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## ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND MODERN SOCIAL SCIENCE: THE NEED TO RE-EXAMINE THE METHODS OF FORMING SOCIAL THEORIES IN THE SPHERE OF RELIGIOUS CULTURE

### ABSTRACT

Social theories are logically associated with a series of terms that represent their principles and consequences. When they are realized in society, they actualize the entire network of their conceptual additions in a logical order. One part of this network primarily attracts the attention of the scientific community, while the other one remains hidden and takes the form of marginal knowledge. Modern social science theories move from the margins to the center of society once their philosophical principles are actualized even in the sphere of general culture. In the context of Islamic culture, these theories appeared in the shadow of the credibility of the political and economic domination of Western societies, and their philosophical principles remained hidden on the margins of domestic knowledge. In the domestic cultural atmosphere, based on significantly different knowledge, modern social theories have caused cultural and historical disturbances, because they have not been reconstructed in accordance with the needs of the cognitive heritage of Islam. Logical principles of modern science have gradually left the marginal sphere and dominantly influenced their new and weakened cultural environment, which is facing identity challenges and crises on its way to complete transformation.

### KEYWORDS

Islam, philosophy,  
social theory,  
modernism, rationality.

## Introduction

Modern Western theories from the field of social sciences and humanities are actively present in the educational systems of today's Muslim societies. For more than a century, they have been carefully studied at all the newer universities in the Islamic world, which, in light of the dominance of Western political and economic capacities for strategic influence, are based on the principles of cognitive authoritativeness of modernist scientific knowledge. In countries where the system of classical education in traditional Islamic schools is still

dynamically maintained, such as Iran, academic dominance of Western social theories is not exclusive and unlimited. In those schools, which have been the primary platform of domestic education for several hundred years, classical disciplines on various forms of Islamic knowledge and cultural identity of Muslims in their original historical environment are still very actively studied and improved. For instance, when we expertly follow the results of studies in the field of classical Islamic disciplines, such as jurisprudence, exegesis, theology, mysticism or different branches of Islamic philosophy in today's school in the Iranian city of Qom, then we notice that vital and expert discussions do not take place only in academic centers where modern and western scientific knowledge is promoted. Moreover, in the famous school of Qom, modern social and humanist theories are often analyzed very systematically, but are subject to critical evaluation by a Muslim philosopher because he boldly questions the validity of their philosophical principles in light of the credibility of his Islamic school of philosophy (Halilović, S. 2019: 10–17). So, in the example of today's Iran, scientific theories of the modern West are not dominant elements in the educational environment of Muslim students, at least when it comes to classical Islamic schools. The picture is completely different though, in the newer universities in Iran, such as the oldest university in Tehran, founded in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and therefore cannot be compared in its originality with the brilliant historical legacy of the classical Persian schools of Islamic knowledge. Academic processes at newer universities are primarily conducted on the margins of the exclusive cognitive authority of modern Western scientific knowledge.

We can say that modern social sciences and humanities, in the complex historical example of contemporary Iran, control at least half of the human and economic capacities of the educational system and significantly direct all its broad organizational possibilities, even though they have no foundation in the domestic identity environment in that country. In other Muslim countries, the situation is many times more destructive to the detriment of classical knowledge, to the extent that the traditional educational system of Islamic schools has been neglected in those societies. Using the same analytical framework, we could evaluate educational structures of Muslims in the Balkans, which discredited very quickly the central importance of classical Islamic schools in their educational system at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Halilović, S. 2016: 156–170). On the margins of civilizational disruptions in the Islamic world, they accepted the authority of modern Western knowledge under the strong political influence of the dominant structure of the then Austro-Hungarian government (Halilović, S. 2013: 84–90).

In the last few decades, Muslims have actively participated in cultural processes in which philosophical principles of modern social sciences and humanities have been domesticated in their societies. Processes of strategic influence and domination of the modern West have gradually taken place in new universities in the Islamic world where the most talented members of the young generations of Muslims have studied, since the dominant policy on the margins

of the unquestionable credibility of Western science systemically popularized those universities. Numerous new schools in Muslim societies that bear the name – Islamic school – have also played a significant role in strengthening the foundations of the educational dominance of modern scientific disciplines. There, the main goal was to encourage as many Muslim students as possible to gradually become familiar with the basic philosophical orientations of modern scientific knowledge through skilful emotional reaffirmation of historical memory and emphasizing the external form of Islamic names (Halilović, S. 2020: 20–23). Hence, the Iranian example of the school in Qom and the few similar schools represent an exception in the modern Islamic world, in which the domestic education system, after several hundred years of brilliant successes of traditional schools, will be mercilessly pushed to the margins of social influence and continue to develop minimally in the space of its civilizational isolation.

