ARAB INTELLECTUALS AND AUTHORITY
A Continuity of an Implied System

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The ruler doesn't want from the thinker free thinking. He wants his loyal thinking.

Tawfiq al-Hakim, A'wdat al-Wa'y (The Return of Consciousness)

The modern intellectuals' crisis has roots that lie in the past, when the pro-authority Arab intellectuals' predecessors instilled in them the fact that power is always a prerequisite for the nation and should be divinely and earthly sustained. This has been engraved in the mindset for generations, and I would suggest that the continuity of this notion in the socio-political tradition needs to be reconsidered as a major factor in the formulation of the Arab intelligentsia. In short, I believe that the present for Arab intellectuals is a continuation of their past. This paper will provide a synthesis of different positions of Arab intellectuals, with emphasis given to the suitability and continuity of Arab tradition in the present condition of the modern Arab intellectuals.

Since the beginning of 2011, the revolutionary upheaval of the Arab peoples reflects a serious crisis in both the political and cultural realms of the Arab world. The projects of Arab intellectuals in rationalism and enlightenment have obviously failed in dealing with the sudden and dramatic transformation on the ground in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Oman, and Syria. This spontaneous transformation of the Arab societies, which observers in the U.S. and Europe have analogized as 'the Arab Spring[2],' declares the death of established myopic ideologies, politically and culturally respectively. Therefore, the

current situation raises significant questions about the future role of the Arab intelligentsia: What are the mechanisms through which this element has been working over the past several decades? What kind of relationships do they have with political authorities? Is their attitude anachronistic? Or are they simply faithful to inherent Arab tradition regarding the 'culture-politics' correlation?

The factors that form the relationship between the intellectual and authority need to be further examined, because there are

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multiple and complex interactions that contain ramifications rooted in history, culture, and modern relations of what is happening in the social body and political community. This study focuses on evaluating the presence of Arab-Islamic intellectual traditions, as they are manifest in the realm of modern Arab intellectuals. This approach helps in understanding and accommodating the confusing relationship between the Arab intellectual and authority in their moments of cooperation and antagonism. Though the modern correlation of intellectual-authority is typically conceptualized as a relationship divided along oppressed-oppressor or even opponent-proponent intellectual nexus, in fact the history and culture context is subtler and more complicated. This study focuses on the implied system that formulates and limits the effectiveness of the Arab intellectuals and their (political and social) activities. It examines one aspect of the problem of Arab intellectuals with regard to their involvement

with authority. It also scrutinizes an implied system that stems from the Arab tradition and governs the state-intellectual relations.

The role of the modern Arab intellectuals flourishes as a conflict intensifies over a particular issue; because the intellectuals repeal their role as idea producers, they no longer think or rethink their own ideas, but receive the politically dominant discourse. Therefore, the intellectuals are incorporated into the projects sponsored by the administrative elite and become state employees that receive patronage for their services. They have a specific task to perform in accordance with the rigid instructions of the state. According to the policy of integration of the intellectual into the state, he becomes an 'ideas keeper,» to use 'Ali Harb's wording[3], and not an idea producer. This is because the prevailing authority has already generated the ideas. All the intellectual has to do is to promote, protect, and sanctify these preexisting ideas.

There is an implied system that orients the acts of the Arab intellectuals in their interaction with the power and society. This hypothesis explores the reasons behind the cultural crisis of Arab intellectuals and their relationship with the modern states. It is an attempt to examine a crucial tradition in the power-intellectual correlation is the continuity of a traditional implied system, which the establishment of an Islamic state initiated. Additionally, it is partially responsible for formulating the role and practice of the Arab intellectuals. This traditional sub-system traces back to the founding of the imperial Islamic caliphate and the establishment of the boards of administrations (dawawin). Not only does it shape the intellectual's role, but also it has a remarkable impact on the concrete basis of

the future position of the Arabs' political, social and religious structure. Therefore, in order to determine the current concept of the role of intellectuals, it is necessary to revisit their past role in the course of Islamic tradition. Such reference, I believe, ought to be taken into account to extract the sub-system that has been flowing underneath the political-cultural activities. A further examination entails that the uninterrupted presence of the culture-state relationship sub-system set up a firm foundation that could not be eliminated or even shaken by the establishment of the modern states.

Political oppression managed to prevent any opposition and any unified voice to act as a different thought or way of thinking. The often horrendous and violent state-oppression created a type of single-mindedness in all aspects of the system. A prime example of this is evidenced by cultural life in Iraq during the 1980s until 2003 when the faltering regime collapsed through war. Once the oppressive machine had fallen apart, the oppressors, whether they were former security officers or simply intellectuals, moved to gather its disassembled parts in a last attempt to subjugate Iraqis. However, when Coalition Forces firmly established the new political path was and new Iraqi political parties began to rise, the only sanctuary for Iraqi intelligentsia was to portray themselves as victims to gain the benefits of reconciliation in post-Saddam Iraq.

