

Conceptual and theoretical Frames for north Africa Socio-Psycholinguistics

An Outlook on Our Socio-Psycholinguistic Research
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Introduction

We intend in this article to put into perspective our own research in socio-psycholinguistics. That is, how we became interested in this field of social sciences, what are the phenomena we have focused upon, what are the concepts and theories we have used and what are the main findings of our studies of socio-psycholinguistic phenomena in Tunisian society in particular.

I – Academic background

My university academic background hardly has a direct relation with my recent, current and growing interest in sociolinguistic issues. I received a B.A in Psychology (1969) and an M.A in Sociology (1971) from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, USA, whilst I obtained a Ph.D in Sociology (1979) from L'Université de Montréal, Canada.

As to the roots of my increasing involvement late 1970s, it can be explained by two major factors : one is of an educational nature and the other is more of a socio-contextual nature. On the one hand, my secondary education in Tunisia was strongly rooted in the Arabic language and its literature as well as in the Islamic teachings and thought. This was because my high school studies were in The Zeituna educational system where the importance of the Arabic language and Islamic knowledge are heavily stressed. As a result, I have always had full respect for both the Arabic language and the Islamic faith. This positive attitude toward Arabic is widely uncommon among Tunisian high school students who attended/attend bilingual and bicultural (Arabic and French and their cultures), or is not found at all among Tunisian students who went to school during the French colonization, or who now go to school where the French language and its culture strongly dominate the educational system.

II – Life in Quebec Between 1972 and 1979 I resided in Montréal, Québec in order to do my Ph.D studies in sociology. I had plenty of opportunities to teach social sciences in French and English universities and colleges. The call then for the wider and strict use of the French language in Québec was at its peak under the separatist Parti Québécois's leadership of René Lesveques who was the Prime Minister of the province of Québec. The adoption of Bill 101 in 1976 made it clear that French is Québec's only official language. The rising and dynamic move of Quebec's political leadership in favor of the promotion of French in all sectors of the Quebecker society made me more aware of the importance of language to the over all evolution and development of its own society. Thus, the lifting of the French language status in Quebec after 1960 was part of the so called 'Quebec's Quiet Revolution' (Dhaouadi, 2002 a : 66).

III- Summers in Tunisia

On average, I returned in the summer from the US and Canada every two years to my homeland (Tunisia) for vacations. I found a great deal of codeswitching (Franco-Arabe) among educated Tunisians and especially among women. I considered this as a sign of disrespect for Arabic, Tunisia's only national language. This widespread Tunisian codeswitching could only make me very angry and critical of Tunisians' lack of awareness, unlike the Quebeckers, of the due respect they should manifest and practice toward Arabic. But I often told myself that I must go beyond simple anger and criticism and do social science research on this phenomenon in order to comprehend and explain the various sociolinguistic issues in my Tunisian society. What is, for instance, the role of French colonialism, the Tunisian political leadership, the elites, the Tunisian education system or the social status of men and women... in the making of the diverse sociolinguistic issues present in the Tunisian society before and after independence ? (Dhaouadi, 2002 b 6).

IV – The Concept of the Other Underdevelopment

In 1983 I published my first article in Arabic about what I called the Other Underdevelopment in The Maghreb (Dhaouadi, 1983 : 20-4). The Other Underdevelopment (OU) is defined as the oral and written underuse of the national language (Arabic) in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco caused by the French colonization's linguistic impact in these developing societies. The OU is hardly dealt with in the West and in the East in the literature of modern social sciences of development/underdevelopment. It is a symptom of academic dependency in the non-Western world (Alatas, 2003 : 599-613). My writings in Arabic and English on related linguistic manifestations of the OU had initially begun in 1974 (Dhaouadi, 1974 : 43-52). The great number of published articles on the OU allowed me to publish, in 2002, two books, one in Arabic and the other in English (Dhaouadi, 2002a, 2002b). Al Jazeera Channel aired an interview with me on the English version of my book in May and December 2003. Furthermore, there have been many published reviews of my Arabic book of the OU in the Arab world. Some English journals have promised to publish reviews of the English version of my book. The first journal to do this is the Journal of Third World Studies (Spring 2004). As a result of this wide media coverage, the concept of the OU appears to have spread well in the Arab world particularly among the intellectuals and the educated people at large.

