
Western Modernity versus Alternative Modernity

Tarik ElFalih¹,  | Layachi ELHabbouch²

¹Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Faculty of letters and Human Sciences Tetouane, Morocco, Laboratory of Hermeneutics, Textual and Linguistic Studies

²Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Faculty of letters and Human Sciences Tetouane, Morocco, Laboratory of Hermeneutics, Textual and Linguistic Studies

Received 13-09-2024

Revised 14-09-2024

Accepted 25-10-2024

Published 27-10-2024



Copyright: ©2024 The Authors. Published by Publisher. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Abstract

Rather than simply reflecting on the origins of modernity, it is necessary to critically examine its main story by disseminating its underlying ideas throughout the world. Reevaluating the world through a different lens facilitates the deconstruction of the binary between the Global North and the Global South. This paper's analysis scrutinizes the ideas introduced by the Moroccan philosopher Taha Abdurrahman in his work entitled "The Spirit of Modernity: A Prolegomenon to Laying the Foundations of Islamic Modernity." This paper illustrates the ability of Global South to offer a novel viewpoint. Taha Abdurrahman's critiques of what he terms "Islamic Alternative Modernity" through a methodology that integrates translation and discourse analysis. His authorship constructs a conceptual framework that interrogates the prevailing perceptions of Muslims within Western societies. The works of Abdurrahman offer profound insights into the modern Islamic landscape and the myriad perspectives that coexist within it. It encourages us to reflect on the forms in which one might achieve a deeper understanding of Islamic thought. According to the narrative, Taha Abdurrahman has remarkable contributions to be able to discern the complexities and contradictions within modern Western civilization, shaped by his post-colonial perspective. In exploring the nuances of contemporary thought, one must consider the alternative perspectives that challenge the prevailing notions of modernity. The spirit of this inquiry invites us to examine the significance of location in shaping and reshaping our experiences, particularly in relation to the Global North Grand narratives about the South. A critical analysis reveals the complexities of universality, urging us to question established paradigms and engage in thoughtful discourse about pluriversality.

Keywords: Alternative, Modernity, Spirit, Location, Majority, Universality, Critique

1. Introduction:

By definition, modernity is the period of history when reason, science, technology and industry began to develop. The emergence of current nation-states, capitalism, secularism, and individualism are social and political shifts it enabled. In the case

of modernity, it is claimed, progress is sought for such basic and vital ends as equality, autonomy, and freedom. As a result of modernity, cultures developed from a traditional, religious or communally integrated perspective to modern

individualistic, scientific and rational viewpoints. A particular brand of modernity, dubbed Western Modernity, emerged in the western hemisphere, distinct from any other region, owing to the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment, and the threefold economic expansion that swept Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. Many hold the perspective that Western modernity and its forward movement is a blueprint that other cultures can replicate. The tenets of Westernisation cut across the over-arching ethical ideology of secularism, capitalism, democracy and science. Such perspectives resonate well with European supremacy and imperialistic designs which suppressed western ideals and institutions over several territories of the world.

That conclusion leads to the assumption that it is only Western societies which are modern whereas others can only be on a non-ending journey to try to attain the singular form of modernity provided by the West. However, that is where the Eurocentric lens can be challenged, and one can postulate the existence of a distinctly separate postcolonialism, this is not unimaginable. Proponents of alternative modernity claim that the unity of the concept does not seem to be appropriate since many kinds of modernity arise and develop in different cultures, historical periods, and geographical regions. They believe that modernisation witnessed in the Arab, Asian, and African regions will be different from that witnessed in the West. Rather than completely disregarding the western secularism and liberal democracy, many countries have sought to adopt the modernity aspect within their cultures and traditions. The idea of the alternative modernity takes its course to argue the western mode of modernization as the only ideal one, taking into account social diversity that exists in the contemporary world. The concept of alternate modernity argues that countries from the non-Western world should not be looked at as 'backward' nations, but rather as societies that can create relevant new forms of 'modernisation' and new understandings of 'progress'. Therefore, it follows that although western modernity is often

looked at as the default, alternative modernities go against the belief that societies need to be modernised towards a certain western way. However, in contrary, all societies exhibit as possessing unique attributes of an adopted modernity in different forms as different civilisations. These ideas are central to any discussions about postcolonial critiques of the west as well as its globalization and development.

