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A Forgotten Debt: Humanism and Education, from the Orient to the West

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The passage of the West from Classical Antiquity to the Renaissance was facilitated by the Islamic civilization, whose contribution was central to the emergence of the modern enlightened West as we have come to know it. Yet, this essential fact of world history has been almost systematically overlooked in leading humanism studies, thus perpetuating a crucial chasm in the sequence of world history and the genealogy of ideas. In his poem *To Helen*, the great Edgar Allan Poe could just as easily have bridged that gap by adding to the famous lines 'the glory that was Greece, the grandeur that was Rome',[1] a proper reference to 'the magnificence that was Baghdad'. Artistic licence aside, such oversight is indicative of a long-standing amnesia developed in the Western world over recent centuries and which has functioned as a mode of invisibilization of the magnitude of the impact of Arab and Islamic cultural thought and practice on the rise of the modern Western world.

The phenomenon was lengthy and widespread, manifesting itself systemically in education, science, arts and politics, and it was primarily the result of a history of revisionist self-perception. For in experiencing its entry into the modern era, and in rising to dominate that new world, the West relied just as much on its own revolutionary innovations and socioeconomic and cultural re-examinations as it did on the achievements of past civilizations passing on a well-lit torch of culture. Yet amongst these, only 'glorious' Greece and 'grand' Rome have been the mainstay of the Renaissance narrative. A shortcut excising the contribution of the Arab and Islamic world from that account appeared early on in the eighteenth century, it was rapidly cemented in the context of the imperial age of Great Britain and France during the nineteenth

century and then endowed with normality throughout the twentieth century. When, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the West and the Orient were pitted anew against each other perceptually in an apparent clash of civilizations and the post-September 11 world, the narrative and its lacunae re-emerged, at times antagonistically, when, in fact, by that critical point it should have been revealed as merely lacking factuality.

At its height in the twelfth century, the Arab and Islamic Empire – the first truly globalized world dominion stretching from Spain to Zanzibar to China – was the theatre of dynamic thinking and multifaceted creativity that, by the time of the *Reconquista,* had made a substantial impact in creating, indeed signposting, the path upon which a reborn Europe would soon embark. Yet, as the dominant narratives goes, the sum total of knowledge accumulated during the previous eight centuries could simply not come to influence, immediately and directly, the direction which Western Europe, and in time North America, would take in the subsequent centuries. Yet, the Arab and Islamic achievements were admittedly important. However, (i) those achievements were essentially confined to translations of Greek classical works, and as such were not necessarily original in and of themselves, (ii) they functioned primarily as a transmission belt of works originating elsewhere and passed on to others and, consequently, (iii) the Arab-Islamic impact on the overall picture of the rise of the West is secondary, if not negligible.

Against this background, the experience and discourse about the particular traits of Western identity have led it often to regard itself as the sole legitimate locus and promoter of ethical norms. The resulting narrative is concerned with the West's historical ability to situate itself at the heart of what is good and desirable for humanity, and to proceed to subjugate, force, rally, or merely convince others of the normalcy of that self-designed and self-serving reality, whereas such confiscation of universality rests, fundamentally, on a historical subterfuge as regards the roots of Western enlightenment.

Contesting the historical accuracy of this interpretative perspective, and examining primarily humanist and educational aspects, this essay argues that the Arab and Islamic civilization has made a direct, central and consequential contribution to the rise of the Western world. In contradistinction to the above narrative, which understates such a bestowal, it is argued that not only did the methods of thinking and learning developed in the Arab and Islamic world impact those conceived of and adopted later in the West, but that the very essence of contemporary questioning and critical thinking prevalent

in the West traces its ancestry to the Arab and Muslim culture and its supremacy over eight centuries, from the 700s to the 1500s. This oft-overlooked historical reality stands, it is put forward, in stark contrast to the recent dominant analyses negating such contribution or diminishing its importance. The chapter concludes that it is precisely on such unearthing of a common past that the future of mutually-respecting and constructively-engaging Western and Muslim worlds rests, and not on alleged civilizational clashes and war on terror hysteria.

The genesis of Western exceptionalism

The progression of ideas is at once an unswerving and a non-linear phenomenon with individuals building on and expanding earlier contributions. History thus moves forward through both repetition and accumulation, societies replaying age-old patterns and developing new ones. These two dimensions, which can be posited as axioms of knowledge production and action definition, stand at the heart of this discussion. They point to an ultimately singular process whereby the intellectual lineage of a given civilization, the Western one (one, too, invariably insisting on its universality), has been paradoxically pictured in most accounts as almost *sui generis* when it is the visible inheritor of a grand legacy.

   Beyond the conscious disappearance of the Arab-Islamic contribution to the writing of that episteme, the incomplete account of the emergence of the West is inextricably linked to political developments in Europe from the Middle Ages onwards. For all the intentionality of the oblivion towards the Arab-Islamic contribution – a phenomenon as widespread, lasting, and with mutually-reinforcing instances cannot be random – the fact of the matter is that this story has as much to do with the reinvention of the West as it does with the recasting of the Arab-Islamic world in a supporting role. Yet, it begs credulity that a Dark Ages Medieval Europe could rush into modernity solely on the strength of its own innovations without so much as incorporating the revolutionary transformations that were playing out around it and, indeed, in its very midst in Arab Andalusia and Muslim Sicily. As Prince Faysal Bin Hussayn Bin Ali Al-Hashemi is depicted as saying to T. E. Lawrence with respect to that historical asymmetry: 'But you know lieutenant, in the Arab city of Cordoba, there were two miles of public lighting in the street when London was a village.'[2]

   Hence, it is roughly with the reclaiming of Spain by Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon that came, in the post-1492 world, the

beginning of the writing of a new religious-political narrative about the historical anchoring of a self-produced Western cultural identity and its educational underpinnings harkening back overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, to the Greco-Roman period. The dual discourse of invisibilization and of demonization working in tandem appears early on with the *Crónica Sarracina* [Saracen Chronicle] of Pedro Del Corral, also known as *Crónica del Rey Don Rodrigo* [Chronicle of King Don Rodrigo], which is put forth as a historiographic work when, in fact, it partakes in a political discourse informed centrally by resentment towards the Muslim colonizer. As Patricia Grieve notes, the *Crónica* 'changed the way Spain viewed its national origins. ... In fifteenth-century histories and poetry written by the nobility and upwardly mobile, what we find especially is *the importance of identifying with those who resisted the Muslims*' (emphasis added).[3] It is hence a story of fall and redemption that sets the stage for the birth of a discourse of exceptionalism, which per force functions according to a mode of negation. In this sense, the fulfilment of the new-old Western project is associated with foundational myths of identity.

