

Islam and Contemporary Western Thought: Islam and Postmodernism

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The two books recently authored by Ernest Gellner and Akbar Ahmed on the subject of Islam and postmodernism have attracted interest among Muslims and non-Muslims. To me, it is a landmark in the continuing dialogue between Islam and the West. Has the rise of postmodernism in western philosophical thought meant an easier accommodation of Islam into contemporary western society, or is Islam intellectually at odds with the epistemological foundations of postmodernism? These are some of the important questions addressed by Gellner and Ahmed. In view of the increasing cultural and intellectual globalization, not to mention the economic side, taking place today, the place of Islam in contemporary thought and society can no longer be safely isolated from "western" thought and culture.

Unlike previous encounters, where victory was decided through military confrontations, or in times of peace, where coexistence is maintained through the separation of borders limiting influence and interaction, ours is a time when cultures and civilizations are interlocked. Hence, it is of the utmost importance that Muslims define their thought and philosophical position clearly in relation to the West, if they insist on maintaining their identity and way of life in a world that is increasingly westernized. Part of the Muslim ummah's legitimacy derives from the sovereignty of its individual nations existing in the world community and from the intellectual strength of its religious and philosophical position. Muslims cannot compromise on that if they are to maintain their viability as an ummah in the contemporary world. Recent intellectual dialogues on Islam and the West, therefore, should acquire an important place in the Muslim minds and agenda if they are not to witness the further erosion of Islamic values and beliefs.

In view of the importance of the discussions on Islam by Gellner and Ahmed in their recent works, I now turn to an analysis of their books.

Gellner on Islam, Rationalism, and Postmodernism

As opposed to previous binary polarities in history, Gellner believes that our time is characterized by a competition between three irreducible posi-

tions, namely, religious fundamentalism; relativism, or currently guised as "postmodernism"; and Enlightenment rationalism (p. 2).¹ Gellner makes no secret as to which camp he belongs—the group of Enlightenment rationalism. This "confession" is no news for those acquainted with his previous works. In fact, it is a wonder he is able to sustain consistently those views, which he has held since the 1960s, given the challenges and changing intellectual climate.

However, his "sticking to his guns" is not necessarily an indication of an incapacity to develop intellectually over time. For some, it is comforting that there are familiar intellectual signposts still remaining, despite the changing winds. Gellner has done battle with the relativists before, against such people as Isaiah Berlin in political philosophy and Paul Feyerabend in the philosophy of science. In studies on Islam, Gellner's work on Islamic society has been chided by some, such as Edward Said, as typically orientalist. But Gellner does not seem to come out of these battles wearied, mellowed, or weakened. If anything, such battles have only strengthened his commitment to a rational culture. In this admirable book, Gellner at last brings those two main concerns of his—the need for a culture of rationality and the nature of religious society, particularly Islam—in one single work. Though relatively brief compared to his previous books, it has the merit of stating his basic position regarding a fundamental issue clearly, succinctly, and without digression.

Gellner discusses each major positions mentioned earlier. He admits openly to being an advocate of Enlightenment rationalism. He is not too hard on the religious position, though he clearly distances himself from it. As a secular humanist, he cannot accept the legitimate existence of revealed knowledge. He is hostile to relativists, currently exemplified by the postmodernists. Gellner's hostility toward relativism, both as a philosophical idea and a social attitude, has been transparent throughout his academic career. Given his western background and social milieu, postmodernism is closer to home and thus more of a threat, unlike religious fundamentalism. He has been on the forefront of attempts to uphold the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century on toward the twentieth century. His position against such relativists as Isaiah Berlin, Richard Rorty, Paul Feyerabend, and Clifford Geertz indicates this clearly. While Ahmed, in his *Postmodernism and Islam*, views postmodernism favorably as inaugurating a mood that would allow for a more tolerant accommodation of Islam into contemporary western society, Gellner states bluntly that postmodernism and religious fundamentalism are incompatible and basically opposed to one other:

Logically, the religious fundamentalists are of course also in conflict with the relativists, who would evaluate their faith with its claim to a unique revelation, and reduce it to merely one of many and equally valid "systems of meaning." (p. 85)

Gellner implies that while the postmodernists might be tolerant of Islam, Islam's insistence on its own unique vision of truth is clearly at odds

with the postmodernists' epistemological and social pluralism. Worshipping the God of Kantian reason, Gellner the believer in, or perhaps prophet of, Enlightenment rationalism proclaims:

To those of us who have deeply internalized what I called the Kantian or Enlightenment ethic of cognition, the obligation to treat all evidence impartially, and all occasions as equally unprivileged, the notion of a Revelation is morally unacceptable. The idea of a unique and final Message, delivered at one place and one time, exempt from scrutiny, from the disaggregation into its constituent claims, and from the need to subject these claims to question—this violates the rules of that cognitive ethic which, for those of us who have become committed to it, constitutes the fixed point in our world-view, and the only one. (pp. 84-85)

Gellner's remarks on religious fundamentalism would be considered appropriate for the more conservative or rigid versions of Islam, such as in Shi'ah Iran or Wahhabi Saudi Arabia. It does not quite hit its mark when one considers the more tolerant and "liberal" or universal type of Islam exemplified by such Muslim scholars as Akbar Ali, S. Hossein Nasr, or such Sufis as Ibn al 'Arabī, and in places such as Southeast Asia. Given the differing perceptions of religion in the two books, with Gellner identifying religious with doctrinaire fundamentalism and Ahmed stressing its more "feminine aspects such as love, patience, tolerance, forbearance and kindness," it is not surprising that they relate to religion and postmodernism differently.

But Gellner has a kind word to say about the religious position and even made a "Mannheimian" concession to it within a modern society:

The fundamentalists deserve our respect, both as fellow recognizers of the uniqueness of truth, who avoid the facile self-deception of universal relativism, and as our intellectual ancestors. Without indulging in excessive ancestor-worship, we do owe them a measure of reverence. Without serious, not to say obsessional monotheism and unitarianism, the rationalist naturalism of the Enlightenment might well never have seen the light of day. In all probability, the attachment to a unique Revelation was the historical pre-condition of the successful emergence of a unique and symmetrically accessible Nature. It was a jealous Jehovah who really taught mankind the Law of the Excluded Middle: Greek formalization of logic (and geometry and grammar) probably would not have been sufficient on its own. Without a strong religious impulsion towards a single orderly world, and the consequent avoidance of opportunist, manipulative incoherence, the cognitive miracle would probably not have occurred. (p. 95)

The influence of Durkheim's sociological theorizing can be seen in the above-quoted passage. Whereas Durkheim thought that the religious life

with its concomitant social organization was responsible for the emergence of the abstract concepts of space and time, which later find their way into science, Gellner analogously transposes the religious fundamentalist notion of the uniqueness and universality of truth on to its modernist cognitive counterpart.

But he also realizes that the modernist version of (scientific) truth is "cold" and "abstract." Not being "metaphysically" grounded, it does not offer the solace and comforting promise of paradise or soothe troubled souls/minds in their earthly existence:

What of the weakness of Enlightenment rationalism . . . ? It has a number of weaknesses, from the viewpoint of its use as a practical faith, as the foundation either for an individual life or for a social order. It is too thin and ethereal to sustain an individual in crisis, and it is too abstract to be intelligible to any but intellectuals with a penchant for this kind of theorizing. Intellectually it is all but inaccessible, and unable to offer real succor in a crisis. In practice, Western intellectuals, when facing personal predicaments, have turned to emotionally richer methods, offering promises of personal recovery, such as psychoanalysis. (p. 86)

Short of acknowledging Jung's view of the human being's need of the religious and the supernatural as a human psychological imperative, Gellner concedes, à la Mannheim, that perhaps we should allow for "token worship":

The attractive solution, it seems to me, is what might be called constitutional religion, on the analogy of constitutional monarchy What is constitutional monarchy in effect? It is a system which retains the ritual and symbolism of genuine monarchy, whilst transferring most of the real business of running society to a more technical, secular and unsacralized sphere. On the assumption that ritual theatre is needed, but that the "new science" either cannot produce it or will only produce a disastrous version, the ritual and the real spheres of social life become separated So constitutional monarchies seem to function satisfactorily. But the point of the present argument is not to commend this principle in the sphere of political symbolism, but to make explicit the nature of its applicability in the wider and more general sphere of the relationship of belief and practice The viable compromise, the equivalent of constitutional monarchy in the sphere of conviction, is a kind of double authority, with the separation of their respective zones left deliberately obscure and ambiguous. In the sphere of legitimation of social arrangements, the old pieties are retained in the social liturgy; in the sphere of serious cognition, they are ignored. (pp. 91-92)