According to Habermas (1997), modernity is an endeavour that is "incomplete" but can be salvaged. Habermas addresses the Weberian critique of the Enlightenment's modernity project in his extensive writings, particularly the disenchantment and consequent degradation of faith in the capacity of reason to direct human existence. He recognises Max Weber's contention that sociocultural rationalisation has resulted in the erosion of freedom and meaning in contemporary society (Weber, 1978). Habermas, on the other hand, refutes Weber's assertion that reason is synonymous with *Zweckrationalität* (instrumental rationality) and denies the pessimistic interpretations of this association that Horkheimer and Adorno expounded in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002). Habermas critiques perspectives that equate sociocultural rationalisation with reification (as in Lukács) and techniques of power and control (as in Foucault), contending that such views confuse the selective deployment of reason under capitalist modernisation with the true essence of reason itself (Lukács, 1971; Foucault, 1977). He maintains that reason is reduced to an instrumental mode exclusively within the framework of subject-centred reason associated with the philosophy of consciousness (Habermas, 1984-1987). Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action, which delineates a balanced development of rationality's dimensions, is essential for comprehending and traversing the contemporary world (Habermas, 1984-1987). His objective is to revitalise the modernity project by re-establishing reason as a dynamic, multifaceted force (Habermas, 1987). Furthermore, a new call to action is required if the Western project of modernity is perceived as

incomplete due to its failure. The objective of this scholastic investigation is to contribute to the ongoing academic discourse on modernity by situating it within the context of East-West relations. This study also integrates Taha Abdurrahman's perspectives on Alternative Islamic Modernity into broader global discussions on modernity and tradition, thereby challenging the conventional approach that portrays Muslims as sole subjects of research when modernity is discussed. Western civilisation has been fundamentally influenced by Western modernity since the Enlightenment. It is depicted as a global paradigm that is defined by the triumph of reason, science, and progress, which results in societal emancipation and expansion. The development of science and technology that transformed social, political, and economic spheres was facilitated by Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke and Immanuel Kant, who promoted reason as a means to individual liberation and societal progress (Giddens, 1990). Institutions such as democracy, capitalism, and secularism are frequently depicted as universal standards that other cultures are expected to emulate in their pursuit of liberty, prosperity, and growth (Bauman, 1989). Western modernity has been subjected to substantial criticism, despite its numerous promises. Environmental degradation, socioeconomic inequality, and cultural homogenisation are among the unintended consequences that modernity has introduced, according to its detractors. Bruno Latour (1993) argues that modernity has yielded detrimental outcomes as a result of its control over nature and society. Additionally, many critics contend that Western modernity is not universally applicable; it is problematic to apply Western models to other societies without considering their cultural, social, and historical factors. Escobar (1995) critiques the narrative of progress, contending that modernity frequently exploits and marginalises non-Western nations.

The concept of "*alternative modernities*" was introduced in response to the constraints of Western modernity. This viewpoint regards modernity as a multidimensional phenomenon that

is influenced by a variety of cultural, social, and historical factors. Gaonkar (2001) and Eisenstadt (2002), among others, contend that distinct societies can pursue their own paths to modernity, thereby challenging the Eurocentric notion of a singular, universal modernity. Alternative modernities advocate for a more inclusive approach, recognising the contributions of non-Western societies to the global modernity discourse (Eisenstadt, 2002). Islamic modernity is one of the most significant alternative modernities. Islamic modernity aims to preserve Islam's ethical and spiritual values by incorporating Islamic principles with modern scientific, technological, and industrial advancements. Taha Abdurrahman, a distinguished Islamic philosopher, contends that modernity should not be separated from religion, but rather integrated into an Islamic framework. The unity of God in all aspects of existence is emphasised by the principle of Tawhid (God's Oneness), which is fundamental to Islamic modernity. This concept serves as the basis for reconciling Islamic principles with contemporary standards. Furthermore, Ijtihad (independent reasoning) is essential in Islamic modernity, as it enables the reinterpretation of Islamic texts in the context of contemporary issues (An-Naim, 2008). However, Islamic modernity also prioritizes social justice and equality, particularly in the context of social welfare. It urges modernity to transcend material prosperity and concentrate on the empowerment of marginalized groups and the resolution of social disparities (Sardar, 1985; Ramadan, 2004). The modern world has been unquestionably influenced by the discourse of Western modernity, which places a strong emphasis on reason, science, and progress. Conversely, it has encountered substantial criticism, which has resulted in the development of alternative modernities. The necessity of inclusive, context-sensitive approaches to modernisation is emphasised by the recognition of the diversity of modern experiences, notably Islamic modernity, which enriches global discussions on modernity. By adopting a variety of viewpoints on modernity, one can contribute to the development of a more equitable and just global community as we

