*Hichem Djaït*

# A QUEST FOR THE VALUES
# IN ISLAM

The subject of values presents certain dangers. Why not the moral philosophy of Islam or even the ethics of Islam? The term "moral" seems traditional, if not antiquated; it connotes the ideas of good and evil, a long list of commandments and interdictions; it evokes a restraint of the individual, something limiting and narrow. The word "ethics" is more acceptable; it is closer to the idea of a system of values, a global vision of the moral life, but it may also express a normative process. Max Weber speaks of Islam and other religions as being ethical religions, that is, "a complex of commandments and bans whose transgression is sin," and he imputes this particularity to prophecy that "produces a centralization of ethics." The term "values" is often used today, and it corresponds better to modern sensitivity preoccupied with the search for dispersed or connected values on which to base its behavior and its image. We know that the "theory of values" began with Western moralist philosophers as a substitute for the old morality, experienced as submission, and to introduce the idea of a personal morality, the

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essential being to conform to freely-chosen values. However, we may also speak of collective values or even of values attached to a particular line of conduct that they establish, for example, "martial values," "tribal values" or "fundamental values." A value may be isolated, like a Platonic idea, put into a package or even a system. It remains none the less abstract, since it is itself the product of an abstraction and rarely a creation. To look for the values of a culture, a religion or a society is to devote oneself to an operation of extraction from a multitude of data. It is truly a quest, one that allows for personal interpretation in selection from the time that one becomes sensitive to one line of values rather than to another. Thus is presented the problem of the divergence of values within a single ethical system, especially if it is as vast as that of Islam. My purpose here is not selective. It is to go in search of the values of Islam in their variety while trying to find a guideline and also locating them at various levels of comprehension.

## KORAN AND HADÎTH

What are the values emanating from the two fundamental sacred texts of Islam?

Two types or two levels of values exist at the heart of the religion of Islam, in the Koran and in the *hadîth*: a nucleus of certain values, affirmed and confirmed, and relatively restricted in number. They are often imperative and make up the essential of the moral life required of *homo islamicus*. Then there are more flexible values that are quite numerous, going so far as to cover most of human behavior, that are a view of life or a series of points of view of human existence. The Koran contains the first kind of values, that become the foundation for the obligations of the believer; the *hadîth*, one of the most gigantic compendiums of values, norms and visions that the human mind has ever produced, has assembled the second level in its invincible multiplicity. The Koran obliges the believer to believe, to pray, to give alms, to fast, and it presents as essential values divine transcendence, the superiority of the sacred over the secular, of the future world over the present one. It requires a justification for the gift of life through the act of

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adoration. In addition, it organizes human relations through an intense morality based precisely on belief in God and in future life. The metaphysical comes before the ethical but postulates it and requires it as its complement. From this come the urgent appeals for good deeds, the simple and clear distinction between good and bad, the bad being sin or disobedience (*ma'siya*). We may think that the positive values are less clearly specified than the interdictions, as though the divine command were more preoccupied with purifying the earth of evil than radiating values. This may also arise from the fact that in order that the religious person may penetrate the most refractory layers of interhuman reality it is more efficacious to fix imperative interdictions than to incite the cultivation of positive values. However, the Koran constantly associates good deeds (*al-sâlirât*) with the profession of faith, thus closely associating metaphysical and ethical requirements. Positive incitations abound, diffused and dispersed in the text: mercy for others, fraternity between believers, respect for obligations and human life; compassion for orphans, the weak and the poor, justice. Above all that, in a more ethereal region of moral life, elevated and fine attitudes are proposed, rather than imposed, for the disposal of the believer: values that are effective because of their appeal, that refine, cultivate and comfort the best part of ourselves. They are to love: *sabr, rahma, hudâ, tuma'nîna, haqq*, Islam itself. The first values are pedagogical, aiming at the pacification of human relations, at raising them to a higher degree of humanity. The second would have us enter into the divine sphere [1]: they are less pragmatic and seek the crystalline way of the purity of the soul, a preeminence that is not heroic but pacific. Along with asceticism and the love of the face of God, they represent the spiritual heart of Koranic ethics. As for the interdictions, they are perceived by their imperative nature concretized in this life by punishments and in the other by chastisement. They provoke the anger of God which, in Islam, is the other face of his mercy. It is forbidden to kill, to fornicate, to drink, to steal: secular in the sense that they are intended for the organization of human existence, punishable and legislative also, they are nevertheless religious, because they

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[1] They are often attributes of God, but some are implicitly intended for man, and they scintillate for their appeal.

