



Globalisation and the Question of Arab Cultural Identity

NOUARA Grid

Ali Lounici University - Blida 2- Algeria

E-mail: gridnouara88@gmail.com

Abstract

The relationship between identity and globalisation has been raised on multiple levels. It continues to be a subject of critical discourse, as it represents one of the most significant, complex, and challenging issues today. It remains at the forefront of current debates due to its intellectual and moral implications, as well as its tangible outcomes, which have affected all spheres of life amidst the ongoing global transformations. We are witnessing the formation of a new world in which modern science and technology constitute its most prominent and consequential features. These transformations have touched upon the psychological and intellectual dimensions of human beings and the bonds they share with others. This signifies the emergence of a new, multifaceted culture, one that is not being produced solely because of culture's intrinsic link to life, but also due to its profound connection to identity and the future.

Keywords: *globalisation, culture, identity, cultural identity, Arab world*

La mondialisation et la question de l'identité culturelle arabe

Résumé

La relation entre identité et mondialisation a été abordée à plusieurs niveaux. Elle continue d'être un sujet de débat critique, car elle représente l'une des questions les plus importantes, complexes et difficiles à l'heure actuelle. Elle reste au premier plan des débats actuels en raison de ses implications intellectuelles et morales, ainsi que de ses conséquences tangibles, qui ont affecté

tous les domaines de la vie dans le contexte des transformations mondiales en cours. Nous assistons à la formation d'un nouveau monde dans lequel la science et la technologie modernes constituent les caractéristiques les plus marquantes et les plus importantes. Ces transformations ont touché les dimensions psychologiques et intellectuelles des êtres humains et les liens qu'ils partagent avec les autres. Cela signifie l'émergence d'une nouvelle culture multiforme, qui n'est pas seulement le fruit du lien intrinsèque entre la culture et la vie, mais aussi de son lien profond avec l'identité et l'avenir.

Mots clés : mondialisation, culture, identité, identité culturelle, monde arabe



Introduction

'Who am I?' 'Who are we?' These are the two fundamental questions in discussions of identity that have persisted since the eighteenth century and intensified towards the end of the 1990s. Humanity is still in need of new answers to these questions, especially in the context of the phenomenon of 'universality' or 'globalisation', which has come to sweep across the world in various domains. As it has been noted, "No individual from the information society now lives in a genuine condition that renders them either static in relation to identity or dynamic; rather, they have been driven into a dialectical state torn between holding onto identity as a solid core that assists them in confronting rapid transformations, and the transformations of identity itself, resulting from the human community's attainment of a supreme modern condition." (Samir Morcos, 2015, p. 30)

The contemporary human being is now confronted with a multitude of cultures. It has become increasingly preoccupied with how to preserve their identity, or rather, how to integrate it within the context of these current transformations.

There exists an intrinsic relationship between identity and culture, one so interwoven that it is nearly impossible to separate the two. Every identity encapsulates a culture, just as a single identity may encompass multiple cultures. Likewise, a single culture may contain diverse identities. This is referred to as "diversity within unity." The identity of a people may eventually lead to the emergence of multiple cultures, whose elements intermingle and whose components overlap to produce a single identity. The

relationship between identity and culture is akin to that between the self and the production of the object. As is well known, no cultural output occurs in the absence of a thinking subject.

The problem of cultural identity lies in the fact that it comprises both a modifier (identity) and a modified term (culture), each of which constitutes a complex and dialectical issue. This complexity is further exacerbated by their entanglement with religion, politics, and ideology. To develop a conceptual framework for cultural identity, it is necessary first to clarify the notions of identity and culture.

1. Identity

Identity is defined as “the thing itself, or the thing that is what it is that is, the thing possessing the same nature as another thing,” or as “the set of characteristics that render a particular person identifiable or distinguishable.” Thus, identity is an expression of essence or of a truth being expressed when an attribute is united with that which it describes, in a unique identification that allows no overlap or substitution. (Samir Morcos, 2015, p. 26) According to this definition, identity is the essence of a thing; it is equivalent to the subject it expresses.

