The Impact Of The Western Discourse Of Modernity On The Inspiration Of The Renaissance Project Among Arab Intellectuals (Mohammed Arkoun - Adonis) As A Model

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Abstract:

Due to the multiple justifications for the idea of cultural and social renaissance, Arab reformist thought has promoted bold discussions that delve into issues of thought, culture and religion. Within these discussions, there have been researches and studies with a philosophical bent that shed light on a problematic issue that has attracted the attention of scholars. These studies explore the general concepts of the meaning of renaissance, social progress, questions of renewal, effects and communication, in response to the criticisms raised by critics of "postmodern" philosophy regarding the term "Enlightenment" or "modernity discourse" in the West.

However, this intellectual and historical communication has created a crisis of textual interpretation for Arab thinkers on the question of Islamic heritage. Some see the project of renewal as undermining the relationship between the heritage of the past and the achievements of the present, following the internal structures upon which the foundations of modernity in Western discourse were formed.

Keywords: Enlightenment, heritage, modernity, West, Islam.

Introduction:

The topic of heritage has generated extensive discussion, particularly among postmodernist thinkers in the West. It is part of a series of questions and controversies about the true meaning of "Enlightenment" and "modernity" in 20th century literature and culture[1]. It also relates to the wider European cultural heritage, especially its intellectual aspects, in terms of the content of the philosophical discourse of the Enlightenment and its classical schools. It is also concerned with the authentic dimension of a set of concepts and ideas with a humanistic dimension, such

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[1]- Peter Brooker: Modernity and Postmodernity: Translation by Abdulwahab Aloub, Cultural Foundation Publications, Abu Dhabi, (1st edition), 1995, p. 3.

as rationality, freedom, ethics, identity, progress and others, which are currently being challenged by Arab intellectuals[1].

In this context, it is noteworthy that our research has been chosen within a specific geographical framework and conceptual scope due to the unity of Arab history and identity. The meanings of 'enlightenment' and 'modernity' for Arab intellectuals have been confined to a defined geographical space and have been seen as a purely European cultural specificity. In postmodernist critiques, the term "Enlightenment" has been associated and circulated with Western intellectual currents of the 20th century[2]. The Italian philosopher Gianni Vattimo, in his book "La Fin De La Modernité", argues that the philosophical characteristics of the Enlightenment cannot be reduced to the mere cultural criticism that permeated philosophy and cultures at the beginning of this century, unless they are linked to what all postmodernist thought clearly adopts as the new conditions of existence in the advanced industrial world[3].

These critical conditions involve gathering together the scattered elements of philosophy and integrating all scientific and practical knowledge gained through human experience.It also involves incorporating all the cultural endowments of peoples, despite the diversity of knowledge and mentalities. These efforts represent positive new endeavours by critics to reconstruct philosophical perspectives, rather than mere accusations of cultural decadence for everything considered old in culture[4].

Within the framework of the contemporary Arab renaissance project, in line with Western modernist thought and the inclination towards renewal, which adopts new approaches in intellectual and practical aspects (modernisme), it also touches upon artistic life, including poetry and literature[5]. "Arabic literature is truly taking on a new colour, and we take as our title nothing but renewal[6]. It expands the concept and spreads it within the cultural identities of the peoples. From the point of view of Arab modernists, this renewal can be described within the framework of general civilisational communication, and they perceive it as a comprehensive human given within the cultural pluralism, diversity and differences of other peoples[7].

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[1]- Mohammed Arkoon: Issues in the Critique of Religious Reason: How Do We Understand Islam Today? translated by Hisham Saleh, Dar Al-Taliaa Printing and Publishing, Beirut, (4th edition), 1998, p. 314.

[2]- Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno: The Dialectic of Enlightenment, translated by George Kattoura, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Jadeed, Tripoli, (1st edition), 2006, p. 18.

[3]- Gianni Vattimo: The End of Modernity: Nihilistic and Interpretive Philosophies in Postmodern Culture (1987), translated by Fatima Al-Jayoushi, Ministry of Culture, Damascus, (1st edition), 1998, p. 3.

[4]- Gianni Vattimo: The End of Modernity, Nihilistic and Interpretive Philosophies in Postmodern Culture, cited above, p. 3.

[5]- Ibrahim Madkur: The Philosophical Dictionary, Arabic Language Academy, Cairo, (3rd edition), 1983, p. 38.

[6]- Taha Hussein: Tradition and Renewal, Hindawi Foundation, UK, (4th edition), 2017, p. 86.

