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## **Beyond Cross- Cultural Philosophy: Towards a New Enlightenment\***

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### **Abstract**

*The acculturation of humanities from the late 1980ies onwards led not only to imagined different worlds (e.g. West / Islam), postmodernity overshadowed also common grounds of world's philosophies. Christianity and Islam share far more than what might separate them, and we find Islam in „the West “as Christianity „in the East“. The Logos of Life Philosophy as developed by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (1923-2014) strives towards deciphering the deep layers of philosophy and its common grounds. Tracing back to Gnostic, Platonic (neo-platonic) and Islamic shaped philosophies - Ikhwan as-Safa will serve as an example - the Logos of Life / Aql Al-Kulli (universal reason) will be historicized in the following while introducing approaches towards a New Enlightenment (A.-T. Tymieniecka) as an alternative to the current crisis in meta-sciences.*

**Keywords:** *Cross-Cultural Philosophy, Logos of Life, Gnosis, Ikhwan as-Safa, Crisis of Sciences, New Enlightenment*

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### **From otherization to a common point of departure**

The term cross- or intercultural philosophy puts its emphasis on a cultural embedding of thinking, thereby assuming cultural differences as a main distinguishing criterion. Even if the term transcultural philosophy seems to be more appropriate, it still remains caught in the postmodernist culturalization of philosophical heritage and more recent tendencies.

The insistence on cultural differences as a main theoretical tool while fading out historic, social or other shared universal dimensions, values and heritage, paved the way for an, even if not implicitly intended, otherization (Said 2011), be it on the level of discourses and their analysing or not least in reality. Despite efforts which emphasize the inseparable unity of philosophy – outlined in *Introducing Confluence* (Kirloskar-Steinbach: pp. 7-67) – the outcome of the culturally deduced otherization succeeded politically to initiate a polarization, which then entered subtly into shared world views and values, when for example Islam was confronted with Christianity and constructions like an invented *Clash of Civilization* (Huntington 1996) where forced, often militarily, into reality. The essentialist turn succeeded even to undermine the understanding of religious worlds of belief or faith while transforming religion into “civilization” or “culture”.

The fruits of the negative spin-offs of such a far reaching political motivated engineering are reaped fully only recently. Going hand in hand with a certain (self-) orientalizing, it seems that the great and most cruellest dreams of nineteenth centuries’ orientalist painters à la Jean-Léon Gérôme or Henry Regnault are put into the shadow of nowadays perfect staged horrific scenarios.

The counter-development and de-modernization, we are witnessing, does not have any historical roots in the traditions of the Arabic and wider Islamic world, looking back to a long tradition of tolerance and a culture of ambiguity (Bauer 2011). The mode of a peaceful and harmonious living together was regained again after a long and finally successful liberation struggle in the second half of the twentieth century. The current throwbacks point not only to a crisis of sciences but also to a crisis of philosophy and thinking in general.

While not ignoring that humans share cultural differences, such as languages, traditions, customs, habits and specific likings, the philosophical quest has a common ground. Deep philosophical questions raised on one part of the globe, coincide with the ones which are desired to be responded in other regions of the world. Where we are coming from, to where we are going to, eternity respectively infinitude or finiteness of beingness, creation or/respectively followed by auto-creation, justice and not least the striving after the quest of knowledge what life is – all these and more fundamental philosophical questions are universal ones.

Instead of juxtaposing different conceptual theories and methodical approaches, an in-depth comparison of different schools should, as Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (1923-2014) suggested, have its starting point from the deep level of the *logos*. The term *logos* reveals its belonging to a philosophical tradition, which is embedded in a Christian *Weltanschauung* (world view) and is

clearly reflected in the prologue of the gospel of John: „In the beginning was the Word (λόγος), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. “

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka conveyed her longing for the „beloved of the soul” poetically in her „Song of the ‘Promised One’ - A Christian Song of Song (A poetical fragment)“ (Tymieniecka 2011: pp. 229-239). Yet, as philosophy is essentially nor poetry nor aesthetics – even if philosophy often lacks a poetic and an aesthetic language – in her philosophy she clearly enmeshes recent scientific findings into her lines of philosophical argumentation. But:

*Understanding „Rationality“ and reason in its main modalities has involved us in cognitively unscrutinizable aporia, but we have also indicated that we should not seek piecemeal joining links but seek rather to unravel the common ground of their fluctuating becoming, which is not in the static ontological structure of eidoi, and not in speculative metaphysical principles, but in the flux of the individualizing becoming of beingness itself: the ontopoiesis of beingness in generative flux, the ontopoiesis of life. The new critique of reason culminating in the logos involved in the ontopoiesis of the logos of life. (Tymieniecka 2011: 4)*

Although Islam differs clearly from Christology, foremost the understanding of Jesus as God’s son ship and the incarnation of the logos in Christ, we yet do not find only a comparable terminology (*logos / aql*) in Islam shaped philosophies, but, moreover, both flows of ideas can be traced back to common philosophical roots.

