

# WESTERN CIVILIZATION IN THE ISLAMIC THOUGHT OF MALEK BENNABI

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## ABSTRACT:

The intellectual writings of Bennabi examined Western civilization in terms of advantages and drawbacks, explaining the right way to revive contemporary Islamic civilization by taking advantage of the positive aspects of Western civilization and focusing on the authentic civilizational construction of the rising Islamic civilization, and interacting with the contemporary facts and its progress. From the critical perspective of Malek Bennabi, studying, understanding and dissecting the virtues and shortcomings of universal Western civilization is an important threshold, which helps understand the causes of contemporary human problems in general and the current Islamic civilizational problem in particular. Actually, Islam, with all its sound human and civilizational values and high principles including peace, brotherhood justice, equality and love, can be thanks to the true believers' forearms a universal Islamic civilization that will become a safe haven for all humanity. Bennabi's ideas provided great hope and optimism, as he emphasized that no matter how much the Muslim world suffered from the scourges of underdevelopment and cultural, intellectual, political, economic, social decay and "colonizability", it could recover. This can be achieved if it adhered to the Quranic rule, calling for transformation, change and innovation from the human soul at home to the change of the world abroad, while abiding by the conditions of innovation and cultural renaissance, embodied in the construction of creative Man, investing in soil and taking care of time- that precious treasure.

Key words: Society, Renaissance, Islam, Reform, Human.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Praise Be to Allah and Blessings and Peace upon the Lord of Prophets, and His Family and His Companions and those who loved and followed them until judgment day.

The Arab Islamic Algerian thinker Malek Bennabi benefited from his study of mathematics and engineering in The Wireless Institute in France as regards organizing and refining his ideas and starting from them for observation and deep scientific and methodological analysis of problems and challenges relating to the third world in general and the Islamic world in particular. Bennabi's Arabic, African and Islamic origins, on the one hand, and his education locus and residence in France, on the other, represented a rationale for establishing his comprehensive and panoramic vision of colonialization phenomenon. More specifically, its two angles (East/Orient and west/occident) and its resulting deep analysis of civilization problems, tracking its generating factors, origins, its degenerating factors, and its revival details.

Malek Bennabi thinks that the crisis, shaking the Islamic World from Tangier to Djakarta, is essentially a purely civilizational one, whose sole solution lies in the establishment of a contemporary Islamic civilization based on Islamic minds and hands, and in the profit from the lands and riches, which God has endowed it with. This is along with taking advantage of the findings and achievements the Western civilizations have reached, in the various scientific fields.

Bennabi, the author of *The Civilizational Message*, attempted to alter the situation of the Islamic Nation and reform it from a stand of weakness to a strength one. He extensively explained this in his writings, which represent the literature the researcher benefited from in this scientific paper. The most important of which is «Problems of Civilization», which is a broad heading under which he wrote several books such as, (*The Conditions of Renaissance, The Quranic Phenomenon, Vocation of Islam, Memories of a witness on the century, The Question of Ideas in the Muslim World, Afro-asiatisme etc.*). He was concerned with the introduction and treatment of issues of: civilization, culture, renaissance, dependence, colonization while focusing on construction and not destruction, which is the most favourable for Muslim nation and civilization.

These works and other events and activities in which Bennabi took part emphasized the importance of the Muslim's high level of culture which would enable him to activate the human civilizational dialogue, since for Bennabi, culture is a necessary condition for international civilizational vision.

## 2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The challenge of this study is to try to identify international western civilization in terms of advantages and drawbacks, and to indicate the right way to revive contemporary Islamic civilization by benefiting from the advantages of international western civilization, focusing on its original civilizational structure and interacting with the present age characteristics and its progress.

## 3. THE RATIONALE BEHIND CHOOSING THIS TOPIC

The researcher chose this scientific subject for its importance; the phenomenon of universal western civilization is deeply rooted in history and has its own reality and current repercussions. It has also added many real achievements and contributions to humanity heritage albeit being at the same time at the origin of great chaos and crack in the world.

Likewise, understanding universal western civilization and identifying its positive and negative aspects, will contribute to the Muslim's empowerment to deeply understand this phenomenon and positively benefit from it in terms of boosting contemporary Islamic civilization while maintaining its cultural originality and specificity.

Accordingly, this scientific paper aims to find answers to the following queries:

- A. What is the concept of civilization to Malek Bennabi?
- B. How is the civilizing structure established according to Malek Bennabi's thought?
- C. What are the components of civilization for Malek Bennabi?
- D. What are the advantages of western civilization universality for Malek Bennabi?
- H. What are the disadvantages of western civilization universality for Malek Bennabi?
- I- What is the nature of the civilizational relationship established with Western civilization in Malek Bennabi's thought?

## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researcher has relied on a number of major research methodologies, the first of which is the descriptive analytical approach; considering the nature of the subject, the problem of the study and its questions. This research is classified among the descriptive studies related to a contemporary phenomenon -(the universality of Western civilization) aiming to reveal the current facts of the studied problem, record its characteristics and classification, and unveil its relationship with other variables, so as to describe the phenomenon in all its aspects in a thorough and comprehensive manner .