[7]- Mohammed Amara: The Battle of Terminologies between the West and Islam, Nahda Egypt for Printing and Publishing, Cairo, (3rd edition), 1997, p. 3.

One aspect of this is the project of expanding renewal in Arab and Islamic thought, where intellectuals seek to rebuild new knowledge values to play the role of vessels and tools across civilisations within a unified comprehensive model among peoples. One of the ways to improve and strengthen this communication is through the in-depth study and reading of contemporary European and American thought and literature[1].

Therefore, we ask the following question What is the intellectual and social role of concepts of modernity in interpreting and renewing heritage from the perspective of Arab Enlightenment intellectuals? And what criteria were used in the Renaissance project?

First axis: Conceptual framework of the study

1. Enlightenment in language:

a. Ibn Manzur states that "enlightenment" (al-tanwir) is used to refer to the time of dawn. It is said: "The dawn has enlightened, and enlightenment means illumination, the beginning of the morning. It is said: He prayed Fajr at the time of illumination"[2].

b. In Al-Waseet dictionary, "astanara" means to illuminate. It says: "The people were enlightened: they became conscious and educated. And God enlightened his heart: He guided him to truth and goodness. He was enlightened by it: he drew inspiration from it, and the dawn was enlightened: its light appeared"[3]. Thus we see that the various meanings derived from the root "nur" (light) contrast with darkness or obscurity.

2. Enlightenment as a concept:

a. In European thought, enlightenment means liberation from inherited doctrines accepted on the basis of authority. It also means a redesign of life based on rationality and the will to act through reason[4].

b. The Enlightenment is a European intellectual movement that recognised the true existence of human reason and sought to free civilisation from ecclesiastical authority, supernatural conflicts and superstition. It believed in human progress through scientific inquiry[5]. Therefore, the central idea can be summarised as follows: the concept of Enlightenment expresses a historical context that Europe went through after the Renaissance, where a new direction in prevailing thought emerged. This can be seen in the emergence of a revolutionary thought that opposed the theological heritage and the authority of the Church, and considered reason and

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[1]- Taha Hussein: Tradition and Renewal, cited above, p. 86.
[2]- Abdulaziz bin Othman al-Tweijri: The Concept of Enlightenment in Islamic Thought, Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Rabat, (2nd edition), 2015, p. 11.
[3]- Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Ahmed Al Ali: Modernity in the Arab World, A Critical Study, Imam Muhammad bin Saud University, (1st edition), Riyadh, 1994, vol. 1, p. 48.
[4]- Mahmoud Hamdi Zaqzuq: Religion, Philosophy and Enlightenment, Dar Al-Maaref, Cairo, (1st edition), 1976, p. 79.
[5]- Same reference, pp. 79, 80.

rationality as the true liberating and central axis of all human knowledge[1]. It also expresses the idea of progress, which aims to free humanity from fear and make it master of itself. Its programme seeks to remove magic from the world, to liberate from myths and to provide knowledge as a support[2] for the imagination. This is achieved by replacing supernatural and mythical theological thinking with nature and reason in interpreting the phenomena of the world and establishing its laws[3].

3. Modernity in language:

a. Al-Jurjani sees the meaning of modernity as derived from the term "al-ihdath", which means the creation of something unprecedented in time[4].

b. In language, "al-hadith" (modern) is the opposite of old and is synonymous with new[5].

4. Modernity as a concept:

a. The Austrian philosopher and critic Peter Brooker (1909-2005), in his book "Modernism/Postmodernism", sees the terms "modernity" and "postmodernity" as phenomena that distinguish Anglo-American and European culture in the 20th century. Although they are related to that culture in different ways, while the former tends towards decline and disappearance within the pillars of Western civilisation, the latter abandons what museums, art exhibitions and libraries have known and moves towards the richness of external cultural frameworks and fluctuating orientations[6]. This is what postmodern studies aim to do, to go beyond the conventional and fixed perception of traditional Western geography and to try to encompass the totality of human cultures, as well as to trace the dynamics of changing mentalities, ideas and knowledge among non-European and non-American peoples.

b. The British critic Raymond Williams (1921-1988), in his book "Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society," analyses that the term "modern" began in the late 16th century as a synonym for "now," indicating a state of change, perhaps for the better.In the 18th century, "to modernise" and "modernity" were used to mean improvement and progress.In the 19th century, the term began to take on a sense of what is desirable and progressive[7]. Since the term "modernity" is considered as an intellectual term that tends towards a specific doctrine, with its own rules and

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[1]- Mohammed Qutb: The Question of Enlightenment in the Islamic World, Dar Al-Shorouk, Cairo, (2nd edition), 2002, p. 54.

