

Question of Jealousy and the Horizon of Achieving Coexistence - Current Status and Challenges -

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Abstract:

The concept of coexistence or living together is a result of abstract intellectual orientations seeking realistic achievement within ethics that converge and harmonize different perspectives, opinions, and diverse values amid various and conflicting systems in many cases among culturally diverse societies. This underscores the importance of embracing the principle of coexistence with others by first recognizing the self, leading to the realization of mutual respect between the self and others within what is known as the diversity of cultural identities and shared frameworks among individuals or different human groups, regardless of their races, genders, and religions. This calls for coexistence to be achieved through a degree of connection and collaboration despite the challenges and stakes present in today's world.

Keywords: Coexistence - Understanding - Self - Other - Diversity - Tolerance - Ethics.

Introduction:

The world today is experiencing a multitude of social, economic, and political changes that emphasize the importance of understanding and embracing intellectual and knowledge-based contents. These contents form a rational discourse that positively interacts with ongoing cosmic transformations and leads to a fresh approach towards globalization and democracy within the context of human thought. This approach relates to the civilization race and the cultural specificity of nations, moving away from the notion of a fixed self, where individuals solely revolve around the idea of defending their own identity, exalting its components without considering it as a main gateway to achieve a proper approach with others. This approach should foster transcendence and

contemplation of alternative solutions that lead to peaceful coexistence between parties.

Achieving this cannot be accomplished through vague slogans that serve as mere intellectual marketing mazes. Instead, it requires delving into the essence of the concept, returning to its original unity between contemplation and action, which fosters the rejection of conflict and contradiction among peoples: "The phenomenon of rejecting the other based on ignorance is widespread among cultures and is often rooted in negative attitudes, starting from exclusion, marginalization, self-aggrandizement, fear, racism, cultural arrogance, and culminating in cultural and temporal distance, freezing the image of the other¹". The accumulation of complexities in the world, coupled with unforeseen complications of extremism and unconscious violence, has led to intense and illegitimate conflicts, possibly influenced by natural human conflicts, causing the loss of value in rights, plunging them into darkness, stagnation, frustration, and complexity at various levels.

Despite globalization being historically recognized as a movement aimed at bringing peoples and nations closer together, it has also been marred by numerous misconceptions that require correction, scrutiny, and addressing to achieve frameworks for peaceful coexistence. As nations aspire to establish their own economic, social, and political systems, there is a need for rectification and examination of certain moments in history that merge contemplation and action in an unbreakable timeframe, not subject to any pause that could delay the aim of reducing infinite conflicts. This is especially crucial for our Arab world, which is going through a critical transitional phase that calls for reordering priorities to achieve more effective civilizational progress.

Will the bet on the optimism of openness to the world prevail in the face of the stagnation of self-isolation?

To what extent can we convincingly achieve the principles of coexistence in the midst of a complex human reality?

The emotional conformity path of humans is a model of the transformative upheaval for many manifestations of life they resort to and to which the self aligns in an attempt to mend the deep-seated wounds within. These manifestations carry the fragility of thought and emotions, which should only rise by taking genuine reasons for engagement or empathy with others in the presence of safety ensured by a shared foundational dialogue that leads to a true

¹-Tahar Labib, "The Image of the Other: The Arab Looking at and Being Viewed by the Other," Arab Unity Studies Center, Arab Sociological Association, (n.d.), Beirut, 1999, p. 39.

vision, allowing for the inclusion of realistic and appropriate questions that align with the standards of thought and its subjects. This can establish a healthy relationship between human existence and the continuation of harmonious existence, balancing freedom and commitment.

Human nature is inherently bound to diversity and differences, as humans are nothing but diverse peoples and tribes with various customs and traditions.

The essence of humanity lies in recognizing and harmonizing these differences, where diversity should only be considered as one of the rights that express the foundation and balance of humanity. It takes the form of the aesthetics of coexistence, considering that "participation, at all times, retains a personal character not only because it presupposes an individual's action but also because instead of leading us to a general and abstract principle, it leads us to another living and conscious being, recognizing its presence everywhere, and we become a group with it, retaining our ties of friendship¹".

