

A Critique of Orientalist Reason in Hegel's Philosophy

نقد العقل الاستشراقي في فلسفة هيجل

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Abstract (English):

When discussing "Hegel's Orientalism" or Hegel as an Orientalist, we do not limit ourselves to Western perceptions and judgments of the East as a religiously and ethnically "Other," nor to the historical tensions, caution, and hostility between East and West as reflected in traditional Western discourse, which has aimed at religious proselytization and political hegemony for centuries. Rather, it extends to modern studies from a humanities perspective. In recent decades, Arab intellectuals have recognized the importance of studying Orientalism epistemologically, producing research that analyzes its roots and historicity to clarify our epistemological vision and scrutinize its core assumptions. According to Ian Akroun (1997), Fouad Zakaria's epistemological critiques of Orientalist methodology followed Anouar Abdel-Malek's "Orientalism in Crisis" (1983) and Edward Said's "Orientalism" (2003), which marked the onset of these postcolonial critiques. This approach also applies to the writings of Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, and Achille Mbembe, bolstering a comprehensive philosophical critique of Orientalism.

Key terms: Hegel's Orientalism, Critical Orientalism, Philosophy, Postcolonialism, Humanities perspective.

ملخص باللغة العربية :

عند الحديث عن "هيجل الشرقي" أو هيجل كمستشرق، لا تقتصر على التصورات والأحكام الغربية تجاه الشرق كـ"آخر" دينياً وعرقياً، ولا على التوترات التاريخية والحذر والعداء بين الشرق والغرب كما يعكسها الخطاب الغربي التقليدي، الذي سعى إلى التبشير الديني والهيمنة السياسية على مدى قرون. بل يمتد الأمر إلى دراسات حديثة من منظور إنسانيات. في العقود الأخيرة، أدرك المثقفون العرب أهمية دراسة الاستشراق معرفياً، مما أنتج أبحاثاً تحلل جذوره وتاريخيته لتوضيح رؤيتنا المعرفية وفحص افتراضاته الأساسية. وفقاً لإيان أكرون (1997)، جاءت نقود فؤاد زكريا المعرفية للمنهج الاستشراقي

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بعد "الاستشراق في أزمة" لأنور عبد المالك (1983) و"الاستشراق" لإدوارد سعيد (2003)، الذين شكلا بداية هذه النقود ما بعد الاستعمارية. ينطبق هذا النهج أيضاً على كتابات أيي سيزير، فرانتز فانون، وأشيل مبيمي، مما يعزز نقداً فلسفياً شاملاً للاستشراق.

الكلمات المفتاحية: هيغل الشرقي، الاستشراق النقدي، الفلسفة، ما بعد الاستعمار، منظور إنساني.

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1- Introduction

When we discuss Hegel's Orientalism or Hegel as an Orientalist, we do not simply refer to the Orientalism that includes the visions, perceptions, and judgments put forth by the Western Other, who is religiously and ethnically different, nor do we solely talk about those studies that contain within them the historical tension, caution, and hostility between the East and West, as reflected in the image the West presents of the East—the traditional image that has characterized and defined Orientalism from centuries past to the present, which aims for religious proselytization and political hegemony. In recent decades, some Arab intellectuals have realized how important it is to study Orientalism from a humanities perspective, and various Arab studies have been presented that try to analyze its roots and delve into its historicity, assisting us in illuminating our epistemological vision of it and examining its key assumptions. Hence, According to Ian Akroun(1997), Fouad Zakaria's epistemological studies challenging Orientalist methodology followed Anouar Abdel-Malek's publications on "Orientalism in Crisis" (Abdel-Malek, 1983) and Edward Said's postcolonial perspective in "Orientalism," which marked the beginning of these critical studies (Said, 2003). As demonstrated by the writings of Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, and Achille Mbembe, this method also applies to the endeavors of other postcolonial philosophers.

Only by describing Hegel's viewpoint on different Eastern civilizations as it is expressed in his later works does our examination of Hegel as an Orientalist become overt. These civilizations are portrayed in these texts as precursors of Western civilization, which is the apex of the Hegelian system and the expression of the Absolute Spirit. Therefore, Orientalism is the ultimate objective of Hegel's system and the basis upon which it is built, not a term we externally impose on his work or just one aspect of his doctrine. We must thus stress the importance of Hegel's position toward the diverse Eastern cultures. This position has become a wellspring for all subsequent Western publications about the East.

Our intention is not merely to discuss Orientalism in Hegel's work or among scholars of historical textual criticism. Rather, when we examine Hegel's Orientalism, we aim to return to the philosophical origins, or what we might term, if the nomenclature is appropriate, the exploration of the "genealogy of Orientalism," the deconstruction of Orientalism, the epistemology of Orientalism, and the hermeneutics of Orientalism. In the same way that some have studied the composition and development of the Arab mind, we ask whether it is possible to have a "critique of the Orientalist mind." Our objective extends beyond criticism; we aim to search for a methodology that transcends

critique towards establishment, transitioning from historical tendencies and criticism to philosophy and the epistemological basis for exploring the origins of the Orientalist mindset as distinctly illustrated in Hegel's work.

Thus, the imperative to examine Hegel's Orientalism emerges. Our main goal is to clarify which Western sources the German philosopher used to learn about the East in his day. These sources are the result of earlier Orientalists' work; Hegel did not specifically specify some of them in his references, but he did include others. We investigate whether Hegel preferred, selected, interpreted, and exegetically interpreted the sources from which he obtained his knowledge of non-European civilizations, especially Islamic civilization, and if he thoroughly and impartially studied all of the materials that were available. Hegel, though fervently engaged with Greek knowledge and Kantian philosophy, was profoundly shaped by the religious studies he undertook at the Lutheran theological institution "Stift Tübingen" during his theological education (Hindawi, 2013). Additionally, his lack of distinction between Eastern civilizations (Chinese, Indian, and Islamic) on one hand, and Islam as perceived by Europe during this period through the lens of the Ottoman Empire on the other, shaped Hegel's orientations and, consequently, his view of the East (Almond, 2010). This resulted from his failure to engage with fundamental Islamic texts, representing the circumstances and elements upon which Hegel relied in formulating his perspective on Islam.