One special sub-feature of the OU can be identified among Tunisian educated women in particular. The latter tend to be more involved in codeswitching than their Tunisian male counterparts. Tunisian educated women use more French words and also in their Tunisian Arabic dialect "the Franco-Arabe" (Dhaouadi, 1982 : 124-137, 2003 : 417-435, 1986 : 46-66, 1996 a : 81-91). They also adopt more of a Parisian accent when they speak or read the French language (Dhaouadi, 1996b . 107-125, 2002c 41-53).

As such, Tunisian educated women's use of French words and sentences in their Arabic Tunisian dialects have two characteristics : 1 - more use of French words and sentences than their Tunisian male counterparts, and 2 – their intense use of the Parisian accent when they speak or read French. It is methodologically legitimate here to recognize that we have two types of Franco-Arabe in Tunisian society, one is masculine and the other is feminine. The socio-psychological causes of the latter need to be fully described and analyzed.

V – The Socio-Psychological Dimensions of the Feminine Franco-Arabe :

Historically, the mixing of Arabic with French (The Franco-Arabe) among the Tunisian population has its roots in the French colonization of Tunisia which lasted from 1881 to 1956. Ibn Khaldun's (1332-1406) law of imitation could explain why the encounter between the French colonizers and the Tunisian people has, on the one hand, led to the emergence of the Franco-Arabe among Tunisians and, on the other, to the absence of what we may call the Arab-Franco- spoken language among the French occupiers. According to this Arab sociologist/historian, "The vanquished always wants to imitate the victor in his distinctive characteristics, his dress, his occupation, and all his other conditions and customs" (Ibn Khaldun, 1989 : 116). While the Franco-Arabe is a general socio-linguistic fact in contemporary Tunisia, it is not, however, identically used by the two sexes. The 'Western oriented educated' Tunisian women tend to mix their Arabic dialect with more French words and expressions than their Tunisian male counterparts. Interviews, ordinary and participant observations make it rather clear that this sub-category of the Tunisian female population has a decisively more pronounced desire and orientation toward the use of French in their spoken Arabic[i]. The question can now be formulated in Khaldunian terms : what lies behind the greater imitation of the French language as manifested by the 'Western oriented educated' Tunisian women ? In other words, what are the socio-psychological factors which make them more attracted (solicited) toward the more frequent use of French in their Arabic conversations ? What is at stake here is the identification of certain specific factor(s) that could account for this sub-category of the larger phenomenon of the Franco-Arabe in the Tunisian society.

Our own research in this field has enabled us to identify two major forces that could explain the Tunisian feminine Franco-Arabe in question. They are of socio-psychological nature and they are integrated in what we would like to call "The Double Self Contempt Symptom" (Dhaouadi 1984 : 25-50; 1986). On the one hand, there is an inferiority complex feeling in relation to the French (or the West in general), which is shared by both the male and female population alike in today's Tunisian society (Memmi, 1957). On the other hand, the 'Western oriented educated' Tunisian woman suffers from a second inferiority complex in a male dominated society. The mentalities, the traditions and the social structures of the Tunisian society greatly hamper the female population from having an easy and full excess to participate particularly in the larger sectors of modern life[ii]. In functionalist terms, the 'Western oriented educated' Tunisian woman's frequent resort to the Franco-Arabe has basically a psychological function. It represents for her a compensative solution that gives her the impression of bridging the equality gap between her and her male counterpart. The use of French as a cultural symbolic weapon plays two roles for the Tunisian 'Western oriented educated' woman : (1) It lifts her up, so she can consciously or unconsciously come closer to the image and status of the former colonizing French, which personalizes for her more self-esteem and a better image of the self. The imitation in speaking her/his language helps to reduce the burden of the inferiority complex still felt in the face of the perceived dominant Western people. The Tunisian 'Western oriented educated woman's frequent use of French appears to be a symbolic gesture with which she peacefully protests against the social order of her own society. This social order still puts some obstacles in the way which block her from having easy access to the benefits of modernity like her Tunisian male counterpart.

