Chapter II

Sayyid Qutb’s Response to Western Culture And His Thesis About Neo-Jahiliyyah
After studying Maulana Maududi's concept of Islamic Civilization, this chapter deals with the discussion of Sayyid Qutb’s response to Western culture and his thesis about Neo-Jahiliyyah. Sayyid Qutb’s views about the present chapter have been divided into the following sections:–

1.) Qutb rejects Marxism.
2.) Classification of Culture.
3.) Divine guidance and Jahiliyyah.
4.) Islamic society versus Jahiliyyah society.
5.) Islamic versus Jahiliyyah leadership.
6.) Qutb’s coinage of novel concept of Neo-Jahiliyyah.

Introduction

Mankind to day is on the brink of a precipice; not because of the danger of complete annihilation which is hanging its head—this being just a symptom and not the real disease—but because humanity is devoid of those vital values which are necessary not only for its healthy development but also for its real progress. Even the Western world realizes that Western Civilization is unable to present any healthy values for the guidance of mankind. It knows that it does not possess any thing which will satisfy its own conscience and justify its existence.

1. Sayyid Qutb rejects Marxism

Democracy in the West has become infertile to such an extent that it is borrowing from the system of the Eastern bloc, especially in the economic system, under the name of socialism. It is the same with the Eastern bloc. Its social theories, foremost among which is Marxism, in the beginning attracted not only a large number of people from the East but also from the West, as it was a way of life based on a creed. But now Marxism is defeated on the plane of thought, and if it is stated that not a single nation in the world is truly Marxist, it will not be an exaggeration. On the whole this
theory conflicts with man’s nature and its needs. This ideology prospers only in a degenerate society or in a society which has become cowed as a result of some form of prolonged dictatorship. But now, even under these circumstances, its materialistic economic system is failing, although this was the only foundation on which its structure was based. Russia, which is the leader of the communist countries, is itself suffering from shortages of food. It now has to import food from abroad and has to sell its reserves of gold for this purpose. The main reason for this is the failure of the system of collective farming, or, one can say, the failure of a system which is against human nature.

It is essential for mankind to have new leadership.

The leadership of mankind by Western man is now on the decline, not because Western culture has become poor materially or because its economic and military power has become weak. The period of the Western system has come to an end primarily because it is deprived of those life-giving values which enabled it to be the leader of mankind.

It is necessary for the new leadership to preserve and develop the material fruits of the creative genius of Europe, and also to provide mankind with such high ideals and values as have so far remained undiscovered by mankind, and which will also acquaint humanity with a way of life which is harmonious with human nature, which is positive and constructive, and which is practicable.

Islam is the only system which possesses these values and this way of life.

The period of the resurgence of science has also come to an end. This period, which began with the Renaissance in the 16th century after Christ and reached its zenith in 18th and 19th centuries, does not possess a reviving spirit.42

The statement that “Culture is the human heritage” and that it has no country, nationality or religion is correct only in relation to science and technology—as long as we do not jump to boundary of these sciences and
delve into metaphysical interpretations and start explaining the purpose of man and his historical role in philosophical terms, even explaining away art and literature and human intuition philosophically. Beyond this limited meaning, this statement about culture is one of the tricks played by world Jewry, whose purpose is to eliminate all limitations especially the limitations imposed by faith and religion, so that the Jews may penetrate into body politic of the whole world and then may be free to perpetuate their evil designs. At the top of the list of these activities is usury, the aim of which is that all the wealth of mankind end up in the hands of Jewish financial institutions which run on interest.

2. Classification of Culture

However, Islam considers that—-excepting the abstract sciences and their practical applications—- there are two kinds of Culture, the Islamic culture, which is based on the Islamic concept, and the *Jahili* (without divine guidance) culture, which manifests itself in various modes of living which are nevertheless all based on one thing, and that is giving human thought the status of a God so that its truth or falsity is not to be judged according to God's guidance. The Islamic Culture is concerned with all theoretical and practical affairs, and it contains principles, methods and characteristics which guarantee the development and perpetuation of all cultural activities. One ought to remember the fact that the experimental method, which is the dynamic spirit of modern Europe's industrial culture, did not originate in Europe but originated in the Islamic Universities of Andalusia and of the East. The principle of the experimental method was an offshoot of the Islamic concept and its explanations of the physical world, its phenomena, its forces and its secrets. Later, by adopting the experimental method. Europe entered into the period of scientific revival, which led it step by step to great scientific heights.