Mohammed Amara defines identity as being derived from the Arabic pronoun *huwa* (he), meaning that it is the essence and truth of a thing, containing it as a seed contains the tree and its fruits. Hence, the identity of a human being, a culture, or a civilisation is its essence and its truth. Given that all things, be they human, cultural, or civilisational, contain both constants and variables, the identity of a thing lies in its constants, which are renewed yet do not change, manifesting and revealing themselves without being



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

displaced by their opposites, so long as the subject remains alive. Identity is like a fingerprint for a human being: it distinguishes them from others, renews its effectiveness, and reveals its form whenever the layers of obscurity or concealment are removed, yet it never relinquishes its place or value to other fingerprints. (Muhammad 'Ammāra, 1999, p. 6)

It is therefore evident that identity is the essence of the human being, that which distinguishes them from others. It is among a person's enduring constants, renewable yet not extinguished. Its renewal ensures its continuity and permanence.

Turki Al-Hamad, on the other hand, views identity as “a composite of selected material, social, and subjective reference elements that allow for a specific definition of the social agent (...) And insofar as it is a composite of elements, it is necessarily changeable, while at the same time characterised by a certain constancy just as a single person is born, grows, and ages, and their features, behaviour, and taste that is, their personality change over time, yet they remain themselves and no one else.” (Turki al-Hamad, n.d.), p. 17) This definition also aligns with the previous one in affirming that identity is both constant and renewable: the former likened it to a fingerprint, while the latter compares it to a human being who is born, matures, and ages, whose features change, yet who remains the same individual.

From the foregoing, it may be said that identity is the origin and essence of a thing; it expresses and represents it, and is among its enduring and renewable constants that distinguish it from others.

2. Culture

Culture has been defined in numerous ways, generally viewed from two perspectives: some definitions present it in a limited sense, restricting it to the domain of the elite, while others regard it as a comprehensive vessel encompassing all that surrounds human societies. What may be said about culture is that it varies according to the diversity of nations, ethnic groups, interest-based communities, clubs, companies, and other forms of human collectives, those bonds that unite individuals and cause them to think in ways slightly or significantly different from the rest of society. (Muhammad al-Rumayhī, 1999, p. 18) It is not within our scope here to present all such definitions, but we shall focus on the concept that regards culture as a vessel for all that surrounds human communities.

When culture is mentioned, one is immediately reminded of the definition provided by the anthropologist E. B. Tylor, who described it as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” (Ibid., p. 15) According to this definition, culture is characterised by its inclusion of all matters with a human dimension, material, doctrinal, ethical, artistic, and customary. These elements form an integrated structure rather than scattered fragments.

Furthermore, culture is not an individual attribute, but a social one; the individual experiences it within the context of a society or nation. It is a form of social life and an intellectual and behavioural reality within which the human being operates. It is not merely an abstract philosophical or intellectual construct. Most importantly, culture is what



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

distinguishes the members of one society or nation from others. In this way, it intersects fundamentally with identity.

“Culture, then, is a set of standards for thought and behaviour; it determines the meaning of life, which would otherwise be meaningless without these standards. It comprises symbols that define the aims of life, which would otherwise be aimless without those symbols. Thus, culture provides an answer to the individual’s and the group’s questions through its various forms art, ethics, custom, rules of decorum and mediates the relationship between individual and group, individual and authority, and group and authority.” (Turki al-Hamad, p. 11)

Culture, then, is composed of those symbols that mark the individual or the group, distinguish them, and define the purpose of their existence. Although the linguistic difference between the terms *culture* and *identity* is evident, we may find no comprehensive terminological definition that encompasses both. According to sociological and anthropological studies, identity or culture is the sense of belonging to a group or nation that shares a complete set of social, cultural, and psychological characteristics. It is through these characteristics that harmony and interaction are achieved.

As it has been stated, “Individuals in any society, if they wish to formulate a particular way of life, must come to an understanding or a negotiation regarding a set of values and beliefs capable of sustaining the lifestyle they have chosen. There is always, in any society, something general, shared, and essential in human relations that every individual is expected to act upon if not fully, then at least partially. And negotiation here is not meant in the direct sense, but rather

in the sense of mutual understanding, acceptance, and acquiescence.” (Muhammad al-Rumayhī, p. 20)

3. Cultural Identity

Cultural identity, as outlined above, is the shared outcome of religious belief, language, accumulated knowledge, the products of labour, arts and literature, heritage, values, traditions, customs, ethics, history, sentiment, standards of reason and behaviour, and other elements through which nations and societies distinguish themselves. This concept has become increasingly tied to technological developments in communication and information, as well as to the diversification of fields of human knowledge, their production, and their control by the more dominant party, who often employs it as a means of domination and control over the weaker party.