[2]- Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno: The Dialectic of Enlightenment, cited above, p. 23.

[3]- Abdulaziz bin Othman al-Tweijri: The Concept of Enlightenment in Islamic Thought, previous reference, p. 14.

[4]- Al-Jurjani: The Dictionary of Definitions, edited by Mohammed Sadiq Al Manshawi, Dar Al-Fadila, Cairo, (1st edition), 2004, p. 13.

[5]- Jamal Saliba: The Philosophical Dictionary, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Lubnani, Lebanon, (1st edition), 1982, vol. 1, p. 454.

[6]- Peter Brooker: Modernity and Postmodernity, previous reference, p. 5.

[7]- Raymond Williams: Modernism and its Opponents, translated by Farouk Abdul Qadir, Alam Al-Maarefa, Kuwait, (1st edition), previous reference, 1999, p 48.

foundations, resulting from a revolution against the sources of knowledge and values, and calling, among other things, for a transcendence of the familiar and the dominant[1]. For Raymond Williams, therefore, the term "modernity" is a selective and interpretive term that varies according to the direction and the exercise of each intellectual, artistic, political or economic discipline, as long as "the definition of the process established at the moment of modernity is a matter related to the definition of the mechanism of selective inheritance"[2].

Accordingly, the statement that describes "modernity" as the true historical reality, as opposed to the old mentality dominated by a naturalistic and cyclical view of the world, is the most widespread and credible vision[3]. It transcends any heritage or cultural product of old European thinking. This is what Enlightenment thinkers aspire to. Both terms, "modernity" and "Enlightenment", are integrated in meaning and historical foundations according to the division established by historians: pre-human times (primitive age), the mental stage, the Middle Ages, and then the modern period (Renaissance, religious reform, and the Enlightenment or modernity)[4].

Second Axis: The Idea of Renaissance and Renewal from a Modernist Perspective

First, the introduction of the terms "Enlightenment" and "modernity" implies that they are titles for a comprehensive cultural movement and a comprehensive cultural moment, according to the connotation of Western civilisation[5]. Different definitions have been proposed, some emphasising freedom of thought, others intellectual revival. This variation is attributed to several factors, including disillusionment with the relationship between the institution of the church and the social life of the Western individual, as a result of the intellectual accumulations that shook European consciousness before the 18th century. It engaged in a critique of religious discourse and the examination of theological references within an Enlightenment project of textual criticism in all things historical and cultural. Religious reform was based not only on the idea that the Pope was not the rightful head of the Church, but also on the belief that the whole Church was corrupt[6].

In addition, the Church held sway over spiritual authority, while temporal authority was a subject of conflict between individuals and popes, with power shifting between them. Any dissenting thought that contradicted the teachings of the Church was

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[1]- Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Ahmed Al Ali: Modernity in the Arab World, previous reference, Vol. 1, p. 46.
[2]- Raymond Williams: Modernism and its Opponents, previous reference, p. 48.
[3]- Gianni Vattimo: The End of Modernity, Nihilistic and Interpretive Philosophies in Postmodern Culture, previous reference, pp. 5, 6.
[4]- Abdulaziz bin Othman al-Tweijri: The Concept of Enlightenment in Islamic Thought, previous reference, pp. 16, 15.
[5]- Raymond Williams: Modernism and its Opponents, previous reference, p. 48.
[6]- Omar Farouk: The Influence of Islamic Philosophy on European Philosophy, publications of the Manimah Library, Beirut, (2nd edition), 1952, p. 54.

considered heresy and blasphemy, punishable by various forms of torture and death. Many early thinkers and scholars in the Middle Ages fell victim to their audacity[1]. The Church categorised those who opposed it as atheists and heretics, while they called themselves "free thinkers"[2]. Through interaction and exchange with Western geography for the purposes of education and the search for knowledge, this cultural critique also sparked debate with European culture among Arab intellectuals, especially graduates of French universities such as the University of Paris, such as Taha Hussein[3], Mohamed Arkoun[4] and Adonis[5].

Given that the "Enlightenment" is a French phenomenon[6], we find among its prominent figures the French philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778), who called for the exaltation of reason as an alternative to the sanctity of religion. He launched a scathing campaign against the clergy and the Church, denying the existence of the supernatural, the resurrection and the afterlife, and declaring that there is no sacred revelation other than nature itself[7]. Another Arab figure who visited France and studied in its schools was the Egyptian Rifa'a al-Tahtawi (1801-1873). He praised the French for their quest for knowledge and spiritual liberation, while criticising religion, saying:

"Are there places like Paris... where the sun of knowledge never sets?

