RESEARCH ARTICLE	**The Philosophy of Values in the Thought of Mahdi Elmandjra**

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Abstract

This article aims to explore a concept previously overlooked in studies addressing the thought of Mahdi Elmandjra, namely, the philosophy of values. The research traces his publications to extract references related to this theme, focusing on his dedicated work, The Value of Values. In this book, Elmandjra addresses the problematic relationship between the Global North and the Global South, asserting that such a relationship cannot be built on solid foundations as long as the North views the South with condescension, refuses to respect its values, and insists that Southern countries adopt Western values and culture as a prerequisite for respect. Elmandjra also interprets the First Gulf War as a civilisational conflict waged by the West, not only for military and economic reasons but also to eradicate the values of the "other", those divergent from Western values. Hence, he calls for ethical engagement and mutual respect for values in North–South relations as essential conditions for global peace.

Introduction

When the name of the thinker Mahdi Elmandjra (1933–2014) is mentioned, the first image that typically comes to mind is the familiar image of a scholar in the field of foresight and futurism. While this image is accurate, it confines him to a well-known domain. It overlooks another area in which he wrote extensively and developed a distinct theory and a sharp, forward-looking vision: the philosophy of values.

Through his positions at UNESCO, particularly in the social sciences, humanities, culture, philosophy, and human rights, Elmandjra observed the crucial role of values in relations between nations and societies. This realisation led him to dedicate a significant portion of his intellectual efforts and writings to the subject, culminating in his authorship of *the value* of *values*.

Elmandjra demonstrated remarkable creativity in coining numerous terms, such as mega-imperialism, postcolonialism, first and second civilisational wars, neofascism, zelocracy, and fear-cracy (or phobocracy), among others. In examining the last two terms, he derived them from the word democracy. Democracy, as defined by Jamil Saliba in his dictionary, is a Greek word composed of two parts: demos, meaning "people," and kratos, meaning "sovereignty." Thus, the term signifies the sovereignty of the people. However, Elmandjra replaced the notion of "people" with "fear" in one instance and "humiliation" in

another to illustrate that the sovereignty of fear and hu-miliation marks the current era due to the neglect of values such as justice, equality, and respect for the other by global powers.

Accordingly, we raise the following central question: What role do values play in Elmandjra's thought, and how should they be employed in pursuing global peace?

Definition of the Philosophy of Values

The philosophy of values is the inquiry into what exists insofar as it is desirable in and of itself. It examines the worth of things, analyses them, and elucidates their types and origins. The theory of values (axiology) studies the nature, classifications, and standards of values. It consti-tutes one of the principal branches of general philosophy and is closely connected to logic, ethics, aesthetics, and theology.[1]

Some scholars consider philosophy itself to be a theory of values comprising three main branches:

1. **Logic**, which concerns itself with the value of truth.
2. **Aesthetics**, which investigates the value of art.
3. **Ethics** examines the value of action.

These three fields are known as normative sciences, and they are concerned with the study of the various manifes-tations of the human mind in its capacity to formulate value judgments.[2]

The term "criterion" refers to a tangible or intangible standard by which something should be measured or evaluated. Ethics, for example, serves as "the model of good conduct and the rule of right action". In axiology, it is "the standard for judging values". In aesthetics, it con-stitutes "the measure for evaluating artistic production", whereas in logic, it serves as "the rule for correct infer-ence".

Normative sciences are disciplines that go beyond merely describing what is to examine what ought to be. They involve the study of values such as truth, goodness, and beauty. Hence, logic, ethics, and aesthetics are normative sciences that result in evaluative judgments without issu-ing commands or directives. These sciences stand in

contrast to positive or descriptive sciences, which concern themselves with "what is. "[3]

According to Lalande, philosophy, more specifically, consists of two primary inquiries:

First, "A critical intellectual study of what is examined by the sciences in their true sense". Philosophy investigates the origin of our knowledge, the foundations and princi-ples of certainty, and seeks to uncover the causes of phe-nomena studied by the positive sciences.

Second, "A study of thought since value *judgments char-acterise* it". Thus, philosophy is regarded as a system comprising three fundamental normative sciences: **ethics**, **aesthetics**, and **logic**.[4]

Some divide philosophical sciences into two branches: "theoretical and practical", each comprising three disci-plines. "Theoretical philosophy" includes **metaphysics**, **epistemology** (the theory of knowledge), and **logic**, whereas "practical philosophy" includes **ethics**, **aesthetics**, and **psychology**.[5]

The aforementioned definition is noteworthy in that "logic" is treated as an independent field, distinct from the philosophy of values. It also considers "psychology" to be part of the philosophy of values or one of the nor-mative sciences, an opinion that, to our knowledge, is unique to that definition.

The concept of "value" in contemporary thought was initially defined in one of its dimensions as "anything of significance in perception and action among individuals and groups." Philosophical reflection on value has given rise to a newly established field denoted by the term "axiology." Accordingly, we may refer to it as the "science of values," "philosophy of values," or "theory of values."[6]

If we return to the etymological origin of this term, we find that its Greek root signifies "that which is precious" or "worthy of trust." From this, we may conclude that "axiology is the science concerned with what is precious,

[3] Ibrāhīm Madkour et al., *Al-Muʿjam al-Falsafī* (Cairo: Al-Hayʾa al-ʿĀmma li-Shuʾūn al-Maṭābiʿ al-Amīriyya, n.d., 1983), 188.

