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Rationality in Islamic philosophy

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Introduction

The discussion of rationality can only be conducted today against the backdrop of the raging postmodernist and deconstructionist onslaught on the "citadel of reason," as one writer has put it recently. Although the current postmodernist skirmishes are launched against modernism as represented by Descartes and Kant, it is clear that the proclamation of the bankruptcy of reason or "the end of philosophy," as both Martin Heidegger and Richard Rorty have put it, goes well beyond the modernism of Descartes and Kant. It is part of the struggle between logos and anti-logos which is really perennial.

The greatest "misologist" of ancient times was probably the Sicilian sophist, Gorgias of Leontini (d. ca. 380 BC), who started by denying the "criterion" and published a book entitled On Nature, or Concerning the Existing and the Nonexisting, in which he argued that nothing exists at all; and even if it did, it could not be known, nor the knowledge thereof be communicated to others. Some of the present-day "misologists," like Rorty and Jacques Derrida, to whom I will be referring in this article, appear to espouse the same anti-metaphysical anti-epistemological cause, since the "mirror of nature," according to the former, does not mirror anything and even if it did, it could not be trusted to "mirror" accurately any external object or objects.

It should be noted at this point that "the end of philosophy" proclaimed with such assurance by the postmodernists is not altogether an end, since traditional philosophical aims can be achieved by recourse to other modes of discourse: hermeneutics, as recommended by Michel Foucault and Paul Ricoeur, narrative or conversation, as recommended by Rorty and Jean-François Lyotard, edification (Bildung), as recommended by Hans-Georg Gadamer, and even "nomadology," as recommended by Gilles Deleuze. The onslaught on reason or the logos has also taken the form of "deconstruction" or "grammatology" at the hands of Derrida, who argues that philosophical "writing" should be approached in an open-ended spirit which allows for a variety of meanings rather than a unique or privileged one.

The response to ancient misology came of course from Plato and Aristotle, who despite their fundamental differences, agreed that being exists, and is knowable and communicable. The prototypical mode of communicating the knowledge of being was dialectic or logic, which Plato practiced and Aristotle codified in an elegant syllogistic system. This logic exhibited the structure of language as well as that of

human thought, and although it could be applied to the content of thought, it was really "formal" or independent of this content.

For two and a half millennia, rationality or the "cult of the logos" was unquestioned. Writing in 1781, Kant could still, in the Critique of Pure Reason, pay Aristotle the compliment of having codified logic in a definitive manner, so that "it has not been able to advance a single step" since. Nevertheless, Kant was compelled to go beyond Aristotle's "formal" logic in the direction of "transcendental" logic, in which the content of knowledge is not altogether ignored because of the organic connection between the knower who "creates" the cosmos and the sense-data or the "manifold of intuition" from which our representation of the world is constructed. Kant continued, however, to accord reason, in the form of the understanding (Verstand), a primordial role in the realm of nature (as in the science of physics), while denying it any legitimacy in the domain of supernature (or metaphysics). From that point on, the die was cast and modern philosophy became vulnerable to the onslaughts of the postmodernists and deconstructionists.

Conjunction with the active reason

Hegel in a sense restored to reason the dignity of which Kant had robbed it by "divinizing" it, so to speak – by identifying it with the Weltgeist or the Absolute of which it was, at the human level, an epiphany or manifestation. In Arabic–Islamic philosophy, the Neoplatonists, including al-Fārābi (d. 950) and Avicenna (d. 1037), had already "divinized" reason in the form of an agency called Active Reason or Intellect which was the "storehouse" of intelligibles, as both St Thomas Aquinas and Avicenna called it. According to this view, the acquisition of knowledge, or what we might call the human enterprise of cognition, consists ultimately in taking the final step of "conjunction" or contact with this supermundane agency which is the lowest of a series of ten "intelligences" or "separate substances," as Aristotle had called the series of 55 subordinate movers of the spheres in Metaphysics XII, 8. However, in Aristotelian cosmology, those subordinate movers perform a purely cosmic function, that of moving their corresponding spheres, whereas the ten "intelligences" or reasons perform additional functions – especially the tenth or Active Reason, which dominates the world of generation and corruption, otherwise called the sublunary world in the Arabic sources.