We do not approach Hegel as an Orientalist who provides us with knowledge about the East, its civilizations, religions, and sciences. Rather, we consider him a paradigmatic and foundational figure for the Orientalist efforts undertaken by Western researchers. In our view, he represents the most complete expression of Western civilization in its perspective and historical relationship with Eastern civilizations, and their place in the evolution of human history, particularly our Arab-Islamic civilization. This is from a Western religious and ethnic viewpoint, meaning that he embodies the spirit and essence of Orientalism.

Hegel's categorization of Eastern civilizations and their historical progression, as elucidated by numerous studies on Hegel and the Orient, is not predicated on novel historical discoveries diverging from prevailing knowledge. Rather, Hegel constructs a theory through which he attempts to manipulate human history, compelling it to conform and align with the classification he has delineated for this purpose. Indeed, he goes so far as to invert established historical facts. Hegel distorts historical truth to substantiate his theory concerning the evolution of the concept of freedom across successive civilizations. He is unwilling to acknowledge that the achievements in Europe are merely the fruit of cumulative civilization among diverse peoples, a fact that contemporary studies strive to emphasize. Consequently, the portrayal he presented of the East and Islam is in urgent need of reassessment.

I. Hegel and Orientalist Studies

Hegel addressed the Orient in his works composed in Jena (1801-1806), Heidelberg (1717-1816), and finally in Berlin (1818-1830). His approach to the subject was historical, stemming from his desire to trace the progression of consciousness development in history. As this phenomenon traversed through time, the Orient could not be disregarded, for it represented a stage in human history. Consequently, we find the Orient present in all of Hegel's diverse lectures, whether the topic was religion, philosophy, or art. Nevertheless, there exists no dedicated study of the Orient within Hegel's oeuvre.

According to Oliver Crawford, Hegel's views on the Orient must be interpreted as criticisms of German efforts to connect the Eastern past with Christianity and antiquity. In order to separate India from Christianity, ancient Greece, and Germany while preserving a place for Persia and Egypt, Crawford seeks to show how Hegel attempted to reinterpret the historical role of the Orient.

In his article, "Hegel and the Orient," Oliver Crawford (n.d.) views that Hegel posits that the Classical world—Greek and Roman—represents a higher level of development compared to the Orient. He acknowledges that Greek civilization was, in part, a product of Eastern influence, describing Greece originally as a "dual culture, one indigenous and the other derived from foreign influence." Moreover, Hegel argues, however, that the influence of the Orient on Greece was restricted to its early years. As Greece became older, it became "the antithesis of the element that had been its foundation.

As a result, Hegel contends that genuine Greece was essentially unique, having abandoned its Eastern roots. He says, "In approaching Greek art and life, we are led to Asia and Egypt." He draws the conclusion that "we need not look beyond the Greeks themselves to understand Greek life and philosophy." This viewpoint emphasizes Hegel's theory that Greek civilization achieved a unique and superior cultural identity by transcending its Oriental roots. Crawford goes on to explain that Christian Germany thus symbolizes the "ultimate end" of popular freedom, which originated in Greece. According to him, "The consciousness of freedom first arose among the Greeks, but it was the German nations, under the influence of Christianity, who first realized the awareness that man, as man, is free." The classical world and the German Christian world are therefore the most important "locus" of historical development. Therefore, the Orient's contribution is viewed in this perspective as a mere "prelude," giving Europe the resources it needs to advance to greater levels. The Oriental civilizations are viewed as early phases in the overall story of historical evolution, and their importance mainly stems from their function as forerunners of the more developed Western civilizations (Crawford, (n.d.)).

Susan Marchand's 2009 book "German Orientalism" examines the larger German conversation about the Orient's historical influence on German culture and Christianity. She focuses on Schlegel and Creuzer's attempts to establish the Orient as a cultural model for Germany and to provide scientific evidence for the Eastern origins of Christianity. Crawford's research, however, reveals that Marchand ignores Hegel's input into this discussion. Considering Hegel's profound impact on Western philosophy and his unique method of comprehending the historical evolution of civilizations, this omission emphasizes the need for a more thorough analysis of German intellectual involvement with Orientalism.

Crawford(n.d.) further asserts that Hegel's historical narrative denied the Orient any vital role in shaping Greek culture and Christian religion. Consequently, Hegel positioned Greece at the center, considering it the source of philosophical, political, and artistic greatness. Additionally, he established Christian revelation and reformation as the decisive events in religious history.

Therefore, it can be deduced that Hegel's portrayal of the Orient and Islam does not significantly differ from similar representations in Western Orientalist thought. As such, it largely exemplifies a prototypical image prevalent among Western writers in general, upon whom he relied. This image is predominantly characterized by selectivity, bias, inaccuracy, and frequently lacks scientific objectivity, or is presented according to Hegel's interpretation. Although Hegel's case may have surpassed its temporal predecessors in terms of formulation and certain features, it remains fundamentally similar in essence. Moreover, it substantially defines many aspects of the image subsequently formed in European consciousness.

II. Hegelian Racism and European Centrism

Several scholars have examined Hegel's centrism and racism, which has prompted some to argue that his ideas serve as the conceptual underpinnings of Nazism. Under the heading "Hegel and the Philosophical Foundation of Racism," some authors have regarded him as one of the most well-known philosophers who developed early racist views against the Other and conceived the idea of "racism" in the West. Hegel left out a sizable portion of mankind in his work "The Geographical Basis of World History," believing that they lacked the characteristics of "humanity" that would have allowed them to influence and advance world history. He claimed that only Europe was responsible for history, its flow, and its civilization (Abdullah, 2020).