[4] André Lalande, *Mawsūʿat Lālānd al-Falsafiyya*, trans. Khalīl Aḥmad Khalīl (Beirut–Paris: Manshūrāt ʿAwīdāt, 2nd ed., 2001), 981.

[5] Yaḥyā Huwaydī, *Muqaddima fī al-Falsafa al-ʿĀmma* (Cairo: Dār al-Thaqāfa li-l-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīʿ, 9th ed., 1989), 64.

[6] ʿĀdil al-ʿAwā, *Al-ʿUmda fī Falsafat al-Qiyam* (Damascus: Dār Ṭalās li-l-Dirāsāt wa-al-Tarjama wa-al-Nashr, 1st ed., 1986), 42–43.

[1] Jamil Saliba, *Al-Muʿjam al-Falsafī*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, n.d., 1982), 214–215.

[2] Ibid., 161.

through the appraisal of its worth; and the associated philosophy is a philosophy of values or a theory of values It is no secret that value-oriented activity is as old as human conduct itself indeed, as old as human will. When one asks about "the meaning and worth of existence whether life is worth the effort of being lived, it confronts the question of value. It further inquires into our actions' various possible or desired ends to determine whether they deserve our pursuit by their inherent worth. "[7]

If we trace the history of philosophical thought, we observe that every philosophy inherently contains a value-oriented endeavour. However, the value problem did not emerge as an independent field of inquiry until the modern era. Researchers concerned with the study of value have explored human needs, inclinations, and desires and whether these needs pertain to the economic, emotional, intellectual, moral, spiritual, political, educational, or artistic domains.[8]

What is certain is that all significant philosophical systems are, in essence, philosophies of value in that they claim to provide principles encompassing thought, action, and behaviour. Through their efforts to define the nature of truth and wisdom, they implicitly determine their value and establish a hierarchical framework of values that culminates in responsible reflective action.

The value experience addresses a fundamental question: "the meaning of life or the significance of existence." Once human beings reach a stage of awareness, they discover that neither science, on the one hand, nor faith in science, on the other hand, is sufficient to determine objective truth or the moral obligation of action toward it. For this reason, value-based reflection and, specifically, the philosophy of values enable the human mind to endow life with a meaning through which individuals can define their destiny, which necessarily implicates the world's fate.[9]

Values and Their Importance

The question of values and their role in achieving economic, social, and cultural development occupied a central place in the thought of Mahdi Elmandjra. Having spent a considerable part of his life in Western countries and served as Assistant Director-General of UNESCO for the Social Sciences, Humanities, Culture, Philosophy, and Human Rights, he was deeply impressed by the richness and diversity of Western cultural components.

He observed that this cultural richness is closely tied to a shared history, collective memory, and a specific geo-social and cultural environment. Consequently, it reflects a shared system of values.

Elmandjra held that culture cannot be unthinkingly transferred from one region of the world to another without considering the particular values of others and showing respect for them. He also noted a reluctance among certain Western officials to engage meaningfully with individuals from other cultures. He attributed this hesitation to ignorance of the other or, as he stated, to arrogance and self-sufficiency.

For this reason, he showed increasing interest in other cultures while firmly maintaining his cultural identity. He believed that cultural alienation is the principal cause of the death of creativity and innovation. This conviction led him to the view that the Global North had made minimal efforts to understand, engage with, or speak the language of the South. Accordingly, he argued for the urgent need to prioritise systems of values in intercultural and international relations.

Globalisation, with its embodied values, including political, economic, cultural, and military dominance, has contributed to the absence of civilisational, cultural, and axiological dialogue that respects the way of life of the other.

At one point, Elmandjra identified three principal concerns that troubled the West: demography, Japan, and Islam. However, he later revised this perspective, recognising that today's anxieties had replaced yesterday's anxieties. The fear of immigration had supplanted demographic concerns; China had taken the place of Japan as the new geopolitical rival; and the apprehension toward Islam had not only persisted but also intensified, becoming openly visible. This fear was continually reinforced by associating Islam with terrorism, a link that, according to Elmandjra, helped to spread linguistic and media terrorism. He underscored the irony that "peace" is uttered a billion times an hour throughout the Islamic world.

As he stated, "The Iraq War is, above all, a war against non-Judeo-Christian values. To be convinced of this, one need only pause to consider the substantial role played by the neoconservatives in shaping the ideological and military orientation of United States policy."

If the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 inaugurated what Elmandjra termed the "age of phobocracy," then they also established a reign of fear, one that was exploited and instrumentalised to serve Western interests and to justify aggression against the Islamic world, portrayed as a

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[7] ʿĀdil al-ʿAwā, *Al-ʿUmda fī Falsafat al-Qiyam* (Damascus: Dār Ṭalās li-l-Dirāsāt wa-al-Tarjama wa-al-Nashr, 1st ed., 1986), 45.
[8] Ibid., 45–46.
[9] ʿĀdil al-ʿAwā, *Al-ʿUmda fī Falsafat al-Qiyam*, 48–49.

terrorist threat. While the apparent objective of this war may have been terrorism, its underlying purpose, according to Elmandjra, was the waging of war against an entire system of values that diverged from those of the West.[10]

Human awareness of the value of values is a value in itself. Elmandjra thus asserted that "values are the difference that makes the difference."[11] He further stated that "the future of humanity today depends on the degree of importance we grant to the human spirit and on the mutual respect for values values which constitute the foundation for life to continue in dignity. Hence, the increasing importance of values in our troubled times, where indifference to the suffering of others has become socially acceptable."[12]

Suppose Samuel Huntington acknowledged in his book The Clash of Civilisations that Mahdi Elmandjra was the first to coin the term "civilisational war" and agreed with him that the nature of future conflicts would be civilisational. In that case, the difference between their positions is profound.

