

THE EAST AND THE WEST: THE MOMENT OF UNITY OF TWO POLES

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ABSTRACT

The West and the Islamic East have inevitably influenced each other throughout history. To a certain extent they can be described as two sides of a single imaginary coin. That is why they can be discussed as two sides of the same phenomenon starting with the time Islam. Prof. Khalilov has rightly defended the idea that if the idea of civilization is closely connected with religious values we could then speak of civilizations as corresponding to their religions. In this brief work I shall try to trace how philosophy and ways of thinking as a whole have developed and influenced the relations between the civilizations and their results. In recent history academics have been turning with increasing frequency to ancient history in search of arguments to support the division between the East and the West. I intend to analyze this phenomenon by showing that while in the past the problem of a divided world did not exist, today it has moved to the fore and can be discerned as the primary cause of practically all the global challenges.

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The West and the Islamic East have traveled along similar roads, remaining loose contact and inevitably influencing each other. To a certain extent they can be described as two sides in a single imaginary expanse, which means that they can be discussed as two sides of the same phenomenon starting with the time Islam came into being. Prof. Khalilov has rightly written that “were the idea of civilization closely connected with religious values we could have spoken of civilizations that corresponded to their religions.”¹

It is not my task here to analyze the civilizations related to the above concepts; I intend to trace how philosophy and ways of thinking as a whole have developed and influenced the relations between the civilizations and their results. In recent history academics have been turning with increasing frequency to ancient history in search of arguments to support the division between the East and the West. To put this differently: while yesterday the problem of a divided world did not exist, today it has moved to the fore and can be discerned as the primary cause of practically all the global challenges.

It is worth noting in this case that the East in the East/West antinomy is mainly the Islamic East, while the Far East, an object of Western influence in the form of conquests and many years of colonialist policy, has largely preserved its independent thinking, original culture, and national specifics. India, China, and Japan are pertinent examples of this. The Japanese have no fears of possible Europeanization of the younger generation (something imposed elsewhere by the demands of the times and conditions of life today): they are completely confident in the spiritual richness of their religion and its indissoluble bond with the nation’s values. They know that this contact with spirituality and the awareness of the sanctity of their national culture and traditions will inevitably return the young people to their sources, their religion, and their shrines.² The East is frequently associated in people’s minds with the Far East and the Islamic East, however this phenomenon deserves special discussion.

The Middle Ages were an important milestone in the philosophical development of the East and West. As distinct from other regions, which remained loyal to ancient traditions (China and India two pertinent examples), the East and the West were greatly influenced by Christianity and Islam – new religions sent to them from above. They deeply affected the way of thinking, morality, and mode of life, generated new ideas of the world as a whole, and created conditions in which a new philosophical trend could develop. Significantly,

many of the philosophical systems and theoretical ideas of the Middle Ages (some of them not more than mere embryos) inspired all sorts of conceptions and ideas later advanced and systematized by other thinkers.

Christianity and Islam are separated by about seven centuries yet philosophical thought in the West and the East moved forward along parallel lines and according to certain regularities. An analysis of the ideas about the world shaped by these two religions and their impact on philosophical thinking as well as the roads traveled by philosophical trends in the process of their development reveals (with few exceptions) practically identical stages in their progress:

1. The initial period of Christianity and Islam and their perception of world philosophy: an analysis of their self-preservation and preservation of their dogmas.
2. The systematization and mutual influence of Christian and Islamic philosophies.
3. The separation of religion from philosophy: science and technology become the moving force behind philosophical thought in the West; religion regains its lost domination in society in the East. Let us take a look at each of these periods.

The long time span that separates the two religions makes it hard to put the initial period into a specific time framework. The monotheist religions exerted a great influence on the philosophical thought of people with rich cultural heritage and provided an impetus for a new trend in their development. I have in mind, first and foremost, the new treasure trove of knowledge—the Holy Book, which acquainted people with divine revelations and promoted esoteric knowledge. Second, the Prophet became the role model for society and its members. The phenomenon of man acquired new dimensions: man is Allah’s most inferior and sinful creation; man is the Divine Word; man represents Allah on Earth; man is the vehicle of Divine promise and, finally, man is the Creator.