As Abdullah Ibrahim notes, “Culture plays a decisive role in establishing differential standards between peoples. It has often shaped and reshaped a set of facts specific to a given society, prompting that society to perceive itself as superior to others. Thanks to its elevated position, culture is capable of authorising or dominating, permitting or forbidding, devaluing something or raising its status thus demonstrating its ability to serve as the primary means of consolidating distinction within the domain it represents.” (Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm, p. 326)

Since culture possesses an inherent capacity to solidify perceptions, visions, and values and to promote cultural narcissism, this implies that, in the context of the technological revolution and the wave of globalisation which seeks to impose a unified model, there is a consequent dissolution and reduction of identities into the culture of the



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

more dominant power. "Proponents of this discourse call upon societies to abandon their particular cultural values and replace them with others derived from a different environment under the pretext of adopting a more expansive and successful model." ('Abd al-Bāqī al-Harmāsī, 1999, p. 36)

This is precisely what Arab-Islamic societies are suffering from, placing them before two possible outcomes: either the dissolution of their original cultural identities if those identities are not deeply rooted in the emotional, intellectual, and historical characteristics tied to their cultural contexts, and simultaneously capable of self-definition or a retreat into the self, due to the dominance of foreign specifically alien cultures. "In both cases, cultures face the risk of extinction or of taking refuge in the concepts of the past, becoming confined within the walls of grand truths and closed circles." (Ibid., p. 327)

What results from this is either the dissolution or the stagnation of cultures. Moreover, since the relationship between culture and identity is one of cohesion, any disruption or erosion of culture will inevitably weaken the components of identity and trap it in a state of rigidity and inertia.

4. The Arab World's Position on Globalisation

Globalisation seeks to unify identity and reduce the world to a culturally, economically, and socially homogeneous entity by imposing a set of values and visions aimed at dissolving cultural, intellectual, and economic boundaries between nations. Abdullah Ibrahim, one of the critics of globalisation, asserts that globalisation has emerged as

though it were imposing new conditions upon the history of human societies, to redirect their traditional course towards a set of predetermined values and visions. "It raises the slogan of unifying values, perceptions, visions, purposes, and goals as an alternative to fragmentation, dispersion, division, and the intersection of cultural systems."

However, in making such claims, globalisation reduces the world to a single concept and overlooks its true nature, as a diverse formation of powers, wills, affiliations, cultures, and aspirations. (Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm, 2001, p. 128)

"Globalisation, through its pursuit of imposing a unifying model, transforms into a logic of exclusionary globalisation one that integrates rather than unifies, delegates rather than builds, and divides rather than unites. As a result, the contemporary Arab individual, under the impact of successive shocks that have shattered traditional references, comes to believe that what is occurring beyond their environment is an inevitable evil one that must be mastered and that all necessary means of preparedness must be secured in order to confront it." (See 'Abd al-Bāqī al-Harmāsī, p. 36)

This preparedness is expressed in the attempt to answer the question: "Who are we?" They respond by returning to all that is dear to them, their ancestors, their religion, their language, their history, their values, their customs, their institutions and by uniting in cultural groups in the form of a tribe, an ethnic group, a religious community, and, ultimately, in the form of a civilisation. (Samuel Huntington, 1999, p. 10)

This results in a kind of "illusory protectionism," to use the expression of Abdelbaki Hermassi, behind which fundamentalist movements and positions often conceal



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

themselves. The dominance of a single cultural model, as globalisation seeks to impose, "does not lead to solving the problems of identity and belonging; rather, it may, on the contrary, give rise to ideologies that promote new notions about the preservation of origins and the purity of identity." Globalisation, then, will lead to new hierarchies, as it fosters loyalty to the Other, reinforces conformist thinking, reduces the self to a passive object, excludes evolving components, and chaotically triggers social unrest. ('Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm, 2011, p. 156)

This will inevitably lead to a "clash of civilisations," against which defensive and protectionist reactions such as invasion and domination on one side, and self-centred withdrawal by the weaker party on the other, prove inadequate. Such responses stand in stark contrast to openness, dialogue, and interaction with the Other through a dialectic of exchange, mutual contribution, and active participation in building human civilisation.