Huntington argued that the threat of an impending civilisational war would emanate from the non-Judeo-Christian world. This implies that Judeo-Christian values are the supreme values and that all others are of a lower rank. According to this view, the solution lies in imposing Judeo-Christian values upon the rest of the world. Any rejection of Western values would be seen as the source of danger, and the war, consequently, would originate from those who refuse them. Hence, the West must engage in preemptive war, with the Iraq War being a case in point.

Elmandjra, by contrast, maintained a preventive stance, asserting that the purpose of future studies is precautionary: to raise awareness and correct the course of development. Since the root of forthcoming civilisational wars lies in differences in values, the solution, in his view, is mutual respect for values, which he referred to as cultural communication between diverse value systems. This would establish the principles of dialogue and respect for axiological pluralism, which alone can lead us toward genuine universality, not the denigration of the values of the non-Judeo-Christian world.[13]

On every occasion, Elmandjra emphasised the role of values and cultural diversity in shaping future global relations, positively or negatively, depending on how significant powers interact with other nations. In 1978, he stated, "We must give the highest priority to the hierarchy of values, to demonstrate that the current crisis between the North and the South cannot be resolved through mere adjustments."

In the following year, he reaffirmed in another report that "cultural diversity, whether on the national or international level, is among the most urgent psychological and spiritual needs of societies and will remain so. It could also become a growing source of conflict within societies themselves, as well as in their relations with others."

Later, in 1986, during his appearance on a television programme in Tokyo concerning the future of international cooperation, Elmandjra once again stressed that the causes of forthcoming conflicts will be primarily cultural.[14]

During his twenty-year tenure at UNESCO, where he was responsible for the organisation's cultural sector, Elmandjra consistently defended his thesis that the culture specific to each society had not been granted its rightful place in the analysis of international relations.

In an interview with Radio France Internationale, broadcast on 6 October 1991, he stated that the Gulf War was about to begin, an assertion based on his analysis of a speech by U.S. President George H. W. Bush. In that speech, Bush declared that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, by seizing large petroleum reserves, would impact "our work, our way of life, and our freedom, as well as the freedom of countries friendly to us." Elmandjra indicated that the threat was not merely political, economic, or even strategic but rather one that more broadly endangered the American nation and the West's value system.[15]

Thus, he argued that the term "globalisation" implies that Western military power stands ready to intervene to

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[10] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Qīmat al-Qiyam* (Morocco: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-ʿArabī, 2nd ed., March 2007), 7–10.

[11] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Qīmat al-Qiyam* (Morocco: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-ʿArabī, 2nd ed., March 2007), 14.

[12] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Qīmat al-Qiyam* (Morocco: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-ʿArabī, 2nd ed., March 2007), 15.

[13] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Qīmat al-Qiyam* (Morocco: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-ʿArabī, 2nd ed., March 2007), 289.

[14] Mahdi Elmandjra, ʿAwlamat al-ʿAwlama: Min Ajl al-Tanawwuʿ al-Ḥaḍārī (Morocco: Manshūrāt al-Zaman, 2nd ed., 2011), 26.

[15] Mahdi Elmandjra, ʿAwlamat al-ʿAwlama: Min Ajl al-Tanawwuʿ al-Ḥaḍārī (Morocco: Manshūrāt al-Zaman, 2nd ed., 2011), 27.

protect and uphold the Western value system, regardless of the cost and consequences that such wars may have for the rest of the world. For this reason, Elmandjra stressed the importance of recognising cultural values within international relations and establishing cultural communication to achieve global concord and lasting peace.

He further asserted that the real danger arises from globalisation's infused cultural arrogance of the West, an arrogance sustained by indifference to the values of other nations and their right to exist. According to him, this would inevitably lead to global cultural authoritarianism. An explosion could threaten the entire world if these notions were not revised.[16]

Importantly, Samuel Huntington acknowledged that Elmandjra was the first to coin the term "civilisational war," yet he did not agree with Elmandjra's assertion that the Gulf War was the first such war. Instead, Huntington regarded it as the second, identifying the Soviet–Afghan War (1979–1989) as the first civilisational war. Both conflicts began with direct military invasions and evolved into wars between civilisations representing divergent value systems.[17]

This sense of superiority in Western thought concerning the alleged supremacy of Western values is also evident in the work of Francis Fukuyama, particularly in his book The End of History and the Last Man. Fukuyama explains what he means by "the end of history," namely, that with the collapse of several ideologies once considered rivals to liberal democracy, such as hereditary monarchy, fascism, and communism, liberal democracy would gain legitimacy without viable alternatives. This, in turn, would serve as a measure of its validity, marking it as the final stage in the evolution of human ideologies and the ultimate and definitive form of political governance.