Indeed, the specificity of Western culture has seldom been the subject of in-depth inquiry. The West has devoted attention and resources to the study of other civilizations, but other cultures have rarely sought to examine what is inherently constitutive of Western identity. Southern intellectuals have documented Western domination of the world and its impact on their societies. Similarly, the mechanisms of colonialism and imperialism have been unpacked and their political and cultural logics revealed.[4] However, these approaches have been concerned with Western attitudes towards others, not necessarily with what was intrinsic to Western society.

In so doing, historians and social scientists from the South have been mostly reactive in their intellectual posture. Denouncements of Western policies – from historical colonial actions to neo-colonial adventures – have been the order of the day, rather than a clinical inspection of Western attributes. Whereas Western intellectuals have painstakingly assembled a body of knowledge about other civilizations, approaching these cultures with dispositions ranging from contempt to infatuation, the non-Western thinker has remained, for the most part, confined to a posture of protest, justification, or defence – unable or unwilling (or, indeed, blind to such a possibility) to match the West's ambition to map the world, and beam back a dispassionate, nuanced, and scientific statement on Western ethos.

By declaring a coincidence between the desired state of modernity, which other cultures seek to achieve, and the West's stance and corpus,

it is implied that the others have to graduate to that position; doing so, as it were, essentially by emulating 'the free world'. From civilizing mission to humanitarian intervention, by way of the 'white man's burden', the provincializing of the West's ideas was always associated with a deep-rooted self-perception of exceptionalism and, therefore, claimed concomitant rights and responsibilities. The Western argument proceeds thus: the universal norm of modernity has been attained by the West, which, after the Renaissance, completed its intellectual migration to that stage, and other cultures have merely to emulate the West to achieve what is presented as universal modernity. Such political expansion has succeeded to the point that its investigation (let alone its questioning) by non-Westerners has always been confined mostly to a victimhood perspective. Consequently, the West's success in universalizing its specific history rests in its ability – from one global political order to another (colonialism, neo-colonialism, the Cold War, the post-Cold War era, the post-9/11 period) – to maintain this supremacy, ever mutating as long as it can remain the central locus of the modernity's origin. Consequently, even when highly effective, intellectual resistance was just that. Beyond stigmatization, no equivalent examination of the Western metropolis was, for a long time, conceivable.

In the post-September 11, 2001 world, the late Edward Said argued that 'more than ever before, it is true to say that the new generation of humanist scholars is more attuned than any before it to the non-European, genderized, decolonized, and de-centered energies and currents of our time.'[5] To be certain, we have, in recent years, witnessed works unpacking the historical implications of Western self-perceptions.[6] Still, the perception of supremacy remains dominant both in the North and the South. As Richard Rorty notes, 'for most white people, until very recently, most Black people did not so count'.[7] Indeed, Francis Fukuyama wrote in a seminal piece in 1989 that 'for our purposes, it matters very little what strange thoughts occur to people in Albania or Burkina Faso'.[8] For most leading Western thinkers, an alternative paternity of modernity – which can be associated with a strong past, as in the case of Islam – is not really conceivable. Forcing or convincing the other to adhere to the existing status quo is a condition that is always at the ready.

In the final analysis, the infinite ability to state that values designed in the West (must) apply internationally, because they are allegedly global, assumes that a reverse, reciprocal process, whereby values originating elsewhere – significant beliefs and norms, not cosmetic incorporations of, say, particular traits of some cultures that can be reconciled with the

basic Western curriculum – are adopted in the West, is inconceivable. This contradiction is at the heart of the existing equation between the West and the rest. More importantly, it is the result of a conscious set of historical actions that have cast aside an intellectual debt towards the Arab and Islamic world. As the Moroccan philosopher Mohammed Abed Al-Jabri remarks, 'the Orientalist reading…merely seeks to understand how much Arabs have "understood" the cultural legacy of their predecessors'. Such a process of alienation negates the historical weight of Arab thought itself.[9]

History is assuredly written by the victors and, as such, it can be stubborn. 'The scientific study of other cultures is almost exclusively a Western phenomenon, and in its origin was obviously connected with the search for new and better ways, or at least for validation of the hope that our own culture really is the better way, a validation for which there is no felt need in other cultures,'[10] erroneously argues Allan Bloom, for intellectual curiosity about others is precisely where what we can term the Arab 'Naissance' began. In that respect, we must explicitly come to terms with the fact that the West does not solely originate in eighteenth century Germany or sixteenth century French or Italian humanism (*mos gallicus* and *mos italicus*). To the extent that historiography is a process concerned with the changing ways of viewing the past and its relationship to the present,[11] unearthing the proper sequence of that past could help enable a sober contemporary civilizational balance. Let us examine it.

Arab-Islamic cultural 'naissance'

Higher learning is deeply rooted in the history and societies of the Arab Middle East.[12] The Arab-Islamic contribution has, indeed, taken the form of the preservation of ancient works, but it has also generated new contributions which were wholly original. As Philip Hitti reminds us:

> [A]fter the establishment of Baghdad as the seat of the Caliphate, the Arab-speaking peoples were in possession of the major works of Aristotle, the leading Neo-Platonic commentaries, the mathematical and astronomical compositions of Euclid and Ptolemy and the medical writings of Galen and Paul of Aegina. These translations into Arabic, transmuted in no small degree by the Arab mind during the course of several centuries, were transmitted together with many new contributions to Latin Europe mainly through Moslem Spain and Norman Sicily and crusading Syria. They laid the basis of that

canon of knowledge which lay at the bottom of the modern European renaissance.... In their Latin translations, the...works of the Arab authors were used in such early universities as Naples, Bologna, and Paris.[13]

The missing link in relation to the Arab-Islamic contribution is specifically here concerned with a whole period that is skipped in the contemporary study of humanism in the Western canon. Working backwards, such study usually depicts a modern period founded during the Renaissance, whose power and originality are stressed almost as if it emerged *ex nihilo* and then, much earlier, from Greco-Roman literature. The intervening centuries, and in particular the medieval period of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are almost always just not studied, much less presented as key to the (re)configuration of the *Re*naissance.