Adel Samara (2015) argues that some scholars have endeavored to elucidate the philosophical underpinnings of Nazism and the complicit roots in post-Holocaust German culture and philosophy, tracing these elements back to more than a century before the emergence of Nazism itself. They posit that the spiritual father of Nazism, from a philosophical perspective, is Hegel, whose works are extensively praised in Arab academic literature while overlooking his racist tendencies. Also, Samara

(2015) proposes switching the idea of "nations without history," which Hegel is credited with developing, to "nations whose history has been obscured by others." Racist thinking, according to Samara(2015), allows white Western capitalists to dominate non-white populations, avoid making sincere regrets for colonialism, and insist that we normalize our connection with history in order to continue this normalization in the future.

Lucia Pradella(2014) examines Hegel's analysis of the social question and European expansion, critiquing his Eurocentrism and racist distortions. In her work on the relationship between Hegel's political economy and his philosophy of history, Pradella(2014) argues that Hegel promoted European expansion based on a Eurocentric vision that contradicts the universal perspective of his philosophy of right. While numerous studies have focused on Hegel's philosophy of history and its Eurocentric or even racist deformations, Pradella (2014) analyzes the political-economic dimension of Hegel's Eurocentrism by investigating the connection between his philosophy of history and his political economy.

Additionally, Ahmed El-Rubaie (1949-2008), the Kuwaiti professor of philosophy, deepens the critique initiated by Imam Abdel Fattah regarding Hegel's writings on history and "Eastern peoples." El-Rubaie (1986) elucidates the extent of Hegel's influence on the roots and origins of Western Orientalism, or the foundations of "European centrism," and explicates the philosophical and theoretical basis for the racist view of human history. El-Rubaie(1986) draws a more profound critique from Imam's introduction and critique of Hegel's vision of Eastern civilizations, which is a measured academic critique from a Hegelian thinker. In addition to Hegel's Western bias, this critique highlights his Orientalism, racism, and centrism—what El-Rubaie (1986) refers to as the "racist Hegelian spirit," which he discusses in great detail. He also claims that Hegel's viewpoint is the result of European racism, which sees the East as a sick man who must submit to Europe or face his doom. Although El-Rubaie (1986) concedes that "some" of Hegel's prejudice results from the fact that he "knew about Islam only what missionaries told him," he contends that Hegel's "lack of information about the East and Islam" is not the sole problem. Rather, it is intrinsically linked to a comprehensive philosophy that sees spirit as the foundation of its existence (p. 214.)

Furthermore, Ahmed El-Rubaie (1986) stresses how crucial it is to place Hegel's theories on Eastern history in the appropriate historical perspective. He contends that this philosophy, deeply rooted in racism, transcends mere "philosophical opinions of a great thinker" and instead represents the legitimate successor to all racist thought and the theory of "European centrism." El-Rubaie's critique reaches its zenith as he unequivocally labels Hegel's philosophy as racist and Western-centric, further underscoring Hegel's colonialist inclinations. He asserts that Hegel's perspective on the East forms a fundamental basis for imperialism, stating: "More perilously, Hegel's philosophy of

history, particularly concerning Eastern history, became one of the critical foundations upon which subsequent colonial and imperialist ideologies were constructed."

El-Rubaie(1986) highlights the colonial exploitation of Hegelian ideas by drawing a convincing connection between Hegel's position on the East and James Balfour's view of the Oriental world. "Hegel is reincarnated in the guise of Arthur James Balfour as he delivers a speech to the British House of Commons on June 13, 1910," he writes, highlighting the remarkable resemblance between Hegel and Balfour. Speaking not in the language of a philosopher but as a politician, Balfour addresses the status of the English occupation of Egypt, saying: 'Western nations, upon their emergence in history, immediately display the harbingers of self-governance, for they possess unique attributes. You may examine the entire history of the Orientals in what is generally termed the East without finding a trace of self-governance whatsoever. (You) do not see a single nation among these establishing, through its own internal momentum, what we from a Western perspective call self-governance. This is the truth.'" El-Rubaie comments on this, exclaiming: "What similarity in words and congruence in meanings between Hegel and Balfour! Is not what Balfour saying a Hegelian reading of Egypt, using the same terms and expressions?"(p.215)

El-Rubaie's interpretation of Hegel's view of peoples requires affirmation, as it presents a distinct shift from previous explanations that attempted to elucidate Hegel's racism or Eurocentrism. Al-Rubaie advances beyond Lucia Pradella's interpretation of Hegel's capitalist perspective to emphasize the colonial viewpoint. Pradella's analysis finds confirmation and deepening in the work of Indian critic M.A.R. Habib(2017) , who posits that the Orientalist, Eurocentric perspective renders Hegel the quintessential philosopher of capitalism. Habib argues that Hegel's dialectic expresses the nature of capitalism on multiple levels, stating that "Hegel's Eurocentrism is not merely a matter of historical curiosity; it is a fundamental feature of contemporary knowledge. The Hegelian dialectic has become the prevailing model for conceptualizing the relationship between the West and non-Westerners, including the wholesale rejection of other cultures and the view that Europe and America constitute the main course of history"(p.3).

Consequently, Habib (2017) characterizes the Hegelian dialectic as inherently expansionist and colonial, as it negates everything declared in the world, where all forms of the Other are incorporated into our expanded subjectivity, which in this way gradually "invades" the world, absorbing it into itself. Hegel views the dialectic not only as a movement from substance to subject but also as a movement through history towards freedom – ultimately defined as the connection between the rationality of the human mind and the rationality of the institutions created by this mind. This implies that Hegel's dialectic has profound implications for some fundamental concepts in globalization studies and postcolonial studies(p.6).