### **The Influence of Modern Social Sciences on Islamic Culture: Different Layers of Principled and Marginal Influence**

We do not want the basic methodological postulate on which we build our analysis in the following pages to remain insufficiently highlighted here. That is why we will immediately clarify that all theories from the field of modern social sciences and humanities must necessarily be viewed in the context of conceptual networks with which they are essentially connected. Modern theories in their essence depend on complex conceptual constructions that condition their emergence and social foundation. Were those primary concepts and principles not formed, it would not be possible for the social theories of the modern West to appear. We emphasize that we recognize the West as a natural homeland and domestic environment in which modern social theories first came to the fore. However, the final formation of these theories is the final result of complex changes in the cognitive process in which we observe at least two introductory stages of fundamental importance. Modern theories are the fruit of a long process that took place in the modern West (Pārsāniyā 2012: 147–150). First of all, it was necessary to consolidate certain philosophical principles and conceptual roots in the West, which actually serve as fundamental knowledge or cognitive platform for building new structures of social theories. Here we compare modern social theories with a multi-story building, and in the mentioned philosophical principles we recognize the basic works on strengthening the foundations of the future building. We can add that these early works on the foundations are necessarily carried out below the surface of the earth and for this reason they usually go unnoticed. By forming the foundation, the conditions would be created for us to officially complete the realization of the first introductory phase in the mentioned complex cognitive process. After the first phase, it is necessary to prepare, very patiently and with a long-term focus, social and academic instruments for the strong popularization of the fundamental concepts and philosophical principles at

the level of general culture. This will mean that the hidden philosophical principles, which we found to be largely unnoticed, will move from the marginal sphere of social influence to the sphere of principled influence in various forms of culture, such as literature, art and everyday life. It will be of key importance, according to our belief, to clearly see what is gained by moving certain philosophical networks of conceptual structures and principles from the margins and their taking on the role of a visible social element with the capacities of principled influence. The goal is certainly not to increase the number of thinkers, students and professors who will become interested in dealing with insufficiently popular philosophical questions. We will look for the aim in a different sphere of wider cognitive influence. Namely, when philosophical principles are moved from the margins to the spheres of principled influence, they bring with them an entire conceptual network whose credibility they condition and strengthen. A whole network of social realities, values, concepts and theories that are formulated after the primary foundation of a certain philosophical system will appear in the central structures of society, because we previously popularized their philosophical principles at the level of general culture in that society. We will restate that this long-term cognitive process took place according to a reasoned schedule in the West, which is a natural ground for the expansion of the conceptual network of modern social theories. This has been established with the help of examples of building foundations and the building itself. We can cite another example, which is the umbrella. According to this second example, we will say that in the modern West, in the first step, the umbrella concepts were established as philosophical principles of the coming essential cognitive changes. In the second step, the umbrella principles were popularized at all levels of the general culture, which accepted them with a cordial welcome – because it is their natural homeland. Finally, in the third step, when the new philosophical principles were moved from the margins of social structures and gained the power of principled influence, they pulled from the margins to the central spheres all those modern theories and the network of concepts that were formed under the umbrella and under the auspices of the credibility of their umbrella philosophical and conceptual causes. We consider this flow of gradual changes and movement from the margins to the structures of the principle influence of first philosophical and then social theories as a natural cognitive process in those geographical locations, such as the modern West, where new philosophical solutions are accepted as responses to domestic needs and crises. Philosophers and thinkers in the modern West did not object to the establishment of a new network of philosophical principles in the most hidden spheres of their social identity. Essential changes did not worry them because they expected to find answers to their domestic questions, problems and needs in them. For this reason, Western thinkers and scientists from all stages of modern knowledge gladly engaged in the popularization of new philosophical foundations in the spheres of general culture and education, and instead of a marginal role, they were given the central role of social elements with the possibility of principled and strategic influence. Only after

that important step in the complex cognitive process of essential changes, will modern theories from the field of humanities and social sciences be able to gain the necessary credibility and be included in the study program of the most prominent academic centers in Western countries, precisely because the entire conceptual network of their umbrella philosophical principles was already accepted in the sphere of Western collective consciousness and culture (Pārsāniyā 2022: 15–19).