The desire and the pursuit of modernity in Tunisian society put greater socio-psychological pressures, stress and worries on the female population (Hays, 1987). In socio-psychological terms, the phenomenon of the feminine Franco-Arabe could be seen as the result of two types of oppressive practices of which 'Western oriented educated' Tunisian women are especially victims : (1) the self-degradation feeling as the outcome of the relationship between the former dominant colonizer and the dominated colonized Tunisians. (2) the oppression exercised by the prevailing traditions, mentalities, social structures... of the Tunisian society, particularly on the 'Western oriented educated' female population who aspire for a greater share of modernity (Hays, 1987). It is

clear that the Tunisian 'Western oriented educated' woman's inferiority complex is the outcome of both social and psychological forces. As such, her socio-psychological state is more likely to be exposed to more social contradictions and psychological tensions, (Hays, 1987).

VI – The Socio-Psychological Dimensions of Adàa

It is fair enough to state that Adàa (word cursing) as a widely used feminine Tunisian discourse has no relationship with woman's biology. Otherwise, Adàa would have been a common feature in the past, in the present and in the future among the female population in the rest of human societies regardless of the socio-cultural differences which may exist between them.

Adàa appears to be absent, for instance, in both the American and the Canadian societies. Viewed against this background, the phenomenon of Adàa becomes a full blown legitimate domain of sociological research. The sociologist can easily state in this regard that Adàa is predominantly a feminine widespread linguistic phenomenon whose roots are first of all of a social nature. This phenomenon is far from being a recent phenomenon in the Tunisian society. It is rather a cultural heritage which continues to prevail among the larger female population.

VII – The Social History of Adàa in the Arab World

The social researcher is required here to shed light on the history of the social forces which have helped to bring about the wide phenomenon of Adàa among the Tunisian female population. The Arab sociologist, Zuheir Hattab is to be considered almost the only known Arab author (Hattab, 1980) who has implicitly made reference to some of the socio-historical causes which could help explain and account for the emergence of the phenomenon of Adàa in the Arab societies at large. Though the determination of the precise historical date of the emergence of the phenomenon in question may be of some help for the establishment of a better understanding, we focus our attention nonetheless in this article on the diagnosis of the socio-psychological dimensions of Adàa as it could be read from Adàa discourse itself. The appropriate reading and interpretation of the latter could certainly convey and offer an adequate image both of the state of society as well as of the social status of the women in it.

The phenomenon of Adàa is more likely to surface and even happen in societies where the following social characteristics are common features : widespread of alphabetical and intellectual illiteracy, prevalence of superstition and an illusive imagination strong belief in invisible and mysterious forces like Satan, demons (Jinn), Saints, magicians, jugglers...

Like other linguistic discourses, Adàa unveils certain aspects of society's social reality. It is a sort of a mirror that reflects the state of the social condition of individuals and groups in a given period of society's history. In short, Adàa is one of the telling indicators of a society's grave backwardness. It should be rightfully added to the list of the sociology on underdevelopment indicators spelled out by the literature of sociology of underdevelopment in modern times. In our own terms, Adàa is a clear component of what we have called "The Other Underdevelopment"[iii]. That is, the underdevelopment which erodes and undermines both the psychological as well as the cultural dimensions of the individual's personality.

According to Zubeir Hattab, the Arab families as well as their societies had witnessed a high degree of decline, in thought and behavior, especially during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.

Thus, Adàa can be seen as a discourse, that has recorded in a symbolic manner, the deteriorating larger society of which the Tunisian society is but a social subsystem.