To understand this development, which does not appear to have a direct Greek predecessor, and is at the center of the Islamic view of rationality, it is necessary to review the stages through which the view of reason passed in the Arabic–Islamic philosophical tradition. As one would expect, it all started with Plato and Aristotle, or rather Plotinus, as he interpreted the two great masters. Noūs for Plotinus was the first emanation from the One or God and is referred to as the "second god." The life of reason had been defined by Plato in Theaetetus 176B as homoiōsis tō Theō, or the imitation of God, according to human capacity. Aristotle, on the other hand, had described, in Nicomachean Ethics X, 7, the activity of reason as the loftiest activity of which man is capable, and declared that "man more than anything else

is reason." In *Metaphysics* XII, 1072b17, this activity is then identified with God or the Unmoved Mover, who is the actuality of thought thinking itself.

The Muslim philosophers, much as they were fascinated by this concept, were somewhat embarrassed by its elevation of reason to the rank of the Divinity. For this elevation clashed with the rigorous Quranic concept of the transcendence of God: "Unto Him nothing is Like" (Quran 42,9). Accordingly, they posited Active Reason as an intermediary between man and God, as indeed between the sublunary world and the intelligible world beyond. In that capacity, Active Reason played in Islamic philosophy three primary roles.

1 At the epistemological level, it played the role of repository of all intelligibles, which constituted the substance of all cognitions.
2 At the cosmic level, it performed the function of the mover of the sublunary world and the ultimate cause of all becoming or change in it.
3 At the biological level, it imparted the various "substantial forms" of life and growth (that is, souls) to living organisms, as soon as they become disposed for their reception.

The process whereby the Active Reason itself came into being was designated as emanation (*ṣudūr* or *fayḍ*), which the Muslim Neoplatonists following Plotinus and Proclus had introduced, in fact, as an alternative to the Quranic concept of creation *ex nihilo*. It was favoured by those philosophers because it appeared to bridge the gap between the intelligible and the material worlds, but was received with the utmost resistance by the theologians and the masses at large, because it appeared to rob God of the freedom of choosing to create or not to create the world at a point of His own choosing in time – the process of emanation being described as eternal by its Neoplatonic protagonists. Moreover, it appeared to contradict the concept of creation out of nothing, since the universe was supposed to emanate or overflow from the very essence of the One, according to them, in a progressive manner, generating first the series of intelligences, then the series of souls, followed by the series of heavenly spheres, and finally the material world of the elements.

The transition from potential to acquired reason

With respect to the cognitive or epistemological function of reason, the Neoplatonists, as already mentioned, regarded conjunction or contact with this semi-divine agency as the climactic point in a gradual process which consisted of four basic stages or steps. From the time of al-Kindī (d. ca. 866) almost all the major philosophers of Islam wrote treatises on reason or the intellect, modelled on the famous treatise of the great Aristotelian commentator, Alexander of Aphrodisias (d. ca. 205), entitled *Peri Noū*. Al-Fārābī, who wrote the most detailed treatise on this subject, begins by listing the different senses of the term reason (*ʿaql*):

1 Reason as predicated of the "reasonable" man in ordinary discourse and which Aristotle, according to al-Fārābī, calls *taʿaqqul* – that is, practical wisdom or prudence (*phronēsis*).

2 The reason that the theologians posit as the faculty which prescribes or prohibits certain actions on the ground that they are right or wrong, and which is synonymous with common sense or sound judgment.
3 The reason that Aristotle describes in *Analytica Posteriora* as the faculty that apprehends the first principles of demonstration instinctively or intuitively.
4 The reason referred to in *Nicomachean Ethics* VI as the faculty of apprehending the principles of right and wrong in an infallible way.
5 The reason referred to in *De anima* and to which Aristotle has assigned four distinct meanings, according to al-Fārābī. These are the epistemologically significant connotations of reason around which controversy raged in Arabic-Islamic philosophical, as well as Latin–Scholastic, circles in the Middle Ages.