Fukuyama argued that other forms of governance contained serious flaws and structural irrationalities that contributed to their collapse. In contrast, liberal democracy is distinguished by the absence of those inherent defects that plagued previous systems. This is not to suggest that liberal democracies, as they currently exist, are free of social problems or injustices; instead, such issues are not intrinsic to the system itself but stem from the shortcomings of those responsible for its implementation.

Accordingly, the failure of any state today to consolidate a liberal democratic regime would inevitably result in a regression to markedly inferior forms of governance, such as theocratic rule or authoritarian military dictatorship. For Fukuyama, liberal democracy thus represents the optimal and final model of political governance.[18]

Edgar Morin maintains that barbarism is intrinsically linked to every form of civilisational development; indeed, it constitutes one of the components of great civilisations. He supports this view by citing Gaston Bouthoul, who stated that "the history of great societies is the history of wars." Morin also concurs with Walter Benjamin's assertion that "every document of civilisation is simultaneously a document of barbarism."[19]

From this, we understand that Morin views European history as a history of wars, implying that this civilisation is founded upon conflict and is inherently rooted in barbarism. This perspective allows us to grasp the values underpinning Western civilisation's true nature.

Morris Berman argues that American civilisation is in decline because it has lost faith in itself. As a result, it engages in false wars such as the Vietnam and Iraq wars, marked by increasing superficiality and arrogance and accompanied by diminishing humanistic content. This, he asserts, is evidence of its spiritual death, brought about by the erosion of its core values.

Berman contended that the collapse of civilisation occurs only when four specific conditions are met:

First: A rapidly widening gap in social and economic inequality.

Second, it is low in effectiveness in addressing social and economic problems.

Third, increasing illiteracy is accompanied by a corresponding decline in critical thinking and public intellectual awareness.

Fourth, hollow and rigid cultural content can lead to spiritual death.

[16] Mahdi Elmandjra, ʿAwlamat al-ʿAwlama: Min Ajl al-Tanawwuʿ al-Ḥaḍārī (Morocco: Manshūrāt al-Zaman, 2nd ed., 2011), 28.

[17] Samuel Huntington, Ṣidām al-Ḥaḍārāt wa-Iʿādat Ṣiyāghat al-Niẓām al-ʿĀlamī, trans. Ṭalʿat al-Shāyib (Dār Sutoor, 2nd ed., 1999), 399.

[18] Francis Fukuyama, Nihāyat al-Tārīkh wa-Khātim al-Bashar, trans. Ḥusayn Aḥmad Amīn (Egypt: Markaz al-Ahrām li-l-Tarjama wa-al-Nashr, 1st ed., 1993), 8.

[19] Edgar Morin, Thaqāfat Ūrūbbā wa-Barbariyyatuhā, trans. Muḥammad al-Hilālī (Morocco: Dār Tūbqāl li-l-Nashr, 1st ed., 2007), 8.

He believes these four conditions apply directly to American civilisation in the twenty-first century.[20]

The First Civilisational War

Elmandjra considered the Gulf War, which began in the 1990s, the "first civilisational war." In his view, it went beyond the tense bilateral relations between Iraq and Kuwait. The conflict, he argued, must be understood in light of broader transformations within the international system, specifically, the transition from a Cold War dynamic between European socialist states and Western capitalist nations to a new global order marked by U.S. dominance following the Cold War's end.

With this shift, the nature of global conflict changed: no longer an ideological struggle between Marxism and capitalism, it became a civilisational confrontation centred on values, a clash between Judeo-Christian values on one side and other human value systems, such as those found in Buddhism and Hinduism, on the other. Islam came to be considered the primary enemy of the West at large.

This, Elmandjra believed, was the reason Iraq was targeted first and why the civilisational war escalated in places such as Palestine and Somalia, an extension of what he identified as a new form of colonialism. He also saw the genocide in Bosnia as part of this same trajectory, aiming toward the same objective.[21]

Indeed, the West's hostility toward all Islamic values, Elmandjra argued, led to the strategic orientation of NATO's military doctrine toward combatting everything associated with Islam. An example of this perspective can be found in an article by the French official Jacques Baumel, published in Le Monde on 1 April 1993, in which he wrote:

"The gravest threats we face are those revealed by the Gulf War. The most serious among them come from Islamic countries, which are sinking deeper into poverty and turning to Islamic fundamentalism in search of remedies for sufferings for which we are responsible... Let us beware of this diabolical arc stretching from Algeria to Pakistan, composed of countries striving to acquire and produce weapons of mass destruction."

From this premise, he concluded:

"In the face of these multiple threats, France and Europe must rely on three essential capabilities: a substantial rapid-deployment force capable of intervening swiftly in any region; a space-based information and surveillance system; and a missile defence shield to counter any form of barbaric bombardment."[22]

The First Civilisational War revealed three fundamental gaps:

1. **A gap between North China and South China**, which transcends the economic and political realms and extends to a civilisational value gap.
2. **There is a gap between the governments of the Third World and their people**, which is particularly evident in Arab and Islamic countries.
3. **A generational gap within the Third World concerning attitudes toward civilisational values**, where Elmandjra observed that the younger generation is more engaged with these values, shows no inferiority complex in the face of traditional colonialism, and possesses greater confidence in itself and its own civilisational identity.

