

harmony with Islam, in contrast with the particularistic currents present in Egyptian and Syrian nationalism to which he objected strongly. His nationalist pan-Arabic activities in this period focused on the secret society that he founded, "the Society of the Arab Association." The first aims of the society were to bring about a union of the amirs of the Arabian Peninsula, to work for the development of the Arab countries and their protection, and to establish connections between the Arab societies in Syria, Iraq, and Istanbul, within the framework of the struggle against the CUP. In the oath that he composed for entering the society, Riḍā had already advanced one step forward and no longer spoke only of the unformulated term "Arab Association" but also about "the founding of a new kingdom for them." In the pamphlet that he distributed thereafter Riḍā's appeal to the Arab world included the demands "to proclaim the union of all the leaders, the amirs and the heads of tribes" and "to prepare you all to fight so that you will be able quickly to answer the first call." Now Riḍā was no longer satisfied with the ideas of a union, but made it clear that the intention was to realize and implement this ideal and to fight for the independence of the Arabs, also against the European powers. Riḍā tried to achieve these goals by contacting the rulers of the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf in an attempt to convince them to unite in order to establish an independent Arab state, an attempt that failed just as other attempts to come to any kind of agreement among these rulers had failed.

In the "General Organic Law of the Arab Empire" which he composed and submitted to the British in 1915, Riḍā clearly defined what the future Arab Empire would look like. One of the articles states its decentralized character, another explicitly guarantees that every province will be independent in its internal administration. Both of these provisions are particularly interesting in the light of article 1: the Arab Empire will be composed of the Arabian Peninsula, the Province of Syria and Iraq and the territory between them. It can be assumed that on the basis of his experiences with the rulers of the Arabian Peninsula, Riḍā did not believe that the entire Peninsula could be constituted as a single united province in the future Empire. Thus Riḍā, the Pan-Arabist, recognized the fact that the Arabs of the various countries were different from each other and that a firm basis for the new Empire could lie only in a decentralized framework in which every country would have its own independent internal administration.

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MUḤAMMAD RASHĪD RIḌĀ'S PERSPECTIVES ON THE WEST AS REFLECTED IN *AL-MANĀR*

There has been a tendency to portray Muḥammad Rashid Riḍā (1865–1935) as a mere transmitter of the ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849–1905) and loyal defender of his thought. Albert Hourani described Riḍā as "'Abduh's liege man: the mouthpiece of his ideas, the guardian of his good name, and his biographer."¹ Riḍā's ideas were treated as an extension of 'Abduh's thought and in line with the framework which the latter designed for reforming and reinvigorating Islam and demonstrating its compatibility with modernity.² 'Abduh's framework included the abandoning of *taqlīd* (imitative reasoning), resorting to rational criteria of interpretation of Islamic doctrines, the reform of religious institutions and educational systems, and the adoption of modern skills and technological achievements.³ The links between the two reformers are of course strong, but this portrayal often presents one side of the picture and eventually tends to deemphasize Riḍā's own intellectual contributions.

Riḍā led an active political and intellectual life, filled with dramatic events that led to the transformation of the Arab and Islamic world. Western influence and dominance were tangible everywhere; the advocates of wholesale adoption of the Western model were on the ascendency, supported by the powers of the time, and assisted by the attraction of easy solutions. After the First World War, the Islamic world was fragmented into separate states under the control of Western powers, and the Caliphate was abolished in 1924. Riḍā, almost alone in Egypt, represented the Muslim thinker and activist endeavoring to reform and rescue his nation while at the same time preserving its identity and culture. In the process, Riḍā's thinking was diverse and complex, reflecting the diversity and complexity of the time. His thinking on the West was also more diverse and complex than is commonly believed to be so.

Riḍā's Acquaintance with the West

Rashīd Riḍā drew his knowledge of the West from various sources. He acquired his earliest experience about modern progress and the new world of the West in Lebanon through discussions and personal contacts with liberal Christian intellectuals and American missionaries in Beirut. He read the former's books and journals, in particular *al-Muqtataf* and *al-Ṭabīb* which focused on the recent developments in science and modern knowledge.⁴ Moreover, during Riḍā's life-

¹ Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought In The Liberal Age, 1798–1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 226.

² Malcolm H. Kerr, *Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muḥammad 'Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 16. See also Nadav Safran, *Egypt In Search of Political Community* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 75–84.

³ Majid Khadduri, *Political Trends in the Arab World: The Role of Ideas and Ideals in Politics* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp. 60–65.

⁴ Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, *al-Manār wa'l-Azhar* (Cairo, 1934), p. 193.

time, the Middle East and the Arab world witnessed a rapid increase in the number of translated books in various fields of knowledge. The multitude of translated Western books enabled Riḍā to compensate for his inability to read in languages other than Arabic.

We know that in *al-Manār* ("The Lighthouse")⁵ Riḍā reviewed some of the works of Gustave Le Bon, Demolins, Spencer, Tolstoy, Hugo, Shaw, and others. Those which had a particularly profound impact on his thought and were frequently quoted in his journal were Le Bon's *Les Lois Psychologiques de l'Évolution des Peuples*, Demolins's *A quoi tient la Supériorité des Anglo-saxons?*, and Spencer's *Education and The Principles of Sociology*. Riḍā was also in contact with such Orientalists as Moritz and Margoliouth. The latter offered him a copy of his book on *Abū 'l-ʿAlā*; Riḍā admired the organization of its index and bibliography, and, indeed began to adopt the same technique in his journal and in most of his books.⁶ In addition, the literature of Arab travellers to Europe who recorded their various observations on Western civilization, their experiences, and impressions of the West, provided Riḍā with another significant source of information. These books included Kurd 'Alī's *Gharāyib al-Gharb* ("The Wonders of the West"), Muḥammad Bayram's *Ṣafwat al-ʿIṭibār*, Al-Muwaylḥī's *Ḥadīth 'Isa Ibn Hishām* ("The Narrations of Issa Ibn Hisham"), and Arslan's *Ḥāqir al-ʿAlam al-Islāmī* ("The Present Muslim World") and other messages which the latter sent to his friend Rashīd.⁷

Riḍā had direct contact with Europe when he travelled to Switzerland in 1922 on a political mission. As vice president of the Syro-Palestinian Congress, he presented the Arab cause for independence. There, he met liberals from the West and members of the League of Nations with whom he discussed the question of independence and the relationship between the East and the West. Riḍā also toured in Germany, recording his "European Journey" and publishing it in *al-Manār*.⁸

Most probably, the rigid classification and particular organization of *al-Manār* restricted Riḍā from producing special issues dealing with the West. Nevertheless, Riḍā devoted articles to "The advantages and disadvantages of Europeans in the East," "A Comparison between European and Eastern civilization," "Fanaticism," "The Western in the East," "The consequence of the war on European

⁵ *Al-Manār* appeared in 1898 as a weekly, and after one year, as a monthly journal. Riḍā continued publishing his journal till his death in 1935. For a very good selection and analysis of some texts of *al-Manār*, see Wajih Kawtharani, *Mukhtārāt Siyāsiyya Min Mijallat al-Manār* (Beirut, 1980).

⁶ Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, *al-Waḥī al-Muḥammadi* (Cairo, 1956), p. 9. See also *al-Manār*, XIII (1910), 396.