VIII –Adàa and its Socio-Psychological Meanings for the Tunisian Woman :

The above are some of the social meanings that could be inferred from Adàa about the state of Arab societies for a given period of their history. The most important question relevant to the thesis of this study is this : what are precisely the socio-psychological dimensions (meanings)of Adàa for the Tunisian woman ? As stressed here, Adàa is predominantly an oral discourse more used by the female gender in the Tunisian society. In the view of Zuheir Hattab, this could be accounted for by the overall deteriorating social status of the Arab woman during the periods of decadence in the history of the Arab people. “Due to her ignorance, her lack of social experience and her isolation, the Arab woman becomes the member of the family and society who is mostly predisposed to react favorably toward superstitious beliefs and thoughts and mostly inclined as well to take them as true and as basis for her behavior/action » (Hattab, 1980 : 175). In sociological terms, the phenomenon of Adàa among the Arab (Tunisian) female population becomes the outcome of a stubborn socio-cultural determinism.

On the psychological level of the Tunisian woman, the discourse of Adàa makes unambiguous hints that the Tunisian woman was incapable of dealing directly and personally with many issues and events that affect, preoccupy and defy her. Feeling helpless, weak and in a state of defeat, she seeks the help and intervention of others on her behalf. What makes her situation worse is that Adàa is a call upon invisible and metaphysical beings in the hope that they can intervene, control and put her own affairs in order. In acting this way, she can only harden and aggravate her psychological state of powerlessness. The intermediate beings to whom she turns and asks for help belong neither to the real material world nor to the making of her own daily life. With Adàa, she ultimately sought/seeks help from an imaginary and illusory universe that can hardly offer her any substantive help conducive to a real positive change of her socio-psychological state.

IX – Tunisian Females’Condition and the Parisian Accent

There are two strong reasons which have prepared and continue to predispose the Tunisian women to be psychologically and socially more in need than Tunisian males for their persistent adoption of the Parisian accent when they speak or read French. These two reasons also explain the already described tendency among Tunisian females to mix their Tunisian dialect with more French words and expressions (the Franco-Arabe) than their male counterparts. In other words, both the Parisian accent and the greater use of French in the Tunisian dialect by Tunisian females could be interpreted as symbols of the degraded social status and the strained psychological state of contemporary Tunisian women. The socio-psychological situation of the latter makes them : 1) keener than the Tunisian males to reach out for the symbols of imitation of the former French colonizer and (2) more pressed than the Tunisian males to reach out for the symbols of modernity. Both behaviors could be seen as a syndrome of what is called « status frustration » in modern psychology.

The Pecking Order Amongst the Three Social Actors

In order to apply a sociological perspective in our analysis, let's look now at the phenomenon in question from the perspective of the social theory of imitation.

The act of imitation implies at least the presence and the interaction of two parties: the imitator and the imitated. In the situation at hand during the French colonization of Tunisia, there were three parties involved: the Tunisian women, the Tunisian men and the French colonizers. The interactions of these three parties interact through the law of the so-called pecking order. That is, a hierarchy prevails in the relationship among the three social actors. On the one hand, during Tunisia's colonization by France (1881-1956), the French occupiers were the dominant party and the Tunisian men and women were the dominated ones. On the other hand, Tunisian society was strongly male dominated. Inequality between the sexes was an overwhelming feature. In this triad situation, Tunisian women were subjugated to two types of domination. In short, they were the most powerless of the three parties.

The Continuing Pecking Order

With Tunisia's independence in 1956, things have greatly changed between the parties in question. The French physical occupation of Tunisia was terminated. Consequently, the majority of the French population left Tunisian territory soon after. But the shades of French domination did not fade away from the imagination of the independent Tunisian population. France is still strongly present among Tunisians through its cultural symbols, especially its language, culture and thought; the result of which is still strongly felt and seen in the Tunisian semi-colonized mind. France, as a well developed society, is still intensely felt by developing Tunisia through tourism, the written media and the lively images which Tunisians regularly receive from the various French/European television stations on their television screens. After independence, the dominant/dominated relations between the French and the Tunisians have taken the form of developed/developing relations. That is, Tunisians continue to suffer from the inequality syndrome in their relations with the French, their former colonizers.