A nearly identical understanding of the principles of individualizing of beingness, especially when following a comparison of the *Philosophy of Life* (A.-T. Tymieniecka) and the tenth century corpus *Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā’* (brethren of sincerity) is evident. While we will focus on this community of philosophers and scientists, as an Islam shaped or embedded philosophy and meta-science, we are fully aware that a New Enlightenment will include philosophies of different provenience, whether embedded in an African, American or an Asian and Oceanian tradition. Many philosophies of the world shared the principle understanding of unity as a micro-macro cosmological interplay. It is exciting and challenging in the same time, that we experience currently a revivification of cosmological philosophies all over the world.

The deeper levels, to be found on meta-religious and meta-cultural dimensions, which are sometimes referred to as ethics or, in the writings of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, as moral sentience, point to shared understandings while differences appear on the surface, the dogmatic levels of religious inspired philosophies. We might refer to the deeper dimension as the spiritual level of striving towards truth, which rarely is reflected consciously or „rationalized“ in systematic approaches. The tenth century scholarly collective of *Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā’* is, while bringing spirituality and reason into harmony, an exemption and therefore ideally suitable for being compared with the *Logos of Life* philosophy.

In this connection we will apply the theoretical and methodical approach of the universalistic epistemology (Khella 2007), turning more attention to the

deeper levels of epistemic knowledge below theories and world views (*Weltanschauungen*), towards the dimensions of pre-reflected ontology or better layers of values. Moral sentience corresponds with emotional and intuitive approaches towards truth. The unity of beingness is not graspable by conceptual or pure logical and methodological reasoning in general. A unity, not least including the human, is poetically called into awareness by Ġalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī (1207-1273):

Not Christian or Jew or Muslim, not Hindu,  
Buddhist, sufi, or zen. Not any religion or cultural system.  
I am not from the East or the West,  
not out of the ocean or up from the ground,  
not natural or ethereal,  
not composed of elements at all. I do not exist,  
am not an entity in this world or the next,  
did not descend from Adam and Eve  
or any origin story.  
My place is placeless,  
a trace of the traceless. Neither body nor soul.  
I belong to the beloved, have seen the two worlds  
as one and that one call to and know,  
first, last, outer, inner, only that breath  
breathing human being. (Rūmī in Barks 2004: 32)

In the European tradition intuitive epistemic approaches were introduced by Husserl as „intuition of essences“ (*Wesensschau*). Intuition, as knowledge beyond the cognitive, might be also ascribable to the unconscious and to the collective archetypes acting within it in a transreligious manner (C.G. Jung) (Tougas: 8). Jung called attention to the crisis of rationality from a deep psychoanalytical perspective:

*Modern man does not understand how much his “rationalism” (which has destroyed his capacity to respond to numinous symbols and ideas) has put him at the mercy of the psychic “underworld”. He has freed himself from “superstition” (or so he believes), but in process he has lost his spiritual values to a positively dangerous degree. His moral and spiritual tradition has disintegrated, and he is now paying the price for this break-up in world-wide disorientation and dissociation. (Jung: 48)*

While the critical questioning of European concepts of reason remained practically monologous – although Jung mentioned and praised eastern and oriental spirituality –, it is the great merit of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka not only to develop phenomenology further to the *Philosophy of Life*, but to do so, while conversing towards not least an inclusive and therefore new enlightenment which is winged by a lively philosophical exchange, going far beyond the likewise rare habit to list one or another written source of an oriental philosopher.

This philosophical innovation, I will shortly outline here, thereby bridging time and space, while bringing the philosophy of *‘aql al-kullī* (universal

reason) of *Ikhwān as-Ṣafā'* into harmony with the *Logos of Life* philosophy of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka.

