

The Significance of Religious Thought in the Evolution of Civilization in the Modern Epoch: A Critique of Malek Bennabi's Interdisciplinary Approach

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Abstract: This paper looks into Malek Bennabi's viewpoint on how religion contributes to the development of civilization. Bennabi's writings are examined to gain insight into his conception of religion and its various facets. The study specifically focuses on three aspects of religion: religion as a component of universal laws, religion as a historical force, and religion as a guiding principle of cognition. Bennabi's perspective on the role that religion plays in bringing people together is also emphasised, along with its goals as stated in the Quran, historical relevance, and social aspects. The study concludes that he views religion from a variety of angles, such as existential, philosophical, teleological, and practical angles. Moreover, religion is an essential component of civilizational values because it organizes human thought toward spiritual purposes, facilitates the formation of individuals and groups, embodies the relationship between God and man, and establishes moral laws that give human life and behavior meaning. In arguments regarding the place of religion in society today, Bennabi's work on religion and civilization is crucial. Therefore, by offering a thorough examination of his viewpoint—which highlights the beneficial and constructive effects of religion on human society—this research adds to the continuing conversation. Bennabi's work highlights the role that religion plays in civilization, which helps people in modern society view religion in a more complex and inclusive way.

Keywords: Role of Religion, Civilization, Philosophy of History, Malek Bennabi, Muslim Thought.

Introduction

A collection of behaviors, rituals, and worldviews that are predicated on the idea of a divine or higher force might be referred to as religion (William, 2020). Galloway (2006) defines religion as a human's belief in a force outside of himself through which he displays his acts of worship and service in an attempt to satiate his emotional demands and find stability in life. Religion is an integral part of life and cannot be separated from it (Weber, 1976). According to Masih (2013), the fundamental purpose of religion is to tie people together and to tie up any loose ends from their own inclinations and aspirations. It is an experience of philosophers coming together as a group and as individuals. In a similar vein, the Indian Supreme Court holds that religion is the belief that unites spirits (Sen, 2019). The four main schools of conventional religion are Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Judaism (Dow, 2007). While each of these ideologies adheres to a unique set of values and customs, they are all committed to advancing mutual respect and understanding. Christianity, according to MacCulloch (2009), is a monotheistic faith centered on the conviction that Jesus Christ is the divine son.

Christians hold that Jesus sacrifice his life on the cross to save humanity from sin and that individuals can develop a close connection with God by adhering to his teachings (William, 2020). The prophet Muhammad established the monotheistic religion of Islam in the seventh century. According to Sullivan (2010), the ancient religion of Hinduism is predicated on the notion of reincarnation—the conviction that a soul reincarnates into a new body following death. Hindus hold to the concept of karma, which holds that a person's deeds in this life will decide their destiny in the next. The foundation of Buddhism is the teachings of the Buddha, who is said to have attained enlightenment via his mindfulness and meditation practices. Prebish (2007) claims that the main goals of Buddhism are inner tranquility and self-improvement via personal growth. All of these faiths originated in various places and at different eras, but unfortunately, the bulk of their adherents appear to have lost interest in them.

Thus, sociologists, historians, anthropologists, and philosophers, have thoroughly examined the origins, emergence, growth, interactions, accomplishments, decline, and fall of civilizations (Deezia, 2017). Thus, sociologists, eminent historians, anthropologists, philosophers, and others who were interested in civilization have thoroughly examined the origins, emergence, growth, interactions, accomplishments, decline, and

fall of civilizations (Shehab, 2021). While there is a general consensus about the essence, character, and evolution of civilizations, there are variances in viewpoint, approach, concentration, and ideas that include different methods (Benlahcene, 2011). The scholars see both parallels and variations in the link between philosophy of history and religion. Religion and historical philosophy differ and are similar in many ways when it comes to understanding the truth. True truth in religion has to be determined by revelation or belief (Latif 2024).