So Gellner recommends this schizophrenic double-life as a compromise between the truth of reason and the emotional need for religious symbolism. In making such concessions, he is aware that his position differs from that of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment movement, typified by the French *philosophes* at the more popular level and by such thinkers as Kant, Hume, Locke, and Hobbes at the more serious intellectual level. As he puts it: "The mild rationalist fundamentalism which is being commended does not attempt, as the Enlightenment did, to offer a rival counter-model to its religious predecessor" (p. 94).

Despite his own commitment and declaration of faith in rationalism and secular humanism, Gellner makes some interesting observations on the Islamic world and its relation to modernity. Whereas such thinkers on modernity as Habermas, Marcuse, and the Frankfurt School in general universalize the characteristics and trend of modernity, based on their model of western industrial societies, Gellner, equally a contemporary sociologist of note and distinction who is well-acquainted with the world of Islam, takes exception to the view that secularization is a universal phenomenon that attends modernization. According to him, Islam is a major exception:

The realm of Islam presents an interesting picture in the modern world. Sociologists have long entertained, and frequently endorsed, the theory of secularisation. It runs as follows: [in] the scientific-industrial society, religious faith and observance decline. One can give intellectualist reasons for this: the doctrines of religion are in conflict with those of science, which in turn are endowed with enormous prestige, and which constitute the basis of modern technology, and thereby also of modern economy. Therefore religious faith declines. Its prestige goes down as the prestige of its rival rises There are many variants of this theory. What matters is that, by and large, the secularization thesis does hold But there is one very real, dramatic and conspicuous exception to all this: Islam. To say that secularisation prevails in Islam is not contentious. It is simply false. Islam is as strong now as it was a century ago. In some ways, it is probably much stronger. (pp. 4-5)

Having made this observation, Gellner goes on to ask: "Why should one particular religion be so markedly secularisation-resistant?" (p. 6). He then spends the next few pages laying down the foundations for his answer. It is given in terms of the distinction between what he calls "Low or Folk Islam" and "High Islam" (p. 9). Gellner notes that for most developing societies, the dilemma is: "Should we emulate those whom we wish to equal in power (thereby spurning our own traditions), or should we, on the contrary, affirm the values of our own tradition, even at the price of material weakness?" (p. 19). For Muslims, however, the choice need not be one or the other, for their pursuit of material power could be conducted legitimately within their own local religious paradigm, namely, one that has been

set by "High Islam." Although Gellner has reservations about the validity of such claims (see bottom of p. 19), he nevertheless presents his answer thus:

So self-correction did not need to go outside the society, nor seek pristine virtue in its social depths: it could find it in its own perfectly genuine and real Higher Culture, which had indeed only been practised by a minority in the past, which had been recognized (though not implemented) as a valid norm by the rest of society. Now, seemingly under the impact of a moral impulse and in response to preaching, but in fact as a result of profound and pervasive changes in social organisation, it could at long last be practised by all. Self-reform in the light of modern requirements could be preserved as a return to the genuinely local ideal, a moral homecoming, rather than a self-repudiation. (p. 20)

Gellner's overtly optimistic view of the possibility of Islamic countries modernizing without the bane of secularism is comforting to the modern Muslim. However, given the different social, economic, and cognitive circumstances prevailing in the High Islam of the past and that of our present century, one should be more cautious of the Gellner thesis and compare it perhaps with a rival view, such as that of Bassam Tibi.² In particular, the coupling of science with modern technology, as well as the legitimation and entrenchment of scientific knowledge and imagery through economic-technological practice, could bring into question the total relevance of the High Islamic model. High Islam, a pre-seventeenth-century phenomenon, had not yet witnessed the social entrenchment of scientific paradigms through technological and economic practice. As such, they had not addressed the crucial question of how to underwrite the technical procedural rules of modern social organization in terms of religious symbolism.