The second approach is the deductive research one, which aimed at drawing out, devising and ranking the findings and making recommendations resulting from the study to be a field for future probable studies.

In adopting these approaches, the researcher has adhered to the customary rules of scientific research approaches in terms of categorization of ideas, justification of opinions with evidence and quotes, and attribution of quotations to their reference.

## 5. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CIVILIZATION

Malek Binnabi considered Jamal Al Din Al Afghani as the forerunner of this nation and was greatly influenced by his thought. However, he differed from Al Afghani in many ideas. The latter was preaching the treatment of Muslims' backwardness and their enemies progress' through Islamic union and political reform (Mahmoud Awad, 1980, p. 87), while Malek Bennabi was calling for another solution in the form of a new approach in which Muslims edify a new, authentic civilization on their land (Malek Bennabi, 2004, p. 47). He believes that Muslims have been able to get politically liberated from Western domination but have so far been unable to break free from the control of Western civilization over them and their societies.

According to Bennabi, not only is Islamic wealth made and marketed by Western minds, theories, methods and machines, but Muslim armies are also using Western weapons and uniforms, espousing Western military plans and enjoying Western music (Zuhdi Al-Fateh, 1991, p. 38). From this perspective, Malek Binnabi believes that societies and Nations fail abysmally when they neglect defining their visions and goals and following a methodological plan to build their future.

Ignorance, procrastination and cowardice lead to one result, which is decay, subordination and backwardness (Ibrahim al-Faqi, 2008, p. 19-23).

Accordingly, Malek Bennabi stressed the importance of constructing an authentic Islamic civilization on Islamic lands by the Muslim individual who follows in his construction a purely Islamic method, custom and tradition. He finds it aberrant and a sign of ignorance to put up an iron curtain between the civilization we aspire to achieve in the Muslim world and modern civilization, and it is absurd to establish an Islamic civilization based on the products of Western civilization.

Thus, according to Bennabi, civilization is a set of material and moral conditions allowing society to rely on its own potential to rise and prosper (Malek Bennabi, 2004 p 49). Therefore, civilization for Bennabi is initially formed in the world of ideas and then becomes a social, political and legal project governed by framing moral controls that ensure meaningful guidance and continuous motivation for all individuals in society. According to Bennabi's belief, civilization is also a social phenomenon, which includes all different societal groups, guaranteeing them their rights, security, well-being and future.

The Islamic world has been piling the collectibles and products of Western civilizations for hundreds of years thinking that this is the most effective way to construct civilization, and actually this collection has achieved but the state of civilization - or – object-oriented/ corporality civilization". This result does not solve the problem of the Islamic world once and for all. The solution lies in constructing a real civilization in both qualitative and quantitative terms, just as was the case in Japan, Russia and China. These countries have truly constructed an authentic civilization and made their own path in the march to human civilization (Malek Bennabi, 2004, p. 48). Bennabi states: "The fact that the Muslim World has neglected this phenomenon has led to the outcome we are witnessing. The European costume, trumpet, drum, telephone and car have broken into the entire Islamic world for 50 years. However, the problems of underdevelopment have remained well entrenched in these countries, since instead of constructing a civilization, we wanted to accumulate their products, and the work of Islamic Renaissance over the last five years has not been a construction but rather a stockpiling of equipment. Unfortunately, the spirit of stockpiling and object-orientation that must be removed has been surviving" (Malek Bennabi, 2005, p. 50).

The equation of civilization for Malek Bennabi is composed of the following: (Civilization = Man+ soil + time), and based on this mathematical analytical form, the problem of civilization consists of three main problems: Man, soil, and time. Therefore, to establish a true civilization, we must not pile up goods and products, but we shall mainly solve these three problems. The conditions of civilization offered by Malek Bennabi in his equation do not exist in most Muslim countries. In fact, Man in this equation who is the Muslim, is hesitant, ignorant, confused, and dominated by destabilizing forces closely tied with colonialism. As for soil, which is embodied in the riches and treasures of Muslims, it is depressed and plundered by a legion of internal and external thieves. The last component of the equation of civilization conditions- time- is violated, wasted, untapped, and passing away like clouds through the vast Muslim masses everywhere. Based on these contemporary conditions throughout the Muslim world, it is difficult to construct a new Islamic civilization without all these elements' genuine rise/revitalization (Malek Bennabi, 2002, 30-31).

The equation of civilization offered by Malek Bennabi does not mean that human civilization can rise only thanks to the availability of these three elements combined (Man, soil, time), but rather a specific compound is needed, which once available, human civilization is constructed. This civilization compound is the factor that affects the integration of the three elements together, which is the religious idea that has always accompanied the process of civilizations creation throughout history (Ahmed Ali Weiss, 2010, p. 279).