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correlative of such a disastrous way of thinking, so to speak, was the enthusiastic corroboration of the Iraqi intellectuals through a similar swift motion of a pen, not to enact new laws, but to produce a hypocritical pseudo-justification of their master›s scribbled laws. It is not an exaggeration to say that there was no awareness of the absence of a sense of responsibility among the Iraqi intellectual elite in both the academic and non-academic institutions. Very few of them had asserted that the oppressive authority of the Ba'th Party could utilize even the intellectuals' shy repulsion of any cooperation with the regime to pulverize them. Therefore, they went into deep silence until death. This situation may be illustrated by two individual examples: 'Ali al-Wardi (19131995-), the charismatic Iraqi sociologist and historian, and Mahmud al-Brekan (19272002-), the well-known Basran poet.[4]

On the other hand, one may approach the intellectuals' cooption collectively by examining the attitude of the Iraqi Communists' intellectuals in their struggle with the Ba'th Party in the 1970s. The long violent struggle between the Communists and Ba'thists, especially the 1963 Ba'thist atrocities against the Communists, ended in an alliance through the signing of the Nationalist Progressive Front (al-Jabhah al-Wataniyyah al-Taqaddumiyyah) in 17 July 1973. The policies of the Nationalist Front enabled the Ba'thists to remove the Iraqi Communist Party-Central Committee and completely destroy it as a threat to their regime. This alliance was rejected by the other communist faction, which was the Iraqi

Communist Party-Central Leadership.[5] Only three years later, in 1976, the Ba'thists initiated a wide ranging violent campaign against the remaining Communists that eventually dissolved the Iraqi Communist Party in the coming years.[6]

The multilateral silence of the Iraqi intelligentsia created a bizarre consent toward the authoritative oppression; it was meant to be a kind of self-defense, but it was an ego protection. Iraqi Intellectuals also developed a collective sense that authorial oppression of this kind was not unprecedented in previous periods. By this, they attempted to create a stronger theoretical pretext to justify their consent through the arguments their silence

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and cooperation were expressions of the natural human instinct for survival. In short, the cooption and coercion of Iraqi intellectuals have been the predominant characteristics in the relationship between culture and power. Nevertheless, the Iraqi literary critic and thinker Muhsin al-Musawi tends to believe that there has been and is a dialectic relationship between culture and power in Iraq.[7] Although he recognizes the challenge of writing on the relationship between culture and power, al-Musawi involves history as one of the challenges that shapes the discussion along with religion, ethnicity, social classes, and ideology.[8] In the midst of all these challenges, the dialectic relation between culture and

power seems to be marginal and limited.

In Saudi Arabia, the intellectuals have the same multilateral silence and 'bizarre' consent toward the oppressive authority, but it is not justified within a self-defense pretext. It actually can be explained through an implied conformity among the majority of Saudi intellectuals with the state policies and strategies. Not far from Saudi Arabia, Iraqi intellectuals' responses, contributions, or participation in Iraq's catastrophic wars have led to a traumatized country that could be easily led by the outmoded ideologues of those who stood on ideological pulpits wrapped in their illusions to revitalize the ugly spirit of killing. The violence of the Saddam era and the Iraqi intellectuals response, begs the question did they develop an eccentric indifference toward reality during the 1980s and 1990s, flagrant moral failures, or were there actions a natural response from fragile human beings?

The typical question of Arabic thought dealt with the intellectual-authority correlation in terms of current ideology, politics, and national interests. However, I would prefer to formulate this question in terms of an implied influence of the past tradition on contemporary intellectuals. Ultimately the crises of Arab intellectuals are at least partially rooted in the precedents of Arabic-Islamic culture. It is extremely important to understand that this link between Arab intellectuals present and past does not mean their embracement of Arab tradition and their attempts to reproduce it in the contemporary discourse, or what is known as the discourse of originality (al-asalah) in opposition to the discourse of contemporariness (al-mu'asarah). It rather means that a certain relevant convergence has enticed modern Arab intellectuals to internalize

the past mechanisms of the production of the discourse itself, even when they maintain a sustainable relationship with the concept of contemporariness, modernization, and the values of modern enlightenment. This is reflected most clearly in the nature of their relationship with authority; they more likely tend to strengthen their links with the ruling class more than to develop an authentic vision that can be achieved symbolically and realistically. Worldly interests have absorbedly covered their thoughtful visions.

Their predecessor, the old Arab intellectual, was normally commencing his cultural life through subservience and service to the governor (al-wali), as preliminary training and preparation for his desired major step to the caliph's court. At the caliph's court, all performed the same function, representing the authority's vision, whether the intellectual was a scholar, jurist, poet, writer, or singer. Similarly, the modern Arabic intellectual is keen to link his activities to the prevailing authority voluntarily or involuntarily, and he is well-prepared to sacrifice his independence. In this essential junction, he follows the shadows of his predecessors, those who were included in the circle of the Caliph's entourage or retinue (hashiyah[9]), and his intimate friends (nadama), were incorporated into the space of power and appointed to the service of the ruler. Nonetheless, the few exceptions that represent the position of the past intellectuals and their independent attitudes, which opposed the power of 'mainstream' views, can be compared with the few exceptions of the modern Arab intellectuals.