Through a process of dialogue that acknowledges the legitimacy of differences, coexistence can be achieved by promoting a culture of dialogue, tolerance, and accepting the other. The Quran provides evidence of the characteristic of diversity in the verse: "And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed, in that are signs for those of knowledge²". Moreover, it gives a precise and highly eloquent term with no place for the concept of "the other" but a term that represents the human race, and that is "Al-Nas" (people), which is frequently mentioned in the Quranic chapters. The eloquence and precision in using the term "Al-Nas" lie in its expression of the genus "humanity," which cannot be fragmented or categorized, with no corresponding term, and its purpose is to point to universality and inclusivity, referring to all people without any additional description, differentiation, or distinction³.

Ibn Khaldun pointed out the meaning of human diversity as a prominent characteristic when discussing the differentiation among individuals in society, saying: "Social status is distributed among people, arranged in layers that extend upward to kings who have no higher authority above them, and downward to those who do not possess any wealth or influence among their fellow beings. Between these layers, there are multiple social strata. God's wisdom in creating

¹ - André Lalande, "Philosophical Encyclopedia," Translated by Khalil Ahmed Khalil, Awaidat Publications, Beirut, Paris, 2nd Edition, 2001, pp. 944-945.

² - Surah Ar-Rum, Verse 22.

³ - Zaki Al-Milad, "Epistemological Excavations in the Meaning of the Other," Unpublished Manuscript, p. 13.

humanity is aligned with their livelihoods, managing their interests, and ensuring their continuity. The human species cannot exist and endure without cooperation among its members for their mutual interests. It has been determined that an individual cannot exist and endure in a presumed state, and even if this occurs rarely, their survival would not be valid¹.

The question of jealousy and the recognition of the other:

The prevailing characteristic in many societies today is the prevalence of violence and the rejection of the other in a way that threatens coexistence. This calls for the importance of opening new horizons for coexistence by reconsidering the reality of certain concepts related to the existential essence of humans, both in the past and the present, such as self, other, and jealousy, in their most precise intellectual and cognitive meanings and manifestations.

"These words, despite their frequent use today, do not necessarily mean that their meanings are clear and stable, and that those using them fully understand their essence. Rather, it should be acknowledged that these words have remained ambiguous... People talk about the existence of the other, etc., but without posing the question of what the other is and who represents it... And how do we arrive at an authentic meaning of jealousy? Who is the other, apart from all preconceived moral judgments? What is the nature of the relationship between the self and the other? And why does one desire to be recognized by others? What justifies the respect of others towards us²?... "Before all that, who is this other we are talking about, and what preoccupies us with regard to it?

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Do we want to discover ourselves through seeking the existence of the other, considering that knowing the other is part of knowing oneself, and self-knowledge is not complete without knowing the other? Or do we want to know who this other is, where we differ, and where we share similarities? Or do we

¹ - Ibn Khaldun, Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad bin Khaldun al-Khadrami, "Ibn Khaldun's Introduction," Dar Al-Qalam, Beirut, Lebanon, 1984, p. 120.

² - Zuhair Khweidi, "The Concept of Otherness: Between Rejection and Recognition," Al-Hiwar Al-Mutamaddin, 10-11-2009.

<https://www.independentarabia.com> Accessed: 11.03.2023.

want to say that we are better than this other or that, to reassure ourselves and be grateful for what we are?

These questions and others should be asked when discussing the meaning of the other, as we all represent the self. The other, to us, is the self to those to whom we have given this description. The self, to us, is the other to those who observe us¹.