The concept of globalisation is closely linked to the idea of centrism, and indeed works to reinforce it. In order to confront the storm of this overwhelming wave of globalisation, Arab societies turned to expressions of selfhood by attempting to formulate projects derived from their specific cultural context, through the revival of images from the past as a form of symbolic resistance to this wave.

"As the tendency toward centrism developed, it introduced a concept related to the very premise of centrism itself: the concept of universality or globalisation. Thus, the ambition expanded to encompass the entire world, but from within a Western perspective derived from the aforementioned premise, while maintaining a hierarchy that

privileges and differentiates between what is Western and what is not.” (Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm, same page)

Amidst these transformations, Arab culture has been unable to develop distinct features of its own, remaining captive to a set of unresolved challenges, some related to the methods of modernisation, and others to the nature of its relationship with the past and its compatibility therewith. “The distorted wager on modernisation has given rise to a counter-thinking system that calls for clinging to the self and constructing a fixed, distinct cultural identity, one that urgently seeks a model borrowed from the past. Through that model, it is believed, complete purity is attained, particularity is revived, and the risk of dissolving into the Other is averted.” (Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm, 2008, p. 122)

This inward-looking vision issued fixed judgments and specific perceptions, based on the premise that a return to the past provides all the answers to the present, thus guaranteeing the preservation of identity. This narcissistic perspective stems from the colonial experience, which was driven by a desire for domination. While colonialism resorted to military force through wars, the expansion of influence, and the subjugation of the world by power, globalisation has surpassed this traditional method by formulating a set of binding laws and regulations that must be adopted. It has utilised modern communications technologies to disseminate and impose these values globally.

What the media and communication networks promote and aim to achieve is the shaping of public consciousness in such a way that it accepts the framework of Western values. Globalisation does not recognise diversity; instead, it advocates unification through the imposition of the Western



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

model. Inevitably, "any unification that does not acknowledge diversity will lead to the resurgence of narrow particularisms, nourished by closed ethnic and religious references driving societies into the prison of fixed identities." (Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm, p. 155)

The critic Abdullah Ibrahim argues that globalisation's claim to create a world unified by shared concepts, values, and objectives contains a fallacy. For within the framework of the convergence hypothesis promoted by globalisation lies "a series of contradictions and disharmonies that undermine that very hypothesis." The encouragement of traditional societies to import foreign models exposes the incompatibility of those models with the original value systems of such societies. On the one hand, this reveals a lack of coherence; on the other, inciting these societies to adapt to Western values renews the possibility of dangerous and unpredictable reactions.

Furthermore, the rush to unify the world, as globalisation advocates, leads to the emergence of individualistic tendencies and the assertion of a singular new system responsible for authority, an outcome that "opens the door to greater contestation and an intensification of conflict." (Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm, p. 158)

The model that globalisation seeks to impose is a value system marked by foreign particularities that are incompatible with other models. Moreover, the imposition of such values opens new centres of conflict and fuels disputes, as well as tendencies towards fanaticism, narcissism, and domination.

Arab culture has long remained subordinate under the sway of opposing dualities that have characterised

contemporary and modernist Arab discourse. Arab intellectuals have worked to entrench these dualities within a referential framework for what reason produces in the age of globalisation. One such duality identity and globalisation strongly affirms this trajectory, as noted by Ali Harb when he states: "The duality of identity and globalisation has intensified the core of the question and fuelled debate within intellectual circles and political domains in the Arab world and beyond. This is evident from the abundance of works addressing globalisation from the perspective of its impact on identity and culture."