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link crime to sin, aiming in all cases at the right way and the extinction of evil. We may also affirm that these bans are based on implicit positive values that have long been admitted by the monotheists, namely, absolute respect for the life of the other, for his honor and his property, that here is more than a necessary condition for social coexistence but also a value in itself sanctified by the will of God: "To kill a soul unlawfully means to kill all men in their entirety," says the Koran. The human being is sacred because in his finiteness he encloses infinity and is guaranteed by God: here is a concept that goes beyond simple social fact and takes on a metaphysical-ethical significance, itself taking root in the specific humanism of the Koran that concretizes an entire vision of the adventure of the Being and the place of man in this adventure.

This system becomes complex and humanized in the *hadîth*. Whether the *hadîth* is the word consigned to the Prophet or the totalization of the profound experience of the *Umma** of the first two centuries is rather unimportant. Let us say, instead, that it was necessary that the *hadîth* be the tradition of the Prophet for its credibility, authority and interiorization. In any case, it was and is an emanation of Islam in its development as well as the place for the collection of the most desired values. It was, in every sense, the complement of the Koran; it remains so, and that is the essential: a complement in that the *hadîth* covers practically all human activity and establishes a solicitation, an immense field of values. Here all is delicacy, refinement and tenderness. While the Koran mixes anger and pity, violence and mercy, tradition is modulated in infinite convolutions of goodness. It is the most comprehensive sum of the human experience, the most accessible to the lament of man in which the Prophet, magnified by the Koran as remote from all austerity, clothes himself in the most profound tenderness. The most diverse range of the values that involve life, on the edges of strict and restrictive ethics, unfold in the *hadîth* with an unequaled richness. The method used here is that of putting into a small inscription an apparently minor value, such as delicacy of the soul, that becomes the access to damnation or salvation. That act of kindness, of good neighborliness, of filial devotion, erases all sins. Conversely, the torturer of a cat is con-

* The asterisks indicate words found in the glossary at the end of this article.

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demned to Hell (*hadîth al-Hirra*). Islam in formation was endowed with a complex ethic, extremely refined, enclosing the complexities of life and its failures. It plumbs the human heart to track its intention, bent on the discovery of the ethereal purity of the soul. However, one *hadîth* may be opposed to another: only the whole gives ethical sustenance. While the Koran postulates and presents an external entreaty, that of God, with its accents of mercy, the *hadîth* tends to construct a sensibility, an internal entreaty, an ethical perspicacity, an atmosphere, but both unite to raise high the walls of moral conscience and in the long run forge a typical personality of *hòmo islamicus*, a conduct and the content of a super-ego.

It is perhaps through their postulation of the hereafter, that is, an eternity for being and not for nothingness, more than through their monotheism that late Judaism—excluding the Sadducees —, Christianity and Islam exact a demanding moral life, at times rich and at times mutilating. In general, they were able to offer broad bases for human enlightenment. Modern morality would be inconceivable if it had not passed through a demanding religious ideal, that is, through an acknowledgement, a surpassing, a negation or a synthesis instead of through some form of primitive spontaneity. That is essential.

The fact remains that at the metaphysical level Islam like Christianity is *a priori* an unrealizable ideal, since they both establish a division between the blessed and the damned at the high level of eternity; that the experience of the Being, exteriorizing itself through its internal dialectic, envelops a duality that expresses only the duality of good and evil in this life or the one the entire Being goes through, and that does not end in tranquillity but in an agonizing eternity. This postulated eternity is secured only through the subduing and education of our original barbarity, through our moral apprenticeship, at the time of our ignorance. Here let us note that Islam, as Rousseau later, believed in a native goodness or neutrality—a *fitra*—that the complexification of the instinct throughout history, of the fact through the chance event, deviated and perverted, and that it is the task of religion to redress.

