The Question of ethics in critical thought of Muhammad Arkoun

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Abstract:

In this article, we aim to address Mohammed Arkoun's ethical thought, based on his chosen critical stance, namely the critique of Islamic reason. In this regard, our goal is to clarify the direction of this critique with regard to the ethical aspect. Another goal is to evaluate the results of this critique. In fact, the approach we have put forward has shown us that Arkoun's position, despite its boldness and depth, is far from being creative. This is because, as it appears to us, he did not truly come close to investing in the Quranic values that expressed a distinct Islamic way of thinking. In this, we have followed the critical analytical approach.

key words: Ethics; Quran; criticism; critical mind; Islamic thought; values; creativity

Introduction:

When the issue of ethics is brought up for discussion, there is no doubt that it also raises the issue of man. There is a very obvious connection in this regard, given that man is based on principles and values and adopts behaviors guided by them. This is the reality wherever man exists in time and space. It is certain that man is a moral being, and while this is settled, what is not settled and raises debate is the connection to history. The fact that man is a moral being is the fact that man is a historical being, and

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this has many meanings, perhaps the most prominent of which is the source of those morals and the direction they take accordingly. The role played by the sources of moral belief is significant in the realization of the type and form of morality. A telling example of this is the impact of The system of religious values of a religion such as Islam on the patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior of Muslims.

It has become clear what characteristics she bestows upon them and imprints her stamp on them. They live in a dynamic history with its own events and challenges. Given that history is the framework through which results can be assessed, the observer cannot fail to notice the many phenomena prevalent in the Islamic arena, which sometimes tend towards negativity, such as a poor attitude towards the other and his civilizational values, or an inability to revive oneself by submitting to historical visions, or an inability to distinguish the originality of the value or the principle from its historical confusion, and falling into extremism or stagnation.

From here comes those critical attempts that we are referring to here as represented by Arkoun, which is based on epistemological methodology, as much as they stand on the historical presence, standing on its origins and roots. Because of the importance of this matter, we ask the following questions: How do Arkoun look at ethics? What is its systematic definition to look at it? What is the relationship of this to the critical practice of the Islamic mind? To what extent it can be said that this actually expresses privacy and creativity

1. In Looking at ethics:

It should be said starting that Arkoun's moral view is not a style of school looks in which opinion can be determined easily, as he does not provide definitions and does not simplify his opinion directly, but his opinion is included in it in an analytical framework that interferes with multiple situations. In any case, one in this case is forced to endure the effort with the length of the soul, and we are on this basis to find from the reflective signs of the moral feature of his saying that morals are the science of behavior (Arkoun,1996a, p.41).

This is a very brief position, as if it shines on the truth of ethics on the one hand, but it does not clarify it completely, if we know that the definition of morality is expanding to more than that to include not only the behavior itself but its background Theoretical and practical that is based on; Whereas, on its first side, it is concerned with motives, ends, guarantee, freedom, will, intention, intention, goodness and evil, which are subjective and normative matters at the same time. And that in its

practical aspect it is concerned with different duties, the shape and nature of the application that you take (Rushwan,1998,pp. 25,26). Ethics are not in this manner merely behavior for itself, as long as the behavior is determined by many data related to what a person believes, does, or frames, and if that is what testifies to the type of morals that we can judge with approval or underestimation, as is the case usually.

Whatever it is, this is not what is hidden from Arkoun, but that reference we consider as an unintended analysis of ethics in itself, and perhaps this is from the results of the tendency to the phenomena of history printed by embodiment, which is interested in the religious mind and its phenomena. And when he is interested in this, he is concerned with behavior and thought accompanying him, and therefore morals appear to him in the place of critical view, whether both in relation to the position on the religious mind and the Islamic mind specifically, as he as he remembers he wants to present the moral vision of Islam in its historical framework with all the means of this follow -up to the emergence, development and relationship of the present, and the present is far from the present, and it is far from the present Historical, as monitoring here is completely involved in the relationship with the work of the critical mind (Arkoun, 2007, p.22).

