

DEUTSCHE MORGENLÄNDISCHE GESELLSCHAFT



SAMAR ATTAR

Europeans' betrayal or ignorance of the other's achievements?
The influence of Ibn Tufayl on modern western thought

XXX. Deutscher Orientalistentag
Freiburg, 24.-28. September 2007
Ausgewählte Vorträge
Herausgegeben im Auftrag der DMG
von Rainer Brunner, Jens Peter Laut
und Maurus Reinkowski

online-Publikation, März 2008

<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:gbv:3:5-92387>
ISSN 1866-2943

Europeans' Betrayal or Ignorance of the Other's Achievements? The Influence of Ibn Tufayl on Modern Western Thought¹

SAMAR ATTAR

I

Western theorists usually argue that “The modern origins of the history of ideas can be traced to the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century”, or “to ‘philosophic’ historians such as Voltaire who tied progress to the growth of ‘reason’, or the triumph of the human mind over superstition.”² When modernity is discussed there is usually a reference to the Renaissance and Reformation, but then both periods are described as ones that tend to “look to the past for inspiration.”³ The seventeenth century modern theorists, according to this claim, looked more to the future and present. The shift from the contemplative mode to the utilitarian one marks the scientific revolution. Practical science becomes very important. As a result, the authority of great men, including Aristotle and Ptolemy, begins to be questioned, and eventually crumble. Book after book describes the scientific revolution and names great Western astronomers, or physicists, or mathematicians, but fails to trace the real origin and development of this drastic evolution of the new conception of knowledge in the world as a whole. This is mainly due to this very exclusive way of looking at Western societies as constituting separate and coherent entities very different from any other. The large divide created by historians and literary critics between East and West seems to be responsible for many errors and misunderstanding in the transmission of knowledge in general.⁴

¹ See my book *The Vital Roots of European Enlightenment: Ibn Tufayl's Influence on Modern Western Thought* (Lanham; Boulder; New York; Toronto; Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, A division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007).

² See Franklin L. Baumer, *Modern European Thought: Continuity and Change in Ideas, 1600-1950* (New York; London: Macmillan & Collier Macmillan, 1977), 3.

³ Baumer, 27. Baumer refers, for instance, to Sir Francis Bacon as “both prototype and epitome of this new sort of modernity.

⁴ In *The Scientific Revolution: A Historical Inquiry* published by the University of Chicago in 1994, H. Floris Cohen tells us a very interesting story about how an ‘innocent’ question posed by three Chinese graduate students at Cambridge University in 1937 has led their English biochemistry professor to take a crash course in Chinese and eventually publish several volumes on *Science and Civilization in China*. Of course, only Chinese scholars can assess the value of such a contribution. But the ‘innocent’ (or not so innocent question) of the students is the one that interests me. Given the fact that Joseph Needham had written a large volume on the history of science in the 1930s the students inquired, “how it was that ‘modern science originated only in Europe.’” 418. Cf. Mohammad Ilyas, *Islamic Astronomy and Science Development: Glorious Past, Challenging Future* (Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications, 1996). Ilyas asks a similar question, but more specific. How come that history of science books jump from the Greeks to the Renaissance as if the years 750-1100 never existed? Yet there were many prominent Arab and Moslem scientists during these years. 1-17.

In his “Preface” to the *Encyclopedia of Enlightenment* published in 2003, Alan Charles Kors discusses the Enlightenment as “ a set of tendencies and developments of European culture from the 1670s to the early nineteenth century (including in the American outposts of that culture.”⁵ He argues that “Enlightened culture ... was matched by a set of dramatic phenomena. ... all of which had strikingly different histories according to time, place, circumstance, and group. These included . . . an increasingly critical attitude toward inherited authority in a large variety of human spheres, a sense that, armed with new methods and new powers, the human mind could re-examine claims upon it in a growing set of the domains of human life, including religion.”⁶ Furthermore, Kors highlights the ethical dimension of utility and the emergence of toleration as one of the most significant concerns of the time. Once again one wonders how did these ‘dramatic phenomena’ spring up in a whole continent, which was not only oblivious to such concepts as empiricism, doubt, toleration, but also very hostile to them. The impression one gets from this repeated argument by Western scholars is that revolutions take place locally without the influence of the outside world, and that foreign ideas hardly travel beyond borders. But if the influence of others is conceded there is often the tendency to trace the original ideas to the Greek and Latin masters and the Renaissance.

The purpose of this paper is to show how modernity⁷ which Western scholars normally trace to European Enlightenment, has travelled from Muslim Spain through a philosophical book written in the twelfth century in the guise of a novel that became well known in Europe since 1349.⁸ *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* not only helped usher the scientific revolution, but it also

⁵ See Alan Charles Kors, ed. *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), xvii.

⁶ Kors, xvii.

⁷ Modernity in this context means the autonomous quest of man to master and fully understand the universe and live comfortably within it due to such understanding and mastery. It is reason that makes it possible for human beings to comprehend the mysteries of the universe, or to develop forms of government that will ensure human liberties. Jürgen Habermas supports this definition of modernity. See, for instance, his book *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity Twelve Lectures*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1987, fifth printing 1991) and his article “Modernity- An Incomplete Project” in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (Port Townsend, Washington: Bay Press, 1983), 3-15. Habermas tends to use modernity and enlightenment interchangeably. For him, the scientific and rational modern spirit is worth defending.

For definition of “modernity” in various fields see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy*, 3rd ed., edited by Jonathan Rée and J.O. Urmson. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

⁸ For the various translations of *Hayy* see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, vol. III, ed. B. Lewis et al. (Leiden & London: E.J. Brill & Luzac Co., 1971), 330-34. Cf. also Lawrence I. Conrad, “Research Resources on Ibn Tufayl and *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*” in *The World of Ibn Tufayl Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, ed. Lawrence I. Conrad (Leiden, New York, Köln, 1996), 267-93. The most recent German translation is done by Patrick O. Schaerer under the title *Der Philosoph als Autodidakt Hayy Ibn Yaqzan Ein philosophischer Inselroman* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner

transformed medieval Europe and pushed it to the edge of modernity. Major European thinkers from Da Vinci to Locke, Descartes to Kant, Rousseau to Voltaire had formulated and reformulated Ibn Tufayl's notions of freedom, equality and toleration. They gave Hayy different names and depicted him in different places. But at the same time they subverted some of his traits and changed his basic humanistic message.

II

Hayy Ibn Yaqzan is one of the earliest philosophical novels that construct an autonomous individual who does not belong to a group. He has no family, no religion, and no language. He is neither white nor black.⁹ In his *Politics*, Aristotle argues, "He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god."¹⁰ Writing in the second half of the twelfth century, an Arab Andalusian philosopher, Ibn

Verlag, 2006). In his introduction Schaerer draws the attention to Ernst Bloch, the leading Marxist philosopher, who in 1952 had rediscovered *Hayy* and saw the basic belief of the Enlightenment reinforced by Ibn Tufayl's work 'that man does not need any faith beyond his reason'. However, Schaerer quotes Voltaire as to be unimpressed by *Hayy*. It is clear the translator/critic is not aware of Ibn Tufayl's influence on the French writer, particularly in *Zadig* and *Candide* and the French novel during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. See my book *The Vital Roots of European Enlightenment*, Chapter 5 and 6.