In an age when cosmology and technology could still function separately and autonomously, because the subsystems of purposive rational behavior had not yet extended/expanded to the point where it challenges the legitimacy of the religiously informed cultural institutional framework, the containment of secularism was viable. But in a modern society, in which the technology found in the subsystems of purposive rational behavior themselves contain an implicit "cosmology" or paradigm, its congruence with the cosmology and ethos of religious symbolism ultimately would come to a head. Whether one wards off such clashes by reinterpreting technology or religious symbolism in order to bring them closer together is something that should be examined further. As a contemporary example, one can cite the "rationalization" of interest rates through the language of "dividends" and *muḍārabah*. Furthermore, Gellner's suggestion of appealing to the model of High Islam, regardless of whether the suggestion is normative or descriptive, has an uneasy "Protestant ethic" ring, especially when one notes the affiliation of certain parts of High Islam with rationalist Mu'tazilah theology.

All in all, Gellner's book is frank and thought provoking. Whatever might be the merits or demerits of his own position, one cannot help but admire the total intellectual honesty with which he conducts the discussion. Like a true warrior, Gellner is the kind of scholar who will ride his Trojan horse to the very end. It is up to those who disagree with him, the religionists and the relativists in particular, to argue their cases with equal candor and intellectual honesty in the remote hope that perhaps they might be able to convince him to change horses.

Akbar Ahmed on Islam, Postmodernism, and the Position of Muslims in the West

Although thicker but intellectually less formidable, Akbar Ahmed's *Postmodernism and Islam* provides a respectable contribution to the contemporary intellectual from a Muslim point of view. What it does most is to remind the intellectual world of the Muslim's intellectual, and not merely physical, presence in the contemporary world. His attempt to engage in a sustained dialogue with the West by bringing in categories to, and using idioms familiar with, the western frame of mind ensures that his Islamic dialogue with the West is not ruled out of court from the outset. It is fitting that, for this purpose, Ahmed has allied himself with postmodernism in order to present Islam to the West, a consideration perhaps dictated by the logic of contemporary western rhetoric. As noted earlier, for Gellner, postmodernism and religion constitute potential enemies rather than congenial bedfellows. But, given the rise of the postmodernist frame of mind in Europe and the increasing marginalization of such positions as Gellner's (considered passé by some), the Islamic case could perhaps be best served, under present circumstances, through the postmodernist ticket.

Ahmed's concern is really to dispel the negative images of Islam and the Islamic community currently circulating in the West. His position as Allama Iqbal Fellow at Cambridge University, coupled with the felt need of making Islam, the religion of a large group of South Asian migrants to Britain, morally and intellectually comprehensible, if not acceptable, to the host nation, somewhat defines the parameters of the book. In a larger context, of course, Ahmed's book can be said to be relevant to the larger Muslim world as a whole, in its approach toward the West. For this task, Ahmed's training as an anthropologist has served him well. Though the philosophical analysis in the book is not as deep as one would expect from its title, it is marvelously compensated for by those human insights and anthropological documentation (both primary and secondary) that Ahmed as a "participant observer" gives. His moderate view of Islam and his eagerness to break down communication barriers between Islam and the West is seen throughout the pages of the book.

The chapters are of uneven quality, as some are more substantive than others. For example, chapter 2 on "Greek Gods and Semitic Prophets"

shows a certain amount of originality and reveals Ahmed at his anthropological best. His analysis of the continued influence of Greek ideals and philosophy on contemporary western civilization and those that came under its influence is both insightful, penetrating, and convincing. For instance, he points out that "The Greek ethos helps explain . . . the continuing importance of British public schools with their glorification of sport, masculinity, victory and elitism" (p. 87).³ Had he visited that British legacy, the Malay College Kuala Kangsar, dubbed Malaysia's "Eaton of the East," with its Graeco-Roman architecture and the espousal of the above-mentioned values, he would have been confirmed further in his belief.

Other chapters appear weaker and of a more popular interest. For example, consider his treatment of the western media. The last chapter, devoted to the media and entitled "The Evil Demon: The Media as Master," is an anticlimax. Similarly, his treatment of postmodernism in the opening chapter is superficial and overdependent on quotations and secondary sources. His failure to come to grips with the philosophical essence of postmodernism early on ensures that the book does not live up to the promise suggested in its title. For instance, there is no dialogue with the ideas of such prominent postmodernist philosophers as Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard, or Rorty. What is the epistemological basis of postmodernism, and how does it fare against Islamic thought? Given the secular humanist, albeit non-rationalist and nonobjectivist, nature of their position, how could Islam be reconciled with them? These are serious questions that await an answer from an Iqbal fellow worthy of the legacy.