The examination of truth is enriched only when reason is employed. Philosophical reasoning, on the other hand, requires the application of reason to the pursuit of truth. Even when the truth that religion presents and philosophy achieves may be comparable, religion and philosophy are not the same thing. A differing perspective is the cause of this discrepancy. The link between philosophy of history and religion will be the main topic of this article. Regarding the link between philosophy and religion, several paradigms are put up, such as intergalactic, subordinative, and contrast paradigms. In this context, the goal of this study is to evaluate the paradigm of philosophy of history, which has long been the dominant paradigm in civilization studies, with its diverse viewpoints and schools. Additionally, the analysis in this work aims to evaluate Malek Bennabi's critical assessment of the paradigm's contributions.

Philosophy to History: A Comparative Approach

The attempt by humans to provide logical interpretations of historical events gave rise to the philosophy of history (Siddiqui 1979, 2). It is an effort to identify the rule that governs them and decipher its meaning, which gives historical events a logical order, explains the present, and sheds some light on the future (Collingwood 1993, 1-3). Stated otherwise, history philosophy is a second order study, whereas history itself is a first order study of previous deeds, events, and circumstances (Edwards 1967, 6:24). It is an examination of these subjects' research. It may be seen as a *meta-study* as it seeks to explain and expound on past occurrences using an indirect approach rather than dealing directly with the conditions, acts, or events (Benlahcene, 2011). Consequently, history philosophers usually seek to provide comprehensive perspectives on the historical process as a whole. They see themselves as making grandiose syntheses or generalizations based on the intricate information provided by more practical historians.

It is hard to find a historian who does not have some type of philosophy regarding his historical writings, notwithstanding the academic separation that exists between the subject matter of historians and that of historian-philosophers (Benlahcene, 2016). As a result, there is no clear distinction between the two disciplines' subjects. In other words, it is challenging to study history without considering some philosophical issues about the reasons underlying historical events, their progression, the process of change, and the factors that drive human history. Historians try to explain why society changes as well as what really occurred in the past. Such studies often bring up several important concerns (Jamsarisari et al., 2023). The first query relates to historical players and their respective roles in providence, the individual, and the collective. The second query is whether historical movement exhibits universal patterns, or to what degree historical occurrences are singular or conform to patterns. The third query concerns whether or whether human affairs are progressing (Al-Messawi, 1999). Furthermore, is there a periodic ups and downs movement or not? When studying history, this paradigm poses the following broad questions. There are several schools of thought that have distinct methodologies since the answers to these issues vary depending on one's philosophical perspective on humanity.

There are several schools of thought and points of view regarding the matter of historical actors. Certain schools place a strong emphasis on the existence of divine will. One such school is St. Augustine's (d. 430) *City of God*, in which he argued that historical events reveal God's plan. He charted the course of divine providence from the Old Testament to the present. Others have elevated the significance of the person in the historical process while downplaying the importance of providence. Thomas Carlyle (d. 1881) was one of the latter, believing that history's great men and heroes are its decisive and constructive forces (Hutchins and Adler 1963, 108-9).

Some educational institutions challenged this broad generalization by highlighting the influence of impersonal factors like the economy. The Marxist school, which stresses the importance of economic considerations in historical development, is the finest illustration of these schools. According to certain thinkers, history is progressive. For instance, the Judeo-Christian conceptions of time and history as progressing in a straight line and the traditional idea of historical cycles were attempted to be combined in various ways by Herder, Plato, Hegel, and several other European philosophers (McNeill, 1963). However, the responses from those schools also differ with regard to the units that

should be used for historical analysis and writing. While historical study has produced a growing number of complex and varied products, the question of how best to write world history and what unit of analysis is most appropriate has not been answered. However, as more and more efforts have been taken toward a global world history throughout history, the necessity for a solution has risen (Benelalcene, 2004).

Consequently, those who have sought to write global history have so far employed three techniques in the lack of a universally agreed conceptual system that might offer the framework of unity (Breisach 1983, 394). They employed the progress model, the series (sequence) of cultures or civilizations model, which holds that all cultures (civilizations) follow the same pattern of development, and the straightforward side-by-side histories of the many peoples that make up humanity (Stanford 1994, 18-21). Actually, from the early days of historiography, the second and third methods have dominated. The writings of St. Augustine, Plato, and the early Christian historians can be discussed in relation to the second approach. Furthermore, the models shared by Hegelians and Marxists, who saw history as either linear retrogressive or linear progressive, are similar. Regarding the third approach, historians who concentrate on racial and ethnic histories as well as national and regional histories continue to defend this antiquated method of historiography (Benelalcene, 2016).