Note that for the text of *Hayy* I have consulted the Arabic versions of Dar al-Mashriq, ed. A.N. Nadir (Beirut, 1968); Dar al-Afaq, ed. F. Sa'd (Beirut, 1980); the 5th edition published by Damascus University, ed. J. Saliba and K. 'Ayyad (Damascus, 1962), and the English translations of L.E. Goodman, *Ibn Tufayl's Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972) and R. Kocache's *The Journey of the Soul: The Story of Hai bin Yaqzan* (London: The Octagon Press, 1982). All subsequent references to *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* are from Kocache's translation; page number will be cited in the text in parenthesis.

⁹ See my article "Beyond Family, History, Religion and Language: The Construction of A Cosmopolitan Identity In A Twelfth Century Arabic Philosophical Novel" in *Adventures of Identity: European Multicultural Experiences and Perspectives* ed. J. Docker and G. Fischer (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 2001), 75-89. Ibn Tufayl's thesis is that the individual is prior to society and history. Many classical western theoreticians of the social contract must have been familiar with the translation of *Hayy* into Latin, or other European languages, in addition to their familiarity with Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Their basic assumption is that the autonomous individual in the state of nature depicts the true characteristics of humankind. Contrast the views of Norbert Elias who might not be aware of Hayy's existence. Elias argues against the case of the individual being prior to society. For him, Robinson Crusoe "bears the imprint of a particular society, a particular nation and class. Isolated from all relations to them as he is on his island, he behaves, wishes and plans by their standard, and thus exhibits different behaviour, wishes and plans to Friday, no matter how much the two adapt to each other by virtue of their situation." *The Society of Individuals*, ed. Michael Schroter, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford, Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 27.

¹⁰ Aristotle, "Politics", in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York, 1966), 1130. Cf. Immanuel Kant, "Analytic of the Sublime" in *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5: 276. Kant argues, "To be self-sufficient, hence not to need society, yet without being unsociable, i.e., fleeting it, is something that comes close to the sublime, just like any superiority over needs. In

Tufayl, refutes Aristotle's argument by constructing a novel in which he creates a fictitious character who has no need to live in society.¹¹ Ibn Tufayl's hero is born in nature, without parents, and learns how to be sufficient for himself, yet he attempts to live with other human beings when he discovers them at a later stage. However, he chooses to return to his desert island accompanied by another male hermit. He is neither a beast, nor a god. He is simply a rational human being and a visionary who believes in equality, freedom and toleration.

The novel is an optimistic treatise on human nature. Man is both body and soul. He is different from animals, for he can control his passions if he wishes. Humans are endowed with reason and free will.¹² If they use their rational capacity wisely they will be able to have power over nature. Everything could be learned by experience. Science is the key, which signifies certainty of demonstration. Mathematics, geometry and physics help solve everyday problem. Some bodies are in constant motion. The principle of mechanical cause and effect is of a paramount importance. In short, material knowledge can be acquired through observation and experimentation. It is possible for man to control his universe and to progress to a higher

contrast, to flee from human beings out of **misanthropy**, because one is hostile to them, or out of **anthropophobia** (fear of people), because one fears them as enemies, is in part hateful and in part contemptible. Nevertheless there is a kind of misanthropy (very improperly so called), the predisposition to which is often found in the mind of many well-thinking people as they get older ... evidence of this is to be found in the tendency to withdraw from society, the fantastic wish for an isolated country seat, or even (in young people) the dream of happiness in being able to pass their life on an island unknown to the rest of the world... , which the novelists or poets who write Robinsonades know so well how to exploit." Seen is this light Hayy is certainly someone who comes close to the sublime.

¹¹ For the life and works of Ibn Tufayl, consult *The Encyclopedia of Islam: A Dictionary of the Geography, Ethnography and Biography of the Muhammadan Peoples*. Ed. M. Th. Houtsma et al. (Leiden: Brill; London: Luzac, 1913-1934). Vol. ii, 1927, 424-25.

¹² Although women are absent in Ibn Tufayl's allegorical novel, there is no reason to believe that they, as human beings, are not endowed with reason and free will. Fedwa Malti-Douglas argues that 'the absence of the female is essential to the utopian, harmonious elements of Hayy's and Asal's perfect society. Theirs is a world without sexuality.' *Woman's Body, Woman's Word* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 83. Also consult 67-110. On the other hand, J.C. Bürgel observes that the presence of the female as represented by the gazelle is essential for Hayy to survive at all. See 'Ibn Tufayl and His *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*', in S. Khadra-Jayyusi (ed.), *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992), 832. It is possible to place Hayy, in particular, in a Platonic tradition where men alone, specifically philosophers with the toughest intellectual training, are supposedly capable of journeying from the materialistic world to that of the soul where they achieve the beatific vision. But there is no explicit, or implicit statement about women in the text. Also we never think of Hayy, or Asal as men, rather as human beings with no specific gender. But at the beginning when Hayy is an infant and a boy, the image of the female deer as a mother is overpowering. She represents all what is good in nature. One should never forget that she is the boy's first mentor. Furthermore, the position of women in Moslem Spain during Ibn Tufayl's life was quite good. Women were highly educated and played an important role in society. Men sought knowledge from learned women.

Contrast what Kant specifically says about women and their rational ability in his essay "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (1784) In *Practical Philosophy*, translated and edited by Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 8:35, 8:36.

rational knowledge. Yet, there is another dimension to man's greatness, that is, his capacity to attain metaphysical truth. To acquire knowledge of what cannot be seen or tested by the senses, one needs intuition. But this intuition is always tied to causes and sources. In short, the promotion of the autonomous rational individual, who is a moral agent by necessity, does not in anyway undermine the stability of civil society. On the contrary, the more we have rational beings in one place, the more we are likely to be able to create a polity based on justice and equality for all.

Hayy Ibn Yaqzan advocates the primary importance of the individual and the virtues of self-reliance and personal independence. He is totally autonomous, free of any external influence, or control. He is independent in mind and judgment and can be considered the supreme ruler of himself. No one has supremacy or authority over him, or his actions. His self-realization, the significance of his conscience and self-development are necessary stages towards his ultimate freedom and happiness, provided no harm is done to other beings, be humans, animals, or plants. As a moral agent an individual is normally content with very little. He eats no more than just what would satisfy his hunger. Owning more than one's shelter is not an essential need for survival. Although man is motivated by self-interest at first in order to survive in the wild, he quickly comes to the conclusion that it is in his own interest too to think of the general good. Human reason can create a balance between the self and the Other. Darwin's state of continuous warfare is not difficult to be checked. Harmony and peace can be established on earth without the need of a policeman, a judge, or a prince.