⁷ *Al-Manār*, XXV (1924), 719, XI (1903), 84, X (1907), 61, and XXVI (1925), 223. See also Aḥmad al-Sharabāshī, *Amīr al-Bayān*, II (Cairo, 1963), 822, 834-35, 839. On the personal relationship between Riḍā and Arslan, see Shakīb Arslan, *Rashīd Riḍā wa Ikhwā' Arbaʿin sana* (Damascus, 1937) and William L. Cleveland, *Islam Against the West: Shakīb Arslan And The Campaign for Islamic Nationalism* (London: al-Saqi Books, 1985), pp. 73-74.

⁸ *Al-Manār*, XXIII (1922), 114-20, 383-90, 44-59, 553-60, 635-40, and 696-702. See also Yūsuf Ibiṣh, *Raḥalāt Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā* (Beirut, 1971), pp. 311-84.

⁹ This article was published first in *al-Muḥayyad*, no. 2748, April, 1899, and then in the first volume of *al-Manār*.

civilization," and others. In these articles, Riḍā explained various Western historical, social, and political developments, and linked them to the conditions of the East. He selected those phenomena in which the West appeared to be in a commanding position—science, technical skill, and democracy—and argued that his society needed to acquire these while preserving its own moral and ethical values.

In a 1932 book, *al-Waḥī al-Muḥammadi* ("Muhammadan Revelation"), however, he seemed to go further than synthesis and demonstrated concern at the negative side of Western civilization. As with many "Orientals," the First World War revealed to Riḍā the destructive and ruthless side of the West which seemed to be lacking in spiritual elements and moral checks. Riḍā envisaged the need of this civilization for the guidance of Islam, the religion of brotherhood, mercy, and peace.¹⁰ The book, though not on the West per se, thus attempted to use reason and logical and historical evidence to prove that the Qur'ān contained all the necessary elements for modern reform. Addressing the book to the liberal European and Japanese scholars of modern civilization, he explicitly called on them to adopt Islam in the hope that they would in turn transmit the message to their people.¹¹

The West as a Civilization

The supremacy of the West was a prime concern for many Arab intellectuals. Shakīb Arslan's book, *Why Are the Muslims Backward While Others Are Advanced*, was certainly a reflection of a such concern. Though the West was a source of pain and frustration, Western progress seemed almost irresistible. Like other intellectuals of the time, Riḍā was struck by the disparity between an advanced Europe and a backward East plagued by tyranny and stagnation. Riḍā sorely expressed this fact in one of his articles:

Europe attacks us with the strength of its nations, sciences, industries, organization, wealth, shrewdness, and wisdom . . . so long as we remain in this state of ignorance, disorder, fragmentation, and congealment, we will never be able to stand before Europe.¹²

In his early thinking, Riḍā believed that Europe was able to achieve its progress because of education. With the development of science and knowledge, which the Europeans learnt from Islamic civilization, education spread and advanced in the West. It played a significant role in raising European generations on the virtue of independence so that they were able to restrict the powers of their rulers and establish republican systems.¹³ Moreover, in order to convince the Ottomans of the indispensibility of education in building a modern army, in several issues of his journal, Riḍā quoted Bismark's belief that it was German-type education that defeated France.¹⁴

¹⁰ Riḍā, *al-Waḥī*, p. 11.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

¹² *Al-Manār*, VIII (1905), 759.

¹³ *Ibid.*, I (1898), 869.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, IX (1906), 58.

Attributing the very beginnings of Western advancement to the influence of Islamic civilization on Europe was a recurring theme and important device which Riḍā as well as many Muslim intellectuals resorted to in their writings. Riḍā mentioned proudly that "some fair-minded European scholars and intellectuals had admitted that the beginning of modern European civilization had been a consequence of what the Europeans acquired from Islam in Spain at the hands of Averroes and his disciples, and during their wars against the Muslims."¹⁵ This may have had the effect of compensating for feelings of inferiority among Muslim intellectuals of the time, but it clearly had the effect of justifying the adoption of the commendable aspects of modern civilization while eliminating all possible opposition to the process of adopting them. In saying that these aspects had their roots in Islam, Riḍā and others were legitimating their acceptance as part of the Muslim heritage. Equally important, this line of thinking aimed at demonstrating that backwardness was not an inherent element of Islam, but an accidental stage which could be overcome in the life of Muslims; civilization was not due to the intrinsic superiority of one race over the others.

Also noteworthy in Riḍā's view of the role of education in Western progress is the explicit link between education and political development. According to Riḍā, because Westerners were educated, they were able to impose restrictions on the prerogatives of the rulers and eventually establish constitutional governments and republican systems. In other words, education provided Westerners with independence of will, freedom of thought, and the recognition of their political rights. In arguing this, Riḍā was following 'Abduh, but also criticizing the British authorities in Egypt for their lack of concern for education. This lack of concern struck Riḍā as ironic: "The personal freedom, independence, and dignity of the British people enabled them to conquer one fifth of the world, which lacked these values, though the British army was not the largest in number."¹⁶ In this association of education, the moral habits of the British, and their ability to dominate other nations, Riḍā reflected the assumptions of Demolins's and Le Bon's writings, which linked the ethical habits of the British to their military, economic, and political success; they attributed this to the self-reliance and independence of thought and will of the British.¹⁷

Riḍā found consolation in, and drew inspiration from, the Reformation movement which he considered to be a factor standing behind Western progress. In an article on Islamic reform, Riḍā described the strong opposition of European rulers and clergy to science and knowledge in medieval times. The two parties were united in their opposition to science, innovation, discovery, freedom, justice, equality, and every aspect leading to the independence of the will. In the name of religion, the clergy fought reason and science; the rulers submitted and supported them. The two parties enjoyed absolute power and the total obedience of their

¹⁵ Ibid., I (1898), 733.

¹⁶ Ibid., XIV (1910), 408.

¹⁷ Ahmad Faṭḥi Zaḡhlūl, *Sirr Taqaddum al-Ingīz al-Saksūniyyīn* (trans. from Demolins) (Cairo, 1908), pp. 80, 176-79, 256-58. See also *Sirr Taawwur al-Umam* (trans. from G. Le Bon) (Cairo, 1913), p. 39.

people.¹⁸ After the Crusades, Europeans grew aware of their weakness and began to defy both secular and church authorities.¹⁹ Riḍā believed that the real reformers of Europe were not Bismark, Pinksfield, Gambeta, Georgekove, or other statesmen or philosophers, but those who were persecuted for reforming the convictions of their people. The greatest of all such reformers was Luther, the reformer of religion and eradicator of the most tremendous obstacle to European progress, ignorance.²⁰

Riḍā's detailed treatment of this development in Western history carried within it an implicit reference to the similar conditions which existed in his society, that is, absolute rulers, stagnant scholars, and vulnerable advocates of reform. He believed nonetheless that Muslims were in a better situation than medieval Europeans, and the possibility of reforming their conditions tangible, for "Islam abolished all spiritual authorities, restricted the powers of rulers by a doctrine based on real freedom, justice, and equality."²¹ He therefore asserted that, "Islamic reform could take place in the East, but it depends in the first place on convincing traditional scholars of the indispensibility of natural sciences, on which the possession of power and wealth rests."²²