The first strategy, which is based on the sequence model, is the most advanced. In contrast to the other two methods, it is an effort to write global history in a novel way and identify the driving force behind the path of history. Great scholars of civilizations including Vico, Ibn Khaldun, Toynbee, Spengler, Elias, Braudel, and others have contributed to its emergence. For example, Ibn Khaldun's cyclical perspective on history was formed from his research of the historical accounts of several Muslim dynasties in Europe and Asia, both before to and during his own lifetime (Benelalcene, 2022). His desire to comprehend the processes behind the creation and dissolution of nations and dynasties initially caused him to see a pattern in their pasts: conquest of the desert, followed by the opulence that corrupted the rulers (Ibn Khaldun, 1986). Three generations later, corruption paved the way for a new wave of conquerors from the desert to start the cycle over. Second, Ibn Khaldun derived his theory of cycles from the examples in his civilization, which views the rise and fall cycle as the pattern of historical change at the state and dynasty levels (Ahmad, 2002).

In his work *The New Science*, written three centuries after Ibn Khaldun, Vico endeavored to introduce a cyclical view of world history. For him, history is a sequence of phases (Tateo, 2015). Inspired by the Platonic ideal state, he holds that real history is the ideal, eternal history consisting of three stages: the age of the Gods, which includes the origins of religion, the family, and burial; the age of the heroes, which includes family heads banding together to fight the class of serfs; and the age of men, which includes the establishment of the legal principle of equity and the human rights of the common people (Miraj, 1980). However, the pursuit of personal riches results in a deterioration of the public morale and the subsequent disintegration of institutions, ultimately leading to a reversion to the primitive condition of nature. This cycle was further triggered by the emergence of Christianity. Vico's quest to identify the overarching pattern of global history is his most significant contribution to the study of history. As a result, he claimed that there are certain methodological guidelines for researching historical change (Benlahcene, 2016).

Vico believed that some historical eras had a general character that persisted in subsequent times, meaning that two distinct periods may have the same general character and that one could make an analogous argument from the other (Lenz, 2020). Furthermore, he believed that those eras had a tendency to reoccur in the same sequence. The era of heroes comes after the age of gods, and the age of mankind comes after that. The period of gods and a descent into new savagery come next. Vico summarized his cycle thus: raw power is the initial principle of history; (Al-Messawi, 1999) this is followed by brave or heroic strength; this is followed by valiant justice; this is followed by dazzling originality; this is followed by constructive contemplation; and finally, a form of wastrel (Jamsarisari et al., 2023). Furthermore, this cyclical movement is a spiral rather than a circle, reflecting the passage of time via a series of set stages (Tateo, 2015). Consequently, it is possible to concur that Vico is a progressive and cyclical thinker, even if in reality he is not as he views cycles as spirals rather than circles.

Actually, Spengler (1980, 31-37) described the tale of global history as the story of great cultures, or civilizations, of which there have only been eight to date: Western, Babylonian, Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Mexican, Islamic, and Islamic. He saw high cultures as those among the many cultures that, due to their unique dynamics, produced remarkable achievements. This sprang from his conviction that cultures, or

civilizations, are living beings with a set life cycle and no greater purpose than to emerge. Following the conclusion of their artistic careers, they stayed in a condition of inactivity (Egles, 2021). For his part, English historian and civilization philosopher, Toynbee, saw global history as a series of civilizations (Navari, 2000). According to Toynbee, civilizations rather than countries or eras make up the understandable units of historical inquiry. He also believed that challenges and answers form a dialectic interaction that leads to civilizations. He also extended his notion to the world's civilizations. Thus, over the span of human history, he recognized, evaluated, characterized, and investigated the emergence and collapse of over twenty civilizations (Hartler et al, 2018). Furthermore, he believed that the world's faiths supplied the fertile ground from which civilizations developed.