When we observe how modern and Western social theories appeared in the cultural spheres of contemporary Islamic countries, we notice that this did not happen in a natural cognitive process whose various stages of gradual realization we have just explained. In the Islamic world, it happened in a completely different and unnatural direction. First, we will explain what did not happen and why we believe that the norms of the natural cognitive process were not followed in the case of the formation of new theories. Modern and Western social theories are very popular in Muslim societies and the results of their essential influence can be easily noticed in all layers of identity and educational structures in the Islamic world. However, these theories did not emerge among Muslims at the end of long-term and fundamental cognitive processes. No substantive processes took place in this case and Muslims did not accept modern social theories because they believed that they contained answers to domestic historical and social issues and the needs of their communities. We said that these theories appeared in the modern West itself as part of a conceptual network under the umbrella structures of philosophical principles that were systematically popularized in the West. In the Islamic world, modern social theories did not emerge in the company of their umbrella philosophical principles. The fundamental conceptual network to which these theories belong did not exist at all in the conceptual and philosophical structures of domestic knowledge among Muslims. We will repeat once again that modern social theories in the West have moved from the margins of social influence to the central spheres of principled influence under the auspices of their umbrella network of philosophical principles. Since such an umbrella conceptual network was not established or popularized in time in Muslim societies, modern Western social theories could not move from the margins to the central sphere of Islamic culture, as we would expect in natural cognitive processes. Moreover, Muslims accepted modern social theories as a final product that was not delivered to them in a cognitive package along with all the accompanying philosophical principles. Modern theories were offered to Muslim thinkers without any conceptual addition and they had to place them at the very beginning in the central structure of their culture, thus enabling them to have the power of principled influence on the new environment.

We must not ignore the fact that modern social theories, which apparently became popular overnight in the Islamic world, are actually the fruits of knowledge from another cultural and historical environment. The geographic host of these theories was not the Islamic world, but rather the modern West, and they primarily offered solutions to issues and problems of Western societies

(Halilović, M. 2019: 461–479). Modern social theories became authoritative in the Islamic world for another reason, which we will explain below. Namely, when these theories gained full credibility in Western societies, as a result of a natural cognitive process, Western thinkers decided to transfer their domestic social theories to other contemporary and non-Western societies because they were simply allowed to do so by the new Western hegemony and authoritativeness they gained in the shadow of the exclusive political and economic dominance of their Western societies. Modern social theories were not formed by a natural cognitive path in the Islamic world, but as a result of the will and desire of Western thinkers to transfer, under the auspices of the dominant political power of their countries, these theories to new cultural and non-Western environments (Halilović, S. 2021: 304–306).

The fundamental theoretical challenge to which we wish to draw attention here becomes clear if we pay attention to the following two points. Firstly, modern social theories in their new cultural environment, in countries that do not belong to the geographical and civilizational West, will not contain answers to the questions and problems that their new hosts naturally face (Pārsāniyā 2016: 205–206). Secondly, these theories came into a new environment in which the umbrella conceptual network of their philosophical principles did not have time to gain the necessary credibility. In fact, nowhere in Islamic countries, can even the faintest manifestation of the philosophical principles of modern social theories be observed. We will dwell on this point in particular, since we place central analytical importance on it in our thoughts. We found that modern social theories do not have the same logical relationship with their umbrella philosophical principles in Western and Islamic culture. In their cultural homeland, the modern West, these theories gain their primary epistemological credibility from their umbrella philosophical principles, and only in that natural conceptual network can they be functional and have the constructive power of principled influence. In the Islamic world, on the other hand, modern theories cannot achieve a natural logical contact with the conceptual network of their philosophical principles, because these principles do not possess instruments of popularity and credibility in the new cultural environment and in the general culture of Muslims. Here, we approach one of our main conclusions. Although modern social theories in their new environment, in Muslim societies, do not make natural contact with the logical structures of their umbrella philosophical principles, it would still be fundamentally wrong to think that the aforementioned conceptual network of philosophical principles will not continue to follow its theoretical fruits in the field of social sciences, even in new conditions. The logical connection between social theories and the conceptual network of their philosophical principles is essential and unbreakable, and this cognitive package will always be current as a whole (Ġawādī Āmolī 1999: 66–67). However, when logical additions in the form of umbrella philosophical principles cannot appear on the theoretical surface as the primary conceptual platform of social theories, they will still necessarily follow social theories from their conceptual network, but this time, in conditions