Hayy's basic thesis proves to be accurate in a natural state where a wild boy could change and be changed through different experiences and even surpass his original condition by making use of his inborn reason and intuition. Human nature at this juncture is supposed to be uniform. But since Hayy has lived only in nature and is the sole individual on his island, he has no idea about human societies. His thesis must be tested in a political state, which is essentially a body and moved by natural desires of men. Does human nature change according to time and place? How do men live in society, or ought to live? What laws regulate human actions? And how does one solve the conflict between the individual and the group? In his attempt to apply mathematical reasoning and psychology to social and political phenomena Hayy discovers that not all men are willing to use their rational power in order to control their passions, or to seek pure truth. But there is no reason to believe that they cannot, or will not change in the future, for men have great potential in themselves. To build a rational society is not a dream. Every one of us possesses reason and free will. But in order to succeed we must be willing to activate these valuable traits and use them wisely. Reason will eventually

liberate people and show them the path to happiness. The antagonism between science and theology will cease to exist. Orthodox, or traditional religion, as we know it, will eventually diminish in status. But in the meantime the rational prince and his council ought to be pragmatic, keep peace at any cost for the general good of humanity and avoid violence and bloodshed. A contract between the ruler and the ruled is established. Human beings join together in the formation of a state whereby individuals surrender some of their interests for the sake of security and basic existence. The just sovereign, on the other hand, maintains peace and stability and ensures the welfare of his people. In this context, the state is viewed as a rational construct meant to check men's greed and desires by rational means. It is worth mentioning that the problem of body and soul in this political state is quite pronounced. It is only when men fully use their reason, derive their knowledge from science and overcome their excessive desires that this problem can be solved. In short, the conflict between the individual and the group needs not to be if individuals utilize their rational power and strive to balance their responsibilities towards others and themselves. It is important to understand that individuals are ends in themselves, but at the same time are extensions of all others in the universe. Equality is a key concept in Hayy's theories.¹³ Every individual is unique and can be autonomous if he strives to be. The emphasis is on the notion that there is no contradiction between the one and the many; that identities are similar and different, and that it is possible for individuals to co-exist peacefully side-by-side in spite of their differences, or to live separately as they choose.

Hayy's ethical and evolutionary theories, however, were not totally accepted by western thinkers. Daniel Defoe, for instance, who plagiarized a significant portion from this Arabic book in *Robinson Crusoe* could not envision a totally ethical individual such as Hayy. For Defoe, a nation cannot consist only of saints. If commerce is not allowed the nation is easily transformed into masses of beggars.¹⁴ Thus he heralded the age of slavery and exploitation.

¹³ Unfortunately, Ibn Tufayl is never discussed with what Western writers call 'classical theorists', such as Locke, Kant and Rousseau. No one seems to be aware of his existence, or influence on these thinkers. The father of equality, freedom and toleration is forgotten. Scholars continue to produce books either praising the men who wrote about the state of nature and the social contract, or condemning them for their racism and capitalism. See for instance, Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment Against Empire* (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003) and Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1997).

¹⁴ See my article "Serving God or Mammon? Echoes from Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Sinbad the Sailor in Robinson Crusoe" in *Robinson Crusoe: Myths and Metamorphoses*, ed. Lieve Spaas and Brian Stimpson (London, New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 1996), 78-89. Cf. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons with a Forward by R.H. Tawney (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 155-83. Weber discusses the issue of wealth and its acquisition in a number of Christian theological books including Barclay's *Apology* as a

On the other hand, Locke who borrowed liberally from *Hayy* legitimised private property that eventually led to the rise of a capitalist market. He had no difficulty justifying the appropriation of foreign land without consent and excluding Catholics and Muslims from the body politic.¹⁵ Kant who exalted the autonomous rational individual as a moral agent did not hesitate to differentiate between races and describe the white race to which he belonged as humanity's greatest perfection in contrast to the inferior "yellow Indians" and the "Negroes".¹⁶ Similarly, Darwin's concept of the 'fittest' has come to acquire a racist and

representative of the Quakers' views in this regard. He concludes that all theologians under study, except for Calvin, have frowned on the acquisition of earthly goods. But the reason for that is "only because possession involves this danger of relaxation that it is objectionable at all. Labour is, on the one hand, an approved ascetic technique, as it always has been in the Western Church, in sharp contrast not only to the Orient but to almost all monastic rules the world over" (157). In the final analysis, Christian theologians, according to Weber, support the rational and utilitarian uses of wealth for the needs of the individual and the community. Weber also quotes Dowden who says, "as in *Robinson Crusoe*, the isolated economic man who carries on missionary activities on the side takes the place of the lonely spiritual search for the Kingdom of Heaven of Bunyan's pilgrim, hurrying through the market-place of Vanity" (176). Accusing Protestant Asceticism, Weber argues that "it legalized the exploitation of this specific willingness to work, in that it also interpreted the employer's business activity as calling" (178). It is obvious that Weber is not aware of *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* and the book's tremendous influence on Barclay and the Quakers who took what they liked from it, misinterpreted some of its ideas and discarded the rest. (See my article "The Man of Reason: Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and His Impact on Modern European Thought" in *Qurtuba 2* (Cordoba), 1997: 19-47.

It is ironic, of course, that Weber thinks that only the Western church emphasizes work and its significance "in sharp contrast to the Orient." If there is any book that highlights the importance of work it is *Hayy*. But as far as the rational and utilitarian uses of wealth for the needs of the individuals and the community on the inhabited island it is the task of the just king to prevent exploitation and greed. Hayy himself has no need for wealth on the desert island. He works to support himself and the environment around him.

Cf. S. J. Barnett, *The Enlightenment and Religion: The Myth of Modernity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003). Barnett attempts to prove the influence of Western Christian thought on the age of Enlightenment. He does not seem to be aware of the impact of a Muslim philosopher, such as Ibn Tufayl, on the dissenters in both England and Scotland.

¹⁵In his introduction to Locke's *Two Treatises of Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2003), Ian Shapiro justifies Locke's exclusion of Catholics and Muslims on political ground, xiii. Contrast Shapiro's position with H.M. Bracken, "Essence, Accident and Race" *Hermathena*, 116 (Winter 1973): 84. For full treatment of Locke's justification of the appropriation of land without consent in North America and the consequential displacement and dispossession of the Aboriginal population see James Tully "Aboriginal Property and Western Theory: Recovering a Middle Ground" in *Facing Each Other: An Expanding World*, vol.31: part I, ed. Anthony Pagden (Aldershot, Burlington, USA: Ashgate, Variorum, 2000), 53-80. See also Anthony Pagden "The Struggle for Legitimacy and the Image of Empire in the Atlantic to C. 1700" in *The Oxford History of the British Empire. The Origins of Empire: British Overseas Enterprise to the Close of the Seventeenth Century*, vol.1, ed. Nicholas Canny (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 34-54.

¹⁶Examine, for instance, Kant's notorious comments on the mental capacity of blacks in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, trans. John T. Goldthwait (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 111-13. Cf. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, "The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race in Kant's Anthropology" in *Anthropology and the German Enlightenment: Perspectives on Humanity*, ed. Katherine M. Faull. *Bucknell Review* (London, Toronto, Lewisburg:

sinister overtone. According to the father of evolutionary biology and promoter of ‘natural selection’, competition is the essence of everything in life. Self-interest guides all species on earth.¹⁷

Nevertheless Hayy’s notion of the greatness of man with emphasis on his significant rational power and empirical ability became one of the favourite themes in the Renaissance and seventeenth century Europe. The image of the self-made man was glorified. Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519), who was born in a small town in north Italy, then moved to Florence, which was ruled by the Medici family, then to Milan, represents the emergence of this modern man. During his lifetime, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* was translated by one of the most illustrious men in the Renaissance. In the seventeenth century Hayy’s novel continued to be in vogue in Europe. Francis Bacon, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke and others emphasized the significance of human power and portrayed man as a rational being. Some believed that men are capable of even attaining metaphysical truth. Others insisted that men are capable of controlling their passions and consequently will be able to build a more rational society. The exalted view of man also appeared in the works of Descartes who differentiated sharply between men and animals and spoke of the freedom of the mind. Many ideas were discussed, accepted or discarded. Is man nothing but a machine? How can one solve the dichotomy of mind and body? Is there a relationship between freedom and determinism? How can one explain the imperfection and limitation of human nature? Some, like Hobbes adopted mathematics and geometry as their scientific method and attempted to apply it to politics. Others like Leibniz made mathematics the basis for their political projects in the hope that they would discover universal characteristics in man and be able to eradicate conflicts.