(a) First comes reason *in potentia*, or potential reason, which Aristotle has defined as "a soul, a part of the soul or a faculty of the soul." This reason is capable of abstracting the forms of material entities with which it is subsequently identified. It was for this reason that potential reason is referred to in the Arabic sources as material or hylic (*hayūlāni*).
(b) Once potential reason has apprehended the above-mentioned forms and become identified with them, it is designated reason-in-act, or actual reason. At this level, the reason-in-act and the intelligible-in-act become one and the same.
(c) When actual reason has apprehended all the intelligibles, material and other, including the primary principles of demonstration, as well as itself, it is designated acquired reason (*mustafād*). This acquired reason marks for al-Fārābī and the Muslim Neoplatonists generally the culmination of the cognitive process at the human level.
(d) However, beyond this acquired reason, rises the Active Reason which al-Fārābī describes as "an immaterial form which neither inheres nor could inhere in matter," and is in fact a supermundane agency governing the sublunary world and serving as the "storehouse" of all intelligibles, as already mentioned. It is through conjunction or contact with it, as we have also mentioned, that the process of cognition is consummated.

Logic and rationality

The Muslim philosophers never questioned the certainty or finality of the cognitive process once it has received the imprint of conjunction with the Active Reason, reserved for the privileged class of metaphysical philosophers. In Aristotelian terms, the method leading up to this conjunction is demonstration (*burhān, apodeixis*), grounded in the intuition of the primary principles of demonstration. It was for this reason that Averroes (d. 1198) resorted, less than three centuries later, to a "sociological" interpretation of this cognitive or epistemological theory. Mankind is divided, according to him, into three classes: (1) the philosophers or "people of demonstration"; (2) the theologians or "people of dialectic" (*jadal*); and (3) the masses at large, or the rhetorical class (*khaṭābiyūn*).

The three classes, as well as their methods of cognition, are hierarchically ordered, according to Averroes. Neither the theologians nor the masses at large are able to attain the level of demonstrative certainty, because of the weakness of the premises upon which their arguments rest, and which are based on received opinions that are purely arbitrary. By demonstration, Averroes meant, following Aristotle, the process of syllogistic deduction, in so far as it rested upon primary premises which are both necessary and universal. Neither dialectic nor rhetoric can satisfy this condition. This was the consensus of Muslim logicians and philosophers from al-Fārābī, to Avicenna, Avempace (d. 1138) and beyond.

Moreover, demonstrative knowledge for those philosophers, contrary to the claims of present-day postmodernists, exhibited the knowledge of the being (wujūd) of the object, as well as the causes underlying this being or existence. It was for this reason that those philosophers and logicians placed the concept of causality at the center of their epistemological concerns and this concept became in due course a major bone of contention between them and the theologians (mutakallimūn), especially the Ash'arites. The locus classicus of this contention is al-Ghazzālī's Tahāfut al-Falāsifa (Incoherence of the Philosophers) and its rebuttal by Averroes in Tahāfut al-Tahāfut (Incoherence of the Incoherence). For al-Ghazzālī (d. 1111), the alleged certainty of the cause–effect relationships is an illusion; it is reducible entirely to habit, which God could alter at any time. For Averroes, on the other hand, the concept of habit as applied to God or inanimate objects is meaningless. In addition, genuine knowledge is a matter of eliciting the causes underlying any occurrence in the world, so that the activity of reason itself may be described as "nothing more than its knowledge of existing entities through the knowledge of their causes, whereby it differs from other cognitive faculties. Thus whoever repudiates causes actually repudiates reason" (Tahāfut, 1930, p. 522). This repudiation will undermine the very foundation of the "art of logic," and having rendered genuine knowledge (epistēmē) impossible, will only leave us with opinion (doxa), concludes Averroes.

Rhetoric and poetics

What the function of the "art of logic" was for this Muslim philosopher is really more complex than this dogmatic statement appears to imply. The Muslim logicians tended to conceive of logic in much broader terms than Aristotle had conceived of it. Perhaps the best illustration of this point is the way in which those logicians had from the earliest times expanded the scope of Aristotle's Organon so as to include the two treatises of Rhetoric and Poetics, (as well as the Isagoge of Porphyry) in a manner which was probably no part of Aristotle's intent.

It is noteworthy, however, that the inclusion of the Rhetoric and Poetics in the logical corpus started much earlier than the tenth century, which witnessed the translation and diffusion of logical texts in the Muslim world. Classical scholars, including Richard Walzer, have shown as early as 1934 that the Poetics was already included in the Organon by Greek commentators of Alexandria who belonged to the School of Ammonius in the third century; whereas Simplicius

(d. ca. 532) grouped the Rhetoric with the logical treatises of Aristotle three centuries later.