of insufficient social popularity, they will hide behind the transparent form of modern social theories and assume the role of hidden or marginal logical knowledge. Therefore, the entire conceptual network of philosophical principles that, through the instruments of their popularity in Western societies, enabled modern social theories to gain credibility in the West, will accompany these theories in Islamic culture in its full cognitive capacity. In other words, when modern social theories are transferred to the cultural environment of contemporary Muslim societies, all conceptual elements of the philosophical network of principles that condition and determine the foundation of the modern world are at the same time transferred to Islamic culture. The only, yet very significant, difference will be that the conceptual network of philosophical principles in the modern West has been moved from the margins to the central sphere of transparent social influence, and in the Islamic world, this conceptual network will remain hidden on the margins of artificial popularity of modern social theories. Now we notice more clearly two completely different and, in a way, twisted models of the cognitive process of forming modern social theories. In the modern West, these theories follow the natural popularity of their umbrella philosophical principles, and in the Islamic world, they become primarily popular while their philosophical and logical additions remain hidden behind the outward form of popular social theories. This conclusion will not surprise us if we remember that modern Western social theories were popularized in Muslim countries by the power of political will and in the shadow of exclusive Western hegemony. We risk repeating, perhaps unnecessarily, that in this way, by political will, the necessary methodological structure of the natural cognitive process of forming new theories was destroyed.

What particularly worries Muslim philosophers in this twisted cognitive process is the fact that this conceptual network of philosophical principles, which is transferred to the Islamic world by remaining hidden on the margins of popularity of modern social theories, does not come into an empty cultural environment. If the new environment, in this case Muslim societies, were characterized by cultural and philosophical emptiness, then no big problem would arise. The modern conceptual network of philosophical principles hidden behind Western social theories would gradually fill the cultural void in its new environment and spread its influence on the margins of the cultural being of Muslim societies. However, the situation is significantly different. The conceptual network of complex philosophical teachings of the modern West, which appears in Islamic culture in the form of hidden knowledge, by no means enters a cultural void, but will be met by the rich structure of developed classical Islamic philosophical knowledge (Halilović, T., Halilović, S. & Halilović, M. 2015: 18–19). At the same time, note that domestic philosophical knowledge in the Islamic world will not be at all friendly towards the guest who was supposed to remain unnoticed, because Islamic philosophical knowledge in its domestic cultural environment built solid instruments and conceptual networks of its original civilizational awareness and popularity for centuries. These two conceptual networks, one that is the host and the other that comes as a hidden

guest, in certain essential elements of philosophical knowledge represent two bitter rivals and two irreconcilable parties (Ġawādī Āmolī 2007: 140). What do we really want to establish here as a significant logical warning? We want to show that it would be naive to think that modern social theories will be popularized in the Islamic world, in the shadow of the political dominance of the modern West, and that all cognitive processes will end exactly at that level of superficial and simple exchange of scientific experiences. On the contrary, we believe that modern and Western social theories will actualize in the new cultural environment, that is, in the Islamic world, all the cognitive capacities of the conceptual and philosophical network to which they naturally belong, a network that has remained hidden here on the margins of popularity of modern social science. Then, in the Islamic world, we will witness fundamental disturbances in the deepest spheres of its cultural and historical being. The essential theoretical challenges will become clear to all when Muslim thinkers have to make a decision about a fateful epistemological choice. If their choice is to accept the credibility of the conceptual network of modern philosophical principles and move them from the margins to the sphere of principled cultural influence, it will mean that they are ready to discard and sacrifice domestic conceptual networks of original Islamic philosophical and theological knowledge. If they choose the second option, which is to support their original philosophical heritage, then they will have to conclude that the new modern social theories, which they took over from the West, remain without their primary philosophical foundation and therefore cannot be credible and correct. Cultural and historical disturbances at this fundamental level take on the widest civilizational proportions in the contemporary Islamic world.