According to history, before the revelation, the Arabian Peninsula was a barren desert inhabited by a Bedouin people wasting their time at petty issues. All elements of the equation of civilization were available at that time, but they were stagnant, piled up and unable to play their assigned role in life until the Quran was revealed to Prophet Mohamed (Blessings & Peace Be upon Him). and all these lazy, static and piled up elements turned into active, vigorous and united ones forming thus the first Islamic civilization that had remained dominant on the stage of time for successive centuries representing an icon of development, civism and dignity. The simple stagnant life of the Arab Peninsula inhabitants, after the spark of revelation, turned into a life full of audacity, activity and motivation, a life full of renewed fresh thinking that benefited from the first sciences of ancient times, and also invented new sciences in Damascus, Samarkand, Baghdad and Cordoba. (Malek Bennabi, 2004, p. 57).

Islam thus provided a psychologically, spiritually and socially appropriate climate for the growth and prosperity of civilization, a climate enabling its members (Muslims and non-Muslims) to launch their ingenious ideas and creativity to achieve modernity and renaissance, thus recovery, and to change the current ideas, chaos and indifference by enhancing new, healthy and straightforward situations and conditions.

Bennabi says, "Whenever one goes back to the human being past history over one's glorious eras of civilization or to the primitive stages of one's social development, one would find lines of the religious idea. Archeology has yielded some remnants of it, which the ancient Man dedicated to his religious rituals whatever they be.

Architecture shifted from the worship caves of the Neolithic age to the era of the majestic temples alongside with the religious idea that had characterized human laws and even science; thus generating civilization under temples. From there civilizations were rising to enlighten the world, prosper in its universities and factories and reflect political debates in its parliaments. The United Nations laws are essentially derived from theology and as for their alleged civil code, it is religious in essence.” (Malek Bennabi, 2009, p. 69)

Therefore, the religious idea provides Man with virtues; moral and spiritual values that will strengthen his resolve boost his energy and enhance his motivation, which will lead this human to exploit the other components of civilization. Thus, he exploits soil, which represents the source of his food, and invests time in productive efficiency.

Hence, these components will not be as wasted as dust, and the opposite is true: when this religious idea loses its intensity, impact and its ability to charge the spirit with faith and energy, it turns into an individualistic, cold and silent trend that does not exceed the performance of rituals and worship obligations. The message of civilization will end, as its components will be unable to enhance and revive movement (Malek Bennabi, 1986, p. 32).

## 6. THE ADVANTAGES OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION UNIVERSALITY

Western civilization dominates the entire world, which is clearly reflected in the proliferation of Western products in every part of the world. Western civilization has been able to unite the human problem, and thus is a successful and advanced universal civilization. In this respect, Malek Bennabi says, "Western genius has managed to achieve this unification since it has brought human ability to universal level, manifested in the life and political formations of each people, in its colors and its mental, artistic and social activity. Criteria and methods of behavior and thinking continue to converge to Tangier-Djakarta axis, and Washington-Moscow one." (Malek Bennabi, 1981, p. 259-260).

Western concepts and theories are thus gaining unprecedented global proliferation, demand and acceptance in various scientific, cognitive, productive, industrial, technological and communication fields, which is one of the natural consequences of the domination and ascendancy of Western civilization over other civilizations and peoples. Western civilization has bridged the distances between human masses around the world and created a single milieu in which challenges, concerns, hopes and goals are united in a single global environment and entity. The single human concern has become closely tied with human concerns in this globe.

The Western model that has prevailed in the world and turned it into a small village with close homes and rooms has created of quasi-common lifestyles and thinking. The world has started to « Americanize ». The spread of Western consumption model, embodied by the fast food, Western garments and the consumption of Western products that have engulfed the world, has become one of the most prominent signs of the tyranny of Western civilization over the different civilizations and nations in the world (Malek Bennabi, 2004, p. 40).

Despite the dominant nature of Western civilization, which Bennabi has clarified in his works, he did not forget to emphasize (through his consideration of the social/sociological historical angle) the success of Western civilization in exporting its cultural model and establishing it as a reference model. He believes that all humanity has enjoyed close proximity, unifying thus its challenges, problems, hopes and dreams. Under this closeness, the human destiny has become a common shared one. Nowadays, no country in the world can start setting up any new project without taking into account this important external/human factor (Badran Ben Al Hassan, 1999, p. 112).

Consequently, the individual and collective awareness of in the global community has shifted from the narrow scope to the vast and broad one .The formerly narrow circles of society have become broad global human ones. Thus, the justifications provided by Malek Bennabi for the universality of Western civilization are realistic from a social perspective, as he, through this sociological analysis, monitors the movement of this phenomenon, its global presence and its impact on history (Badran Ben Al Hassan, 1999, p. 113).

## 7. THE DRAWBACKS OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION UNIVERSALITY

Although the aspects of the universality of Western civilization was beneficial for many peoples and the masses, we must not lose sight of the negative aspects of this universal civilization. Western colonialism can be said to be the most prominent of these negative manifestations; all the weak and peaceful peoples of this world suffered from the scourges of this Western colonization from the 19th century to the present day.