The conflict between the modern and traditional intellectual as two diverse representatives of the Arab renaissance in the 20th century deepens the Arab cultural crisis. It is another factor that unbalanced the development of the notion of the intellectual. One may recall Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) and his note about a distinct development of the notion of the intellectual, which existed in the United States. The American intellectuals emerged within "the absence of traditional intellectuals" on "an industrial base."[10] Neither of these two decisive elements in the formation of the intellectual's notion exists in the context of the formation of the modern Arab intellectual. Instead, the modern Arab intellectuals have witnessed a struggle between traditionists and modernists. Fatimah al-Muhsin's Tamath-thulat al-Nahdhah fi Thaqafat al-Iraq al-Hadith (The Representatives of Renaissance in the Culture of Modern Iraq) emphasizes the fact that the culture of the so-called 'Iraqi renaissance' was established on a polarization between the elements of traditional tendency and elements of modernization. The ideas of modernization and progressiveness had influenced a wide range of writers and intellectuals, including the clergy. The interference between the traditionalist and modernist elements emerged

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within the educated class as a whole, and within the active individual, who commands the promotion and propagation of the new ideas and values.[11]

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Let us examine another aspect of this question and contemplate the attitude of the esteemed Egyptian intellectual and writer Tawfiq al-Hakim. Tawfiq al-Hakim harshly criticized and degraded King Faruq (1920-1965). Although he was part of the new power structure following the military coup in 1952, he eventually held the same negative feelings toward the revolutionary leader Gen. Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir. Al-Hakim openly criticized King Faruq's politics and barefacedly degraded him by describing his «filthy morals and his sagging body like a pig.»[12] However, al-Hakim's book, ʿAwdat al-Waʿy (The Return of Consciousness), introduced his late impressions and insights, twenty years after the 1952 revolution. It presents the insights of a man who has fully contemplated the tragic consequences of that military coup. At first, Tawfiq al-Hakim was «fascinated» by the military, but later he realized that he did not pay attention to the loss of the «constitutional life,»[13] which King Faruq had violated first, but was entirely crushed under the military coup. Al-Hakim described Gen. Nasir twenty years later: «He was solely and innately giving speeches for long hours making us heroes under his leadership, while superpowers around us appear dwarfs. We used to applaud with admiration and pride. And when he vehemently said to a powerful state that [he] has atomic bombs: 'If they are not satisfied with our actions, let them drink from the sea,' we were filled with pride.»[14] The vital attitude of the intellectual here was late by twenty years. During these years, everything was collapsing before the intellectuals' eyes, but they were kidnapped by the varnish of a 'revolution.' However, al-Hakim's The Return of Consciousness had set the stage impressively for significant revelations about rethinking the intellectuals' convictions.

Another example of an Iraqi poet, quite exemplary in this context, is Muhammad Mahdi al-Jawahiri (1900-1997). Al-Jawahiri is the most renowned poet in Iraq's modern era; he was blessed, or cursed, to have lived a prolonged life and witness a century of Iraqi's modern history. He started his work with King Faisal's (1883-1933) royal court and was occupied by Iraq and Arab issues for entire career. In his Thikrayati (My Memoirs), al-Jawahiri declared his remorse for rejecting the position of Representative in the Iraqi Parliament during the Monarchy. He obviously had reservations of the traditional Arab's attitude in general and Iraqi society's attitude in particular, towards intellectuals serving the government. For the society, al-Jawahiri emphasizes, cannot accept the fact that one can be simultaneously with rulers and the people.[15]

For the past six decades, successive political regimes in Arab countries have imposed centralized cultural and educational systems based on promoting the mainstream ideologies. Apart from some isolated incidents, the Arab intelligentsia did not have contentious confrontations that have made any change to the furious governmental attempts to reshape the culture according to specific ideologies. Theoretically speaking, each of these Arab regimes, particularly the republican regimes,

proclaimed itself an exclusive legitimate authority. Each further claimed they could protect the interest (interests) of the Arab nation, achieve 'glorious goals,' and thereby restore the glorified past of the Arabs. However, in practice none has ever been able to create a mutual understanding of central issues that could lead to a possible 'road map' for navigating their subsequent crises. In the midst of the Arab regimes' debates, the intellectuals claimed for themselves the exclusive and legitimate authority to protect the interests of the Arab nation. Naturally, none has ever been able to do so.

The intellectual-power relations have created an endless stream of disagreement and contention ranging from stern condemnation to killing. The detriment to the both, along with the society as a whole, has been immense. One example can be found in the idealism of 'Ali Harb's criticism of the intellectual, a criticism that gains a large portion of its legitimacy due to the ill-conceived intellectual-power theorization. Precisely, he assigns the same role that is played by power to the intellectual. While this theory aggravated the understanding of the intellectual›s role and made it more ambiguous, it may portray 'Ali Harb as a power-support thinker. It can also be understood as a reaction to the state policies and programs in reshaping the culture in conformity with the mainstream ideologues. Thus, some intellectuals developed an approach that assumed the cultural power as an attempt to define their own exclusive shares of authority.