### **The Need for Creative Reinterpretation of Modern Social Theories in the Context of Cultural Challenges**

When we illustrated, in the previous few lines, the state of essential cognitive doubt of the Muslim thinker in a situation in which he perceives insurmountable differences between two conceptual networks of philosophical principles in the contemporary Islamic world, one – the domestic, original network of Islamic concepts and the other – the guest conceptual network of the modern West that is hidden behind the popular form of Western social theories, we have deliberately decided to significantly simplify the beginning of our analysis in this part of the discussion. We have pointed out, in the simplest form, that the Muslim thinker will have to take sides and make a decision whether a) he will turn his back on the classical structure of philosophical concepts of his historical heritage and traditional cultural environment or b) he will refuse hospitality to the modern system philosophical structures that, as an uninvited guest, came hiding in the company of modern Western social theories. Truth is that the choice of the Muslim thinker does not have to be so simple and exclusive towards one side or the other. Of course, we are talking here about the



thinker who understands the seriousness and complexity of his cognitive challenge and does not ignore the fact that the mentioned hidden logical structures and networks of philosophical principles on the margins of popularity of modern social theories have the power to have a very destructive influence on the domestic, that is, the Islamic cultural being. If the thinker does not understand this, and such thinkers unfortunately make up the vast majority in almost all academic centers in today's Muslim countries, then the following analytical warnings of ours might seem as meaningless conceits. However, we will not be easily discouraged and will say that it is possible for the Muslim thinker to opt for a third choice. Instead of excluding from his discussions one or the other conceptual network, that is, the original structure of Islamic philosophical principles or the structure of philosophical principles of the modern West, he will be able to take the position of an active and creative analyst in meeting this very serious cultural challenge. In that case, he will not allow the cognitive capacities of the logical structures of his domestic and original Islamic cultural environment to be a silent observer, but will actualize those logical capacities with the aim of actively re-examining and reconstructing the conceptual network of the visiting social and philosophical knowledge (Pārsāniyā 2011: 35). If he decides to critically evaluate, in the light of the original authority of the classical philosophical structure of Islamic concepts, the conceptual network of logical structures of modern philosophical knowledge, which he realized will not always have marginal importance in Islamic culture, then he will turn one of the most dangerous cognitive challenges in his cultural environment into a unique historical opportunity for a full reaffirmation of Islamic culture in the context of contemporary needs. We will explain this briefly.

Were the Muslim thinker to ignore the importance of the conceptual network of modern philosophical principles on the margins of modern social theories, these philosophical structures would eventually use the instruments of the popularity of social theories from their conceptual network and, moving from the margins to the central sphere of strategic cultural influence, would finally discredit and suppress all logical structures of original Islamic knowledge from different stages of Muslim culture and life. Therefore, it is not a small challenge for the Muslim thinker to oppose the possibility that such a destructive process is realized in conditions when essential disturbances under the surface of the general culture are barely noticed in the Islamic world. This process is a long-term one. By the time its final results have reached the surface of the cultural structures, it will be too late to contemplate a constructive response then. Therefore, serious Muslim philosophers, who, we repeat, are not numerous in today's Islamic world, must be timely cautious and ready for a critical review and reconstruction of guest philosophical structures and hidden conceptual networks of the modern West. Why do we think that in this way a great cultural challenge will turn into a real historical opportunity? Because, for a successful and comprehensive critical review of logical structures and conceptual networks of the philosophical knowledge of the modern West, it is necessary to activate all the theoretical capacities of the Islamic philosophical tradition, even those

analytical capacities and instruments which, in the absence of serious theoretical challenges, were not often used and therefore their philosophical significance was somehow neglected. When all the analytical capacities of a brilliant philosophical school, such as classical Islamic philosophy, are activated, then we can rightly expect that entirely new philosophical theories and ideas will be produced in the critical encounter between this school and the philosophical structures of the modern West. Therefore, if in the social contexts of this cognitive challenge, the Muslim philosopher appears in the role of an active and creative analyst, then he will start a wave of fundamental discussions and open the possibility for new frameworks of philosophical conclusions to appear. We are talking here about a whole series of analytical instruments and capacities in the classical Islamic school of philosophy that have not been actualized until now simply because in previous decades and centuries Muslim thinkers could not focus on them because they simply did not face any theoretical challenges on that level. Layered philosophical capacities of that sort did not come to the fore and the Islamic philosophical tradition somehow kept them hidden in its brilliant heritage. When Muslim philosophers finally faced contemporary issues and challenges of today's life, they were forced to activate all the cognitive capacities and conceptual networks of their original philosophical structures. In the last few decades, they have spectacularly reaffirmed their philosophical knowledge, especially in the context of new questions imposed on the broadest level of cultural and historical awareness by Western theories and modern science (A'rāfi 2016: 340–341). We will conclude that the process of activating original philosophical structures of the Islamic cultural environment in the encounter with foreign, Western, theories and knowledge can open unlimited horizons of constructive discussions. If, on the other hand, Islamic cultural environment is not ready to actively devote itself to a creative and critical review of the visiting conceptual networks of philosophical principles, then the mentioned cultural challenges will come to the fore. It is natural that, in that case, we will not expect challenges to turn into any opportunity for development and that social processes of cultural dialogue will not take a positive direction. However, social processes will not stop, but will have extremely negative consequences. Cultural challenges at the cognitive meeting point of the passive domestic cultural environment and visiting conceptual networks of the modern West will soon produce essential identity disturbances in all structures of the Islamic world. Theoretical challenges, for the above reasons, will take the form of a general crisis of cultural and historical annulment and disappearance of the Islamic world. Because, when in the light of the dominance of modern social theories and all the accompanying philosophical elements of their conceptual networks, logical structures of the original cultural environment in the Islamic world are discredited, then the original identity of Muslims and their cultural heritage will gradually disappear, in the absence of key cognitive principles that guarantee vitality and life of Islamic culture. If, a few lines before, we had the intention to simplify the beginning of the discussion in this part, and we emphasized that on time, we will not follow such