Bucknell University Press, 1995): 200-241. Examine particularly p. 218. Kant’s “Of the Different Human Races” is one of the earliest attempts to define the concept of race and to distinguish between species and races. The original article “Von den verschiedenen Rassen der Menschen” (1777) was translated into English by Jon Mark Mikkelsen (1999) and published in *The Idea of Race*, ed. with an introduction by Robert Bernasconi and Tommy L. Lott (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2000), 8-22. Cf. Kant’s “On the Different Races of Man” 1775 in *This is Race*, selected and edited by Earl W. Count (New York: Henry Schuman, 1950), 16-24. See also Robert B. Loudon, *Kant’s Impure Ethics: From Rational Beings to Human Beings* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 62-106. Note that Kant had appropriated David Hume’s racist dogma. In a footnote to his essay “Of National Characters” (1748) Hume argued that the blacks in general were inferior to the whites. See *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*, revised edition, Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987).

¹⁷ Consult Darwin’s *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection*, ed. Joseph Carroll. Peterborough, Ontario; Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 2003. Darwin’s views on racial issues can also be found in “On the Races of Man,” the seventh chapter of *The Descent of Man*, published in 1871 and reprinted in *The Idea of Race*, ed. Robert Bernasconi and Tommy L. Lott, 54-78.

The metaphor of Leviathan, or commonwealth, suggested by Hobbes, evokes Hayy's description of man's organs and its interconnected relation not only within a single body, but also within other bodies in nature¹⁸. Motion and the mechanical cause and effect govern everything in the universe. The state and nature are juxtaposed in both Ibn Tufayl's and Hobbes' works. But while Hobbes clearly depicts the Leviathan as a giant whose body consists of smaller bodies of men and who enjoys a soul, reason and will, Ibn Tufayl leaves it to his intelligent reader to apply what is in nature to the political state and make the link between the two.

In his book *Classical Individualism: The Supreme Importance of Each Human Being*, Tibor Machan argues that many people across the political spectrum deem individualism to be problematic. "The central charge is that the individualism that classical liberalism embodies is simply incapable of making room for morality... Classical liberalism," he observes, "has been accused of fostering licentiousness, libertinism, hedonism, and moral subjectivism, as well as promoting atomism, alienation, and the loss of community and human fellowships."¹⁹ These accusations may be levelled at the political economists who followed Hobbes and encouraged individuals to amass great material wealth, or to build empires based on inequality and racism. On the contrary, Ibn Tufayl exalts the autonomous enlightened individual who strives for self-perfection and the preservation of all species on earth. His allegorical novel suggests a social contract in the political state to be endorsed not by an absolute monarch as in the case of Hobbes, but by a group of just and rational human beings presided by a prince.²⁰ It is understood that when other men begin to emerge from their "self-imposed minority,"²¹ to use Kant's term, and show their courage in using their own understanding, then there will be no

¹⁸ See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 1651, ed. Richard Tuck, revised student edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹⁹ Tibor R. Machan, *Classical Individualism* (London: Routledge, 1998), 1. Cf. Paul Hopper, *Rebuilding Communities in an Age of Individualism* (Hampshire, England; Burlington, USA: Ashgate, 2003), 29-30.

²⁰ Contrast Ibn Tufayl's social contract with that of Rousseau. See *Discourse on Inequality* (1755), trans. with an introduction and notes by Maurice Cranston (New York: Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1984). According to Chares Mills "Rousseau argues that technological development in the state of nature brings into existence a nascent society of growing divisions in wealth between rich and poor, which are then consolidated and made permanent by a deceitful 'social contract' Whereas the ideal contract explains how a just society would be formed, ruled by a moral government, and regulated by a defensible moral code, this nonideal/naturalized contract explains how an unjust, *exploitative* society, ruled by an *oppressive* government and regulated by an *immoral* code, comes into existence." *The Racial Contract*, 5.

²¹ The reference here is made to Immanuel Kant's essay "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment? (1784)." See *Kant, Practical Philosophy*, trans. & ed. Mary Gregor, 11-22.

need for a state, or a contract of any kind.²² The enlightened individual thinks and wills for himself without violating the freedom of others. Returning to nature is not dangerous, or undesirable. Society's regulations and constraints are only meant for those who rather have others check their desires and passions. Yet the essence of all humans is the same whether in the state of nature, or in society. Our capacity for consciousness and agency elevates us all beyond the materialistic physical realm. Artificial civilization might corrupt us, but it is our task to cultivate our capacities and to act as moral agents. There are many different humans on the face of the earth, yet they are all one. We should celebrate their differences and similarities.

III

Ibn Tufayl presents a theoretical model based on the premise that there are places on this earth where human beings can be born and brought up without parents. The narrator of Hayy's story tells us that this is possible, because the island enjoys the most perfect temperature on earth and receives its light from the highest possible point in heaven. For sceptical readers, the narrator presents another version of Hayy's birth. A princess who lives on another island marries a kinsman against the will of the king; her brother, and gives birth to a baby boy. Fearing her brother's revenge she puts the baby in a sealed ark and casts him at nightfall into

²² Unlike Ibn Tufayl, many Western theorists saw danger in unregulated state of nature and envisioned only chaos and savagery. It is interesting to see how Kant in his *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View* read and understood Rousseau. In a revealing passage on "The Character of the Species" Kant argues: "One certainly need not accept the hypochondriac (ill-tempered) picture which Rousseau paints of the human species. It is not his real opinion when he speaks of the human species as daring to leave its natural condition, and when he propagates a reversal and a return into the woods. Rousseau only wanted to express our species' difficulty in walking the path of continuous progress toward our destiny ... Rousseau wrote three works on the damage done to our species by 1) our departure from Nature into culture, which weakened our strength; 2) civilization, which resulted in inequality and mutual oppression; and 3) presumed moralization, which caused unnatural education and distorted thinking. I say, these three works, which present the state of Nature as a state of innocence... should serve only as preludes to his *Social Contract*, his *Emile*, and his *Savoyard Vicar* so that we can find our way out of the labyrinth of evil into which our species has wandered through its own fault. **Rousseau did not really want that man go back to the state of nature, but that he should rather look back at it from the stage which he had then reached. He assumed that man is good by nature...**, but he is good in a negative way. **He is good by his own decision and by intentionally not wanting to be evil.** He is only in danger of being infected and ruined by evil or inept leaders and examples. Since, however, good men, who must themselves have been trained for it, are required for moral education, and since there is probably not one among them who has no (innate or acquired) depravity himself, the problem of moral education for our species remains unsolved." See Kant's *Anthropology*, trans. Victor Lyle Dowdell, revised and edited by Frederick P. Van De Pitte (Carbondale and Edwardsville, London and Amsterdam: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), 243-44. Emphasis is mine.

the sea. The current carries the box to a densely wooded grove on another island. The hungry baby starts to cry. A doe who has lost her fawn hears the sound and comes up to the ark. She saves the baby and becomes his nurse and mother. Regardless of whether we accept the first or the second version of Hayy's origin, we realize that whoever his real parents are, they have played no role in forming his identity.²³

Hayy Ibn Yaqzan is not a known Arabic or Andalusian name. It is neither Muslim nor Christian, nor is it Jewish. It simply translates as "the living, or the alive one, son of the wakeful." Thus, the protagonist is simply identified as a being whose father is wakeful. His name sounds 'foreign', perhaps to everyone on earth. Yet it is familiar and universal, for we are all alive and share at least one basic characteristic with the human race and other plants and animals.

