

A New Meaning of Culture, for a Safe World Future A Reading in Khalid Hajji's Book: From Restrictions of Modernism to the Arabo- Islamic Open Space of Creativity

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من مضايق الحداثة
إلى فضاء الإبداع الإسلامي والعربي



المركز الثقافي العربي

Abstract:

This essay is a reading in Khalid Hajji's Book: من مضايق الحداثة إلى فضاء الإبداع العربي الإسلامي [From Restrictions of Modernism to the Arabo-Islamic Open Space of Creativity.] The book's main aim, as made clear in its introduction, is to help lay the foundations of a sane and

safe world cultural future. All the way throughout, the idea of cultural sanity and safety is extensively discussed. Therefore, as seen/read from our own point of view, the book is an undertaking that pushes the door wide open in front of the emergence of a new culturally peaceful world,

and in which the concept of "culture" is introduced from a moderate Islamic angle of vision that bypasses theological/ideological cogitation seeking an escape out of the current misunderstandings that gave birth to a seemingly cultural East/West crisis along history. Hence, given

The current world situation, we thought a synopsis of what the book is about, put in a different language too (English), would help appease and mitigate the rough mood some fundamentalist social movements have prompted and forced lately.

Keywords: Culture, Civilisation, Islam, Peace, the World.

Being by its nature a treatise about culture and future cultural challenges, the book qualifies as a cultural attempt to restore to Muslims part of their lost cultural dignity that is being shattered by Muslims' internal problems such as ignorance, mis-interpretation of religious texts, mis-consideration of the modern world situation, clash with other civilisations, use and misuse of power, and wide ideological and theological schisms that completely fraction the Muslim nation into thousands of uncomplimentary factions. In attempt to re-define the meaning of Islamic culture and the Muslim as a cultural being, Khalid Hajji explains who are Muslims and what are they required to do at the beginning of the book as follows:

We are a people who believe that what man can do is to move and act, and the question of success is an unknown matter...and upon this belief which is engraved in our minds, in our body parts and in our heritage,

we should be aware of our mission as a people who are to wake the world from its cultural coma and free economy from the logic of "prosperity through things" and suggest the logic of "needlessness to things," and also emancipate science from its utopian roots and its exaggerated certainty in orders...and it remains to remember that we may succeed or not because that's something unknown¹.

In the few lines above, Hajji warns that the world is heading towards a deadly state in which man will cross its border lines as a being that is required to live within reasonable natural limits that have been pre-destined. Wary of the fact that world economy, politics, and industry are leading the world the wrong way, he cautions against any kind of rejection or dis-acknowledgement of human laws in nature. He suggests that 'we' the Muslims are a people of a mission; a people who are required to wake up from our long night of sleep, overcome our paralysing problems, and guide ourselves as well as other neighbours, through dialogue, toward peace, dialogue, and a better cultural state of being.

Muslims are to draw the attention of humanity to the fact that economy is not a solution and that, at the same time, development and perpetual search for another imaginative world is not itself an explanation that

may help overcome the stretching cultural crisis. He writes this:

If we only know how much the world is in need of a wise idea which emancipates knowledge from its suicidal logics that are based on the idea of speeding up human motion and total neglect of contemplation. Arabs and Muslims too are much required to strength and self-confidence so as to contribute with their Islamic heritage and their scientific approaches to the construction of the cultural world, and thus deconstruct the basis of monstrous globalisation.²

In a multicultural and swiftly growing world, nations are in need of cultural heritage and are obliged to preserve, promote, and produce new possible and different cultural spaces in order to resist identity loss and all the calamities and clashes that may result out of that severely complicated situation. For such reason, Khalid Hajji, at the very beginning of the book, asks a major question which summarises to some extent what will later on be developed into chapters that make the whole idea of the book. He writes:

In spite of the seeming differences between the chapters of this book, they are in essence close and trying to answer the major question: How can we deconstruct the Western imposed

Khalid Hajji - 1 من مضائق الحدائة إلى فضاء الإبداع العربي الإسلامي

From Restrictions of Modernism to the Arabo-Islamic Open Space of Creativity] (Casablanca & Beirut: Arab Cultural Centre, 2005), p. 96.]

The book is written in Arabic and all references to it are henceforth to this edition and translated by the author of the essay

2-Ibid., p. 97

3-Ibid., p. 5

hegemony on us, emancipate ourselves, and restore our creative abilities and thus be able to reconstruct a world based on our own culture and thought.³

The question asked here is mainly made of three parts. The first section addresses the question, “How can we deconstruct unlawful hegemony?” The second section of the question deals with “How can we emancipate ourselves from capitalist and imperialist shackles?” While the third is concerned with the question: “How can we restore our lost ability to create?” Despite their different yet complimentary concern, the three questions pour into one envelope. They call for a courageous will to re-construct a safe and sane cultural world based on free and moderate Islamic cultural values with a purely safe vision of life. In a sense, this is a big and promising cultural challenge if seriously considered.

The supposition which Khalid Hajji defends is of course challenged by other ideologies. A cultural world based on Islamic cultural thought sounds, especially nowadays, like an essentialist idea which calls for more clash of civilisations and more cultural misinterpretation. However, Hajji, from his own point of view as a Muslim scholar, is well aware of such difficulties which may confront

and thwart the call. Henceforth, he provides some conceivable answers to questions that may arise in such case. Basically, the advances made by the author seem to be based on the fact that no human ideology could universally solve the Human problem but one that is not human. He focuses on the fact that Islam, as a way of life, which is not human (a Revealed message), could be taken for a legislative power that would guide Humanity toward peace and prosperity. At the same time, Hajji’s perception and interpretation challenges material powers misleading humanity toward a paralyzed and suicidal state. He reprimands neglect and continuous renouncing of metaphysics as an influential dimension of life.