navigate the intricacies of the modern world. Also, we can understand the relationship between Western modernity, its mainstream interpretation, and its Islamic interpretation within the context of the civilisational struggle that arises due to differences in the concepts of progress, rationality, and values. This illustrates the position of Taha Abdurrahman, a philosopher who opposed the conventional-centric European approximation of modernity and sought an Islamic modernity in its place, which is important in contesting Western beliefs about humanity, reasoning, and ethics. In principle, Western modernity originates from the Enlightenment Era, endorsing secularism as a broad observation and viewing progress as achieved through technological, scientific, and economic evolution. The importance of reason, self-determination of the individual, and material assets come first, while the metaphysical or spiritual aspects are put in the background. The Western notion of modernity has on many occasions presented itself as global, arguing there is a need for all nations to follow its "road map" of secularization, industrialization, and liberal democracy. Conversely, various modernities, particularly Islamic modernity, reject the claim that Western principles, practices, and structures are the sole legitimate avenue for progress. As Taha Abdurrahman notes, Islamic modernity, which he described, does not oppose modernity but seeks to synthesise modern progress with Islamic moral and spiritual values. He reproached Western modernity as a range of ideas that describe reason without ethics and spirituality and emphasized concern about materiality alone, leaving aside fundamental questions that relate to morality and spirituality that Islam focuses on.

Abdurrahman thought that the idea of Islamic modernity should be based on the idea of source authenticity. This means that the focus should be on bringing back and developing old Islamic traditions and values, but not in a pure or revivalist way, but in a way that creates new ideas that can deal with the problems of today. In essence, this procedure differs from the secular origins of Western modernity, as it relies on moral principles

rooted in spirituality and public good, rather than morality and materialism. It is precisely these differences in the foundations that give rise to the civilizational clash between Islam and Western modernity. As Islam infuses ethical considerations and spirituality into every social, political, and intellectual endeavour, it regularly clashes with the atheistic, completely detached Western modernity. In this context, Taha Abdurrahman describes what he sees as a weakness in the ethical conception of western modernity. He emphasizes that western modernity, typically focused on materialism, frequently results in alienation, societal degeneration, and ethical deficiencies. He argues that Islamic modernity presents a more balanced ideal of progress by not separating material progress from spiritual development. Abdurrahman's ideas underscore that this conflict is more than a Huntingtonian clash of civilizations; rather, it is an intellectual and ethical engagement over the very essence and trajectory of modernity. Where Western modernity departs on the need for secularism in furthering human development, Abdurrahman maintains that there is no genuine freedom without moral and spiritual responsibilities, which are integral to Islamic civilization. Such intellectual contestation is situated within a broader decolonial critique, which aims to challenge the notion of Western modernity as the sole ideal standard and promotes the existence of multiple modernities that reflect the unique values of various civilizations. In this sense, according to Abdurrahman, Islamic modernity provides Muslims with more than just a new direction. More pertinently, it offers critique of the modernity of its ethical provisions. It seeks an ethics-laden view of modernity that provides sustenance to the materialist and secularism of western thought, but in turn, it propounds a view of modernity that is respectful of ethical diversity. Therefore, the intra-civilisational tussle between the two sides of Islamic and Western forms of modernity is equally philosophical as it is ethical in the sense of arguing what is modern and how societies ought to go about advancing modernity.