As previously stated, there are three main schools under the philosophy of history paradigm that share the study of civilization but have essentially different paradigms within the larger framework. They are the basic side-by-side histories of mankind's varied people paradigm, the progress view paradigm, and the cyclical view paradigm (Benlahcene, 2016). The other two built the part of history in its second order and had a far-reaching influence and stronger impact on the study of civilization, whereas the side-by-side histories paradigm was a portion of history in its first order (Gardiner 1959, 200). They shape the dominant perspectives on how human situations have changed historically and the major schools that have tackled the problem of civilization by attempting to identify and interpret patterns in historical development (McGreal 1992, 515). In the following pages, this paper will critically review the contributions of the progressive view paradigm to the study of civilization. Moreover, the critical review will be based on Malek Bennabi's critical evaluation of the mentioned paradigm.

Malek Bennabi's account of Civilization

This school has evolved historically from a more archaic to a more sophisticated and intricate one. Several hypotheses were introduced into this school during the nineteenth century. The supporters of the notion of progress believed that history was progressing because of the enlightenment and modernity projects, which were increasing and spreading at the time (Herman, 1996). The reader ought to be aware that the three most prominent academics of this school were Comte, Hegel, and Marx. As a result, their contributions to the study of civilization are present in Bennabi's critical analysis of the prevalent paradigms in the field as he works to construct and formulate his own methodology

(Subhani, 2020). Though their conceptions of the driving forces of history differed, they all agreed that history was progressive, whether it be spiral or linear. They were the nineteenth-century prophets of development.

World history was a battlefield for classes, technologies, and economic forces for Marx, but a battlefield for ideas and spiritual forces for Hegel. Hegel believed that history was heading toward a Prussian monarchy, whereas Marx believed that a society devoid of classes was the ideal. Hegel's idealistic worldview led him to believe that human civilization has evolved historically and is headed towards the last stage, when the spirit or mind leads to the absolute (Shamim, 2018). As to Hegel's theory, there are three distinct phases that comprise the objective mind or spirit, the abstract right stage, the morality of conscience or subjective morality stage, and the social morality or state establishment stage. These three phases are also more introspective than empirical and metaphysical than historical. They constitute a logical procedure, as demonstrated by speculative cognition (Benlahcene, 2016). They make no fundamental reference to the line of succession in history. However, at specific junctures in historical evolution, such dialectical progress is made particularly evident or visible in human awareness.

For example, the concept of abstract right was first used during the Roman Empire; it was further developed over the centuries of Catholicism and the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. On the other hand, the historical emergence of the German Protestant community as a political entity and the State as the objectivities of the divine represent the third and final stage, the stage in which all antinomies are reconciled (Shamim, 2018). According to Hegel, the Prussian State represented the latter. Hegel's dialectical approach is his principal contribution. From a dialectical viewpoint, seemingly incompatible entities are actually only earlier phases of a larger whole. Thus, history tells the tale of how civilization and human freedom have advanced. According to Hegel, mankind gradually approaches its own conception of freedom, which is the independent life of every person. According to Hegel, progress is the ultimate purpose of the universal spirit's unquenchable urge and its limitless impulse (Heurtebise, 2017).

Hegel views the East, or the Orient, which includes the civilizations of India, China, and the Middle East, as the earliest stage of civilization. Humanity was still quite young at this point in its history. But it was not until the Greeks that mankind entered its adolescence and the concept of

individual freedom was developed (Shamim, 2018). They were consequently free, but neither they nor the Romans understood that man is free in general; only certain people are free. Hegel said that the Romans ushered in the age of human maturation, during which time those same free people built a vast political and material empire with the help of their slaves. The Germanic or European world succeeded it (Heurtebise, 2017). The latter marks the beginning of modern civilization, which is the pinnacle of development. Hegel declared that Europe represents the end of history, as global history consists solely of the evolution of the concept of freedom.

Hegel, the originator of the idealism historical theory of the nation and historical development, thought that concerns about the nation-state would eventually vanish. People become involved in a strong and stable ethical social sphere that is established by the state's growing authority and its knowledgeable and well-trained civil officials (Wallbank 1992, 5). Marx was another prominent member of the school of historical development and had an interest in this area. Marx is among the most important figures in the fields of historical philosophy and historical change studies. His method was based on the same ideas as Hegel's: the inexorable advancement of human freedom. Marx employed the dialectic of economic means, whereas Hegel employed the dialectic of the intellect.