Developing in different historical time spans, the West and the East covered practically identical routes during the **first period**. In both regions the new religion, after negotiating the initial stages of self-preservation, reached the highest ranks in the social hierarchy. On the other hand, the mechanism of inheritance was obviously at play through which the old word perception acquired new hues and the old dogmas were enriched with rationalism. Finally, the new religion, being deeply rooted in the past, professing different ideas, and having numerous specific distinctions, remained immutable. In this period, irrational consciousness

¹ S. Khalilov. *The East and the West. Toward the Humane Ideal (Philosophical Sketches)* (Baku: Azerbaijan University, 2004), 142 (in Azeri Turkish).

² See *Natsionalnaia Religiiia Iapontsev* (Moscow: Shinto, Kraft, 2008), 43-44.

which influenced both ways of thinking, began developing as one of the trends of independent thinking.

The first period tilled fairly fertile soil for systematized philosophic thought to present it in a more or less complete form (the second period). Valuable scientific works appeared the West and in the East; a new generation of great philosophers and thinkers created the own philosophical schools and trends.

During the **second period** the West acquired scholastic philosophy (the 9th-16th centuries: It was a time when patristic philosophy was systematized and the sciences and knowledge created by most philosophers were used in the interests of religion. It was during this peril that Western philosophers plunged into the deepest layers of Islamic thought and through familiarized themselves with Ancient Greek philosophy. This triggered a new trend in Western philosophical thought. It should be said that in the 1 lth-3th centuries Eastern philosophy passed through a very complex period which enriched it with new knowledge. Some describe this period as the Renaissance of the Islamic East.

At that time philosophical thought was powered by “knowledge of others:” Ancient Greek and Islamic philosophy in the West and Ancient Greek philosophy in the East, should be said that philosophical thought in the East was systematized within a very short period thanks to its close association with Ancient Greek philosophy. It even reached heights from which it could determine the trends Western philosophy, several centuries older than itself, should follow.

The history of philosophy describes the **third period** as the Renaissance of Western philosophy, which is normally dated to the end of the Middle Ages. For several reasons, however I have dated it to the period under review. Indeed, traditional periodization is limited to West which means that Eastern philosophy should be pushed aside. Applied to Eastern philosophy this approach excludes Western philosophy and its history from the textbooks on history of philosophy. On the other hand, it was during this period that the first prerequisites of the future East/West polarization appeared together with their different approaches: philosophical thought, science, and activities designed to reorganize society. Finally, any wishing to acquire a complete picture of medieval philosophical thought should study third period. It is for this reason that I deemed it expedient to reject some of the classify conventions in order to include this period in my analysis. I have written above that the third period covers the age of renaissance of philosophy in the West (the 16th-17th centuries) in the Islamic East (the 14th-17th centuries).

It should be said that the third period has several very distinctive features: in the West and in the East religion is alienated from philosophy; in both regions religion is being “reformed,” which has created a situation where philosophy in the West and religious thought in the East have developed into independent entities. Bertrand Russell in his *Wisdom of the West* wrote about this period in the history of Western thought during which, with the invention of the printing press, new ideas began spreading far and wide. It was this invention that finally undermined the old power: the Bible written in the common language and printed in many copies became widely accessible, which means that the Church could no longer control the minds of its followers.³

The second specific feature is associated with the science-religion interconnection and looks even more important since it is a continuation or rather an addition to the first period. While in the West science sought to replace religion, in the East religion tried to replace science, which, in the final analysis, created contradictions. In the East philosophical thought grew out of religious soil while in the West it developed on scientific soil. In other words, *Western man cognized science but lost the idea of its association with spirituality; while Eastern man cognized faith but lost its call to science.*

It should be said that attempts to replace science with religion or to explain it from a religious position are still going on in the Islamic East: the efforts to find references in the Koran to discoveries made in the West in order to substantiate Islam’s positive and progressive features have never ended.

The West and the East tried to extend their territories and increase their material riches. The t was driven by its small territory and scarce natural riches; scientific achievement armed the West with weapons and navies with the help of which it conquered and colonized distant countries and expropriated their riches. In this way the West multiplied its material wealth, its power, and its influence the world over. At the same time, this wealth had to be spent rationally on new weapons, a new way of life, corresponding policies, etc. This is confirmed by Bertrand Russell, who described: trade and wars as the two main forces that have pushed technologies forward throughout human history.⁴ The West was rapidly gaining might and influence – this was recognized by all.

The new conditions created new thinking: Western man is always right; his claims to dominations are always justified, while Eastern man is doomed by his faith to meekness and

³ See B. Russell. *Mudrost Zapada* (Moscow: 1998), 264 (Russian translation).