On the fertile island where the boy grows up there are no wild beasts, only birds, chickens, deer, horses and cows. The temperature is mild. Hayy is the only human being who lives there for at least fifty years. In line with Arab geographers and historians of the Middle Ages, Ibn Tufayl seems to have thought that landscape and environment play some role in the make-up of their inhabitants. Perhaps, for this reason he depicts a paradise-like island in order to create his perfect rational human being.

Hayy's life is divided into seven-year periods. Each period represents a natural foundation in man's progress and spiritual development. At first he identifies with his mother, the doe, and her friends. But gradually, he becomes aware of his unique and separate physical entity vis-à-vis the animals on the island. He discovers that their development is different from his.

Reason, which has been bestowed upon him, and not upon the animals and plants, has helped him to reflect on his own identity and the identity of other objects. Teachers, prophets

²³ Ibn Tufayl's thesis here is that the individual is prior to society and history. Many Western theoreticians of the social contract must have been familiar with the translation of *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* into Latin, or other European languages, in addition to Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Their basic assumption too is that the autonomous individual in the state of nature depicts the true characteristics of humankind. But Hayy was born in nature, while Crusoe was born in society. Perhaps not aware of Hayy's existence, Norbert Elias argues against the case of the individual being prior to society. "... the individual always exists, on the most fundamental level, in relation to others, and this relation has a particular structure specific to his society. He takes on his individual stamp from the history of these relationships, these dependences ... in a broader context, from the history of the whole human network within which he grows up and lives. This history and this human network are present in him and are represented by him, whether he is actually in relationships to others or on his own, actively working in a big city or shipwrecked on an island a thousand miles from his society. Robinson Crusoe, too, bears the imprint of a particular society, a particular nation and class. Isolated from all relations to them as he is on his island, he behaves, wishes and plans by their standard, and thus exhibits different behaviour, wishes and plans to Friday, no matter how much the two adapt to each other by virtue of their new situation." *The Society of Individuals*, ed. Michael Schroter, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford, Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 27.

and religious institutions have played no role in Hayy's make-up, or awareness of himself, or of others around him, or of God. His own search for the discovery of the truth is based on objective criteria and the methods used by him in every stage of his development is appropriate to his age. Empirical investigations, deductive and inductive reasoning have helped him answer many difficult questions. Science and philosophy are not divorced from each other. Hayy has to become an astronomer, a biologist, a mathematician, a physicist, a psychologist, a sociologist, and a physician before he attempts to solve his philosophical problems and is forced to apply analogous techniques to philosophy. It is only when he wishes to have a glimpse of the divine world that he recognizes the limitations of reason in this sphere. Intuition-guided by the inner light, or reason, can eventually help the seeker of truth to come face to face with the Eternal Being, who is not subject to the universal laws of creation and decay, and grasp the meaning of the illuminating wisdom, the summit of human knowledge.

The principle of diversity and unity in the natural sciences which helps Hayy Ibn Yaqzan formulate his philosophical notion of the one and the many is crucial to our understanding of Hayy's identity vis-à-vis other identities and his concern over maintaining harmony between people and nature, people and people, people and God. During the fourth stage of his development he examines "all objects subject to creation and decay- the animals and plants in all their varieties, the metals and rocks and such things as soil, water, steam [. . .] smoke and flames" (*HIY*, 17). He concludes:

all of them had some qualities in common and some qualities were specific. When considered from the viewpoint of their common qualities they were all one. When considered from the viewpoint of their different qualities, they were a multiplicity. If he tried to set out the unique characteristics, those qualities, which separated them from others, then the variety of difference was truly enormous and the whole of creation spread out into a multiplicity beyond classification.

When he considered his own being and looked at the variety of his organs, each with a unique function and a specific quality, then his being did indeed seem to be a multiplicity.

On the other hand he could see that his organs, though many, were all interconnected and related and from this point of view his being was a unity. The different function of different organs depended on what reached them of the power of the spirit, the spirit itself being one. From this line of thought he concluded that spirit is a unity in its essence and is the reality beyond the self, all the organs being merely tools. His own self now appeared as a unity." (*HIY*, 17-18).

This argument will prove helpful when Hayy moves temporarily from the wilderness to a human society ruled by a king. If there is no contradiction between the one and the many in the natural world, then there is no reason why there should be any contradiction between one personal identity and another in the human world. He extends his line of thought to other

human beings when he meets Asal, a hermit who suddenly appears on the uninhabited island. According to Hayy, diversity and unity are two sides of the same coin. Such a belief will eventually lead him to the notion of toleration in human societies.

After having learned Asal's language and familiarized himself with the stranger's religion and customs, he accompanies him to the inhabited, civilized island from which Asal has come. Here Ibn Tufayl depicts a multitude of different identities. Salaman, Asal's friend and the king, for instance, has been shaped by his society and religion. He frowns on religious speculations. He and a select group of his people accept the external interpretation of religion. For them, Hayy is a man who is only interested in pure truth. They withdraw from him, but still treat him kindly as a stranger. The rest of the islanders seem to be diverted from thinking of God by their merchandise and trading. Hayy realizes that, although people are endowed with the same reason and the desire to do good, all are not capable of applying these natural gifts to the right uses. Finally, he opts for individual responsibility, and comes to the conclusion that there is no reason to speak any more of pure truth. Fearing that he may cause more damage than good, Hayy goes back to the king, excuses himself and implores him to adhere to his own religion. Then he bids him farewell and returns to his island with Asal. His companion has reached similar conclusions about man's happiness and ultimate goal in life by using different methods of inquiry than Hayy, namely by attempting to understand the hidden meanings and spiritual contents of the scripture. The message of the novel is quite clear. People, we are told, are different although they belong to the same species. One must accept their multiplicity and unity at the same time.²⁴ They happen to use various means in search of the ultimate truth. According to Hayy, there is a place for everyone on this earth. Conformity is not recommended, and arguments that may lead to violence and endanger the social and spiritual fabric of society are better avoided.