2. Re-Locating Modernity: Alternative Modernities in the Global South:

The modernisation process as envisioned within the framework of Islamic modernity is significantly influenced by the concept of cultural diversity and pluralism. This framework argues that modernity should not result in the homogenisation of cultures, but rather should promote intercultural dialogue and interaction. The recognition of human rights and dignity is a critical component of Islamic modernity, which emphasises their importance in the modernisation process. Modernity, according to this perspective, should progress without sacrificing individual rights, with the objective of safeguarding and promoting them. However, the concept of modernity has been the subject of debate, particularly in relation to the claim that Western modernity is universally applicable. In response to this assertion, the concept of alternative modernity has emerged, providing a more pluralistic and comprehensive perspective that recognises the various manifestations of modernity in a variety of societies. In the Global South, where local experiences and aspirations frequently conflict with prevailing Western notions of modernity, it is essential to relocate modernity in order to challenge Eurocentric narratives of progress and prosperity. Throughout history, modernity has been primarily viewed through a Western perspective, which is associated with the Enlightenment values of secularism, science, and reason. This Eurocentric perspective implies a linear development, positioning Western societies as the pinnacle of modern progress (Giddens, 1990). Critics, however, have noted that this perspective frequently fails to consider the unique methods by which societies in the Global South interact with and contribute to modernity. It perpetuates a discriminatory and imperialist narrative by disregarding local cultural, social, and historical contexts (Escobar, 1995). The concept of alternative modernities is a critique of this Eurocentric narrative. Diverse perspectives on modernity have been formulated by scholars from the Global South, which are indicative of their distinctive historical, social, and cultural

circumstances. For example, in Latin America, the concept of "modernity/coloniality" investigates the enduring impact of colonialism on modern social and political processes. Aníbal Quijano contends that the colonial past of Latin America is inextricably connected to the region's experiences with modernity (Quijano, 2000). In the same vein, postcolonial critiques have had an impact on South Asian discourse on modernity. Scholars such as Dipesh Chakrabarty have advocated for "subaltern modernities" that underscore the significance of indigenous knowledge and practices in the formation of modernity (Chakrabarty, 2000). Islamic modernity offers an additional perspective for investigating alternative modernities. For example, Taha Abdurrahman contends that modernity within the Islamic context necessitates the integration of Islamic principles with contemporary advancements. This method aims to reconcile Islamic ethical values with contemporary scientific and technological advancements, thereby challenging the dichotomy between secular and religious modernity. Consequently, Islamic modernity provides a multifaceted perspective that transcends the simplistic dichotomy of Western secularism versus religious traditionalism. The endeavour to relocate modernity in the Global South raises critical concerns about identity, power, and agency. Decolonial theorists underscore the necessity of reevaluating modernity in order to resolve the persistent disparities that have been created by colonial and neocolonial legacies. For example, Walter D. Mignolo contends that modernity is inextricably linked to its colonial origins and that any reimagining of modernity must critically confront these legacies (Mignolo, 2007, 2011). Additionally, the impact of global capitalism on local forms of modernity has been a topic of debate, with critics contending that globalisation frequently undermines local traditions and knowledge (Harvey, 2005).

The complexity and multifaceted nature of the process of relocating modernity necessitate a meticulous analysis of the interactions between various communities and modernisation. In the Global South, this entails challenging Eurocentric assumptions and adopting alternative

conceptualisations of modernity that are more in line with local realities. Scholars and practitioners contribute to a more inclusive and equitable discourse on modernity by addressing issues related to global capitalism, identity, and decolonisation. Intentionally, this investigation refrains from depicting modernist Muslim philosophers in terms of whether their perspectives deviate from or adhere to the confines of tradition. The dichotomy of tradition versus modernity can be problematic, as it fails to acknowledge that traditional ideas are not merely reproductions of past beliefs, but rather reconstructions that are rooted in a long-standing tradition. In this perspective, a modernist Muslim is an individual who acknowledges the importance of Western modernity's accomplishments without necessarily imitating them, despite the fact that they may operate outside the Western sphere. As a result, the concept of modernity is difficult to define, as it oversimplifies a multifaceted array of intellectual currents and social processes. Despite the fact that Islamic scholars do not formally acknowledge it, it is a practice and a concept that have long influenced the way in which Muslims are perceived. According to Stuart Hall (1996), modernity is characterised by the transformation of traditional social structures and religious certainties, which results in a more individualistic, rational, and utilitarian worldview, as well as the emergence of secular political institutions. He observes that "Modernity is a multifaceted process of transformation, characterised by the dissolution of traditional religious principles and social structures." It establishes secular political institutions and authorities, in addition to introducing a materialistic, rational, and individualistic worldview (Hall, 1996, p. 15). The progressive demystification of enchantments through reason and the control of nature via scientific advancements are the hallmarks of modernity, as defined by Enlightenment thinkers. Martin Heidegger critiques this aspect of modernity, contending that it presents nature as a resource that must be managed (Heidegger, 1977). However, this paper will also illustrate that modernity produces its own forms of enchantment,

