

Issue (1) - Jan 2022

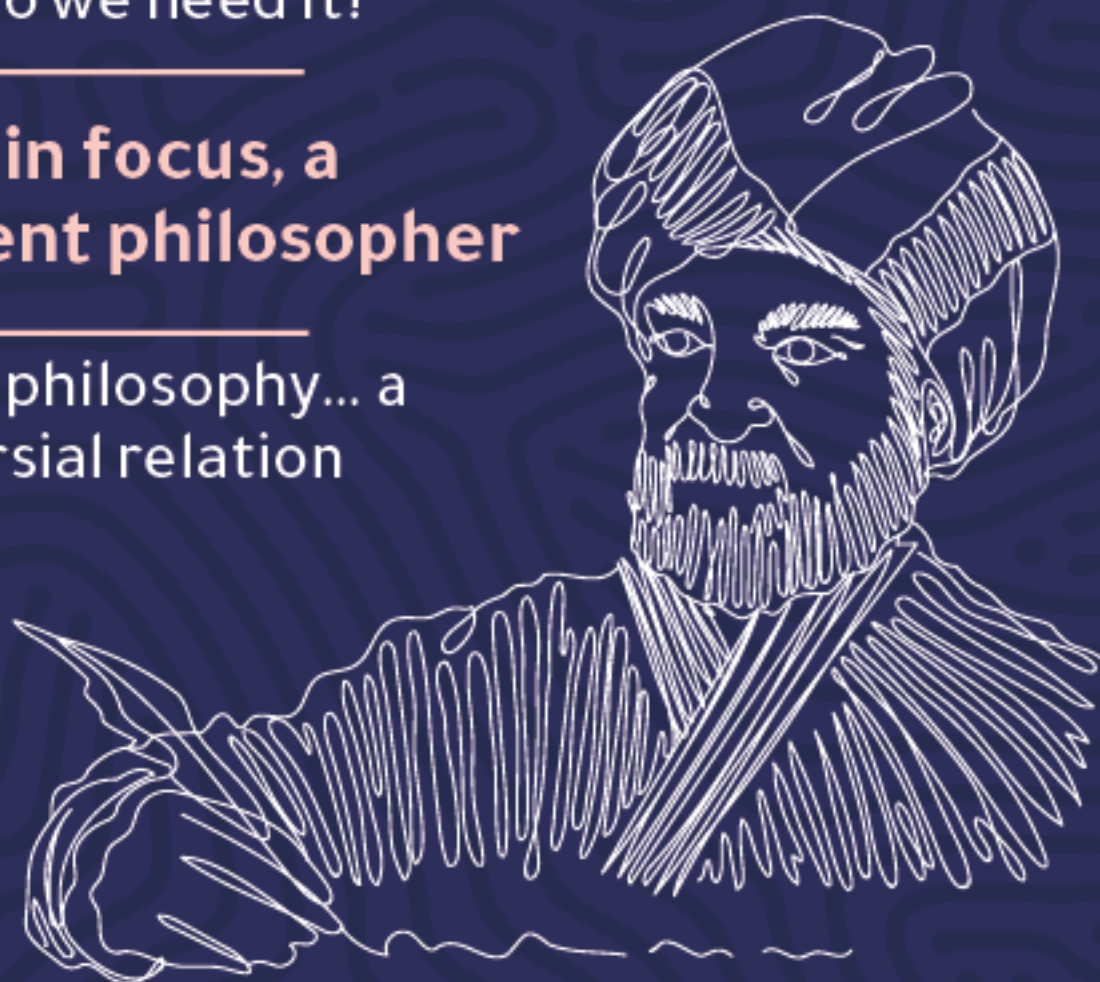
PHILOSOPHY HOUSE

Enlightenment

What is Enlightenment
and why do we need it?