And if we have to spoil this position, we say that his moral vision is to study ethics in its principles, values and manifestations in the context of the modern vision of the critical mind, and when we link the principles and their behavioral applications, we mean that it conjures up the standard concept of morals (Ibid.,2007, p.89) which appears in a typical and directive form in the same way Ethics is a vision of behavior, except that his launch on the critical mind only does not explain the relationship to the formation of these principles and their work, especially as it is seen in the Islamic situation through its specificity in the mandatory influence and after it is the pharmaceutical and legislative (Arkoun,1996a, p.42). Therefore, it is as much as the behavior is searched in its origins and roots, and the issue here is a systematic standard with distinction from the basis of the link with criticism and its requirements

1.1 Reasons for caring about ethics:

Arkoun's view of ethics, which is based on both theoretical and practical aspects—that is, on the formation and role of principles, values, and behavioral manifestations branching from or manifested through them—absolutely departs from a neutral, contemplative position. It places itself within the context of transformations, whether from the perspective of Arab-Islamic reality or from the perspective of

contemporary civilizational reality, especially in its intellectual dimension as revealed by critical reason. This is significant. Accordingly, we find ourselves compelled to consider the objectives that motivate his view on this matter. These objectives can be summarized in several integrated elements, such as:

- Placing ethics in a critical framework. What is meant by this is subjecting ethics, and Islamic ethics in particular, to what he calls the independent mind, that is, the mind that performs its role according to its mechanisms and within its own field of consideration and analysis, far from religious or ideological influences (Ibid., p.42). This is because Arkoun believes that the view of ethics has changed from what it was in the past. He sees that it has become very dependent on the conquests of scientific knowledge and is moving away from the image of the ready-made, self-evident example that is guaranteed in advance (Arkoun, 2007, p.83).

In view of this change, he imagines that the ethical view in the Islamic arena must also change (Ibid., p.84). There are, in fact, observations that he calls for to confirm this call, including the existence of the dogmatic fence of the orthodox mind, which acknowledges a sanctifying view of morality that produces what he calls correct morality (Ibid., p.84). While Arkoun rejects this, he adds to this observation the absence of the historical dimension in the view of morality. He believes that what has lost the existence of a critical ethical thought in Arab-Islamic thought is the view of morality as transcendent to history or governed by constancy (Ibid., p.89) while it is, as he sees part of it, subject to the process of change from the old to the new. This is what has led him to believe that the critical mission he is undertaking is a new, unprecedented conquest (Ibid.,p.89).

- Keeping ethics away from exploitation: This point is an extension of what we mentioned regarding the previous point in which Arkoun reversed his opposition to the direction of the idea of correct ethics. The truth is that his ideas entail each other, but we only want to point out here that the existence of exploitation has its starting point in the duality of correct and incorrect, which is the point on which he relies to say that the belief in the correct religion has produced a trend towards fanaticism and exclusion, not only with regard to Muslims, but also with others (Arkoun, 2011, pp. 87-89).

But since the matter concerns the Islamic circle under consideration here, it is this view that appears in his opinion in the form of ideologically oriented mobilization and agitation as practiced by Islamic

activists or fundamentalists, as he says (Arkoun,2001, p.26), who start from the example of the ready-made model. Ethics, according to this, are part of this situation; I mean that they follow, for him, what he calls the true religion (Arkoun, 2005, p.6). This view, inherent in the structure of Islamic thought, is what, in his opinion, has led to ethics in Islamic thought being repetitive ethics, in the form of an exemplary model that cannot be transcended by those whom Arkoun calls the guardians of orthodoxy (Arkoun, 2007, pp.89,90).

It should be noted that Arkoun's position here is consistent with his observation that the absence of a critical vision of the Islamic religion* is the basis for this exploitative representation of religion and the ethics included in it, where it appears in the form of ahistorical ethics, while in reality it is related to the cultural and social level of the environment in which it prevails (Ibid., pp.117,118), that is, in the sense that the ideal image given to it ignores the historical effects of the prevailing situation in favor of the goals of ideology.

- Raising morality to universality: What is meant by this is moving from the sphere of morality specific to cultures and religions to the sphere of human morality. This humanistic orientation is justified by the current historical reality, which is different from the historical reality of the past, as the ancient morality, in his opinion, was related to manifestations of violence, fanaticism, and exclusion, as embodied by religious wars. And from the perspective of the humanistic tendency, as we said, Arkoun does not want this to continue (Arkoun, 2011, pp.90,91). He wants another morality that does not depart from the narrow position of correctness and differentiation that we mentioned, but rather departs from the position of unification and unification, that is, the morality that serves human reality, or as he said, the morality that can be suitable for us today (Arkoun,2013, pp.195,196), after modernity has been established in a broad cultural environment. And that intended morality is nothing but the morality of coexistence that applies to all people regardless of their affiliations, whatever those affiliations may be, religious or otherwise (Ibid., p.196).