A missing module, which we can term the Andalus Enlightenment, predated the Classical Renaissance of Europe. Yet, if erudition became respected in those ages of an early modern world, the struggle against feudalism, gnosticism and fatalism began immediately with the emergence of the Islamic Empire in the seventh century. 'Creatively assimilated',[14] the Greek works were translated during the Abbasid period under Al-Ma'mun, the seventh Abbasid caliph (813–33), founder of *Beit al Hikma* or the house of wisdom, where texts were compiled and thoroughly studied in an organized, specialized and permanent setting. The bulk of translations was carried out in Baghdad and the *Banu al Munajjim* (eminent intellectual figures of ninth century Baghdad) played a key role with lead translators such as Hunayn Ibn Ishaq (known in Latin as Joannitius), Thabit Ibn Qurra, Qusta Ibn Uqa, and Hubaysh. Muslims also worked alongside Christians such as Yuhanna Ibn Bukhtishu and translations were submitted to corrections and revisions. The translators aimed hence at a correct (*sahih*) text, but with an equal emphasis on intelligibility (*fasaha*) and eloquence (*balagha*). As Roger Arnaldez notes: 'The culture that was born at this period in the Muslim world was not solely about the books. It did not confine itself to a pale imitation of Antiquity. It drew inspiration from original research and realized a genuine progress for civilization and the history of humanity.'[15]

Al Mam'un also called to his court the Persian mathematician, Mohammad Ibn Musa Al-Khawarizmi who devised the first articulated theory of algebra, *Al Maqala fi Hisab al Jabr wa al Muqabala*, subsequently translated into Latin in the twelfth century under the title *Liber Algebrae et Almucabola*. Others produced their works within their professional activity. As in the case of Abu Bakr Mohammad Ibn Zakariya Al-Razi

who authored a major medical reference guide, *Al Hawi* (also referred to as *Al Jami*), which became *Liber Continens* in 1279 and was widely available throughout Europe. Examples abound of such a process in the fields of astronomy, linguistics, theology and logic. Similarly, the Caliph Al-Mu'tadid provided shelter to several scientists in his palace. Thus, such institutionalization of the production of knowledge went beyond the immediate dimensions of translation and dissemination. Consequently, a sense of respect for tradition (*al turath)*, not merely a sense of the past, but of a spiritual heritage as a whole, which also allows for forward projection, combined with a practice of codification that took place immediately after the early Muslim conquests. Known as *'asr al tadwin* ('the era of codification'), and enacted throughout the eight century, this period saw Muslim scholars organize the body of knowledge produced at the time of the Prophet to introduce a pre-Cartesian three-tiered dialectical reasoning built around *al bayan* ('the statement or indication'), *al 'irfan* ('the understanding or illumination' and *al burhan* ('the demonstration or validation'). In so doing, the Muslims introduced a cognitive structure and an ontological process whose systematic and replicable nature was a departure from earlier discursive thinking whose epistemological nature was much less pronounced.

Such reasoning was endowed with persistence as it was displayed and nurtured in *madariss* (schools), where students undergoing apprenticeship would be encouraged to engage in *tafsir* ('exegesis'), *fiqh* ('jurisprudence') and, indeed, *ikhtilaf* ('divergence'). The creative process during that phase of world history was, therefore, not merely one of renewal or regeneration, but of actual innovation. The value of dialectic (*jadal*) and logical reasoning advanced in large part thanks to the work of Abu Hamid Mohammad Al-Ghazali. Author of some 457 titles, Al-Ghazali produced critical inquiries into Greek philosophy (in particular Plato and Aristotle), as well as Arab philosophy (in particular Ibn Sina or Avicenne and Al-Farabi), the most famous of which were *Maqasid Al Falasifa* [The Objectives of Philosophers] and *Tahafut Al Falasifa* [The Incoherence of Philosophers]. Similarly, Al-Ghazali's work strongly emphasized the importance of the principles of education. He argued that schools – and teachers, whose centrality he highlighted – played a fundamental role in 'filling up' the pupils with knowledge about their social environment as well as about their selves. He was amongst the first to introduce the experience of education as a 'total' experience drawing attention to both the acquisition (concepts, methods, categories, and aims) and practical (plenitude and fulfillment) use of knowledge.[16] As Philip Hitti notes, 'Al-Ghazali's influence … was effective and lasting. Through it,

theology became more rational, more relevant, and at the same time more spiritual. Jurisprudence became more sensitive to changing conditions, expanded beyond the narrow bounds of religion, and was lifted to a higher intellectual level.'[17]

The conspicuous role that Al-Ghazali played would be furthered by Ibn Hazm and Ibn Tumart, who would take critical thinking beyond Aristotle or Plato. Yet again we find that the contribution of these Muslim thinkers has been reduced to commentary, when it was constitutive of original thought. Thus, Ibn Hazm is usually known for *Tawq al Hamama* [The Ring of the Dove], an eloquent treatise on love, when he produced more in terms of legal studies and a system of thought characterized by the prevalence of three key concepts, namely the principles of discontinuity, contingency and analogy. For his part, Ibn Rushd introduced the distinction between philosophy and religion, planting the seed for the Enlightenment and the rebellion against the Church. Similarly, in opposing religious orthodoxies, Ibn Tumart stressed (and actively practiced) the importance of judgement and the legitimacy of questioning established order. Overall, the contribution concerned the bridging of known and unknown variables, and how to systematize their interrelationships within an increasingly organized and structured scholarly environment.

What was particularly novel was the process of turning reflections into axioms to be used (or questioned) systematically. The endeavour was aimed at individual enlightenment, and was an invitation to exercise personal judgement in the face of received information. Ibn Rushd devoted a section of his law treatise to this very aspect, *Bidayat al Mujtahid wa Nihayat al Muqtasid* ('The beginning of the one concerned with interpretation and the end of the one concerned with the received information'). The second significant humanist innovation concerned the relationship between science and thought. The world was no longer merely observed (as in the Hellenic tradition, albeit insightfully), but questioned in relation to an independent tool, namely the mind, which is itself now the subject of systematic rules. For instance, a fellow colleague of Ibn Rushd – both students of Abu Bakr Mohammad Ibn Abdelmalik Ibn Tufayl – Abu Ishaq Al-Batruji, precedes Galileo Galilei and Nicolaus Copernicus in working towards a symbiotic relationship between science and reasoning.

The scholasticism that was being born was also characterized by its emancipation from both religion and politics. Part of the initial focus on older hard sciences (mathematics, astrology and logic) was to avoid politicization of knowledge. Yet, their insights were often meant as a

commentary on current affairs, much like Voltaire's later. This was the case, for instance, with Ibn Tufayl's 1170s allegorical novel *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* [Alive, Son of Awakening], which was translated into Latin as *Vivens Filius Vigilantis*. Ibn Tufayl, known for his keen insights on his contemporaries, introduced Ibn Sina to the Almohad caliph Abu Ya'qub Yusuf in Andalusia, thus making an important connection that allowed Ibn Sina to benefit from the Caliph's patronage.