such as the mystical allure of markets and illusions of progress. These enchantments have an impact on the organisation and perception of modern landscapes, shaping both the past and the present. In summary, modernity should not be perceived as a predetermined product or ideology that can be either embraced or rejected. Rather, it is a continuous process that involves negotiations, contestations, and epistemic shifts. This study is particularly interested in analysing Taha Abdurrahman's contributions to the discourse on Islamic modernity, acknowledging his dedication to the intellectual challenges presented by modernity while remaining profoundly rooted in Islamic spiritual objectives. The struggle between Western modernity and Islamic modernity, as projected through the philosophy of Taha Abdurrahman, has the most opposing prisms of progress, reason, and ethics. Enlightenment ideals shaped Western modernity, promoting secularism, individualism, and material development, while Abdurrahman's vision of Islamic modernity integrates western advancement into Islamic moral values. The clash, in this case, is not simply a competition for economic and political resources but also for the soul of mankind, for what modernity should be and what humanity ought to be aspiring for.

Western modernity asserts its global reach, mapping rationalism and the secularization of science, politics, and economics to every society. Such a framework often views religion as a personal matter, diminishing its significance in the public sphere. Abdurrahman offers a critique of this model by showing its spiritual and moral deficiencies. He claims that Western modernity, regardless of the success in the areas of technological and scientific achievements, tends to cause alienation through materialism and the dissolution of collectivism and social responsibility.

Western technological advancements hold a grudge against Islamic modernity. Abdurrahman believes that the world's material movements should shape Islamic modernity. We cannot reduce the ideas of human development to mere science. A framework for social mobility through science is

necessary, but it must not disrupt Islamic institutions. Western ideologies are religions based on facts. Science defines how people should function; there is no room for imagination or ethics. Abdurrahman highlights the Islamic principles over modern secular ideologies. In the modern context, there is a conflict between the two communities. In this context, the conflict between Western and Islamic modernity is not simply a binary clash of cultures but a deeper philosophical struggle over the meaning of modernity itself. Western modernity sees its model as the endpoint of historical development, while Islamic modernity offers an alternative that integrates ethical and spiritual dimensions into the modernization process, according to Abdurrahman. The Global South is a term that is becoming more widely recognised in academic, political, and economic discourse. It refers to less developed nations that are located in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and specific regions of the Middle East. The Global South is a term that collectively refers to the regions that are characterised by poverty, colonial histories, and systemic marginalisation from global capital operations. These nations are primarily affected by the marginalisation imposed by the global economy and colonialism, which has resulted in poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment. It also pertains to the fundamentally imbalanced power dynamics that exist between affluent, industrialised nations in the Global North, which primarily include North America, Western Europe, and East Asia, and the less privileged post-colonial countries located within or otherwise linked to the geographical South. This concept has evolved in recent years to emphasise the geopolitical and cultural impediments that these nations face within a global framework that prioritises the values, norms, and economic priorities of the Global North, in addition to their economic circumstances. The term is frequently used by academics who are involved in decolonial, postcolonial, and critical development studies to emphasise the persistent ramifications of colonialism and the mechanisms through which the global economic framework perpetuates historical disparities in inequality.