In Hegel's historical schema, as Habib (2017) elucidates, there exists a reciprocal relationship between modern capitalism, Protestant Christianity, the principle of self-conscious reason, Europe's imperial destiny, and the realization of freedom in history. All of these elements are encompassed within a single dialectic that operates on cognitive, historical, and political levels. Habib (2017) concludes that "the dialectic expressing the freedom of the modern world is the same dialectic that distinguishes Europe, places it at the center of the global stage, and considers it the evolving subject of modern history, while conversely, the rest of the world is explicitly designated as the 'Other.'" This dialectic is not merely a dialectic of property rights, capitalist economics, the bourgeois family, and human self-realization; it is also fundamentally a dialectic of empire (p. 7).

Hegel contributed more than any other modern Western philosopher to deepening the image of Western centrism, predicated on the disparity between the intellectually, culturally, religiously, and racially superior West and the inferior "other" world. He formulated a conception of the West as occupying the apex of humanity, propelling efforts to maintain this position until a significant change in human civilization occurs.

According to Abdul Wahid El-Humaidi (2015), Goethe discerned in Hegel's dialectic a clear and explicit concept of exclusion, negation, and distancing, manifesting in various forms. What alarmed Goethe in Hegel's thought was the logic of exclusion and elimination, evident not only in the metaphorical/literal image (according to Hegel) of the conflict within a plant where the rose eliminates the bud, but also in the "philosophical structure" underpinning Hegel's vision. In the dialectic that synthesizes a thing and its antithesis, leading to transcendence and synthesis, an exclusionary and violent tendency towards existence, nature, and objects emerges. The image of the plant containing an exclusionary conflict between the rose and the bud succinctly encapsulates Hegel's philosophy of identity and otherness (p.152). Thus, there is no identity without conflict with the other, and no otherness without exclusion or even elimination.

Additionally, upon closer examination of Hegel's writings on other cultures, the reader will discern—and this is the source of danger—that the Western intellect consistently returns to Hegel when seeking to elevate its own culture while denigrating others. The same attributes are reiterated across centuries: freedom for them and slavery for us, openness and pluralism for them and extremism for us, and so forth. This reflects Hegel's internal eye, or that pure eye, shaped under the influence of preconceptions and nurtured by the Western "Christian" narrative. It is an eye that perceives the external world solely through its internal lens rather than through the world itself (El-Humaidi, 2016).

More interestingly, Hegel's racism is evident in his characterization of the African man as "essentially natural," with proximity to the natural state in Hegel's view being synonymous with inferiority. He states: "The African man represents the natural man in all his savagery

and capriciousness. To understand him, we must discard all our European ways of perceiving things. We must think neither of a spiritual God nor of a moral law; we must suspend all respect and all morality of what we call feelings. All of this is lacking in the (African) man, who is still in a raw state. We cannot find in his nature anything that might remind us of the human"" (cited in Camara, 2005). This means that Hegel finds nothing of value in Black Africa; on the contrary, he finds everything that is incompatible with the conditions for the emergence of the universal spirit. For him, Africa is a breeding ground for the most savage and ferocious animals, and its climate is toxic to Europeans (Camara, 2005).

Therefore, as Balkafif (2011) claims, Hegel's perspective is utterly inhumane; it is, in fact, a colonial spirit. How else can we explain the coincidence of Hegel's philosophical call and similar ones with the emergence of the colonialist tendency manifested in the drive to conquer the world for the economic expansion of the European domain?

III The Orientalist and Ahistorical Nature of Hegel's View of Islam

According to Hussein Hindawi (2013), Hegel's various texts and analyses establish a peculiar ethnocentric and religious centrism in philosophical guise, with Orientalist roots evident in his sources and his perspective on Islam. His judgments on Islam were formed in Hegel's consciousness from the early stages of his religious education as a young man. . Hindawi(2013) also declares that the majority of Hegel's sources on Islam are Orientalist in origin and are extensive, varied, interrelated, and frequently conflicting. These sources, which can be divided into four categories, influenced Hegel's view of Islam either directly or indirectly, favorably or unfavorably.

The texts in which Hegel discusses Islam are consistently brief and often highly scattered. However, they are invariably focused and profound in a manner that suggests the philosopher encountered a genuine challenge in incorporating Islam into his philosophical system. This difficulty reveals a fundamental contradiction at the core of his philosophical framework.

A reader of Hegel recognizes that he presents a Christian interpretation of Islam, portraying it as a precursor to and preparation for Christianity. This violent revolution and negative regression are viewed as necessary within the historical evolution of human consciousness in its journey towards absolute truth alongside Western Christian spirituality. According to Hegel, Islam's arrival was unavoidable in order to eliminate gods and overthrow the feeble Zoroastrian and Roman governments in their Christian religion, setting the stage for the proper foundation and other prerequisites for the worldwide triumph of Christian spirituality. Hegel explicitly asserts that genuine and true Christianity only emerged with Luther and Protestantism, thereby removing the aforementioned historical-temporal contradiction from his philosophical system and resolving the question of necessary development based on a temporal-historical progression, given that Islam

emerged after Christianity (Hindawi, 2013). Moreover, Hegel accomplishes three goals with this "philosophical" interpretation: he disassociates Eastern Christianity from a deep link to Christian truth, denies Islam any connection to ultimate divine truth, and criticizes Catholicism for having a shallow knowledge of this reality. In doing so, he settles Protestantism's account with all other religions that could potentially accuse it of heresy and illegitimacy.