Another critical issue revealed by the Gulf War was the total loss of credibility and legitimacy of all governmental and nongovernmental international organisations. This includes bodies such as the United Nations and organisations of the Global South, such as the Arab League; the Organisation of African Unity; the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation; and even the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO). According to Elmandjra, none of these institutions retained the capacity to play any meaningful role in the future service of humanity.

In his reflections on the collapse of the communist bloc, Elmandjra attributed its downfall to its foundation on materialistic values. These materialist principles, he argued, are shared by the entire Western world, whether in the communist or capitalist camp, as both were rooted in Judeo-Christian values and elevated materialism to the highest position in the value hierarchy. For this reason, he believed that the remaining Western states would collapse within a few years, just as the communist bloc had before them.[23]

The world has entered a civilisational confrontation marked by the use of force and violence by the powerful. In the medium term, no viable solution exists except for radical structural and functional transformation, the only

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[20] Morris Berman, *Inḥiṭāṭ al-Ḥaḍāra al-Amrīkiyya*, trans. Ḥusayn al-Shūfī (Syria: Dār al-Madā li-l-Thaqāfa wa-al-Nashr, 1st ed., 2010), 27.

[21] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Ḥiwār al-Tawāṣul* (Morocco: Dār al-Nashr al-Maghribiyya, 4th ed., 1997), 68.

[22] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Ḥiwār al-Tawāṣul* (Morocco: Dār al-Nashr al-Maghribiyya, 4th ed., 1997), 69.

[23] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Ḥiwār al-Tawāṣul* (Morocco: Dār al-Nashr al-Maghribiyya, 4th ed., 1997), 71.

remedy capable of enabling us to confront new challenges and developments reshaping the global landscape.

Elmandjra argued that this transitional phase will last between three and five years, after which we will witness a fundamental transformation within the countries of the Global South, such as North–South relations.[24]

The most significant problem in North–South relations lies in the issue of civilisational communication. This stems from the West's refusal to engage on the basis of values, reflecting a lack of commitment to tolerance, cooperation, mutual understanding, and even essential communication with the other. The most apparent evidence of this phenomenon, Elmandjra observed, is the large number of Western journalists in the Gulf region. However, it is rare to find one who speaks Arabic or can communicate with the local population in their language. This, he argued, is due to their lack of appreciation for the value of communication with the other and an absence rooted in arrogance and contempt, stemming from the belief that it is the people of the South who must speak the language of the North and not the other way around.

Elmandjra remarked that his generation had studied Western languages and learned about every aspect of Western life, but the reverse had not occurred. The West believes that "the other must become a replica of itself to engage in communication."

Elmandjra was labelled "mad" for stating, during a French television program in May 1980, that North–South conflict could unfold according to three possible scenarios:

The first is the stability scenario, which, according to Elmandjra, could be maintained for five years.

Second, the reform scenario could be realised if serious and sustained efforts were undertaken over five years from 1980--1985.

However, if both of these scenarios fail because of the West's unwillingness to pursue meaningful change, then, inevitably, the world would enter a third scenario at the beginning of the 1990s: the rupture scenario, which would lead to open conflict between North China and South China.

This third scenario, Elmandjra argued, is precisely what began to materialise in reality. It demonstrates his pro-

found understanding of a Western system that refuses to accept civilisational pluralism and affirms the accuracy of his foresight and anticipatory vision.[25]

Elmandjra divided contemporary history into three distinct phases:

1. **The colonial phase** ended in the 1950s and 1960s. This phase was characterised by clarity: as he put it, "the moment you stepped into the street, you could see your enemy walking in front of you."
2. **The semicolonial phase** extended from the early 1960s until 2 August 1990. This period was defined by the legacy of colonialism, weak and outdated structures incapable of keeping pace with the global developments of the time. As a result, societies in the Global South lagged in terms of civilisational progress. Perhaps the most dangerous legacy of this phase, according to Elmandjra, was the intellectual class left behind by the colonial powers. This class had no real connection to their societies, having severed all the ties with the values and roots of their people.

This intellectual elite distinguished itself through its imitation of the West, its promotion of Western values, and its glorification of Western civilisation. It effectively functions as a proxy for former colonisers, administering public affairs in ways that serve the interests of the old imperial powers. They often displayed an attitude of superiority toward their fellow citizens and, in practice, represented a new form of colonialism implementing programs and ideas developed abroad, especially those introduced under the banner of "technical assistance" and supported by imperialist institutions to advance agendas contrary to the aspirations and well-being of the peoples of the Global South.

3. **The third phase**, which begins on 2 August 1990, is what Elmandjra termed the postcolonial phase.

He warned against falling into the trap of Western narratives that obscure the actual dimensions of global conflicts. The Gulf War, he argued, was not fundamentally about Saddam Hussein but rather about Iraq itself, which had become a target precisely because it was the first country to defy American hegemony and reject submission to the West openly. For this reason, the entire Western bloc united against Iraq, seeking to prevent it from becoming a model or source of inspiration for other countries in the Global South.

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[24] Ibid., 74.

[25] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Al-Ḥarb al-Ḥaḍāriyya al-Ūlā* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Shurūq, 1st ed., 1995), 54.