The Global South is a significant area of focus in the context of your investigation into Taha Abdurrahman and the tensions between Western and Islamic modernity. This region encompasses a number of Muslim-majority nations, where Islamic modernity is actively competing with Western concepts of progress and development. These regions frequently confront the intricacies of modern life within a global framework that promotes Western secular principles, all the while attempting to preserve cultural and religious integrity and contend with the repercussions of colonial history. As a result, the term "Global South" denotes not only a geographical region, but also a collective experience of political and economic marginalisation, as well as a location of intellectual and cultural resistance against the hegemony of Western modernity.

3. Pillars of Alternative Modernity:

Taha Abdurrahman's work endeavours to establish a modern social and political system that is profoundly rooted in reaffirmed Islamic principles, in striking contrast to the prevailing Western frameworks of modernity. He intends to methodically revisit these principles in order to resolve the perceived inadequacies of an uncritically adopted Western modernity. His critique is fundamentally predicated on the notion that the advancement of modernity is frequently misattributed to the interaction between Western culture and other global cultures. This perspective presupposes that the distinction between Western and non-Western societies has existed for centuries, prior to the orderly division of these identities into European-centred dichotomies. This distinction may have been influenced by colonial enterprises, including the establishment of slave industries in regions such as Latin America and Africa, prisons in the Crimea, and schools in Calcutta. An argument could be made here. The distinction between Europeans and non-Europeans was significantly influenced by these colonial institutions. Edward Said's *Orientalism* investigates the cultural foundations of this distinction, asserting that "Orientalism is a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient." It is a mode of thought

that establishes the Orient as fundamentally distinct from the West, thereby placing it in a position of inferiority and influencing Western knowledge and power dynamics (Said, 1978, p. 3). During its colonial expansions, Western identity was shaped through a process of "othering," which involved defining itself in opposition to an imagined "Orient." Said's insights underscore this. This dichotomy between "the Orient" and "the Occident" emphasises an epistemological and ontological division that has historically influenced Western knowledge production and power dynamics. This geographical and historical distinction continues to be pivotal in the modernity discourse. Nevertheless, Abdurrahman contends that simply challenging this geography is insufficient to undermine the persuasive narrative of modernity. However, the emphasis should also be placed on the manner in which the temporal structure of modernity, which is characterised by an emphasis on Western timeframes, oversimplifies the intricacies of historical development across various regions. Marshall Hodgson (1993) and Perry Anderson (1984) present alternative perspectives on the global dimensions of modernity, which are in stark contrast to the widely accepted narrative of a Western-originating modernity. For instance, Anderson highlights that modernism did not originate from a Western core, but rather from regions on the periphery of Western influence. He examines the manner in which Latin American intellectuals, for instance, introduced the term "modernismo" to assert cultural autonomy in opposition to Spanish literary dominance.

In the same vein, Abdurrahman critiques the notion of a monolithic Western modernity, emphasising that the ethical underpinnings of this modernity are problematic. He argues that the significance of ethical and spiritual aspects of human existence is disregarded by the emphasis on human rationality, which is a fundamental component of Western modernity. By doing so, Abdurrahman establishes a distinct distinction between his vision of Islamic modernity and that of the Western philosophical tradition, which places an excessive emphasis on

rationality as the foundation for societal advancement. Abdurrahman employs the concept of "multiple modernities" to develop this critique, which contests the notion of a single path to modernity. He posits that modernity is influenced by distinct cultural, historical, and institutional legacies, resulting in a variety of forms. As Eisenstadt (2000) asserts, "The concept of multiple modernities entails the comprehension of modernity as macro-historical, macro-social, and macro-cultural amalgamations of cultural worldviews." This method acknowledges that modernity is not a single, universal process, but rather a multifaceted and diverse collection of experiences that occur in a variety of historical contexts and societies (Eisenstadt, 2000 p. 1). Abdurrahman's endeavour to establish an Islamic modernity that is ethically and philosophically distinct from the Western tradition is therefore consistent with the concept of multiple modernities. Abdurrahman's intellectual contributions are designed to establish a novel comprehension of modernity that is based on Islamic principles. He opposes the hegemony of Western rationalism and provides an alternative ethical framework that emphasises the moral development of both individuals and societies. This intellectual endeavour is a critical intervention in the broader discourse on modernity, advocating for the reinvigoration of Islamic thought in the contemporary world while highlighting the diversity and plurality of modern experiences.