Throughout the book, Hajji recurrently goes on explaining that the one-sided materialistic way of life has, for a long time, put away the question of morality and humanism and that it replaced them with idolatry modern economic forms such as money making, surplus, benefit, machine control, institutionalisation of life, etc. The materialised mode of being has abandoned the essential criteria for life. It, in its unrestricted pursuit of profit, has masked reality and given it a distorted and misleading definition. Its unrestrained running after impossible utopic worlds and

perfection, through time and perpetual propaganda, has falsified truth and disguised incapable destructive results of the whimsical wish. Hajji writes:

If it’s that necessary that man should move the wheel of life so as to make a living and guarantee his natural rights such as food and dress, it is very necessary too that this same human being who is hovering after material things to develop a certain sense of being, a sense of how to enjoy life and feel like dwelling in the world and being present in it. The ideology of evolution and development – as it is being imposed by globalisation – is a utopian ideology. It promises new dreams by the end of history and shuts out many of its nightmares, because it believes in the human mind as the final tool it could rely on in its search for submission and control of the world, which deceives people by making them believe that the way the world is handled nowadays by scientists and economists is leading to a perfect state and that we are promisingly moving beyond the foggy state the world is in.⁴

There are cut and clear denunciations of modernity’s tools and methods and their effect on human life. That would certainly make the reader think of essentialism. But, as highlighted before, the idea may seem

4–Ibid., p. 55

5–Ibid., p. 68

to only if seen from what we may call a limited 'modern' and a 'modernist' angle of vision. Advances made in the book, would be categorised as being essentially biased, dislocating, and tension-raising only if the idea is de-contextualised and not followed from its embryonic stage in which the needs and conditions that forced it into being are clarified. Yet, according to the author, and within the moderate Islamic cultural sphere, the urgent need of a homogenising culture that brings all the people of the world into one equally interwoven whole is a must. It is a culture, apart from its possible undergrounds and their seeming limits that may re-map the cultural state of the world and redistribute roles and relations on a democratic basis that neglects no one the right to be and at the same time gives everybody the right to exist. The forsaken culture is a uniting globe in which humanism and the human dimension of man is supreme.

The suggested criteria related to the construction of a new meaning of culture provide answers to many questions as stated in the book. Part of what it answers, is the question of the modern misuse of human knowledge and human power in vain and the blinded strife after economic prosperity:

The hoped for technical and technological progress does not only promise prosperity and massive 'monumentalising,' it also promises death and destruction. Besides, the question of bounding human future to robotic technology explains how much the cultural dimension is being 'absented,' add to it the fearful run of humanity after estranging itself more and more from the natural world and its unconscious embracement of an artificial industrial one.⁵

The subject is of great importance if we only know its value. The need of it at the present time and the cultural value it represents for us is at stake. The theme of culture is a crucial one. It is the only possible means of change. Besides, Hajji, in his attempt to diagnose the cultural body, does not focus only on the West as much as he focuses on the Arabo-Muslim internal schisms and misunderstandings. He criticises the Muslim intelligentsia for being divided into two fractions that are guided by and hovering after false courses of time and mind. He states that:

By the time the colonial machine quit the Muslim and Arab world and freedom and independence were restored, there came to the surface new challenges and big questions which had a lot to do with the relationship

between society and the state, religion and modernity, Men and Women, the Self and the Other, etc. At this historical moment, Muslim and Arab intellectuals, in their trying to answer some of these questions and submit some of the faced challenges, they divided among themselves to two parties. The conservatives chose the way of linking the past to the present so as to modernize society, the others, the progressives, chose to link the nation's present to the Western advanced technological, economic and political situation.⁶

The Muslim and Arab intellectuals who opted for the past's heritage and those who chose modernity as a modal, both of them are, in Hajji's view, wrong. He sees that the first party estranged itself in its attempt to stick to the past and blindly imitate it, and that the second party estranged itself from the present in its utopian pursuit of a fake modern material world.⁷ The double estrangement of the Arab and Muslim self made it impossible for the Arab/Muslim mind to think of any other worlds out of the existing ones, while the idea of taking a different road is feasibly promising. Locking one's self within two limited and inoperative worlds is the biggest aberration the Arabs/Muslims blindly shut themselves inside.

6-Ibid., p. 3

7-Ibid., p. 5

8-Ibid., p. 6

The new meaning of culture, which the author suggests, and the way he, as an Eastern thinker, sees the cultural future of the East in light of its relation with the West and other parts of the world is of paramount importance. It is a new perspective which refuses total immersion and idolism of the past and rejects the present in its undesirable state. He suggests a new way out. His advances begin with a call to a total reconciliation with the self and other based on fundamental self-criticism. The current situation in the Muslim and Arab world seems, in Hajji's view, helpless and in need of urgent re-consideration. He states that:

If we take a close look at the actual situation of thought in the Arab and Islamic world in the post colonial era, those who glorify the self and those who glorify the Other will clearly realise that thought projects have reached a paralysed state in which they have no real objective and only walk against the stream and speak a language of exclusion.⁸

The Muslim thinker, in general, being problematically divided among himself, seems to have no place in the present world. He is torn between retired past, a perplexing present, and an unidentified future. In fact he does not exist at all, and if we friendly give him the right to

be considered, we will realise that he is not here among us in the present world, he is totally absent, either tracking down the past or lost in dreams about an unknown future. Most of Muslim thinkers walks against the stream and speak extremist language of exclusion. This psychotic situation needs immediate treatment, and the solution lies in re-consideration of one's place in time and geography, and one's culture as a people, given the fact Islam, as a potential source of inspiration, is not by any means, and has never been, something naturally tied to the Arab or the Arab Muslim. For, according to Islam itself as a religion, culture, and way of life, is a book of teachings addressing humanity in its whole and does not make a difference between any ethnic or linguistic groups.

At a time when other theories of emancipation, which emerged after the colonial era, exactly those considered postcolonial, Hajji's angle of vision, provides a challenging key to the present situation of the Muslim and Arab world. Besides, it should be noted that writings such as *The End of History and Clash of Civilisations*, and of course many others, which are considered neo-colonial theories that fulfil dreams of the old imperialistic project, are getting much ground around the world. Henceforth, Hajji's Arab/

Muslim cultural challenges sound like a view that somehow balances the scene and softens the debate that has for a long time been monopolised by so called 'effeminate' cultures. Hajji writes:

In an attempt to show the miserable situation of complete division, which the Muslim and the Arab nations live, I have used the word "cultural unconsciousness", claiming that we are in such a cultural state as a result of tying ourselves to the West... and I try to show how the modern West is escaping ahead, towards the future, with the same quantity we also find escape back to the past; and I try to explain how we both do not live in the present and do not enjoy our presence, as humans, in the world.⁹

The fact that in the postcolonial world a number of attempts aimed at solving the problem of the ex-colonised Man and nations, means that there is an ongoing will and endeavour to assert the culture of democracy, the rule of law, and the right of all nations and every people to lead a dignified life, prosper, develop their own cultural paradigms, and contribute to the making of a safe and differentiated world. As a result, the post-colonial era has been marked by growing voices which call for rights and a sane use of human and natural resources

9-Ibid., p. 6

10-Ibid., p. 6

11-Ibid., pp. 6-7

both in the East and the West, and Hajji's voice is one of them. His contribution to drawing the world's attention to the weight of the crisis which is at doors is mainly directed to everybody anywhere.