That Islam reformed and educated the ancient Arab peoples marginalized in the history of the Orient, at that time the center of the world, is a fact vindicated by all the newly-converted, a

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textual fact, but Islam saw itself as a religion of law, that is, addressing itself to all humanity and even more to the immense multiplicity of the social strata of a vast universe. This last point explains why religion surpasses philosophy, Christ surpasses Philo and the prophet Avicenna, according to the latter's own testimony.

## ISLAMIC DOCTRINE AND THOUGHT

Moslem law considers itself the development of the principles given in the Koran and the *hadîth*, a detailed and precise codification of the cult and of human relations. The pratical side of things is much more present than theoretical justifications. Thus it is rare that we find in the classic works of *fiqh*\* a chapter dealing with ethics as such, but the fundamental, permanent and definitive values of the Koran and the *hadîth* find in the *fiqh* their concrete application and are thus in the forefront of all legislation. The *sharî'a*\* has therefore been formed as the ideology of the Islamic social body, and it has greatly contributed to the construction of the Islamic way of life of which it has been said that, more than anything else, it has founded the identity of the civilization to which it refers. Now, a civilization tends to make values of the characteristics of its existence, magnifying and purifying them.

However, in the category of ethical reflection we have the remarkable exception of al-Ghazzali, so perfectly representative of Islamic thought, pure but theorized and rationalized. The third volume of *Ihiyâ 'ulûm al-dîn*\* (*The Renaissance of Religious Sciences*) is entirely devoted to a thorough research into the values of Islam and develops in the ethical, moral and psychological spheres. There can be no doubt about the transcendent foundation of Islamic morality: the prospect of salvation, the central idea of *ma'siya* (meaning disobedience and thus sin). All is in the hands of God, who foredooms us to good or evil. Submission and sin come from a trascendent world in which everything is worked out in advance (*khazâ'in al-ghayb*\*, *khazâ'in al-malakût*\*), but it is a matter of a predisposition given by God to the human heart (*qalb*), of a natural disposition to the two opposing paths of salvation and perdition. Within this framework, enthusiasm for good deeds may

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be efficacious. Al-Ghazzali gives directions for this *riyâda*, that is at the same time method, exercise and therapy for the soul, and he sets up at the same time the list of virtues and vices (*fadîla* and *âfa*). Furthermore, it seems we must note the implicit distinction in his work between the essential and what is necessary for the way to salvation, that is, submission to the fundamental divine commandments and the wider sphere of the search for a form of perfection. He stresses the second point, from which comes the double imprint of asceticism and mysticism in his design in this part of his work. Rarely does he address himself to the average Moslem, and when he does it is to remind him of a properly Islamic moderation (*i'tidâl*). More often, he points out the way of a demanding asceticism to the novice following the ascetic-mystical road (*murîd*). Yet we are not dealing with a manual of asceticism because of the generality of the proposed values. They are not explicitly revealed in their purity, unless to identify them in the detailed table of virtues, but they underlie the entire work. If it happens that he enumerates them under the heading of salutary acts (*munjiyât*), particularly patience, fear of God, hope, poverty, renunciation and pacifism, for example, the development of the discourse considerably enriches them. Everything is referred back to the basic category of *dîn* (religion), including the secular virtues that complete the *dîn*, embellish it and become part of it. What is really valuable is the other life for which the *dîn* prepares us, that is, the sacred horizon, so that values that are good in themselves are also put into the perspective of the supreme value. From this comes the affirmation of the value of renunciation of desires and impulses. It is better to confine oneself to hunger, poverty, celibacy, and we must strangle rage, resentment, pride or anything that resembles vanity. It is not really a question of a monastic ideal to be attained, because al-Ghazzali does not really break with the conception of man in society and in his proper place, and he rationalizes what he says. Neither does he propose an ideal but an asceticism or a rule of conduct for the Moslem in the community, which seems to him to correspond to the deep spirit of Islam, of a synthesized Islam. Here we can see the seeds of puritanism that will develop later, but nothing is as foreign to al-Ghazzali as a legal puritanism, that is, one leaning on the secular arm. His ethic is a search for interior life that acts through its appeal, that is very close