4. The Dynamics of Modernity from the Tangible Entity to the Conceptual Essence.

Taha Abdurrahman argues that any nation or culture can achieve modernity by adhering to the fundamental principles of modernity. He contends that the integration of modernity into Islamic deliberation should be a natural outcome of the acceptance of modernity. As previously mentioned, this perspective is consistent with his perspective on translation. He compares the rigorous adherence to the norms of Western societies and the lack of creativity to faithful renditions of sacred texts that strictly follow their source material. Abdurrahman critiques these

qualities. He argues that the Islamic milieu's distinctive characteristics are at risk of being undermined by the rigorous integration of modernity. Abdurrahman (2006) differentiates between the historical actuality of modernity, which he refers to as waqia al-hadatha, and its essence, ruh al-hadatha, in order to circumvent such pitfalls. This distinction is essential to his approach to productively engaging with modernity. Abdurrahman delineates three fundamental principles that encapsulate the essence of modernity: universality (shumul), critique (naqd), and majority (rushd).

The Majority Principle (rushd) underscores the importance of individual possession of one's intellectual processes and beliefs, indicating a transition from dependence to independence. Abdurrahman posits that this transformation is reminiscent of his transition from taqlid (imitation) to tajdid (renewal). He contends that this principle requires both independence (istiqlal) from external influences and creativity (ibdaa) in ideas, regardless of whether they are novel or reconfigurations of pre-existing ones.

The necessity of adhering to logical evidence is emphasised by the Principle of Critique (naqd). Nevertheless, this critique may also originate from textual sources within an Islamic framework. Abdurrahman emphasises the historical use of the concept of itir (objection) by Islamic legal scholars as a precedent for critical examination. He regards critique as a critical component of the process of rationalising experiences that are associated with natural phenomena, societal systems, human behaviour, and history. This process, which he terms differentiation (tafl/tafrq), entails the dissection and analysis of the constituent elements of any subject under investigation.

The Principle of Universality (shumul) emphasises the dissemination of modernity across all societies and disciplines of knowledge. Abdurrahman perceives this process as a transition from the specific to the universal, from fragmentation to a more comprehensive comprehension. The principle of universality is based on two fundamental principles: generalisability and

extensibility. Modernity's aspiration to incorporate all facets of existence is reflected in the concept of extensibility, which recognises that comprehending any single component necessitates a more comprehensive understanding of the entire system. Generalisability reflects the capacity of modernity to disseminate its values, which include the promotion of human emancipation and technological advancements, beyond its original context. In this sense, the modernisation experiences of Islamic nations like Malaysia, Indonesia, and Morocco exemplify the efficacy and promise of Islamic modernity in integrating Western technology advancements while preserving a unique Islamic identity and ethical foundation. These nations exemplify various approaches on how Islamic communities might embrace modernisation according to their own principles, illustrating the pragmatic relevance of the philosophical concepts proposed by Taha Abdurrahman. Utilising these instances, the researcher may furnish tangible proof of the functioning of Islamic modernity across many contexts, integrating contemporary developments with Islamic tenets. These instances demonstrate that Islamic modernity, as conceptualised by Taha Abdurrahman, transcends a philosophical ideal and manifests as a tangible reality in many regions of the Muslim world. Countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, Morocco exemplify how Islamic cultures can effectively integrate contemporary technology, economic advancement, and scientific innovation while maintaining their unique civilisational character. In each instance, these states have embraced Western innovations according to their own criteria, assimilating them into structures that align with Islamic beliefs and practices. This illustrates the feasibility of Islamic modernity as a formidable alternative to Western secular modernity, asserting that modernisation does not need a divergence from religious and cultural tenets. These examples, accentuate the tangible achievements of Islamic modernity, demonstrating that the discord and rivalry between Western and Islamic modernity, as articulated by Taha Abdurrahman, is not only a simplistic dichotomy. It is a delicate negotiation in which

Islamic nations assimilate and adapt Western advancements while maintaining and maybe augmenting their religious and ethical identities.