In summary, Hegel views Islam as a negative moment in the history of Spirit. As a purely negative moment, the Islamic foundation should not persist in time: it is merely a transient and swift phase, ultimately a moment of punishment where the actual world must begin its journey charged with the task of divine will. For Hegel, the final point is when Christians begin to sense self-consciousness and embark on resisting evil against the "opposing-direction."

To this, we add the perspective offered by the translator of "Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion" in his writing titled "The Dialectic of Religion and Freedom," which provides examples relevant to our discussion here, delineating the achievements of Hegelian thought. He addresses an issue that has become central to the current intellectual and spiritual relationship between Arab-Islamic and European civilizations: understanding the reasons that led Hegel to hesitate in determining Islam's position, failing to find a place for it within the series of forms defined by his religious philosophy. Hegel speaks about Islam in almost every chapter of the book, yet he does not dedicate a specific chapter to it like other religious forms, despite placing it in the same stage he attributes to Christianity. He considers them opposites in theoretical characteristics and practical outcomes, echoing the historical conflict between Arab-Islamic and Germanic-Christian civilizations as presented in Hegel's philosophy of history.

Abu Yaarub El-Marzouki examines Hegel's preconceived judgments against the East and all non-Western entities. He identifies two key factors that aid in understanding the implications of Hegel's thought: his approach to reducing the religious to the secular and historical, and the efficacy of his preconceptions regarding other civilizations, particularly Islam. The most significant of these judgments, which underscores Hegel's racism, is the idea of hierarchical differentiation between mentalities, mindsets, or the spirits of peoples. El-Marzouki states: "Hegel considers the fundamental constituents to be present in all religious forms, at least potentially. However, he simultaneously puts the East, in particular, and the non-West, in general, on trial, which may imply that he excludes them from humanity and stigmatizes them with inferiority, a slave mentality, and indifference to human dignity. In this sense, while the human being is inherently free, Africans and Asians are not free because they lack awareness of their freedom, that is, they lack awareness of the concept of what it means to be human" (El-Mohammadi Riahi, 2012, p. 89).

The abstract Hegelian idea struggles with actual history; Hegel's idealistic dialectic does not organize peoples and cultures along a line of development of a single mind based on an objective

tracking of the idea's progress through time. Instead, it employs a perspective that defines the West in general, and the Germanic world crowned by Luther's Christianity in particular, as the ultimate goal of development and the end of the path of progress. In this view, the East forms the "inevitable beginning" to end in the West as "the ultimate development of absolute history." As some observe, "The East, in Hegel's Eurocentric perspective, transformed into a place of civilizational despair. If we exclude the Hebrew moment from Asia's lifespan, the entire continent, along with Africa and the indigenous peoples of America and Australia, exits from history" (Ghalioun, 2012, p. 225).

According to this viewpoint, Tayeb Tizini (2009) considers Hegel to be among the key pioneers of what would come to be known as "modern Orientalism." Fundamentally, the presence of great men in the fields of thinking and culture did not make this development feasible. The matter was related to the historical stage in which Hegel lived and its horizons (from 1770 to 1831 AD), a period that marked a turning point in world history, during which a major transformation towards bourgeois formation and the establishment of the capitalist system was realized in the West. Hegel, the great philosopher deeply immersed in the "European centrism" obsession, as seen by the Syrian Marxist philosopher Tayeb Tizini, had identified what he considered the decisive cause behind the portrayal of Easterners. According to this view, they possess no principle other than (revelation), which is a fixed, definitive matter requiring nothing more than people's compliance and action in accordance with its demands (Tizini, 2009).

IV- Hegel on Oriental Despotism and Islamic Fanaticism

We shall examine one of the most significant issues raised by Hegel concerning the concepts of freedom and despotism, their presence in the East, and fanaticism as the essence of Islam. We will also explore Hegel's perspective and its influence on Western views of Oriental despotism, the patriarchy of ancient nations, African slavery, and life outside the process of becoming. This discussion will analyze Hegel's writings, texts, and his view on religion, the evolution and limitations of religions, Islam's position among them, its connection to Judaism, its opposition to Christianity, and the absence of liberalism in the Arab-Islamic world.

Hegel's perspective on Arabs, Islam, and the East appears in several works, which researchers have interpreted differently. However, Hegel's comprehensive vision becomes clear only within the context of a historical analysis of all the texts in which he discussed the East, Arabs, and Islam throughout his various lectures in the final years of his life. To define this perspective accurately, we must return to all of his writings that addressed aspects of Arab life and Eastern civilizations, without limiting ourselves to only some of them, to compete and clarify the picture.

1-Arabs and Islam in Hegel's Lectures

This section analyzes a text by Hegel on Islam, which he termed "Mohammedanism" (*Der Mohammedanismus*), translated by Salem Benjemish. Hamish presents this text, which elucidates Hegel's vision of Islam in concise, evocative words. He emphasizes the importance of examining the judgments contained within to elucidate Hegel's perspective. It is noteworthy that the philosopher was not versed in Arabic nor familiar with Islamic Arabic texts. Instead, he relied on certain Orientalist sources to establish the foundations that shaped his view of us, a fact highlighted by numerous researchers specializing in Hegelian philosophy (Hegel, 2009).