If we take al-Fārābī and Averroes as representatives of the Arab–Muslim logical tradition, it will be appropriate to discuss their reasons for this inclusion. Al-Fārābī, to whom Averroes refers often in this connection, begins by defining rhetoric as a "syllogistic art," the aim of which is persuasion (iqnā'), possible through rhetorical and dialectical, as well as demonstrative, means. In fact, he argues in a historical note, that rhetorical and dialectical methods of "persuasion" actually preceded the demonstrative, in point of time, as did the sophistical. It was not until Plato's time that dialectical, sophistical, rhetorical and poetical methods of discourse were clearly demarcated, although it was Aristotle who formulated the rules governing those different modes of discourse (al-Fārābī, 1970, p. 132).

As for poetry, al-Fārābī argues that the essence of this art for the "ancients" (meaning Aristotle and his followers) "consisted in being a discourse made up of what involves the imitation of the object," either through action or speaking, wherein the imaginative representation (mimēsis) of the object is sought, as is the case with scientific and logical statements. That is why imagining is analogous to scientific knowledge (epistēmē) in demonstration, opinion (doxa) in dialectic, and persuasion in rhetoric. For this reason, al-Fārābī contends, poetics can be regarded as part of logic. Both Avicenna and Averroes follow al-Fārābī's lead in this regard.

Despite its ingenious character, al-Fārābī's argument does not justify, we believe, the inclusion of poetics in the logical corpus, and this inclusion at any rate appears alien to Aristotle's purpose. Poetic discourse, according to him, is not liable to truth or falsity and "the poet's function is to describe, not the thing that has happened, but a kind of thing that might happen; that is what is possible as probable or necessary," in Aristotle's own words. The case of rhetoric, however, is different, and it is significant that a whole class of philosophically inclined writers, such as Abū Hayyān al-Tawhīdi (d. 1024) and Ibn Tufayl (d. 1185) were able to express themselves in a more rhetorical or literary idiom than the professional philosophers, even when they were conveying a strictly philosophical message.

The uses of the hermeneutic method

As we have seen, some postmodernists, in their attempt to exorcise philosophy altogether, because of its preoccupation with certainty, objectivity, and universality, have proposed hermeneutics as a substitute. For Muslim philosophers, hermeneutics or its Arabic equivalent, ta'wīl, was welcomed from the earliest times as a complement, rather than a substitute, for philosophy. Even the theologians who tended to be suspicious of the whole method of interpretation, fell nevertheless into two groups:

1 the literalists, like Ibn Hanbal (d. 855) and Ibn Hazm (d. 1064), who repudiated the application of the hermeneutic method of interpretation to the sacred text of the Quran; and

2 the rationalists, or semi-rationalists, like the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites, who allowed for such application, and may therefore be described as pro-philosophical.

Of the philosophers, Averroes was perhaps the most explicit in his advocacy of the application of the method of interpretation to the Quranic texts. Schooled in Aristotelianism, of which he was one of the greatest champions in the Middle Ages, both in the East and the West, he begins in one of his major theological treatises, entitled "The Decisive Treatise concerning the Relation of Philosophy and Religion" (Faṣl al-Maqāl), by giving a definition of philosophy that accords with the Quranic exhortation to "reflect" upon God's creation (Quran 29,2 and 7,184), as well as with St Paul's assertion, in Romans I, 20, that God's "everlasting power and deity, however invisible, have been there for the mind to see in the things He has made."

This definition of philosophy, which is clearly un-Aristotelian, states that "the examination of existing entities and their consideration in so far as they exhibit the Creator – I mean, in so far as they are created," implies that religion (shar') exhorts us to reflect upon existing entities in a rational manner. Such reflection, argues Averroes, is nothing more than "extracting the unknown from the known and deducing it from it," which is precisely what the logicians designate as syllogistic reasoning (qiyās).

If it is objected that the use of syllogistic reasoning is an innovation or heresy (bid'a), we would retort, says Averroes, that "juridical reasoning" introduced during the early part of Muslim history is not regarded as an innovation or heresy by the opponent. Accordingly, we should be willing to apply the syllogistic methods of proof, of which demonstration is the highest form, to the interpretation of the sacred texts, when they appear to be in conflict with demonstratively warranted principles or cognitions. By interpretation, Averroes then explains, we should understand: "Extending the connotation of the term from its real to its figurative meaning, without violating the linguistic usage of the Arabs, which allows for giving a thing the name proper to its equal, its cause, its accident or its concomitant." If the use of this method by legal scholars or jurists is allowed in legal decisions, the philosophers, or "masters of demonstration," who investigate the nature of reality, should a fortiori be allowed to use it also.