According to the philosophical perspective, the other is renewed by considering the other as the self that is not actually me, as Sartre distinguished. Defining the other may be an impossible matter according to the Aristotelian view, as a thing is either identical to itself or different from it. Amidst this argument, with variations in its use, there are two fundamental aspects to be highlighted and emphasized in understanding and dealing with the concept: the moral and human aspect on one hand, and the intellectual and cultural aspect on the other. The moral perspective denies categorizing the concept of the other among humans based on color, race, or language, and rejects and confronts those who accept or adopt such notions and ideas, and those who speak or lean towards them... Therefore, the concept of the other is defined in the intellectual and cultural aspect, and it is specifically framed as the concept that primarily refers to significant and decisive intellectual and cultural differences between individuals or human groups. It does not concern minor, superficial, or transient differences. This constitutes a new and essential component of human rights when adopted in the sense of recognition and respect rather than isolation, exclusion, and self-centeredness, which hinder our understanding of the other. Instead, we tend to despise and scorn their religion, beliefs, politics, ethnicity, lifestyle, country, language, etc. Therefore, embracing tolerance as ethics and principle would lead to a horizontal and integral solidarity for all of humanity².

Tolerance and the philosophy of common ground in the context of religious and cultural diversity - the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar as an example.

The practice of tolerance has been prevalent for a long time in discussions about religious freedom, and the term "tolerance" originates from Latin, first used in the sixteenth century, and was employed by ancient classical writers to express the idea of acceptance or enduring in relation to the freedom of belief.

¹- Zaki Milad, "Cognitive Excavations in the Meaning of the Other," Edited by: Ibrahim Ahmed, Proceedings of the International Forum on Tolerance, Dialogues on Religion and Language, 15-16 April 2013, Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Mostaganem, Algeria, pp. 12-14.

²- Zaki Milad, "Cognitive Excavations in the Meaning of the Other," Manuscript, p. 14.

The differences that some consider as a source of danger can, through dialogue, become a source of deeper understanding of the human existence. Pluralism, at its core, recognizes the existence of diversity and variation, rejecting reduction and comparison between religions and cultures. It positively distinguishes between individuals and communities "Bertrand Russell stated that our perspectives in life and philosophy are influenced by two factors: first, our inherited religious and moral views, and second, the scientific approach to research. With some degree of racial, ideological, and cultural diversity, civilized individuals are more likely to accept others and create a space for peaceful coexistence, making wars and conflicts exceptions rather than the norm. Civilized individuals stand out in their openness to different ideas and opinions¹".

Therefore, diversity is the foundation of human interaction that comes with the necessary competition at various levels, providing the impetus for construction, renewal, and empowerment to achieve progress on Earth through harmony, coexistence, security, and peace.

Discussing the issue of diversity and its connection to the discourse of tolerance may shed light on some current challenges, emphasizing the importance of understanding the factors of change and activating interconnected areas of influence, especially in our Arab world in general and within the contemporary Arab intellectual framework in particular. Cultural diversity is essential in any civilization, and predicting a future comprehensive culture is plausible. However, this can only be achieved through embracing the frameworks of adaptation with others within the boundaries that foster common living and the principle of peaceful coexistence. This balance within human societies remains a central challenge in dialogues seeking to establish a proper approach towards self and others, considering that most conflicts arise from lack of tolerance, often stemming from ignorance and resistance to different opinions.

"History tells us about numerous ancient civilizations that emerged at different times and in various parts of the world. Each civilization played the role assigned to it in shaping human history. Among these civilizations, the Islamic civilization stands out as the most rooted, complete, and enduring, resisting decay, neglect, denial, and hostility throughout the ages. This timeless Islamic legacy highlights aspects of Islamic glory that are truly admirable. Therefore, discussing the concept of the Islamic civilization means discussing a

¹ - Edgar Lirin; "Introduction to a Politics of Man," Edition du Seuil, Paris, 1965, p. 92.

contemporary civilization that always embodies the characteristics of this noble Islamic faith, promoting intellectual pursuit, knowledge, and action in every era and place¹".

Emphasizing reconciliation and tolerance with oneself before others, "one must fully recognize that studying Islamic civilization entails understanding a central moderate path, spanning from its inception to the present day, combining the virtues of all civilizations within the context of Islamic teachings. Such an approach firmly rejects extremism in any form, be it racial, religious, ideological, or intellectual²".