Meanwhile, the Muslim world gradually drifted away from Islam, as a consequence of which the scientific movement first became inert and later
ended completely. Some of the causes which led to this state of inertia were internal to the Muslim society and some were external, such as the invasions of the Muslim World by the Christians and Zionists. Europe removed the foundation of Islamic belief from the methodology of the empirical sciences, and finally, when Europe rebelled against the Church, which in the name of God oppressed the common people, it deprived the empirical sciences of their Islamic method of relating them to God's guidance.

Thus the entire basis of European thought became *Jahili* and completely estranged from the Islamic concept and even became contradictory and conflicting with it. It is necessary for a Muslim, therefore, to return to the guidance of God in order to learn the Islamic concept of life— on his own, if possible, or otherwise to seek knowledge from a God-fearing Muslim whose piety and faith are reliable.

In Islam the saying “Seek knowledge from the one who knows”, is not acceptable with respect to those sciences which relate to faith, religion, morals, values, customs and habits, and all those matters which concern human relationships.

No doubt Islam permits a Muslim to learn chemistry, physics, astronomy, medicine, technology and agriculture, administration and similar technical Sciences from a non-Muslim or from a Muslim who is not pious—and this under the condition that no God-fearing Muslim scientists are available to teach these sciences. This the situation which exists now, because Muslims have drifted away from their religion and their way of life, and have forgotten that Islam appointed them as representatives of God and made them responsible for learning all the sciences and developing various capabilities to fulfill this high position which God has granted them. But Islam does not permit Muslims to learn the principles of their faith, the implications of their concept, the interpretation of the Quran, *Hadith* (sayings, action or affairs of the Holy Prophet as reported by reporters) the Prophet -peace be on him-
the philosophy of History, the traditions of their society, the constitution of their Government, the form of their politics, and similar branches of knowledge from non-Islamic sources or from any one other than a pious Muslim whose faith and religious knowledge is known to be reliable.

3. Divine guidance and *Jahiliyyah* (*Ignorance of the Divine guidance*)

According to Qutb, knowledge can be divided into two distinct types, Divine knowledge and *Jahiliyyah* knowledge. A Muslim cannot combine these two sources, depending on his opinion, when the Divine standard provides him a way to judge the matter. This is the decision of God and His Messenger—peace be on him—and we refer it to them. We refer it to them in the same manner as is befitting for a Believer, as all controversial decisions ought to be referred to the judgement of God and His Prophet—peace be on him.

God Most High says in general terms concerning the ultimate aims of the Jews and Christians against Muslims.

"Many among the People of the Book wish to turn you back from your faith toward unbelief, due to their envy, even after the truth has been known to them, but forgive and excuse them until God brings about His decision. Indeed God has power over every thing." (2:109)

"The Jews and Christians will not be pleased with you unless you follow their way." Say: "indeed, God's guidance is the true guidance, And if, after this knowledge has come to you, you follow their desires, then you will find no helper or friend against God." (2:120)

As reported by Hafiz AbuYala, the Messenger of God—peace be on him—said: "Do not ask the People of the Book about any thing. They will not guide you; In fact, they are themselves misguided. If you listen to them, you might end up accepting some false hood or denying some truth. By God, if Moses had been alive among you, he would not be permitted (by God) any thing except to follow me."
After this warning to the Muslims from God concerning the ultimate designs of the Jews and Christians, it would be extremely short-sighted of us to fall in to the illusion that when the Jews and Christians discuss Islamic beliefs or Islamic history, or when they make proposals concerning Muslim society or Muslim politics or economics, they will be doing it with good intentions, or with the welfare of the Muslims at heart, or in order to seek guidance and light. People who, after this clear statement from God, still think this way are deluded.

Similarly, the saying of God Most High: Says, “in deed, God’s guidance is the true guidance,” determines the unique source to which every Muslim should turn for guidance in all these affairs, as whatever is beyond God’s guidance is error and none other than He can guide, as is clear from the emphasis in the verse, say: “Indeed, God’s guidance is the true guidance.” There is no ambiguity in the meaning of this verse and no other interpretation is possible.