a methodological approach here and we will go on to draw a very cautionary conclusion. The conclusion will be that the Muslim thinker in the contemporary world will be able to have only one of the following two directions when he wants to define the relationship between his original cultural environment and modern Western theories in the field of social sciences and humanities. Of course, he will be able not to think about that relationship and continue to live and think in the classical patterns of his historical Islamic environment, which will very clearly isolate him from the possibility of coming into contact with the modern West, but such a thinker is not the subject of our discussion. Therefore, if he is professionally interested in the cognitive position of modern social and humanist theories in the cultural sphere of the Islamic world, then his first orientation will be reflected in deciding to critically evaluate and reconstruct these theories in the light of the credibility of his original philosophical and Islamic knowledge. Note that this decision and this orientation will be many times more demanding and complex than the next one. The second orientation will be shown by the fact that the Muslim thinker will not take an active position in the creative and critical questioning of modern social theories, but will passively accept and promote them in his historical environment. In that case, his hope that this will help his cultural identity and enable his Islamic society to follow modern norms of development will be an essentially naive hope. A passive approach to understanding essential theoretical and cultural challenges of the relationship between the modern West and the contemporary Islamic world will in fact be an introduction to the state of general identity crisis of Muslim societies on the way to gradual cultural and historical disappearance and annulment of their original consciousness (‘Elmī 2014: 36–38). Therefore, if the Muslim thinker does not want to isolate his intellectual tradition and close the borders of Islamic cultural environment with the aim of developing structures of his original knowledge without any contact with the modern West and modern science, then, he in the modern world will have two options, namely: (1) an active critical review of conceptual networks of the philosophical principles of modern Western science and social theories in the light of the authority of rational instruments and the capacities of the Islamic philosophical tradition and (2) the process of cultural and historical disappearance of Islamic original knowledge due to the crisis of identity disorders caused by passive acceptance of the cognitive credibility of logical structures of the modern West. The latter option, in our opinion, illustrates the dominant face of philosophical and analytical discussions in today’s Muslim societies.

We can add here three more short methodological points, which in some way have already been present in the previous analysis, but we highlight them because we consider them to be of key importance. Firstly, if we want to engage in a complex process of critical reconstruction of modern sciences, it will simply not be possible if we turn our backs on those sciences and the modern West. We wish to say that the Muslim thinker does his intellectual heritage no favour if he chooses to ignore the results of scientific changes and processes in the modern West. Secondly, the Muslim thinker will not get the opportunity