Riḍā's article, "The Advantages and Disadvantages of Europeans in the East,"²³ marked the beginning of a new phase in his thinking on the reasons of Western progress. In this article, which was published first in *al-Jarīda* in 1907 and then in *al-Manār*, Riḍā refuted various possible causes for the advancement of the West, and then reduced these factors to one prime cause, the existence of associations (*jam'īyyāt*). Riḍā's use of the word "associations" was very broad. It connotes cooperative organizations for achieving certain collective and specific interests. He considered political parties, interest groups, financial corporations, philanthropic societies as forms of associations. In the West, various associations specialized in the educational, cultural, economic, political, and social life of society. The formation of these associations had been the act of rational individuals who were moved by the retarded conditions of their society, and therefore, sought its progress.²⁴ Political associations succeeded in abolishing the absolute powers of kings and popes, and in replacing them with republican systems of government and constitutional monarchies. Religious and philanthropic associations established schools, orphanages, and hospitals. Scientific and educational associations broadened the spheres of science and arts, and widened the fields of knowledge. Financial associations, in the form of companies, built factories for various industries, and banks for facilitating financial transactions.

It followed that he attributed the inability of Muslims to preserve and develop their civilization to the fact that it did not rest on associations or institutions, but

¹⁸ *Al-Manār*, II (1899), 69.

¹⁹ Ibid., III (1900), 31.

²⁰ Ibid., IV (1901), 684-85.

²¹ Ibid., I (1898), 885-86. See also Ibid., III (1900), 245.

²² Ibid., II (1899), 70.

²³ Ibid., X (1907), 340-43.

²⁴ Ibid., XIV (1911), 289-90.

rather on individuals, and thus eventually collapsed. Yet in order to encourage the adoption of such organizations, he attempted to search for their roots in his own traditional heritage. The Shīʿa, Khārījites and mystical orders (ṭarīqas) were examples of political associations. However, the first two failed because they concealed their objectives, and the third were politically submissive.

This aspect of Western civilization had a great impact on Riḍā's political attitude. He participated in the formation of several political and cultural associations such as "Jamʿiyyat al-Shūrā al-ʿUthmāniyya" ("The Ottoman Consultation Association"), "Ḥizb al-Ia-Markaziyya al-ʿUthmāniyya" ("The Ottoman Decentralization Party"), "Jamʿiyyat al-Rābiʿa al-Sharqiyya" ("The Association of Oriental League") and "Jamʿiyyat al-Jāmiʿa al-ʿArabiyya" ("The Association of Arab League").²⁵ Riḍā's emphasis on the role of associations in the development of Europe was not a coincidence: the idea appeared to have wide support among ʿAbduh's disciples in Egypt, particularly those associated with the Jarīda-Umma group, which included intellectuals like Luṭfī al-Sayyid, Faṭḥī Zaghlūl, and others who worked for the extension of ʿAbduh's liberal views and his policy of social reform.

The Dilemma of Imitating the West

Not surprising from the dim view that he took of some aspects of Islamic tradition, the enmity between Riḍā and the conservative ulama was deep rooted. He blamed them for fragmenting the Muslim nation by their fanatical sectarian dogmas and accused them of destroying the independent and democratic spirit of the nation by supporting tyrannical rulers and justifying their despotic practices. He also condemned their opposition to modern sciences and reform movements.²⁶ Yet Riḍā bitterly criticized the Westernizers of Muslim society. He accused them of blind imitation of Europeans without having either their experience or independence of judgement. They were infatuated by the superficial aspects of Western civilization without regard to the more serious side of its scientific achievements, technical skills, and organizational ability. Riḍā also pointed to the feelings of inferiority from which the Westernized suffered. They irrationally imitated foreigners as a result of their feeling of self-contempt and the glorification of others. Therefore, they humiliated themselves by remaining subordinates rather than becoming models for others to follow, by being enslaved rather than independent.²⁷ He attributed this to the spread of Western-type schools which caused the alienation of the Westernizers, brought up to admire Western values and culture, while leaving them improperly educated in their own cultural traditions.²⁸ But he also blamed them for their inability to realize the drastic consequences of their imitation of the West. They stood behind the introduction and persistence of imperialism, by serving the interests of the occupiers. They pursued Western ways of life

²⁵ *Ibid.*, XXVI (1925), 291-94.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, VIII (1905), 117 and 789.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, XXX (1929), 120.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, XX (1917-1918), 341-43.

and conspicuous patterns of consumption, and, eventually, squandered the wealth of the nation and perpetuated Egypt's dependence on the West. They also contributed to the disintegration of the social and cultural bonds that held the nation together by introducing alien values.²⁹

The Westernizers seemed to have failed to realize the different evolutions of Eastern and Western societies. Two issues, religion and women, reflect such failure.

Riḍā regretted that the separation between religion and politics in the West was a major area of attraction for many intellectuals in the East. Nationalism based on secular notions meant the elimination of Ottoman authority and the decline of the social status of the Turkish aristocratic class. It enabled some Egyptians, for instance, to promote their social and economic status in the country. Moreover, for the Westernizers, secularism meant the adoption of ready-made models, without the need to synthesize the new with the old. As a matter of fact they hardly felt at home with their indigenous culture and heritage and preferred to adopt the Western model in its totality. In the process, however, they failed to realize that Islam represented an identity as well as a religion. Hence, Riḍā attacked people like Salāma Mūsā, and ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq, who both advocated the separation between religion and politics. He considered their views to be a weapon in the hands of imperialism.

The danger of views such as ʿAbd al-Rāziq's, he said, was that they could be made use of by the enemies of Islam. These enemies fought with ideas as well as the sword; in particular, they were trying to cut the links which bound Muslim peoples to one another so that they would become a prey to the wild beasts of imperialism.³⁰

For people like ʿAbd al-Rāziq, it was not evident that in a cultural encounter the feeling of separateness and awareness of one's own identity was a substantial element for self-assertion and independence. Therefore, Riḍā endeavored to demonstrate the role which religion had played in the West and correct the fallacies which the Westernized secular intellectuals made by comparing two dissimilar religions.³¹

He distinguished between Christianity as a religion and the practice of the clergy which deformed its essence. Then, he concluded that in reality, the Europeans did not relinquish their religion altogether, but only the traditions of the Church and its hierarchy. These traditions prohibited the use of reason in the name of religion and prevented the people from understanding the laws of nature or realizing independence of will and freedom of thought. However, after encountering Islamic civilization during the Crusades, the Europeans felt the need for changing their backward conditions and, consequently, rebelled against the authority of the Church. Nonetheless, he contended that "even the European philos-

²⁹ *Ibid.*, VIII (1905), and XVIII (1915), 229.

³⁰ Hourani's trans. for Riḍā, *Arabic Thought*, p. 241.