'Ali Harb wages this war, not against the state authority as one may tend to think, but against the intellectuals and their projects and proclamations. First of all, he connects the rise of the profession of the intellectual in the modern Arab world with the predominance of the 'struggle mentality' (nidhal) that has been embraced by those who work in cultural fields.»[16] Then, he declares the major failure of Arab culture to develop its own self-criticism and the «end» of the intellectual. A new task of intellectuals, 'Ali Harb believes, has to reshape their role and relationship to the core values, the values of freedom and justice, and their relationship to the political and social environment.[17]

The expansion of the concept of the intellectual has always been a task in itself. Gramsci expands the notion of intellectual as he redefines the term and calls for an 'organic intellectual,' who is engaged in reality to change it. He raised the question, "What are the utmost limits of the meaning of the term 'intellectual?'[18] Gramsci acknowledges that no single criterion can set some limits for the intellectuals' activities. In fact, he incorporates intellectuals' activities with the activities of the social groups. Therefore, he emphasizes the fact that the intellectuals' activities are located within a system of relations, which reflects the intrinsic nature of intellectuals' activities. Gramsci states:

"The intellectuals have a function in the 'hegemony' that is exercised throughout society by the dominant group and in the 'domination' over society that is embodied by the state, and this function is precisely 'organizational' or

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connective. The intellectuals have no function of organizing the social hegemony of a group and that group's domination of the state."[19]

This kind of intellectual should be very interested in public relations, public activities, and public domination. On the contrary, Julien Benda (1867-1956) designates a specific meaning to the term 'the clerks' as a disinterested, unbiased intellectual who works without personal interests: a utopian intellectual who is, writes Benda, "being set apart, someone able to speak the truth to power, a crusty, eloquent, fantastically courageous, and angry individual for whom no worldly power is too big and imposing to be criticized and pointedly taken to task".[20] Benda used the term 'the clerks' by which he means:

"… all those whose activity essentially is not the pursuit the practical aims, all those who seek their joy in the practice of an art or a science or metaphysical speculation, in short in the possession of non-material advantage, and hence in a certain manner say: 'My kingdom is not of this world.'"[21]

However, Benda notices that the European clerks, at the end of nineteenth century, immersed themselves in politics and "began to play the game of political passions."[22] His attitude involves the dimension of morality as this essential change of intellectuals' function turned them to be stimulators of 'the realism of the people' rather than checking on it.

Overall, Benda's mode of intellectual emanates from his deep condemnation of wars and injustice to which the intellectuals contributed; especially First World War and the well-known Dreyfus Affair. But, if the intellectual is not an 'organic' nor a 'master of truth' (i.e.

a consciousness or conscience, nor a Marxist one who is aligned with universal missions), then Michel Foucault calls for another mode of intellectuals: A 'specific intellectual' in the face of a 'universal intellectual.'[23] The specific intellectual is situated within specific sectors that represent his work or environment such as the university, the laboratory, hospital etc. So this mode of intellectual encounters

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different problems and questions which are not universal, but specific. Hence, the intellectual as a writer is questioned or even voided in this context, because specific intellectuals are now doctors, psychiatrics, Magistrate, social workers, sociologists, and so on. Foucault's concept can be partially involved in Gramsci's argument because the 'specific intellectual' is capable of utilizing his specialty in the public domain.

Edward Said tried to create a conceptualized intellectual that is located among Gramsci's, Benda's, and Foucault's intellectuals, (i.e. not organic, neither utopian nor specific, but an independent one). He characterized the intellectual as an "exile and marginal, as amateur, and as the author of a language that tries to speak the truth to power".[24] Nonetheless, Edward Said's intellectual can be identified as Russell Jacoby's 'public intellectual', the one who contributes to open discussion.[25] Edward Said combines the intellectual as a member of academe and the

intellectual as amateur, or as Russell Jacoby's public intellectual, especially when the latter characterizes the public intellectual as "an incorrigibly independent soul answering to no one."[26]

While Fawzi Karim found in Benda's The Betrayal of the Intellectuals a discovery[27] and a foundation to support his skeptical attitude towards Arab intellectuals and their passions and positions, 'Ali Harb switched the debate about the state-intellectual relations. The latter tried to go beyond the dichotomy of intellectual and authority, because it is no longer viable, and it obliterates his objective in questioning the intellectual himself. Indeed, his questioning is somehow a self-criticism that is constituted by an intellectual and addressed to intellectuals. It is more connected to the intellectuals' predicament than to their engagement with the authority. Nevertheless, Fawzi Karim also found in Benda's analysis, of the political passions of the intellectuals, a solid ground to express his rejection of the use of passions that stem from ideologies or political parties. He considered the use of political passions and parties affiliation as a 'European sin' that also has 'genuine and deep roots in Arab soil'.
[28] Since Fawzi Karim has been meticulously preoccupied by the universal over the partial and by spiritual over practical, viewing that the Arab intellectuals resembling the Europeans intellectual characterized by Benda (i.e. they betray their role as they glorify the partial over the universal and the practical over the spiritual).[29]

'Ali Harb is strongly convinced about the intellectuals' use of 'symbolic violence' to