As deeper we descend to the groundings of philosophy as more interlacing of seemingly different religions and cultures are to be excavated. The shared metaphysical quest of Islam shaped philosophy and somehow occidental phenomenology shall be the point of departure. Before we will have to climb down from superior levels of philosophical concepts, down to the low-lying levels of moral sensitivity, we first will have to immerse into history. Historicizing the long awareness of the *logos of life* is required, in order to show that for extended periods in time, two parallel and contradicting flows of understanding life shaped the debates beyond religious and cultural differences.

### **Christendom and Islam**

A wide range of philosophical orientations, shaped by Christianity and later Islam, can be traced back historically to a common ground. To start with dwelling on the level of *Weltanschauung* and world views, the historical milieu out of which non-systemic philosophical schools in early Christendom, emerging during the imperial Roman and later Byzantine dominance over Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Asia Minor and North Africa of the first six centuries AC, are to be depicted shortly.

These various knowledge oriented schools are to be seen as a continuation of early hermetic and gnostic thinking of mainly Egyptian and to a lesser extent also Persian (*Mazdean*) provenience – the later shown by Corbin with a special focus on Suhrawardī (Corbin 1979). The most important source therefore is the Coptic-Gnostic Library of *Nag Hammadi*, containing fifty-three texts, named after the Egyptian finding place in 1945 and nowadays preserved in the Coptic Museum in Cairo. Even if the codex can be dated back paleographically to the first half of the fourth century, this does not say anything about the date in which the texts were written originally (Schenke: 2). Among the corpus we find several flows of ideas, hermetic initiation writings, a fragment of Plato's *Politeia* (State), non-canonical gospels (Book of Thomas), sayings of Jesus (*logoi*), apocalyptic writings and texts praising the Egyptian female deity Isis or the much later gospel of Maria Magdalena (Papyrus Berolinensis 8502), who received the last words of Jesus on the cross.

The corpus testimonies a period of transition, in which various path of knowledge orientation coexisted and a canon, was not yet established – a development which took centuries to be finalized, beginning with the anti-gnostic polemics of the church father Irenaeus (ca. 135-202) in his *adversus haereses* (Against Heresies), written around 180 AC, and continuing till the year 380 AC when the Byzantine emperor Theodosios I. proclaimed Christianity as the sole state religion. A process which finally mouthed in the division of the church in 451 AC following the Council of Chalcedon, when many Christian schools, the Coptic, Ethiopian, Syriac, the Malabar Christians in India and Armenians left the Imperial Church. After escalating intolerance, the Byzantine Empire turned more and more into an aggressive one.

The non-revocable breaking away from the tolerance of plurality inside the church led most probably to the downfall of the Byzantine Empire. The crisis of knowledge and science went hand in hand with intolerance, repression and the exploitation especially of the rural population in the vast provinces of the Empire. The raising of Islam and its fast spreading from the first half of the seventh century onwards, cannot be seen independently from the historical context. When Islamic troopers entered Egypt in the year 640 AC, they were welcomed by the Coptic Church whose leadership was forced so far by the Byzantine Empire to live in underground.

This leads us to the following conclusion. The non-imperial Christianity, among them the Coptic Church, was far from being hostile towards Islam. In contrary, the understanding of justice founded its common ground. It is here not the place to dive deeper into church history, but it is well known that asylum was given to the Muslim community by the Christian King of Ethiopia in around 614 AC. We find in the Koran many parallels with especially non-canonical sayings (*logoi*) of Jesus, for example in a saying – probably dating back to the first half of the first century, as the destruction of Jerusalem is not mentioned – transmitted in the gospel of Thomas, in which receiving of any interest while lending money is clearly rejected. Instead, money should be given to the one who will not pay back. In the Koran the prohibition of interest is provided by religious law (*šarī'a*) and the alms-giving *Zakāt* (*Zakāh*) is a pillar of Islam. It is out of doubt and not necessary mentioning at this point, that the common understandings between Christendom and Islam by far outweigh differences. In the apocryphal traditions the congruities are even more evident, particularly in Christology and Docetism. In a recent study I have shown these interrelations in more details (Quintern: 2015, pp. 97-120).