³¹ *Al-Manār*, V (1902), 882.

ophers who denied God, denied only the God of the Church which portrayed Him in an unreasonable way. . . . This had been the conviction of Cecil Rhodes, Huxley, Spencer, and other philosophers."³² To reinforce his view, Riḍā quoted Spencer who emphasized the important role which religion played in the formation of moral habits and ethical values.³³

Europe, moreover, used religion as a political instrument for mobilizing European Christians by inflaming their fanatic emotions against others. This was manifest in the spread of missions, which were used as means of cultural and military conquest. Riḍā cited Germany's invasion of Kiao Chao in China after the murder of some missionaries.³⁴ To convert non-Christians to Christianity, missionaries claimed that Western civilization and progress were based on the principles of the Bible. Riḍā asserted that nothing could be farther from the truth, as Western laws and values were entirely incompatible with the teachings of the Holy Book. Furthermore, European politicians and the religious hierarchy invoked religious fanaticism against non-Christians. To prove his point, Riḍā drew on historical as well as current examples. "France compelled the Muslims in Algeria to convert to Christianity; Austria and Hungary enforced their law of marriage and divorce on their Muslim subjects; German papers criticized Weillhelm II for praising the Muslim hero, Saladin, during the former's visit to Syria."³⁵ Then Riḍā wondered, "if the Ottoman state had dared to inquire about the condition of her Muslim subjects in the colonies, all Europe would have accused her and turned against her for inflaming religious fanaticism in the East."³⁶

Another issue which attracted the attention of Westernized intellectuals was the condition of women in the West. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Orientals became aware of the difference in the conditions of women in the West and the East. In the West, they were more educated, independent, active, and enjoyed more social rights. Movements for the liberation of Oriental women appeared everywhere in the East, except in Japan. In Egypt, Qāsim Amīn, with the West in his mind,³⁷ inaugurated this movement in 1899 by his book, *Tahrīr al-Mar'a* ("The Emancipation of Woman"), in which he received 'Abduh's assistance, and *al-Mar'a al-Jadida* ("The New Woman") in 1901. Amīn advocated the provision of more social rights, education and freedom for the Muslim women so that they would be able to perform their role in society and shape the moral code of the nation.³⁸ In fact, Riḍā was among the supporters of Amīn, as he honored, defended, and quoted parts of Amīn's books in his journal.³⁹ Riḍā certainly had his own views, which emanated from indigenous Islamic perspectives, and therefore, wrote his own book, *Nidā' Ilā al-Jins al-Laṭif* ("A Call to the Fair Sex") in

³² Ibid., VIII (1904), 139.

³³ Ibid., XIII (1910), 920.

³⁴ Ibid., I (1898), 485.

³⁵ Ibid., XXV (1924), 140.

³⁶ Ibid., I (1898), 483-93 and 714-15. See also Ibid., XIII (1910), 392.

³⁷ Qāsim Amīn, *al-Mar'a al-Jadida* (Cairo, 1901), p. 20.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 124.

³⁹ *Al-Manār*, III (1900), 850 and IV (1901), 26 and 30.

1932, for reforming women's conditions. In this book, he compared the status and rights of women in Islam and women in pre- and non-Islamic societies.⁴⁰

Drawing on the rights of women in Islam and on the financial and legal status of women in the modern West, Riḍā proved to his satisfaction that the Islamic principles governing the status of Muslim women were more progressive and superior to those of the West. He stated that for thirteen and a half centuries, Islam had recognized the equality of women and men in religious duties, financial and legal affairs. Muslim women participated in public affairs and in war, at a time when some Europeans were still inquiring into the nature of woman's soul whether it had been derived from an animal or from the devil. Even in modern times and after Europe's social progress, Islamic principles concerning women's financial and legal rights were still superior. French women had not been granted the right of full control over their property and legal transactions and were still restricted by the will of their husbands. This was due to European traditional prejudice which suspected the capability of the woman's mind. American women had only recently been granted the right of full control over their own property.⁴¹ Riḍā therefore anticipated that the facts of life and education would force Europe to acquire other principles from Islam. The Europeans had already permitted divorce, and, most likely, they would legitimize polygamy in the future. To support his expectations, he quoted from some European newspapers; *London Truth*, *Echo* and *Eastern Mail*, the wish of some "virtuous" European women to permit polygamy.⁴²

Riḍā also criticized the type of education which the French and British women received, demonstrating its drastic consequences on the stability of the social conditions of the Europeans. Receiving the same type of education like men, Riḍā believed, led European women to depend entirely on themselves for earning their living. This in fact disturbed the nature of women. Many of them preferred to remain unmarried, some married at a relatively old age, and others did not have children, so that they would maintain their jobs. Equally important, the free interaction between men and women encouraged illegal relationships.⁴³ Therefore, Riḍā urged his people not to pursue the type of education which women in the West were receiving. He suggested instead another type by which a woman would be able to preserve her good attributes as a woman. Relying on the West as a source for proving his view, Riḍā stated that "this is what Germany, the most progressive European country in science and knowledge, has chosen and realized."⁴⁴ He believed that it was sufficient for a woman to master her language, literature, mathematics, home economy, health, ethics, and pedagogy. The last two should be based on the principles of religion, a good knowledge of its rules, moral precepts, and doctrines. A woman should also learn history, geography, economics and have a general knowledge of the principles and fields of all other

⁴⁰ The book was first published in *al-Manār*, XXXII (1931), 354-400.

⁴¹ Riḍā, *al-Wahī*, pp. 276-283 and *al-Manār*, XXXIII (1932), 20-24.

⁴² Ibid., IV (1901), 485-88, and V (1902), 888-89.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., VIII (1905), 185-86.

sciences. Moreover, competent girls should not be deprived of higher education, particularly, medicine and management of girls' schools and philanthropic societies.⁴⁵

The type of education which Riḍā described for women reflected his conception of the role which they should play in their Islamic society. This role had to coincide with the traditions, customs, and belief-system of that society. Education should prepare them for becoming properly educated mothers, raising their children on the virtues of religious principles and social values.

A Scheme for Emulation

As these examples show, Riḍā's harsh condemnation of the secular intellectuals reflected his conviction that the acquisition of some aspects of Western civilization was not to be left to random, but ought to be rationally defined and preceded by certain objective conditions. Riḍā's selective scheme included the development of industry and the technical and scientific skills behind it; the willingness to accept assistance from virtuous and independent Europeans who had no religious, political, or imperialist ambitions on the Muslim nation; and above all, the need for seriously studying, though not automatically adopting, Western historical, political, and social developments.⁴⁶ Indeed, in a reflective paragraph, Riḍā touched on the failure to distinguish between the superficial features of Western civilization and its essential products.

We must compete with the Europeans in an effort to discover the sources of benefits to us. We must explore their signs and causes, and refrain from confining ourselves to the importation of the products of their Western industries and achievements, such as military equipment. Imitating the West will make us dependent on the Europeans for ever, and eliminate all our hopes to approach and emulate them.⁴⁷

One way by which Riḍā justified the acquisition of aspects of Western civilization was to appeal to religious necessity. The weak and retarded conditions of the Muslims had led to the suspension of many religious duties, the most important of which was the *jihād*. Strength in the modern world depended on science, industries, and technical skill, all found in the West. What was an indispensable condition for performing a duty was itself a duty and it was, therefore, the duty of all Muslims to acquire from and master these aspects of the West.⁴⁸ However, perhaps speaking now to another, more secular audience, he also argued that the need for technical skill was a universal one, necessary to all nations regardless of differences in religion, tradition, and habit.⁴⁹

However, would the East remain immune to the inevitable infiltration of the Western values, after acquiring Western scientism and technical achievements?