Despite the concept of the clash of civilizations being acknowledged among different human races and nations, Qatar, as an Arab Muslim country, has achieved a remarkable milestone in the 2022 World Cup, making a significant impact on the region and its people. It has brought about a qualitative leap by effectively conveying a message to the entire world. Through effective means, Qatar succeeded in changing preconceived and erroneous stereotypes about the Arab world and Islamic countries

"Through its cultural fusion, Qatar has managed to prove that:

Most disputes between countries are fabricated and rely on selecting information from false media, forged history, suspicious and inherited cultural backgrounds, implanted stereotypical images, preconceived assumptions, selfishness, and greed. We have evidence that when the world came to Qatar, they found nothing worthy of criticism or disagreement. Qatar did not leave anything to provoke sensitivity or annoyance. Thus, it has demonstrated the clear fact that people, with their diverse cultures, can coexist peacefully in one melting pot based on exchanging experiences, knowledge, and mutual benefits³".

It's a global political, economic, and cultural challenge that Qatar has experienced. It represents a real and immediate challenge to the Arab world's ability to innovate and adapt to the global reality while preserving its cultural uniqueness, which can achieve balance within the Arab and Islamic context. This challenge also empowers the Arab world to embrace encounters with other cultures and emphasizes the importance of absorbing knowledge to establish rationality that positively interacts with the ongoing global transformations.

¹ - Bertrand Russell, "A History of Western Philosophy," Volume One, translated by Mohamed Fathi El-Shinqiti, Cairo, 2011, p. 46.

² - Mr. Ahmed Al-Makhzangi, "Islamic Civilization, Its Moderation, and Position from the Other," PDF, p. 17. Website: <http://olibray.medi.u.edu.my/mediu.09883>

³ - itself

Respect for the concept of distance and the ability to learn from others is crucial in this process.

Between religion, identity, citizenship, and shared destiny:

Each civilization undoubtedly has an internal coherence that shapes the values and perceptions governing specific behaviors of particular individuals within their own environment. This is commonly referred to as identity, which is usually defined by fundamental elements such as religion, language, culture, and shared history.

Indeed, the topic of identity and citizenship has occupied a broad space within the realms of thought and culture, encompassing various studies from politics, law, sociology, and beyond.

The concept of identity can be defined within the prevailing definitions of many thinkers, focusing on highlighting the element of difference and distinction. In many cases, identity revolves around the self, which plays a significant role in forming a cognitive understanding of the essence and nature of things. Hassan Hanafi has suggested that the concept "of identity intertwines with essence linguistically, as something is what it is and not something else, based on logical consistency. Additionally, the concept of essence carries the same meaning, and all three concepts originate from the same moral root¹".

"Citizenship, in its simplest sense, expresses an individual's political affiliation to an entity other than national or religious affiliations. These affiliations do not necessarily align but intersect, forming both general and specific aspects. Citizenship, in this context, refers to the state of a national entity aiming to achieve a common will in building a balanced nation where individual and collective rights and duties are harmonized²".

If citizenship is an area of openness to multiple identities, it should also be open to other identities. It is not reasonable for identity to confine itself and certain parts of its heritage, even if it relates to changing customs. Based on the preceding discussion, it seems essential to reframe the concepts of identity and citizenship, considering the existing relationship and structural connection between them, especially in our current time:

Some believe that: "identity is not just a private life, but a deep background of group belonging and the need to defend itself. We can philosophically assume

¹ - Suhair Al-Salah, "Cultural Harmony in the 2022 Qatar World Cup." Website: <http://www.aljazeera.net.blogs> (Accessed on December 22, 2022, at 13:30).

olibray.mediu.edu.my.medieu.09883

² - Hassan Hanafi, "Al-Huwiyya" (Identity), Supreme Council of Culture, Egypt, 1st edition, 2012, pp. 10-11.

that the line between private ownership and private life is the thin thread between "having" and "being." Private ownership is outside ourselves and encompasses the world where we negotiate with others about boundaries. On the other hand, private life is fundamentally linked to who we are at our core and what we believe in. Any approach to the issue of private life based on the constants of identity will lead to conflicting interpretations because it always requires a mixing of the group identity and individual identity¹.

Throughout history, both in ancient and modern times, it has become evident that we should not be content with narrow perspectives and individual considerations when it comes to identity. Understanding the self as a separate individual from the community is a misconception. Even though various new schools of thought aim to reflect the scene of each civilization and society "one of the deepest misunderstandings we've held (as Arabs and Muslims) is the belief that our identity can be solely expressed as individualistic.