to actively participate in the critical development of modern sciences in the Islamic world even when he decides to passively accept and follow Western sciences in his society. This is, of course, understandable because as soon as he chooses a passive methodological position, it will mean that he does not want to get involved in the process of evaluating philosophical principles of modern social sciences and humanities. In the explanation of this second methodological point, we will add one more possibility. Namely, it is possible for the Muslim thinker to make a decision to ignore the philosophical principles of modern sciences and to distance himself from their conceptual networks and focus on implementing exclusively practical benefits of modern Western knowledge in Muslim societies. His approach in this case would have a pragmatic determination; however, we would also classify him in the category of thinkers who have a passive attitude towards creative evaluation of modern sciences. Thus, we have established that the Muslim thinker will not be able to creatively reconstruct conceptual networks and logical structures of modern Western sciences if he neglects their importance, that is, if he passively accepts their theoretical or practical credibility. The cognitive choice that we promote on these pages is significantly different from those two paths and we define it as the third announced methodological point. The third point is that an active and critical reconstruction of modern Western sciences in the contemporary Islamic world will be possible only within the process of deepest theoretical discussions (Pārsāniyā 2018: 17–20). In that philosophical process, the Muslim thinker will have to reveal in detail the hidden cognitive backgrounds of modern social theories, as well as the complex conceptual networks that condition a successful formation of modern sciences. This means that his primary task will be to recognize all philosophical and metaphysical principles based on which modern theories in the field of social sciences and humanities are formulated. In the continuation of the analysis, we will particularly emphasize the importance of the mentioned philosophical and metaphysical principles of modern Western sciences.

### **Historical Contexts of Formation and Development of Fundamental and Humanist Sciences**

When we observe the brilliant results of the development of both applied research and fundamental knowledge in the modern West, we need to pay attention to the fact that the primary historical contexts of the formation of new scientific disciplines from the sphere of fundamental, humanist and social sciences are found in much deeper layers of modern Western being and identity. New scientific disciplines and theories represent a logical result of essential changes in the fundamental layers of Western knowledge, since these cognitive changes condition a completely different approach to understanding the universe and man in the modern world. On these pages, we primarily wanted to focus on the importance of the mentioned fundamental changes and to show that they are illustrated in different spheres of belief, thinking

and practical decisions, as well as models of collective and social life of modern man. Therefore, here we are talking about three levels and three faces of the cognitive being of the modern West, of which the first face is fundamentally important to us in our critical analyses. At the first level, we observe the theoretical face of the modern West, which appears as a result of the speculative work of the most influential Western philosophers in the post-Renaissance period and their new views on the universe, man and reality. This theoretical face most often remains hidden and is not seen by many thinkers, but that does not mean that the basic features of this face do not appear on other and more popular levels of the modern Western being. Moreover, we tirelessly insist that according to this theoretical face, the other two faces of the modern West are formed and that serious thinkers should clearly recognize in the popular forms of the Western cultural being the deepest level of its theoretical foundation. We found that the importance of this complex intellectual task is largely neglected in the contemporary Islamic world. The task would be to critically evaluate, from the perspective of the classical Islamic philosophical school, the way in which the aforementioned theoretical level of modern and contemporary philosophical ideas has a key role in the process of forming the two other faces of Western cultural identity and modern humanities and social sciences. It is about the next, second and third, level of the western cultural environment. The second level is the level of collective and popular culture, and, at that level, we analyze daily life habits and needs of modern man in the sphere of economy, family life, common norms of behavior, as well as in the field of art and the dominance of collective desires and imagination. Finally, the third level represents the sphere of organizational orientations and the model according to which these orientations are practically implemented and realized in various political structures of Western societies. At all these levels, serious thinkers notice the primary theoretical face of the modern West and all the conceptual networks of modern and contemporary philosophical principles that guarantee the popular credibility of new cognitive stages and different views on existence and man.

We will add one more point that is important. The three mentioned levels of the cultural being of the modern West form a whole whose internal elements are closely connected with each other. None of these three levels will be credible without the other two levels and this means that each level depends on other levels in its cultural and social essence. If, in this unit, one level were to be discredited or eliminated, then the other two levels would also suffer significant damage and, finally, the mentioned unit would be annulled. We do not mean here that these three levels have the same or similar quality and strategic depth of influence. On the contrary, we pointed out that the first, that is, theoretical, level has a key influence in the process of forming the total cultural entity of the modern Western being and that the other two levels, in fact, follow the essential elements of the theoretical level. However, we have just established that it is impossible for the other two levels to form in a certain cultural environment while the credibility of their first and theoretical

level is questioned in that same environment. In other words, the conceptual network of modern and contemporary philosophical principles that we will recognize as the theoretical face of the modern West will necessarily be present in all cultural environments in which the cultural and organizational results of Western prosperity are promoted (Yazdānpanāh 2022: 473). We have already warned that this largely hidden theoretical face will eventually emerge from the sphere of marginal presence and move the structures of its influence into the central milieu of popular culture in any society that accepts the authority of the political or academic hegemony of the Western world.