Elmandjra explained that he called this the postcolonial phase because it marked the beginning of a war that "has started but will never end, regardless of its immediate outcomes." In his view, it is a cultural and civilisational war between North China and South China, a clash of values in which negative values, such as cultural domination and authoritarianism, confront positive values, such as diversity, pluralism, and the right to difference.[26]

Elmandjra asserted that the concept of the New World Order is not originally Western but rather a purely Japanese idea. It first appeared in a study conducted by the Japanese Foundation for the Advancement of Scientific Research in 1988. This study lasted for over five years and involved thousands of Japanese specialists. It focused on what Japan should undertake in science and advanced technologies. However, as is often the case, the West sought to appropriate anything novel and beneficial, claiming it was its invention.[27]

According to Elmandjra, the Gulf War was the first actual world war. What is commonly referred to as the First World War and the Second World War was, in reality, Western wars fought on Western soil between Western nations. In contrast, the Gulf War deserves to be considered the first genuine world war because it was not fought over economic, political, or military objectives alone but was rooted in civilisational goals.

Iraq, he emphasised, possesses civilisational heritage extending over 6,000 years. It was home to numerous historical civilisations, including the Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian civilisations. The deliberate and systematic destruction carried out by Western powers during the Gulf War, Elmandjra argued, was aimed at eradicating the civilisational values embodied in Iraq's ancient heritage, a legacy deeply rooted in the earliest chapters of human history.[28]

Given that the desired future cannot be achieved without an intense scientific research and technology foundation, Elmandjra emphasised that Iraq was the only country in the region that had seriously invested in this field. This, he argued, is precisely why it became the primary target of Western aggression.

Accordingly, he called upon Arab countries to engage in a collective, cooperative, and participatory effort in sci-

ence and technology. He stressed the necessity of increasing the budget allocated to scientific research to at least 19% of the national income. He warned against importing Western technologies, as the West, in his view, would never hand over the keys to its technological power. It will only provide access to technology, as the recipient countries remain subordinate.

For Elmandjra, designing developmental programs that respond to the genuine needs of our people is one of the most critical challenges for the future.[29]

For much of the twentieth century, the dominant global reality was characterised by the presence of two rival powers: a socialist–communist bloc led by the Soviet Union and a capitalist bloc led by the United States. According to Elmandjra, these two powers tacitly agreed to control and dominate the world in ways that served their mutual interests. For the Third World, its role was limited to aligning with one of the two blocs whenever it faced a crisis.

However, this dynamic changed fundamentally following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the United States' internal crisis, which extended beyond economic and financial domains to include civilisational and axiological (value-based) dimensions.

Therefore, the U.S. intervention in Iraq, Elmandjra argued, was not solely about securing oil resources or diverting public attention from its internal problems. Rather, it was a preemptive war against future threats emanating from the Global South threats that had grown into a genuine challenge to the political and economic interests of the United States, as well as a threat to its civilisational supremacy.

The New World Order, as Elmandjra explained, relied on three strategic policies to safeguard the interests of the United States and its allies:

1. Fragmentation and resistance to unity policies aim to weaken regional or ideological cohesion among Global South nations.
2. The policy of stability and opposition to change, whereby movements for democratic reform were actively suppressed. A clear example of this was the Western military intervention in Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal to quash popular uprisings demanding democracy.
3. The policy of civilisational expansion was intended to secure linguistic hegemony as a precursor to cultural and intellectual domination, ultimately ensuring the suprema-

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[26] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Al-Ḥarb al-Ḥaḍāriyya al-Ūlā* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Shurūq, 1st ed., 1995), 13–14.

[27] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Al-Ḥarb al-Ḥaḍāriyya al-Ūlā* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Shurūq, 1st ed., 1995), 50.

[28] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Al-Ḥarb al-Ḥaḍāriyya al-Ūlā* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Shurūq, 1st ed., 1995), 85.

[29] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Al-Ḥarb al-Ḥaḍāriyya al-Ūlā* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Shurūq, 1st ed., 1995), 88.

cy of Judeo-Christian civilisation over all other cultural systems.

Elmandjra argued that this Western fear-driven agenda was motivated by growing anxieties over several future threats, including the following:

• The recent demographic explosion in southern countries contrasts with the West's declining population growth and aging societies.
• The emergence of democratic change in the Global South threatened Western control over the political autonomy of these states.
• A growing civilisational threat, particularly from Islam. He cited findings from a study conducted between 1985 and 1986 by a Vatican-affiliated institute specialising in Islamic studies, which revealed that the number of Muslims (765 million) surpassed the number of Catholics (750 million), with projections indicating that the gap would widen further in the future.[30]

Elmandjra referred to globalisation as a form of "new totalitarian colonialism." This new colonialism, he asserted, has no colour or flag and requires no passport to cross borders. It is led by the United States, which seeks to establish a division within the societies of the Global South. Despite its outwards calls for openness, its true aim is to impose submission to the authority and dominance of the United States.

According to Elmandjra, the true expression of "globalisation" is "Americanisation." Beneath this appealing term lies a concealed agenda: not promoting free-market economics in the spirit of "laissez-faire" but somewhat undermining moral values. He argued that Judeo-Christian *civilisations*, through the mechanisms of globalisation, aim to impose their values, ethics, and way of life on other civilisations, particularly the Islamic world.