According to Souad Ayad (n.d.) Hegel identifies fanaticism as the key concept that unlocks the secret of the Islamic whirlwind's power and speed, serving as the enduring explanation for Arab Muslims' beliefs and behaviors towards others. For Hegel, fanaticism does not encompass tribal or religious zealotry; rather, it represents an emotional efficacy, a fiery fuel propelling towards the realization of monotheistic worship. The Muhammadan fanaticism, according to Hegel, was capable of achieving the highest degree of spiritual elevation, liberated from petty interests and imbued with all virtues associated with chivalry and courage. Hegel employs the concept of enthusiasm to denote an emotional energy synonymous with fanaticism. In Hegel's view, no moral principle remains to sustain the human spirit, as Muslims and Arabs are perceived as pure emotion—this is the fundamental image Hegel portrays of us. When this emotion subsides, only the hungry senses of the Oriental remain. By emphasizing this Oriental sensuality as an Islamic Eastern trait, Hegel becomes one of the first to establish the cultural-racial polarization between a sensual East and a rational West. Hegel (2009) asserts, as Ben Salem Himmich continues, that abstraction dominated Muslims, with their goal being the presentation of abstract worship, pursued with the utmost enthusiasm (*Begeisterung*). This enthusiasm was a form of fanaticism, and Himmich clarifies Hegel's definition of fanaticism as an enthusiastic inclination (infatuation) towards something abstract, an abstract idea that behaves negatively towards what exists. In essence, Hegel's fanaticism lies primarily in the declaration of destruction and demolition of the tangible. However, Hegel importantly notes that Muslim fanaticism was also capable of all things sublime. Their principle was religion and intimidation, akin to Robespierre's principle of liberty and intimidation. Actual life is tangible and encompasses specific aims; through conquest, it achieves domination, wealth, the establishment of ruling family rights, and bonds between individuals.

Furthermore, Hegel (2009) continues in a language that combines mentioning Arabs and praising them on one hand, while oscillating between elucidating Islam's position in the evolution of religions and making ambivalent, dual-meaning statements about Islam on the other. He alternates between noting Islam's inclination towards conquest and destruction and expressing admiration

based on his sources. However, Hegel's emphasis on Islam's propensity for conquest and destruction has become, in his view and that of subsequent Orientalists, an intrinsic part of Islam's nature.

Hegel's philosophy has elicited diverse reactions among Arab intellectuals since the early 20th century, following their exposure to it through various means. Some encountered it directly during their academic missions abroad, while others accessed it through translations of Hegel's works and those influenced by him. These reactions range from those who laud the philosopher's stance on Arabs and commend him, to those who criticize his critique of Islam and the East. As demonstrated by the many viewpoints of Arab researchers, these stances demand our critical analysis in order to understand the self through the other and develop a sense of both self and other.

2-Hegel and Muhammad Abduh

Muhammad El-Bahi compared the German philosopher to the Islamic reformer Sheikh al-Imam in an early German study. We have located a review of the study in *Al-Risalah* magazine, which reveals its content, subject matter, and explication of both philosopher Hegel's and reformer Imam Muhammad Abduh's stances on Islam, despite the fact that the study is lost because it was written in Germany in the mid-1930s. This took place at the start of the early twentieth-century era of enlightened Islamic religious reform.

Al-Bahi informs us in his introduction that his motivation for publishing this booklet stemmed from his observation in Germany that people there did not comprehend Islam in its true essence. He formed this opinion after attending his professor's (Nock's) lectures on Hegel's "Philosophy of History" and participating in Professor Strothmann's discussions with his students on various works about Islam. This provided him with the opportunity to conduct a comparison between Hegel's views on Islam, as presented in his book "Philosophy of History," and Muhammad Abduh's perspectives, as outlined in his work "Islam and Christianity, Science and Civilization." This comparison elucidates the relationship between Hegel's philosophy and the dialogues that took place in Egypt at the beginning of the twentieth century regarding the impact of religion and science on our social life, which is echoed in this study. Thus, the study is significant for multiple reasons: not only because it was published in German in Germany by an Egyptian researcher studying at German universities and because it was conducted during the period of global anxiety in the 1930s after Hitler's rise to power in Germany, but also due to the subjects of comparison—Hegel and Muhammad Abduh—and its focus on Islam and history. The study presents the most important views of the German philosopher Hegel concerning Islam.

El-Bahi studied Islam through the lens of philosopher Hegel, who saw religion as a combination of contradictions: concrete reality and abstract ideas. Hegel's perspective, as put forward by El-Bahi, holds that the Islamic and Jewish conceptions of God are different. While Yahweh is exclusively the

God of the Jewish people, Allah is the Lord of all worlds. Al-Bahi elucidates that Hegel perceived Muslims as living and existing for their religion and the realization of its principles, with their worldly life serving merely as a means to attain the afterlife and its rewards. This, Hegel argued, was the impetus behind their conquests in Asia, Africa, and Europe.

El-Bahi critically examines Hegel's assertion that fanaticism against non-believers was initially at its peak but subsequently relaxed, leading to the substitution of killing infidels with the imposition of an annual tax (jizya). El-Bahi contends that fanaticism in Islam did not lead to destruction and demolition, as is typically characteristic of fanaticism, but rather to construction and development(Editor, 1935).

The article's editor highlighted Al-Bahi's discussion of Hegel's claims about Muslim fanaticism. Hegel viewed Islam as justifying violence for its propagation, similar to Robespierre's justification of force to achieve liberty. He argued that individuality in Islam was paradoxical, with rulers willing to sacrifice personal glory for religion, only to reclaim it ruthlessly later. Al-Bahi emphasized Hegel's observation that early Islamic societies guaranteed freedoms to all, regardless of gender or class, exemplified by commoners' access to Caliphs. However, Hegel noted a later shift where rulers isolated themselves in palaces, distancing from the people and reversing the previous social order(Editor, 1935).

Professor Al-Bahy, as the editor continues, argues that Hegel judged Islam through the actions of some Muslims, whereas he should have referred to the original sources of Islam. Al-Bahy criticized Hegel's research methodology. As mentioned by the letter's editor, and as Abu Yaarib Al-Marzouki would later do, Al-Bahy discussed eight issues from Hegel's philosophical views. The Islamic requirement was the first point of contention. Using evidence from the Quran, Al-Bahy contended that it also covers worldly matters, in contrast to Hegel's view that it only addresses the hereafter. Al-Bahy's attempt to show that Islam was purely defensive in all of its conflicts was the third topic, whereas the second dealt with fasting.