The historical importance of such critical consciousness and its centrality in relation to the subsequent rise of Western reason and enlightenment cannot be overestimated. What is more, the emerging humanism features dynamic fertile (*ikhtilaf*) debates between, for instance, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd and Al-Ghazali. In that respect, in a famous reply to Al-Ghazali's *Tahafut al Falasifa* [The Incoherence of Philosophers], Ibn Rushd published *Tahafut al Tahafut* [The Incoherence of The Incoherence]. Omnipresent culture, as a way of life, is something that was eminently characteristic of the Arab-Islamic world during this period. Much later, for instance, Raymond Williams, in his study of the transformation of British society in the period 1780–1950, would discuss at length how the Western mutation of 'civilization' and 'the general progress of society' took place in the context of democratization and industrialization without necessarily seeing how such diffusion of 'culture' had been imported during the previous centuries as a powerful matrix for aesthetics, which had similarly transformed the Arab and Islamic world. Indeed, the novelists whose works Williams examines – Edmund Burke, Charles Dickens, D. H. Lawrence and T. S. Eliot – had all been influenced by William Shakespeare's works, where the structure of such Arab-influenced omnipresent concern with culture was eminently visible.[18]

In that respect, the Italian humanists of the sixteenth century had developed a multidisciplinary and comprehensive *studia humanitatis* (poetry, ethics, history, language and politics), which in many ways was precisely the perpetuation of the tradition previously developed in the Arab and Islamic world as *adab* (a *sui generis* terms approximated by civilization, customs or manners). For example, Al-Ghazali's *Ihiya Ulum al Din* [Revival of the Religious Sciences] preceded the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, and his *Al Munqidh min al Dalal* [Deliverer from Error] St. Augustine's *Confessions*, as did Abdallah Ibn Al-Qutayba's *Kitab al Adab* [Book of Customs]. Yet, whereas the Muslim humanists had generally been independent thinkers opposed to religious thinkers and the dogma of their time, the Italian and French humanists were often men of the Church or under its patronage and tutelage.[19] Thomas Aquinas,

in particular, had been influenced by Muslim authors while a student at the University of Naples, where the Norman King Frederick II sought and translated Arabic works into Latin. Aquinas studied Al-Ghazali in depth, from whom he borrowed the notion of 'perfect knowledge' (his 'grace') to be found in contemplation as did Blaise Pascal with the concept of 'bliss' in his *Les Pensées* (1669). Christian beatification came, as it were, from Islam. At the other end of this spectrum, Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi influenced the seven heavens notion of Dante Alighieri in his *Divina Commedia*. In addition to Dante's own quoting of Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd (magnanimous, he places them in Limbo instead of Inferno), Miguel Asin Palacios convincingly demonstrated how the *Divine Comedy* had substantially borrowed from Ibn 'Arabi.[20] As Rachida El Diwani remarks: 'Muslim philosophy influenced Western thought in several ways. It mainly initiated in the West the humanistic move-ment and helped the Western scholastics in harmonizing philosophy with faith. Muslims gave a humanist bent to the Western mind. They revealed to the West that outside the prevailing Catholic church it was not all darkness and barbarism but immense wealth of knowledge.... By harmonizing faith with reason, Muslim thinkers made possible for themselves and for Europe an unhampered development.'[21]

Yet again – although it had been uncontested contemporaneously, 'the Francs learned early on what Islam was and to admit in the Muslims a people more civilized than themselves'[22] – the influence of the Oriental was both ignored and transformed into a negative picture as the Latin humanists claimed to be in pursuit of 'the sources' (*ad fontes*), namely Classical Greek works. As Nabil Matar remarks on this issue: 'In their discourse about Muslims, Britons produced a represen-tation that did not belong to the actual encounter with the Muslims. Rather, it was a representation of a representation.'[23] Initially, however, there is a perceptible ambivalence as competition, fear, admiration and hostility are alternately present in relation to Muslims at the time of an Elizabethan England engaged in substantial commerce and diplomacy with North Africa and the larger Muslim world (the Barbary Company was established by Queen Elisabeth I in 1585 to engage in exclusive trade with the Kingdom of Morocco). As José Pimienta-Bey aptly notes: 'Western scholarship has characteristically dragged its feet on the issue of the historical significance of the Moor.... The Moor's largely obscure fate, however, is not due to his insignificance in the history and development of Western civilization, but, rather, to the judgment passed upon him out of jealousy at his great influence. The religious and ethnic/racial prejudices of several European historians seem to

have prevented most contemporary histories from presenting a more thorough and balanced view of the Moor and Islam, especially as they relate to Christian Europe.'[24]

Humanism has also developed in the West on the heels of great poetry. Here too, we note in this founding Arab period a strong influence that was subsequently forgotten and which had primarily taken the form of the definition of the then predominant mode of poetry, chivalry. Poetry flourished notably in the Abbasid Empire from the mid-eighth to the thirteenth century. As Wacyf Boutros-Ghali sums it up: 'There was in the twelfth century between the Orient and the West an exchange of ideas and of sentiments: the West provided the shield and the organization which sustained the noble traditions of the Arabs; the Orient gave in exchange a refined civilization and his loving understanding of the virtue that enriched the make-up of European chivalry.'[25] Most paradoxically, Arab poetry contributed to forming the moral ideals of French knights who would engage in crusading. 'Those who have studied the history of the Crusades do not have to be taught that in these struggles, the virtues of civilization: magnanimity, tolerance, genuine chivalry and loving culture were all on the side of the Saracens.'[26] As Gustave Le Bon aptly remarks, this was also the basis of the gender respect that came later on in the West, but which was prevalent in Arab and Islamic circles early on: 'It is to Arabs that the inhabitants of Europe borrowed the rules of chivalry and the gallant respect of women that such laws imposed. It was not then Christianity, as is generally believed, but indeed Islam that gave woman her standing.'[27]

All in all, the scholastic method introduced by the Muslims aimed at a synthetic form of knowledge within a culture of tolerance, of valuing compelling expression, of sophisticated chivalrous poetry and, indeed, intellectual competition. To wit, the approach was that the search for the truth puts the thinker or debater in a position where he has even to find arguments for his opponent; a form of argument which would become *disputatio* in the Latin tradition. Above and beyond this particular disposition that looked upon knowledge as a core component of social affairs, the Arab-Islamic world developed, as noted, a tradition of centres for scholarship which were the direct ancestors of Western universities. The *madariss* ('schools') furthered this conception of higher learning by introducing standards (gradual specialization), structure (different programs) and academic freedom (protection of the sanctity of debate). In time, the prevalence of higher learning came to be illustrated throughout the Arab and Islamic world from

Al Qarawiyin in Fes, Morocco founded in 859, the world's oldest academic degree-awarding university, to Al Azhar in Cairo established in 970, the world's second oldest degree-granting university. Other organized centres of learning with regular curricula, specialized faculties and organized libraries spread throughout the Arab world, notably in Baghdad (Iraq), Damascus (Syria), Mecca (Arabia), Kairouan (Tunisia) and Chinguetti (Mauritania).