Persistent Inequality of the Sexes

The Tunisian social scene has, in turn, witnessed considerable positive change in favor of the promotion of the social status of Tunisian women. They have gone to school and participated in the job market en masse. Many pro-woman progressive laws have been adopted as well. The Tunisian woman stands today as the avant garde in the entire Arab world as far as woman's rights are concerned. Yet, genuine equality between men and women has hardly been completely achieved in independent modern Tunisia. This is far from being peculiar to Tunisia. Inequality of the sexes still exists even in the most advanced Western societies of this century. In other words, the Tunisian woman still lags behind her male counterpart on few fronts on the equality scale. In spite of her considerable gains that have increasingly enhanced her social status in the last five decades or so she remains more disadvantaged than the Tunisian man with regard to what we would like to call 'modernity's benefits'[iv]. The net result of all this is the continuing presence of some hierarchical order of the former French colonizers among the Tunisian men and the Tunisian women. A thin pecking order still holds through. There has been some change favoring more equality in the relationship between independent Tunisians and the former French colonizers on the one hand, and the relationship between the sexes since Tunisia's independence, on the other. In this hierarchal triad, the position of the Tunisian woman tends to remain somewhat in the third place.

XII – Who Imitates Whom Most and in What ?

Modern social science theory of imitation suggests that the weaker party is more inclined to imitate the stronger one. This is in line with the law of imitation of Ibn Khaldun, the Arab historian and sociologist of the Middle Ages (1332-1406). He states that the vanquished party tends always to imitate his conqueror : « the vanquished always want to imitate the victor in his distinctive characteristics, his dress, his occupation and all his other conditions and customs (Ibn Khaldun, 1989 : 116). As seen before, the Tunisian woman suffers from a double domination. Her traditional male dominated society continues in certain cases to block her social mobility, restrict her access to the wider range of modernity's benefits and limit her free development and actualization. In face of this situation, the educated Tunisian woman in particular is pushed harder to look for an outlet that liberates her somewhat from the burden of the double domination she faces. Her inclination to imitate the French dominant party appears to be legitimate for at least three reasons: (1) the French were physically and now are symbolically the top dominant party in the triad setting referred to earlier. Thus, they were and are more eligible to be imitated by the most dominated party (the Tunisian woman). (2) The Tunisian woman's imitation of the French liberates her somehow psychologically and, to a certain extent socially, from some strict traditional cultural features of the Tunisian male dominated society, and (3) it is through the imitation of the French (Western) dominant party that the Tunisian woman attempts to minimize the stress caused by her desire for modernity in a society which continues to exercise, in certain situations, a double standard between the sexes (Hays, 1987). In other words, being more deprived of modernity's wider benefits than her Tunisian male counterpart, the Tunisian woman tends to seek peaceful symbolic means to express her frustration. She opts for some sort of non-violent protest against the male dominated society. Her imitation of the French (the Western) party is hardly limited to her adoption of the Parisian accent when she speaks or reads French. As pointed out earlier, she is also known to be more keen than the Tunisian man in mixing her Arabic with French words or/and expressions (Franco-Arabe) in her daily speech (Dhaouadi, 1986 : 46-66). Furthermore, Tunisian women appear to be more involved in birthday celebrations than Tunisian men. This is more visible in the organization of birthdays for their children which has become, since independence, a relatively widespread custom among a significant majority of Tunisian mothers. The adoption of the Parisian accent, the tendency of using more French words or/and expressions with Arabic and the widespread birthday celebrations among Tunisian women all converge to signal one thing: Tunisian women are more in need of imitating French (Western) modernizing symbols. To speak French with a Parisian accent means to be as modern as the Parisians themselves, the most modern of all modern French people. Behind the Parisian accent and the French language use in general, there is more than what the ear can hear. The persistent use of the Parisian accent by today's Tunisian women stands for the symbols of becoming modern like Parisians. In sociological terms, feeling thwarted by the traditional structures of a male dominated society, the modernizing Tunisian women reach out for certain symbols of modernity which hardly raise the anger of Tunisian men. The Parisian accent, the greater use of French words and expressions (Franco-Arabe) and birthday celebrations appear to satisfy both sides. On the one hand, the Tunisian woman's self-esteem and their desire for becoming modern seem to be adequately fulfilled with the easy practice of those symbols. On the other hand, the Tunisian male population does not apparently mind seeing that Tunisian women have access to modernity through the use of some of its symbols which are tolerated by the rules of a male dominated society[v].