**Al Kindi in focus, a
prominent philosopher**

Logic and philosophy... a
controversial relation



Philosophy House

and Arabs' philosophical opinion



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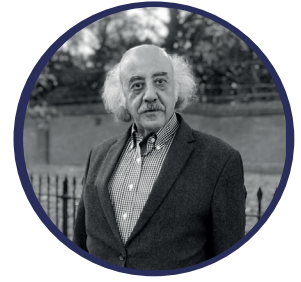
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❖ The House of Philosophy Journal and Arabic Saying in Philosophy

By Dr Ahmed Barqawi

Every human being is a project, constantly and eternally aiming to attain his existence. He, the man, is a set of enablers originated by his own awareness of reality. Now, we are celebrating the birth of a new yet a permanent project, the House of Philosophy Journal. We hope it will be home for all Arab philosophers, and a reference for all philosophy fans.

The announcement of The House of Philosophy as a permanent project stems from the fact it is based on countless philosophical project. It aspires to open the cultural space to the Arab opinion of philosophy, and such an opinion is limitless, so long as philosophy is the mind's constant celebration of existence.

One might ask, "What is meant by the Arab saying in philosophy? Is it aiming to establish a common Arab philosophy?"

If we revert to our hypothesis that philosophy is the celebration of the mind with existence, then such a celebration can only take place by discovering the multi-facet and variable questions, and coming up with answers that reflect the difference and diversity. And if the philosopher is the person of his time and reality, then his questions are just the yield of awareness of his time and reality.

The contemplator of our Arab reality, when particularly envisaging its inward deeply, realises the number of questions below the surface of this reality.

The issues of identity, differences, awareness, relationship with the other, ego, self, mind, severance, continuity, state, authority, freedom, enlightenment, the possible, reality, tolerance, happiness, alienation, and other preoccupations related to the universal human being, and the specific person in a certain culture, all require holistic philosophical answers. These answers ought to be free from ideological awareness influencing capacity to possess with a world by virtue of proof.

When we present some problems, this does not indicated they are the mere ones; the philosopher can grasp what others fall short of. One of the philosophy's facets is to envisage the world from contrasting angles and enrich the mind with all comprehensive methodological know-how tools.

Then, The House of Philosophy is nothing but a platform for setting forth Arab philosophical ideas, reflecting all aspects of disagreement, and questions and answers.



Emanating from the spirit of dialogue and criticism, and aiming to preserve the spirit of philosophy, The House of Philosophy seeks to be the home of all Arab philosophers regardless of their variable and multi-faceted philosophical outlooks.

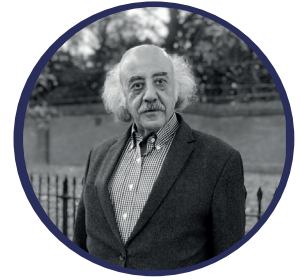
A very important point must be mentioned, which is the relationship to the philosophical discourse of other nations. Since philosophy offers comprehensive answers to real problems, it undoubtedly, like any epistemological study, enjoys the peculiarity of its ability to transcend. Therefore, being acquainted with the global philosophy is a significant source of enriching philosophical pool of knowledge, and liberating from repetition that does not give rise to an exclusive opinion.

Our Arab countries have long ago become home of all schools of contemporary philosophy. This started with the neo-Thomism of Youssef Karam, to Marxism in the speeches of Mahmoud Amin al-Alam and Sadiq Al-Azm popularised by many, all the way through the existentialism spearheaded by Abd Al-Rahman Badawi, Zakaria Ibrahim and Mutaa Safadi. Then the positivism is presented by Zaki Naguib Mahmoud, and the personality in the writings of Abdul Aziz Al-Habashi and Rena Habshi.

For this reason, we at The House of Philosophy, both the institution and the journal, generally seek a philosophical discourse. It is devoid of the mechanical reflection of what the other produces, while recognising the specificity of each original philosophical idea produced by the human mind.

We are now amid a very special experience, the establishment of philosophical activity outside the university campuses and their academic methodology. As it opens its doors to Arab specialists and academics, The House of Philosophy welcomes every genuine philosophical discourse from outside the academia.