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to a search for values that are always subject to the prospect of salvation. However, these values produce a type of man who is taken with perfection, a delivered, pacified and unburdened man who rejoins the early forms of Moslem asceticism mixed with Sufism, the one of Hasan al-Basrî and Uways al-Qaranî who are given as models in the works of hagiography, except that with al-Ghazzali asceticism is codified, rationalized and inclined to a morality of moderation. He reminds us, however, that Islam is a severe ideal, while for more than a century there has been a tendency to show its pragmatic and anti-ascetic side, its disposition to guide the most concrete life.

This severity is directed in al-Ghazzali to the interior conviction of the Moslem. It takes up a position in the later puritan movements in the appeal to the application of the *hudûd Allâh*\*, from Ibn Hanbal to Muhammad b. 'Abdalwahhâb, up until the contemporary forms of Islamic restoration. To be sure, with all these men who tried to re-Islamize society through the reanimation of the system of sanctions, there was a desire for purity and a keen sense of the transcendence of the *sharî'a*: the *hudûd* proceed from the will of God. Certainly also the farther one was, from the early age, the more a legalistic type of monastic aspiration, implacable in the writings of Ibn Taymiyya and, later, in those of Ibn'Abdalwahhâb. There is something rather like a fierce grandeur in them but something that breaks with Ghazzalian interiority. It is striking that this type of reform has sought first of all to be embodied in the area of customs but remains in the sense of a restoration ispired by early Islamic idealism. Contemporary Islamic renewal seeks the repression of error as a symbol of reunion with the *sharî'a* in its most unrefined and external regulations. In a certain sense, it is a challenge to the world: if Islam is identified with cruelty, one will love this cruelty through love of Islam. However, a religion is not judged by nor identified with its legislative arsenal of self-defense but rather by its ethical aims and its basic aspiration. This aspiration is not absent in the most recent reformers, but it hardens into the belief in legal force as well as symbolic force. It runs up against modern ethical inspiration that is not based on an absolute incarnated in a text.

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## SECULAR VALUES IN ISLAM

Koranic teaching strongly rejected those which, among Arab values of the *jâhiliyya*\*, were most clearly opposed to it. The Koran desired to found a new metaphysical-ethical world and succeeded in imbuing a gigantic historical complex with Islam. Islamic society, as well as the State, civilization and culture, submitted to the religious nucleus. However, secular values, that is, other than properly Islamic, survived in this complex or were grafted onto it. They are not of religious inspiration, but they are part of Islam-history or Islam-culture. The same is true of Arab values, of which only some were rejected by Islam-religion, and of values integrated from foreign civilizations or secreted by the movement of ideals and life. The *adab* and poetry, for example, represented the collective memory of the Arabs and, secondarily, that of the Persians. They also reflect the creative effusion of groups or individuals living in an Islamized context. Different is the current of speculative philosophy of Platonic, Aristotelian or Plotinan inspiration; different also is the line of Persian and Hindu wisdom, personified by Ibn al-Muqaffa'; and different are the values of the political machine whether in practice or in theory (cf. the political ethic of the *marâyâ al-Umarâ'* [mirrors of the princes] that in its realism admits its breaks with the ethics of the *sharî'a* made up of "stable and definitive values.") This is without counting the immense diversity of values in the micro-milieux. To the same degree with which Islam crowned a world that was more and more unified and complex, partial ideologies could only proliferate. Arab poetry of the first century, stubbornly, with force and magnificence, carried with it Bedouin values, some of which religious Islam integrated into its ethical vision. The heroic values of courage were especially drawn toward the *Jihâd* (holy war), and thus it is that the Koran proscribed all cowardice in combat and likened it to a sin against God, inasmuch as it was a combat on the side of God's way. Tribal ties, always respected, remained alive for some time in the first urban centers of tribal structure (*Amsâr*) and even longer among the marginal Bedouins of *Dâr al-Islâm*, in Arabia as in the Egyptian *Sa'îd*. However, Bedouin values of blood ties at times ran up against purely Islamic norms; what Arab poet does not lament that the men of his tribe do not lend him support or take refuge in