Apocryphal gospels circulated in Arabia, where many Christians, dissenting from the imperial church, found shelter from the persecution from the Roman and Byzantine Empire. The encounters of the Prophet Muhammad with Christian monks and bishops during his extended journeys are well known. Many bishops seats where spread over the Arabian Peninsula and in the Sassanid Empire during the life time of Prophet Muhammad. We should not wonder, that the church father John of Damascus (*Yūhannā ad-Dimashqī*) (c. 675-749), who served for a certain period also the Umayyad Caliphate, criticized Islam as a heresy, implying that he did not see Islam as a different religion. It seems that the differentiation between Christianity and Islam stems from a later date. It is not the place here, to debate these questions, but it is intended, to briefly touch the long period, which is particularly suitable to serve as a pool for the deciphering of over lacing ideas, interpretations and values.

#### **From Gnosis via Plotinus to Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā'**

As the wider space around the Mediterranean and its vast hinterland was inter-connected by a large variety of philosophical and religious schools and networks, communicating often along trading routes by land and sea, the exchange of ideas was flourishing. The current thinking, which is still dominated by national orientations, should not be projected into history. Not only was

Plato's design of the state (*politea*) a possible description of the Egyptian state, based on the justice-teachings of *Ma at*, but also the writings of Aristoteles show parallels to Egyptian philosophy. This holds true also for many aspects of medical knowledge. Plato's understanding of the sperm originating in the bone marrow is an example therefore (Kolta 2000: p. 163).

The Eurocentric contrasting of "the rational thoughts of Hellenic φιλοσοφία (= love of wisdom) and the mytho-theological concepts of the ancient Egyptians" (Stemmler-Harding: 135) is a pillar of thinking in discontinuities. Cheikh Anta Diop (1923-1986) was among the earliest African scholars, calling attention to the problem of discontinuity in the history of science and philosophy and the detachment of Egypt from its African context.

Already the church father *Clemens of Alexandria* (150-215) – he deduced Christian teachings from platonic concepts and was influenced in the same time by gnostic schools – underlined that the Greeks were not the inventors of philosophy, as these were „rising as a light among the peoples, before reaching later also the Greeks.“ (Clemens of Alexandria: p. 68). It seems that Hegel in his philosophy of history was not aware of this early critique of proto-eurocentrism. He imagined Greek as the beginning of philosophy (Hegel: p. 122). Marx followed in Hegel's footsteps, not only regarding his teleological concept of history (*end of history*), but also with regard to the disconnection of Egyptian and Greek art, while writing that „Egyptian mythology never could have been the fundament or maternal womb of Greek art“ (Marx: p. 61). Different and even conflicting European schools shared eurocentrism as a pillar of a more and more systematized feeling of superiority, which became intellectualized science in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Concepts of discontinuity are still a main obstacle for an understanding of the continuously and universal interwoven flow of philosophy. The later concept of the „Renaissance“ faded out the most important contributions of Arabic-Islamic sciences, philosophy and medicine to fifteenth century innovations and inventions materializing in foremost southern Italy. Europe is presented as the beginning and end of philosophy and science in the same time. Needless to say, that Eurocentrism has become obsolete. It is the right time, to rediscover common grounds in world's philosophies, not least regarding shared human values and orientations in a wider cosmological context. Historization, as a theory and method, is a tool to excavate these deeper layers.

The quintessence of various gnostic teachings, among them the Christian gnosis, flourishing in the first centuries parallel and in dispute with the church, is (self-) knowledge based salvation. These communities, among them Christian, refused the establishment of the church as a hierarchical institution and were justice oriented. One of the main polemics of Irenaeus was directed against female ministering. The target audience of the gnostic communities were the poor. As sayings of Jesus in the gnostic gospels show, he refused to preach to the rich. The healing of the soul – in contrast the physicians healing of the body – was the motivation for evolving knowledge. As the divine flows through all beings, knowledge is to be understood not only as knowledge of God, but also of the cosmos, the nature and the self.

The gnostic knowledge path can be understood as a communicative interplay in the unity of life. An epistemology, even if not systemized in a teaching building, but nonetheless a spiritual-philosophical orientation. And, of crucial importance, to know was not tantamount to obedience to the authority of the church.

With the establishment of the institutionalised church, a separation between clergy and lay people went hand in hand. The bishop of Rome, Clemens (between 90-100 AC), demanded absolute submissiveness, when stating that God delegates his governmental power to leaders and rulers on earth (Pagels: 67). Later Irenaeus will stress, that it is better if somebody knows nothing, not a single cause of the origins of created things, than to persist in the belief of God and in love, instead of swelling in science (*scientia*) while breaking away from love, which makes man lively (Rudolph: p. 401).