This Western colonial phenomenon was initially an invasion aiming to dominate the mines, energy sources and markets of these peoples and countries. The Western man got rid of all his spiritual and human principles and was overwhelmed by the instincts of greed, avarice and selfishness (physical and quantitative instincts). Consequently, the law of the jungle/law of power overrode and gripped him, and all the lofty social values collapsed. In this respect, Malek Bennabi, comments saying "Europe has achieved miracles in the world of discoveries and science, but it lost ,in the depth of itself, that sense or dimension that used to cheer, entertain and support its people at ordeals because it used to tie them with God's existence . In fact, the civilization of the

twentieth century led to the loss or destruction the sanctity of existence in the spirits, culture and consciences. Sacredness was lost because it was considered a petty useless thing for us" (Malek Bennabi, 2005, p. 177).

The European has put everything sacred in this universe in the dustbin. From his quantitative perspective, nothing has a value or a price, and the only thing that matters is the tyranny of science, mind, and civilization capacities that have swept and removed all that is ethical, spiritual, and moral, subjecting everything to their pure quantitative criterion (Malek Bennabi, 2005, p. 178).

Accordingly, the European human being is in a state of complete separation and isolation from humanity. He abandoned it and with evil, as if he is not one of its members; he wants to own and rape the whole world. This state constitutes one model of Western mental models dominated by super ego and blind arrogance. This view has been distorting Western civilization and its philosophy toward Man and humanity (Malek Bennabi, 1986, 102-103).

West colonialization was the most dreadful of the world; the colonialist was merely an incarnation of tyranny, selfishness, greed and racism. He forged for, his interest and his civilization; most of what is relevant to colonized peoples and countries, changing for his own sake, historical facts. He made of virtues and morals a symbol of regression and underdevelopment, an old fashion and a bizarre issue incompatible with civism and civilization. One of his terrible deeds lies in his endeavor to exclude religion likening it to backwardness and an obstruction against the process of scientific progress. The Western colonizer has therefore falsified values and facts and has established new rules to link everything to Western colonial situation (Asaad Al Sahmarani, 1986, p. 121).

The Western colonizer has not only absorbed the marrow of material resources and spiritual values in colonized societies, but also followed various methods, strategies and ways that would lead him to colonize more countries and peoples, and deceive them with his poisonous marketing terminologies, expressions and ideas.

Western colonialism exploited the ignorance of colonial masses to shroud its slipped or tucked ideas into society, with a halo of silence and emptiness, so that the masses would indisputably not argue. The colonizer then increased his croaking voices using various means, and weakened the mental ability of the masses to judge the torrent of ideas that he had instilled in them in a logical, well-studied and discreet manner. (Badiazzamen Al Nawrassi, 1991, p. 29).

The political intrigues and conspiracy were so atrocious that they reached the stage of buying people's consciences, minds and hearts. Due to the power of money and influence, Western colonialism managed to have a handful of allies and friends from colonized countries who contributed in the achievement of its colonial goals and victory. In return, the colonizers removed all national elites and true minds, isolated them and exiled them so that they would not influence its colonial plan (Malek Bennabi, 2006, p. 16).

It is worth noting that the Western colonial plan was an intentional, well-planned and prudent one. As before stepping foot in the territories, Western colonizer started preparing for the Arab-Islamic East invasion, the nucleus of which started with Orientalism Movement, which studied the thought in this colonial region and managed to unveil the strengths and weaknesses, some time before the planned invasion. In this respect, Malek Bennabi says, "Colonialism did not manipulate our social capacity, as it deeply studied our psychological situations, and realized its weaknesses, thus obliging us to be at its disposal, like rockets directed at its wished targets. Actually, we cannot imagine how much it cheats to make us mouthpieces and pens with which it writes. It uses us all along our pens to serve its own purposes. It uses us because of its knowledge and our ignorance. Indeed, we have not scientifically studied colonization yet, as it so did, that it acts freely in some of our national and even religious attitudes whether we are aware of it or not. ." (Malek Bennabi, 2004, p. 159).

Along with weakening the intellectual aspect of colonized peoples, Western colonialism focused on fighting the religious deterrent of Muslim peoples and weakening it in various ways, and thus wanted to grip these peoples, absolutely rule and drown them with its purely material philosophy after it enfeebled their thinking and religion aspect.

The Islamic religion represents the impregnable fortress that boosts the Muslim personality values of pride, dignity and liberation, and weakening this impregnable fortress enables the colonizer to slip into the Muslim personality and impose his philosophy and values on it (Asaad Al-Sahmarani, 1986, p. 124-125).