Voices of intellectuals from ex-colonised nations seized the withdrawal of the colonial powers from native territories to launch a call for freedom and the right to re-establish one's own lost cultures. Hajji's call to the necessity to widen the scope of culture, which comes after about half a century after the elimination of colonialism, comes both as a reaction against an inner cultural inertia and a growing sub-diffusion of material culture. The attempt tries to change human view toward the world, sows the seeds of hope, and helps humanity look out of the bow for other possible cultural worlds. Hajji argues:

Once I realised that the East, the West, the North and the South all get part of the cultural unconsciousness, under the pressure of an abstract civilisation which claims universality, I found it easy to design the role of the intellectual not only as an agent responsible of urging his people to stand up against the Other's wrongdoings and facing it, but to draw the world's attention to its sleepiness and wake them up from their cultural coma in an attempt to secure

the world from hands of those who saw seeds of crisis and lead civilisation to suicide, and also get the human being well aware of its value and the value of his being present both in space and time.¹⁰

Third world intellectuals, in their fight for post-colonial freedom, addressed issues that go along with the will of the international community of the post-second World War era to restore peace and guarantee rights of nations. They played, and still do, the role of the messianic figure that preserves the culture of his community and raises the consciousness of both his people and others toward the fact that there is a local culture which has been for long subdued and denied the right to be. Third world intellectuals, through literature and other means, fought for liberty of their cultures and people. More conveniently, the post-colonial elite held the torch of freedom and followed the path of liberty that was traced by ancestors who started resistance during a time when they were under total colonial seizure of power and total inhuman seize of human rights and individual liberties of the colonised. By defending his culture and exposing it as a substitute to what he calls "suicidal" cultures, Hajji marks the power of local cultures to give, contribute to the making of a different but universal culture,

and assert their right to exist equally among other cultures. In this context, Hajji sees that the first thing to be done while in battle against underdevelopment is to re-consider the question of language. He writes:

The Muslim and Arab intellectual could never have the ability to play a major role in guiding the world and Western suicidal civilisation only if he has the ability to "Taàthil." As it is most noticeable in Taha Abderahman's works, "Taàthil" is the ability to abstract concepts of their universal and cosmological nature so as to give the mind the required space of freedom and its right to differ, hence give it the possibility to create relying on its linguistic abilities and wise linguistic use of language and develop the faculty of naming, categorising and subtracting...¹¹

Hajji suggests a way out. He blames Western culture for having embedded Man's creative abilities within a very restricted frame and limited the abilities of the human brain. He sees that such a decision, which has long been imposed on the Western logos, led to a type of dying civilisation he calls: "suicidal civilisation," since it, according to him, definitely leads to a static state of mind and culture that is one-sided and does not take opportunity of all possibilities offered by LIFE

12-The idea is negotiable

13-Ibid., p. 73

14-Ibid., p. 7

as a wide term and unlimited scope of Being. He argues that the Western man, as an example, in search for a way out of his unacceptable –unaccepted by him – natural state, has fallen in the trap of superficiality and thus constructed an apparent limited world that confined human abilities in their total to a senseless act of perfection of what is falsely considered a perfect world that is free of natural drawbacks.

From another angle of vision, and actually, true liberty and autonomous rule require cultural independence. Henceforth, for Muslim nations, the way toward total freedom requires cultural, military, political and economic independence first, according to Hajji. That is indeed what partially happened. Intellectuals of the ex-colonised nations, where a colour of neo-colonialism is still persistent, in collaboration with the army and the civil society, drove the coloniser out.¹² After that, third world elite who seized power seats and rule once the coloniser was driven out, claimed they would try to give re-birth to indigenous, neglected, and half-dead cultures, and help promised they would lead their communities out of the miserable post-independence states they found themselves in. But, that thing never happened and the propagated idea had ever been seriously considered. The ruling

elite split among themselves in their indecent running after power.

Conscious of the fact that cultural legacy and pride of a nation lie in its own developed modes of being, not in imported ways of life, which most of the time do not apply to the society in which they are shamefully implanted, Hajji suggests: reconciliation with the self, with the past, and the will to seek the practical and functional way out. At the same time, he warns against adoption of emancipating strategies that unconsciously destroy rather than build. He explains that current Western modes have up till now failed in finding the right path to lead toward a safe future, and does not deny the fact that they are constantly seeking ways out too. Being imposed through the wave of globalisation hitting the world, the material culture is getting more and more ground at the expense of some of the most spiritual cultures. Hajji argues that:

Revolution against time is the outcome of a mind which refuses the natural world and which sees that the real world – Cosmos or Mundus – will be realised only in the future. The outcome of such madness about a “real waited for world” led to the emergence of the idea of the Utopian World. Therefore, there spread the kind of thought which is basically industrial and does

not use industry as a means so as to live in and enjoy the world, but it seeks to transform the world through industry. Thus, industry became a tool to which Man sticks strongly and through which Man thinks he could build his industrial and artificial hoped for world where coincidence does not exist and has no meaning at all, and where man gets rid of nature and all natural contingencies.¹³

The awareness that culture is a cornerstone in the way toward freedom and development inhabited every committed intellectual. As a result, most studies and researches, in fact, treat the issue of culture, identity, and development. As a case, the book being dealt with is no exception. Fundamentally, it’s an attempt to present a new vision over the issue of cultural emancipation. It, slightly different from other such works that approached the question of culture from an ideological perspective, the text we are dealing with here argues that the solution humanity is looking for may lie in the Islamic culture. The argument goes this way: the current hegemony of the materialised culture is not to be challenged with traditional ideological and technological tools. Inversely to what most thinkers opt for, Hajji insists that “once we recognize that the right to differ is a right, only then we would be able get rid of the senseless and long-lived

15–Ibid., p. 72

16–Ibid., p. 7

17–Ibid., p. 7–8

18–Ibid., p. 8

ذخائر :lash between the 'I' and the 'Other.'"¹⁴

Hajji's main argument is the following: in order to have the ability to save our human cultural heritage and our right to be free and different, and in order to emancipate ourselves of chaining ideologies that are deeply sawn in our modes of being, we should face the materialised culture with an ideology that is antithetical but not clashing. At the same time, this will not be done only for the sake of a small portion of people; it will be primarily done for Humanity's sake and for the sake of the dying cultures societies. With a strong belief in the right to diversity and equality, and being a Muslim postcolonial intellectual and author, Hajji focuses on how could we, as humans not only as Muslims, promote and develop new cultural modes through which we can face the hegemony of materialised cultures without falling in the trap of radicalism, unrestricted modernism, or anarchism. Hajji tells us this:

The question of refusal of the unknown and reliance on linear time became major basics to the revolutionary mind. In fact, refusal of the unknown and the metaphysic is a revolution against what modernity itself promises. If we only take a look at the mental principles which guided thought and sciences in Western history at least since the beginning of the

modern era, we will find that it worships revolution.¹⁵

Hajji considers the two stances, radicalism and modernism, as being defective by nature because they 'essentialise,' 'dislocate,' 'radicalise,' 'produce more racism and clash,' 'polarise,' 'bring about tension,' and hinder real progress. Hajji's cultural approach does not implement totalitarian ideologies to advent a utopian claim, he implements Islamic culture and Islam as a way of life to think of and suggest a peaceful culture uniting humanity but not neglecting any individual or society its right to be and stand as different. This is his view of a safe 'cultural' and 'civilised' future of the world:

As much as the Ego avoids clash, as much as the door of worship opens in front of it, and thus the door of culture. Worship purifies the soul from the destructive will to suppress Others, and saves it negative results of such ideology that brings about only fall and bankruptcy. Worship, in one of its most pure meanings, is what makes the human being feel pessimistic and slows down his will to subject the Other and make of it a copy of the I, which is no more than a subjected object that follows and imitates. Culture, too, helps people not get lost in thought and place. Culture in its most meaningful sense is the limits of human action; limits which if crossed by Man he may suffer

loss and thus all his actions may become senseless and without a rational motive. Culture guides human will to enlargement, and it also gives sense to human existence in time and place and solidifies peoples' powers and skills.¹⁶

Hajji thinks that Islam, as a culture and a way of life, provides the modal culture that would contribute to the establishment of a safe and sane world. He strongly believes that the Islamic tradition (view to the world) is the paradigm within which many of the solutions lie. He bases his argument on the failure of all previous attempts that were based on materialised ideologies to free the concept of culture from hegemonic universal traces. He believes that there is an inherent still-not-discovered power in the Islamic cultural modal. He criticises the centrality of materialised culture and the inefficiency of its counterpart, the peripheral world's culture, which blindly borrowed and applied certain counterproductive ideologies. He believes that "the Western logos resort to enlargement is due to the logical reason which lies in the fact that the door of worship and culture has come to an end point."¹⁷

Hajji rejects the universalism of the first party (the West), and the weak adoption of alien ideologies of the second one (the East). The cultural battle against ruthless hegemony of

19-Ibid., pp. 8-9

20-Ibid., p. 152

materialised culture around the world, according to him, shall be initiated with a will to join efforts and put into practice a general strategy seeking to overcome previous defects. For Hajji, the Islamic culture must have a share in the construction of the future culture of the world. But, to avoid falling in essentialism, Hajji raises and highlights the idea that Islam, as a culture and a way of life, is nobody's ideology in essence. He makes clear that Islamic Culture is a general approach on how to lead human life that deduced from a religious book (The Koran) and argues that this culture is by no means subjective, essentialist, egocentric, dislocating, central, or hegemonic. He insists that it is a totally different type of culture and a total cultural experience, which if well understood and implemented, it would prove its ability to cope with some of the most immune cultural complexities of the century. He states that:

Once the mind gets involved in the act of construction, both at the level of mind and fact, without any pre-destined goals and limits, this mind will end up to a series of endless forms of constructions. Man will become a machine which targets nothing but construction and monumental enlargement, and this human-machine will keep moving from one constructive order to another and from one system to a new one, aimlessly trying to impose reason over reality, and aimlessly imposing manufacture over nature. Such mind is guided

by a “transformational philosophy,” a philosophy which is not satisfied with world as it is, a destructive philosophy whose primary objective is to re-formulate the world and transform it from its natural condition into an artificial ordered world. Such philosophy claims that it tries to change the world for the better and it seeks to pick it out of the state of coincidence, chaos, mist, and ugliness and place it in the assured state of manufacture, expectation, order, and beauty.¹⁸

By criticising such a mode of being and such a way of life and thought, he pushes forward a substitutive solution, which, in his view, provides the key cure to the suicidal civilisation the world is led by and the cultural wave of unconsciousness the world is living under. He blames humanity on their pure reliance on the self and human mind in their attempt to impose order over nature that up till now ended with a disordering of nature. Why should the human being seek transformation of his world? Why is there dissatisfaction with the existing world as it is? More obviously, why can not the Human Being see that dreaming beyond the actual given world is in itself an estrangement and disenchantment of our world, from which, by the end of the day, humanity has nowhere to go. Hajji suggests this:

Instead of a transformational philosophy, we suggest a “habitation philosophy,” which seeks ways through which we can live in the

world and inhabit it, not ways through which we can transform it. The philosophy of in-habitation, when it asks the question: “how could we and how shall we inhabit our world?” provides a possibility of discarding all that which may hinder human being's enjoyment of life in nature. It works as a substitute to the “transformational philosophy,” which seeks control over nature and suggests ways how to get nature itself out of the natural order which it calls a “chaotic state.” At the same time, the mind remains, according to the philosophy of dwelling in the world and being present in it, related to metaphoric and poetic language when philosophising and producing orders of thought, and also keeps being related to the senses even when moving towards abstraction, and with a clear vision when theorising.¹⁹

The following translated quote sums up everything and it philosophically puts great minds in grips with the question about Humanity, the World, Destiny (the future). He writes:

Today, our world is not in need to mental and technical skills, and its not either in need to piercing intelligence, as much as it is in need to wisdom so as to guarantee a joyful present and a better future. Hopefully, may our poets and philosophers make of wisdom their lost truth? ²⁰

Conclusion

The book Khalid Hajji

enriched the library with exposes a new dimension of how to cope with the world, under assumption that the human being is, on earth, to complete a mission. In other words, Man is on earth to live and die not to look for eternity. Man is to be responsible of himself, his soul, his body, his mind, his actions, his environment, his and his human fellows' security. Man is on earth so as to live a restricted life that goes along with the conditions of life on earth, not to seek to transform nature into a utopian place in chase for pleasure and plain comfort. Man's dreams have to have limits. Man should know that only wise use of his mental and physical abilities could guarantee him a true sense of being present on earth and enjoying life. More conveniently, Man has to rethink modes of being, to re-establish himself as a being in his world. Man is not to play God on earth, for that will ultimately lead to his destruction.

Islamic culture, according to Hajji, is totally a new experience worth being given the chance to participate in making the world's cultural scene. It is, no matter what its principles and prospected results might be, a renovated and conformist perspective that primarily seeks to re-establish some order to a completely balkanised world where humanity is approximately loosing sense of life in daily high rates. Being a new suggested experience of its kind, the proposed Islamic cultural approach claims its ability to have positive and different

cultural effects through the vision it puts forward. Being, fundamentally, an Islamic culture, the suggested approach provides answers to questions the world has for long been, and is still, grappling with. It comes up with 'ways out,' which are in facts paths it considers worthy of being given a chance and implemented if the world is ever truly seeking solutions. It, theoretically, cautions that Man should avoid the present loss in the material bare world, which resulted in the loss of any spiritual and rational belief that could explain the world as a peaceful, safe, and sane place to live in for the human being. According to the Islamic cultural vision, a serious cultural upheaval is something immediately necessary if the world is ever truly willing to establish some order to the current messy situation East and West.