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, X (1907), 560.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, XVII (1914), 10-11.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, I (1898), 551-52.

⁴⁸ Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 236.

⁴⁹ *Al-Manār*, XXX (1929), 120.

Riḍā was, in fact, faced with this question during a meeting in Geneva with the editor of the *Tribune de Genève*. In his reply, he explained that the intervention of imperialist powers in the affairs of Orientals deprived them of the freedom and independence to choose the elements by which they could achieve progress and concurrently preserve their own cultural heritage. The clear exception was Japan, which managed to develop in a fashion similar to the West, while preserving its national character.

Indeed, motivated by a deep admiration for the Japanese model of modernization, Riḍā listed the requirements that had to accompany the process of borrowing Western innovations. First, these ought to be acquired independently and freely without any coercion, so that they would become an inherent part of the nation's character. One of the means to achieve this task was to translate Western sciences into Arabic and improve the language in order to be able to assimilate them.⁵⁰ Second, this process was to be carried out by a group of people mastering these sciences and at the same time preserving their own national characteristics and cultural values.⁵¹ Third, the members of the nation must be tied together with a single bond.⁵² Whereas the Japanese were united and agreed on certain indisputable values—the nation and the emperor—the Arabs had notably failed to achieve unity.⁵³ Fourth, there ought to be careful observation of all changes that might take place in Muslim society as a result of the importation of outside innovations. In this regard, the study of the historical and radical developments which occurred in the powerful and developed countries would be of great importance; it would provide examples for the Oriental peoples and enable them to discover the convenience or inconvenience of these innovations to their social conditions.⁵⁴ These conditions obviously reflected the profound impact that the Japanese experiment had on Riḍā. Like other Orientals, he believed that Japan's victory over "Western" Russia in 1905, in addition to its successful modernization which was achieved in a relatively short time, refuted all claims of inherent Oriental inferiority or inherent Western superiority.⁵⁵ To his mind, Japan's success remained an indictment of the failure of the Egyptian and Turkish governments and intellectuals to do the same. This success, Riḍā believed, was due to the moral and military independence of the Japanese spirit, which had remained unspoiled and unbowed for thousands of years.⁵⁶ Muslims, on the other hand, did not have either the government or the leaders to direct them to the advantages of the modern world and to help them in avoiding its harmful effects.⁵⁷ Moreover, the Japanese perspective on education and their moral habits appeared to be higher than those of

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, XXVII (1926), 788-89.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, XVII (1914), 10-11.

⁵² *Ibid.*, VIII (1905), 813.

⁵³ Hisham Sharabi, *Arab Intellectuals and The West: The Formative Years, 1875-1914* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp. 105-106.

⁵⁴ *Al-Manār*, XXX (1929), 120.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, VII (1904), 629.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 200.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, VIII (1905), 514-15.

the Egyptians. For instance, in Europe Japanese students specialized in practical and applied sciences, and were an example of good behavior, seriousness, and activity. Contrary to the Japanese, Egyptian students specialized in theoretical and social sciences, and were a model of moral corruption and extravagance.⁵⁸ As a result, the Japanese nation was able to have a countless number of scientists who stood on equal footing with the Europeans in searching for facts and discovering new inventions, the Egyptian nation was not.⁵⁹

These views as a whole reveal an unusually sophisticated awareness of the difference between modernization and Westernization. The first to Riḍā meant the possession of technical skill and scientific knowledge while preserving the indigenous national features and the moral basis of society. A later Islamic thinker, who belongs to the same school of thought, expounded on this idea. In his views, which may be seen as reflecting Riḍā's, modernization could be achieved if the nation believed that its backwardness was simply accidental and that it could be overcome by the unity of the whole nation on specific goals. Modernization required the existence of a national will and an efficient government capable of directing the nation on the path of industrialization. Westernization on the other hand was a belief that backwardness was in the essence of the nation—its culture, belief system, history. Therefore, the nation had to sever all its links with the past, and reconstitute itself on the Western model of development.⁶⁰ For Riḍā, Japan was modernizing, whereas Egypt and Turkey were Westernizing, and history had already shown which path was preferable.

The West as Imperialism

Though some aspects of Western civilization seemed impressive in the East, the presence of the West as imperialism was indeed very disappointing. This might explain why Riḍā would admire parts of Western progress while sometimes expressing critical views of Western imperialism. During his life time, Riḍā witnessed the gradual fragmentation of the provinces of the Ottoman Empire at the hands of foreign forces. He also observed the flagrant economic exploitation of the natural resources of the occupied countries and the breakdown of the old bonds of society. Most drastic among these changes was the formation of new political entities and nation-states in the area, including the attempts to create a Jewish-Zionist state in the midst of the Arab world. Despite his favorable view of Western science and representative government, Riḍā had no doubt that "imperialism is the source of all contemporary problems and conflicts between nations."⁶¹

However, Riḍā's conception of the Western occupation passed through three stages. In the first stage, Riḍā was under the influence of Afghānī and his anti-imperialist tendencies, which were articulated in *al-Urwa al Wuthqā* ("The Indissoluble Bond"). Consequently, in the first issues of *al-Manār*, Riḍā held

similar views to Afghānī toward Western imperialism. He was confident that the real purpose of imperialism centered on the accumulation and transfer of wealth from the colonies to Europe. He also understood that the consequences of this process included the penetration of European industries and trade into the East, and the availability of more jobs for the Europeans in the colonies. Furthermore, colonial expansion led to the promotion of the industrial products of the West, the circulation of wealth outside the occupied countries, and the permanent dependence of the colonies on the West.⁶²

Riḍā distinguished between the different kinds of European imperialist countries and their attitude toward the colonies. France and Holland were cruel and oppressive, while Britain was relatively tolerant. The Germans appeared to be less greedy and more honest. Italy's invasion of Libya in 1912 was considered to be the most evil example of the imperialist power.⁶³ The preference for the British type of colonial rule was due to the policies of the British in Egypt, where, according to Riḍā, "The British prefer to acquire gains through peaceful means, and avoid provoking the feelings of resentment of the people."⁶⁴ Partially, it could also be attributed to the influence of some of Le Bon's views on Riḍā who stated that "Le Bon . . . preferred the policies of Britain in its colonies to those of France."⁶⁵

As for the means adopted by European imperialism, Riḍā believed that Europe resorted to measures other than war for disguising its hegemony and ensuring utmost gains. In their rush to conquer other countries, he explained, Westerners realized that wars would not guarantee all the anticipated results. Wars, in fact, often destroyed wealth and inflicted harm upon the victor. Therefore, Westerners invented new pretexts and methods for "peaceful" invasion. They claimed that the purpose of their conquests was to spread modern civilization and educate "savage" nations.⁶⁶ In addition, they alleged that they wanted to protect their special interests in the occupied countries, ensure the safety of their religious missions, and defend these countries against outside enemies. They also exploited their agreements and treaties with the colonies in order to occupy them permanently. Riḍā affirmed that "all these claims have no meaning except to secure the possession and domination of other countries without wars or struggle."⁶⁷

There were other means which Europe used for dominating the East. Riḍā believed that Europe managed to control the revenues and minds of the occupied peoples through debts and trading companies. Egypt's financial problems and heavy debts represented an incentive for the intervention of the European countries in its affairs. "These debts enabled the Europeans to dominate Egypt as well as other Oriental countries. The European shareholders seized its land and the Suez Canal. Their administrators controlled Egypt's revenues and the state appa-

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 299–308.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, VIII (1905), 790. See also XXXI (1930), 672.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 814.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, XXXI (1930), 149.