And a night of unbelief without a morning... Doesn't this amaze you?"[8].

These Enlightenment ideas helped to stimulate the critical movement in the Arab world, with writers deeply influenced by what the West was advocating. In discussions with Islamic thinkers, the direction and debate led to two opposing visions. The first is the reform movement, which calls for "enlightenment", or reform according to the Western model derived from Europe. The second is the Islamic movement, which advocates a return to Islam[9]. This is what the Syrian poet and

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[1]- Omar Farouk: The Influence of Islamic Philosophy on European Philosophy, previous reference, p. 6.

[2]- Mohammed Qutb: The Question of Enlightenment in the Islamic World, previous reference, p. 72.

[3]- Taha Hussein: The Future of Culture in Egypt, Dar Al-Maaref, Cairo, (2nd edition), 1939, pp. 47, 48.

[4]- Mohammed Arkoun: Secularism and Religion, Western Islam and Christianity, Dar Al-Saqi, Beirut, (3rd edition), 1996, p. 9.

[5]- Adonis: Incomplete Identity, Creativity, Religion, Politics and Sex, translated by Hassan Ouda, Badayat for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Syria, (1st edition), 2005, pp. 17, 18.

[6]- Murad Wahba: An Introduction to Enlightenment, previous reference, p. 19.

[7]- Mohammed Amara: The Battle of Terminologies between the West and Islam, previous reference, p. 55. Rifaat Badawi Al-Tahawi was one of the first Egyptian students on the mission to France. He worked there as an imam, not as a student, but he took advantage of his presence in Paris to continue his studies. He mastered the French language and read widely in Greek literature and thought, as well as the works of Rousseau, Voltaire and Montesquieu. Here he acquired new ideas about modernity and cultural change in Egyptian society. Taha Hussein and Adonis consider him one of the pioneers who brought the beginnings of modernity and wrote about the question of change in Egypt... See Adonis: Al-Thabit Wal-Mutahawwil, Research on Adoption and Creativity among Arabs, The Shock of Modernity, Dar Al-Awda, Beirut, (1st edition), 1978, p. 35.

[8]- Adonis: Al-Thabit Wal-Mutahawwil, Research on Adoption and Creativity among Arabs, The Shock of Modernity, previous reference, p. 39.

[9]- Mohammed Amara: The Battle of Terminologies between the West and Islam, previous reference, p. 6.

thinker Adonis (1930) refers to when he speaks of Western culture: "So what we want from the West is a helping hand and support for Arab democrats and secularists. Yes, everything in our society must change. We live, I and my colleagues, in a society that needs to be completely examined and questioned at all levels"[1].

Supporting the idea of enlightenment and renewal in modern Arab thought is the analysis of cultural issues that affect society and the Muslim individual, based on the opinions and perspectives of Western critics and their attitude to heritage. Taha Hussein, in his book The Future of Culture in Egypt, states: "The path of the renaissance is clear and straight, without any crookedness or deviation. It is to follow the path of the Europeans, to walk in their footsteps, to become their equals and to be their partners in civilisation, both its good and its bad, its sweetness and its bitterness, what we like and what we dislike, what we praise and what we criticise"[2]. According to his discourse, which is in line with the secular trend, it is a question of following what Europe has done before, which is a revolution against everything religious, separating spiritual life from social life and promoting individual freedom, which leads to empowerment and strength[3].

1- Mohammed Arkoun emphasises the need to consider the causes of overcoming the historical East-West dichotomy.

Through his intellectual and religious writings, Arkoun presents his reformist project, characterised by a modernist approach to the interpretation of Islamic heritage. His aim is to establish a genuine dialogue between intellectuals, particularly within the Arab-Islamic sphere. From his perspective as a researcher, thinker and critic, Arkoun believes that critical analysis should involve a detachment from the cultural, historical and religious specificities of the subject matter. According to Arkoun, this is an objective requirement for any researcher to achieve the philosophical concept of secularism. He also sees it as a method for reaching a consensus in the interpretation of religious phenomena among different religions and sects[4].

Regarding his approach to dissecting the heritage, Arkoun says: "This reading cannot be done properly unless we apply the science of interpretation to the revealed texts... What I am trying to do and what I am engaged in is not just the work of exertion or interpretation in relation to Islam. It is my epistemological path in the intellectual

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[1]- Adonis: Incomplete Identity, Creativity, Religion, Politics and Sex, previous reference, pp. 18, 19.