Regarding religious fanaticism, which is the most critical issue that Muslim researchers examine, Islam does not oppose science, as was often debated among Arab intellectuals in the early 20th century. It neither punishes nor persecutes free-thinking scholars. Instead, Islam encourages study, science, and knowledge. Muslims have revered scholars of all backgrounds, honoring their memory and respecting them. It suffices to note that Jewish scholars in Syria and Christian scholars in Egypt sat alongside other scholars in the councils of caliphs and rulers. Some studies emerged during this period, paving the way for discussions about Hegel in the pages of Al-Risalah magazine.

In his lectures on the philosophy of religion, Hegel accorded Islam, as the Italian professor Ventura observes, special consideration as a historical religion. Lorella Ventura notes that Islam is distinctly separate from the Oriental world. Islam's definition, characteristics, and historical role can

be characterized as a "revolution" in relation to both the Oriental world and Judaism, as it is no longer associated with any particularity. Consequently, according to Hegel's analysis, Islamic religion and Muslim peoples differ from "Oriental" peoples. Islam stands in its splendor, freedom, breadth, and clarity, particularly in the path of deepening the Christian world. All particularities and class distinctions disappear in this oneness; all characteristics of the East vanish (Venturapp. (n.d.), pp. 117–134).

Hegel defines Islam as the "revolution" of the East. In this sense, he observes the distance between Islam and the Oriental world, as Islam represents the transformation of the Oriental world into something entirely new. Rateb Hourani notes that Hegel derived his information from Ricaut's book titled "The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire" (1670), as well as from a text Hegel wrote in his early youth during his stay in Frankfurt (1797-1800) entitled "The Spirit of the Orientals," along with other early writings. These unpublished writings by Hegel indicate that the Islamic world was present in Hegel's mind from the beginnings of his intellectual awareness (38). Hegel dedicates an entire chapter to Islam in his "Lectures on the Philosophy of History," not as part of the Oriental world, whose trilogy was completed by China, India, and Persia, but as part of the Germanic world. As Michel Hulin expresses, the entry of Islam into the Germanic world in Hegel's view was analogous to the entry of Christianity - also Eastern - into the Germanic world with its institutions and ethics (Hourani (n.d.), p. 62).

Hourani (n.d.) discusses the position that Islam occupies in relation to Christianity and the Protestant Reformation in various sections of Hegel's writings. He presents this in the form of a question, which, in my view, is an important one. Hourani asks: If Hegel considers Islam as the "revolution of the East," and he states that "there is no revolution without (religious) reform," does he consider Islam to be that required reform, which preceded the Western Protestant Reformation by several centuries? Hourani observes that all these points Hegel made regarding the Lutheran Reformation are repeated when he speaks of Islam as the "revolution of the East," but without explicitly using the word "reform" or "comparison" between Islam and the Protestant Reformation. Hourani notes that Hegel did not explicitly raise this issue of comparison. He comments on how Hegel could raise it, knowing that supporters of the traditional church had accused the "Reformation" of being Islamic, and that advocates of the Protestant Reformation had responded to their opponents with the same accusation (pp. 65–64).

Hourani (n.d.) observes that those familiar with the concrete historical circumstances in which Hegel delivered his lectures on the philosophy of history and religion at the Royal University of Berlin in the 1820s understand why Hegel limited himself to occasional allusions, while a contemporary reader might demand more explicit statements. Hegel did not assert that direct

contact with Islam was a distant or proximate cause of the European Renaissance or the religious reformation in Europe. Hourani suggests that this assumption appears necessary, at minimum, to preserve the image of the absolute triad: art, religion, and philosophy, in the realization of the absolute spirit in its global journey.

This earlier discussion lays the groundwork for discussing the problem of fanaticism and freedom in Islam as it was put forth by Hegel and as it was expressed in the works of modern European scholars who have written commentary on him. In order to show how deeply Hegel's conceptions of Islam influence modern Western thought and act as mirrors through which Hegel's portrayal of Islam can be somewhat transparently identified, we now turn our attention to examining European viewpoints.

V- Hegeland Islam- Fantacism and Freedom in Religion

In his study on Hegel and Islam, Ian Almond provides a crucial clarification: Hegel viewed his Protestant Christianity as largely synonymous with the concepts of Enlightenment and education, to the extent that he occasionally seemed to perceive himself as a Lutheran figure. Almond asserts that there exists a "shared space" between Christianity and Islam, and the nature of this space is twofold. The first aspect pertains to Hegel's conception of Islam and Christianity as universal religions that did not repeat Judaism's error of imbuing a pure transcendental entity with a comprehensive terrestrial specificity (i.e., attachment to a particular land and people). The second aspect, which Hegel does not explicitly address, refers to the geographical contact that transforms Islam from an erroneous metaphysical monotheism into a religious, economic, and military competitor.

As "devoid of any form of nationalism," Islam is seen by Hegel as both an unfinished form of Christianity and a developed form of Judaism. It is no longer restricted to "a specific people," and because it has rejected particularity in its understanding of God, like Christianity, it finds itself at a juncture between the Christian ideal and the Jewish model—a transcendentality devoid of any earthly specificity that still needs to cultivate a cogent spirituality(Almond,2010, p.114).

Scholars like Haridyano embrace this historical interpretation of Islam because they see it as an undeveloped and imperfect form of Christianity. Haridyano goes one step farther and compares Christian revelation to Islamic philosophy (Almond, 2010, p.114).