In this sense, the identity-globalisation duality surpasses and at the same time encapsulates the contradictions that have long been prevalent, such as the dualities of tradition and modernity, authenticity and contemporaneity, or particularism and universalism. "Each era has its own issues, as well as its own breakthroughs and inventions." (Alī Harb, 2014, p. 9–10)

As a result of these illusory dualities that have dominated Arab thought, globalisation has been met within the Arab context by two opposing positions. The first calls for self-enclosure and clinging to the past, aiming to preserve a pure and untainted identity composed of elements drawn from a past regarded as the source of proper knowledge and absolute certainty. The second promotes unconditional openness, a surrender to Western or Other culture, and immersion within it to the extent that one becomes a part of it, perceiving reality through the perspective of the Other.

Critics, including the Iraqi critic Abdullah Ibrahim, have warned against the entrenchment of such oppositional dualities. Indeed, Ibrahim lays the foundation for a thought of difference that emerges from within these very dualities,



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

offering an optimal alternative for overcoming them, if not eliminating them. This notion of difference calls for dialogue and interaction with the Other, standing alongside it in genuine participation in the construction of the present.

The Arab mind, therefore, is experiencing a state of fragmentation and disintegration, rendering it captive to specific preconceptions or, more precisely, subject to pathological illusions of conformity that deny and erase its presence in the present. It has been rendered incapable of innovation, locked in intellectual stagnation and mental rigidity, unable to pose questions or propose alternatives in response to emerging intellectual issues and epistemological transformations.

This is a condition of *imbalance* that has led Arab thought to a point where truth and illusion are perceived as equal. Hence, it is necessary to “legitimise the question of difference, for we discredit everything related to ourselves through a conformity that devalues it. The obsession with reducing everything to either the past or the Other has created a fragmented reality, and this opposition must be resolved by reconfiguring our relationship with reality and its external influences across time and space.” (Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm, p. 82)

The entrenchment of the idea of conformity within Arab culture and particularly within cultural identity will inevitably lead to its extinction and dissolution. To preserve it, the notion of *difference* must emerge, for this is the only way out of the closed loop of self-enclosed identities. We are now facing a global phenomenon in which groups with distinct identities actively participate. To claim that we, as Arabs, will build our civilisation based on a promise made

to us is something that must be rejected, disbelieved, and stripped of all legitimacy.

What is taking place is the interaction of people, identities, and ideologies within a shared space. It is far preferable for this space to be governed by the conditions of partnership, the liberation of intellectual endeavour, the safeguarding of personal and public freedoms, and the promotion of rational, civil thought. As Abdullah Ibrahim states, "new patterns of thinking have begun to replace the obsolete ones." (Ibid., p. 82) This statement, if it reveals anything, reflects the critic's forward-looking, reformist vision of the Arab nation's future, one in which the embrace of *difference* becomes the alternative that ensures its survival and continuity.

However, the pressing question remains: has the idea of *difference* truly been realised?

Results

What we can conclude is that cultural identity is neither fixed nor static; rather, it is open and dynamic. However, such openness must occur within a conscious framework. "There is no fixed or motionless identity identity is formed, internalised, absorbed, and developed. The more open identity is, the more it renews itself and becomes creative; and the more closed and self-sufficient it is, the more it resorts to violence and destruction, as it cannot bear the presence of others. Thus, identity must be understood as a form of freedom those who belong to it must not be constrained by illusions of isolation, uniqueness, or absolutism." (Ahmed Siraj, p. 55) However, this openness and renewal must be accompanied by awareness and a



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

recognition of inalienable truths. What is required is the preservation of the essence, without compromising it.

The fear and anxiety surrounding globalisation are vastly exaggerated. True, it carries both positive and negative dimensions, but this requires an awareness of its meaning and essence. As globalisation is "an ongoing historical process in other words, a lived inevitability then the issue is not an ideological or political choice of whether to accept or reject it. Rather, it is a question of how to engage with it and absorb it. Those who reject globalisation outright in the name of protecting cultural particularity and identity are doomed to extinction and those who surrender to the wave and let it carry them wherever it will are likewise doomed. The solution lies in becoming conscious of the meaning and essence of globalisation and integrating into it with that awareness without becoming mired in debates over behavioural assumptions that do not touch upon the essence." (Turki al-Hamad, p.122–123)

Globalisation is not a foreign inheritance, neither "European" nor "American", but rather a historical movement necessitated by the conditions of the age. It is the product of specific contexts and circumstances. However, this does not preclude engagement with it, provided that such engagement is conscious and deliberate. Conscious interaction with globalisation ensures the continuity of the self and prevents both complete immersion and absolute isolation.