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impose their projects. One may argue that it is not persuasive to include the intellectuals' activities, as such, within the physical coercive realm of political activities. However, he initiated a debate of this magnitude based on myopic, one-sided, observation. Indeed, there has been a failure to observe the manifest distinction between the physical coercion and symbolic coercion. By the wording of 'symbolic violence', Harb means the violent written ideas that reflect the violence of the intellectual's entire project. Accordingly, 'Ali Harb might be seen as a tacit defender of the political authority. Under the ideal of defending human rights, Harb argues intellectuals establish their own authority over the people. For him, the authority's unequivocal coercion is imposed over the populace, including the intellectuals', whereas the intellectuals' resentment is expressed by an equivocal coercion (i.e., by condemning injustice and demanding liberty). The intellectuals and authority perceive a competition over manipulating the populace, as a property that could be annexed to their powers. The populace becomes a battlefield where the two rivals wage their wars in the name of the people's interest, each claiming to have no ambitions but taking care of the people. However, the conflict will definitely be less favorable when their interests do not coincide, the tragic history of the state-intellectual correlations lead us to firm predictions that they both would use violence.

It is not uncommon to say that authority uses violence against the intellectual who rejects its policies or has misgivings about its legitimacy. However, it is uncommon to say

that the intellectual also uses violence against the authority. The violence of the intellectual is symbolic that tries to create a complete break with the ideological constraints. This intellectual practiced violence is incorporated in the struggle for freethinking that is advocated by the intellectual himself. However, 'Ali Harb rethinks this symbolic violence and concludes that it is, in fact, a kind of intellectual tyranny in comparison to political tyranny; or two sides of the same coin. They are in actuality the tyranny of the intellectual and the tyranny of the politician.[30]

Parallel to the active intellectual, there is the reclusive solitary intellectual whom turns away, as much as he can, from both unjust power and the society of others, living in solitude. This kind of intellectual co-exists with tyranny by voluntarily disabling the effectiveness of his role. The reclusive and solitary intellectual attempts to completely withdraw, because repressive power attempts to shape culture according to its ideologies. The repressive power wants to ultimately shape the public opinion within a specific industry, and prevent any other shaping that contradicts it. The first possible source to influence public opinion and formulate culture is the intellectual. Thus, the effectiveness of the intellectual is either paralyzed or deactivated, if he chooses to encounter power violently. However, power mostly neglects those intellectuals who voluntarily choose to remain silent and solitary; thus, they are safe of harm.

Although it seems superficially different, the modern cultural system appears to be the same in comparison with the traditional one. Arab intellectuals represent, more or less, a continuation of that traditional system which accompanied the formation of Arab

and Muslim civilization, when intellectuals, men of letters, artists, thinkers, or ashab al-qalam (Arabic, literally: The pen holders, of Fr. littérateurs), propagated the ruling ideas and earned privileges in return. This aspect of the problem of the modern intellectual-authority relationship is contingent on an inability of modern intellectuals in rethinking the presuppositions of their predecessors about Islamic culture, history, and tradition. They are not immune to the same old reasoning illness that had occurred in their past. Similarly, modern intellectuals either build projects under the supervision of the state ideology or construe their preconceived projects.

In his Al-Muthaqqafun al-'Arab wa al-Turath: Al-Tahlil al-Nafsi li ꞌUsab Jamaꞌi (Arab Intellectuals and Tradition: Psychoanalysis of A Collective Neurosis), Georges Tarabichi (1939-) diagnosed this mysterious chronic malady when he described the defection of Arab intellectuals regression to their tradition as Collective Neurosis resulted from mass

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frustration.[31] However, this 'diagnosis,' due to its psychoanalytical orientation, does not interpret the continuity of traditional conventions in the modern cultural environment of Arab intellectuals. I believe that the best interpretation may not be psychological, but epistemological. The continuity of traditional thinking in the modern era and the implied presence of traditional reasoning lead not only

hinder the Arab intellectuals from 'diagnosing' the problems, but also from finding remedies.

Since the emergence of the Islamic state was accompanied by the era of tadwin, the duties of the intellectual class had been mapped out by the state as a service of consultation. These duties could have been drastically changed, if the modern Arab states did not abort the birth of the secular state in the age of colonialism. Similarly the birth of secular culture was aborted and eventually connected to authority over the society, to religion over secularism, and finally to traditionalism over rationalism.   In such circumstances neither Ernst Gellner's conclusion that the 'intellectual vocation' does not exist, nor Edward Said's characterization of the intellectual "as exile and marginal, as amateur, and as the author of a language that tries to speak the truth to power,"[32] can describe the Arab inextricable intellectuals' positions. This is because they do have functions for which they have been paid and they are not amateur, they are rather promoters of power. Each intellectual unconsciously absorbs the Arab ancient tradition in being subjugated to certain power and abandoning free thinking. They serve power's cause explicitly and implicitly responding to an inherent tendency in their tradition.