5. Conclusion:

Abdurrahman recognises that it is neither feasible nor desirable to resist modernisation. He contends that the fulfilment of contemporary obligations necessitates the attainment of modernity in Muslim societies. Taha is of the opinion that the Quranic concept of qalb provides a more comprehensive and comprehensive epistemological understanding of reality than the limited scope of materialist intellects, as per Hallaq (2019). He juxtaposes the profound intellectual and spiritual insights of divine oneness with the superficial worldview of paganism. Therefore, Abdurrahman denies the assertion of conformist modernists that the Quran can be compared to human-authored texts. Abdurrahman also proclaims that Muslims must modernise their religion by adopting technology and innovation. Nevertheless, he emphasises that it is imperative to steer clear of the problematic courses taken by Western modernity in order to attain modernity in Morocco and other Muslim contexts. Abdurrahman believes that adhering to the three principles of modernity, majority, critique, and universality, provides a method for accomplishing this objective. Nevertheless, the principle of majority, when applied to its utmost extent in the Western world, resulted in an overabundance of individual autonomy, which in turn led to the degradation of religious practices and moral decay. In the same way, the diminished authority of religious texts was a result of the intertwining of critique and pure reason. Globalisation has also had a detrimental impact on the principle of universality. Abdurrahman's critique functions as a cautionary tale for Muslim societies that are striving to modernise without sacrificing their religious and cultural traditions.

References:

1. Abdurrahman, T. (2006). *Rūḥ Al-Ḥadātha: Al-Madkhal Ilā Ta'sīs Al-Ḥadātha Al-Islāmiyya*. Casablanca: Al-Markaz Al-Thaqāfī Al-'arabī.

2. An-Naim, A. A. (2008). *Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of Shari'a*. Harvard University Press.
3. Anderson, P., (1998). *The origins of postmodernity*. London and New York: Verso. Google Scholar
4. Arnason, B. T. (2001). *Modernity and revolution: A comparative analysis*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
5. Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
6. Bauman, Z. (1989). *Modernity and the Holocaust*. New York: Cornell University Press
7. Chakrabarty, D. (2000). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. USA: Princeton University Press.
8. Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. USA: Princeton University Press.
9. Eisenstadt, S. N. (2000). Multiple Modernities. In *Daedalus* (Vols. 129–129, Issue 1, pp. 1–1) <https://voidnetwork.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Multiple-Modernities-by-S.N.Eisenstadt.pdf>
10. Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Pantheon Books.
11. Gaonkar, D. P. (Ed.). (2001). *Alternative Modernities*. UK: Duke University Press.
12. Giddens, A. (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. United Kingdom: Stanford University Press.
13. Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America. *Nepantla: Views from South*, 1(3), 533-580.
14. Habermas, J. (1984) *The theory of communicative action vol. 1: Reason and the rationalization of society*. Boston: Beacon Press
15. Habermas, J. (1997). *Modernity: An Unfinished Project*. In M. P. Entrèves, & S. Benhabib (Eds.), *Habermas and the*

- Unfinished Project of Modernity: Critical Essays on the Philosophical Discourse of Modernity (p. 38). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
16. Habermas, J. (1987). *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*. Cambridge: MIT Press
 17. Hall, S., & du Gay, P. (1996). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications
 18. Hallaq, Wael B. 2019. *Reforming Modernity: Ethics and the New Human in the Philosophy of Abdurrahman Taha*. New York: Columbia University Press.
 19. Heidegger, M. (1977). *The question concerning technology and other essays*. Lovitt, W. (Trans.). New York: Harper & Row.
 20. Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. (2002a). *The Concept of Enlightenment*. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (pp. 1-34). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Originally published in 1947)
 21. Latour, B. (1993). *We have never been modern*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
 22. Lukács, G. (1971). *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*. Cambridge: MIT Press
 23. Mignolo, W. D. (2007). *Delinking: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of decoloniality*. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2–3), 449–514.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162647>
 24. Mignolo, W. (2011). *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Duke University Press.
 25. Ramadan, T. (2004). *Western Muslims and the future of Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press.
 26. Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.
 27. Sardar, Z. (1985). *Islamic Futures: The Shape of Ideas to Come*. Mansell Publishing.
 28. Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. University of California Press.