In contrast to the understanding of knowledge of God as required by heads of the church, the gnosis opened up knowledge-paths to the individual, independent from his/her societal and ecclesiastical status. Furthermore, knowledge was not understood as contradicting spiritual love. But, the human was capable to come nearer to God, independently from the church and the authoritarian image of God she taught. While the church required submission under the dogmatic teaching, the gnosis motivated human auto-creative path towards an unfolding of (self-) knowledge. These two contradicting paths to knowledge continued to compete the following centuries. The famous theses of the Parisian Bishop Tempier in 1270 were mainly directed against the widely read and discussed teachings of Averroes (*Ibn Rušd*, 1126-1198), who, following here *Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā'*, taught the human ability to know autonomously. Scientific verification was understood as the highest level along the path of human knowledge perception (Khella 1994: p. 516). Ibn Rušd differentiated prophecy from science, giving the example of medicine. The prophet founds a religion while the physician has the duty to heal which has to be carried out by a medical doctor (Averroes: 173).

In the philosophy of science of *Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā'*, developed in the mid of the tenth century, the gnostic auto-creative knowledge path came to a high peak. Between the gnostic schools and *Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā'* in the tenth century, the Egyptian philosopher Plotinus (205-270 AC) was an important connective link. His works (*Enneads*) were edited by his student Porphyry (ca. 233-301/305 AC). Although Plotinus was a critic of gnostic teachings, he was influenced by them.

The teachings of the emanation of the *nous* (reason) out of the One's free will is essential to the philosophy of Plotinus. Being originates in a creative act of divine will, which is limitless free. The free will, by which human beingness is endowed with, has to be understood as a humanization of the One's free will. In the Nag Hammadi Corpus (*Tractatus Tripartitus*) we find the following notion: „for the free will which was begotten with the totalities was a cause for this one, such to make him what he desired, with no one to restrain him.” (Robinson: 72)



The free-willing down-fall of the nous/logos goes hand in hand with the striving towards eternal salvation through returning in the spheres of the immortal divinity. In the works of Plotinus as well as for Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā', the coming down of the noetic soul out of the One Multiplicity or *'aql al-kullī* (universal reason) into the temporal and mater-bounded beingness, emanates out of the One, the Aristotelean unmoved mover (*primum movens*). The aspired yearning to re-becoming One is a continuous interplay of the universal soul (unity) and the partial or individuated souls (multiplicity) in the web of life. The self-reflecting reason, emanating out of the One, actualizes itself in the soul, which, endowed with wise sensitivity, transforms hyllic matter before becoming a specific being in life's shaping (*physis*).

Regarding the centrality of the sensitive and intellectual soul and its emanation out of the one, we find the most common ground in the philosophy of Plotinus and Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā'. Plotinus describes the soul as self-reflecting/reasoning and sensitive. For Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā' life is the substance of the soul which emanates continuously out of it like the light out of the sun: "In the same way life emanates out of the soul on the bodies in as much as the life is substantial for the soul. It is then the form which constitutes its being." (Diwald: 439) But what makes man a human-being, who is distinguished from the life of plants and animals, and yet at the same time woven into the inseparably meshed life? Here Plotinus underlines the dianoetic capacity of the human soul as the specific and essential characteristic of human beings.

The statement that human being is the „pride of creation“ is qualified by Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā'. As a parenthesis between the chapters (in total 52 treatises or *Rasā'il*) of basic sciences / natural sciences and humanities (anthropology, politics and religious studies) the collective brings in the „*The Case of the Animals versus Man Before the King of the Jinn*“, an ethical fable, reminding to treat animals human. The fable imposes the obligation to the human to disclose an ethical based relationship with animals, anticipating current discussions on animal ethics and the intelligence of non-human life, here animals, before introducing the understanding of the unfolding of life.

The anthropology of Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā' is developed from the realization of the individualizing soul, which flows through the web of life. While basing on an evolutive assumption that life advances from minerals and plants to animals and humans the latter unify micro-macrocosmologically the interwovenness of everything-there-is-alive. The human being is endowed with reason, being capable to decipher the interplay of live creatively. In this context Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā' make the only distinction regarding the striving for knowledge. Human beings are indiscriminately endowed with reason. Evolving knowledge and sciences is the destiny and definition of human beingness.