The Arab intellectuals have been prone and unconsciously faithful to the traditional vocation of ancient Arab court writers. In other words, they continue to provide advisory services to the governor and promote his ideas or even justify his mistakes and crimes. It seems that the birth of modern state did not affect the function of intellectuals, and their different activities. Utilizing communication technologies and the media remained in the

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hands of the state. We have models of such modern states, such as Egypt commanded by General Nasir during 1952-1970 and his successors, Iraq under the Ba'th party during 1968-2003, and Syria since 1963. These countries, which have been reshaped by military coups, have contained the intellectuals who have forcibly or voluntarily co-opted within grand projects to formulate a systematic culture according to specific methodology and ideology. Of course, there is a great deal of similarity between these Arab republic states and some Arab kingdoms and emirates, Saudi Arabia in particular.

In principle, the more political, or even military, conflicts intensified over particular issues (national and trans-national), the more the role of Arab intellectuals grows and flourishes. This notion can be validated by the fact that this kind of intelligentsia does not necessarily assume the role of leading the community, but has been led by the state ideology becoming a member in the ideological state apparatus. Once the state ideology absorbs the intelligentsia in the space of authority, the cooption reaches its culmination. The full cooption of intelligentsia in the game of authority results in an indispensible consequence: the loss of liberty of reason.

The intellectuals will not be free and their

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research is subjected to the major ideological market: the state ideology. Those products definitely comply with the state specifications and eventually will be commoditized. For authority, the ideological conformity is a condition where the state can be strengthened by the writers. But for the writers, the same ideological conformity is a condition where the independent thinking is extremely violated, the aura of the tamed writers is sadly vanished, and free voices are voluntarily muffled. The intellectuals have lost their own way of thinking and have merged with the mentality of the mainstream thinking. By incorporating them into ideological projects, or commoditized products, sponsored by the ideological power, the intellectuals have been disconcertedly transformed into state employees having specific tasks to perform in accordance with the instructions of the state and in conformity with its ideology.

In our modern times, and due to the domination of Western civilization, Arab culture has witnessed a historical moment when a few Arab intellectuals could practice freethinking and relatively break with the authority mainstream ideology. In particular, these few could oppose the rigorous religious thought and politicized religion. But why did these attempts of Arab intellectuals fail to form a new cultural environment in the Arab world? One aspect of this dilemma lies, I believe, in the persistence of the traditional intellectual-authority correlation (i.e. old Arab intellectuals had been prone to adopt positions of authority (rather) than opposing them, and this phenomenon can still be seen in the case of modern Arab intellectuals).

According to the integration policy of the state regarding the role of the intellectuals, they systematically become 'protectors of ideas,' to use 'Ali Harb's expression[33], and not producers of ideas. Since, the ideas preexist and the only viable mission for the intellectuals is to protect and revere them, or even justify political blunders and atrocities. However, what is the price the intellectuals pay for the sacrifice of their liberty of thinking and commoditization of their research 'labor'? The state-institutionalized intellectuals have been the rigid cultural arms of the authority to direct and redirect the main streams of culture to only one state-controlled direction. The state authority wants to gain legitimacy through the intellectuals, and intellectuals want to gain acceptability for their ideas through the state intellectual pseudo-legitimacy.

The modern Arab intellectual is associated with the authority through its educational institutions and media apparatus; this is the same position of his predecessor, the Arab intellectual who was emerged in the purview of the Arab-Islamic state where the mosques and other educational institutions were controlled by the state. As it was rare for the state-dominated culture to establish independent schools and seminaries, the modern state-dominated culture did not succeed in establishing independent research centers and cultural institutions. Therefore, the modern research centers and cultural institutions are now an 'objective correlative' for the mosques during the Islamic Arab state (especially Umayyad

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and Abbasid dynasties), in that the societal structures were entirely under the supervision of the state.

One of the modern studies that dealt with this question is Nadia Ramsis Farah's 'Intellectual, State, and Civil Society.' She studied the impact of civil society in reshaping the relationship between intellectuals and authority in the modern Arab world. Normally, Arab civil society was sometimes negative, or even hostile in the way of forming this relationship. [34] The description of civil society's role in the establishment of an intellectual relationship with authority is still gaining credibility in the Arab intellectual environment. In other words, the civil society could be possibly adapted by the state to create consistency with its objectives; here civil society may indirectly intimidate intellectuals on behalf of the state, as is happening now in Iraq. For instance, the politicization of religion in Iraq has tremendously motivated the Iraqi society to restrain freedom of expression; thereby, abandoning the constitution they had created and approved. Consequently, intellectuals who fear society cannot but submit to authority. This cunning and feasible stratagem, in which we find examples in countries such as Iraq and Saudi Arabia in particular, where the community is well prepared to violently apply the mainstream views (politicized religious ones often), provides a contrary image of the role of intellectuals as drawn by Gramsci. Specifically, this is a prime negation of his concept in the Arab intelligentsia of the 'organic intellectual' as a role that leads to an organization of the social domination and the state control through the civil society and political community. [35]

The intellectual provides advisory services to the politician, not only by promoting the latter's ideas, but by justifying his actions and