The modern nature of Arab and Islamic humanism and the modernizing bent of its emphasis on education is best illustrated by the work of Abdulrahman Mohammad Ibn Khaldun. With his 1377 *Muqaddima* [Introduction] and his 1375 *Kitab al Ibar* [Book of Advice], Ibn Khaldun puts forth both a comparative universal history of the world and a policy analysis of historical development. In tackling the universal mechanics of civilization (*umran*), notably in relation to economic growth, social mobility, political competition, dynastic evolution and generational transformation, Ibn Khaldun came to represent a new, unprecedented form of independent critical and comparative historiography, which established him as the founder of modern sociology. In addition to sociology, Ibn Khaldun's work was particularly important for humanism and education as regards its focus on the role of the state and specifically the correlation between statehood and historical significance. As Aziz Al-Azmeh notes: 'The object of the prolegomenon [*The Muqaddima*] is eminently historical, in that it corresponds to, and consciously takes as its model, the conception which historical writing in Arab-Islamic culture has of the object of historical study, a conception that, immanently, devolves upon the category of the historically significant unit: the state. It is the state in its historiographic physiognomy that is carried over from this field and elaborated in the *Muqaddima*'.[28] Indeed, Ibn Khaldun presents a problematization of history beyond narrative and his introduction of the concept of *asabiya* ('kinship' or *esprit de corps*) would influence lastingly sociopolitical analysis, incorporated as early as Niccolò Machiavelli's use of the notion in his *virtù*, setting the stage for Classical Republicanism and, later, Hans Baron's civic humanism.

In ushering an age of thorough reflection about the world around them opposed to superstition, fanaticism, fatalism and irrationality – at a time when these were dominant in Medieval Europe – the Arab and Muslim thinkers of that period enacted a widening progression from hearsay (*sama'a*) to reading (*qara'a*) to belonging to a school of thought (*qaraa 'alaa*), which built the foundations of higher learning leading to our modern *cursus studiorum* and core curriculum.

A proximate and lasting bequest

As early as the 680s, the Umayyad, notably Khalid Ibn Yazid Ibn Muawiya, commissioned translations of Greek works and grammarians, from such as Abi Ishaq Al-Hadrami, which appeared less than a century after the Quran was fully revealed. As noted, the movement gathered momentum with Al-Ma'mun who dispatched envoys to the Emperor of Byzantium requesting philosophy books. With the advance of Muslims in Europe and the simultaneous internal expansion of the breadth of those cultural works, the direct points of transmission to Europe were southern Italy and southern Spain. If the excellence of the work is perceived as vestigial today, it bears reminding that the Arab-Islamic Empire was culturally rich, precisely because it was open and welcomed innovation. For all the indelible imagery of the savage 'Sarasin', holy book and sword in hand forcing 'infidels' to convert (regardless of the Quran's explicit command 'Let there be no compulsion in religion (10:99)'), the imperial Muslim was a man (and a woman[29]), whose initial and general disposition was above all else tolerant and, more often than not, translated into a *zeitgeist* of exchange.

The transmission of this disposition to the West takes place from post-Late Antique Italy to the fifteenth century. The leading figures of Western thought in the period preceding the Renaissance, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon and Adelard of Bath (who journeyed to Sicily and spent several years in the Arab East in the 1110s studying what he termed 'the wisdom of the Arabs' and translating many of their works), had all been exposed to Arab-Islamic works and methods, which they adopted and, in turn, transmitted to the Western canon. Whether it is the work of Abu Yusuf Yaqub Ibn Ishaq Al-Kindi (known as the father of Arab philosophy, whose many works, insisting on the rules of reasoning, were translated into Latin and circulated in Medieval Europe generating positivist thinking), or Al-Farabi (working on the harmony of agents, his *Ara Ahl al Madina al Fadila* [Book of Opinions of the People of the Ideal City] stands as a precursor to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract),* they pervaded the coming of age of a Western cosmology directly indebted to these revolutionary ideas of the organized relationship between man, humanism, education and society.

By and large, we witness a reaction against irrationality looked upon as the mainstay of ignorance. Ibn Sina's greatest work, *Kitab Al Shifa* [The Book of Healing], for all its universalist appeal, nonetheless makes specific reference to another work in which he discusses the Oriental philosophy or wisdom characterized by, as he notes, 'exhaustive research

and extended reflection'.[30] The rejection of obscurantist thinking that is being produced is, therefore, fully conscious of its own Arab and Islamic identity, in particular that which it is rejecting (*al jahiliya*[31]), and what it may be transmitting.

The conveyance to the West ultimately produces, firstly, a methodical approach and exegesis that go beyond the apparent meaning (*al dhahir*), in order to unearth the meaning of a text or contribution and the meaning attributed to it by the author. Secondly, it establishes the imperative link between the veracity of facts (*al waqi'*) and their objective conformity to the world to produce science. Within a dynamic context of reinvention, re-examination and production of new canons and methods – and indeed, the devising of overarching laws for history, for example, Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* – what emerges is a mindset treasuring competence (*kifaya*) and thoroughness.

In the tenth century, an Ismaili group in Iraq known as Ikhwan al Safa (the Brethren of Purity) produced the world's first encyclopedia with educational and training purposes. Titled *Rasail Ikhwan al Safa wa Khulan al Wafa* [Epistles of the Brethren of Purity and the Sincere Friends] and deepening the work of Plato and Pythagoras, the work was a multidisciplinary collection of articles on mathematics, physics, psychology and law. All the encyclopedias produced in Europe in the thirteenth century and later would find direct inspiration from it through a translation into Spanish that was prepared in Al-Andalus by Maslama Al-Majriti. This was the case for Alexander Neckham's *Speculum Speculationum* (1215), Bartholomeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (1240), Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum Maius* (1264), and in time Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond D'Alembert's *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751–72).