It is important to mention that Arkoun is driven in this by a critical methodological sense dictated to him by his anthropological view of religions as religions united by common features even if they appear in different forms (Arkoun, 1999, p.275). Therefore, as much as he focuses on this commonality, he tries to criticize and expose what he calls the deceptive appearances of moral behavior within the framework of religions and their cultures (Arkoun, 2011, p.91).

1.2 Method and ethics:

What is constant in Arkoun's thought is that it starts from methodological premises, and ethics here is not isolated from that. It falls, like others, within the framework of his methodological system of consideration and analysis, which is a system characterized by multiplicity and keeping pace with the new productions of the modern mind. In this regard, we can point out the most important principles adopted in it, which are:

- The progressive retrospective methodology, by which he means, on the one hand, a return to the past to know the factors and mechanisms that produced the primary and secondary texts and determined their different functions, and on the other hand, he means by it monitoring the aspects of historical transformation related to them in terms of their effectiveness and continuity in action (Arkoun, 1996b, p.164), as there is a belief in his existence of semantic manipulations that take the meaning far from its origin (Arkoun, 1993, p.84), and predict what he calls historical fallacies (Arkoun,1996b, p.141). This explains his great interest in synchronistic reading, on the basis that it is the reading that allows the possibility of linking words to their first past, far from immediate projections (Arkoun, n.d, p.284).
- The historical methodology, meaning the methodology that is concerned with the historicity of phenomena in terms of the change and development that befalls them over time (Arkoun, 1996a, p.23), or it is the methodology that moves away from a mere fleeting description of phenomena to tracking and deciphering the data of deep history through a long period and the meanings and structures that are reflected from it that are effective and motivate consciousness (Arkoun,1996b, p.133). In fact, when Arkoun goes in this direction, he is concerned with rejecting the idea of the absolute, fixed, and eternal transcendental truth in favor of the relative, changing truth (Arkoun, 2005, p.10), and he is also concerned with raising the issue of the "unthinkable (Arkoun, 2001, p.44), and all of that is because he seeks to establish a hermeneutical, contemplative, and deductive science (Arkoun, 2005, p.58). In this way, the Islam that is the subject of his consideration is within history and not outside of it (Arkoun, 1996b, p.61), and everything in it or related to it is equal in this regard.

The methodology of displacement, which is a methodology based on a complex vision that includes, in addition to displacement itself, deconstruction and transcendence, and it means creating an actual movement in the structure of old thinking and its closed rationality in favor of a new framework, which is the framework of pluralistic

problems (Arkoun, 2005, pp.27,28); this is in order to discover new, unfamiliar sites. This is because Arkoun is interested in seeing issues in an open and free framework, and in their true situation (Arkoun, 2001, p.116). The displacement that he calls for is what is performed in his ethical view through the genealogical, archaeological and linguistic position, given that he is interested in knowing the ways in which values or phenomena in general are formed through their historical path (Arkoun, 2007, p.92). Likewise, through the path of the sociological methodology (Ibid., p.114), which approaches ethics in its active and changing social context

2. Ethics in Islamic thought:

Since Arkoun's discussion of ethics moves awayor from preaching ethics or ready -made morals in general and focuses on critical morals, the important observation that we should refer to is that Arkoun gives his conversation in this matter the privilege of leadership, on the basis that the issue of criticism of values is not preceded in the usual Islamic thought, in his opinion, on the representation of the standards of behavior (Ibid., p.89) It is based on its epistemological and critical orientation that does not lose sight of the distinguished attempts that were found in Islamic thought during what the classic era is called, and it means by ethical ideas with a human orientation that the representatives of philosophical literature, especially both Miskawayh and Abu Hayyan al-Tawhidi (Arkoun, 2011, p.97), are intended for it (Arkoun, 2007, p.84).