At the social level, as we mentioned earlier, Averroes recognizes that the method of demonstrative interpretation should be reserved to the philosophers and is not open to the common run of men, because of the diversity of their intellectual aptitudes. He even finds in the Quran a confirmation of this thesis in verse 3,5 which states in Arberry's translation:

> It is He who sent down upon thee the Book, wherein are verses clear which are the Essence of the Book and others ambiguous. As for those in whose hearts is swerving, they follow the ambiguous part desiring dissension and desiring its interpretation; and none knows its interpretation save only God. And those firmly rooted in knowledge say: "we believe in it; it is all from our Lord."

By those firmly rooted in knowledge, Averroes claims that the philosophers or "people of demonstration" are actually meant; and to substantiate this claim, he resorts to an ingenious expedient: he removes the period after God and reads the latter part as follows: "And none knows its interpretation, save only God and those firmly rooted in knowledge," that is, the philosophers.

Be this as it may, perhaps the most interesting application of the hermeneutic method as recommended by Averroes is the way in which he rebuts the three charges which al-Ghazzālī had levelled against the philosophers: namely, their denial of God's knowledge of universals, their assertion of the eternity of the world, and their denial of personal immortality. In none of these cases, says Averroes, can al-Ghazzālī produce a single explicit and unambiguous Quranic text supporting his view.

Take the eternity of the world as an example. Al-Ghazzālī and the Muslim theologians generally contended that the creation of the world in time (ḥudūth) and out of nothing is explicitly enunciated in the Quran, whereas a careful examination of relevant Quranic texts simply proves that the "form" of the world is created, whereas its existence is continuous a parte ante and a parte post. Thus verse 11,9, which states that "it is He (that is, God) who created the heavens and the earth in six days, while His throne was upon the water," appears to imply that the water, the Throne and the time measuring their duration are all eternal. Similarly, verse 41,10 which states, "Then He arose unto heaven which was smoke", appears to imply that the heavens were created from pre-existing matter, that is, smoke. This interpretation of these two verses is clearly antithetic to the theologians' thesis of creation in time and out of nothing, but is perfectly acceptable.

Hermeneutics and the method of commentary or exegesis

If the aim of hermeneutics is to probe the meaning(s) of the text – the relation of sentences or words to other sentences or words, as Rorty has put it, then the method of commentary or exegesis should be regarded as a privileged one. This method is in fact a distinctive feature of the Islamic tradition, the prototype of which is Quranic exegesis (tafsīr). Together with the Talmudic tradition, Quranic exegesis is not too far removed from the new mode of discourse labelled "grammatology" by Jacques Derrida and his followers. Derrida appears from his earlier writings to have been drawn to the view that writing (écriture) is superior to speaking, as a reaction to Plato's argument in the Phaedrus that writing is a debased way of expressing the truth because it reduces the spoken word to a lifeless inscription and serves simply as the basis of an apparent or false wisdom.

The exegesis of the Quran which, according to Muslim believers, is the direct revelation of the "Mother of the Book" or "Preserved Tablet," existing eternally in heaven, took in general two contrasting forms. Some commentaries like al-Kashshāf of al-Zamakhshari (d. 1144) tended to be grammatical or linguistic, whereas others, such as al-Bayān of al-Ṭabarī (d. 925) tended to be more theological or discursive. However, in almost all cases, the commentators tended to

sprinkle their commentaries with biographical, historical and other circumstantial information drawn from the Prophetic biographical tradition (al-Sīrah) or other sources. In this respect, Quranic commentators may be regarded as genuine forerunners of modern hermeneutics.

The philosophers, on the other hand, adopted as early as the tenth century a more literal approach to philosophical texts, which were almost exclusively Aristotelian. Al-Fārābī, who was the first commentator on Aristotelian logic, as appears, from his extant commentary on *Peri Hermeneias* (*Kitāb al-ʿIbārah*), has Arabicized Aristotle, without departing very much from the Aristotelian text. In addition, he wrote paraphrases of all the parts of the *Organon*, which included the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics*, as well as the *Isagoge* of Porphyry, as mentioned above. He has also made a valuable contribution, unmatched before modern times, to the analysis of logical terms in two major treatises, the *Terms Used in Logic* and the *Book of Letters*, as well as other minor logical tracts.