Such initiatives were forerunners of any in the West, since they did not limit themselves to (an already laudable work of) translations in the context of religion,[32] and because of the officially sanctioned nature of intellectual activity. As noted, the Umayyad and the Abbasid urged their courts 'to seek knowledge' ('until China' the Prophet Mohammad is reported to have advised). If, arguably, we can trace such characteristic eloquence to an Arabia that predated Islam – the most complex and rich poems are the seven *Mua'laqaat* [The Suspended Odes], which were composed during the *jahiliya* – it is fundamentally the post-Islam period that is revolutionary in its positive embrace of the value of knowledge (*'ilm*), the importance of education (*adab*), the social and political empowerment of savants (*'alem*) and the resulting openness to the world. For example, the Abbasids were contemporaneously surrounded

by different traditions (Persians and Byzantine) and were themselves the result of expansion, following the Umayyads, as they would have a foot in Baghdad and one in Spain. Such globalization of its day functioned according to a mode of furthering of physical centres of learning.

The implications of this legacy were profound, notably due to the concomitance of (i) the intellectually 'empty' nature of Europe during that period and (ii) the acceleration of quality production in an Andalusia where thinkers, benefiting from the solidity of higher learning structures devised earlier in Baghdad and elsewhere in the East, were engaged in a sophisticated contest of scholarly one-upmanship. Going beyond the immediacy of discourse (*Al Kalaam*) and Greek sophism, they subjected language itself to rigorous practice, subjugating the previously dominant custom of imposing discursive tendencies to a requirement to articulate a construct guided first and foremost by objective rules. Hence, Ahmad Bin Abdulrahman Ibn Mohammad Ibn Mada authored a *Kitab Al Rad 'ala Al Nuhat* [Book of Response to the Grammarians] in which he, among others, attempted to systematize the respect of grammatical rules refuting the *ta'lil* ('motivation') through which nouns and verbs were excessively adapted to specific context; hence leading to a multiplication of special cases and undisciplined improvisation. Indeed, the dominant themes of the day were *ijtihad* ('interpretation'), *ijma'* ('consensus'), *ilham* ('inspiration'), *dalil* ('proof'), *istiqra'* ('examination'), *sabab* ('cause') and *qiyas* ('reasoning'), allowing for a qualitative progression from indication or statement to the inevitable demonstration.

In spite of the linearity of this bequest, as the Arab world lost ground in the fifteenth century, first to the *Reconquista* and then to the Ottomans, a twofold mutually-reinforcing phenomenon of reappropriation of the Muslim contribution and the rendering invisible of this tradition materialized. In time, and before the German Orientalist T. J. De Boer and his *Geschichte der Philosophie im Islam* (1901), Ernest Renan – famously of the view that 'the conquest of a country of inferior race by a superior race is nothing shocking'[33] – could argue in a racialized study of Ibn Rushd, *Averroes et l'Averroïsme* (1823), that philosophical thinking amongst the Arabs could only be an imitation of the Greeks. Later, Carra de Vaux is equally explicit in perpetuating the new myth: 'We must not expect to find among the Arabs the same powerful genius, the same gift of scientific imagination, the same "enthusiasm", the same originality of thought that we have among the Greeks. The Arabs are before all else the pupils of the Greeks; their science is a continuation of Greek science which it preserves.'[34]

The new narrative that emerges after the Renaissance and throughout the imperial age of the nineteenth century is the one that would remain the canon of contemporary 'admitted truth' on this issue.[35] With new focal points and establishing a revisionist historical symmetry between The Antiquity and The Renaissance, it would proceed to surgically remove all Arab and Islamic contributions from the educational and humanist march of the world. This endeavour was essentially facilitated by the fact that it took place in the context of the colonial expansion of the West. For how could the now-rendered-in-terms-of-savagery Muslim be an inspiration for the Enlightenment? How could his defeated religion be a basis for a victorious Church and a nascent imperial republic? As Sigmund Freud famously demonstrated, 'It is always possible to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are other people left over to receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness.'[36]

Initially, Christianity is positioned as the preliminary to republicanism and the religious legacy to be shed is paradoxically the very religion that will become anathema to the West. In other words, the tenets of the Muslim faith helped build Western secularism.

> Christendom (*Christianitas*) was the form of Western unity that emerged in the High Middle Ages. Medieval writers spoke of Christendom when they talked about themselves and their civilization, investing the idea of Christendom with their hopes for temporal as well as spiritual unity in this world.… One finds the full articulation of the notion of *Christianitas* in crusading chronicles.… The launching of the Crusade can be seen as marking the symbolic point when Christendom became a 'living reality', when it was transformed into what could be called a society.… An essential moment in the articulation of the self-awareness of the Christian commonwealth was the construction of the Muslim enemy. The antagonistic difference between themselves and the Muslims was a constitutive element of the Latin Christians' collective identity … [The Muslims] were regarded as precisely the fundamental enemy of Christendom.… The Muslim world became no less than 'the antithetical system'.… This determined the nature of Christian war against the Muslims, which was harsher and more ferocious than wars against any other adversary.[37]

The amnesia therefore has political underpinnings. Ironically, as the West increasingly associated itself with science and rationality in its practice and discourse – 'Everyone here is fully convinced that this is

the most just war, because it is against barbarians; who would believe in this age such atrocities could be committed in a Christian civilized country'[38] – the facts on the ground were evidence of a rewriting of history primarily by means of violence. Sven Lindqvist captures the subterfuge:

> When Europeans went east as Crusaders in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they came across people who were superior to them in culture, diplomatic cunning, technical knowledge, and not least in experience of epidemics. Thousands of crusaders died because of their inferior resistance to bacteria. When Europeans went west in the fifteenth century, they themselves were the bearers of those superior bacteria. People died everywhere the Europeans went.… Preindustrial Europe had little that was in demand in the rest of the world. [Its] most important export was force.… Thus the backward and poorly resourced Europe of the sixteenth century acquired a monopoly on ocean-going ships with guns capable of spreading death and destruction across huge distances.[39]

Regardless, the colonial movement is schizophrenic as it cannot fully erase the influence of the world that it is subjugating. So, from the end of the eighteenth century onwards, Western artists travelled throughout the Islamic world and brought back powerful ideas and visuals. Once a source, and even as a target, the Orient became an inspiration further fuelling the Western cultural project and its accelerated rise in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The 'voyage to the Orient' becomes all the rage and many – François René de Chateaubriand in Palestine (1806), Eugène Delacroix in Morocco (1832), Alphonse de Lamartine in Syria (1833), Gérard De Nerval in Egypt (1843) and Guy de Maupassant in Algeria (1881) – succumbed to it. In 1856, Owen Jones published a *Grammar of Ornament* in London in which he organized Islamic designs as universal models. Simply put, modern creation was regenerated thanks to the earlier advances of Cordoba, Baghdad or Cairo.