[2]- Taha Hussein: The Future of Culture in Egypt, Dar Al-Maaref, Cairo, (2nd edition), 1939, pp. 47, 48.

[3]- Mohammed Qutb: The Problem of Enlightenment in the Islamic World, cited above, p. 34.

_According to Mohammed Arkoun, from his point of view, "secularism" is a path towards another epistemology (another theory of knowledge), and he considers it one of the acquisitions and openings of the human mind. It faces two responsibilities in the question: How can we know reality accurately and correctly? And how can we find a suitable means to communicate it to others without restricting or limiting their freedom? See Mohammed Arkoun: Secularism and Religion, Western Islam and Christianity, previous reference, pp. 9, 10, 11.

[4]- Same reference, pp. 7, 10, 12, 13.

heritage of Islam as a researcher and university professor"[1]. This statement affirms the supremacy of reason in the interpretation of religious texts, echoing Enlightenment thinkers. Similarly, Taha Hussein argues: "There is no harm in drawing heavily on the reasoning of European civilisation for our religious life[2].

In an effort to overcome cultural conflicts and interpretative disputes in the reading of traditional texts, which have led to a crisis of methodology, Mohammed Arkoun presents his hermeneutic approach, using the term "contemporaneity" instead of "modernity". This is intended to transcend all dogmatic theological readings that have been inherited.He believes that there are justifications and differences in meaning between temporal modernity and epistemological modernity[3]. This intellectual openness and the dynamics of transmission and purification, as compared to the works of Horkheimer and Adorno, are comparable to "healthy factories" that filter out metaphysical philosophy in order to form the theoretical basis for criticism[4].This is because the metaphysical understanding of knowledge has limited the meanings of openness and renewal.

Mohammed Arkoun argues that in order to undertake this fundamental critical review of the legacy, the first step must be to reinterpret the Qur'an today. He claims that the traditional reading, imposed by tradition, has focused on one area and obscured another. Arkoun wants to inaugurate a dialectical reading, one that constantly oscillates between the sector dominated by oral culture and the sector dominated by the phenomenon of writing[5]. This theoretical framework and its contents, as developed by Arkoun in the reinterpretation of religious texts, represent his conclusion of a return to the reference of Spinoza and Descartes in order to liberate philosophical reasoning from theological reasoning[6].

Thus, Arkoun's position of detachment and epistemological and historical transcendence from all theological certainties is a prevalent pattern among modern intellectuals in our Arab world. They draw from, assimilate and adopt the ideas of European thought. This methodological orientation in intellectual practice aims at psychological, political, scientific and existential comfort. Similarly, Taha Hussein seeks to consolidate this approach, stating: "If we want this intellectual and psychological independence, which can only be achieved through scientific, literary and artistic independence, we naturally need its means. Its means are for us to learn as the European learns, so that we may feel as the European feels, and judge as the European judges. Then we shall act as the European acts, and live our lives as the

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[1]- Same reference, pp. 22, 36.
[2]- Taha Hussein: The Future of Culture in Egypt, cited above, p. 46.
[3]- Mohammed Arkoun: Secularism and Religion, Western Islam and Christianity, previous reference, p. 42.
[4]- Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno: The Dialectic of Enlightenment, previous reference, p. 19.
[5]- Mohammed Arkoun: Secularism and Religion, Western Islam and Christianity, previous reference, pp. 45, 48.
[6]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today, previous reference, p. 316.

European lives his"[1].

On the question of the meaning of "Enlightenment", "modernity" and "postmodernity" among Arab intellectuals, Mohammed Arkoun sees a certain ambiguity among Arab intellectuals in presenting the true meaning of these terms.

Arkoun points to the overlap between "classical reason" or "classical modernity" and the "reason of the Enlightenment", which crystallised with Descartes, Spinoza and the philosopher Kant. The philosophies of these thinkers, including Kant, were based on Newtonian philosophy. From this perspective, the Newtonian theory of knowledge embodies the characteristics of modernity, such as universality and consensus. Thus, Kant's famous statement "Without Newton, there would be no Kant" implies that Newton's theory is no longer valid[2], and therefore the philosophy based on it is open to criticism. This concept collapsed with the emergence of contemporary critical theories and the advent of knowledge of relativity and probability[3].