Since Arkoun makes the ethical thought point starting from that stage, we point out here that he notes a break between the classic stage and what followed it until the contemporary stage that is defective to submit to the ideology of the struggle, political alienation and the rejection of criticism (Ibid., p.84). In general, Arkoun, as he speaks for the classic stage, means, especially, the period of the fourth century AH, or as it calls it the period of the emergence of human and rational tendency . It can be noted that the ethical upbringing at this stage, according to Arkoun, has grown through the condemnation of the moral and political behavior of what the religious and philosophical mind orders, meaning that it was found in the framework of a cultural situation that allowed the intellectual to play a critical role in society (Arkoun, 1995, pp.183,184), because this framework that was formed by political, social, economic and cultural factors was Open and desirable for scientific, rational and human thought (Arkoun, 2011, p.14), then it is not surprising that he will rise with awareness and reformist burdens according to the circumstances of that stage.

And since we have said that there was a religious and philosophical mind, it is important to mention that Arkoun's monitoring of the human ethical direction is a monitoring in exchange for other directions that he sees that they are all coming out of two patterns of moral speeches and they are; Serious standard discourse and aristical standard discourse, the first is concerned with the ready -made ethical standards that are transmitted by the narration, and expresses it with the guarantee of preaching, as represented by the morals, and finds its presence in his opinion in two streams: the religious and the worldly current (Arkoun, 2007, pp.89-91). The second is concerned with the analytical, specialized aspect directed to the scholars and consideration, and includes two streams, the universe of the owners of doctrines, religious schools, and philosophical and philosophical current (Ibid., p.100). Of course, when Arkoun refers to these currents, he refers to them to illuminate the state of evaluation and morals in general that I took at the hands of these currents, especially since they were in a competitive position that ended historically as he saw the victory of the Orthodox religious stream and the Tawari of the philosophical stream (Ibid., p.114).

It is noticeable that Arkoun monitors the emergence of the moral interest of the currents of the classic era draws to an important point, which is that these currents - with the variation between them - participate in taking advantage of the moral material of their era to achieve an attractive and attractive standard system, but they behave in it in accordance with its directions, and it is what he sees showed by the religious and jurisprudential movement. In his opinion, ethics have evolved from seeking to invest the moral heritage of Islam and others to try to control and trim it to be effective, after he was alone in the square without philosophical stream. However, as he saw, the outcome of the moral development of this or Islamic current is in general, the loss of this values that calls for its attractiveness, temptation and transforming it into the authority of coercion and coercion (Ibid., pp.113,114).

2.1 Ethical sources:

Based on the historical view that Arkoun is going on, the sources of morals with him are not limited to one source, but are multiple to different sources, but at the head of these sources there is a major source that precedes every source, which is the Qur’an based on its inclusion in what is called the moral axial principles or the central values (Ibid., p.22). In addition to him there is the prophetic hadith (Ibid., p.90), and as it is noted, the sources of morals in Islamic thought, even if they are subject to the dominance of the aforementioned exporters, are expanding

to various literature, whether those represented by the productions of schools and religious doctrines or those represented by the productions of philosophers (Ibid., pp.88,89), In this regard, there are some observations that Arkoun points out that we should mention, which are:

- The breadth of ethical sources in the classical era and their narrowness in contemporary Islamic thought. It is worth mentioning that that era, through its ethical interest, inaugurated intellectual spaces of utmost importance, especially on the part of the philosophical intellectual trend, but that was limited after the Islamic world entered the era of decline and the dominance of religious orthodoxy in its two branches, Sunni and Shiite (Ibid., pp.100,101).
- The unity of moral epistemology: The meaning of this is that all moral trends are governed by the medieval cognitive system by virtue of the religious tributary that supports it, and this is regardless of the difference in their positions (Ibid., p.98).
- Scientific Lack: In Arkoun's view, the ethical effort in Islamic thought, despite its diversity, is still far from a scientific nature, meaning that the historical sources of ethics have not been placed within the framework of deep and organized scientific study. The example he presents as evidence of this is the Quranic ethical values, which, in his opinion, have not been treated epistemologically (Ibid., p.37). This requires us to point out that Arkoun criticizes ethical studies in general for being descriptive studies. Ibid., p.88)
- The historical nature of the sources: Arkoun believes that the ethical sources of Islamic thought do not go beyond the historical framework, meaning that they are sources that existed in history and developed within it, meaning that they have their historical conditionality, which means a temporal and spatial influence that includes the act of change, selection, or the like (Ibid., pp.90,91).
- Binary Opposites: Moral sources in Islamic thought are built on binary oppositions of good/evil and so on (Ibid., pp.92,93).
- The View of Qur'anic Ethics: Arkoun's treatment of ethics in Islamic thought begins from the perspective of observing the subordination of these ethics to the dominance of Qur'anic ethics. As we saw in our discussion of the sources of ethics, all trends in Islamic thought revolve within the same epistemological space. While this is something imposed by the logic of belief, what Arkoun truly cares about is not this presence in and of itself, but rather something else it reveals: extracting the Qur'anic ethical theory and questioning its truth and its relationship to the