IV

If the philosophical message of *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* is that there is no one exclusive truth and no one exclusive way of finding the truth, then it is possible to argue that there is no one single authoritative definition of personal identity, and that there is no one single exclusive way of

²⁴ Note that some modern philosophers reformulate Ibn Tufayl's thesis without being aware of him. See for instance John Lachs, *A Community of Individuals* (New York, London: Routledge, 2003), 55. "Inclusion in a single species guarantees rights to all; differentiating us into a variety of natures safeguards against a natural consequence of such inclusion, namely the oppressive demand that all of us pursue the same ideals. Our shared nature forms the foundation of decency, our divergent natures provide the ground of toleration."

discovering what personal identity is all about. Ibn Tufayl depicts several identities in his philosophical novel, but concentrates on one identity in particular. His hero, Hayy Ibn Yaqzan, is not shaped by family, society, history, language, or religion. He is a cosmopolitan personality, a rational free thinker who can function anywhere on this earth.²⁵ What shaped him is how he has made good use of his reason and intuition. His scientific experiments have helped him see diversity and unity, strangeness and familiarity in a dialectical way. Consequently, his identity has never clashed with other identities. Theoretically, he believes that since everyone is endowed with reason, there is no need for prophets, sacred texts, religious mediators, or conventional religions. However, this thesis is modified when Hayy encounters different personalities on the inhabited island. Only then he realizes that other people may be shaped by conventions and customs; that they tend to rely heavily on social, political, religious and educational authorities, and that they hardly allow their own reason to play any role in shaping their identity. Hayy attempts to convince others of the virtues of autonomous and critical knowledge. He encourages them to think for themselves, but he fails. Since he always wishes to be a good man and is concerned about the consequences of his action, he prefers to tread carefully. If his crusade to alter society will definitely lead to discord and violence, he will then retreat and leave people time to think for themselves.

This courageous, tolerant, and rational individual cannot only be considered as the isolated product of Ibn Tufayl's philosophical and literary imagination. Indeed, he has his historical roots during the golden age of Muslim Spain. The Andalusian society had diverse people: different races, languages, histories, bodies, memories, landscapes, environments, and religions. People were able to live side by side in a relatively tolerant society, but they were also able to live separately. The mind was free. Rational thinkers wrote and spoke freely about their philosophical speculations without being afraid to be punished.

But with the new emphasis on race, ethnicity, religion, history, language, 'we' versus 'them', 'diversity', versus 'unity', 'rationality' versus 'irrationality', 'tolerance', versus 'fanaticism', the golden age began to wither. It was the task of the philosopher and freethinker to recreate and reinvent the identity of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan who was able to see the danger inherent in conformity and similarity when others preferred to remain blind.

²⁵ See my article "Beyond Family, History, Religion and Language: The Construction of A Cosmopolitan Identity In a Twelfth Century Arabic Philosophical Novel" in *Adventures of Identity: European Multicultural Experiences and Perspectives* ed. John Docker and Gerhard Fischer (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 2001), 75-89.

V

Richard Dawkins, who holds the Charles Simonyi Chair in the Public Understanding of Science at the University of Oxford, was invited to Harvard University to give the Tanner Lectures on Human Values on November 19, 20, 21, 2003. He gave two lectures on the first two days, namely, “The Science of Religion” and “The Religion of Science.” On the third day there was a seminar in which other professors of psychology and philosophy participated. Dismissing religion as a social virus, Dawkins argued that religion is harmful and divisive; it has not helped people to adapt, or to survive. As a scientist, he stressed the significance of reason and evidence and totally rejected tradition and authority. Einstein, he said, was a great admirer of Spinoza, and religion for the scientist could only mean his own marvel at the universe.

I was stunned to hear part of Ibn Tufayl’s argument albeit presented in a contemporary and simplistic format and accompanied by slides in order to demonstrate how harmful religion is. But three images in particular have caught my attention. One that represented tribal people wearing Arab robes and taking their gods with them to battle. The other was a tower that led to paradise, and presumably a suicide bomber who kills himself and other innocent people is aspiring to ascend to heaven. The third was the Indian-British writer Salman Rushdie and in the background the angry Iranian ‘clerics’ who censored his thought and urged Moslems all over the world to kill him for publishing his *Satanic Verses*. These three powerful images gave the audience not only the hateful and misleading face of Islam as a religion, but of those races who adhere to it. In confusing his argument about a small group of fanatics with their religion Dawkins’ thesis may easily lead to the persecution and harassment of Arabs and Muslims in Western countries, something, I am sure, the British scientist does not wish, or accept. When I asked him during the question-answer period whether a scientist should be also interested in history and endeavour to put his presentation in a historical perspective -for neglecting history, which is never static, but always in flux, can lead to dangerous consequences and consolidate stereotypical images of other people- he curtly replied that he detested all Abrahamic faiths, that he was not picking on Arabs and Moslems, and that his slides showed others as well.²⁶ But to my mind these brief captions that

²⁶ Dawkins’ slide about the Arabs taking their gods with them to battle is rather inaccurate. The ancient Arabs were very irreligious. Some tribes used to make their gods out of dates. Whenever they were hungry they ate them. But the people of the Old Testament had a very different relationship with their God who went with them to battle. The other images: the suicide bomber and Rushdie with the Iranian clerics (never mind that there is no clergy in Islam) were exclusively treated as part and parcel

Dawkins showed to us at Harvard at these troubled political times froze and slanted history. Ironically, he used part of Ibn Tufayl's argument about the significance of reason, experimentation and evidence and used it inadvertently perhaps to damn Islam as a religion.

Ibn Tufayl's protagonist, Hayy Ibn Yaqzan, had no religion. He was not a Muslim, a Christian, or a Jew. When he matured on his own without the help of parents, society, or religious mentors, he managed to discover some power in the universe, and he gave it a name from the science of mechanics; i.e., the Mover of the Universe, not as God, Allah, or Yehua.²⁷ When he became acquainted with other human beings, he did not convert to their religion, or use subservient means to convert them to his. He realized that conventional rituals, literary interpretations of scriptures and abandonment of reason and evidence in favour of blind faith could be very harmful. He endeavoured to reason with other human beings, but never sensationalized their shortcomings, or spoke with contempt about their religion, for Hayy believed that each one of us is endowed with reason. There is no doubt that he felt immense pity for those who neglected to use their reason, and thought that they would eventually use it if they had the will to do so. Hayy did not condemn religion per se. He saw some benefits to those who needed it.²⁸ On the other hand, he realized that truth was something relative, and that people who did use their reason did not exactly reach his own conclusions.

of Islam as a religion which allegedly encourages Moslems to kill innocent people and have a blind faith in authority and scripture. Unfortunately, these images along with many others have become associated with all Moslems (and who ever looks like them; i.e., a person with a beard and dark skin) in the eyes of many westerners. After September 11 many visible and not so visible Moslems were spat at and insulted in the streets of so many western cities. On the contrary, the image of the American Evangelist Graham projected by Dawkins is certainly not associated with all Americans. No body insults Americans abroad because Graham is one of them. Cf. my Arabic article, "'I am Spanish,' Said the Frightened Lebanese Woman: The Aftermath of September 11, 2001 in Australia." *Al-Mustaqbal* (Beirut), 20 January, 2002.