During the early twentieth century, religious and biological[40] explanations were replaced by cultural ones and we witnessed the transformation of an adventure into an enterprise and then into an administration.[41] However, the amnesia remained throughout the twentieth century.[42] Therefore, if the West and Islam are often presented as antagonistic,[43] it is largely because of the impact of political discourse prevalent between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, which successfully sought to erase the historically consequential trace of Arab and Islamic influence

on the West. In recent decades, this storytelling has gained momentum. As Mahmood Mamdani writes: 'Islam and the Middle East have displaced Africa as the hard premodern core in a rapidly globalizing world.... Whereas Africa is seen as incapable of modernity, hard-core Islam is seen as not only incapable of but also resistant to modernity.'[44] Yet, the very notion (objectivity) that is being levelled as missing in the Muslim translations is the one absent in the case of the latter-day Western world. Citing Charles Malik, Nabih Amin Faris summarizes the issue of a necessary reciprocity, away from a relationship of domination: 'When will it become possible for a Muslim scholar to write a treatise on Christianity to which Christians could refer, for the next thousand years, as a standard and a reliable work on the subject?'[45]

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the progression of the West is historically indebted to the Arab and Islamic world, although this debt has been subject to amnesia, notably as regards humanism and education. The duty of recognition that is so reflexively expressed in relation to the Classical Greek and Roman periods is almost systematically denied to the Muslim golden age. Yet, the latter's is a central contribution to a Western story generated from and built upon knowledge produced over eight centuries in Baghdad, Cairo, Cordoba, Seville and elsewhere under the Islamic Empire. Much as it has been said to be 'pre-scientific',[46] the world before the Arab contribution was arguably pre-humanistic.

The Greeks influenced the Arabs who in turn influenced Westerners. No sleight of hand could erase that linearity. The notion of an intransigent and independent reason able to transcend and join rigorously two opposed viewpoints was actively articulated during the golden age of the Arab and Islamic Empire. Demonstrative methodology beyond inquisitive mind, and rigorous dialectic beyond discourse and sophistry were tangible contributions which the Muslims developed in higher learning centres for a lengthy period and over a vast stretch of territory. By the early Renaissance, the sum total of this knowledge had been known to the Italian and French, and later British and German, scholars. Three centuries later, it would have been re-appropriated and its lineage erased for political reasons.

Amnesia or theft of meta-historical units?[47] As academe is increasingly tackling the profoundly problematic nature of the Eurocentric or Occidentalist account of the genesis of the contemporary era, we must come to terms with the revisionist nature of the account of a 'backward

East' and an 'inventive West' as a normative referential. Stripped of all legendary accretions and the anaemic language of translated works, the enormous legacies remain of, among others, Al-Ghazali, Al-Shafi'i, Al-Kindi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, and Ibn Khaldun to whom the likes of Thomas Aquinas and those that followed are indebted as they invariably walked in their footsteps.

In the post-September 11 world, it is even more necessary than ever to re-establish the facts in this sequence, with a view to re-founding a new, more positive relationship between the Orient and the Occident and unearthing their shared history. Above and beyond that relationship, ultimately humanism and education cannot be reduced to a history of subjective representation. Their very appeal requires the nurturing of the sanctity of their universality and never-ending expansion from one culture to the other.

Notes

1. Before Edgar Allan Poe revised the poem in 1845, the original lines composed in 1831 had been: 'the beauty of fair Greece and the grandeur of old Rome'.
2. Dramatized dialogue in the screenplay by Robert Bolt from the 1962 motion picture *Lawrence of Arabia* directed by David Lean. Also see T. E. Lawrence's own major work *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, published in different versions since 1922.
3. P. E. Grieve (2009), *The Eve of Spain – Myths of Origins in the History of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Conflict* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press), p. 69. The, at times, schizophrenic disposition of actively repressing and passively appropriating Muslim achievements is tackled, in the case of Spain, by Barbara Fuchs (2008) in *Exotic Nation – Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press).
4. Notably by Edward Said (1978), *Orientalism – Western Conceptions and the Orient* (New York: Routledge); and (1994) *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books). See, also, U. Singh Mehta (1999) *Liberalism and Empire – A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
5. E. W. Said (2004), *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press), p. 47.
6. See, in particular, S. Bessis (2002), *Western Supremacy: The Triumph of an Idea* (London: Zed Books); C. Hall (2002), *Civilizing Subjects – Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830–1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press); and V. Forrester (2004), *Le Crime Occidental* (Paris: Fayard).
7. R. Rorty (1997), 'Human Rights, Rationality, and Sentimentality', reprinted in M. R. Ishay (ed.) *The Human Rights Reader* (New York: Routledge), p. 263.
8. F. Fukuyama (1989), 'The End of History?' *The National Interest* 16, p. 9. The sentence was excised from the book of the same title published in 1992 by the Free Press.

 9. Mohammed Abed Al-Jabri (1995), *Introduction à la critique de la raison Arabe* (Paris: La Découverte), p. 37; translated compilation of Al-Jabri's two major works: *Nahnu wal Turath: Qiraat Mu'asira fi Turathina Al Falsafi* [Tradition and Us: Contemporary Readings in Our Philosophical Heritage] (Casablanca: Dar Al Nashr Al Maghribiya, 1980) and *Al Turath wal Hadatha* [Tradition and Modernity] (Beirut: Al Markaz Al Thaqafi, 1991).

10. A. Bloom (1987), *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon & Schuster), p. 36.

11. Z. Sayre Schiffman (1985), 'Renaissance Historicism Reconsidered', *History and Theory*, Vol. 24, No. 2, p. 170.

12. V. Romani (2009), 'The Politics of Higher Education in the Middle East: Problems and Prospects', *Middle East Brief,* No. 36 (Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Waltham, Massachusetts), p. 2.

13. P. K. Hitti (1944), 'America and the Arab Heritage', in N. A. Faris (ed.) *The Arab Heritage* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 2–3.

14. To use George Makdisi's phrase. See his 1974 'The Scholastic Method in Education: An Inquiry into Its Origins in Law and Theology', *Speculum*, Vol. 49, No. 4, p. 661.