Malek Bennabi asserts "Religion alone is the ultimate means of correcting the morals of the people that lost, in the midst of a historical crisis, every ethical concern, and if we find today something shouting inside the Islamic soul to enable it to change itself and abandon its generosity, which will be only Islam. Therefore, this impelling force/impetus was not spared from the attack of colonization, which imposed on it all kinds of restrictions and forms of censorship, so that it became easier for us today to open a gambling club or a cafe, than to open a Quranic school. It is even odder to notice that it is the administration which appoints religious officers such as

the Mufti or Imam as the mufti and Imam, following the colonists 'whims and not the Muslim community's decision" (Malek Bennabi, 1986, p. 116).

Western colonialism attempted, by all means, to create a sense of despair and frustration among colonized peoples, and deluded them that they could not rise up and to prosper again, thus drowning them in pathological despair that fully dominated the aspects of life. Peoples, spurred by colonists, began claiming their rights without taking heed of their duties. In the face of challenges and difficulties, be they important or petty, they fail to respond, think, make any effort or set off to strive to remove them immediately.

According to Malek Bennabi, the origin of difficulties in constructing contemporary Islamic civilization stems from the following. First, a defect in the world of individuals, which means that there are no men who have the ability and wisdom to cope with the various internal and external challenges facing their countries, which facilitates the colonizer's mission and helps him to plunder the country's wealth and resources, and bleed it dry. Second: A flaw in the world of thoughts, which means that there are no thinkers who can reunite the people through their creative ideas and set their goals, visions and future course, which might enable them to achieve the goal of expelling invaders and colonists, removing colonial ideas and substituting them with meaningful national and patriotic ones. Third: A defect in the world of things, which means that there are no resources, there is some inability for their prospection on the ground, or underground, which deprives them of their necessary material capacity to liberate themselves from colonialization and subjugation. Fourth: A defect in the above factors (a defect in the world of individuals, a defect in the world of thoughts, a defect in the world of things), which is the flaw in the relationships between these elements (Malek Bennabi, 2002, p. 21).

We therefore conclude that the universality of Western civilization is one, which is egocentric and lacks human dimension- A universality that deals with other nations and peoples in a marginal way and considers them unseen and ineffective. A patronizing universality in which science contradicts with conscience, as science drives them to engage and integrate with all humanity. While its poisonous, backward racist conscience does not allow it to advance and become more humane, compassionate, ethical and conscious. According to Bennabi, "It is well known that in every modern country, intellectual life, which includes a set of ideas and principles that are universally acknowledged, does not exactly match the practical life that includes reality, facts and political reality, in particular. To an extent that thought feels, when moving from the field of principles to the field of reality, that it is violating the boundaries between two worlds". (Malek Bennabi, 2006, p.144)

Even though most peoples have liberated themselves from Western colonialism, albeit this is ostensibly the case, colonialism remains and extends in the colonial territories in a hidden way, targeting, at this second stage, the loyalty of leaders and the influential members in society. In addition to the absorption of resources, various material and moral riches and the tightening of the political and economic grip on these peoples (Malek Bennabi, 2006, p. 10).

Our main concern in this respect is that the Muslim should remove his own and his nation's dependence, and to dispel silence and rosy dreams to replace them with hard, planned and purposeful work. Actually, every Man's movement is a movement of society and history together, and every silence and complacency on his part is his society and history's. The Muslim must therefore wake up from his long slumber and indulge in reviving and constructing his Islamic civilization, and preserve its religion, dignity, values and proper authenticity, benefiting from all the auspicious resources of other human civilizations.

Malek Bennabi says, "The renaissance of the Islamic world does not lie in the separation of values. It is rather the fusion of science and conscience, creation and art, between nature and metaphysics, so that it can edify its world according to its causes law and means, and according to the requisites of its purposes" (Malek Bennabi, 1986, p. 169).

## 8. COLONIZABILITY

Malek Bennabi stressed that Arabs and Muslims had struggled to fight colonizers as much as they could but they failed in return to know the reasons and factors that led to the presence of the western colonization in their countries. Neither did they manage to find the necessary means they had to provide, in order to fight and get rid of colonialism as soon as possible.

Colonialism is essentially not made by Islamic politicians, but it stems from the self which accepts subordination, humiliation and the servility of colonization, and helps it easily find methods and ways. No nation or people will survive colonialism unless they get rid of this spirit of colonizability. This result will not be reached through rhetorical speeches, literary, poetic or propaganda festivals, but with a serious psychological transformation in which the individual will be able to perform his national and social roles and duties with pride, competence and full eligibility. His sense of colonizability would then vanish and will be replaced with that of independence; he would not be satisfied that he himself or his homeland will be subservient to or plundered by the various colonial powers (Malek Bennabi, 2004, p. 33).

Muslim politicians are but a byproduct of their Islamic society, which they have sprung from, and led; if their society is developed and independent, politicians will equally be so and will not accept to be instruments in the colonizers' hands. If society is amenable to colonizability, this will naturally yield politicians who are mere subservient rides and cheap tools in the grips of colonization.