²⁷ Notice that the philosopher Ibn Bajja, or Avempace, who was greatly admired by Ibn Tufayl, uses a similar metaphor in his treatises on physics. According to him there is one Supreme Mover of the universe. See *Kitab tadbir al-mutawahhid (Guide of the Solitary)*, edited and introduced by Ma'n Ziyada (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr & Dar al-Fikr al-Islami, 1978), 11-13; note 13 p. 34. Note that the science of mechanics was also used by Ibn Rushd, or Averroes, for instance, in his attempt to explain the conditions of health and disease. Consult his *Kitab al-Kulliyat*, ed. and introduced by Muhammad Bin 'Abd al-Jalil Balqiz. (al-Dar al-Bayda': Al-Najah al-Jadida Press, 2000).

²⁸ According to Dawkins all religions have something very harmful in them. It is not the manipulation of certain men which is responsible so much for the trouble we have today, but rather the ideas propounded by these religions. During the Seminar with Dr. Dawkins and two other professors that took place on Friday, November 21, 2003 at Wiener Auditorium in John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Professor Steven Pinker, Johnston Family Professor of Psychology at Harvard observed that religious beliefs exploit our emotions, and that the group tends to control the individual. In describing religious rituals, he spoke about what he called the 'solidarity' phenomenon in such a frightening manner, i.e., engaging in their rituals makes individuals susceptible to group psychology. Again there was no differentiation between fanatics and ordinary pious people. One of his many examples was the Moslems' bowing all at once towards Mecca. He did not elaborate

Hayy's basic argument is not really so much about the harmony between philosophy and religion as Léon Gauthier claims. Rather it is about us humans, about our diversity and the necessity to accommodate each other and the possible peaceful ways which we may be able to use in order to avoid violence and bloodshed.

It is helpful, but not essential, to know that Western philosophers and writers had once owned, or read this Arabic book, in order to ascertain its influence on their works. The most important thing is to examine Hayy's innovative and modern ideas, such as his theory of knowledge, scientific method, system of education, concept of equality, freedom and toleration, the individual progress to perfection and the use of reason as a basis of evidence in contrast to authority in all its forms. These modern ideas seemed to have spread like fire from Moslem Spain to medieval Europe where once experiment was associated with black magic.²⁹ But it was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth century that they began to take roots in European thought. "The Enlightenment. . . as Ernst Troeltsch and many others were later to say, was the hinge on which the European nations turned from the Middle Ages to 'modern' times, marking the passage from a supernaturalistic-mythical-authoritative to a naturalistic-scientific-individualistic type of thinking."³⁰ It is the spirit and the great ideals of this enlightened age that became the pride of Europe to this day.

On January 22, 2003 the American Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld dismissed France and Germany as "old Europe." Responding to a reporter's question about European opposition to the use of force in Iraq, Rumsfeld said: "You're thinking of Europe as Germany and France. I don't. I think that's 'old Europe.' If you look at the entire NATO Europe today, the centre of gravity is shifting to the East. And there are a lot of new members. And if you

or explain how such an act could harm an individual. It was left for us to speculate the consequences. Feeling no pity for ordinary people who do not share their conviction that religion is harmful, Dawkins and Pinker differ drastically from Ibn Tufayl.

²⁹ Samuel Huntington seems to be absolutely oblivious to the influence of Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Rushd and other Moslem philosophers on early modern European thought. In *The Clash of Civilizations* he argues that "All civilizations go through similar processes of emergence, rise and decline. The West differs from other civilizations not in the way it has developed but in the distinctive character of its values and institutions. These include most notably its Christianity, pluralism, individualism, and rule of law, which made it possible for the West to invent modernity, expand throughout the world, and become the envy of other societies. In their ensemble these characteristics are peculiar to the West. Europe as Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., has said, is 'the source-the *unique* source' of the 'ideas of individual liberty, political democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and cultural freedom. . . . These are *European* ideas, not Asian, nor African, nor Middle Eastern ideas, except by adoption.'" See *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 311. According to Huntington history seems to be frozen. Peculiar traits are assigned to certain nations regardless of the passage of time. The myth of the West and Western values is entrenched with all its ideological trappings.

³⁰ Baumer, *Modern European Thought*, 141.

just take the list of all the members of NATO and all of those who have been invited in recently--what is it, 26, something like that? {But} you're right. Germany has been a problem, and France has been a problem."³¹

The German-French reaction was swift. But the amazing thing is that the French and the Belgium, in particular, had invoked the Enlightenment. A French government spokesman, Jean-Francois Cope, noted pointedly that being old also meant being wise. He said: "An 'old' continent--a continent somewhat ancient in its historical, cultural, political, economic traditions--can sometimes be infused with a certain wisdom, and wisdom can sometimes make for good advice."³² Belgium's Foreign Minister Louis Michel described Rumsfeld's insulting remark as a slap in the face. "Rumsfeld, who comes to teach a thing or two to 'old Europe', the Europe of democratic values, humanist Europe, the Europe of the Age of Enlightenment, personally I find this hurts,"³³ the Foreign Minister said.

But one of the possible torches that showed Europe the path to enlightenment was this wild boy who matured and became wise at the age of fifty. His name was Hayy Ibn Yaqzan. He was created in the imagination of an Arab Moslem philosopher from Spain in the twelfth century. The negation of history, or the emphasis on the exclusiveness of one's own history, not only by the American Secretary of Defence, but also by the European officials shows this "scornful attitude" towards the Other, the denial of our indebtedness to each other and the selfish drive that dominates our lives.³⁴ Ibn Tufayl would never have dismissed the ancient philosophers. He would certainly disagree with them, or even criticize them, but he would always acknowledge his debt to them. On the other hand, he would never praise any specific race, or religion, or claim that they have exclusively achieved something that no one is able to

³¹ See Briefing at the Foreign Press Centre, also participating, Air Force General Richard B. Myers, chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. News Transcript on the web: http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2003/t01232003_t012, p.1.

³² See "US.: Rumsfeld's 'Old and 'New' Europe." Radio Free Europe. <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2003/01/2401200317>, p. 2. See also *The Washington Post*. January 24, 2003, page A20.

³³ See BBC News. "Belgium to block US Nato request." <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2743185.stm> (9 February, 2003).

³⁴ On January 4, 2004 Robert Kilroy-Silk, a former British Labour Party member of Parliament published an anti-Arab column headlined, "We owe Arabs nothing" in the *Sunday Express* tabloid. In the article he described Arabs as "suicide bombers, limb amputators, woman repressors" and questioned the contribution of the Arab world to civilization. His BBC TV talk show was immediately suspended. "This article is indisputably stupid and its main effect will be to give comfort to the week-minded," said CRE [Commission for Racial Equality] Chairman Trevor Phillips. "Given the extreme and violent terms in which Mr. Kilroy-Silk has expressed himself, there is a danger that this might incite some individuals to act against someone who they think is an Arab." See "BBC Talk Show Host Suspended for Anti-Arab Column." CNSNews.com.

achieve. For him we are all human beings, and are able to change the world if we use our reason.