In this view, economics serves merely as a façade to obscure the fundamental objective of globalisation: penetrating the fabric of societies to perpetuate domination and control.[31]

Second civilistic war

On 17 September 2001, Mahdi Elmandjra declared in an interview with the Radio France Internationale that a second civilisational war was imminent. He later reaf-

firmed that this war had already begun. In explaining its meaning, dimensions, and context, Elmandjra stated that Osama bin Laden was one of the "students" of American intelligence, having been funded by the United States during the Soviet–Afghan War to fight the communist bloc. Once the U.S. had achieved its goal and the Russian threat had dissipated, bin Laden himself became a real danger to the United States.

Elmandjra warned that the consequences of this second civilisational war would not become fully visible for more than a decade. He also noted that the United States had failed to provide conclusive evidence linking bin Laden to the events of 11 September 2001. What these attacks revealed, he argued, went beyond the notion of terrorism; they introduced fear as the new dominant force in the international climate.

Because of this widespread fear, decisions began to be made hastily and arbitrarily, without relying on precise or verifiable information. The prevailing logic in international relations became "If you are not with me, you are against me," a profoundly dangerous principle.

While the first civilisational war was characterised by postcolonial dictatorship, Elmandjra asserted that we are now witnessing the rise of what he termed "new fascism," a global, alliance-based fascism emerging under the guise of international cooperation.

This fear that now dominates the world is what Elmandjra termed "phobocracy," rule by fear. It is no longer confined to the countries of the Global South; even the arrogant and overconfident United States, which had long believed that no power on Earth could defeat it, was shaken.

The events of 11 September shattered the mythical image the U.S. had constructed for itself, imagined in its narrative, and marketed globally.[32]

The media swiftly directed accusations toward Osama bin Laden and Afghanistan in connection with attacks on the United States, shaping global public opinion under the pressure of phobocracy, a climate of fear deliberately cultivated and exploited. Elmandjra described this phenomenon as the height of audiovisual terrorism, orchestrated by the United States.

The war in Afghanistan, labelled by George W. Bush as a "crusade," clearly revealed the war of values led by the

[30] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Al-Ḥarb al-Ḥaḍāriyya al-Ūlā* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Shurūq, 1st ed., 1995), 14–15.
[31] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Zaman al-Dhalaqrāṭiyya* (Morocco: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-ʿArabī, 1st ed., 2017), 14–15.

[32] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Al-Ihāna fī ʿAṣr al-Mīgā Imbiryāliyyā* (Morocco: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-ʿArabī, 5th ed., 2007), 39–41.

United States against Islamic values. Despite efforts by Western media to reinterpret Bush's words, shifting the meaning from a war on Islam to a defence of the American way of life, the underlying reality remained unchanged: this was not merely a defence of Western values but an attempt to impose them on others. At the heart of American foreign policy lies a logic of confrontation with the Other.

Elmandjra argued that there must be a genuine civilisational dialogue between the Global North and the Global South if such confrontation is to be avoided. The use of the term "crusade" in Bush's speech and the world's near-total submission to the American will in its war against alternative value systems serves as compelling evidence of the truth behind Ibn Khaldun's famous assertion: "The vanquished is always enamoured with the ways of the victor." This is manifested in the dominance of the Western language, values, lifestyle, and culture over the peoples of the Global South.[33]

Paths to a Life of Dignity

Elmandjra suggested that survival with dignity requires two forms of solidarity:

1. **Spatial solidarity** means that everyone must participate in this collective effort.
2. **Temporal solidarity** refers to the urgency and proactiveness of implementing this solidarity anticipation rather than reacting.

However, several obstacles stand in the way of achieving such solidarity, the most significant of which are as follows:

➢ Vast economic disparities between countries and within individual societies result in social injustice and inequality.
➢ The dominance of Western **sociocultural** values leads to the rejection of other civilisational value systems.
➢ The mental frameworks governing education are incompatible with the rapid pace of change in the contemporary world.

Given all of this, Elmandjra maintained that human survival cannot be guaranteed unless a new coalition is established, one capable of fusing science and culture into a single, unified project.

To that end, he proposed several fundamental issues that must be addressed if we are to secure our collective future, namely:

1. The Modernisation/Westernisation Equation

Elmandjra acknowledged that his call for the aforementioned coalition would inevitably raise additional questions, particularly concerning the universality and neutrality of science. These questions often lead to the assumption that modernisation is synonymous with Westernisation, an equation Elmandjra categorically rejected.

He illustrated his position by citing the pioneering Japanese experience as a prime example. Japan, he argued, succeeded in deeply integrating science with its own cultural identity, thus demonstrating that it is possible to pursue modernity without severing ties with one's civilisational values. As such, the Japanese model represents a genuine and value-driven path to development, offering an alternative to the Western paradigm.[34]

2. The New Coalition between Culture and Science

Culture and science have become two principal determinants of the structure and nature of the international system. Elmandjra emphasises that science and technology cannot be adequately understood without referencing the cultural context from which they emerge and within which they operate.

This cultural context fundamentally challenges the claim of the "universality and neutrality of science and technology." To address this issue, Elmandjra invoked the perspective of Ilya Prigogine, who stated:

"Science will become truly universal only when it ceases to deny, to consider itself detached from the concerns of societies, and ultimately becomes capable of engaging in dialogue with people from all cultures and respecting their questions."[35]

3. Respect for Cultural Diversity

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[33] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Al-Ihāna fī ʿAṣr al-Mīgā Imbiryāliyyā* (Morocco: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-ʿArabī, 5th ed., 2007), 42.