There is also a decisive injunction to avoid a person who turns away from remembrance of God and whose only object is this world. It is explained that such a person follows mere speculation- and a Muslim is forbidden to follow speculation—and he knows only what is apparent in the life of this world and does not possess the true knowledge. “Avoid a person who has turned away from our remembrance and does not desire any thing beyond the life of this world, and this is the extent of his knowledge. Your Sustainer knows best who has gone astray from His path, and He knows best who is guided.”(53: 29-30)

“They only know what is apparent in the life of this world, and are negligent of the Hereafter.” (30:7)

A person who is negligent in remembering God and is completely occupied with the affairs of this life—and that is the case with all the ‘scientists’ of today- knows only what is apparent, and this is not the type of knowledge, for which a Muslim can rely completely on its possessor, except for what is
permitted to be learned from them to the extent of technical knowledge. He should ignore their interpretations concerning psychological and conceptual matters. This is not knowledge which is praised repeatedly in the Quran for example in the verse, “Are they equal— those who know and those who do not know?” Those who take such verses out of context and argue are in error. The complete verse in which this rhetorical question is posed is as follows: “...Or is he who is worshipful in the watches of the night, prostrating and standing, he being afraid of the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of His Sustainer? Say. Are they equal—those who know and those who do not know.? Indeed, the thinking persons take heed.”(39:9)

Only such a person who, in the darkness of the night, remains worshipping, standing or prostrating, who fears the Hereafter, and hopes for the mercy of his Sustainer, is truly knowing, and it his knowledge to which the above verse refers, that is to say, the knowledge which guides toward God and the remembrance of Him, and not that knowledge which distorts human nature toward denial of God.

The sphere of knowledge is not limited to articles of faith, religious obligations, or laws about what is permissible and what is forbidden, its sphere is very wide. It includes all these and also the knowledge of natural laws and all matters concerning man’s delegated role before God. However, any knowledge, the foundation of which is not based on faith, is out side the definition of that knowledge which is referred to in the Quran and the possessors of which are considered praise worthy. There is a strong relationship between faith and all those Sciences which deal with the universe and natural laws, such as astronomy, biology, physics, chemistry, and geology. All these sciences lead man toward God, unless they are perverted by personal opinions and speculations, and presented devoid of the concept of God. Such a regrettable situation actually occurred in Europe. In fact, there came a time in European history when very painful and hateful differences arose between the scientists and the oppressive
Church, consequently the entire scientific movement in Europe started with Godlessness. This movement affected all aspects of life very deeply; in fact, it changed the entire character of European thought. The effect of this hostility of the scientific community toward the Church did not remain limited to the Church or to its beliefs, but was directed against all religion, so much so that all sciences turned against religion, whether they were speculative philosophy or technical or abstract sciences having nothing to do with religion.

The Western ways of thought and all the sciences started on the foundation of these poisonous influences with an enmity toward all religion, and in particular with greater hostility toward Islam. This enmity toward Islam is especially pronounced and many times is the result of a well-thought-out scheme, the object of which is first to shake the foundations of Islamic beliefs and then gradually to demolish the structure of Muslim society.

If, in spite of knowing this, we rely on Western ways of thought, even in teaching the Islamic sciences, it will be an unforgivable blindness on our part. Indeed, it becomes incumbent on us, while learning purely scientific or technological subjects for which we have no other sources except Western sources, to remain on guard and keep these sciences away from philosophical speculations, as these philosophical speculations are generally against religion and in particular against Islam. A slight influence from them can pollute the clear spring of Islam.43

4. **Islamic Society versus Jahiliyyah Society**

Islam knows only two kinds of societies, the Islamic and the Jahili. The Islamic society is that which follows Islam in belief and ways of worship, in law and organization, in morals and manners. The Jahili society is that which does not follow Islam and in which neither the Islamic belief and concepts, nor Islamic values or standards, Islamic laws and regulations, or Islamic morals and manners are cared for.
The Islamic society is not one in which people call themselves 'Muslims' but in which the Islamic law has no status, even though prayer, fasting and Hajj are regularly observed, and the Islamic society is not one in which people invent their own version of Islam, other than what God and His Messenger - peace be on him- have prescribed and explained, and call it, for example, "progressive Islam". 

Jahili society appears in various forms, all of them ignorant of the Divine guidance.

Some times it takes the form of a society in which belief in God is denied and human history is explained in terms of intellectual materialism, and scientific socialism becomes its system.

Sometimes it appears in the form a society in which God's existence is not denied, but His domain is restricted to the heavens and His role on earth is suspended. Neither the Shariah nor the values prescribed by God and ordained by Him as eternal and invariable find any place in this scheme of life. In this society, people are permitted to go to mosques, churches and synagogues, yet it does not tolerate peoples demanding that the Shariah of God be applied in their daily affairs. Thus, such a society denies or suspends God's sovereignty on earth, while God says plainly:

"It is He who is sovereign in the heavens and sovereign on the earth."(43:84)

Because of this behaviour, such a society does not follow the religion of God as defined by Him.