⁴ Ibid, 447.

obedience. A look into the past will show us that the East was far ahead of the West in many spheres of human endeavor while the West knew how to use its achievements and raise them to a higher level of perfection. This went on as long as the East remained the producer of ideas and a “brain center.” The East stayed within the crippling limits of its religious dogmas obviously unwilling to escape. Toshihiko Izutsu wrote in his time: “Oriental philosophy, in turn, does not seem to be able to maintain its spiritual values in the face of the pressing problems ... as it did in the past. It will find itself utterly powerless in the presence of contemporary problems. For technology is no longer a Western phenomenon. It is rapidly extending its sway over the whole globe.”⁵ After liberating itself from the suffocating conditions of religious domination, the West in the Renaissance referred to religion and the long past Middle Ages to reject all discoveries, ideas, and plans (no matter how progressive) that reached it from the East. It is not surprising that the history of philosophy deliberately limited the history of the East to the pinching limits of the Middle Ages.

The West was inundated by scientific advances, technological progress, numerous discoveries, and information diversity, which caused concern in the philosophical community: indeed, the scientific and technical progress of the late 19th century pushed aside philosophy and man. Bertrand Russell was convinced that the gap between artistic and scholarly occupations was another novelty of intellectual life of the 19th century. The scientific way of life, Bertrand Russell pointed out, with its laboratories and experiments, seemed to suppress the spirit of freedom and quest indispensable for artists.⁶ It turned out that the above was nothing but a prelude to later events. In the 20th century, the achievements of philosophy, psychology, national thinking, sociopolitical thought, and technology (splendidly represented by Freud, Nietzsche, Adam Smith, Darwin, Marx, Engels, August Comte, Charles Pierce, and others) produced two devastating wars and the atomic bomb, the ultimate threat to mankind’s continued existence.

What was going on in the East while the West remained preoccupied with everything positive and negative taking place in its realm? Was it to remain engrossed in miniature painting, lyrical poetry, Koranic interpretations, new religious-mystical sects, and new prophetic hadith? No, Islam called on the faithful to study, to enlighten themselves, and to duly serve religion and the people. The Muslims, however, preferred to look at the world through the prism of dogmas and prescriptions. Jamal ad-din Afghani offered the following

comment: “I find it strange that our scholars divide sciences into Muslim and European and for this reason dissuade people from studying useful sciences. They fail to understand that science cannot belong to one nation: it belongs to those who master it”.⁷

The past of any Eastern nation abounds in crucial events. There is a more or less widespread opinion that Azerbaijan reached its highest point at the turn of the 20th century. This is true and this is logical. Here I am not talking about individual thinkers or even nationalities – I am talking of ideas, the importance of which cannot be squeezed into the frames of the East, of theories that should serve mankind rather than one nation. I have in mind activities that should reaffirm the place and role of the East in the system of values common to mankind. What does the East have for countering Western thinking today? Here is a very apt contribution from Giuseppe Mazzini: “We have the past, we have a great and glorious past, but we do not have a good history to illuminate all of this with the light of philosophy.”⁸

Late in the 19th century, Jamal al-Din Afghani asked the same question: “Wise science tells us about the causes and ties that exist between us. Isn’t it amazing that our scientists read *Sabri* and *Shamsul-barie* and are proud to call themselves founts of wisdom? Yet they never ask themselves what we are? What is electricity, steamships, a railway?”⁹ Afghani spent many years traveling in the West and Muslim countries in an effort to find an explanation for why the Islamic East had fallen far behind Europe in terms of social developments and sciences. He repeatedly raised these questions in the press and offered his suggestions at conferences. Being fully aware of the deeply buried causes he stressed: “If a Muslim intellectual and scholar embraced the democratic European traditions in their entirety he would be able to educate people and introduce them to all the contemporary progressive democratic ideas by relying on the Koranic teaching.”¹⁰ In other words, he wanted to set up an entity with the spirit of the East and the reason of the West.