Interestingly enough, Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā' – as we find the reception of several peripatetic writings in the corpus – strictly avoid any hierarchal thinking towards the human, let alone any racist categorization. A clear overcoming of the Aristotelian splitting of the human into men and slaves, rulers and ruled, which is at best an asocial stratification and deduced by Aristoteles in his *Politics* (Aristoteles: p. 16) as natural. In general any categorization along „race“,

„class“ and confession was alien to Islam shaped philosophy. The racist categorization of the human is the main derailment of the European Enlightenment, followed by the disintegration of the human from nature and cosmos.

### **On the crisis of science**

When Husserl wrote *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (1936) discussing not only philosophical thoughts of Kant and others, but also theoretical and methodological approaches, like empiricism and the mathematization of sciences, he underlined that, with the objectivistic restriction of the idea of science, it had lost its embedding in specifically human questions. The decoupling of philosophical quests from sciences might have been the most severe disruption of a constructive path which came to its blossom in Europe with the phenomena „Renaissance“ in the 14th century, a flourishing which developed from a long scholastic adaption and reception of mainly Arabic knowledge. The understanding of science, interwoven in philosophical-spiritual dimensions, was finally broken with the positivistic turn. The systematization of epistemic violence is rooted in this historical context. Husserl did not omit specific critiques of the dualistic-splitting of the human by the invention of the category *race*. The year 1936, when the *The Crisis of European Sciences* was published in German, coincided with the passage of the racist Nuremberg Laws (*Nürnberger Gesetze*).

The term „race“ was introduced by Kant into German philosophy and language, but had its predecessors already in Carl von Linné's *Systema Naturae* (published 1735-1768, 1773), in which he classified Africans on the lowest step of humanity. When Kant wrote in his *Menschenkunde* (1782), that the “race of the negroes” would only adopt an education as servants, who will be „drilled“<sup>1</sup>, then were these racist pretences examples for the pre-history of dualistic-racist epistemic concepts which later had been further developed into an applied system, mouting into the further differentiation of science. In the second half of the 19th century disciplines like anthropology and ethnography became academically highly esteemed disciplines.

Adolf Bastian, who is often referred to as one of the key contributors to the development, if not the father of ethnography, stated in 1889 that people of Africa would diminish into the nothingness, in other words, he assumed in his studies that these parts of the human population would become extinct in their physical existence. For Bastian the psychic disappearance carried more weight than the physical extinction of the African peoples (which depends on the almighty course of history and was not avoidable). Bastian was profoundly convinced that the ethnological originals had to be delivered as soon as possible into the safety of literature and museums (Bastian: 181).

“Objects” could only be classified in an epistemic system when the living beings and the cultural “artefacts” had been shred out of the constructive interplay of live before. Africa became one of the most suffering victims, whose life and history was sacked, before, quite ironically, a ‘lack’ of history of the continent was preached in Europe. The colonialist-violent epistemic turn (compared to preceding more religious universal-scholastic and Renaissance concepts) went even further. From now on, Africa, where people were damned

to vanish, became a field of experimentation. The institution museum, where not rarely the „collection“ of African skulls served for an „anthropometric“ verification of an European superiority complex, became the most obvious expression of the destructive turn European sciences had approached to. Without doubt, Africa was not the only victim of a dualistic epistemology which became anthropology.

In *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* Husserl did not go beyond a critical review of abstract philosophical concepts. But the fundamental questions he raised are of relevance to the present debates:

Scientific, objective truth is exclusively a matter of establishing what the world, the physical as well as the spiritual world, is in fact. But can the world, and the human existence in it, truthfully have a meaning if the sciences recognize as true only what is objectively established in this fashion, and if history has nothing more to teach us than all the shapes of the spiritual world, all the conditions of life, ideals, norms upon which man relies, form and dissolve themselves like fleeting waves, that it always was and ever will be so, that again and again reason must turn into nonsense, and well-being into misery? Can we console ourselves with that? Can we live in this world, where historical occurrence is nothing but an unending concatenation of illusory progress and bitter disappointment? (Husserl: pp. 6-7)

Husserl's questioning of an "illusory progress" might have been targeted at historical-materialism (Marxism) or the general thinking in dimensions of progress, which dominated the glorification of industrialization also in the United States (*Fordism*). On a meta-level the understanding of progress as a result of industrialization was not substantial different, when comparing the developments in the Soviet Union and the United States in the late twenties of the last century. Both ideologies, preaching an industrialized progress, were based on concepts of nature which was reduced to serve passively the needs of a growing urban population in the big cities, be it New York or Moscow.