As it has been stated, "Globalisation and identity should not be confined within a framework of conflict; their true destiny is integration. The diversity of identities is the foundation of globalisation, and the more people's identities

are supported and grounded in their cultural references, the more fruitful and beneficial globalisation becomes. Mutual enrichment based on the logic of particularity is what gives the concept of globalisation its profound human dimension." (Abd al-Bāqī al-Harmāsī, p. 37)

The discourse of identity must be subjected to critique to break free from the constraints that hinder progress. This is because "the identity we once imagined to be immune to all change could not withstand the sweeping winds of transformation that struck the region. Likewise, the identity we understood to possess a definitive historical answer one that would enable it to withstand the tests of history with all their serious and complex realities failed to respond to any of the questions raised by these new, multifaceted developments. As for the myth of a fixed, immutable identity unrevisable, based on a specific reference framework, and capable of regulating and directing individual wills it has broken down. It was unable to grasp new developments, and its referential system has become disconnected from contemporary realities. Accordingly, there is now an urgent need to renew Arab identity." (Samir Morcos, p. 36)

The claim that identity is closed and fixed has not enabled it to withstand ongoing developments. This has led to a state of crisis and fragmentation, making it necessary to re-examine and critique identity constructively and objectively. There is no such thing as a "sacred identity" or one that is immune to scrutiny; every identity is subject to review and reassessment.

Arab societies now assume the role of guardian and defender of identity. This closed posture has led them into a state of disorientation. As Ali Harb notes, "Identity has been



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

approached with a logic of guarding and defending, which only increases its fragility. We lose what we seek to preserve to the extent that we lose our intellectual identity and our capacity for effective initiative and creative action. Guarding ideas is what kills them, and the closure of identities is a sign of their weakness. A strong and flourishing identity, by contrast, is one that is capable of expansion and dissemination through effective critical engagement one that questions assumptions and certainties as much as it defines values and standards, or gives rise to new transcendent concepts and living ideas.” (Alī Ḥarb, p. 24)

What we need is a change in the way we engage with our cultural identity. We must strive to critique the foundations and fixed principles of an approach that generates change through the creation of realities and the production of truths. We do not need to defend our identity as much as we need a product through which it is renewed, an identity that becomes more deeply rooted the more it is revitalised. (See *ibid.*, p. 24)

This reflects the inability of Arab culture to open space, generate ideas, and foster innovation to confront the challenges of globalisation. What it truly needs is a change in the way it engages with its identity. This identity has been confined within a closed framework, rendering it incapable of preserving its authenticity while also unable to protect itself against waves of Western expansion.

As it has been stated, “The problem with our cultural identity is not, as we tend to believe or imagine, the onslaught of globalisation and Americanisation, but rather the failure of its bearers to reinvent and reconfigure it within the context of unfolding events and developments, or in

light of technological advances and historical transformations. The real problem lies in their inability to globalise their identity, universalise their society, digitise their economy, rationalise their politics, and cosmopolitanise their thought and knowledge. That is the true issue we are fleeing from." (Ibid., p. 25)

This does not imply a complete drift toward globalisation, nor is it a call to adopt it as it is. Instead, globalisation must be received with awareness and conditional openness through processes of reshaping and reinvention that preserve authenticity and foundational principles, while simultaneously keeping pace with ongoing developments.

The theological rhetoric promoted by globalisation, raising the banner of unifying concepts, visions, perspectives, and values as a universal path for all humanity, contains many fallacies. The imposition of a single model of the world contradicts the diversity that characterises all of humanity. Human groups differ ethnically, religiously, and culturally, and cannot be reconstituted according to a single standard.

"No matter how culturally comprehensive globalisation becomes, it will never entirely eliminate cultural specificities. Just as there has never been a wholly pure, original culture (pure particularity in any society or group throughout history), there will never be a global culture that completely erases local specificities. Rather, the process will move along two tracks of interaction and interpenetration provided that isolationist defensive mechanisms and excessive cultural withdrawal are avoided, as these lead to the total destruction of cultural identity and personal particularity." (Turki al-Hamad, p. 22)



Soumission : 06/10/2024 Acceptation : 04/05/2025 Publication : 15/07/2025

Isolation, then, is not the solution, as it leads to the loss of identity and its distinctive character. Nor is unconditional openness, which contributes to the complete erosion of identity. What must characterise cultural identity is dialogue, interaction, constructive critique, and difference. It is the absence of these qualities that truly threatens identity.