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Islamic norms, "as if God had created only them to obey him"?

Inversely, we shall never know if the values of honor concerning women come from Islam, from ancient Arabism or from the combination of the two ethics, because if the Arabs, after Islam but also before Islam, appear supercilious on this issue, the Qurayshites refused in the beginning to accept the ban against adultery.

Values tied to collective pride—*hamâsa, hamiyya*—are denounced by the Koran, but Islam has converted them to the service of God and the solidarity of the community (*Umma**). However, they existed even previously; Islamized, they are openly magnified: Islam is the religion of *tahammus*, affirms al-Jâhiz, that is, of a communal, fiery heroism. How many Arab values—not necessarily Bedouin—have been assumed by post–Koranic Islam, especially through the *hadîth*? That of *hilm* (self-control), eloquent expression, *hayâ'*—male modesty or respect for elders—for example. How many Arab values have survived alongside Islamic values and sometimes opposed to them? In the *futuwwa**, for example, or more simply in the social immensity of the city as well as in the tribe, or in the deepest layers of the individual self.

Values coming from the ancient Persian civilization are more difficult to isolate, if only because they are not based on an easily-recognizable nucleus and have evolved in complexity. Nevertheless, they are basically courtly behavior and the foundation for the "distinction" of courtiers and scribes (*kuttâb*). In al-Jâhiz we see them disputing over properly Arab values and more definitively isolated in the ideal of the perfect man as presented by Ibn al-Muqaffa' in the *Kalîla wa Dimma* as well as in the two *adab**.

The literature called *adab* itself appears above all as a cumulative pedagogy of secular ethics on a basis of ethnio-cultural diversity, predominantly Arab. The concern for seeking values or conduct is everywhere in it, as well as eclecticism. It is the same with the Apollo-like tone that breaks with the Dionysian values of the Arab *hamiyya* but on the other hand unites with the even tone of the *hilm* and the *muruwwa*, that are also Arab. In the *adab* literature we do not find only a historical heritage, since it is also the reflection of the experience of more than a century of urban and court life, through which appears a delicate ethical exigency but also a moral hedonism. This is why we find values in it that coincide with those of the *hadîth*, or, later, the ethic of Al-

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Ghazzali, and this is because the culture evolved within an Islamized context and theorized Islam could not remain indifferent to the climate of civilization and culture.

We find this dialectic at work in philosophy, which it would be incorrect to consider as a subject completely foreign to Islam, however much its references are secular and drawn from Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus. In the field of ethical research, Miskawayh is the most thorough representative. He is one of the rare philosophers to have written treatises on ethics, of which the *Tahdhîb al-Akhlâq*\* is fundamental for the entire history of the culture of Islam because of its objective, its procedure and its later influence. The originality of Miskawayh lies in the fact that he remains a philosopher in method, inspiration and vocabulary while keeping to an Islamic, indeed, Arab, line. In his work the religious perspective is synthesized with the philosophic method. Influenced by the Aristotle of the Nicomachian Ethic rather than by the one of *Politics* but also by Plato and Plotinus, he selects what he uses from the Greek philosophic material. We find again in his writing the ideas Supreme Happiness and Pure Intellect but also of Supreme Good experienced through the contemplation of God by a soul released from its body. He draws the meticulous analyses of Aristotle toward a mystical sense, rejects Aristotelian dualism of supreme happiness achieved by the soul and the body at the same time, vacillates through Islamic spirituality toward Platonic monism in which only the soul survives. Then in the dilemma to save either the hereafter or the soul-body dualism, both postulated by Islamic orthodoxy, he opts for a hereafter relieved of the body.