Khalid Hajji argues that the go back to the roots is necessary. Big questions should be re-asked, and big inventions should be re-questioned. Any misuse of Man's capacities as a being, any misuse of nature and natural resources, is ultimately a soft exterminating act that will lead to slow deterioration and ultimate loss. The modern civilised world seems to be on the wrong path. In other words, development is good but it should not destroy life. For, a true development is one which enriches life and simplifies it, not one that goes against it and destroys it. Only few are wary of the fact that the train of modernisation and false development are leading

humanity to a state of moribund civilisation. So, the idea of culture is of paramount importance, because only a sane culture could help live the world in peace and with no clashes of civilisations that are primarily clashes of cultures.

a seemingly cultural East/West crisis along history. Hence, given the current world situation, we thought a synopsis of what the book is about, put in a different language too (English), would help appease and mitigate the rough mood some fundamentalist social movements have prompted and forced lately.

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Being by its nature a treatise about culture and future cultural challenges, the book qualifies as a cultural attempt to restore to Muslims part of their lost cultural dignity that is being shattered by Muslims' internal problems such as ignorance, mis-interpretation of religious texts, mis-consideration of the modern world situation, clash with other civilisations, use and misuse of power, and wide ideological and theological schisms that completely fraction the Muslim nation into thousands of uncomplimentary factions. In attempt to re-define the meaning of Islamic culture and the Muslim as a cultural being, Khalid Hajji explains who are Muslims and what are they required to do at the beginning of the book as follows:

We are a people who believe that what man can do is to move and act, and the question of success is an unknown matter...and upon this belief which is engraved in our minds, in our body parts and in our heritage, we should be aware of our mission as a people who are to wake the world from its cultural coma and free economy from the logic of "prosperity through things"

and suggest the logic of “needlessness to things,” and also emancipate science from its utopian roots and its exaggerated certainty in orders...and it remains to remember that we may succeed or not because that’s something unknown¹.

In the few lines above, Hajji warns that the world is heading towards a deadly state in which man will cross its border lines as a being that is required to live within reasonable natural limits that have been pre-destined. Wary of the fact that world economy, politics, and industry are leading the world the wrong way, he cautions against any kind of rejection or dis-acknowledgement of human laws in nature. He suggests that ‘we’ the Muslims are a people of a mission; a people who are required to wake up from our long night of sleep, overcome our paralysing problems, and guide ourselves as well as other neighbours, through dialogue, toward peace, dialogue, and a better cultural state of being. Muslims are to draw the attention of humanity to the fact that economy is not a solution and that, at the same time, development and perpetual search for another imaginative world is not itself an explanation that may help overcome the stretching cultural crisis. He writes this:

If we only know how much the world is in need of a wise idea which emancipates knowledge from its suicidal logics that are based on the idea of speeding up human motion and total neglect of contemplation. Arabs and Muslims too are much required to strength and self-confidence so as to contribute with their Islamic heritage and their scientific approaches to the construction of the cultural world, and thus deconstruct the basis of monstrous globalisation.²

In a multicultural and swiftly growing world, nations are in need of cultural heritage and are obliged to preserve,

promote, and produce new possible and different cultural spaces in order to resist identity loss and all the calamities and clashes that may result out of that severely complicated situation. For such reason, Khalid Hajji, at the very beginning of the book, asks a major question which summarises to some extent what will later on be developed into chapters that make the whole idea of the book. He writes:

In spite of the seeming differences between the chapters of this book, they are in essence close and trying to answer the major question: How can we deconstruct the Western imposed hegemony on us, emancipate ourselves, and restore our creative abilities and thus be able to reconstruct a world based on our own culture and thought.³

The question asked here is mainly made of three parts. The first section addresses the question, “How can we deconstruct unlawful hegemony?” The second section of the question deals with “How can we emancipate ourselves from capitalist and imperialist shackles?” While the third is concerned with the question: “How can we restore our lost ability to create?” Despite their different yet complimentary concern, the three questions pour into one envelope. They call for a courageous will to re-construct a safe and sane cultural world based on free and moderate Islamic cultural values with a purely safe vision of life. In a sense, this is a big and promising cultural challenge if seriously considered.

The supposition which Khalid Hajji defends is of course challenged by other ideologies. A cultural world based on Islamic cultural thoughts, especially nowadays, like an essentialist idea which calls for more clash of civilisations and more cultural misinterpretation. However, Hajji, from his own point of view as a Muslim

scholar, is well aware of such difficulties which may confront and thwart the call. Henceforth, he provides some conceivable answers to questions that may arise in such case. Basically, the advances made by the author seem to be based on the fact that no human ideology could universally solve the Human problem but one that is not human. He focuses on the fact that Islam, as a way of life, which is not human (a Revealed message), could be taken for a legislative power that would guide Humanity toward peace and prosperity. At the same time, Hajji’s perception and interpretation challenges material powers misleading humanity toward a paralyzed and suicidal state. He reprimands neglect and continuous renouncing of metaphysics as an influential dimension of life.

Throughout the book, Hajji recurrently goes on explaining that the one-sided materialistic way of life has, for a long time, put away the question of morality and humanism and that it replaced them with idolatry modern economic forms such as money making, surplus, benefit, machine control, institutionalisation of life, etc. The materialised mode of being has abandoned the essential criteria for life. It, in its unrestricted pursuit of profit, has masked reality and given it a distorted and misleading definition. Its unrestrained running after impossible utopic worlds and perfection, through time and perpetual propaganda, has falsified truth and disguised inescapable destructive results of the whimsical wish. Hajji writes:

If it’s that necessary that man should move the wheel of life so as to make a living and guarantee his natural rights such as food and dress, it is very necessary too that this same human being who is hovering after material things to develop a certain sense of being, a sense of how to enjoy life and feel like dwelling in the world and being

present in it. The ideology of evolution and development – as it is being imposed by globalisation – is a utopian ideology. It promises new dreams by the end of history and shuts out many of its nightmares, because it believes in the human mind as the final tool it could rely on in its search for submission and control of the world, which deceives people by making them believe that the way the world is handled nowadays by scientists and economists is leading to a perfect state and that we are promisingly moving beyond the foggy state the world is in.⁴

There are cut and clear denunciations of modernity's tools and methods and their effect on human life. That would certainly make the reader think of essentialism. But, as highlighted before, the idea may seem so only if seen from what we may call a limited 'modern' and a 'modernist' angle of vision. Advances made in the book, would be categorised as being essentially biased, dislocating, and tension-raising only if the idea is de-contextualised and not followed from its embryonic stage in which the needs and conditions that forced it into being are clarified. Yet, according to the author, and within the moderate Islamic cultural sphere, the urgent need of a homogenising culture that brings all the people of the world into one equally interwoven whole is a must. It is a culture, apart from its possible undergrounds and their seeming limits that may re-map the cultural state of the world and redistribute roles and relations on a democratic basis that neglects no one the right to be and at the same time gives everybody the right to exist. The forsaken culture is a uniting globe in which humanism and the human dimension of man is supreme.