Furthermore, Thomas Lynch(n.d.) discusses the relationship between religion, fanaticism, and world history in Hegel's perspective on Islam, elucidating that Hegel views Islam as a form of fanaticism in contrast to Christian Europe. For Hegel, both Judaism and Islam demonstrate the impossibility of human freedom, reducing the human relationship with God to one of obedience. True freedom, in Hegel's view, is only possible through the Trinity. While neither Judaism nor Islam are religions of freedom, Hegel clearly considers Judaism superior. This is because Judaism is a particular religion with a national deity. Judaism's lack of universality makes it better than Islam but

inferior to Christianity. Lynch(n.d.) notes that Hegel believes Judaism lacks expansionist tendencies; its followers may not be free, but they are only fanatical when attacked. When Hegel addresses the issue of tolerance towards religious minorities, as Lynch (n.d.) continues, he presents Jews as an example of a group that should be tolerated, while Islam, in its universality, is fundamentally fanatical. Islam, according to Hegel, eliminates all particularity: national, class, and ethnic differences disappear because a Muslim is solely a believer. Islam diminishes the value of the individual: its sole purpose is the worship of the One, demanding complete submission to the divine existence. In his 1824 *Philosophy of Religion*, Hegel again emphasizes Islam as a glorification of the abstract(p. 42).

Since Islam is "an earlier stage of religious consciousness" and is "in opposition to Christianity" as a "contemporary competitor representing the opposite direction," it is not given much consideration in Hegel's lectures. The Islamic Other is evident throughout Hegel's work, despite the fact that he does not give Islam much thought when it comes to the philosophy of religion. Islam consistently exists as an antithesis, an external counterpart to Western Europe(p. 43). Lynch (n.d.) criticizes this Hegelian stance on Islam and fanaticism, explaining that Hegel did not adequately consider the richness or diversity of Islam. He suggests that a more comprehensive Hegelian reading of Islam would lead to a different conclusion. Lynch argues that Hegel's work reveals "not merely a scene of simple Orientalism, where Hegel, the quintessential Western observer, imposes a demeaning definition on a voiceless East," but rather that Hegel's doctrine contains nuanced arguments justifying his rejection of Islam, which is linked to foundational aspects of his view on subjectivity, dialectics, and freedom. As David Nirenberg writes in his comparison of Hegel and recent discourse on Islam and the West, "The debate about Europe's relationship with Islam is a founding characteristic of Europe." Nevertheless, Hegel's discussions of Islam are inadequate; his philosophy remains paradigmatic in understanding Islam as antithetical to Christianity, Europe, or the West. The question is not how liberal Europe or the liberal West can be tolerant of Islam; we do not need to make room for Islam in Hegel's universal history. We need a different history because there is a different spirit(p. 44).

Ivan Davidson Kalmar's paper , "Jewish Islam: Reflections on Hegel," explains that we are confronted with a movement that, according to some, links Islam back to Judaism or at least creates a link between the two. This is obvious in the analysis he gives, which also focuses on the joint construction of Jews and Muslims in Hegel's theory. Kalmar(n.d.) emphasizes that for Hegel and his contemporaries, while Judaism is treated in great detail across various contexts, Islam is addressed in a limited and intermittent manner. Hegel's views on Judaism can be summarized without reference to Islam, but as Davidson asserts, the reverse is not true. In fact, understanding Hegel's conception of Islam is impossible without comprehending Judaism, as Hegel believed Islam to be merely a late

mutation of the Jewish religious principle. Significantly, Kalmar (n.d.) notes that for Hegel, the Jewish mission was exhausted with Christ's incarnation. At this point, Judaism should have disappeared, but it did not. When the Jewish spirit rose again in the form of Islam, it did so in a historical context different from that of ancient Israel. Hegel speaks here of the "Arab" religion, not "Islamic," using "Arab" synonymously with "Semitic," a usage that occurs prominently. Hegel was clear that Islam owes its character to the Arabs, and as far as the religious principle is concerned, "Arab" and "Islam" were one and the same. Hegel does not speak of Muslims but refers to them as Mohammedans or Arabs, avoiding mention of Islam, which is simply the religion of the Arabs, who are Semites.

Jamil Khader, a professor at Bethlehem University, focuses on Žižek's text "A Glance into the Archives of Islam." In response to Hegel's teleological investigation of the three monotheistic religions and the mystery of Islam's genesis after Christianity, this book reflects Žižek's dialectical theological-political interpretation of Islam. Žižek's view of Islamic universalism reactivates Hegel's dialectical analysis of Islam, which is based on the sequence of monotheistic faiths. This perspective avoids Hegel's racial Orientalism, Eurocentrism, and Islamophobia.

According to Khader(2020), Žižek rejects Hegel's emphasis on both the temporal contradiction of Islam and the unique concept of the abstract and transcendent God. He reloads Hegel's dialectical views and manages to resolve the impasse in Hegel's approach to Islam, which cannot explain Islam's universality. Khader extracts the political implications of Žižek's philosophical interpretation of Islam, establishing the emergence of political Islam in the wake of the modernization project's encroachment on the Islamic world, and attributes the rise of Islamic extremism (violence) to the contradictions and predicaments of global capitalism(p.47). Žižek defines his task as "reactivating Hegel," identifying the stagnation in Hegel's dialectical reading of Islam. In his view, it is not Hegel who excludes Islam from his universal history, but rather Islam that excludes itself from the Hegelian scheme due to its failure to deepen the dialectical relationship between divine universality and human particularity in Christianity(Khader, 2020, p.47).

The reactivation of Hegel's dialectical analysis of Islam is evident from the beginning of "The Archives." Žižek examines Hegel's interpretation of Islam as "the religion of sublimity in its purest form, as the universality of Jewish monotheism," focusing on the unique concept of God in Islam. Islam overcomes the concrete manifestations of human history and existence, placing them in the category of "true universal monotheism." For Žižek, abstract monotheism has been reintroduced in Islam without any trace of Jewish particularity. (Khader, 2020, p.48).

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