historical context, especially in its new form, which is marked by ideological indoctrination (Ibid.,p.21).

When Arkoun asserts that there is a Quranic ethical theory that can be extracted and examined, he essentially means the ethical principles that the Quran established as a result of the critical process it practiced, whether in terms of the form of criticism directed at the values it opposed and denied or in terms of the form of values it established and called for as a model of ethical performance and relationship with the transcendent (Ibid.,p.22).

- Because Arkoun moves within a methodological path, this procedural definition, as much as it aims to shed light on these ethics, simultaneously moves toward the goals of critical reason, and what it entails in terms of monitoring and questioning. Therefore, the ethical theory, as he envisions it, has absolutely no relation to any rehabilitative or reverential goal, but rather relates solely to the critical requirements that entail dismantling tradition, isolation, and exploitation. It can be said here that Arkoun does not aim for definition, but rather aims for knowledge, although it appears not to be pure knowledge.
- In any case, imagining the existence of Quranic ethics means imagining the existence of a specific nature of the Quran, and here we point out that Arkoun builds his position on it on the basis of distinguishing between two different forms: its oral state and its written state. The first state is called discourse, and the second state is called text. This advanced stage is the stage that is more worthy of being referred to by the term discourse than the second (Arkoun, 1989, p.53). This is because the first is more abundant in meaning than it, in that it is based on the rhetorical situation and its aspects (Arkoun, 2005, p.114).

Since this issue of differences is important on the linguistic level and has its intellectual impact, we find that Arkoun uses the term Qur'anic event or Qur'anic phenomenon instead of the term Qur'an (Arkoun, n.d,p.29), which is usually used in an absolute manner and without distinguishing between one stage and another. When we mention this, it is because Arkoun's view of Qur'anic values stems from an internal reading of the Qur'anic discourse that sees that this discourse has its own effective characteristics in the emergence of values, their direction and their connotations. This can be clarified through the following points:

-The Qur'anic discourse has a transformative orientation, meaning that it engages in a critique of prevailing values to open the way for the values it supports (Arkoun, 2007, p.22).

-The Qur'anic discourse has a conflictual structure because it positions itself in opposition to other opposing discourses, which it seeks to displace (Arkoun, 2005, p.35).
-The Qur'anic discourse has a poetic logic because it stirs emotions and nurtures imagination, rather than imprisoning its recipients in the grip of rational categories (Arkoun,1996 b, p.207).
The Qur'anic discourse has a mythical structure, as it is linked to a new symbolic system that moves the collective imagination (Arkoun,1996a, pp.210-212). This is a structure that is more responsible, as he sees it, for the metaphor that is open to the absolute and the multiplicity of meanings (Arkoun,1993, p.167).

Given the Quran's multiplicity and spiritual richness, Arkoun's vision of moral values attempts to harmonize with this particularity and reflect through it what is acceptable or unacceptable. In other words, since the Quran possesses discursive dimensions that blend the relationship between the transcendent and the recipient, this relationship reveals, in his view, the values it supports or rejects, according to the criteria it adopts.

2.2 Basic standards of ethics:

Arkoun discusses four dividing criteria for values and behavior in terms of agreement or disagreement, i.e., for the values of confrontation between the group of believers and the group of the ignorant. These are: 1. The Beautiful Names of God, 2. The Testimony, 3. The Ummah, the Believers, 4. The Law, the Command (Arkoun, 2007, p.23).