"The command belongs to God alone. He commands you not to worship any one except Him. This is the right way of life.'(12:40)

Because of this, such a society is to be counted among jahili societies, although it may proclaim belief in God and permit people to observe their devotions in mosques, churches and synagogues.

The Islamic society is by its very nature, the only civilized society, and the jahili societies in all their various forms, are backward societies.
If we look at the sources and foundations of modern ways of living, it becomes clear that the whole world is steeped in *Jahiliyyah*, and all the marvelous material comforts and high-level inventions do not diminish this ignorance. This *Jahiliyyah* is not based on rebellion against God’s sovereignty on earth. It transfers to man one of the greatest attributes of God, namely sovereignty, and makes some men lords over others. It is now not in that simple and primitive form of the ancient *Jahiliyyah*, but takes the form of claiming that the right to create values, to legislate rules of collective behaviour, and to choose any way of life rests with men, with regard to what God has prescribed. The result of this rebellion against the authority of God is the oppression of His creatures. Thus the humiliation of the common man under the communist systems and the exploitation of individuals and nations due to greed for wealth and imperialism under the capitalist systems are but a corollary of rebellion against God’s authority and the denial of the dignity of man given to him by God.

In this respect, Islam’s way of life is unique, for in systems other than Islam, some people worship others in some form or another. Only in the Islamic way of life do all men become free from the servitude of some men to others and devote themselves to the worship of God alone, deriving guidance from Him alone, and bowing before Him alone. This is where the roads separate, and this is that new concept which we possess and can present to mankind - this and the way of life which this concept organizes for all the practical aspects of man’s life. This is that vital message of which mankind does not know. It is not a product of Western invention nor of European genius, whether Eastern or Western.45

*Jahiliyyah* is one man’s lordship over another, and in this respect it is against the system of the universe and brings the involuntary aspect of human life into conflict with its voluntary aspect. This was that *Jahiliyyah* which confronted every Prophet of God, including the last Prophet -peace be on him- in their call toward submission to One God. This *Jahiliyyah* is not
an abstract theory, in fact, under certain circumstances it has no theory at all. It always takes the form of a living movement in a society which has its own leadership, its own concepts and values, and its own traditions, habits and feelings. It is an organized society and there is a close cooperation and loyalty between its individuals, and it is always ready and alive to defend its existence consciously or unconsciously. It crushes all elements which seem to be dangerous to its personality.

When *Jahiliyyah* takes the form, not of a 'theory' but of an active movement in this fashion, then any attempt to abolish this *Jahiliyyah* and to bring people back to God which presents Islam merely as a theory will be undesirable, rather useless. *Jahiliyyah* controls the practical world, and for its support there is a living and active organization. In this situation, mere theoretical efforts to fight it can not even be equal, much less superior, to it. When the purpose is to abolish the existing system and to replace it with a new system which in its character, principles and all its general and particular aspects, is different from the controlling *Jahili* system, then it stands to reason that this new system should also come into the battlefield as an organized movement and a viable group. It should come into the battlefield with a determination that its strategy, its social organization, and the relationship between its individuals should be firmer and more powerful than the existing *Jahili* system.46

5. **Islamic leadership versus Jahili leadership**

The foremost duty of Islam in this world is to depose *Jahiliyyah* from the leadership of man, and to take the leadership in to its own hands and enforce the particular way of life which is its permanent feature. The purpose of this rightly guided leadership is the good and success of mankind, the good which proceeds from returning to the Creator and the success which comes from being in harmony with the rest of the universe. The intention is to raise human beings to that high position which God has chosen for them and to free them from the slavery of desires. This purpose
is explained by Raba'i bin'Amer, when he replied to the commander-in-chief of the Persian army, Rustum. Rustum asked, "For what purpose have you come?" Raba'i answered, "God has sent us to bring any one who wishes from servitude to men into the service of God alone, from the narrowness of this world in to the vastness of this world and the hereafter, from the tyranny of religions in to the justice of Islam."