According to Mohammed Arkoun, the proper approach to criticism in the interpretation of heritage lies in the renewal of terminology and its linguistic treatment, as well as its role in what Arkoun calls "mental modernity"[4]. Mental modernity involves a break with the dogmatic certainties of traditional beliefs.In this sense, Arkoun goes beyond the chronological context of the traditional meaning of the word "modernity". Raymond Williams illustrates this overlap in common linguistic expressions when scholars use the term by stating: "It is still common to use the term 'modern' to refer to a world that is a century or a century and a half old"[5]. After correcting the linguistic usage, Arkoun moves on to the cognitive connotations when the term is used critically and methodologically by Arab researchers. These include the independence of the mind (self). He believes that this is a transition to a new stage that goes beyond classical reason, which some call "postmodernity" or "the end of certainties", the inherited classical science[6].

This transition in the transformation of the term "modernity" from a traditional historical concept to a linguistic meaning is aimed at understanding the reality of the present and what is happening in social, scientific and intellectual contexts. It is manifested more in the expansion of the practice of reason in the process of critique and its connection to what is material and temporal in society. The "contemporary modern characteristic" of being true to nature, but how quickly its meaning has

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[1]- Taha Hussein: The Future of Culture in Egypt, previous reference, p. 41.
[2]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today?, previous reference, p. 315.
[3]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today?, previous reference, p. 316.
[4]- Mohammed Arkoun: Secularism and Religion, Western Islam and Christianity, previous reference, p. 43.
[5]- Raymond Williams: Modernity and Its Discontents, Against the New Conformists, previous reference, p. 48.
[6]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today, previous reference, p. 315.

changed from "now" to "immediately now" or even "then", and its meaning always refers to the past, which becomes "contemporary" in contrast to its present state[1].

In this way, the word "contemporary" has gone beyond its historical connotation and has become linked to the constant renewal with nature in terms of knowledge. In this regard, Mohammed Arkoun presents his idea of reading the textual heritage: "We want to inaugurate a dialectical reading, that is, a reading that constantly oscillates between the sector dominated by oral culture and the sector dominated by the phenomenon of writing[2]. This is applied to questions of revelation and the Qur'anic text.

Following the Spinozian approach of distinguishing between the oral and the moment of writing and inscription - the historicity of writing - in what is mentioned in the Christian Holy Scripture, in other words, distinguishing and standing between what is given as an oral message of the Word of God and what the theologians conveyed by writing and recording this Word - the transmission of the Word from the divine to the human - Mohammed Arkoun has taken a path that is also necessary in the process of liberation and independence of the mind from the constraints of inherited Islamic theology.

He says: "But I also added that the Arab-Islamic heritage should be subjected to the same critical-historical study that the Christian heritage has been subjected to in Europe since the seventeenth century[3]". However, Arkoun worked to follow this empirical approach, taking into account the historical differences and the Islamic context in the presentation and the historical condition of the religious text and the Islamic society experiencing it[4].

Therefore, according to Arkoun, the revolutionary upheavals that came with the Enlightenment philosophers such as Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, the Encyclopedists and Kant, as well as the English Revolution[5], can be among the precursors or transitional stages in the Arab context that can be applied to undermine the historical disparity between East and West[6].

Therefore, according to Mohammed Arkoun, the crisis of interpretation and textual exegesis, which has remained the path of Muslim ijtihad due to sectarian and methodological differences, he believes that the diagnosis and treatment of the crisis enters and is treated in the content of thinking and practical application with a

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[1]- Raymond Williams: Modernity and Its Discontents, Against the New Conformists, previous reference, p. 48.

[2]- Mohammed Arkoun: Secularism and Religion, Western Islam and Christianity, previous reference, p. 48.

[3]- Mohammed Arkoun: Problems in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today, previous reference, p. 318.

[4]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today?, previous reference, p. 314.

[5]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today?, previous reference, p. 316.

[6]- Taha Hussein: The Future of Culture in Egypt, previous reference, p. 50.

"postmodern" or scientific approach. In Arkoun's view, the only difference between the "modern mind" and the "postmodern mind" - the mind after the collapse of great ideologies and entrenched certainties - is that the latter, while crystallising new knowledge, knows that it will not reach absolute truth. It arrives at relative, temporary truths that may last a long time or a lot, but they will not last forever[1]. Because knowledge changes and evolves according to the development of the scientific approach and its stages of experimentation that the researcher follows in applying it to the dissection of the phenomenon. And it is conceivable that research is included as material in the reading of the "religious phenomenon", and Islam is considered a "phenomenon", so it is not surprising that interpretation is applied to the revealed book and all that preceded it as reality, since it falls within the meaning of the word "hadith" and therefore requires renewal[2].