With regard to the first criterion, it is noteworthy that for Arkoun, the matter is not related to a numerical count of God's names, but rather to establishing the connection they embody as the gateway to the relationship between the believer and his Lord, and the possible outcomes of this relationship. This is based on a set of intertwined ideas, at the forefront of which stands the central idea of God as the historical actor, that is, the living God involved in history and dominating it. This idea, since it is not abstract in and of itself, in his view, entails that the divine names become the medium of the historical relationship, in that humans use them in their lives, either by speaking about God, turning to Him, or thanking Him. One can observe here that this relationship, although embodied at the level of language, is embodied in depth, spiritually and temporally, simultaneously.

This relationship, which Arkoun notes his direct experience with during the prophetic era, does not intend to imply a political fusion of the spiritual and the historical, but rather merely to establish what he calls the

ontological hierarchy, which is the oppositional position between the absolute and transcendent God, on the one hand, and the embodied historical state of the human agent, on the other. Needless to say, such an opposition, which refers to incommensurability, primarily imposes the spiritual dimension. Thus, one of the most distinctive characteristics of Qur'anic discourse, as Arkoun sees it, is that it is a formative discourse that influences the recipient and draws them toward it with each recitation or reading, conforming to his desired definitions. This spiritual value, from which ethical behavior results, is, in his view, an effect of the symbolic structure of Qur'anic discourse. It can be said that this symbolism is the focus of Arkoun's attention primarily, for in addition to the fact that it theoretically opens, in his opinion, the door to spiritual multiplicity before the recipient, it practically opens history to the experience of life. It is important to say that what concerns Arkoun with regard to this issue is proving that the names of God, in their linguistic and artistic context in the Qur'anic discourse, achieve a spiritual value, which is the value of the experience of the absolute in history as it can be embodied in the contract of faith (Ibid., pp.23-25).

- As for the second criterion related to the testimony, it can be said that Arkoun's discussion of it begins with the idea of the covenant to which the concept of the testimony refers. In his view, for a person to declare his faith in God and His Messenger through the testimony of faith means, in his view, that he is joining the faith and the community of believers. This has consequences and manifestations that can be observed, in his view, individually in the presence of awareness, obedience, and freedom, all of which are intertwined with each other. Awareness is an intrinsic characteristic of the level of reason, obedience is a result entailed by the relationship between awareness and freedom, and freedom itself is the objective carrier for the realization of faith and its applications.

With this approach, Arkoun does not see the relationship between ethics, politics, and law as a separate one, but rather as a relationship that affirms itself among believers in every age, generation after generation. Since testimony is essentially oral, Arkoun links the phenomenon of faith to the historical and social environment. In other words, the presence of testimony does not necessarily imply prior ethics, as prior ethics can remain effective and influential despite the presence of writing or the authority that oversees official ethics. From an anthropological perspective, this reveals, in his opinion, that religious ethics, although they embody a relationship of faith, remain subject to the influence of history (Ibid., pp.27-29).

While we note here that Arkoun does not offer anything new as much as he seeks to emphasize the anthropological issue itself, given its epistemological importance in shedding light on the relative impact of Islamic ethics on society, his view in any case seems far from profound in this regard. As for the criterion of the ummah, which is the criterion resulting from the act of martyrdom, Arkoun's approach begins with the observation that it is a concept associated with the community supporting the Prophet, united by a consciousness of obedience to him and submission to his command, free from any affiliative bias such as tribal bias. This concept is not limited to him alone as the leader, but also because what unites them with him is what unites them with God. The concept of the ummah, as he sees it, not only denotes a political relationship, but also a spiritual relationship. However, while Arkoun acknowledges the temporal political aspect, he refuses to include it as a religious principle that entails the Qur'anic discourse. For him, the matter remains solely related to a historical practice driven by the religious spirit. This is because he sees the approach of the Qur'anic discourse as an approach of sublimation and elevation, even if it touches on history, through the stylistic and rhetorical mechanisms it possesses (Ibid., p31).