Averroes, who has also covered the whole range of Aristotelian logical texts, wrote extensive (or "large") commentaries, middle commentaries, as well as paraphrases or epitomes which have survived either in Arabic or in Latin. On the whole, Averroes tends to be more slavish or literal in his commentaries, and often criticizes al-Fārābī, either for unwarranted additions to or departures from the Aristotelian texts.

Conclusion

If philosophy is to be replaced by hermeneutics, rhetoric, conversation, or poetry, as some postmodernists have suggested, the question arises as to whether there is an irresolvable conflict between the philosophical method, especially epistemology, and these alternative methods proposed as substitutes, or whether they cannot all be enlisted in the service and support of philosophy. After all, some of the greatest philosophers, of whom I might mention Plato, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and Sartre, have tended to use more literary and even rhetorical modes of discourse than others, without jeopardizing their status as genuine philosophers.

On the whole, the alleged conflict between the various modes of discourse mentioned above did not present serious difficulties to the Arab–Muslim philosophers who were willing to exploit them to the full.

Second, it is not clear from the postmodernists' revolt what the aim of philosophy or its successor modes of discourse which they favor really is. In fact, it is not clear what the positive aim of the whole movement really is. If this aim is conversation or edification (*Bildung*), as Rorty and Gadamer contend, we need not quarrel with them, first, because conversation (or dialogue), as a method of eliciting truth, was one of the earliest methods used by some of the earliest philosophers, Socrates, and his disciple, Plato, for instance, as well as many later thinkers, such as David Hume and A. E. Ritchie. However, Socrates avoided making dogmatic or uncritical assertions and claimed to practice his mother's art of midwifery, delivering his interlocutors or disciples of ideas with which they were pregnant. He used conversation or dialogue as a means of leading those interlocutors or disciples to recognize

the superiority of certain assertions over others, after first having recognized the incoherence of their initial positions. In other words, his aim was construction, not deconstruction.

Third, edification, including self-edification, is surely possible only on the assumption that the speaker has a message to convey, whether to instruct, to inform, or to reform. If, however, the conversation is allowed to drag on without any visible goal in sight, then edification will not be possible and no purpose, except possible esthetic enjoyment or entertainment, will be served. The question would then arise as to how philosophy can differ from comedy, drama, poetry or other artistic or literary genres intended to please or entertain.

The Arab–Muslim philosophers were not disturbed by these methodological squabbles. Avicenna, for example, wrote a medical poem which was translated into Latin as the *Cantica* in the Middle Ages; Ibn Ṭufayl (d. 1185) wrote a philosophical novel, *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān*, believed to have influenced Daniel Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*; and the versification of logic and grammar was undertaken by less renowned writers. The point is that poetical, rhetorical, and other literary modes of discourse were not considered inimical to philosophical discourse, which allows for the greatest measure of diversity and inventiveness. Hermeneutics itself should be welcomed by philosophers, not as a threat, but rather as a means of expanding the scope of philosophical discourse, by tapping biographical, social and cultural sources of information intended to make philosphical texts more reality anchored.

Today, the battle is joined in the Arab–Muslim world on two fronts: (1) the fundamentalists who are pitted against liberals and modernists; and (2) the neo-positivists pitted against the protagonists of classical metaphysics and theology. Deconstruction and postmodernism have not made serious inroads into the Muslim cultural arena; a noteworthy and perceptive recent publication on *Postmodernism and Islam* (1992) by Akbar S. Ahmed, highlights the major responses of Islam to these two contemporary movements. However, Ahmed's analysis is essentially sociological and cultural, rather than philosophical. In a more philosophical work, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion* (1992), Ernest Gellner argues that postmodernism and deconstruction amount to the contention "*Relativismus über Alles*" and cannot possibly be reconciled for that reason with the Islamic worldview. I agree that this worldview, which is still predominant, either in a liberal or radical form, is predicated on the thesis that the Islamic revelation is final and definitive and that truth, religious or other, can be known by a variety of means, linguistic, literary, philosophical, theological or other, but cannot be questioned or "deconstructed."

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