However, it is because of his acceptance of values that are properly Islamic and Arab, alongside or inside his approach that he is singular. With the *Tahdhîb* he synthesizes the *falsafa*, the *adab* and Islamic morality. The idea of a supreme happiness of contemplating the face of God already had some correspondence in the Koran, but in Miskawayh the Arab values of the *Muruwwa* have merit like the Islamic ones of justice, continence and the entire retinue of the ethical ideal of Islam. As Arkoun notes, this is what explains why Mâwardî, Ibn Hazm, Ghazzali and Râzî took so much from Miskawayh. In the values of the *Tahdhîb* they recognized a common ground that could be called a synthesized Islamo-Arab ethical culture. Ghazzali even borrows the concept of

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*Tahdhîb* and a way of reasoning on its moral content. However, what distinguishes the two approaches, that of Ghazzali and that of Miskawayh, is that the first bases his ethic on the deeply religious basis of submission/transgression, while the second does not start from a sacred principle but from philosophical reasoning, which postulates the idea of an ontological choice. Perhaps the basic value of Ghazzali is the serenity of the soul that submits to God (*al-nafs al-râdiya**) and that of Miskawayh is an intellectual and subdued serenity. One proceeds from a profound and reflective piety, the other from the attitude of a sage. This serenity is without a doubt the least outstanding value of Islam as a religion and a culture, but it is perhaps the superior value and certainly the finest. It differs from the smiling serenity of Buddhism in that, charged with transcendence, it is imprinted with great seriousness, and it turns its back on the multiple forms of anguished piety.

VALUES IN SOCIETY AND IN HISTORY

If the solid nucleus of Islamic values come from the Koran, that is, from the favored moment of the Revelation, other systems of values, as we have seen, derive from other sources and have been elaborated or fixed at various moments. It may be that the period from the fifth to the eleventh century represented the conclusion of this gestation and that Ghazzali's work responded to a demand for a synthesis of the various currents and moments. With Ghazzali, and after him, a system of values is established that is recognized as the Islamic conscience, a vast ethical ensemble in which the religious element predominates. Too vast, perhaps, contradictory on its margins, thus leaving a latitude for individual choice, and whose coherence is saved by the affirmative power of the Koran but also by the profundity of historical experience. In fact, it is rare that a civilization surrenders so fervently to ethical norms as to build its daily existence on them. Now, Islamic civilization has institutionalized to the maximum its own ethic exigency, imposed by history at the beginning, then interiorized and finally idealized. Furthermore, this happened on a vast scale of space and time, not on the scale of a small community. Faith, law, ethics, religious and social life have had a unifying and structuring effect, but perfection

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itself of the Islamic achievement was paid for at the price of a closing up during the later centuries as well as a very strong singularity. Certainly, this world was always in movement as is proved by the manifestation and extension of popular mysticism with the emergence of the figure of the charismatic saint. However, it was less a development of the ethic than the explosion of the emotional, in which Sufian sublimity was trasformed into expression that was overwhelming because of its very richness.

When we say that Islam serves this world and the next at the same time, that it is *dînwa duniyâ*, it is to this late, coherent, integrated and perhaps regressive community to which we allude, but it is also to the powerful inaugurative moments of the far-off past whose exemplariness was idealized. It is also true that the Koran is at the same time filled with the strength of the appeal for another life and a legislator for this world. Fundamentally, however, in the Koran as in all classical culture, *dîn* (religion and Day of Judgment) is opposed to *dunyâ*, the ephimeral realm of human desire and agitation. When scholars such as al-Mâwardî have written on the *Adab al-dunyâ wa-l-dîn\**, it has been to show that one could extract a successful ethic for this life that would *nevertheless* be compatible with the essential perspective of salvation.