In reality, our collective identity is an essential requirement for belonging, as defined by the concept of the modern state. The notion of identity, just like sovereignty, territory, science, and nationality, was not invented by religions but by modernity. Therefore, anyone resisting modernity based on identity alone acts within its framework without being able to escape its logic².

The reality of democracy and current challenges in achieving the path of coexistence:

The Arab world is no longer immune to the major events that characterize the global stage, especially under the dominance of the liberal democratic model. Today, it faces a real crisis in the actual practice of the slogans that claim justice, human rights, and the pursuit of global peace. Hence, the critical analysis of the value of Arab policies advocating democracy for a better life exposes the shortcomings:

"It does not reflect those desired values. Democracy in the Arab world today is practiced in a brutal manner, as it reinforces obstacles and restrictions on exercising the true rights of citizenship. One of the prominent constraints is the widespread autocratic control in all aspects of social and political life, where

¹ - Jamal al-Din Atiya, "Nahw Fiqh Jadid lil-Aqaliyat" (Towards a New Jurisprudence for Minorities), Dar al-Salam, Cairo, 1st edition, 1423-2003, p. 80.

² - Fathi al-Maskin, "Ma Hiya al-Hayat al-Khasa? Aw al-Din Aw al-Khassasa?" (What is Private Life? Religion or Privacy?), July 2019. [Website: <http://www.mominoun.com>]. Accessed on May 11, 2023.

democracy becomes a facade hiding dictators ruling over their people for their own interests, without any regard for the principles of democratic governance¹". This supports the notion that images of despotism and tyranny have become apparent in all aspects of political life, and mentalities of control govern the people. It is deduced from this that: "Despotism in political life is based on something without any legitimate basis, and the essential characteristic of despotism is the exclusive or sole authority in governance without legitimate justification²".

This confirms the increasing gap between the self and the other, which is a matter that cannot be seriously addressed and understood except by examining it in light of reality, experiences, and data available. In other words, theorizing about democracy without considering and acknowledging reality is meaningless and futile. While the concept of the Declaration of Human Rights is associated with the modern and contemporary European thought and the notion of universality, it is crucial to also take into account the diverse realities and experiences worldwide:

"The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the concept of universality in this context refer to inclusiveness. The rights concerned are universal in the sense that they apply to all individuals, irrespective of gender, race, wealth, or any other factor. Human rights are inherent to every human being, disregarding any other considerations. Philosophers in Europe in the 18th century highlighted two fundamental rights from which all other rights emanate: the right to freedom and the right to equality³".

Despite the aspirations of the world towards a broader understanding of freedom beyond the democratic system, it remains based on the principles of free will and open pluralism. However, it should be noted that the formulation of this system is merely an expression or idea directed to others, rather than an absolute embodiment of it. This contradicts its ultimate goal of achieving peaceful coexistence between different individual and collective models.

The deterioration of democracy is evident today in many countries, particularly in Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, and the Caribbean, where various attacks on the rule of law have taken place.

¹ - Fathi al-Maskin, "Al-Huwiyya wa al-Hurriya Nahw Anwar Jadida" (Identity and Freedom Towards New Lights), Jadawel for Publishing and Distribution, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st edition, 2011, p. 14.

² - Abdul Qadir Bouarfa, "Al-Arab wa As'ila al-Madi, al-Hadir, wa al-Mustaqbal" (Arabs and the Questions of the Past, Present, and Future), Ibn Nadim Publishing and Distribution, Beirut, 2016, p. 31.

³ - Al-Khalifi, Mohamed Hilal, "Mafhum al-Istibdad wa Taghyir Alayat wa Taksirih" (The Concept of Despotism and Changing Mechanisms and Consolidating it), Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, 2006, p. 284.

Additionally, most Arab countries have historically marginalized and disregarded minorities, not recognizing them as equal partners in the nation and in the common cultural and historical heritage. This attitude contradicts not only the previous democratic system but also the values promoted by Islam, such as brotherhood, tolerance, and others that unite humanity as a whole.