[34] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Inṣihār al-ʿIlm wa-al-Thaqāfa: Miftāḥ al-Qarn al-Ḥādī wa-al-ʿIshrīn, Majallat Istishrāf li-l-Dirāsāt al-Mustaqbaliyya* (Qatar: al-Markaz al-ʿArabī li-l-Abḥāth wa-Dirāsat al-Siyāsāt, no. 1, June 2016), 257.

[35] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Inṣihār al-ʿIlm wa-al-Thaqāfa: Miftāḥ al-Qarn al-Ḥādī wa-al-ʿIshrīn, Majallat Istishrāf li-l-Dirāsāt al-Mustaqbaliyya* (Qatar: al-Markaz al-ʿArabī li-l-Abḥāth wa-Dirāsat al-Siyāsāt, no. 1, June 2016), 258–259.

The emerging generations from the Global South are broadly open to other cultures, not culturally alienated, and have complete confidence in themselves. Therefore, the West should not expect further cultural dependency from these generations. It must respect the cultural diversity they represent and take seriously the growing demographic shift that will, in time, tip the balance.[36]

4. Incoherence of Educational Institutions and Systems

This incoherence stems from the fact that our curricula have failed to absorb the rapid and immense advancements in science and technology, nor have they been successfully integrated for the benefit of society. This failure is attributed to the rigidity of political, economic, social, and cultural institutions, which remain unable to keep pace with this evolution.

5. The crisis of regulatory systems

Elmandjra argued that those who design regulatory systems must do so with clear awareness of their intended purpose, driven by both philosophical insight and practical concern. Above all, they must prioritise the protection of freedom as a *nonnegotiable* moral value.[37]

6. Absence of Consensus on Values

Elmandjra called for a "reconciliation with philosophy" and the dismantling of the boundaries between so-called pure and fundamental sciences and the social and human sciences. He advocated the formulation of a new, multidisciplinary agreement capable of transcending the limits of rationalism, which constrained the human mind and diminished the constructive role of cultural diversity.

He argued that the fusion of science and culture guarantees living with dignity. It alone can reveal the profound coherence between order and chaos across the material and spiritual domains. Such a synthesis would enable humanity to reconcile itself with its environment, ultimately realising the meaning of our existence in the universe.[38]

Conclusion

In conclusion, several key findings emerge:

➢ Elmandjra asserted that "values are the difference that makes the difference"; therefore, human awareness of the value of values is a value.
➢ There exists a civilisational war at the level of values, between Judeo-Christian values on the one hand and the rest of the world's human values, particularly Islamic values, on the other hand.
➢ Elmandjra was the first to coin the term "civilisational war", and he maintained that the current conflict and all future wars will be driven by differences in values and the West's desire to impose its values on others.
➢ The Global *North–South* relationship suffers from a lack of civilisational communication. While South China respects North China's values, North China refuses to appreciate or even *attempts* to understand South China's values. This is due to its arrogance, which prevents it from engaging in value-based dialogue, and its lack of commitment to genuine communication with the other.
➢ Elmandjra rejected the designation of the First and Second World Wars as "world wars," arguing that they were Western wars fought between Western nations and on Western soil. In his view, the actual First World War was the Gulf War, as it was based on civilisational objectives.
➢ The New World Order, according to Elmandjra, operates through three main strategies to disseminate its values and protect its interests:
○ Opposing the unity of states that reject its values.
○ Suppressing political change demanded by the people of the Global South.
○ Civilisational expansion aimed at spreading Western values and imposing them on the rest of the world.
➢ Elmandjra contended that the term "globalisation" is, in essence, a euphemism for "Americanisation." He believed that the United States coined the term to enforce its values upon others, all under the guise of economic openness.
➢ Elmandjra called for respecting others' values, maintaining that his position was preventive and aimed at avoiding future wars caused not only by differences in values but also by the rejection and contempt of the values held by others.
➢ He urged the entire world to engage in collective and anticipatory solidarity that links scientific progress with the values embodied in the cultures of people. This, he argued, is essential to ensuring the survival of the human race with dignity, a vision he referred to as the conditions for survival.

[36] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Inṣihār al-ʿIlm wa-al-Thaqāfa: Miftāḥ al-Qarn al-Ḥādī wa-al-ʿIshrīn, Majallat Istishrāf li-l-Dirāsāt al-Mustaqbaliyya* (Qatar: al-Markaz al-ʿArabī li-l-Abḥāth wa-Dirāsat al-Siyāsāt, no. 1, June 2016), 260.
[37] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Inṣihār al-ʿIlm wa-al-Thaqāfa: Miftāḥ al-Qarn al-Ḥādī wa-al-ʿIshrīn, Majallat Istishrāf li-l-Dirāsāt al-Mustaqbaliyya* (Qatar: al-Markaz al-ʿArabī li-l-Abḥāth wa-Dirāsat al-Siyāsāt, no. 1, June 2016), 263–264.
[38] Mahdi Elmandjra, *Inṣihār al-ʿIlm wa-al-Thaqāfa: Miftāḥ al-Qarn al-Ḥādī wa-al-ʿIshrīn, Majallat Istishrāf li-l-Dirāsāt al-*

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