> **The violence of the intellectual is symbolic that tries to create a complete break with the ideological constraints**

crimes as well. The birth of the modern state has not influenced this major function of the intellectual, as his activities and access to modern technology and the media remain under the supervision of the state. The models of some Arab modern states such as Egypt, Iraq, and Syria that are controlled by military regimes co-opted and tamed the intellectuals who had to join the state forcibly or voluntarily. It is therefore not a fully persuasive argument that 'Ali Harb uses to link the flourishing of the profession of the intellectual in the Arab world with the domination of «struggle» (nidhal) over the cultural arenas and those who are related to the issues of thought and knowledge». [36] 'Ali Harb tried to explain the failure of Arab culture and called for a criticism addressed to the intellectual and his elitism, indeed he called for an 'end' of the intellectual, and suggested the creation of a new task that reshapes his role and his relationship with the fundamental values; values of freedom and justice, and his relationship with the political and social milieu. [37] I believe that the main argument here is about the historical roots of the prolonged relationship between intellectuals and authorities since the Umayyad (40132- AH / 662750- AD) and Abbasid states (132 - 656 AH, 6621258- AD).

The question is as follows, "To what extent can the intellectual change his status from

being a proponent of the state into an opponent of the state, thereby eliminating the patronage model?" This question was raised in the

> **Arab intellectuals represent, more or less, a continuation of that traditional system which accompanied the formation of Arab and Muslim civilization**

context of Western culture during the Twelfth Century Middle Ages when the intellectuals were directed by the ideology of the Church. The response to this question is apparently associated with the internal movement of the West and external influence. What achieved this conversion is ultimately the primary knitting of the Christian West with the bright side of Muslim Arabs thinking, especially when Averroes's books were translated into Latin and what so-called the «Latin Averroism» influenced scholastics in Medieval Europe. The Latin Averroism, according to Alain de Libera, separated religion from philosophy. It converted the twelfth and thirteenth centuries' European philosophers from being 'Organic intellectuals' that cultivated their activities in the authority space, providing universities with cadres (scholars), into philosophers who developed their own discourses and opposed the authority of the church, and eventually developing a counter hegemony.[38]

In his work on the origins of the emergence of intellectuals, Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri (19362010-) maintains that the European intellectuals in the Middle Ages could not have achieved their radical change without Averroism, (p. 33). But al-Jabiri's conclusion was based on the origins of Islamic and European cultures. However, my research focuses on those origins of Muslim-Arab culture that contributed to the establishment of a negative concept within which intellectuals work with the authority as promoters and supporters. I believe that what mentally motivates modern Arab intellectuals in their attitudes and projects is their past; the past that permeates the Arabs' modern world. Therefore, instead of being vehemently prone to sustain the self-assertiveness of Arabs by defending their contribution to the emergence of a new generation of European intellectuals, as al-Jabiri did, I tend to address this imbalance by disclosing this unseen thread that links our modern intellectual with his predecessors. Ultimately, both play the traditional destructive role in dealing with authorities as supporters and justifiers.

Al-Jabiri realized that a referential absence needs to be filled when rethinking the origins of Arab intellectuals in the Arab tradition; because he believes that the modern intellectual practices thinking based on a previous intellectual. This attempt moved him to pose the question 'Who is the intellectual?' because he wants first to specify who the intellectual is among writers, philosophers, scientists, scholars, poets, critics, historians, commentators, jurists, and mystics. In order to determine the concept of the traditional Arab intellectual, al-Jabiri adapted the European concept of the intellectual into the Arab-Islamic civilization.[39]

It seems that the current problematic position of the Arab intellectuals is that the modern Arab culture has not been able to create an institutional and legal basis for the intellectual activities, so that the intellectuals can practice their work in an atmosphere of

freedom of expression, which is a necessary condition for free thinking. The totalitarian regimes, one-party states, tyranny, and the absence of cultural and legal institutions, cultural have made the implied system that has been embedded with the Arab culture to be an appropriate paradigm to the deteriorating situation of Arab politics, and to be unconsciously adopted by Arab intellectuals.

Footnotes

1. Hassan Nadhem is an Iraqi Academic, writer, and translator living in the United States. He is a lecturer at the Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS) – validated by Middlesex University, London. He has taught in several Western and Arab Universities and Institutions of higher education. He published eighteen original and translated books. His current research activities mainly involve cultural and literary studies. He is the author of Lost Poetics: Studies and Testimonies (2010), Text and Life (2008), Humanization of Poetry: An Introduction to a Different Modernity (Fawzi Karim's Poetry) (2006), Stylistic Structures: A Study on Assayab's Poetic Collection 'Unshūdat al-Matar' (2002), Concepts of Poetics: A Comparative Study on Origins, Method and Concepts (1994). His most recent research approached "Arab Intellectuals and Authority" for Routledge edited book, 2012.

2. An analogy with 'Prague Spring' in Czechoslovakia in 1968 may be viable and legitimate. However, as the 'Prague Spring' attempted a reformation and redefinition of state ideology (i.e., socialism out of Stalinism) by both intellectuals and elites rather than a rejection of it, the Arab publics are rejecting, violently in some cases, existing authority and are not unified in their ideology; some have none, some advocate liberal democracy, some are Islamists, etc.

3. 'Ali Harb, Awham al-Nukhbah aw Naqd al-Muthaqqaf (Illusions of the Elite or the Criticism of the Intellectual), (Beirut: Arabic Cultural Center, 1998), p. 11.