The complex platform on which modern scientific disciplines are created and consolidated is made up of numerous elements of the new Western being. We will point out several important elements, namely: (1) art and literature after the Renaissance, (2) new life norms of economic and industrial activities, (3) new philosophical schools from the last four centuries, (4) foundation of an entirely new conceptual encyclopedia according to which important cultural and scientific concepts of Western modern society were reinterpreted and reconstructed. We will notice that the relationship between modern scientific disciplines and the mentioned elements is actually established as a relationship of bilateral influence. Just as these elements have a significant role in the formation and expansion of modern scientific disciplines, the new sciences also guarantee and confirm the cognitive and cultural credibility of the mentioned elements in today's world (Meṣbāh Yazdī 1998: 118–119). In other words, modern humanities and social science disciplines will serve the Western man to find in them the necessary arguments to comprehensively support the aforementioned elements and philosophical principles of the theoretical face of the modern West and to activate all life and economic capacities in society for the purpose of their widest popularization, even then when these elements and principles illustrate their shortcomings in the context of facing the complex theoretical challenges of the contemporary world.

## Conclusion

On the previous pages, we have checked the cognitive circumstances in which modern Western sciences, including humanities and social disciplines, are transferred to new cultural and living environments in other parts of the world, primarily in contemporary Islamic societies. We have noticed that the process of popularizing modern sciences is realized in the shadow of the exclusive economic and political domination of Western countries and that modern scientific disciplines are therefore very easily introduced into the official streams of education in countries that were on the margins of the central processes of establishing the new world order. Without any additional explanation, we would be able to conclude that modern Western sciences are transferred in this way to new cultural environments, which in the case of our subject discussion are contemporary Islamic societies, significantly weakened in the complex processes of their identity, political, cultural and academic deconstruction.



Contemporary Islamic societies, mostly in new political and academic contexts, have not activated their original cultural and cognitive capacities and, therefore, have not used the opportunity to reinterpret, reconstruct and reorganize modern sciences in accordance with their domestic needs and civilizational positions. Since this has not occurred, it has been expected that another, strongly destructive, scenario would be realized. Modern Western sciences have gained increasing popularity in the Islamic world under conditions where the conceptual networks of their logical principles and appendages have been hidden at the margins of visible credibility. As we have explained, all the accompanying logical structures of modern Western sciences gradually moved into the central sphere of culture and collective life in the new environment. The original philosophical and logical capacities of the Islamic legacy were not prepared for the sudden conceptual collision and were infamously disqualified from key processes of strategic influence. Theoretical challenges in Muslim societies quickly took the form of the deepest identity crises. In the absence of a strong apparatus of classical Islamic philosophical knowledge, these identity crises bring contemporary Muslim societies to the brink of general cultural destruction and annihilation. We talked about a possible solution and a way out of the position of fundamental crisis on the previous pages in the context of the need to reaffirm the original cognitive instruments of man's theoretical and practical reason.

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### Islamska filozofija i moderna društvena nauka: potreba za preispitivanjem metoda formiranja društvenih teorija u sferi religijske kulture

#### Apstrakt:

Društvene teorije logički su povezane s nizom pojmova koji predstavljaju njihove principe i konsekvence. Kada se realizuju u društvu, one logičkim redosledom aktualizuju celokupnu mrežu svojih pojmovnih dodataka. Jedan deo ove mreže primarno privlači pažnju naučne zajednice, a drugi deo ostaje skriven i dobija formu marginalnih saznanja. Teorije iz oblasti modernih društvenih nauka premeštaju se s margina u suštinu društva onda kada su aktualizovani njihovi filozofski principi čak i u sferi opšte kulture. U stadijumu islamske kulture ove teorije pojavile su se u senci kredibiliteta političke i ekonomske dominacije zapadnih društava i njihovi filozofski principi ostali su skriveni na marginama domaćih saznanja. U domaćoj kulturnoj atmosferi, koja je utemeljena na bitno drugačijim saznanjima, moderne društvene teorije prouzrokovale su kulturne i istorijske poremećaje jer nisu rekonstruisane u skladu s potrebama saznanjog nasleđa islama. Logički principi moderne nauke postepeno su napuštali marginalnu sferu i dominantno su uticali na svoje novo i oslabljeno kulturno okruženje, koje se suočava s identitetskim izazovima i krizama na putu potpune transformacije.

Ključne reči: islam, filozofija, društvena teorija, modernizam, racionalnost.