2- Adonis and the project of modern society

From an artistic and social perspective on the issue of the modernity of Arab society and the direction towards the idea of cultural renewal in its general form, we find the readings of the critic "Adonis" and his philosophy in building the foundations and landmarks of contemporary society.He comments:"There is an immense work to be done, provided that each one of us is free in his perception of things and in acting according to his means of expression and his interests.It should be noted that I live in a society that needs to be completely rebuilt, a society in which its culture and politics are the subject of research and debate, a society in which I see nothing worth defending or building. I live in this society as if it were socially and politically ground zero. It is ground zero in the sense that everything has to be redefined, rethought and reworked[3].

This is the call that Adonis made when he analysed the state of Arab society and its experience of social, political and intellectual backwardness. It is the role of the researcher and the Enlightenment thinker to diagnose this historically desperate situation for the individual and society, and to try to find new formulas as solutions and means of escape from this backwardness. This description of the state of regression has become the subject and material of study of the modernist thinker with a secular orientation and approach.

We find this social analysis also in the readings of Mohammed Arkoun, who states: "Arabs and Muslims in general are living in a very difficult historical period. They feel humiliated and degraded by various internal and external factors, and they feel that progress and civilisation have far surpassed them and that they are unable to catch

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[1]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today?, previous reference, p. 316.
[2]- Mohammed Arkoun: Secularism and Religion, Western Islam and Christianity, previous reference, p. 12.
[3]- Adonis: Incomplete Identity, Creativity, Religion, Politics and Sex, previous reference, pp. 18, 19.

up[1]". There is no way or path to embrace openness to progress and catch up with the West and civilisation, except to accept this modern civilisation with an open mind, not a defeated one[2].

According to Adonis, who is considered one of the contemporary Arab poets, he found in the art of poetic composition a role and a place of salvation to face this crisis. Poetry, he believes, can contribute to establishing communication and understanding with the other (the West): "What is important here is that the poem should be essential. It will not be if it does not contribute to the creation of a new society, a great civilisation and a refined culture... To create out of poetry a deeper abyss, a new society, a new culture, and new relations with the other"[3]. According to Adonis, the poet is an artist who distinguishes himself by renewing the words, the meanings and the aims of his poetry. Language is renewable and dynamic, it lives through the life and nature of the poet. Poetry inspired by a dead language (the language of past poets) is lifeless poetry[4], according to Adonis.

Adonis sees poetry as the subject of the modernist project, following the pattern set by the revolution of Western poets such as Hölderlin, Novális, Goethe, Rimbaud and Nerval[5]. He believes that overcoming the heritage of the past, including ancient poetry, is the optimal way to create a civilised and refined society.

Adonis sums up the problem of "modernity" in its historical and methodological form as follows: "It can be said, within the Arab perspective of 'al-Ihdath' (modernity) and 'al-Mu'hadath' (the modern), and within the specific socio-economic conditions, that modernity in Arab society began as a position that views and interprets the past in the light of the present"[6]. This suggests that Adonis's attitude embodies this traditional tendency that guides the Arab mind based on a purely economic and social context. However, the tendency to think in terms of self-liberation still carries the influence of a traditional approach from which scholars and poets cannot escape. This literary and artistic stagnation is attributed to Taha Hussein, who stated: "The reason is that his Arab culture itself is very limited, and his knowledge of the modern cultures in which he lives is also limited, because he is exposed to them every day from all directions, but in limited quantities. Our literature cannot be truly renewed unless our writers and poets enrich themselves with education and culture, embracing both the old and the new at the same time"[7].

From the point of view of Arab intellectuals influenced by Western culture (the Paris

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[1]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today, previous reference, p. 316.

[2]- Taha Hussein: The Future of Culture in Egypt, previous reference, p. 48.

[3]- Adonis: Incomplete Identity, Creativity, Religion, Politics and Sex, previous reference, p. 20.

[4]- The same reference, p. 20.

[5]- Adonis: Incomplete Identity, Creativity, Religion, Politics and Sex, previous reference, p. 34.

[6]- Adonis: The Fixed and the Transforming, An Examination of Conformity and Creativity among the Arabs, The Shock of Modernity, previous reference, p. 9.

[7]- Taha Hussein: Tradition and Renewal, previous reference, p. 18.