The philosophies of history in the West and the East (Soviet Union and later the states of the Eastern Block or Warsaw Pact) showed no difference when it came to the deeper level of cosmological questions, not least regarding the relationship between "man" and nature. Marx followed the Hegelian stigmatisation of religion as "Opium for the people". The so called "oriental rural communities" in India were nothing else than an obstruction or a barrier which reared up for nothing against railways, telegraphs and others "bringers of civilisation". Colonialism brought progress to Asia, and to rebel against colonialism, was against the natural laws of productive forces. The Historical Materialism or Marxism was the most developed off-shot of the imperial Enlightenment which founded its obvious expression already in the French invasion into Egypt under Napoleon in 1798. On the other hand it was Marxism which sensitised for social questions in a historical context. But unfortunately nothing but in a national and later European context, while marginalising the anti-colonial struggles in the world. A restricted understanding of justice which run against its limits, losing its attractiveness for the desire of a better future.

When Marxism suffered its downturn with the collapse of the Soviet Union in the end of the eighties of the last century, it became obvious that the whole conception of the European Enlightenment collapsed. The result of the dissolution of certainties at the end of the twenties century resulted in a drift into an unrecognizability of the real. The former competitive social question (vs. “liberty of the individual”) was replaced by a cultural turn. From now on it was not any more the question “What is Life?” or “What is justice?” but “Who am I?” In the humanities a particularism forged into the laps which, resulted in the disintegration of the human into cultures, ethnicities, confessions or gender – a differentiation that mouthed progressively into the fragmentation and dismemberment of the unity of human beingness.

A new Enlightenment will be challenged not only to regain the unity of the human, but will also have to overcome the split away of the human from life.

### **Unfolding Life – Towards a New Enlightenment**

It was Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka who introduced the call for a “New Enlightenment” into the ongoing debates of *Islamic philosophy and Occidental Phenomenology in Dialogue* (IPOP). We are awake to the boundedness of the terminological allocation “Islamic” and “Occidental”. Unifying apparent different approaches towards the real might go beyond mapping philosophy to a place in space and time.

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka proposed a kind of archeological approach which unveils the deep driving forces of life’s onto-poietic unfolding. “The new in-depth scientific research into concrete reality is digging deeper and deeper into its generative processes, is unravelling more and more the hidden networks of life. (Tymieniecka 2011: p. 5)

This said, research will have to decipher the driving forces which unfold life out of its communicative networks. A meta-scientific approach which has to go beyond narrow disciplinary boundaries, which had been drawn since old enlightenment’s disciplinarity (mineralogy, botanic, zoology, anthropology) and splitting life more and more into smallest units. In favour of the laboratory the fine web of life was torn into pieces.

A progress which led to a laboratorisation of the real, in which mathematical deduction and modelling replaced the communication of the human with everything-there-is-alive, and, while doing so, failing to direct the creative path of life. Life, forced into the laboratory was measurable only under prefabricated conditions. New Enlightenment, while basing on the creative sentient essence of the logos of life, pursues a different path:

“I have called this sentient-cognitive streak of logico-sentience a dianotic thread that runs through the entire spread of life’s differentiated functions and which at the cognitive level of sentience makes us aware of and feel deeply a basic existential solidarity with all creation.” (Tymieniecka 2007: 23)

In front of our eyes we are witnessing the extensive destruction of the web of life, which not least resulted from the disembedding of sciences in philosophy. Nor a sense of a belonging to the wider cosmos, nor ethics, or, as

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka would say, moral sentience, were touching scientific questions. Sciences are still far away from having a basic existential solidarity with all creation as its starting point. The awareness of the “ontopoietic intentionality of life”, oriented by the “sentience of the *Logos of Life*” (A.-T. Tymieniecka) shall be a common ground of shared efforts towards a New Enlightenment. Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafāʾ, the tenth-century collective, based their trans-disciplinary “encyclopaedic” approach towards the scientific deciphering of the real on an understanding of the universal reason (*aql al-kullī*), which closely resembles Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka’s *Logos of Life*, unveiling a common origin.

Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafāʾ defined the world as a *macranthropos* (a “large” human being), while the human beingness – the Tymienieckan term refers to the temporality of “being” – is a microcosm (Diwald: 134). “Thus”, writes Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “all living beings are symbiotic beings, that is, they all partake essentially in the sentience that they share.” (Tymieniecka 2009: 141). Sharing sentience shall be a main motivating force towards a New Enlightenment.

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