The suggested criteria related to the construction of a new meaning of culture provide answers to many questions as stated in the book. Part

of what it answers, is the question of the modern misuse of human knowledge and human power in vain and the blinded strife after economic prosperity:

The hoped for technical and technological progress does not only promise prosperity and massive 'monumentalising,' it also promises death and destruction. Besides, the question of bounding human future to robotic technology explains how much the cultural dimension is being 'absented,' add to it the fearful run of humanity after estranging itself more and more from the natural world and its unconscious embracement of an artificial industrial one.⁵

The subject is of great importance if we only know its value. The need of it at the present time and the cultural value it represents for us is at stake. The theme of culture is a crucial one. It is the only possible means of change. Besides, Hajji, in his attempt to diagnose the cultural body, does not focus only on the West as much as he focuses on the Arabo-Muslim internal schisms and misunderstandings. He criticises the Muslim intelligentsia for being divided into two fractions that are guided by and hovering after false courses of time and mind. He states that:

By the time the colonial machine quit the Muslim and Arab world and freedom and independence were restored, there came to the surface new challenges and big questions which had a lot to do with the relationship between society and the state, religion and modernity, Men and Women, the Self and the Other, etc. At this historical moment, Muslim and Arab intellectuals, in their trying to answer some of these questions and submit some of the faced challenges, they divided among themselves to two parties. The conservatives chose the way of linking the past to the present

so as to modernize society, the others, the progressives, chose to link the nation's present to the Western advanced technological, economic and political situation.⁶

The Muslim and Arab intellectuals who opted for the past's heritage and those who chose modernity as a modal, both of them are, in Hajji's view, wrong. He sees that the first party estranged itself in its attempt to stick to the past and blindly imitate it, and that the second party estranged itself from the present in its utopian pursuit of a fake modern material world.⁷ The double estrangement of the Arab and Muslim self made it impossible for the Arab/Muslim mind to think of any other worlds out of the existing ones, while the idea of taking a different road is feasibly promising. Locking one's self within two limited and inoperative worlds is the biggest aberration the Arabs/Muslims blindly shut themselves inside.

The new meaning of culture, which the author suggests, and the way he, as an Eastern thinker, sees the cultural future of the East in light of its relation with the West and other parts of the world is of paramount importance. It is a new perspective which refuses total immersion and idolism of the past and rejects the present in its undesirable state. He suggests a new way out. His advances begin with a call to a total reconciliation with the self and other based on fundamental self-criticism. The current situation in the Muslim and Arab world seems, in Hajji's view, helpless and in need of urgent re-consideration. He states that:

If we take a close look at the actual situation of thought in the Arab and Islamic world in the post colonial era, those who glorify the self and those who glorify the Other will clearly realise that thought projects have reached a paralysed state in which

they have no real objective and only walk against the stream and speak a language of exclusion.⁸

The Muslim thinker, in general, being problematically divided among himself, seems to have no place in the present world. He is torn between retired past, a perplexing present, and an unidentified future. In fact he does not exist at all, and if we friendly give him the right to be considered, we will realise that he is not here among us in the present world, he is totally absent, either tracking down the past or lost in dreams about an unknown future. Most of Muslim thinkers walks against the stream and speak extremist language of exclusion. This psychotic situation needs immediate treatment, and the solution lies in re-consideration of one's place in time and geography, and one's culture as a people, given the fact Islam, as a potential source of inspiration, is not by any means, and has never been, something naturally tied to the Arab or the Arab Muslim. For, according to Islam itself as a religion, culture, and way of life, is a book of teachings addressing humanity in its whole and does not make a difference between any ethnic or linguistic groups.

At a time when other theories of emancipation, which emerged after the colonial era, exactly those considered postcolonial, Hajji's angle of vision, provides a challenging key to the present situation of the Muslim and Arab world. Besides, it should be noted that writings such as *The End of History and Clash of Civilisations*, and of course many others, which are considered neo-colonial theories that fulfil dreams of the old imperialistic project, are getting much ground around the world. Henceforth, Hajji's Arab/Muslim cultural challenges sound like a view that somehow balances the scene and softens the debate that has for a long time been monopolised by so called 'effeminate' cultures. Hajji

writes:

In an attempt to show the miserable situation of complete division, which the Muslim and the Arab nations live, I have used the word "cultural unconsciousness", claiming that we are in such a cultural state as a result of tying ourselves to the West... and I try to show how the modern West is escaping ahead, towards the future, with the same quantity we also find escape back to the past; and I try to explain how we both do not live in the present and do not enjoy our presence, as humans, in the world.⁹

The fact that in the postcolonial world a number of attempts aimed at solving the problem of the ex-colonised Man and nations, means that there is an ongoing will and endeavour to assert the culture of democracy, the rule of law, and the right of all nations and every people to lead a dignified life, prosper, develop their own cultural paradigms, and contribute to the making of a safe and differentiated world. As a result, the post-colonial era has been marked by growing voices which call for rights and a sane use of human and natural resources both in the East and the West, and Hajji's voice is one of them. His contribution to drawing the world's attention to the weight of the crisis which is at doors is mainly directed to everybody anywhere.