Muhammad Iqbal, another Islamic philosopher, was also distressed about the unenviable fate of the Muslim countries. Educated in Europe, he played one of the key roles in building Pakistan as an independent Muslim state; his Western education and national thinking forced him to look outside the limits of the East; he was deeply concerned with the fate of mankind and tried to find a way out of the impasse. Having concluded that “the West is developing lopsidedly and is, therefore, deprive of morality and spirituality, while the East is steeped

7 J. Afghani, *Selected Works* (Baku: 1998), 32 (in Azeri).

8 G. Mazzini, *Estetika i kritika. Izbrannye statii, Iskustvo* (Moscow, 1976), 199.

9 Afghani, op. cit., 31.

10 Ibid.

5 T. Izutsu. *The Concept and Reality of Existence* (London: Islamic Book Trust, 2007), 52.

6 See B. Russell, op. cit., 447.

in piety and superstitions,” he realized that “both the East and the West should once more discover the world of the spirit for themselves.”¹¹ His European education made Muhammad Iqbal equally well versed in the problems of the East and the West; probably for this reason he is much more popular in Europe. In his *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, he did not go along with Muhammad ‘Abduh, an Egyptian thinker who insisted on reform of morality; he also rejected the idea of Europeanization of science and public life and of emulating the West and following in its footsteps, an idea favored by Afghani. In other words, he insisted on the revival of the Eastern spirit and ideas, something which both the East and the West needed.

Today, the West can be described as a complete construction in which “people are the means for building this impeccable structure; they are the conscious means. In the East people, as distinct from bricks, remind us ideal monuments of art with an independent and original structure, which means that it is very hard to build anything from them... There are no bricks in the East; there are pebbles, boulders, and unique monuments which individual activity has turned into works of art.”¹² Society can be described as a “construction” with a structure of its own guided by immutable rules and traditions. This relates to the idea of a world adjusted to the rules. This is the fate of both highly developed and developing members of society. In other words, the fate of a brick in the wall of a completed building is similar to the fate of a brick in an unfinished building or a mossy brick in a ruined structure.

Western philosophers have warned about the danger of spiritual impoverishment. Bertrand Russell wrote that the pressure of the organized nature of contemporary life has given rise to irrational thinking in philosophy as a riot against the threat to human freedom which, as was generally believed emanated from science.¹³ Because of this the West goes on producing, from time to time, philosophical trends and schools yet the East remains the main source of ideas. The West borrows from the East what it needs and distorts it with its own faults and shortcomings. On the other hand, instead of going deep into the idea and borrowing it in its totality, the West appropriates it and passes it for its own. If this proves impossible the idea is discarded. Today, the West is awakening to the Sufi ideas: UNESCO declared 2007 the Year of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi. There are scores of research centers in Europe and dozens of publications looking into the creative works of Ibn Arabi. Why this interest? What attracts

people to Sufism, a key Islamic conception, amid the steadily mounting negative attitudes toward Islam? The answer is: liberalism, loftiness, love of man, and fairness, that is, principles traditionally ascribed to Christianity. Mawlana and Ibn Arabi are accepted not as Muslim thinkers but as the vehicles of the well-known Christian principles. For some reason, however, the fact that Sufism forms the core of Islam and all the above mentioned principles and ideas are parts of the same teaching is carefully ignored.

The history of philosophy points to the following regularity: irrespective of conditions, time and space, irrational thought moves to the background from time to time in the face of rational thinking in order to survive. It is this type of thinking that has made a full-fledged human association between the West and the East possible. There is another side of the same coin: no matter how enthusiastic the West is about Sufism (Islamic mysticism of our days), it is equally implacable in relation to Islam.

Today the material is hailed to an unprecedented extent both in the West and the East; it determines the relationships between people. In view of its priority in science, technologies, politics, and economics, the West is obviously the winning side. At the same time, the East is craving “Europeanization” as the shortest road to stability and clarity; the West is seeking new knowledge. Its completed building does not need new bricks which have skipped adequate processing and, therefore, do not fit the brickwork. Meanwhile, each and every one can find a place amid the randomly scattered stones of the East. This explains why Eastern man is rejected in the West and is keenly aware of his second-rate status there. While Western man is at home in the East, today the “small individual monuments of the East have become the *rock quarries*” for Western construction projects. This is best illustrated by the emigration of talented young people to the West or, rather, by the fact that they are lured there.

Is there a way out? According to Prof. Khalilov, “the East is at a loss. If it can find itself, the road to salvation will be opened to it.”¹⁴ Today much is being done to recapture the old grandeur and might of the East at numerous conferences, in TV programs and in monographs, but the results are negligible. Indeed, against the background of the mind-boggling achievements of Western science, the East proves unable to offer an alternative science, and there is no need to do this. The East proves unable to offer a social structure alternative to the normal and self-regulating society of the West even though such an alternative is needed. Today, when Western philosophical thought is in a decline, both the West and the East need a new system of thinking.

14 S. Khalilov, op. cit., 174.

11 H. Abdulkerira. “Muhammad Iqbal” in *History of Islamic Thought*, 4 vols., ed. by M. M. Sharif (Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 1991), 405 (in Turkish).