⁶² *Ibid.*, I (1898), 47, 299.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 585.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, XIX (1916), 128.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, XXVII (1926), 788–89.

⁶⁰ Muhammad Galāl Kishk, *Wa Dakhalat al-Khayl al-Azhar* (Beirut, 1972), pp. 11–15.

⁶¹ *Al-Manār*, I (1898), 47–48.

ratus."⁶⁶ Moreover, the European trading companies, backed by authority and influence, played a cultural as well as an economic role. They obsessed the minds and thoughts of the conquered peoples by spreading foreign systems of education, languages, and manners; they make a "moral conquest."⁶⁷ They were able thereby to dissolve the cultural and social links that had previously maintained the solidarity of the occupied nation, and laid it open to fragmentation and outside domination. The Europeans had a thorough knowledge of the social manners and human nature of the colonized nations. They recognized that extravagance and luxury, unaccompanied by proper education, would lead to social disintegration. They also realized that the Orient lacked proper education and unity, and hence, a slight push of luxury would dissolve the solidarity of its peoples. Consequently, "the West rushed into the East with a host of new fashions, products, jewelry, and luxury goods. The outcome was the erosion of the East's economic position and its morals."⁷⁰

Riḍā's awareness of the economic impact of European imperialism explained his profound conviction that economic independence was a precondition for political independence. Besides, it explained his persistent warnings against allowing the foreigners to possess land and economic enterprises in Egypt. He advocated full control of the Egyptians over their country and the necessity of enjoying their freedom in running its affairs. This included the prevention of foreigners from buying land, eliminating Egypt's international debt, and the allocation of wealth in the hands of its people. He proclaimed that Egypt's national wealth and its preservation was the only way to promote the best political and social objectives of the nation.⁷¹ In order to preserve the resources of the nation and prevent the circulation of its wealth outside it, Riḍā stressed the need of acquiring Western technical skills and the principles, not the products, of the foreign industries.

In the second stage of his thinking, which lasted till the beginning of the First World War, Riḍā became directly associated with 'Abduh and his disciples, who advocated a conciliatory attitude toward the British occupation in Egypt. He advocated a policy of gradual reform and resented any aggressive or militant approach to the achievement of political independence in Egypt. His attitude was mainly determined by his conviction that a revolution in Egypt against the British would have no chance of success. In his opinion the facts of the political situation, at the time, were too strong to be reversed: In Riḍā's words, the powerful "Northern States" were determined to swallow up the weak "Southern States." A revolution against the foreigners would be "drastic" and entail consequences that would be "very dim and very painful." Moreover, Riḍā and many Egyptians believed that 'Urābī's revolt in 1882 was responsible for the British occupation in the first place and believed that another rebellion would only lead to the consolidation of their position.⁷² Riḍā also believed that neither the Ottoman nor the Egyptian officials

⁶⁶ Ibid., 305.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 299.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 307.

⁶⁹ Ibid., X (1907), 111-14.

⁷⁰ Ibid., I (1898), 798-99.

were capable of defending their Egyptian subjects. Hence, "the only possible course under the existing circumstances is to avoid conflict with the authorities and persuade those who wield power that progress is useful for the people and can not harm them. The reformer in these circumstances must be satisfied with this conciliatory method."⁷³ Finally, for Riḍā and 'Abduh's Party, British rule in Egypt put the necessary checks over the absolute powers of the Khedive who represented an obstacle to reform. In 1904, therefore, Riḍā was able to talk explicitly about the natural rights of the nation in appointing and dismissing its ruler, restricting the powers of the government, and issuing laws and supervising their execution.⁷⁴ Despite its defects, British rule in Egypt remained better and closer to justice than the rule of any other European imperialist power, or even that of the traditional rulers of the country. Under the British, Egypt enjoyed security and freedom of the press, allowing journals such as his to be published. Thus, it seemed that "if the Egyptians worked at present, they could reform their country, a course which was not available to them before."⁷⁵ And some of his countrymen were now benefiting from reform:

the reforms which the British initiated in irrigation, finance, administration, and politics forced the majority of Egyptians to recognize the beneficial consequences of these measures. And if it had not been for their dissatisfaction with British policies concerning education, they would have all admitted the good will and benevolence of the occupier.⁷⁶

However, in the third stage of his thinking, Riḍā recognized the failure of the conciliatory policy toward Britain and was disappointed in the British refusal to grant the Arabs an independent state. At this point, although he had earlier criticized Afghānī's failure to achieve success in Egypt or any other country,⁷⁷ Riḍā appeared to rediscover the righteousness of Afghānī's policy toward Western imperialism. Indeed, he rehabilitated Afghānī by republishing in *al-Manār* the revolutionary articles that he had written in *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqā*,⁷⁸ and reaffirmed his links with Afghānī by explicit opposition to British policies concerning the Arab and Islamic question.⁷⁹ Although his new position toward Western imperialism was fully developed only after the First World War, it had its roots in an earlier event. The Italian conquest of Tripoli in 1912 provoked Riḍā's fears regarding the durability and viability of the Ottoman Empire—an empire that represented the wider Muslim community but was now falling apart, one province after another occupied by the European powers. He declared that this evidence eliminated the old conviction that by not antagonizing Europe, the Muslims could have the op-

⁷³ Jamal Ahmad, *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 52. Quoted from Riḍā.

⁷⁴ *Al-Manār*, VII (1904), 358.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 589.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 621. See also Ibid., V (1903), 38, 110.

⁷⁷ Ibid., IX (1906), 282.

⁷⁸ Ibid., XXIV (1923), 26.

⁷⁹ Ibid., XXVI (1925), 593.

portunity to achieve progress. It proved that Europe raped the Ottoman provinces for mere aggression.⁸⁰ Reverting to an old theme of his, Riḍā emphasized that

Europe has infatuated our rulers and peoples. . . . It attacked us with armies of priests, teachers, brokers, debtors, prostitutes, nightclubs, and bars. Europe fought us in our religious beliefs, national traditions and habits, resources and wealth. . . . It was able to dissolve our unity and eliminate our wealth, while we imagined ourselves to be progressing.⁸¹

To face this danger, he called on the Egyptians in the name of all bonds human, Oriental, Ottoman, language, neighborhood, and religion to defend Tripoli and stand beside the Ottoman State.⁸² He also urged the Ottoman Empire and the whole nation to exert all its efforts to face Europe, even if it meant the complete destruction of all Ottomans.⁸³

Two other concurrent developments influenced his change of outlook as well. First, he discovered the disparity between his intellectual position and that of the other disciples of ʿAbduh, the members of the Umma Party. Riḍā felt that this group was no longer capable of influencing Egyptian public opinion because its spirit was "non-Islamic."⁸⁴ He disapprovingly noted that after the Italian conquest of Tripoli and the failure of the Ottoman state to defend its subjects, Luṭfī al-Sayyid, the editor of *al-Jarīda*, called for Egypt's complete independence from the Ottomans.⁸⁵ Second, in 1912 the Khedive drew closer to Riḍā, and the relations between them became more friendly. Riḍā returned from Istanbul, in 1911, without being able to persuade the Unionist government to support his project to establish an educational and reformist seminary, Dār al-Daʿwa wa'l-Irshād ("The School of Call and Guidance"). His plan was to establish that seminary in Turkey in order to avoid the intrigues of al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī ("The National Party") and the British in Egypt. The Khedive, who was against the Unionists, approached Riḍā and supported his project.⁸⁶ Consequently, his new association with the Khedive encouraged Riḍā to take a more aggressive stand against the British occupation and Western imperialism.