God, the Almighty says in Ar-Ra'd (Thunder) Chapter: « Allah does not change a people's lot unless they change what is in their hearts. But when [once] Allah willeth a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back, nor will they find, besides Him, any to protect. (Thunder :11)

The Quranic verse refers to God's (Sharia) law in his creation. A change of souls will lead to a change in events, history and time. If souls are correct in these counties, the situation of the ruling classes and politician will change and society will develop in all fields : ethics, education and teaching , methodological planning, rights , duties, empowerment of women, ensuring her future and other Renaissance areas, which will eventually contribute to progress and overall Renaissance establishment (Malek Bennabi, 2004, p. 36). Bennabi states that "The individual can form himself only with moral conditions, which are the civilizational will or faith in its general sense, and material conditions that are civilizational possibility, knowing that the will precedes possibility, because the will is formed in souls while possibility is a result reached over time" (Ibrahim Assi, 2003, 19-20).

According to Bennabi's perception of the cultural problem, civilization cannot be imported from abroad, whatever the degree of its renaissance and progress be, because social, ethical and cultural values cannot be imported, and the culture or society that needs them must generate these values. All that is needed is endeavor and hard work to reach the aspired civilization.

In that regard, Bennabi says, "No one may propose solutions and approaches, forgetting his nation's place and status, but he must harmonize his ideas, emotions, words and steps with the requirements of the stage his nation is witnessing. However, to import solutions from the East or the West is a waste of effort and a worsening of the situation as every act of imitation in this area is a kind of ignorance and suicide. The treatment of any problem relates to chronological and psychological factors resulting from a certain idea dating since its birth to the processes of social development within the limits of the chronological cycle we are considering. Indeed, there is a vast difference between the problems we study within the Western chronological cycle and the other problems generated within the Islamic cycle." (Malek Bennabi, 2004, p. 47-48)

## 9. DETERMINATION OF THE NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH WESTERN CIVILIZATION

Bennabi refuses that Islamic civilization lives on the margin of Western civilization, considering the allegation that it is a human civilization. Eventually, it is a civilization, whose progress and development principles were inspired from other successful human civilizations, including whiffs from golden times of Arab Muslim civilization. Western civilization still draws its renewed richness from East and West, and Bennabi believes that Muslims are required to establish their own civilization in line with the instructions of noble Islam, just as Japan and the People's Republic of China established their own civilizations (Nabih Faris et al., 1958, 214).

The process leading to the establishment of the project of genuine Islamic civilization entails, as Malek Bennabi perceives, requirements that facilitate the necessary reforms, so that this rising civilization will stand again on its feet and deal with other human civilizations in a way that does not abrogate or marginalize its peculiarity. It must abide by all these requirements, namely the Islamic religion, which contributed to the creation of the history of the whole world, with its ideas' effectiveness and originality. Therefore, if Muslims are willing to refuel their civilization, they must balance the authenticity and effectiveness of their ideas. For Instance, Ibn Al-Nafis, the Arab doctor, discovered blood circulation four centuries ago before the English doctor William Harvey, but his idea, despite its originality and authenticity ,was not effective in his time, as humanity needs long times before benefiting from new theories and applying them in the right practical manner (Malek Bennabi, 2005, p. 103).

The issue for Malek Binnabi does not lie in teaching or reeducating the Muslim what is mentioned in his Islamic faith, but teaching him the best way to use it and how effective it is in this life. Bennabi states that the reformers and preachers have failed to make this fundamental point, which can achieve a comprehensive reform in the structure of contemporary Islamic civilization. He adds in this regard "Even the preacher's words at the pulpit in the mosque have become a mere verbal event and not an effective social action" (Malek Bennabi, 2005, p. 123). Accordingly, Malek Bennabi calls for excluding any complex of belittlement, inferiority, abasement and subservience, and for dispelling the phenomenon of escaping responsibilities, duties, challenges and resuming work, recommending that Muslim Nation scholars be responsible, trustworthy and honest in delivering constructive advocacy and reform messages to the members of the Islamic Nation. And that their responsibility be a complete one, which is not tinged with the imperfections of selfishness, subjectivity and prevarication (Malek Bennabi, 2009, p. 63). Just as in God's words : « Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to

all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity. » (Al-Imran: 104).

To establish the project of Islamic civilization renaissance, Muslims must not stop at the stage of declaring the sanctity of Islamic values and principles. They must rather make them capable of coping with the age spirit, which is the intellectual climate that characterizes this period of time, which the Islamic nation is witnessing. For example, it is not definitely required to make worldly concessions at the expense of the Sacred. In fact, what is required is a serious return to the very spirit of Islam and the activation of the values of effectiveness and originality. Nowadays, the West is fighting, with its various war arsenal, Islam and Muslims and is diffusing among them its different mental poisons so that Muslims embrace, believe and follow them. One of these western toxins is to spread the rumor that Islamic ideas have lost their effectiveness. Unfortunately the West has achieved its goal and a great number of Muslims have been found fascinated by these false and poisonous ideas propagated by Western machines, and they are also preaching Western ideas and encouraging their adoption for their originality and effectiveness, which has markedly exterminated the specificity of contemporary Islamic civilization.