Bibliography

- Ahmed Siraj. *Al-Huwiyya al-Maghribiyya bayna Rūmā wa-l-Islām* [Moroccan Identity between Rome and Islam]. In *The Eighth Arab Report on Cultural Development: Experiences, Challenges, and Horizons*. Beirut: Arab Thought Foundation, 1st ed., 2015.
- Al-Hamad, Turki. *Al-Thaqāfa al-‘Arabiyya fī ‘Aṣr al-‘Awlama* [Arab Culture in the Age of Globalisation]. Beirut: Dār al-Sāqī, n.d.
- Al-Harmāsī, ‘Abd al-Bāqī. “Al-‘Awlama wa-l-Huwiyya al-Waṭaniyya” [Globalisation and National Identity]. *Al-‘Arabī* (Kuwait), no. 484 (January 1999).
- Ḥarb, ‘Alī. *Azmat al-Ḥadātha al-Fā’iqa* [The Crisis of Hypermodernity]. Casablanca and Beirut: Al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-‘Arabī, 1st ed., 2015.
- Ḥarb, ‘Alī. *Ḥadīth al-Nihāyāt: Futūḥāt al-‘Awlama wa-Māziq al-Huwiyya* [Discourse of Endings: Globalisation’s Openings and the Crisis of Identity]. Casablanca and Beirut: Al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-‘Arabī, 2nd ed., 2014.
- Huntington, Samuel. “Al-‘Arab wa-Ṣidām al-Ḥadārāt” [The Arabs and the Clash of Civilisations]. Translated by Muḥammad Sa‘īdī. *Anwāl al-Maghribiyya*, July 1999.

- Ibrāhīm, ‘Abd Allāh. “Ḥiwār al-Thaqāfa wa-l-Qiyam fī al-Mujtama‘āt al-Taqlīdiyya” [The Dialogue of Culture and Values in Traditional Societies]. *Thaqāfatunā lil-Dirāsāt wa-l-Buḥūth*, no. 17 (2008).
- Ibrāhīm, ‘Abd Allāh. *Al-Markaziyya al-Islāmiyya: Ṣūrat al-Ākhar fī al-Mikhyāl al-Islāmī Khilāl al-Qurūn al-Wustā* [Islamic Centralism: The Image of the Other in the Islamic Imagination During the Middle Ages]. Casablanca and Beirut: Al-Markaz al-Thaqāfi al-‘Arabī, 1st ed., 2001.
- Ibrāhīm, ‘Abd Allāh. *Al-Muḥāwarāt al-Sardiyya* [Narrative Dialogues]. Algiers: Manshūrāt al-Ikhtilāf; Beirut: al-Dār al-‘Umūmiyya lil-‘Ulūm Nāshirūn, 1st ed., 2011.
- Ibrāhīm, ‘Abd Allāh. *Al-Muṭābaqa wa-l-Ikhtilāf: Baḥth fī Naqd al-Markaziyyāt al-Thaqāfiyya* [Conformity and Difference: A Study in the Critique of Cultural Centralities]. Beirut: Al-Mu’assasa al-‘Arabiyya lil-Dirāsāt wa-l-Nashr, 1st ed., 2004.
- Marqus, Samīr. *Huwiyyāt fī Sharāka ‘alā Qā’idat al-Muwāṭana al-Thaqāfiyya* [Identities in Partnership Based on Cultural Citizenship]. In *The Eighth Arab Report on Cultural Development: Arab Integration – Experiences, Challenges, and Horizons*. Beirut: Arab Thought Foundation, 1st ed., 2015, p. 30.
- Mohammed Al-Rumaihi, *Culture: That Easy Yet Elusive Concept, Al-Arabi Magazine* (Kuwait), no. 482 (January 1999).
- Mohammed Amara, *The Dangers of Globalization on Cultural Identity*, 1st ed. (Cairo, Egypt: Nahdat Misr for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, February 1999).