Riḍā's bitter experience during and after the First World War increased his resentment toward Britain. Riḍā expected the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire during the war and was in search of an independent Arab State, which would preserve the Islamic umma. The British hoped to utilize Riḍā's influence in some parts of the Arab world to induce them to take a neutral stand during the war, in return for independence afterward. However, they intercepted letters that he sent to warn the Arabs against the British betrayal of independence and arrested him. For fear that exile in Malta would put him in contact with the Turks there, they

⁸⁰ Ibid., XIV (1911-1912), 840-43.

⁸¹ Ibid., 923-25.

⁸² Ibid., XV (1912), 5.

⁸³ Ibid., XIV (1911-1912), 840-43.

⁸⁴ Ibid., XVII (1914), 73.

⁸⁵ Arslān, *Rashid Riḍā*, pp. 203-204.

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 147-49.

kept him in Egypt under close surveillance, which was not lifted until the end of the war.⁸⁷ After the war, and while Riḍā was in Syria, the Egyptian government censored his political writings and tried to prevent his return to Egypt.⁸⁸

These measures, naturally, altered Riḍā's views of the occupation. He now believed that the British reforms in Egypt were only intended to serve Britain's imperialist interests.⁸⁹ Britain and France had also disappointed the Arabs by placing Iraq and Syria under the mandate system, and by delivering Palestine to the Zionists. This frustration was translated into the conviction that "Europe has destroyed all the good reputation it had in the Orient after its experience during and after the war. Nobody, any more, believes the word of the Europeans, nor does anybody trust them, or even perceive them to be qualified to exercise justice and virtue."⁹⁰

Particularly galling was the intimate connection between Western imperialism and Zionism. Riḍā believed that the British hoped to use the Jews in order to weaken the Arabs by creating an enemy in their midst.⁹¹ This enemy would exhaust their power and sever the natural links between one Arab country and another. The Arabs and the Jews would be preoccupied with fighting each other, and at the same time would depend on the British for settling their disputes. Consequently, the Arabs would direct their enmity against the Jews instead of the British occupation. Moreover, the Jewish State would form an obstacle between Egypt, the Hijaz, and Palestine, and would prevent forever the establishment of a strong united Arab-Islamic state standing against European imperialism and its interests in the Middle and Far East. In addition, Riḍā predicted that the Jewish state would spill over into East Jordan, Syria, the Hijaz, and Iraq, even crossing the Sinai and reaching Egypt.

The goals which the Zionist movement worked for seemed clear to Riḍā. The Zionists were determined to usurp and build Palestine for themselves, organize and unite all the Jews in the East and the West, revive and stimulate their religious sentiments, and gain the sympathy and support of the world for their cause. To achieve these objectives, they would resort to the power of money and to political intrigues. They managed to enslave great countries by their manipulation and possession of money, which in the civilized world generated influence and control of the mass media. He pointed to Zionist attempts to buy Palestine from the Ottoman Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, who, however, firmly turned their offer down. As a result, they launched furious attacks against him in Europe and succeeded in deposing him by virtue of their activity in the ranks of the Unionist Movement.

To face the Zionist threat, Riḍā proposed various measures ranging from peaceful to violent means. He urged the Arabs to form associations and hold conventions, for investigating and facing the Zionist goals. After his return from

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 155-56. See also *al-Manār*, XXXI (1930), 719-20.

⁸⁸ Sharabāshī, *Amīr al-Bayān*, II, 62 and 66.

⁸⁹ *al-Manār*, XXII (1920), 398.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 142.

⁹¹ This section is based on Riḍā's two articles "On the Revolution of Palestine," *al-Manār*, XXX (1929), 385-93, 450-68. See also A. M. al-Abiad, "M. R. Riḍā wa al-Ṣahyūniyya," *al-Umma*, no. 19 (October 1982), 32-38.

Istanbul, in 1911, he realized the strong influence which the Jews exercised on the Unionist leaders, and their determination to bring their plans into effect. Consequently, he contacted Chaim Weizman and Jewish leaders in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab World to convince them that Arab leaders were willing to accept the Jews as ordinary citizens, but did not agree to the establishment of an independent state for them. Otherwise, Riḍā informed the Jewish representative in Egypt, the Arabs would form armed groups to combat the Jews and resort to all the possible means of resistance. In addition, Riḍā warned the Arabs against selling land in Palestine to the Jews or foreigners, and called on the Ottoman government to prevent the arrival of Jewish immigrants to Palestine or selling the land to them. When all the peaceful means for resisting the Jewish takeover of Palestine failed, he suggested the organization of armed groups to fight the Zionists and abort their plans.

As this suggests, Riḍā believed after the war that it was time to make a complete separation between Islam, on the one side, and the British, on the other: "It is either a friendship, or absolute enmity."⁹² The British, like the rest of Europe, recognized, respected, and feared nothing but force.⁹³ In 1930, he suggested a boycott of foreign goods, called for civil disobedience, and even proposed a bloody revolution.⁹⁴ In a letter to his friend Shakīb Arslān, Riḍā mentioned his proposals to the High Board of the Muslim Youth Association, of which he was a founder, to arrange with the merchants a successful boycott of foreign commodities, and to organize the Association into military units, foreshadowing Ḥasan al-Bannā's perception of the evils of foreign economic presence and his conception of the organization of the Muslim Brothers into para-military units. He noted that his proposals gained acceptance.⁹⁵

More than political disappointment, the war revealed to many Orientals the violent and ruthless side of Western civilization. The West appeared to possess tremendous power for destruction and havoc, a fact which shed a great deal of doubt on the viability of Western values and progress. One of those impressed by the aggressive behavior of the West during the war was Riḍā, who, with full surprise, declared that "it did not pass through anyone's mind that all these evils could be committed by the great (European) states . . . the states of sciences, arts, and civilization."⁹⁶ Western civilization seemed to have failed in putting sufficient moral checks on the destructive ambitions of its carriers. In addition, scientific advancement turned into guns and bombs annihilating human beings. As a refinement of his earlier thinking, therefore, Riḍā now concluded that "there is no benefit in modern civilization when based on selfishness and material strength. . . . Nor in science and progress when they turn into means for enslaving human beings."⁹⁷

⁹² Ibid., XXIX (1928), 7-8.

⁹³ Ibid., XXX (1929), 452.

⁹⁴ Ibid., XXXI (1930), 219.

⁹⁵ Arslān, *Rashīd Riḍā*, p. 576.

⁹⁶ *Al-Manār*, XVIII (1915-1916), 128.