In this regard, we can say that Arkoun is keen to demonstrate that the Qur'anic discourse is transcendent, meaning that it connects to history in order to transcend it and is valid for all times and places. Naturally, he relies on the logic of this discourse, which is directed from the top down and bounces back from the bottom up. God is connected to the nation of believers through his commands and prohibitions, and they are connected to him at the same time through obedience and loyalty wherever they are found. This explains, in his opinion, the degree of expansion that the Islamic space has known historically. In the event that the nation might face challenges that violate the requirements of the covenant with God, this is addressed through the mechanism of enjoining good and forbidding evil, a mechanism that encompasses both moral and political issues, given that the nation is governed by a fate that does not accept compromise (Ibid., pp.30-33).

However, Arkoun does not add anything new with these words, and if he believes that he has highlighted the development of the concept of the nation and its transformation into the highest peak of religious sovereignty and religious legitimacy as represented by the jurists (Ibid., p.33), then this has a relationship with knowledge, and knowledge is meant to create the directed elite, and there is not necessarily any monopoly or influence in that, but it is noted that the overlap of ethics

with politics, which Arkoun acknowledges and does not reveal all of its dimensions except in a directed manner, to indicate that the believing nation is keen to be within the framework of religion and the world together, and on this, the idea of secularism is invalid without the slightest doubt.

As for the last criterion, related to law or command, it is something that entails discussion of the nation, but Arkoun here presents it separately, starting from placing it in a context different from what is understood from it. For him, law has nothing to do with legislation, but rather with what he calls the system and the sum of commandments and instructions issued by God, in his capacity as the possessor of supreme sovereignty and absolute legitimacy. Therefore, he sees no argument that justifies speaking of Sharia or calling for it from a legislative perspective, since divine commandments, in his opinion, are within the framework of a comprehensive revelation that requires submission to God's will. Although jurists have accomplished legislative work based on that, Arkoun sees it as nothing but a limited deduction that lacks true scientificity, especially as expressed by the principles of jurisprudence (Ibid., pp.34,35).

In fact, Arkoun's problem here goes in a fundamental direction: the affirmation of spirituality in contrast to the dryness and rigidity of law. This explains his belief in the negative role of the work of jurists, who, in his opinion, have transformed divine commands into external constraints. When we say spirituality, we mean the position he builds on the belief in the metaphorical nature of the Qur'an, a nature that, in his view, prevents any transition to law except through a kind of arbitrariness and frivolity, which is what he observes in the work of jurists (Ibid., pp.172,173). From this angle comes his defense of secularism. But, in our opinion, Arkoun can hardly prove this secularism except by comparison with the Christian experience or by examining positions that are considered exceptional in relation to the general position. This is what can be discerned in his discussion of the Sufis, whom he praises for their internalization of the spirit of divine commands and prohibitions, and in his discussion of the Mu'tazila, whose rational belief in freedom he values (Ibid.,pp.35,36). It is clear that these aspects of the vision do not necessarily entail covering up or denying the Sharia. We believe that Arkoun's position is exaggerated, because if there is a higher discourse from which the Sharia is derived, then this Sharia would have no effect without evidence of its existence and a willingness to accept it, especially a moral willingness. This is something that jurists or others cannot ignore. Since Arkoun

makes his approach historical in this matter, he is ahistorical, because adherence to history is the opposite of selection and projection.

In any case, the reader of these standards will not fail to note several observations that can be highlighted here.

- These standards are not purely ethical standards, although they do, in principle, allow for the establishment of behavior based on Islamic values, as Arkoun argues. This is because they combine the doctrinal foundation with the social foundation. The names of God and the Shahada are among the foundations of Islamic doctrine. As for the criteria of the nation and the Sharia, they are both products of that doctrine and its consequences. Given that the two are intertwined, ethics can be considered a manifestation of this relationship, alongside other aspects. I mean, if a believer's morals deteriorate, that doesn't mean he's necessarily outside the community of believers. While Arkoun believes that historically, there has been a difference in inclinations between the philosophical and jurisprudential approaches, the significance of this difference is related to the doctrine and its integrity. Since it is well-known that philosophy has a pagan background, it would be better to be fair in this matter rather than blame the jurists and their orientation, since the ultimate goal of Islam is to demonstrate the accepted doctrine. Indeed, one finds it difficult to accept Arkoun's emphasis on the consequences of these standards and then his bias towards positions and visions that deviate from them!