Voices of intellectuals from ex-colonised nations seized the withdrawal of the colonial powers from native territories to launch a call for freedom and the right to re-establish one's own lost cultures. Hajji's call to the necessity to widen the scope of culture, which comes after about half a century after the elimination of colonialism, comes both as a reaction against an inner cultural inertia and a growing sub-diffusion of material culture. The attempt tries to change human view toward the world, sows the seeds of hope, and helps humanity look out of the bow for

other possible cultural worlds. Hajji argues:

Once I realised that the East, the West, the North and the South all get part of the cultural unconsciousness, under the pressure of an abstract civilisation which claims universality, I found it easy to design the role of the intellectual not only as an agent responsible of urging his people to stand up against the Other's wrongdoings and facing it, but to draw the world's attention to its sleepiness and wake them up from their cultural coma in an attempt to secure the world from hands of those who saw seeds of crisis and lead civilisation to suicide, and also get the human being well aware of its value and the value of his being present both in space and time.¹⁰

Third world intellectuals, in their fight for post-colonial freedom, addressed issues that go along with the will of the international community of the post-second World War era to restore peace and guarantee rights of nations. They played, and still do, the role of the messianic figure that preserves the culture of his community and raises the consciousness of both his people and others toward the fact that there is a local culture which has been for long subdued and denied the right to be. Third world intellectuals, through literature and other means, fought for liberty of their cultures and people. More conveniently, the post-colonial elite held the torch of freedom and followed the path of liberty that was traced by ancestors who started resistance during a time when they were under total colonial seizure of power and total inhuman seize of human rights and individual liberties of the colonised. By defending his culture and exposing it as a substitute to what he calls "suicidal" cultures, Hajji marks the power of local cultures to give, contribute to the making of a different but universal culture, and assert their right to exist

equally among other cultures. In this context, Hajji sees that the first thing to be done while in battle against underdevelopment is to re-consider the question of language. He writes:

The Muslim and Arab intellectual could never have the ability to play a major role in guiding the world and Western suicidal civilisation only if he has the ability to “Taàthil.” As it is most noticeable in Taha Abderahman’s works, “Taàthil” is the ability to abstract concepts of their universal and cosmological nature so as to give the mind the required space of freedom and its right to differ, hence give it the possibility to create relying on its linguistic abilities and wise linguistic use of language and develop the faculty of naming, categorising and subtracting...¹¹

Hajji suggests a way out. He blames Western culture for having embedded Man’s creative abilities within a very restricted frame and limited the abilities of the human brain. He sees that such a decision, which has long been imposed on the Western logos, led to a type of dying civilisation he calls: “suicidal civilisation,” since it, according to him, definitely leads to a static state of mind and culture that is one-sided and does not take opportunity of all possibilities offered by LIFE as a wide term and unlimited scope of Being. He argues that the Western man, as an example, in search for a way out of his unacceptable –unaccepted by him – natural state, has fallen in the trap of superficiality and thus constructed an apparent limited world that confined human abilities in their total to a senseless act of perfection of what is falsely considered a perfect world that is free of natural drawbacks.

From another angle of vision, and actually, true liberty and autonomous rule require cultural independence. Henceforth, for Muslim nations, the way toward total freedom requires

cultural, military, political and economic independence first, according to Hajji. That is indeed what partially happened. Intellectuals of the ex-colonised nations, where a colour of neo-colonialism is still persistent, in collaboration with the army and the civil society, drove the coloniser out.¹² After that, third world elite who seized power seats and rule once the coloniser was driven out, claimed they would try to give re-birth to indigenous, neglected, and half-dead cultures, and help promised they would lead their communities out of the miserable post-independence states they found themselves in. But, that thing never happened and the propagated idea had ever been seriously considered. The ruling elite split among themselves in their indecent running after power.

Conscious of the fact that cultural legacy and pride of a nation lie in its own developed modes of being, not in imported ways of life, which most of the time do not apply to the society in which they are shamefully implanted, Hajji suggests: reconciliation with the self, with the past, and the will to seek the practical and functional way out. At the same time, he warns against adoption of emancipating strategies that unconsciously destroy rather than build. He explains that current Western modes have up till now failed in finding the right path to lead toward a safe future, and does not deny the fact that they are constantly seeking ways out too. Being imposed through the wave of globalisation hitting the world, the material culture is getting more and more ground at the expense of some of the most spiritual cultures. Hajji argues that:

Revolution against time is the outcome of a mind which refuses the natural world and which sees that the real world – Cosmos or Mundus – will be realised only in the future. The outcome of such madness about

a “real waited for world” led to the emergence of the idea of the Utopian World. Therefore, there spread the kind of thought which is basically industrial and does not use industry as a means so as to live in and enjoy the world, but it seeks to transform the world through industry. Thus, industry became a tool to which Man sticks strongly and through which Man thinks he could build his industrial and artificial hoped for world where coincidence does not exist and has no meaning at all, and where man gets rid of nature and all natural contingencies.¹³

The awareness that culture is a cornerstone in the way toward freedom and development inhabited every committed intellectual. As a result, most studies and researches, in fact, treat the issue of culture, identity, and development. As a case, the book being dealt with is no exception. Fundamentally, it’s an attempt to present a new vision over the issue of cultural emancipation. It, slightly different from other such works that approached the question of culture from an ideological perspective, the text we are dealing with here argues that the solution humanity is looking for may lie in the Islamic culture. The argument goes this way: the current hegemony of the materialised culture is not to be challenged with traditional ideological and technological tools. Inversely to what most thinkers opt for, Hajji insists that “once we recognize that the right to differ is a right, only then we would be able get rid of the senseless and long-lived clash between the ‘I’ and the ‘Other.’”¹⁴

Hajji’s main argument is the following: in order to have the ability to save our human cultural heritage and our right to be free and different, and in order to emancipate ourselves of chaining ideologies that are deeply sawn in our modes of being, we should face the materialised culture with an ideology

that is antithetical but not clashing. At the same time, this will not be done only for the sake of a small portion of people; it will be primarily done for Humanity's sake and for the sake of the dying cultures societies. With a strong belief in the right to diversity and equality, and being a Muslim post-colonial intellectual and author, Hajji focuses on how could we, as humans not only as Muslims, promote and develop new cultural modes through which we can face the hegemony of materialised cultures without falling in the trap of radicalism, unrestricted modernism, or anarchism. Hajji tells us this:

The question of refusal of the unknown and reliance on linear time became major basics to the revolutionary mind. In fact, refusal of the unknown and the metaphysic is a revolution against what modernity itself promises. If we only take a look at the mental principles which guided thought and sciences in Western history at least since the beginning of the modern era, we will find that it worships revolution.¹⁵

Hajji considers the two stances, radicalism and modernism, as being defective by nature because they 'essentialise,' 'dislocate,' 'radicalise,' 'produce more racism and clash,' 'polarise,' 'bring about tension,' and hinder real progress. Hajji's cultural approach does not implement totalitarian ideologies to advent a utopian claim, he implements Islamic culture and Islam as a way of life to think of and suggest a peaceful culture uniting humanity but not neglecting any individual or society its right to be and stand as different. This is his view of a safe 'cultural' and 'civilised' future of the world:

As much as the Ego avoids clash, as much as the door of worship opens in front of it, and thus the door of culture. Worship purifies the soul from

the destructive will to suppress Others, and saves it negative results of such ideology that brings about only fall and bankruptcy. Worship, in one of its most pure meanings, is what makes the human being feel pessimistic and slows down his will to subject the Other and make of it a copy of the I, which is no more than a subjected object that follows and imitates. Culture, too, helps people not get lost in thought and place. Culture in its most meaningful sense is the limits of human action; limits which if crossed by Man he may suffer loss and thus all his actions may become senseless and without a rational motive. Culture guides human will to enlargement, and it also gives sense to human existence in time and place and solidifies peoples' powers and skills.¹⁶