Philosophy and the aesthetics of coexistence:

Coexistence has become an elitist topic, especially in recent times, where the voices advocating for the universal approach of openness to others, particularly in the field of philosophy "The development of science and methodologies in contemporary society has made it essential for philosophy, if it seeks to engage with its era, to create new mechanisms that express its current understanding and consciousness. Tunisian thinker Fathi Al-Turk's philosophy, like other new philosophies, calls for philosophical, political, and social openness. Al-Turk is distinguished by his keen interest in the relationship between heritage and the crises and backwardness experienced by the Arab world today. What sets him apart from other thinkers and researchers in this field is his openness to diverse approaches, including critical rationality, which he employs in his research on heritage. He advocates for an open philosophy built on diversity and difference, a critical and transcending philosophy that embraces pluralism and promotes rationality¹".

In his approach to the topic of cultural diversity and philosophy, Fathi Al-Turk believes that:" the cosmic aspect, concerning the philosophy of daily life, lies primarily in the existential experience at both the individual and collective levels. This entails a search for meaning that allows the world to become inhabitable. Through this perspective, Al-Turk emphasizes the significance of the existential journey, seeking to find a sense of purpose and belonging that enables coexistence and harmony among individuals and communities²".

He calls for cultural and civilizational dialogue to overcome the state of violence in international relations, affirming the importance of considering the compatibility of cultural diversity with the established cosmic interconnectedness of humanity, given that the prevailing characteristic today is war. Diversity is not limited to multicultural and multiethnic societies but also encompasses monocultural societies and the existing contradictions within

¹ - Al-Jabri, Mohamed Abed, "Al-Dimuqratiyah wa Huquq al-Insan" (Democracy and Human Rights), a book in the newspaper, Issue 95, UNESCO, pp. 150-153.

² - Khan, Jamal, "Fikrat al-Wahdah wa Maqouliyat al-Tanaww" (The Idea of Unity and the Reasoning of Diversity), Readings in the Thought of Fathi Al-Turk, edited by Ahmed Abdel Halim Atiya, Publications of Philosophical Papers, Dar Al-Thaqafa Al-Arabiya, Cairo, 2008, pp. 70-71.

contemporary societies. The significant challenge, according to Al-Turk's belief, revolves "around whether humanity can preserve its diverse customs and cultures while simultaneously aspiring to coexist with dignity¹".

And He fears, through this, the transformation of the philosophical term "cultural diversity" into a mere ideology, as he understands it vividly in everyday life. Here, Al-Turk calls for what he calls the "beauty of communal living" and presents a definition for it: "The human's capability to change social nature and transform it into a conscious and organized communal living, where the coexistence is organized based on the principles of humanity and love²".

Thus, Al-Turk desires "the effective contribution of philosophy in making communal living accessible to everyone, regardless of their origins, free from any form of prejudice.³ He aims to avoid any inclination towards dominance, oppression, or persecution. At this turning point, philosophy bears its revolutionary aspect, manifested in accepting the other as a friend through the pedagogy of tolerance and coexistence, as stated by Mohamed Hedidi⁴".

Conclusion:

In the midst of the debate on self-realization and existential liberation, humanity is inherently bound to live independently, shaped by its own perception of the world that drives it towards survival and continuity. Perhaps one of the most crucial challenges today is the quest for the possibility of coexisting harmoniously with others, regardless of their identity, culture, or beliefs. The diversity of aspects in life cannot be separated, and human mediation, within its intellectual and cultural pluralism, presents a key approach for living together, serving as a main avenue to express promotion in understanding and respecting others. Through building a path of goodness and peaceful coexistence. Conversely, inclining away from this approach would undermine the human perspective, which is founded on principles of tolerance and dialogue, believing in a set of values that seek unity among all religions and philosophies, adhering to social standards that fundamentally reject violence and savagery in all their forms.

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³ -Fathi Al-Turk, "Jamaliyat Al-Aysh Al-Mushtarak" (The Aesthetics of Coexistence), Dar Al-Wassiti Publishing, Tunisia, 2012, p. 05.

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