Marx saw that the logic of class conflict uses economics, not politics, to unleash human development. To put it another way, mankind were subject to the powerful forces of economics, which also shaped historical tendencies. Moreover, the emergence of the Marxist perspective signified the affirmation of Hegel's assertion that history never ends. Instead, there is a stage that comes after Hegel's nation-state stage (Smetona, 2014). Marxist language indicates that socialism is a stage that comes after capitalism. In the latter, there is no class distinction in society, and the Communist manifesto serves as the foundation for a communist society in which human impulses are governed. This renders Hegel's concept of the state worthless (Marx and Engels, 1976).

The practical component of Marxist doctrine, communism, is what the Marxists declared would bring an end to history. But the Marxist interpretation of events also declared the end of history. As a result, history became deterministic and came to an end for both. According to Marx and Hegel, history has a limit beyond which it cannot go

(Benelahcene, 2004). Marx therefore believes that the historical shift toward the ultimate objective of a classless society may be explained by economic factors. According to the Marxist perspective, the axis of the forces of production is therefore made up of the wants and the technological means. In a same vein, they establish a civilization's social structures and define its material and moral characteristics.

The other member of the historical progress school was Auguste Comte (1999), a French philosopher. He was the intellectual successor of Saint Simon, a French revolutionary leader who died in 1825. Together, they assured humanity of the arrival of a new era marked by advancement in humankind and a logical comprehension of the universe, similar to a new faith. Comte (Whittaker 1993, 15), on the other hand, was more fortunate to secure a more esteemed place among the sociologists and historical philosophers. He articulated a redeeming message in his positive philosophy that was very similar to Hegel's. Comte(1999) tried to apply the ideas of the physical sciences to human situations and historical change, much inspired by the evolution hypothesis and the advancement of the physical sciences. That theory gained a lot of notoriety in the nineteenth century and served as the basis for a novel interpretation of human history that was often a trailblazing explanation in the age of "positive science" in society (Gordon 1991, 287).

Comte (1999) was impacted by the concept of progress, which was essential to Europe in the 1800s. As it extended throughout European culture, it was bolstered by Comte's positivism and Darwin's theory of evolution. Another way to categorize the several phases in human history was put forth by Comte in his concept of *la loi des trois états*, or the law of the three stages or states. According to Comte (1999), the human intellect and humanity proceeded through three stages in order: the positive, theological, and metaphysical(Smetona, 2014). Everything in the religious state was explained by wills and supernatural creatures. In the metaphysical stage, all references to vital energies, tangible forms, etc. were made in place of supernatural creatures and abstract occult causes. Ultimately, in a positive state, science is the only norm that matters: everything must be understood in the context of common sense. This means that both causes and wills must give way to confirmed science, rules, or consistent relationships between occurrences.

Even in the sphere of phenomenon knowledge, the *loi des trois états*, or the rule of the three stages, is a dubious and simplistic generalization when viewed through the lens of history(Akopian and Timashova,

2023). However, to argue that metaphysics and religion are irrelevant because a thunderclap cannot be described as the result of occult forces or supernatural rage is purely irrational. Furthermore, despite Comte's (Whittaker 1993, 15) insistence that his law of three phases was the abstract expression of general reality, he did not present any evidence to refute his hypothesis. The explanation of historical movement, its stages, and its causes may now be found to be the primary contribution of the school of historical progress. In this context, it's vital to examine how Bennabi's interpreted and evaluated these contributions.

Malek Bennabi and Religious Philosophy: History to Legend

According to Bennabi, the focus of different schools of historical philosophy has been on how to understand the evolution of civilization. But the methods used by historians and philosophers of history were too sluggish to create a methodical and thorough way to examine historical development (Benlahcene, 2011). From the Greek historian Thucydides (c. 460 BC) to the French historian Guizot (d. 1874), he claimed that most historians focused on compiling historical events rather than creating a framework for offering a logical interpretation of these events. With the arrival of Guizot, historical science starts to offer a form of scientific interpretation, made possible by the Enlightenment (Jamsarisari et al., 2023). But even Guizot had a certain Cartesian reserve that kept him from developing a comprehensive and methodical approach (Jamsarisari et al., 2023). Bennabi (1986, 18) also held the opinion that different perspectives on how to understand a civilization's historical development emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries. Many historians and philosophers of the time examined the factors that influence historical movement and came up with many theories on how history unfolded.