12 S. Khalilov, op. cit., 170.

13 See B. Russell, op. cit., 448.

The situation is even worse than that: mankind, not merely Eastern and Western philosophy has found itself at a dead end. Any casual observer of the situation in the world will agree with Taha Jabir al-Alwani, who has written: “When humanity becomes so presumptuous, it becomes so overbearing and tyrannical that it destroys the environment by polluting the land, sea, and air. When the natural order is disrupted, Earth is inundated with diseases of excess and perversion. Entire continents are enveloped by hunger, destitution, pestilence, and destruction, and the majority of people are forced to live in misery: “Those who turn from remembering Me shall live lives of misery” (the Qur’an, 20: 124).¹⁵ This is true: mankind is living through a crisis of spirituality and consciousness hence the urgency for resurrection. I dwell on the sources of this issue because the Islamic East and the West are two sides of the same coin. This important factor should be viewed as the core of the problem and its solution. Numerous monographs, societies and alliances, research centers, etc. prove that the number of those concerned about the future of the West and the East is great indeed, however the number of those who are moving in the right direction is small. This is best confirmed by Afghani, who said: “If a nation has no philosophy, then even if its members are scientists, the sciences of this country cannot develop in the right direction and the people will find it hard to profit from them.”¹⁶ In other words, researchers should approach problems as philosophers.

Toshihiko Izutsu wrote: “It is my conviction that the time has come when we must begin making efforts to revive the creative energy contained in this kind of philosophy (i.e., *Oriental philosophy* – my insertion) in such a way that its spirit might be resuscitated in the form of a new philosophical world view powerful enough and alive enough to cope with the new problems peculiar to the new historical epoch into which we have just entered. Such, it would seem, is the intellectual task imposed on us. And in the course of carrying out this task, we Orientals shall and must learn precious lessons from the way contemporary Western existentialism is struggling to solve the problems of human existence in the very midst of the dehumanizing and dehumanized structure of modern society. I believe that only through this kind of intellectual collaboration will the much hoped-for philosophical convergence of East and West be actualized.”¹⁷

What is the gist of the above? The author looks at the East and the West not as isolated entities; he believes that we should look for a way out of the impasse in which mankind as a

whole has found itself. To realize this we should identify the problems both regions are facing today. Salahaddin Khalilov regrets that “the Western and Eastern people cannot achieve a shared position; the history of philosophy common to all mankind is presented not as an entity by as two alternative points of view.”¹⁸

The above suggests that to find a way out of the crisis we should take into account the problems both regions are facing and correctly apply all the boons and achievements of both the East and the West.

In order to move science and technology forward and improve his moral existence man has always looked for and found different roads leading to his aims. This quest is still going on; man will find new ways of dealing with these problems. An analysis of the history of philosophy and of the present decline of thought reveals that our knowledge is based on three main books: the Holy Book, Nature, and Man. Muhammad Iqbal, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Sheikh Taha Jabir al-Alwani, and others refer to two sources—the Holy Book and Nature. Azeri philosopher Salakhaddin Khalilov relies, besides them, on the intellectual world, the world of man.

Today, the fact that the East is trailing behind the West is frequently described as Islam’s responsibility. Jamal al-Din Afghani had the following to say on this score: “If any Muslim states that his religion contradicts all these sciences this would mean that he is an enemy of his religion. Religious manners are important evidence of man’s good breeding; a philosophical perception of the world follows suit.”¹⁹

In fact, an in-depth analysis of the issues and a careful comparison of its various aspects reveal that the spiritual crisis in Western and Eastern cultures is caused by a one-sided approach to this problem. We cannot ignore the fact that in natural scientific studies and the practical implementation of their findings the West has by far outstripped the East. We should bear in mind, however, that all the shortcomings that overshadow the achievements stem from inadequate knowledge or even oblivion of the precepts of the Holy Book.

Al-Alwani referred to divine revelation and nature when he wrote: “In conclusion, the two readings must be combined, for if they are not allowed to complement one another, the result will be an unbalanced understanding of reality. This is why the Islamization of Knowledge is such an epistemological and civilizational necessity, not only for Muslims but for humanity

15 Taha Jabir Al-Alwani. *Issues in Contemporary Islamic Thought* (London, Washington: IIIT Publications, 2005, 32.

16 J. Afghani, op. cit., 29.

17 T. Izutsu, op. cit., 32-33.

18 S. Khalilov. *National Philosophical Thought in the Islamic World and the Problems of its Teaching* (Baku: 2008), 4 (in Azeri).