For Bennabi the "effectiveness" condition is that the person believes that he is the maker and engine of history. The latter is made day after day by purposeful action and not through theorizing and wishes. The problem of the Muslim, according to Malek, is that he thinks with the intent to speak and not to work, which led to the damage of science and waste of time and money (Mustafa Ashour, Islam Online website). Bennabi says, "If we want to translate our experience into ideas at work, we should respect the precepts of efficiency in this work" (Malek Bennabi, 2008, p. 28).

The Islamic community can dispel the poisonous mental image that the West is diffusing in all the continents by restoring effectiveness to contemporary Islamic life through providing work and food to all Muslim community members, and then the genuine ideas of the Muslim community will not be accused of ineffectiveness. The labor force (social power) shall be in a dynamic and active movement for livelihood and subsistence (Malek Bennabi, 2005, p. 117).

For the Muslims to establish the successful construction of Islamic civilization, they must also take advantage of the experiences of previous nations and civilizations that established their own original civilizations. For instance, People's Republic of China began constructing its own civilization in 1948, after the massive and extensive destruction caused by Japanese invaders. Likewise, Federal Republic of Germany, which also began in 1948 with the establishment of its own civilization in the aftermath of World War II, started with a capital of no more than 45 German Marks, equivalent to 26.24 US Dollars. Indeed, with such a little amount it began to build its economy and industry, profiting from systematic investment of time, soil and the German individual; hence the emergence of effective ideas, discoveries and methods that revived the particular German civilization (Ahmed Weiss, 2010, p. 281-282).

Malek Bennabi, the theorist of cultural vision, realized the importance of the coexistence of different civilizations and cultures, as he saw the world heading in the twentieth century toward a wide and universal culture including all humanity, which is no longer confined by the borders of one territory or country. Thus, he was one of the first to call for a dialogue or interaction between cultures and civilizations, even before the concept of globalization and the new world order was universally introduced. He believed that backward civilizations should get civilized and rise to compete with advanced civilizations on equal terms. Moreover, these advanced civilizations should transcend to the lofty level of humanity, and by the activation of this civilizational vision introduced by Bennabi, colonialism and colonizability will be fused in an environment that calls for peace and global coexistence. Bennabi says, "It is known that the first act done by a particular society in the process of self-change is conditioned by the completion of the social relations network; the latter is the first historical act done by society at its birth. For that purpose, the first act done by the Islamic community was the charter between the prophet's supporters and immigrants. The origin of the social relations network that allows a given society to perform its shared common work lies in creating its organic structure, and when the selves are inflated, relationships become corrupt, and joint action becomes difficult and impossible. Then, debate emerges not to find solutions to problems, but to find evidence and proof" (Malek Bennabi, 2009, p. 27-34).

Bennabi emphasizes that Arab Islamic culture can play leading and advanced roles in the international civilizational scene, if it draws its values and its moral, educational, practical and aesthetic philosophy from the inexhaustible spring of the Holy Quran. It was the source of the universal message that is valid for all human beings at all times and everywhere. (Malek Bennabi, 1986, p. 95). In this respect, he says, "Our global battle will be as successful as our internal battle" (Malek Bennabi, 1984, p. 140). He added in another instance



"Our vision and thinking must be in line with the size of the whole world, and we must try to bring Islam to all the possible world, even if it is in the universe of Mars" (Malek Bennabi, 2005, p. 144).

Therefore, the nation must rise right now. It is never too late and will not be, as per god's permission, as long as there is belief and it is possible to refuel it through glad turnout for the Quran and pure prophetic tradition and rejection of procrastination and pathological postponement, so that time will not pass and we become at back position of civilizational convoy, and Man will waste his time and resources without investment and without the Muslim achieving this divine succession (Caliphate) by populating this earth and spreading safety and security. God, Be He Exalted, says "Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah." (Al-Imran: 110)

## 10. FINDINGS

After this research effort, we can draw the following substantial conclusions:

10.1 Malek Bennabi and his reformist Renaissance ideas are the product of the longest colonial experience of the Muslim community; it is the experience of Algeria, which France had occupied for more than 130 years. He was concerned with this cause, its details, circumstances and consequences, aiming to elaborate on the proposals, solutions and recommendations that ensure the liberation of Islamic Nation from this colonization, which secretly continued to exist after its evacuation.

10.2 Malek Bennabi did not content himself with the concept of civilization theoretical framing, but he linked it to its constituent elements that represent the basis of its establishment: (Man, soil, time).

10.3 Civilization is considered a purely human product and the backwardness and dependence the Muslims are experiencing nowadays they are due to their spiritual and psychological motives, to their mindsets and personalities which are amenable to colonization and to their stagnant negative colonial ideas which caused them more deterioration, reluctance and lack of true effectiveness.