Islam did not come to support people's desires, which are expressed in their concepts, institutions, modes of living, and habits and traditions, whether they were prevalent at the advent of Islam or are present now, both in the East and the West. Islam does not sanction the rule of selfish desires. It has come to abolish all such concepts, laws, customs and traditions, and to replace them with a new concept of human life, to create a new world on the foundation of submission to the Creator. Sometimes it appears that some parts of Islam resemble some aspects of the life of people in Jahiliyyah, but these aspects are not Jahili nor are they from Jahiliyyah. This apparent resemblance in some minor aspects is a mere coincidence; the roots of the two trees are entirely different. The tree of Islam has been sown and nurtured by the wisdom of God, while the tree of Jahiliyyah is the product of the soil of human desires. "The fertile piece of land grows good vegetation with the permission of its lord, while the bad land brings forth but little." (7:58)

Jahiliyyah is evil and corrupt, whether it be of the ancient or modern variety. Its outward manifestations may be different during different epochs, yet its roots are the same. Its roots are human desires, which do not let people come out of their ignorance and self-importance, desires which are used in the interests of some persons or some classes or some nations or some races, which interests prevail over the demand for justice, truth and goodness. But the pure law of God cuts through these roots and provides a system of laws which has no human interference, and it is not influenced by
human ignorance or human desire or for the interests of a particular group of people. This is the basic difference between the concept of life taught by God and man made theories, and hence it is impossible to gather them together under one system. It is fruitless to try to construct a system of life which is half Islam and half Jahiliyyah. God does not forgive any association with His person, and He does not accept any association with His revealed way of life. Both are equally Shirk in the sight of God, as both are the product of the same mentality.47

6. Sayyid Qutb’s Coinage of a novel concept of Neo-Jahiliyyah

Religion wise, the world is dominated by Christians and Muslims, Jews though in minority represent a significant political and intellectual class. All the three received divine light through various scriptures, particularly the Torah, the Bible, the Gospel and the Quran. Despite claiming spirituality upon one and another and World as a whole, these communities are far off from divine path both in words and deeds.

Sayyid Qutb equates the present economic, social, political, educational, national, international, ideological, intellectual, basis of their societies as typical example of Neo-Jahiliyyah. The reasons for these religions representing Neo-Jahiliyyah are explained as under:-

Communistic Neo-Jahiliyyah

The Jahili society is any society other than the Muslim society, and if we want a more specific definition, we may say that any society is a Jahili Society which does not dedicate itself to submission to God alone, in its beliefs and ideas and in its observance of worship, and in its legal regulations. According to this definition, all the societies existing in the world to day are Jahili.

Included among these is the communist society, first because it denies the existence of God Most High and believes that the universe was created by ‘matter ’or by ‘nature’, while all man’s activities and his history has been
created by 'economics' or 'the means of production', second, because the way of life it adopts is based on submission to the Communist Party and not to God. A proof of this that in all Communist countries the Communist Party has full control and leadership. Furthermore, the practical consequence of this ideology is that the basic needs of human beings are considered identical with those of animals, that is food and drink, clothing, shelter and sex. It deprives people of their spiritual needs, which differentiates human beings from animals. Foremost among these is belief in God and the freedom to adopt and to proclaim this faith. Similarly, it deprives people of their freedom to express individuality, which is a very special human characteristic. The individuality of a person is expressed in various ways, such as private property, the choice of work and expression in various art forms, and it distinguishes him from animals or from machines. The Communist ideology and the communist system reduces the human being to the level of an animal or even to the level of a machine.

All idolatrous societies are also among the Jahili societies. Such societies are found in India, Japan, the Philippines and Africa. Their Jahili character consists first of the fact that they believe in other gods besides God, in addition to Him or without Him, second, they have constructed an elaborate system of devotional acts to propitiate these deities. Similarly, the laws and regulations which they follow are derived from sources other than God and His Law, whether these sources be priests or astrologers or magicians, the elders of the nation, or the secular institutions which formulate laws with out regard to the Law of God, and which attain absolute authority in the name of the nation or a party or on some other basis, while absolute authority belongs to God alone, and this can be brought into action only in the way shown to us by the Prophets of God.

**Jewish and Christian Neo-Jahiliyyah**

All Jewish and Christian societies to day are also Jahili societies. They have distorted the original beliefs and ascribe certain attributes of God to
other beings. The association with God has taken many forms, such as the Sonship of god or the Trinity; sometimes it is expressed in a concept of God which is remote from the true reality of God.

