What Problems Did Contemporary Cultural Challenges Create for Islamic Thought?

A question and answer

Answered by: Late scholar Abdul-Hadi Fazli

Abdul Hadi Fazli (1314-1392 AH) was a Shiite cleric and influential figure in the 14th century in the Eastern region of Saudi Arabia. He had a comprehensive education in seminary and university science. Fazli has many publications in various fields of Islamic sciences.

In the following, a part of his answers to some questions about Islam and contemporary challenges in front of it are mentioned.

***Key words**: cultural challenges, Scientific achievements, Islam*

We must first define the meaning of the challenge. We have specifically expanded this word from individual concept to group concept and social to political. Today's competition is between the west and other countries.

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The west seeks to dominate the Muslims through it, we call this competition, politically and socially, a cultural challenge or contemporary cultural challenges. These names give a special sensibility and importance to Islamic thought. Because cultural challenges put Islamic countries and thoughts in the stream of cultural invasion, in case of not overcoming these cultural invasion, Islamic thoughts will be destroyed.

But what is significant is Muslims, who from the first moments of western cultural invasion with various instruments in various fields of education and advertising, declared their stance. Their attitude and way of thinking became apparent by passing time. Of its results was expansion of realm of confrontation to western countries, therefore after that they founded cultural institutions there and challenges and confrontation became more complex. We are moving fast towards the equilibrium point, that we are undoubtedly witnessing it in the light of global events. The victory of Muslims in this struggle brought about bright future and justice. I believe that we must continue the cultural process with great effort. We must concentrate our facilities and energy on it.

Sectarianism is one of the most complex problems in Islamic society. How do you look at this problem? What is your Islamic view of the notion of citizenship in Islamic society?

Sectarianism is moving in two lines in Muslim societies*:* 1. The line of thought 2. The line of affection

In the line of thought, there are differences in the religious, theological and jurisprudential dimension.

In the line of affection, it is fanaticism that is interpreted as religious and sectarian fanaticism. Disagreement in the vote and the point of view on the cases and intellectual issues are moving in two lines :1. a realistic and logical line 2.mental and internal line. Disagreement in the realistic line is normal. Because disagreement in method or disagreement in attitude returns to scientific disagreement. This is the case in all human thoughts and we can not call that sectarian disagreement. Most of these disagreement that move in the inner and mental line naturally are

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being affected by prejudice, we must treat our fanaticism and selfishness. I have suggestion for closeness and proximity between religions and Islamic sects. 1. A window to comparative studies should be opened, expanded to all institutions and areas of Islam 2.Enhance the spirit of joining and following the Islamic origins and Islamic homeland, and also following and having good understanding of Islam and also understanding of the present condition, and keeping unity can limit sectarianism. Because keeping unity requires the Muslims to pay attention to the principles of peace so we could finally pay attention to the peace of Muslims. This does not mean people should not evaluate their thoughts, because the duty of comparative study is to promote thoughts leading them to the level of belief.

What is the position of Islam against the scientific achievements and the new technology?
How do you imagine the process of using the products of contemporary civilization in building contemporary Islamic program?

Islamic law has goals that has been looking for in the field of Tashri and the Muslim jurists examined them and revealed their meanings. Just like that there are general foundations in Islamic law that are emphasized on and are taken from view of Islam towards life and human. Whenever these foundations are distinguished from foreign civilizations and cultures we are safe from mistakes.We can learn technology and natural sciences in framework of the general Islamic foundation, and we must islamitize the human sciences to be able to use them for Islamic goals.

In contemporary thought, the subject of different understandings of religion was raised. And they claim the sacredness and stability of religion because of its heavenly credibility is different from recognizing the religious variable; They say religious knowledge is what perceived by human understanding and religion does not have sacredness. That's why we can criticize it. What is your analysis of this?

I think you are referring to seperation theory نظریه تفکیکی.The meaning of that separation is in the domain of Islamic

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thought in terms of the divine root. The Holy Quran is definitely sent from God and as God says: "*The Prophet does not speak without thinking or cravings, it is a revelation that is sent by God*." Both divine knowledge are sacred. But the intellectual product of Muslim scholars, which has been laid down for studying the Holy Qur'an and all other things similar to that, is connected to revelation. This product is of a type of human knowledge and it is not in Quran and sunnah and can be the subject of criticism. Because the results of the Islamic scholars' discussions have been made through usual academic researches carried out in in Islamic centers. Some critisized others in their method and others even by knowing the academic requisites of criticism can avoid entering this realm. Islam is strong and does not fear from criticism. This review can sometimes bring something new and useful and sometimes is deteriorated and lose its correctness and in either case, the result will be useful.

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