CITED WORKS

- Aristotle, "Politics." Trans. Benjamin Jowett. In *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Ed. Richard McKeon. 1941. 1111-1316. New York; Random House, 1966.
- Attar, Samar. "Beyond Family, History, Religion and Language: The Construction of A Cosmopolitan Identity In A Twelfth Century Arabic Philosophical Novel." In *Adventures of Identity: European Multicultural Experiences and Perspectives*. Ed. J. Docker and G. Fischer. Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 2001. 75-89.
- "‘I am Spanish,’ Said the Frightened Lebanese Woman: The Aftermath of September 11, 2001 in Australia." *Al-Mustaqbal* (Beirut), 20 January, 2002.
- "The Man of Reason: Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and His Impact on Modern European Thought" in *Qurtuba 2* (Cordoba), 1997: 19-47.
- "Serving God or Mammon? Echoes from Hayy Ibn Yaqzan and Sinbad the Sailor in Robinson Crusoe." In *Robinson Crusoe: Myths and Metamorphoses*. Ed. Lieve Spaas and Brian Stimpson. London, New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 1996, 78-89.
- *The Vital Roots of European Enlightenment: Ibn Tufayl's Influence on Modern Western Thought*. Lanham; Boulder; New York; Toronto; Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, A division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007.
- Barnett, S.J. *The Enlightenment and Religion: The Myth of Modernity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
- Baumer, L. Franklin. *Modern European Thought: Continuity and Change in Ideas, 1600-1950*. New York; London: Macmillan & Collier Macmillan, 1977.
- "Belgium to block US Nato request." BBC News. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2743185.stm> (9 February, 2003).
- Bernasconi, Robert and Tommy L. Lott . Eds. *The Idea of Race*. Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2000.
- Bracken, H.M. "Essence, Accident and Race" *Hermathena*, 116 (Winter 1973).
- Briefing at the Foreign Press Centre, also participating, Air Force General Richard B. Myers, chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. News Transcript on the web: <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2003/t01232003 t012, 1>.
- Bürgel , J.C. 'Ibn Tufayl and His *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan: A Turning Point in Arabic Philosophical Writing*'. In *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*. Ed. S. Khadra-Jayyusi, 830-46. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992.
- Cohen, H. Floris. *The Scientific Revolution: A Historical Inquiry*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy*, 3rd ed. Edited Jonathan Rée and J.O. Urmson. London and New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Conrad, Lawrence I. Ed. *The World of Ibn Tufayl Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. Ed. Lawrence I. Conrad. Leiden, New York, Köln, 1996.
- Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection*. Ed. Joseph Carroll. Peterborough, Ontario; Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 2003

- Dawkins, Richard. Tanner Lectures on Human Values. "The Science of Religion" and "The Religion of Science." Harvard University. November 19, 20, 21, 2003.
- Elias, Norbert. *The Society of Individuals*. Ed. Michael Schroter, trans. Edmund Jephcott Oxford, Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1991.
- Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*. Ed. Alan Charles Kors. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, vol. III. Ed. B. Lewis et al. Leiden & London: E.J.Brill & Luzac Co., 1971.
- The Encyclopedia of Islam: A Dictionary of the Geography, Ethnography and Biography of the Muhammadan Peoples*. Ed. M. Th. Houtsma et al. Leiden: Brill; London: Luzac, 1913-1934.
- Eze, Emmanuel Chukwudi. "The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race in Kant's Anthropology." In *Anthropology and the German Enlightenment: Perspectives on Humanity*. Ed. Katherine M. Faull. *Bucknell Review*. London, Toronto, Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1995: 200-241.
- Habermas, Jürgen. "Modernity- An Incomplete Project." In *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster. Port Townsend, Washington: Bay Press, 1983.
- *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity Twelve Lectures*. Trans. Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1987, fifth printing 1991.
- Hobbs, Thomas. *Leviathan*, 1651. Ed. Richard Tuck, revised student edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Hopper, Paul. *Rebuilding Communities in an Age of Individualism*. Hampshire, England; Burlington, USA: Ashgate, 2003.
- Hume, David. 1711-1776. *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*. Revised edition, Eugene F. Miller. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987.
- Huntington, Samuel. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
- Ibn Bajja, or Avempace. *Kitab tadbir al-mutawahhid (Guide of the Solitary)*. Edited and introduced by Ma'n Ziyada. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr & Dar al-Fikr al-Islami, 1978.
- Ibn Rushd, or Averroes. *Kitab al-Kulliyat*. Ed. and introduced by Muhammad Bin 'Abd al-Jalil Balqiz. al-Dar al-Bayda': Al-Najah al-Jadida Press, 2000.
- Ibn Tufayl. *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. Ed. A.N. Nadir. 2nd ed. Beirut: Catholic Press, 1968.
- *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. Edited with an introduction by Faruq Sa'd. Beirut: Dar al-Afaq al-Jadida, 1980.
- *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. Edited and introduced by Jamil Saliba & Kamal 'Ayyad. 5th ed. Damascus: Damascus University Press, 1962.
- *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan: A Philosophical Tale*. Translated with introduction and notes by Lenn Evan Goodman. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1972.
- *The Journey of the Soul: The Story of Hai bin Yaqzan*. Trans. Riad Kocache. London: The Octagon Press, 1982.
- (Abu Bakr Ibn Tufail). *Der Philosoph als Autodidakt. Hayy Ibn Yaqzan Ein philosophischer Insel-Roman*, translated with an introduction by Patrick O. Schaerer. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2006.
- Ilyas, Mohammad. *Islamic Astronomy and Science Development: Glorious Past, Challenging Future*. Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications, 1996.
- Kant, Immanuel, "Analytic of the Sublime" in *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

- “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?” (1784) In *Practical Philosophy*. Translated and edited by Mary J. Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
 - *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View*. Trans. Victor Lyle Dowdell. Revised and edited by Hans H. Rudnick, with an introduction by Frederick P. Van De Pitte Carbondale and Edwardsville, London and Amsterdam: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978.
 - *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*. Trans. John T. Goldthwait. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960.
 - “On the Different Races of Man” 1775. In *This is Race*. Edited with an introduction by Earl W. Count. New York: Henry Schuman, 1950. 16-24.
- Kilroy-Silk, Robert. “We owe Arabs nothing.” *The Sunday Express*.” CNSNews.com January 4, 2004,
- Lachs, John. *A Community of Individuals*. New York, London: Routledge, 2003.
- Locke, John. *Two Treatises of Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration*. Edited with an introduction by Ian Shapiro. New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Louden, Robert.B. *Kant’s Impure Ethics: From Rational Beings to Human Beings*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Machan, Tibor R. *Classical Individualism*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Malti-Douglas, Fedwa. *Woman’s Body, Woman’s Word*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Mills, Charles W. *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1997.
- Muthu, Sankar. *Enlightenment Against Empire*. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Pagden, Anthony. “The Struggle for Legitimacy and the Image of Empire in the Atlantic to C. 1700” In *The Oxford History of the British Empire. The Origins of Empire: British Overseas Enterprise to the Close of the Seventeenth Century*, vol.1. Ed. Nicholas Canny. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, 34-54.
- Rousseau, Jean Jacques. *Discourse on Inequality* (1755). Trans. with an introduction and notes by Maurice Cranston. New York: Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1984.
- Rumsfeld. “US.: Rumsfeld’s ‘Old and ‘New’ Europe.” Radio Free Europe. <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2003/01/2401200317>, 2. See also *The Washington Post*. January 24, 2003, A20.
- Tully, James. “Aboriginal Property and Western Theory: Recovering a Middle Ground” In *Facing Each Other: An Expanding World*, vol. 31: part I. Ed. Anthony Pagden Aldershot, Burlington, USA: Ashgate, Variorum, 2000, 53-80.
- Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Trans. Talcott Parsons with a Forward by R.H. Tawney. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1958, 155-183.