The coupling of the two notions on an equal footing is a concern for modern Islam confronted with the challenges of which we are aware but which has certain correspondents in the historical experience of Islam. However, the century-old insistence on the pair *dîn/dunyâ* implies the theoretical recognition of the change in perspective brought about by modernity since the *Aufklärung* in favor of this life and is the equivalent of a rupture with the sacred base. In the West, through successive stages, values have been abandoned, there have been remodeling and conquests. On one hand, we see a metamorphosis in the Christian ethic in the sense that the values of charity and compassion continue to exist in their religious justification. On the other, we see new formulations and an appearance of radically new horizons in the sense of the exaltation of liberty and individual and life values. These are tempered by the heritage of a secularized Christianity, transformed into a conscious humanism.

The modern Moslem world found itself confronted at an early

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stage with the conquering European spirit which exalted its true or false values claiming for itself an attitude of dynamism vis-à-vis existence and history. At that time, Moslem immobility or fatalism was spoken of. The Moslem answer was one of both resistance and welcome. Regarding doctrine, reformism advanced the idea that a renewed Islam was capable of resisting such a challenge because of the ambivalence of its values simultaneously directed toward *dîn* (the intimate part of faith and the individual ethic which is bound to it) and *dunyâ* (the world and history, no longer in the former sense of intrasocial human relations).

Later, as modernism advanced, as the mental, ideological and social universe became more diversified, the problem was posed in different terms. For the most part, traditional Islamic societies refer explicitly or implicitly to the system of Islamic values such as they have been defined, practiced and interiorized, indeed, changed in form during fourteen centuries of history. However, the unconscious aspect that is inscribed in personality and behavior predominates over the conscious aspect of discovered, named and claimed values. The Islamist current that rises against the collapsing of these values appears as a recovery that occurs not through a sifting or enrichment but through a reactualization of law and ritual. It calls for a restoration of banished values before the daily disrespect of Islamic ethics. It is a matter of a strong reaffirmation that would exclude syncretisms.

However, the fact remains that if a re-reading of the religious context in a modernist sense has been able to present itself as a manner of ruse and surrender, and if conciliating modernisms offer a lame compromise, the search for values in the Islamic sense and in a sincere spirit remains the order of the day.

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## GLOSSARY

*adab*: Arab humanities originally intended for scribes.
*Adab al-dunyâ wa-l-dîn*: title of a work by Mâwardî that means "an ethic for this life and for the next."

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*al-nafs al-râdiya*: A Koranic expression that gives the idea of a pacified soul, serene in the acceptance of its destiny and the return to God. A central concept of Islamic ethics and mystique.

*fiqh*: Moslem canon law as elaborated in the early centuries by the jurists or *fuqahâ* based on the Koran, the prophetic *hadîth* and personal reflection.

*futuwwa*: tendencies or movements within post-classic urban Islam (fifth to eleventh century, and after) extolling and cultivating the Arab values of courage and chivalry.

*hudûd Allâh*: regulations of God concerning punishment. This is a divine domain that man is not to interpret or stop. At the same time, orders and laws of God.

*Ihiyâ 'ulûm al-dîn*: title of a famous work by al-Ghazzali. It means "the renaissance of religious sciences."

*jâhiliyya*: the pre-Islamic phase, compared to an age of violence and ignorance, Islam being considered as the inaugurating moment of liberty.

*khazâ 'in al-ghayb, khazâ 'in al-malakût*: expressions belonging to mystic terminology, referring to the destiny of men as hidden and fixed in the secret of the unknowable.

*sharî'a*: the way of Islam. The entire Islamic law, both a cultural and legislative system, fixed by the jurists and traditionalists. For the mystics, it is the exoteric way that completes the esoteric method (*tarîqa*). The *sharî'a* became part of Islamic societies and fashioned their way of life.

*Tahdhîb al-Akhlâq*: title of a work of ethics by Miskawayh that may be translated as "purification of the moral way."

*Umma*: nation. The Islamic community that is understood as historic and religious solidarity. Founded by the Prophet at Medina in an impetus to surpass the other solidarities, composed at first of Moslem Arabs, it later included all those who embraced Islam.

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