This point—that is, the justification of the historical movement—is what sparked Bennabi's interest in doing a critical analysis of the contributions made by several historian philosophers. But he paid close attention to the contributions of Hegel, Marx, and Comte in assessing the diverse readings of the historical trend. He saw Hegel's perspective as a mirror of the political imagination of the nineteenth century on the function of the state (Al-Messawi, 1999). Furthermore, he did not analyze Hegel's contribution in its whole (Bennabi 1981, 62). Instead, he examined the concept of contradiction, which Hegel believed to be the driving force behind historical movements and a potential source of their causes. Bennabi agreed with Hegel's perspective that the domain of ideas plays a significant role in history.

Bennabi (Benlahcene, 2016) noticed a connection between Marx and Hegel when he came to evaluate Marx's contribution. He believed that there was a connection between the Marxist theory, which holds that the conflicting processes that lead to social changes are of an economic character, and the Hegelian idea of contradiction, or the dialectic. Marx's account of historical development, however, is grounded in the materialist interpretation of history rather than the contradiction-based theories of Hegel (Benlahcene, 2004). He views the economic paradox as a catalyst for the advancement of civilization. Marxists prioritize the economic factor over other aspects as a result of Marxism's emphasis on the material aspect of civilization. Their perspective is therefore more economic (Benlahcene, 2011). Thus, the classes' fight forms the foundation of this Marxian paradigm's historical transformation. The proletariat and bourgeoisie's class conflict is what defines the progress of civilization. Thus, the dialectic class conflict is the only cause of the historical march of civilization.

Put another way, Marx and his school of thought held that human wants and material necessities are the only reasons behind any historical process that leads to the emergence of a civilization. Bennabi contends that this viewpoint is overly constrained and restricted to certain circumstances in Victorian-era Europe (Bennabi 1998, 19). Marx's method was overly constrained, while being one of the first attempts to explain social events within the context of the phenomenon of civilization. Despite presenting their method in a universal way to demonstrate its generalizability and suitability for a variety of human cultures, Marx and his successors were unable to free their analysis from the nineteenth-century Eurocentrism (Jamsarisari et al., 2023). The focus placed by Marxism on the relationship between human needs and technical means as the two poles of production modes, the factors that determine the nature of social relationships within any civilization, and the elements that determine the moral and material essence of civilization as a whole led Bennabi (1998, 20) to argue that this approach fails to address the fundamental question that emerges when social relationships break down and civilizations disintegrate in the absence of any shift in the nature of human needs or means of production (Benlahcene, 2016).

As an example, it fails to account for the fall and dissolution of the American civilizations prior to Columbus's arrival, nor the disappearance of Roman civilization due to a lack of technological advancements or basic necessities. This leads us to conclude that

overindulgence in the technique has disrupted Marxist understanding and explanation of historical events. This approach originates from a materialism predestination, meaning it begins with an unconscious mechanical process of civilization planning (Jamsarisari et al., 2023). Therefore, it would seem that the Marxian school of thought saw man as a machine or an unwilling entity and classified him as a one-dimensional being who existed more in his physical form than his moral nature. As a result, Bennabi observed that although the dialectic principle itself contradicts the implied finalism in this perspective, Marxist thought also ignores the fundamental idea of cycle by asserting that social and historical processes move from the era of primitive animality to the era of abundance, consciousness, and liberty (Benlahcene, 2016).

As a result, the historical context of nineteenth-century Europe restricted the Marxist conception of history as an antiquated process. As a result, it was overarched in the 20th century by the introduction of fresh perspectives on the origins of civilization, which provided access to variables other than the Marxist ones of technological advancement and human desires. Bennabi believed that the dynamics of the emergence of a civilization could not be explained by Marx's theory of human wants (Bennabi 1988, 8). He said that Marxists' emphasis on the class consciousness of this class amounts to a political periphrasis. As a result, they give the civilizational dilemma a political nature. But the concept of human wants, he argues, implies rivalry and conflict and harkens back to the individualistic tendency inherent in human nature. Consequently, each person works for their own purpose, motivated by biological laws.