15. R. Arnaldez (1985), 'Les traductions du grec: naissance des sciences profanes et de la philosophie dans les pays musulmans', in *Les grands siècles de Bagdad*, Vol. I (Algiers: Entreprise Nationale du Livre), p. 257.

16. See N. Nofal (1993), 'Al-Ghazali', *Prospects* (UNESCO), Vol. 22, Nos 3–4, pp. 519–42.

17. P. K. Hitti (1968), *Makers of Arab History* (New York: St. Martin's Press), p. 160. Hitti also notes Al-Ghazali's influence on Jewish scholars. He writes: 'Less than a century after al Ghazali's death, a Jewish convert to Christianity in Toledo had his philosophical works translated into Latin. In the mid-thirteenth century, *Mizan al 'Amal* [The Balance of Deeds], a compendium of ethics, was done into Latin by a Jew in Barcelona. Maimonides of Cordova, the most celebrated Jewish philosopher of the Middle Ages, used his *Maqasid*. The compendium on mysticism, *Mishkat al Anwar* [The Niche of Lights], was translated and aroused much speculation among Jewish scholars' (p. 163).

18. Besides Othello and the Prince of Morocco, other Arab-Islamic figures, such as Caliban and Aaron, feature in Shakespeare's plays *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Tempest* and *Titus Andronicus*. For a critique of Shakespeare's Eurocentric perspective, see G. de Sousa (2002), *Shakespeare's Cross-Cultural Encounters* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan).

19. See F. D. Logan (2002), *A History of the Church in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge).

20. M. A. Palacios (1919), *La Escatologia Musulmana en la 'Divina Comedia'* (Madrid: Real Academia Española). Also see his 1931 *El Islam Cristianizado* (Madrid: Editorial Plutarco).

21. R. El Diwani (2005), 'Islamic Contributions to the West', paper presented at Lake Superior State University.

22. E. Lavisse and A. Rambaud (1894), *Histoire Générale du IVème Siècle à Nos Jours – Vol. II: L'Europe Féodale, Les Croisades (1095–1270)* (Paris: Armand Colin), p. 346.

23. N. Matar (1999), *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press), p. 15.

24. J. V. Pimienta-Bey (1992), 'Moorish Spain: Academic Source and Foundation for the Rise and Success of Western European Universities in the Middle Ages', in I. van Sertima (ed.) *The Golden Age of the Moor* (Rutgers: Transaction Publishers), p. 182.

25. W. Boutros-Ghali (1996), *La tradition chevalresque des Arabes* (Casablanca: Eddif), p. 33; originally published in Paris by Plon in 1919. The etymology of 'chivalry' is from the Arabic 'chelval' or 'cherval' used to mount a horse.

26. S. Lane Poole (1898), *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons), p. 306.

27. G. le Bon (1884), *La Civilisation des Arabes* (Paris: Firmin-Didot), p. 428. Barthelemy Saint-Hilaire writes similarly: 'To the commerce of Arabs and their imitation, the rough masters of our Middle Ages softened our boorish habits and the knights without losing their bravery came to know more delicate sentiments, more noble, and more humane. It is doubtful that only Christianity, however beneficent, would have inspired them thus.' See J. B. Saint-Hilaire (1865), *Mahomet et le Coran* (Paris: Didier et Cie), p. 223.

28. A. Al-Azmeh (1982), *Ibn Khaldun* (London: Routledge), p. 11.

29. See F. Mernissi (1997), *The Forgotten Queens of Islam* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

30. Cited in Al-Jabri, *Nahnu wal Turath*, chapter on 'Ibn Sina wa Falsafatuhu al Mashriqiya' ('Ibn Sina and His Oriental Philosophy').

31. On *Al Jahilia*, see D. O'Leary (1927), *Arabia before Muhammad* (London: K. Paul, Trench & Trubner).

32. On this issue, see L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson (1991), *Scribes and Scholars – A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

33. E. Renan (1871), *La réforme intellectuelle et morale de la France* (Paris: Hachette). Renan adds: 'One sees that in all things the Semitic race appears to us to be an incomplete race, by virtue of its simplicity ... [T]he Semitic nations ... have never been able to achieve true maturity.'

34. C. de Vaux (1931), 'Astronomy and Mathematics', in T. W. Arnold and A. Guillaume (eds) *Legacy of Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

35. See, for example, D. R. Kelley (1970), *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship – Language, Law, and History in the French Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press); or P. Burke (1970), *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (New York: St. Martin's Press).

36. S. Freud [1930] (1961), *Civilization and its Discontents*, translated and edited by J. Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton), p. 59.

37. T. Mastnak (2002), *Crusading Peace – Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order* (Berkeley: University of Los Angeles Press), pp. 91–2, 117.

38. C. Darwin (1839), *The Voyage of the Beagle* (London: Henry Colburn), ch. 5.

39. S. Lindqvist (1996), *Exterminate All the Brutes* (New York: The New Press), pp. 46–7; 111.

40. The State Institute for Racial Biology in Uppsala was still in existence in the 1950s.

41. S. Venayre (2002), *La gloire de l'aventure – genèse d'une mystique moderne, 1850–1940* (Paris: Aubier), p. 89.

42. In France, for example, those features were shared by radically different regimes before and during World War II. See P. Ory (1994), *La Belle Illusion – Culture et Politique Sous le Signe du Front Populaire, 1935–1938* (Paris: Plon); and C. Faure (1989), *Le Projet Culturel de Vichy* (Lyon: CNRS).

43. Among many such titles, see for instance A. Pagden (2008), *Worlds at War – The 2,500-Year Struggle Between East and West* (New York: Random House).

44. M. Mamdani (2004), *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim – America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Random House), p. 19.

45. N. A. Faris (1957), 'The Muslim Thinker and His Christian Relations', *The Muslim World*, Vol. 47, No. 1, p. 62.

46. Robert Briffault writes: 'The debt of our science to that of the Arabs does not consist in startling discoveries of revolutionary theories; science owes a great deal more to Arab culture, it owes its existence'. See R. Briffault (1928), *The Making of Humanity* (London: G. Allen and Unwin), pp. 200–1.

47. On this issue, see the work of Jack Goody, notably his 2006, *The Theft of History* (New York: Cambridge University Press); in particular chapter 2, 'The Invention of Antiquity', pp. 26–67 and chapter 9, 'The Appropriation of Values: Humanism, Democracy, and Individualism', pp. 240–66.