The Tunisian woman's social status before and after independence makes her, as described above, more prone to be involved in a wider range of imitative behavior of the French (Western) party in

more than just a limited single act. It covers rather a number of symbolic acts (the Parisian accent, more use of French words and expressions with Arabic (the Franco-Arabe and birthday celebrations) which ultimately make up an entire unit or a coherent system. All these different acts signal unequivocally the Tunisian woman's pressing desire for Western modernity of which her male dominated society deprives her of many of its aspects. Her bargain here is to have bigger access to the system of modernity she reaches out for and concentrates her imitation upon what we have called male tolerated cultural French (Western) symbols as a compensation for modernity's missing benefits. Her greater deprivation (compared with her Tunisian male counterpart) from modernity's gains predisposes her to be the most eligible candidate for a fuller swing, so to speak, of imitation of some symbols of modern French/Western people in general.

As such, the continuing overwhelming use of the Parisian accent by the majority of today's Tunisian women, when speaking or reading French, has to be understood in light of what has been already underlined. That is, the historical argument accounting for the contemporary Tunisian women's Parisian accent is far from adequate. Without the analysis of the social situation and the psychological state of the contemporary Tunisian woman and her use of cultural symbols in response to those conditions, no lucid understanding and explanation of the origin as well as the maintained use of the Parisian accent by the Tunisian woman today could be expected to be genuinely secured. The question of the Parisian accent is hardly a matter of plain history, as Professor Skiki claims. Such a view excludes the impact of society's ever ongoing dynamics on language use through time and space. A given accent of a given language is always potentially subject of change by the people who use it. When it persists, as is the case with the Parisian accent among contemporary Tunisian women, we have to seek a structuro-functional perspective that offers a credible explanation. In other words, the continuing use of the Parisian accent by the majority of Tunisian women will continue to fulfill socio-psychological needs as long as the Tunisian woman remains, in certain areas, the more handicapped party of the modern Tunisian society pecking order structure.

XIII – The Concept /Theory of Cultural Symbols (CS) [vi]

The link between codeswitching and the OU is a direct one as pointed out but this is not the case as to the relationship between the OU and our concept of CS where language is central to CS set. The latter refers to those cultural traits which radically distinguish homo sapiens from both other living species and Artificial Intelligence machines. Language, thought, knowledge/science, religions, laws, myths, cultural values and norms are major distinctive characteristics of the human species. In our own terms, these CS correspond to the term 'culture' as used by contemporary social sciences. As defined, our concept of CS describes a number of properties of its components. First, it must be strongly stressed that language is the Mother of all the rest of the CS set. That is, without the human language we could hardly conceive of the emergence, let alone the presence, of the human CS/culture. These are uniquely human, because it is only homo sapiens who are privileged with that type of distinct human language. The central role of language in the making of CS/culture becomes an obvious one indeed. Although human language is a part of our concept of CS, we would mention it here separately beside CS to emphasize its prominent independence and its extreme importance as the originating cause of CS, on the one hand, and the first class determinant factor for CS maintenance, evolution and full development, on the other hand.

Second, since the beginning of the 1990's our concept of CS and the human language have allowed us to involve ourselves intensely in doing basic research in the deep nature of human language and culture. It appears that we have made progress in deepening the understanding of certain aspects of

human language and CS to which modern social sciences have hardly paid attention. Our explorations of human language and the CS set have enabled us to make three main observations on their nature and its consequences on both the epistemological question of scientific research particularly in social sciences and also in the study of those phenomena related to humans :

1 – As distinct traits of the human species, language and CS are the most credible trustworthy factors that have, throughout human history, determined homo sapiens domination over nature and the other species. Language and CS are, therefore, the capital components which constitute all that is most important and profound in the human entity. This explains, for instance, the validity of the famous saying: “the conquests of peoples’ minds are the most dangerous (the concept of mind conquest) of all types of other conquests”, because it has to do here with the conquest of language and CS which are most central to the making of the human identity.