Put another way, collaboration and integration are not facilitated by class consciousness or the notion of material and human needs (Benelahcene, 2004). Instead, they increase rivalry and conflict among community members, which makes it more challenging to bring society's members together in support of the ultimate goal of their historical existence. In terms of history, Bennabi contended that if we use the Marxist approach's own principles of economic elements, we would be able to clearly see the limitations of its explanation on the global economic map. Upon examining the Marxist movement as an economic reality, we may conclude that it truly conforms to an economic zone that reflects the respective levels attained by Japan and England. Bennabi emphasized the limitations of the Marxist perspective in this regard, Bennabi states:

We can conclude that, barring evidence to the contrary, the spread of the Communist doctrine is restricted to the economic frontiers that coincide with specific geographic boundaries. Marxist thought has not been able to meet the necessary conditions for adaptation beyond these boundaries. As a result, it is unable to offer us a logical explanation that is reliable for the regions in which it has not expanded (1998, 20).

Bennabi (1998) observed in his examination of the phases of civilization that the historical evolution of human civilization as a whole is not explained by the notion of states or stages employed by Hegel and Marx, nor by their theories of the driving force of history. It could provide an explanation for some histories, like European history up until the time of Hegel or Marx, but that idea is constrained and prejudiced in its Hegelian and Marxist forms. It cannot be applied to and extrapolated to human civilization as a whole. Moreover, it offers a definitive conclusion to the progression of human history. For example, neither theory explains how Muslim culture came to be or how it has developed throughout time.

Regarding Comte, Bennabi (1984, 27) recognized his contributions to the field of civilization studies. He saw him as the forerunner of contemporary sociology, having slept for a long period since the days of Ibn Khaldun, the father of the field, ten centuries before Comte. Though Bennabi (1984, 27) appreciated Comte's contributions, the researcher would like to point out that he was very critical of Comte's positivistic view of history. He was aware of Comte's law of the three states and an important positivist paradigm. Bennabi (1994, 9) found it to be a somewhat intriguing false generalization; on the one hand, one might infer certain signs for such a structure. However, positivism—which holds that everything is relative, that there is only one absolute principle, and that knowledge is limited to the interpretation of sensory experiences and the knowledge of phenomena—was the false philosophy that informed the understanding and conceptualization of any inductive result.

Bennabi (1994, 9), therefore, was not a fan of the positivist viewpoint, which holds that the only fields in which truth and true knowledge can be found in human thought are mathematics, physics, and the various sciences of phenomena; as a result, religion, mystical experience, metaphysics, and poetry are remnants of pre-rational and primitive mentalities in the minds of the civilized people. In actuality, several

writers who believe that Comte's perspective on the many disciplines is a crucial component of the positivists' historical philosophy have echoed Bennabi's criticisms of Comte (Zeitlin 1994, 81-89.).

Conclusion

In summary, Bennabi offered a critical evaluation of the School of Historical Progress that the reader may find to be rather critical of this institution in many different aspects. Because he believed the school of historical development to be more theoretical than historical, he opposed it. However, it is predicated on Eurocentric worldviews, which reject any critical examination of the many civilizational experiences and instead see the history of contemporary Europe as the pinnacle of human development. Additionally, they provide methods that ignore the complexity of a civilization as a multivariate phenomenon in favor of concentrating on a few factors of historical development. Bennabi did, in fact, recognize the Marxist appreciation of dialectical analysis as well as the concern of the Hegelians over the role of ideas in influencing history. He countered that there was no connection between this school and the essence of civilization. As a result, he critiqued this institution for having inadequate ideas, methods, and viewpoints.

Bennabi was aware of the general approach of this school, according to the researcher, which focused on the universal process of civilization, at least theoretically; considered the general pattern of historical change; looked for a driving force behind historical movement; and used highly abstract concepts that indicated the various figures of this school were aware of and intended to address the metaphysical aspect of civilization. But as Bennabi himself pointed out, it was his belief in the significance of universal connection that inspired him to study and evaluate the writings of several historical philosophers, including the leading figures of the school of historical development. As a result, he encountered such many theories and viewpoints that enabled him to comprehend and unearth the universal framework of civilization, so enabling him to develop his multidisciplinary approach.

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