1) Civilizational rise requires a fourth component making the three ones tied and effective. This very component is the religious idea, which also plays the role of valorizing the human and liberating him from the grip of society and the myth of power.

2) Western civilization focused on the realm of things (matter and mind), while the first Islamic civilization focused on the world of ideas (the doctrine monotheism – against paganism, worship of idols, and material).

3) Western civilization was only concerned with its material interest, which is an indicator of its near collapse and the end of its civilizational term. In spite of its advanced levels in sciences, arts, industries and so on, it really deteriorated in the spiritual, moral and charitable sides.

4) The true civilization is one that invents, produces and creates its products. However, the nations that import their products from other civilizations are accumulating and amassing nations and not prolific or creative. Indeed, consumption is laziness, stagnation, disability and sterility, but achievement and creativity need a well-studied and planned work in which interact the fundamental civilization components (Man-soil-time-religious idea) in a correct and productive manner.

5) Religion is a generator of every civilization.

6) Western colonization diffused poisonous thoughts in the colonized minds, which weakened their own ideas and led the colonizing ideas to deepen, and this resulted in a considerable civilizational decay and difficult renaissance and social prosperity.

7) The Muslim world suffers from great ideological, political, economic and social decay and regression, and in spite of that, it can, through its own private abilities and resources to rise up again and construct an Islamic contemporary civilization distinct from others thanks to its comprehensiveness, humanitarian characteristic and charitable universality.

8) If Islam, the strongest civilizational factor, which protects the individual and boosts its immunity against any form of colonization through the deterrents it diffuses, is weakened, civilization will easily collapse and end up plundered, violated and decaying.

9) The project of rebuilding contemporary Muslim society is based on the religious idea, which is the basis of any cultural change, and which represents the means with which we can fight obscurantist ideology and all forms of heresy, sorcery and various deviations.

10) The expected Islamic civilizational renaissance will be based on the pure Islamic idea because of its validity, humanity, universality and balanced spiritual and material components.

11) Islamic civilizational construction is not carried out through the accumulation of Western civilization products, but through the special organization of its original components (Man, soil, time, religious idea) and its proper exploitation in the desired renaissance process, the eradication of the existing civilizational problem, keeping pace with modernization and openness while preserving authenticity and specificity.

12) The current Islamic civilizational problem is due to two factors: Western colonization, the external factor, which caused the decline of Arab Muslim societies, and the second: Colonizability, the intrinsic factor, which relates to the defeatist spirit and self that accepts underdevelopment, subordination and reluctance,

13) Universal western civilization rejected religion, belittled it and gave too much importance to science and reason, which made it torn between its totalitarian science aims and what its sick and selfish conscience imposes on it.

14). Contemporary Islamic civilization fell behind in taking off because of the decline in religion role, individuals' colonizability, their lack of proper and intentional planning to revive civilization and break stagnation, dependence and regression.

15). Contemporary Islamic civilization must open up to and coexist with other world civilizations and break the deadlock and closure taking into consideration « give- and- take » principle and not take only, and this requires both reaction and interaction, need and initiative.

16) Contemporary Islamic civilization must be selective in terms of what it takes from other world civilizations, taking into account its authenticity and values, and ensuring not to be subject to dependence and assimilation.

17) The elites and leaders in Muslim society must be the torches for light, right guidance and effectiveness, and to consciously and fully assume responsibility, and must not expose their consciences, minds and hearts for sale ; indeed ,thanks to them the nation reaches the target of true influence and required change and ultimately civilization revival.

18) The cultural contact between East and West is not achieved through imitation, fascination and cloning, but rather by selective guidance and the attention drawn to the conditions and circumstances of the present historical moment, and the establishment of cooperation and upscale and civilizational complementarity.

19) Civilization and society are born again through internal change (from negative to positive), as it is the real motive and incentive of civilizational and historical movement: shifting from paralysis of stagnation and accumulation to the effectiveness of proliferation and production.

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1- Inviting researchers and postgraduate students to consider the encyclopedic ideas of Malek Bennabi and to examine his ideas and theories in their research works.
- 2- Inviting the Islamic Nation's strategic reformers, preachers and planners to draw from Bennabi's relevant propounding in dealing with the problem of contemporary Islamic civilization, and to make the best use of his proposed solutions to get out of this civilizational crisis.
- 3- Proposing educational syllabi at schools and universities shedding light on Malek Bennabi's ideas and debating his scientific works, which treat the challenges of Islamic and International reality and look ahead to the future in various fields.
- 4- Inviting research and scientific institutions to organize more scientific conferences and activities aiming at re -reading the encyclopedic intellectual heritage of Malek Bennabi in a careful and conscious manner

along with the publication of the theses and research papers having dealt with Bennabi's personality and ideas and providing them to the relevant civil society's institutions to profit from.

- 5- Preparing and executing various information programs in the different classical and new mass media interested in presenting Bennabi's renaissance ideology in a simple way for all international masses categories.

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