It is interesting to speculate on Iqbal's answers to such questions, given the profundity and breadth of his philosophical mind. To Iqbal, the "spirit" and the realm of the metaphysical are veritable realities that are not to be dismissed or disguised in pragmatic Wittgensteinian fashion, which is precisely what postmodernists are doing. The ideal of universal tolerance, it seems, has been purchased at the price of metaphysical sacrifice.

Instead, what we find in Ahmed's book is a catalogue of what he perceives to be the main features of postmodernism, eight in all, laid out on pages 10-28, in which a large part of the burden of characterization is left to quotations. This contrasts sharply with Gellner's book, which although brief shows an insider's knowledge of postmodernist thought. This defect affects Ahmed's case seriously, for it fails to answer the poignant charge made by Gellner that postmodernism, with its relativistic epistemology and consequent denial of the idea of a unique truth, is equally a denial of Islam's exclusive claim to truth. In this light, Ahmed's appeal to postmodernism as an ally and as a *via media* for the rehabilitation of Islam in the West appears both unconvincing and shaky. If what Ahmed means by postmodernism is a certain "spirit of tolerance" that hovers over the contemporary western horizon and that South Asian Muslims and other minorities in Britain should take advantage of this new intellectual atmosphere in order to be accepted into the mainstream of British communal life, then he should have avoided such a pretentious title for the book.

Ahmed's desire to act as a mediator between Muslims, especially British Muslims of South Asian origin, and non-Muslims in the West, especially Britain, comes across clearly in his book. His preoccupation with the Rushdie affair, for instance, which has soured relations somewhat between Muslims and non-Muslims in Britain, indicates this. Here again, his skills as an anthropologist rather than as a philosopher saved him from an outright bungle. Ahmed was quite right to point out and to go to great lengths to explain to his western audience why Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* is offensive to Muslims. In choosing the anthropological route, rather than appealing to philosophical metanarratives, he perhaps is practicing post-modernist discourse. His comparison of the novel's impact on the Muslim community with Madonna's antics (such as placing the cross on a rather private area of her anatomy) on the Catholic Church is both significant and ingenious. It helps the "other" see what being smitten by insulting acts mean and shows that each culture has its own sensitivities. Ahmed's explanation of how an otherwise mediocre piece of work (magical realism? cultural hybrid tragedy?) became a best seller is indeed interesting.

Ahmed is more convincing when he is in his apologetic rather than assertive mode, with respect to Islam. His account of 'Alī ibn Abū Ṭālib's attitude during a fight and his own plea for tolerance and wisdom to a Muslim father confronted with the problem of a renegade daughter are indicative of this. However, when his traditionalist and conservative stance comes to the fore, as in the following example, he seems to falter somewhat. For instance, in explaining why jeans fail to catch on in Islamic societies, he cites approvingly Umberto Eco:

Thought . . . abhors tights . . . A garment that squeezes the testicles makes a man think differently . . . women during menstruation, people suffering from orchitis, victims of . . . and similar ailments know to what extent pressures or obstacles in the sacroiliac area influence one's mood and mental agility. (p. 193)

It is during such moments of conservatism that Ahmed opens himself to ridicule. By the same logic, it could be equally well argued that Muslim males should not wear underwear, which also "squeezes the testicles." I dare not contemplate the consequences of Muslim males going about their daily business in such a condition, especially with the improvement in mental ability and mood that such a practice is supposed to bring about.

There are of course redeeming moments in the book. For example, chapter 4, "Studying Islam," is a fine chapter. It exhibits systematic thought, wit, and scholarly satire. Ahmed's swing at Tariq Ali, the former Marxist Pakistani student leader now residing in Britain, is worth quoting:

Even the public image of the elite alienated them from their community. This is typified by Tariq's trained Oxford accent which, after so much practice, still fails to obliterate the primordial

Lahore intonations; it amuses rather than impresses the community . . . (p. 175)

Or consider his countersarcasm against the president of the Muslim Youth Movement of Great Britain, who sarcastically labeled Ahmed “a good boy of the British Empire,” in the following words:

. . . It came from an organisation whose very name, Muslim Youth Movement, was a misnomer—its members may have been Muslim, although their grasp of Islam, judging by the letter, was far from complete; its president, if we went by his appearances on TV—advancing waistline matched by a receding hairline—was no picture of youth, and its limited, localized membership hardly constituted a movement. (p. 190)

On a more serious note, Ahmed’s taxonomy of present-day Muslim writers is indeed novel and enlightening. He categorizes them into three groups: traditionalists, radicals, and modernists (p. 154). Seyyed Hoessin Nasr and Fazlur Rahman come under the traditionalist category. Ziauddin Sardar, M. W. Davies, Parvez Manzoor, and Kalim Siddiqui are placed in the radical group. And Tariq Ali and Salman Rushdie come within the modernist fold. The first two groups retain their Islamic faith, though they are diametrically opposed in their presentation of Islam. The third group, on the other hand, has rejected Islam and has embraced westernism.

Ahmed leaves no doubt that he wishes to have no truck with the radicals. He is in favor of the traditionalists and ambivalently tolerant toward the modernists, regarding them more as “lost sheep” rather than “sons of Satan.” His modernist category is indeed a novelty, since it departs from the standard construct of Islamic modernists, such as al Afghānī, ‘Abduh, and Syed Quṭb, as Muslims who attempted to make Islam relevant to the modern age. Similarly, by referring to Nasr and Fazlur Rahman, both of whom are familiar with western scholarship, though grounded in traditional Islam, as members of the traditionalist category, he has consigned the traditional ulama to near oblivion simply through omission. The radicals, on the other hand, though western educated and Islamically inclined like Ahmed himself, are chided for their lack of self-restraint and other Islamic virtues, such as *adab*. After quoting Sardar’s comments on Rushdie at length (p. 162), he chides Sardar for using abusive language:

Here is solid, legitimate argument and deep hurt; but here is also crass vulgarity. Defecation, phlegm, bile—this is Muslim spleen and not Islamic scholarship, Muslim temper not Islamic literary expression In denouncing their victims through vulgar abuse, these Muslims were themselves becoming like those they attacked; they had left behind the language of traditional Islamic scholarship and were adopting the idioms of the West (p. 162)

Ahmed's classification, as far as I can tell, is the most updated of taxonomies on Muslim writers who respond to the West. It captures very well the *Sturm und Drang* of contemporary Muslim literary expression. All in all, his *Postmodernism and Islam* is a good read and illuminates the contemporary Muslim predicament—that is, if one does not take its title literally.

Conclusion

There are two issues that I would like to address in this concluding section. The first concerns an issue of principle, the second one of practice. Based on these books, one can see that Gellner deals with the question of philosophical principles rather well, while Ahmed, though lacking in his analysis on principles, comes out quite well in his explanation of social and cultural practices. But for contemporary Muslims, especially those who are more intellectually inclined, Gellner's philosophical thesis of Islam should present a challenge. How does one answer his secular humanistic pronouncements on the epistemological position of revealed knowledge, for instance? And what is the Muslim's intellectual response to a contemporary philosophical position in the West such as postmodernism? Can Islam maintain its own claim to superiority, buttressed by the belief in Islam as the final and complete religion and of Muslims as the best ummah, and yet stake a claim to coexistence, perhaps through the postmodernist ticket? These are intellectual issues with which modern Muslims have to grapple within the context of the contemporary globalization of culture.

As for social, cultural, and religious practices, one must commend a work such as Ahmed's, which, to some extent, succeeds in explaining, justifying, and rationalizing Muslim practices in the contemporary world. For too long, Muslims have been the object of ridicule, humiliation, and even contempt by the West. For example, the West has attacked the position of women in Islamic societies as archaic and oppressive, yet remains oblivious to the social problems of their own women, such as sexual harassment and wife beating. The West's claim to a monopoly on human virtue (i.e., freedom, liberty, and justice) must be unmasked as sheer hypocrisy, just as we Muslims should unmask our own misdeeds. The fact is that, as human beings, be they of the East or of the West, we have our own weaknesses. But to swallow the West's condemnation of the East as superior truth is to accede to a modern-day cultural imperialism.

Endnotes

1. All references to Gellner are to his *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).
2. Bassam Tibi. *The Crisis of Modern Islam: A Pre-Industrial Culture in the Scientific-Technological Age* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1988).
3. All references to Ahmed are to his *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).