⁹⁷ Ibid., XVIII (1915-1916), 2-3.

Riḍā thus saw a duality in the nature of the West. On the one hand, the West was an advanced civilization, and, on the other, it was a colonizer. For many Orientals the West reflected more than one image. The West within its own borders appeared to denote progress, freedom, and equality. However, outside its frontiers, particularly in the East, the West was associated with imperialism, economic exploitation, and repression. According to Riḍā, "France combined contradictions. . . . France in Europe is totally opposite to France in Africa. In Europe it is the mother of freedom and equality and the source of science and arts. However, there are no traces of these aspects in Africa."⁹⁸ The same applied to Europe, which strongly denounced religious fanaticism. However, its behavior proved the fact that "religious fanaticism is prohibited in the West, sanctioned in the East."⁹⁹

Riḍā attributed this duality to some of the intrinsic values embodied in Western civilization. These values place an excessive emphasis on individualism, power, racism, interest, nationalism, and the fulfillment of material needs. Therefore, Western civilization appeared in the East to be incapable of presenting a consistent and universally accepted message for human beings. It allowed its carriers to have two contradictory behaviors. Moreover, Riḍā believed that most of the attractive values, freedom, equality, and justice, which Europe claimed to stand for were mere instruments for deceiving Orientals. These values were portrayed to the Orientals to be higher and more just in order to convince them to relinquish their traditional values and adopt the Western ones. However, in the end, the people of the East had little prospect of enjoying these "universal" Western values which were violated in the colonies by French and British imperialism. Meanwhile, the Orientals lost in vain the values embodied in their own culture which sustained them for a long period of time.¹⁰⁰

Rashīd Riḍā's comprehension of this moral dichotomy led him to make comparisons between "Western Civilization after five centuries of progress and Islamic civilization in its first century."¹⁰¹ In his comparisons, Riḍā found a way to prove the superiority of his own culture, at least in relation to some of its moral aspects. He stressed the indispensibility of religion and its moral precepts, in particular justice and mercy, in the formation of civilization. Scientific progress, he asserted, was not sufficient for securing a consistent civilization. In this respect, the West was a perfect case in point. In Europe, the natural sciences had reached a high degree of progress, yet it failed to approach the moral status of early Islam. Islam then was not guided by science but by the moral principles of religion. To fortify his argument, Riḍā introduced examples from Islamic history to demonstrate the justice and fairness of the early well-guided Caliphs, the mercy of the Muslim conqueror, and the just treatment of non-Muslims, frequently quoting Le Bon who highly praised the Arab conqueror for his mercy,¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Ibid., XVI (1913), 616.

⁹⁹ Ibid., I (1898), 486.

¹⁰⁰ Ibish, *Rahālār*, pp. 281-82. *Al-Manār*, X (1907), 41.

¹⁰¹ *Al-Manār*, IV (1901), 11-12.

¹⁰² Ibid., XXX (1929), 458.

and comparing this to the repulsive practices of twentieth-century Europeans in different parts of the East who were acting in an arrogant way toward non-Europeans and were corrupting the morals of the conquered peoples.¹⁰³

Conclusion

Riḍā's views of the West were diverse and complex. Although critical of some aspects of Western civilization, he was no simple rejectionist, nor was he a mere imitator. His intellectual contribution lay precisely here: whereas 'Abduh was intent on proving to the West that Islam was modern and rational, Riḍā, less optimistic, was intent on saving his country by selective borrowing from the West while reaffirming the strengths of Islamic traditions. To his mind before the First World War, the West, in many respects, mirrored what was lacking in the East; some aspects of Western civilization seemed overpoweringly attractive, and needed to be emulated. Yet Riḍā also attempted to outline the requirements that had to accompany this process so that the nation could modernize while holding fast to its indigenous culture and historical identity. He realized that modernization was a structural and not only a mental process.

The Western occupation of Muslim lands was at once invigorating and disillusioning. Indeed, the occupation endowed Western civilization with a double image, with it soon being realized that what the West preached within its borders contradicted how it behaved outside them. Riḍā's views, nonetheless, reflected the realities of the Egyptian situation. At first, influenced by the militant zeal of Afghānī, he gave vent to anti-imperialist views in the early issues of his journal. As Riḍā became closely associated with Muḥammad 'Abduh and the possibility of revolution seemed to grow remote, he adopted a more moderate attitude. Then came the First World War during which Britain and France betrayed Arab aspirations for independence and the horrifyingly destructive potential of Western technological achievements were displayed. This led Riḍā to advocate violence against Britain and imperialist Europe and, more importantly, it confirmed his growing doubts about the worthiness of Western material progress. Where once parts of Western civilization were held out as exemplary, the Western occupation left now only profound disappointment.

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¹⁰³ Ibid., XIV (1911), 850-51 and IX (1906), 122.

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NOTES OF THE QUARTER

The Templeton Award 1988 for the Cause of Progress in Religion

Selections from the citation read out by Rev. Wilbert Forker, Vice-President, Templeton Foundation, on the occasion of the Templeton Prize presentation ceremony for 1988, at the Governor's House, Melbourne, Australia, on 28th September, 1988. The full text was published in *Pakistan Hijra News*, VI, 10 (October 1988).

Dr. Inamullah Khan: An Appreciation

In parts of the world religion is often thought of as divisive. Dr. Inamullah Khan is a religious leader whose great contribution to showing that religion must be applied to daily life can be seen [on] at least three levels. His many gifts and graces can be discerned first at the intimate level where he is found among his friends, his colleagues and his family. Secondly he is a great leader within the Islamic world where his work for Islamic unity and Islamic identity has been untiring. Thirdly he is truly a world citizen, respected by people of varying religious and cultural background. . . . After growing up in Burma in the small Muslim minority there, open to many contacts and friendships with Buddhist and Hindu neighbours, Dr. Inamullah Khan responded to the challenge to become a citizen of the newly-founded state of Pakistan The vision of putting religious convictions into social and political practice sustained the pioneers of the new State and led them to accommodate the headquarters of what was then the only functioning international Islamic organization, the World Muslim Congress. It was the home of Dr. Inamullah Khan that became the hub of activities aimed at reuniting the fragmented Muslim world which had shared in such full measure the upheavals of both world wars and of the dismantling of colonialism. . . .

Despite very limited human and financial resources Dr. Inamullah Khan embarked upon the establishment of a network which went well beyond the gathering of leaders and helped to strengthen a world-wide brotherhood and solidarity among Muslims. It should not be forgotten that some three quarters of the refugees in this century are estimated to have been Muslims. The challenge before an organization such as the World Muslim Congress has therefore been enormous. Despite the many preoccupations within the Islamic world, . . . [Dr. Inamullah Khan] has also given much energy and imagination to building bridges between the Muslim world and neighbours from other religions and cultures. . . .

It is perhaps the dedicated work of Dr. Khan, a chairman of the Executive Committee of the World Conference on Religion and Peace/International, which best illustrates his claim to be a world citizen, recognized by people of every religious tradition for his readiness to co-operate with all people of goodwill in the interests of peace and justice. After many years of involvement in the World Conference on Religion and Peace he was elected at Nairobi in 1984 as one of the nine joint presidents drawn from five different religions. He has been chosen by