2 – CS and human language grow and mature slower than « the human body’s organs. This has two implications:

a/ In comparison with the rapid growth and maturation of the organs of the non-human species, the slower growth and maturation of the human language and CS appear to delay in turn the growth and maturation of the human organs themselves. The link between the culturo-symbolic and the bio-genetico-physiological dimensions is, thus, more than visible among humans.

b/ This seems to have allowed human individuals to have, on average, longer lifespan than that of the majority of the members of the other species. As such, the human longer lifespan ought to be accounted for first by the culturo-symbolic factors and not only by their bio-genetico-physiological counterparts. Our conceptualization of human language and CS goes further to claim that human language and CS have an essential role in the design itself, of the bio-genetico-physiological human make up.

3 – CS and human language possess what we call immaterial transcendental dimensions (semi-metaphysical: the concept of CS transcendental) as they are manifested in the following characteristics:

a/ In contrast to material entities (things) human language and CS have neither volume or weight.

b/ Human language and CS’s lifespan are potentially longer and could even become eternal.

c/ Human discourse and some of the CS set have a great capacity of charging and galvanizing social actors with enormous energy and power so that their actions could become irresistible and undefeatable, like those of supernatural forces.

d/ Human language and CS appear to have an intrinsic characteristic for rapid and instantaneous mobility through time and space. Those transcendental traits are hardly mentioned, let alone taken seriously, by modern social sciences. Our own interest to focus on them for over a decade is the result both of our analytical observations and the Islamic epistemological view of human language and CS. This is in harmony with the growing interest today of social sciences in the study of religion, not only to understand specific social phenomena but also to help establish credible paradigms and reliable theories building in the sciences of Man and society.

Third, the demonstration of the validity of the above characteristics of CS in empirical terms can be briefly shown in the following:

b/ explains how thinkers ideas, scientific theories and cultural heritages of human collectivities and civilizations could last for centuries or even for eternity.

c/ it helps, for instance, to account for the victories of the Third World contemporary liberation movements against their powerful Western colonizers.

a/ and b/ allow us to show the role of the transcendental nature of CS and human language in the explosion of the most important revolution: the Information Revolution. As shown, our conceptualization of the human language, CS and their sub-concepts is strongly interdisciplinary. This is increasingly called for more and more in today's "Two Cultures" of modern sciences.

Based on the preceding analysis it is plainly clear that the notion of CS and its sub-concepts are entirely language based. That is, language is the cornerstone of the major concept of CS set and its derived related minor concepts. Human spoken and written language is the ultimate source that has made possible the birth/emergence, the evolution and the maturation of the human distinct CS/culture. In short, human spoken and written language is second to none as the originator and the only founder of CS. The more than central place of human language in CS system makes one critical of many social sciences definitions of the concept of culture. For instance, Edward B. Tylor's well known classical definition of culture makes no explicit reference to language as part of culture, let alone as the very founder of human culture itself[vii].

It has been shown in this study that our major concept of CS has several minor interrelated concepts like the Other Underdevelopment, the dangerous conquest of people's minds, the transcendentalism of CS, and the longer human life span.

These related sub-concepts qualify the major concept of CS to become a theory which, by definition, can explain a number of various and different phenomena like: why humans live longer, why Tunisian women favor the Parisian accent, why the conquest of the human mind is the most dangerous of all other types of conquests and why organs and bodies of the non-human species grow, develop and mature much faster than those of the members of the human species.

Theoretically, it is potentially legitimate to establish such a credible CS theory which can strongly explain the variety of different human phenomena, because the theory in question is totally based on something uniquely human: the spoken and written language. The latter is the very distinct essence of the human species. As such, a theory whose very basis is human language is fit to have a sweeping global explanatory power in the entire landscape of human affairs.