Hajji thinks that Islam, as a culture and a way of life, provides the modal culture that would contribute to the establishment of a safe and sane world. He strongly believes that the Islamic tradition (view to the world) is the paradigm within which many of the solutions lie. He bases his argument on the failure of all previous attempts that were based on materialised ideologies to free the concept of culture from hegemonic universal traces. He believes that there is an inherent still-not-discovered power in the Islamic cultural modal. He criticises the centrality of materialised culture and the inefficiency of its counterpart, the peripheral world's culture, which blindly borrowed and applied certain counterproductive ideologies. He believes that "the Western logos resort to enlargement is due to the logical reason which lies in the fact that the door of worship and culture has come to an end point."¹⁷

Hajji rejects the universalism of the first party (the West), and the weak adoption of alien ideologies of the second one (the East). The cultural battle against ruthless hegemony of

materialised culture around the world, according to him, shall be initiated with a will to join efforts and put into practice a general strategy seeking to overcome previous defects. For Hajji, the Islamic culture must have a share in the construction of the future culture of the world. But, to avoid falling in essentialism, Hajji raises and highlights the idea that Islam, as a culture and a way of life, is nobody's ideology in essence. He makes clear that Islamic Culture is a general approach on how to lead human life that deduced from a religious book (The Koran) and argues that this culture is by no means subjective, essentialist, egocentric, dislocating, central, or hegemonic. He insists that it is a totally different type of culture and a total cultural experience, which if well understood and implemented, it would prove its ability to cope with some of the most immune cultural complexities of the century. He states that:

Once the mind gets involved in the act of construction, both at the level of mind and fact, without any pre-designed goals and limits, this mind will end up to a series of endless forms of constructions. Man will become a machine which targets nothing but construction and monumental enlargement, and this human-machine will keep moving from one constructive order to another and from one system to a new one, aimlessly trying to impose reason over reality, and aimlessly imposing manufacture over nature. Such mind is guided by a "transformational philosophy," a philosophy which is not satisfied with world as it is, a destructive philosophy whose primary objective is to re-formulate the world and transform it from its natural condition into an artificial ordered world. Such philosophy claims that it tries to change the world for the better and it seeks to pick it out of the state of coincidence, chaos, mist, and ugliness and place it in the assured state of manufacture,

expectation, order, and beauty.¹⁸

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By criticising such a mode of being and such a way of life and thought, he pushes forward a substitutive solution, which, in his view, provides the key cure to the suicidal civilisation the world is led by and the cultural wave of unconsciousness the world is living under. He blames humanity on their pure reliance on the self and human mind in their attempt to impose order over nature that up till now ended with a disordering of nature. Why should the human being seek transformation of his world? Why is there dissatisfaction with the existing world as it is? More obviously, why can not the Human Being see that dreaming beyond the actual given world is in itself an estrangement and disenchantment of our world, from which, by the end of the day, humanity has nowhere to go. Hajji suggests this:

Instead of a transformational philosophy, we suggest a “habitation philosophy,” which seeks ways through which we can live in the world and inhabit it, not ways through which we can transform it. The philosophy of in-habitation, when it asks the question: “how could we and how shall we inhabit our world?” provides a possibility of discarding all that which may hinder human being’s enjoyment of life in nature. It works as a substitute to the “transformational philosophy,” which seeks control over nature and suggests ways how to get nature itself out of the natural order which it calls a “chaotic state.” At the same time, the mind remains, according to the philosophy of dwelling in the world and being present in it, related to metaphoric and poetic language when philosophising and producing orders of thought, and also keeps being related to the senses even when moving towards abstraction, and with a clear vision when theorising.¹⁹

The following translated quote sums

up everything and it philosophical-ly puts great minds in grips with the question about Humanity, the World, Destiny (the future). He writes:

Today, our world is not in need to mental and technical skills, and its not either in need to piercing intelligence, as much as it is in need to wisdom so as to guarantee a joyful present and a better future. Hopefully, may our poets and philosophers make of wisdom their lost truth? ²⁰

Conclusion

The book Khalid Hajji enriched the library with exposes a new dimension of how to cope with the world, under assumption that the human being is, on earth, to complete a mission. In other words, Man is on earth to live and die not to look for eternity. Man is to be responsible of himself, his soul, his body, his mind, his actions, his environment, his and his human fellows’ security. Man is on earth so as to live a restricted life that goes along with the conditions of life on earth, not to seek to transform nature into a utopian place in chase for pleasure and plain comfort. Man’s dreams have to have limits. Man should know that only wise use of his mental and physical abilities could guarantee him a true sense of being present on earth and enjoying life. More conveniently, Man has to rethink modes of being, to re-establish himself as a being in his world. Man is not to play God on earth, for that will ultimately lead to his destruction.

Islamic culture, according to Hajji, is totally a new experience worth being given the chance to participate in making the world’s cultural scene. It is, no matter what its principles and prospected results might be, a renovated and conformist perspective that primarily seeks to re-establish some order to a completely balkanised world where humanity is approximately losing sense of life in daily

high rates. Being a new suggested experience of its kind, the proposed Islamic cultural approach claims its ability to have positive and different cultural effects through the vision it puts forward. Being, fundamentally, an Islamic culture, the suggested approach provides answers to questions the world has for long been, and is still, grappling with. It comes up with ‘ways out,’ which are in facts paths it considers worthy of being given a chance and implemented if the world is ever truly seeking solutions. It, theoretically, cautions that Man should avoid the present loss in the material bare world, which resulted in the loss of any spiritual and rational belief that could explain the world as a peaceful, safe, and sane place to live in for the human being. According to the Islamic cultural vision, a serious cultural upheaval is something immediately necessary if the world is ever truly willing to establish some order to the current messy situation East and West.

Khalid Hajji argues that the go back to the roots is necessary. Big questions should be re-asked, and big inventions should be re-questioned. Any misuse of Man’s capacities as a being, any misuse of nature and natural resources, is ultimately a soft exterminating act that will lead to slow deterioration and ultimate loss. The modern civilised world seems to be on the wrong path. In other words, development is good but it should not destroy life. For, a true development is one which enriches life and simplifies it, not one that goes against it and destroys it. Only few are wary of the fact that the train of modernisation and false development are leading humanity to a state of moribund civilisation. So, the idea of culture is of paramount importance, because only a sane culture could help live the world in peace and with no clashes of civilisations that are primarily clashes of cultures.