4. 'Ali al-Wardi (19131995-) was the most popular Iraqi sociologist and historian; he is the founder of Iraqi sociology. He had written many books on the history of Iraqi people including his 6 vols. masterpiece Lamahat Ijtima'iyyah min Tarikh al-'Iraq al-Hadith (Sociological Glimpses from Iraqi Modern History). Mahmud al-Brekan (19272002-), was born in al-Basrah, southern Iraq and tragically killed in his Basran home on 2002 by a thief. He was a highly regarded and acclaimed poet for his contribution to the modern Arab poetry as one of the pioneers of the Free Verse Movement that had thrived in 1950s.

5. See Tareq Ismael, The Rise and Fall of the Communist Party of Iraq, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 173.

6. See Ibid., pp. 18182-.

7. Muhsin al-Musawi, Reading Iraq: Culture and Power in Conflict, (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2006), p.143.

8. See Ibid., p.37.

9. It is interesting to refer that one of the meanings of hashiyah is a margin.

10. See Gramsci, Prison Notebooks, vol. II, pp. 206.

11. Fatimah al-Muhsin, Tamath-thulat al-Nahdhah fi Thaqafat al-Iraq al-Hadith (The Representatives of Renaissance in the Culture of Modern Iraq), (Beirut: al-Kamel Publishing, 2010), p.56.

12. Tawfiq al-Hakim, Awdat al-Way (The Return of Consciousness), p. 13.

13. Ibid., p. 21.

14. Ibid., p. 37.

15. Muhammad Mahdi al-Jawahiri, Thikrayati (My Memoirs), (Damascus: Al-Rafidayn Publishing, 1988), vol. I, pp. 19294-.

16. 'Ali Harb, Awham al-Nukhbah aw Naqd al-Mutharraf, p. 10.

17. Ibid., 1998. p. 14.

18. Antonio Gramsci, Prison Notebooks, Ed. And trans. By Joseph A. Buttigieg, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), vol. II, p. 200.

19. Ibid., vol. II, pp. 20001-.

20. Edward Said, Representations of the intellectuals (The 1993 Reith Lectures), (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), p.8.

21. Julien Benda, The Betrayal of the Intellectuals (La Trahison des Clercs), Trans. Richard Aldington, (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955), p. 30.

22. Ibid., p.31.

23. See Foucault, Michel, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 19721977-, Ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, Kate Soper, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p.126.

24. Edward Said, Representations of the intellectuals, p.xvi.

25. See Russell Jacoby, The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe, (New York: Basic Books, 1987), p. 221.

26. Ibid., p.235.

27. See Fawzi Karim, Tahafut al-Sittiniyyin: Ahwa' al-Muthaqqaf wa Makhaⵏir al-Fi'l al-Siyasi (Breakdown of Generation of the Sixties: Passions of the Intellectuals and the Riskiness of Political Actions), (Damascus: al-Mada Publishing, 2006), p.60.

28. See Ibid., p.66.

29. See Ibid., p.59.

30. See 'Ali Harb, Awham al-Nukhbah aw Naqd al-Muthaqqaf, pp.5660-.

31. Georges Tarabichi, Al-Muthaqqafun al-'Arab wa al-Turath: Al-Tahlil al-Nafsi li ⵏUsab Jamaⵏi (Arab Intellectuals and Tradition: Psychoanalysis of A Collective Neurosis), (UK: Rayyes Books, 1991), p.19ff.

32. Edward Said, Representations of the Intellectual, p. xvi.

33. 'Ali Harb, Awham al-Nukhbah aw Naqd al-Muthaqqaf, p. 11.

34. See: Nadia Ramsis Farah, "Intellectual, State, and Civil Society," in Gramsci and Civil Society Questions, (Damascus: Kan'an Publishing, 1990), p. 31832-.

35. See Gramsci, Prison Notebooks, vol. II, p. 201.

36. 'Ali Harb, Awham al-Nukhbah aw Naqd al-Muthaqqaf, p. 10.

37. Ibid., p. 14.

38. See Muhammad 'Abid Al-Jabiri, Al-Muthaqqfun al-'Arab wa al-Turat: Mihnat Ibn Hanbal wa Nakbat Ibn Rushd (Intellectuals in Arabic civilization: Ibn Hanbal's Ordeal and Ibn Rushd's Catastrophe), (Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies, 2000), 2nd ed., pp. 2130-.

39. See Ibid., pp. 710-.

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22. Ibid., p.31.

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28. See Ibid., p.66.

29. See Ibid., p.59.

30. See 'Ali Harb, Awham al-Nukhbah aw Naqd al-Muthaqqaf, pp.5660-.

31. Georges Tarabichi, Al-Muthaqqafun al-'Arab wa al-Turath: Al-Tahlil al-Nafsi li ṬUsab Jamaṭi (Arab Intellectuals and Tradition: Psychoanalysis of A Collective Neurosis), (UK: Rayyes Books, 1991), p.19ff.

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35. See Gramsci, Prison Notebooks, vol. II, p. 201.

36. 'Ali Harb, Awham al-Nukhbah aw Naqd al-Muthaqqaf, p. 10.

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