NOTES

[1] - For instance, an overwhelming majority of Tunisians when asked: who mix more their Arabic with French: men or women? Chose women as the greater users of French. This repeated popular common sense impression can hardly be easily dismissed as unfounded when it is particularly supported further by more meticulous social science research techniques like the ones referred to. Modern social science literature on the relation between gender and language use is still poor in spite of its steady growth in recent years. Peter Trudill, for instance, advances an argument similar to the one advanced in this study. That is, specific language use echoes the social psychological situations of its user. He observes that, "Men in our society can be rated socially by their occupation, their earning power and perhaps by their other abilities. In other words by that they do. For the most part, however, this is not possible for women. It may be, therefore, that they are instead to be rated on how they appear. Since they are not rated by their occupation or by their

occupational success, other signals of status, including speech are correspondingly more important'. In *Language in Society, Sex, Covert Prestige and Linguistic Change in the Urban British English of Norwich*, vol.I n° 2, Oct. 1972. pp.179-194.

2 - The double standard of ethics between the two sexes is still strong in certain sectors today in Tunisian society. The cultural value system of the latter still exercises more constraints on the female population toward things associated with modernity. Three empirical examples from the Tunisian social scene are sufficient to make a point: (a) women's mobility after sunset is greatly restricted. They can hardly attend theatrical plays, movies, shows, intellectual events... at night if they are not accompanied by male companions. (b) Tunisian cultural norms still do not permit Tunisian women to smoke in public. (c) Going to cafés or places to drink a coffee, to have a croissant... is still strongly a male activity. In other words, cafés and such places are predominantly male space.

3 - Dhaouadi, M., « An operational analysis of the Other Underdevelopment in the Arab World and the Third World » ; *International Sociology*, Vol.3. N°3 sept.1988, pp.219-234. Our notion of the Other Underdevelopment is the result of genuine criticism which we address particularly to modern sociology of development/underdevelopment. The latter has confined itself to the socio-economic dimensions of underdevelopment in the Third World countries especially. The underdevelopment of what we call cultural and psychological dimensions of those underdevelopment societies is hardly dealt with in modern sociological literature on development/underdevelopment. The cultural underdevelopment in the Third World is manifested in the following: 1) linguistic underdevelopment. That is, native languages in many Third World countries are hardly used in full in all sectors of the new independent societies. The Western languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese) of the former colonizers are still widely used in full in those societies. As such, they undermine the capacity of native languages to have a full commanding use in all domains of society's social life. 2) Science/knowledge underdevelopment: In the fields of science and knowledge Western advanced societies have an obvious monopoly. Compared with their high standard of science/knowledge accomplishments, Third World countries are bound to be considered as underdeveloped. 3) The contact, in modern times, between the dominant West and the dominated Third World has enabled the former to impose the spread of his own cultural values, particularly those of modernity on the underdeveloped societies. The phenomenon of the Westernization of Third World customs and morals is largely a result of this type of power unbalance between the two parties. In this confrontation between cultural value systems, many of the Third World cultural values battle ends in favor of the adoption of Western cultural values. In many cases this promotes the underdevelopment of authentic native cultural values in Third World societies. The psychological side of underdevelopment is measured by the symptom of an inferiority complex toward the West that one encounters among the larger population of today's Third World countries, what is, in short, meant by psychological underdevelopment in our conceptualization of the Other Underdevelopment. The interaction between the cultural and the psychological dimensions of the Other Underdevelopment makes it ultimately a system.

4 - Modernity's benefits refers basically to three things: 1) more equality between the sexes in their society's social order, 2) more freedom of mobility for females in society, 3) more freedom of expression in public for females.

5 - Smoking in public, as a sign of modernity and liberation for some Tunisian females, is still seen as unacceptable behavior by Tunisian society.

6 - We use CS here as a concept and as a theory according to the sociological definition : ' a concept is a label that refers to either relations or descriptive properties. Concepts are not statements

and are therefore neither true nor false. They simply furnish the vocabulary of a theory and identify its subject matter. When concepts are interrelated in a scheme, a theory begins to emerge', Encyclopedia of Sociology, Guilford, Conn. USA, The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc., 1974, p.55.

7 - « Culture, or Civilization... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society », op., p.69.

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