"The Jews say: Ezra is the son of God", and the Christians say: "the Messiah is the son of god." These are mere sayings from their mouths, following those who preceded them and disbelieved. God will assail them, how they are perverted."(9:30)

"They rejected the truth who said," God is the third of three." Indeed, God is but one God. If they do not desist from what they say, the disbelievers among them will be met with a painful chastisement."(5:73)

"The Jews have said: "God's hand is limited in what it can do. Limited are their hands, and they are cursed for what they have said. Indeed, His hands are open, he expends how He wills."(5:64)

"The Jews and Christians say: We are God's children and His favourites." Say: Why then does He then punish you for your offences? In fact, you are people just like others."(5:18)

These societies are *Jahili* also because their forms of worship, their customs and manners are derived from their false and distorted beliefs. They are also *Jahili* societies because their institutions and their laws are not based on submission to God alone. They neither accept the rule of God nor do they consider God's commandments as the only valid basis of all laws, on the contrary, they have established assemblies of men which have absolute power to legislate laws, thus usurping the right which belongs to God alone. At the time of Revelation, the Quran classified them among those who associate others with God, as they had given their priests and rabbis the authority to devise laws in whatever way they pleased.

"They have taken their rabbis and priests as lords other than God, and the Messiah, son of Mary; and they were commanded to worship none but One God. There is no god but He, glory be to Him above what they associate with Him!"(5:31).
These people did not consider their priests or rabbis as divine, nor did they worship them, but they gave them the authority to make laws, obeying laws which were made by them not permitted by God. If at that time the Quran called them associates of others with God and rejectors of truth, then today they are also the same, because today this authority is not in the hands of priests and rabbis but in the hands of individuals chosen from among themselves.

**Muslim Neo-Jahiliyyah**

Lastly, all the existing so-called “Muslim” societies are also *Jahili* societies. We classify them among *Jahili* societies not because they believe in other deities besides God or because they worship anyone other than God, but because their way of life is not based on submission to God alone. Although they believe in the Unity of God, still they have relegated the legislative attribute of God to others and submit to this authority, and from this authority they derive their systems, their traditions and customs, their laws, their values and standards, and almost every practice of life. God Most High says concerning rulers: “Those who do not judge according to what God has revealed are unbelievers,” and concerning the ruled.(5:44).

“Have you not seen those who assert that they believe in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you, desiring to take their disputes to idols, while you were commanded to reject them?”(4:65)

“But no, by your Lord, they have not believed until they make you judge regarding their disputes, and then do not find any resentment in their hearts against your verdict, but submit in full submission.”(4:65)

Before this, God accused the Jews and Christians of committing *Shirk* (association of other gods with God) and of unbelief, and of taking priests and rabbis as lords in addition to God, only because they had given certain rights and privileges to their priests and rabbis, which today who call themselves “Muslims” have given to some people among themselves. This action of the Jews and Christians was considered by God in the same
category of *Shirk* as that of the Christians' making Jesus into the son of God and worshipping him. The latter is a rebellion against the Oneness of God, while the former is a rebellion against His prescribed way of life and a denial of "There is no other deity except God."

Among Muslim societies, some openly declare their "secularism' and negate all their relationships with the religion, some others pay respect to the religion only with their mouths, but in their social life they have completely abandoned it. They say that they do not believe in the 'Unseen' and want to construct their social system on the basis of 'science', as science and the Unseen are contradictory! This claim of theirs is mere ignorance, and only ignorant people can talk like this. There are some other societies which have given the authority of legislation to others besides God, they make whatever laws they please and then say, "This is the *Shariah* of God." All these societies are the same in one respect, that none of them is based on submission to God alone.

After explaining these facts, the position of Islam in relation to all these *Jahili* societies can be described in one sentence: it considers all these societies un-Islamic and illegal.

Islam does not look at the labels or titles which these societies have adopted, they all have one thing in common, and that is that their way of life is not based on complete submission to God alone. In this respect they share the same characteristic with a polytheistic society, the characteristic of *Jahiliyyah*.

A society which places the highest value on the "humanity" of man and honors the noble "human" characteristics is truly civilized. If materialism, no matter in what form, is given the highest value, whether it be in the form of a 'theory', such as in the Marxist interpretation of history, or in the form of material production, as is the case with the United States and European countries, and all other human values are sacrificed at its altar, then such a society is a backward one, or, in Islamic terminology, is a *Jahili* society.
The civilized society— that is, the Islamic society— does not downgrade matter, either in theory or in the form of material production, as it considers the universe in which we live, by which we are influenced, and which we influence, to be made of matter, and it considers material production to be the backbone of the vice-gerency of God on earth. However, in the Islamic society material comforts are not made into the highest values at the expense of “human” characteristics—freedom and honour, family and its obligations, morals and values, and so on— as is the case in Jahili societies.