School), they believe that the progress of Western thought is closely linked to literature and art, and is considered one of the main reasons for its progress. They argue that Arab culture should follow the Western approach in order to liberate Arab culture from darkness into light. According to Adonis, "There is no one who can argue that the East lives in the embrace of the Western heritage when it comes to artistic creativity"[1]. The revival of our culture will be achieved when Arab intellectuals learn and familiarise themselves with the achievements of the Western heritage[2].

This empowerment through the art of the other creates a bridge of communication for the shared meaning of artistic creativity[3]. This enables the modernist writer and poet to transcend the East-West dichotomy, both psychologically and socially, with their European counterparts. Taha Hussein states: "...now that we know our history, are aware of ourselves, and have felt pride and dignity, we are convinced that there is no essential difference in character, nature or temperament[4] between us and the Europeans". This implies the integration and renewal of Arab cultural life on the basis of the contemporary European context.

Furthermore, in order for Arab society to progress and move forward, it is necessary to follow the ideas of the Enlightenment, to establish and implement a secular approach in social and cultural life. This means transcending the notion of heritage and its restrictive content on individual and intellectual freedom. As a poet, Adonis is against religion as an institution imposed on society, but not against individuals who have religious beliefs. This is his approach to criticism and renewal. The attachment to the past has contributed to this backwardness, and that is why heritage represents a horizon of salvation for millions of hungry individuals who cling to it as their only hope[5].

In his commentary on the religious phenomenon, Mohammed Arkoun acknowledges that this attachment to heritage has led to this stagnation.

According to Adonis, the guiding principle of modernity and renewal comes from society itself. He believes that society should be civil, governed by civil laws that respect diversity and difference. Religious belief, on the other hand, is an individual matter and a personal matter. Everyone is free to have their own religious beliefs[6]. Religion is seen as an obstacle to the idea of the Renaissance, and there is no harm in drawing strong inspiration from the causes of European civilisation[6] in terms of individual freedom and the separation of social life from religious institutions. Therefore, today we need new thinkers to understand the current state of religious

[1]- Adonis: Incomplete Identity, Creativity, Religion, Politics and Sex, previous reference, p. 37.
[2]- Taha Hussein: The Future of Culture in Egypt, previous reference, p. 49.
[3]- Adonis: Incomplete Identity, Creativity, Religion, Politics and Sex, previous reference, p. 20.
[4]- Mohammed Arkoun: Issues in Critiquing Religious Reason, How Do We Understand Islam Today, previous reference, p. 318.
[5]- Adonis: Incomplete Identity, Creativity, Religion, Politics and Sex, previous reference, p. 32.
[6]- Taha Hussein: The Future of Culture in Egypt, previous reference, p. 49.

thought and thought in general. We need a revolution that is broader, deeper, more poetic, more humane and more inclusive than the Marxist revolution. We feel an urgent need for this new revolution, especially in our region[1].

Adonis wants a revolution led by poets to reform society, similar to what happened in 17th century Europe with the revolution led by German poets. From a social point of view, this revolution could liberate Arab society. However, while religion may be useful for the individual, it is seen as a sign of undermining the pillars of society, as it resembles a primitive tribe[2], according to Adonis.

Conclusion

The analysis of this article leads to the following findings:

The concept of enlightenment and modernity in contemporary Arab and Islamic thought emerged as a result of Arab thinkers' interaction and engagement with European culture, particularly through student missions to European universities, especially in Paris, for education, beginning in the late 18th century during Napoleon Bonaparte's campaign in Egypt. It was here that students began to discover and study literature, thought, art and heritage as a whole.

It can be concluded that the work of Arab Enlightenment thinkers aimed to transfer Western ideas of social renaissance and renewal, and to promote the project of modernity in Arab social and cultural contexts. This included a critique of the Islamic heritage and all aspects of the historical, cultural and artistic past in order to establish a genuine dialogue among Arab intellectuals. The aim was to overcome the historical and cognitive gap between East and West and to create a channel of communication with the 'other' in the realm of shared culture between people in the fields of thought, literature and art.

Furthermore, it can be deduced that the subject of criticism is based on intellectual practice and freedom of thought, based on an objective framework resulting from the researcher's detachment from any ideological particularity (cultural, historical, religious). This framework is rooted in the consolidation of the principle of secularism, in diagnosing and interpreting the religious references and contents of the heritage from a philosophical perspective, in accordance with the acquired language used as a form of communication and exchange, with its historical development and Arab-Islamic specificity within Arab society (whether in poetry or prose), and linking it to the nature of the material reality of living.Some have taken the path of this method to lay the foundations for renewal, while others have pursued artistic approaches as a social attribute.

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