19 J. Afghani, op. cit., 33.

in general, and why it may be considered a solution to the global crisis of contemporary thought.”²⁰ Muhammad Iqbal agreed with this: “With the reawakening of Islam, therefore, it is necessary to examine, in an independent spirit, what Europe has thought and how far the conclusions reached by her can help us in the revision and, if necessary, reconstruction, of theological thought in Islam. ...Surely, it is high time to look to the essentials of Islam.”²¹

Prof. Khalilov agrees with his predecessors; he calls on the East to use its advantages: “The moral and philosophical doctrines applied and taught in the East have not become priorities; they have not penetrated public life as if being created for abstract individuals. It is ignored that it is Islam that stands apart from all other world religions in its viability, its direct relevance to reality, scientific quest and practical content. It looks as if we have failed to grasp all the advantages of our religion.”²²

This does not set one religion against the other; the religious principles registered in the Bible and the Koran should be merged into unified religious principles to be used for the benefit of the people. It is correct understanding of the first book that makes for correct understanding of the second (Nature) and adequate conditions for its expression possible. Al-Alwani wrote in this connection: “The Islamization of Knowledge is primarily a methodological issue designed to identify and articulate the relationship between revelation and the real-existential.”²³ Man is the third book that completes the first two; he is not only a book but also the link that connects the other two.

There are also traditional sciences as well as – sciences that have not yet been discovered which study and will study man as an object. The problem is that all the minutest details of man’s material and spiritual life should be investigated. In this case the situation is different: man is a microcosm that reflects the meaning of existence. On the other hand, he himself is one of the main Books leading to the cognition of Absolute Truth; he is the third important component that makes the other two complete. In other words, man should be regarded in unity with the other two books, in their context and indispensable component for “reading” the other two books. According to Salakhaddin Khalilov, “the three books should be studied in their synthesized form, in interrelation with each other. Only in these conditions can the

idea stemming from the meaning of being be perceived in its entire and perfect form.”²⁴ This means that by plunging deeper into study of the material world (wisdom contained in divine revelation and nature), man acquires the opportunity to study the book of the mind – the spiritual world. In other words, the three books are mutually complementing elements of a single truth, its “gates”, because in an effort to cognize only “one part (one of the books), man moves further away from the whole (this is best illustrated by the current state of affairs in the East and West). The truth is in entity, integrity.”²⁵ Man is no longer forced to remain either in the physical or in the spiritual world. This helps him achieve maturity as an individual and member of society. The philosophers mentioned above relied on Islam. However, it was not Islam proper that was discussed, rather the sides’ philosophical positions: the Koran urges man to read all three books, to correctly understand them, and to apply this understanding in real life. This is the Islam’s real power.

My analysis relied mainly on Eastern philosophers and thinkers; I intend to explain this and up the above. In his time, Abu Turhan said that “all religions are stemmed from the East.” It is no accident that medieval Eastern philosophy remained for many centuries and remains today a source of ideas for the West and the spirit that inspired the physical body. This body is physically well-develops quite able to support itself but it has no spirit, and this is its huge shortcoming. On the other, this spirit is embodied in the East, which was chopped off as a head that could no longer produce ideas. I have dedicated my analytical effort to the following: united, the East and the West will achieve salvation. This is neither Europeanization nor globalization – this is the unity of two substances.

At all times the East remained a source of ideas and creative activities. In view of known fact that history tends to repeat itself, we turn mainly to Eastern thinkers. It should be said that the West has created numerous philosophical schools and trends far removed from men and morality. This makes it hard (but not impossible) to identify the ideas called on to serve the interests of mankind. In fact, what do we know about the idea of “Europeanization” concealed in the darkest corners of a Western philosopher’s lofty ideas? Emaciated ideology, decadent morality, burning craving for everything that can be used to one’s advantage, and the desire to prove o and superiority.

20 Al-Alwani, op. cit., 32-33.

21 M. Iqbal. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 1989), Chapter “Knowledge and Religious Experience,” available at [www.allamaiqbal.com].

22 S. Khalilov. “Filosofskie etiudy,” *Jurnal filosofskikh i obshchestvenno-politicheskikh nauk*, 3-4 (2006), 119.

23 Al-Alwani, op. cit., 35.

24 S. Khalilov, “*Filosofskie etiudy*”, 121.

25 Ibid, 125. Insertions in parenthesis belong to me.