**Basis of Civilized Society**

If a society is based on “human values” and “human morals” and these remain dominant in it, then that society will be civilized. Human values and human morals are not something mysterious and undefinable, nor are they ‘progressive’ and changeable, having no roots and stability, as is claimed by the exponents of the materialistic interpretation of history or of ‘scientific socialism’. They are the values and the morals which develop those characteristics in a human being which distinguish him from the animals and which emphasises those aspects of his personality which raise him above the animals, these are not such values and morals which develop and emphasize those characteristics in man which are common with the animals.

When the question is viewed in this manner, a fixed and well defined line of separation is obtained which can not be erased by the incessant attempt of the ‘progressives’ and the scientific societies to erase it. According to this view, moral standards are not determined by the environment and changing conditions, rather they are fixed criteria above and beyond the difference in environments. One can not say that some moral values are ‘agricultural’ and others ‘industrial’, some are ‘capitalistic’ and others are ‘socialistic’, some are ‘bourgeois’ and others are ‘proletarian’. Here, the standards of morality are independent of the environment, the economic status, and the stage of
development of a society, these are nothing but superficial variations. Beyond all these, we arrive at 'human' values and morals and at 'animalistic' values and morals, this being the correct separation or, in Islamic terminology, 'Islamic values' and morals and 'jahili' values and morals.

Indeed, Islam establishes the values and morals which are 'human'—those which develop characteristics in a human-being which distinguish him from the animals. In whatever society Islam is dominant, whether it is an agricultural or industrial society, nomadic or pastoral or urban and settled, poor or rich, it implants these human values and morals, nurtures them and strengthens them; it develops human characteristics progressively and guards against degeneration toward animalism. The direction of the line which separates human values from animal-like characteristics is upward but if this direction is reversed, then in spite of all material progress the civilization will be 'backward,' 'degenerative', and 'jahili'! If the family is the basis of the society, and the basis of the family is the division of labour between husband and wife, and the upbringing of children is the most important function of the family, then such a society is indeed civilized. In the Islamic system of life, this kind of a family provides the environment under which human values and morals develop and grow in the new generation, these values and morals can not exist apart from the family unit. If, on the other hand, free sexual relationships and illegitimate children become the basis of a society, and if the relationship between man and woman is based on lust, passion and impulse, and the division of work is not based on family responsibility and natural gifts; if woman's role is merely to be attractive, sexy and flirtatious, and if woman is freed from her basic responsibility of bringing up children, and if, on her own or under social demand, she prefers to become a hostess or a stewardess in a hotel or ship or air company, thus spending her ability for material productivity rather than in the training of human beings, because material production is considered to be more important, more valuable and more honourable than
the development of human character, then such a civilization is "backward" from the human point of view, or 'Jahili' in the Islamic terminology. The family system and the relationship between the sexes determine the whole character of a society and whether it is backward or civilized, Jahili or Islamic. Those societies which give ascendance to physical desires and animalistic morals can not be considered civilized, no matter how much progress they may make in industry or science. This is the only measure which does not err in gauging true human progress.

In all modern Jahili (i.e., Neo-Jahilic) societies, the meaning of 'morality' is limited to such an extent that all those aspects which distinguish man from animal are considered beyond its sphere. In these societies, illegitimate sexual relationships, even homosexuality, are not considered immoral. The meaning of ethics is limited to economic affairs or sometimes to political affairs which fall in to the category of "government interests". For example, the scandal of Christine Keeler and the British Minister Profumo was not considered serious to British society, because of its sexual aspect; it was condemnable because Christine Keeler was also involved with a naval attache of the Russian embassy, and thus her association with a Cabinet minister lied before the British Parliament. Similar scandals come to light in the American Senate. Englishmen and Americans who get involved in such spying scandals usually take refuge in Russia. These affairs are not considered immoral because of sexual deviation, but because of the danger to state secrets!

Among Jahili societies, writers, Journalists and editors advise both married and unmarried people that free sexual relationships are not immoral. However, it is immoral if a boy uses his partner, or a girl uses her partner, for sex, while feeling no love in his or her heart. It is bad if a wife continues to guard her chastity while her love for her husband has vanished; it is admirable if she finds another lover. Dozens of stories are written about this
theme, many newspaper editorials, articles, cartoons, serious and light columns all invite to this way of life.