Arkoun, while presenting these standards, resorts to revealing the uniqueness that distinguishes them, but at the same time, he does not hesitate to reveal his critical tendency, wary of their typical nature and its impact. Here, one can conclude that Arkoun is going too far in his direction, as the normative uniqueness derives its value from this privilege. I mean that the importance of Islam lies in the fact that it positions itself in contrast to other religions, and from this angle, it distances itself from being equal to others, because that is fundamentally inconsistent with the reason for its existence. Moreover, the exploitative effects resulting from this model cannot be avoided as long as its starting point is ideological and its end is social.

-These criteria reveal that Arkoun thinks within the framework of the spiritual objectives of the Qur'anic discourse, objectives that demonstrate its transcendence and transcendence and distance it from historical fluctuations. However, one can conclude that Arkoun does not offer a clear ethical blueprint that aligns with the spiritual concern he expresses regarding it, as affirming this requires an expressive approach. However,

Arkoun appears driven toward criticism and toward the goal of granting legitimacy to various ethical positions and their affiliations. In our view, this is extremely difficult to accept, as there is a distinction between what is acceptable and what is rejected. This is far from necessarily arbitrary, as an example of this is the ethics of asceticism, whose social implications cannot be overlooked.

Conclusion:

Arkoun was keen to present an ethical point of view of theoretical value as he opened the field of critique of values in Islamic thought. While we record our appreciation for the importance of this interest aimed at studying ethics and Quranic values in themselves, and in their relationship with critical reason, due to its role in the objective approach required by science, we note, in contrast, the modest results he arrived at. He emphasizes the study of ethics in history, and within the framework of the religious phenomenon, and insists on restoring consideration to all the ethical outcomes of intellectual trends, and transcending the official monopolistic framework of religion, and its medieval space that differentiates between sects and trends, and calls for distancing from the discourse of veneration and sanctification, and openness to scientific achievement, and celebrates a trend in itself that the trend sees as worthy of the rational and critical philosophical characteristic, and he blames the jurists and Islamic movements, and throws these The movements, with all their opportunistic and exploitative characteristics, and their distortion of the sacred spiritual nature of religion, have, in our opinion, deviated from objectivity and science as much as they wanted to approach them, since it can be argued that this is a door to ideology more than it is a door to science.

If we accept that there is a declared scientific and objective nature that appears in the methodology and in the use of cognitive gains, as is the case in the study of Quranic values, then we believe that the evidence is in the results. The fruit of Arkoun's analysis hardly differs in some aspects from what is known and circulated. It is as if Arkoun, while referring to Quranic values, is unable to add anything new that could be considered a breakthrough or an achievement, except by emphasizing his tendency toward historical criticism and the requirements of his secularism, which highlights the spiritual nature of religion and its sublime, virtuous morals, by relying on a conception that is subject to objection, which sees the Quran as merely a metaphorical nature and a mythical structure. But Arkoun, who affirms this, does not go in the direction of investing in the Quranic values upon which he stands except

in order to support his fears of the consequences of what it could lead to among jurists or Islamists, in terms of claims concerning Sharia or religious superiority.

Here, we find ourselves compelled to say that Arkoun's contribution falls short of the level of creativity, even though the title "Quranic Values" is a title that opens up the realm of creativity. We say this while understanding the need for criticism and the imperative for renewal. However, we believe that Arkoun's approach, as it appears, requires a great deal of depth, which, in our view, can only be achieved by generalizing criticism to include, in addition to Islamic thought, modernist thought, given its well-known impact on the Islamic life experience. How much Muslims need to be guided by virtuous, effective values in a world heading toward the abyss of sweeping materialism. The Muslim's problem is his own self, which is unable to raise the level of effectiveness to the required level. No matter how important the past is to him, it remains limited in comparison with the pressures of the present and the relationship with it.

We believe that the ethical study of Islam and its sources should be scientific and objective, but within its correct, authentic framework, which highlights Islam as the final and universal religion. Although this contradicts Arkoun's position, it never falls within the realm of veneration, which he rejects and warns against. We believe that every religion has its own particularities, which contradict any call for compromise, as he advocates. We also see a deficiency in serious theoretical ethical study in the Islamic religious field. This deficiency can be remedied by transcending the moralizing perspective and devoting greater attention to the intellectual foundations of these ethics. This is a vast field that deserves to be a major arena for the creativity we lack.

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