From the point of view of 'human' progress, all such societies are not civilized but are backward.

The line of human progress goes upward from animal desires toward higher values. To control the animal desires, a progressive society lays down the foundation of a family system in which human desires find satisfaction, as well as providing for the future generation to be brought up in such a manner that it will continue the human civilization, in which human characteristics flower to their full bloom. Obviously a society which intends to control the animal characteristics, while providing full opportunities for the development and perfection of human characteristics, requires strong safeguards for the peace and stability of the family, so that it may perform its basic task free from the influences of impulsive passions. On the other hand, if in a society immoral teachings and poisonous suggestions are rampant, and sexual activity is considered outside the sphere of morality, then in that society the humanity of man can hardly find a place to develop. Thus, only Islamic values and morals, teachings and safeguards, are worthy of mankind, and from this unchanging and true measure of human progress, Islam is the real civilization and Islamic society is truly civilized.50

Why Civilization is identical with Islam

Some human characteristics are common with those of animals, even with those of inorganic matter. This has misled the exponents of 'scientific Jahiliyyah' (or Neo-Jahiliyyah) to consider man to be nothing more than an animal, or even than inorganic matter! But in spite of the characteristics which man shares with animals and inorganic matter, man possesses certain other characteristics which distinguish him and make him a unique creation. Even the exponents of 'scientific ignorance' were forced to admit this, the evidence of observational facts choking them, but even then, their admission of this fact is neither sincere nor unequivocal.
In this respect the service rendered by Islam's pure way of life has produced concrete and valuable results. Islam based the Islamic society on the association of belief alone, instead of low associations based on race and colour, language and country, regional and national interests. Instead of stressing those traits which are common to both man and animal, it promoted man's human qualities, nurtured them and made them the dominant factor. Among the concrete and brilliant results of this attitude was that the Islamic society became an open and all inclusive community in which people of various races, nations, languages and colours were members, there remaining no trace of these low animalistic traits. The rivers of higher talents and various abilities of all races of humankind flowed into the vast ocean and mixed in it. Their intermingling gave rise to a high level of civilization in a very short span of time, dazzling the whole world, and compounding the essences of all the human capabilities, ideas and wisdom of that period, in spite of the fact in those times travel was very difficult and the means of communication were slow.51

No doubt this religion must defend itself against aggressors. Its very existence in the form of a general declaration of the universal Lordship of God and of the freedom of man from the servitude to any being other than God, and its organizing a movement under a new leadership other than the existing Jahili leadership (which is Neo-Jahili), and its creating a distinct and permanent society based on the Divine authority and submission to One God, is sufficient cause for the surrounding Jahili society, which is based on human authority in some form or another, to rise against it for its own preservation and for the suppression of Islam. Clearly, under these conditions, the newly organized Islamic community will have to prepare itself for defense. These conditions inevitably occur and come into existence simultaneously with the advent of Islam in any society. There is no question of Islam's liking or disliking such a situation, as the struggle is imposed upon Islam; this a natural struggle between two systems which can not co-exist
for long. This is a fact which can not be denied, and hence Islam has no choice but to defend itself against aggression.

But there is another fact which is much more important than this fact. It is in the very nature of Islam to take initiative for freeing the human beings throughout the earth from servitude to any other than God; and so it can not be restricted with in any geographical or racial limits, leaving all mankind on the whole earth in evil, in chaos and in servitude to lords other than God.\footnote{52}

It is not the function of Islam to compromise with the concepts of \textit{Jahiliyyah} which are current in the world or to co-exist in the same land together with a \textit{Jahili} system. This was not the case when it first appeared in the world, nor will it be today or in the future. \textit{Jahiliyyah}, to whatever period it belongs, is \textit{Jahiliyyah}; that is, deviation from the worship of One God that the way of life prescribed by God. It derives its system and laws and regulations and habits and standards and values from a source other than God. On the other hand, Islam is submission to God, and its function is to invite people away from \textit{Jahiliyyah} towards Islam.\footnote{53}
REFERENCES AND NOTES

43. Ibid. p. 110-116.
44. Ibid. p. 93-94.
45. Ibid. p. 10-11.
46. Ibid. p. 46-47.
47. Ibid. p. 131-132.
48. Ibid. p. 80-84.
49. Ibid. p. 96-97.
50. Ibid. p. 97-99.
51. Ibid. p. 49.
52. Ibid. p. 73.
53. Ibid. p. 129.