Last but not least, I would say we in The House of Philosophy in general, and in The House of Philosophy Journal in particular, are thrilled to see this modern institution to be home for all minds celebrating existence.



◆ We and the Enlightenment

By: Dr Ahmed Barkawi

For over a century, the question of enlightenment has been present in our Arab realism and debated by mindful intellectuals. The writer of this article has published more than one research in answer to the question: what is enlightenment? And every time he addresses the issue of enlightenment, he finds himself in need of more enriching answers.

Before embarking on investigating an answer to our relations with enlightenment, which I chose as a title to this article, let us indulge in what ostensibly appears to be something that does not need consideration, i.e. I mean the separate nominative pronoun denoting the awareness of a group of itself. Whereas (we) is the plural of (I), and just as the pronoun (I) refers to both the masculine and the feminine, the pronoun (we) also signifies both plural genders. When a certain group, or whoever their unassigned representative, utter the pronoun (we), this means they are aware of an identity denoting to the group (from nation to the group); they realise the commons among members of the group.

But the speaker (I) cannot embrace the characteristics of the group, and the group that share a characteristic cannot be of similar individuals. So, when you ask the (I) who are we? It declares its affiliation with the meant (we).

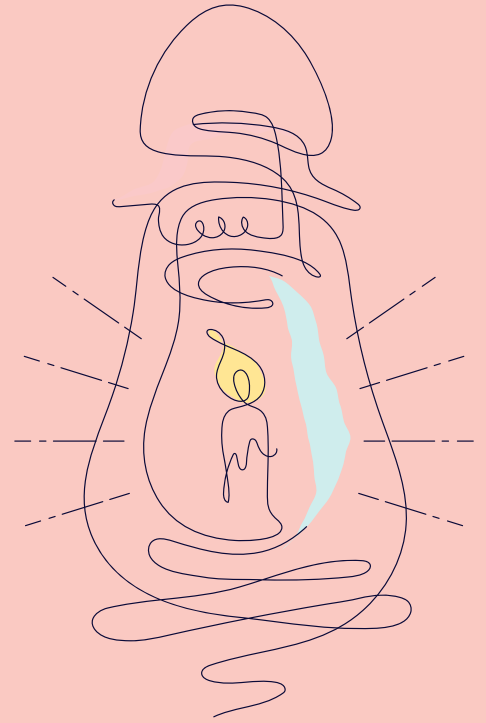
(We) here in the form of the question concerns the residents of the region extending from the Ocean to the Gulf, with its Arab majority and its various minorities. It encompasses the inhabitants of the Arab region, their classes and groups, countries and regions, religions, sects and factions, and with their contradictions and differences.

So, the (we) here refers to a multi-different majority. For is it wise to present a single discourse on enlightenment for all these different inhabitants?

Then why do we need enlightenment in the first place? Are we living in an era of darkness? And above all, what is enlightenment?

In order to better define our enlightenment, we will address these questions and the emanating sub-questions from their answers.

More than a hundred years have passed since Arabs become obsessed with enlightenment, yet we still reiterate the same question. How can a question raised for over a century sustain until this moment in our contemporary history? Let us rather say, "What motivates us more persistently to raise the same question of enlightenment, now in a gloomier reality compared to the yesteryears when enlightenment debuted in our Arab world?"



◆◆ More than a hundred years
have passed since Arabs
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An enlightened mind is a realistic mind

We and the Enlightenment

We, the Arabs, are an objective reality, a group of countries with varying forms of power, structures, and experience diverse states of stability with uneven levels of economic progress and infrastructure. Given all this, is it wise whether to cite the question about enlightenment using the pronoun (we).

Therefore, in answering it, another sub-question arises, helping to arrive at an answer, "What are the common features that make the discourse of enlightenment in the Arab world possible? Rather, let us ask what the common darkness that needs to fade.

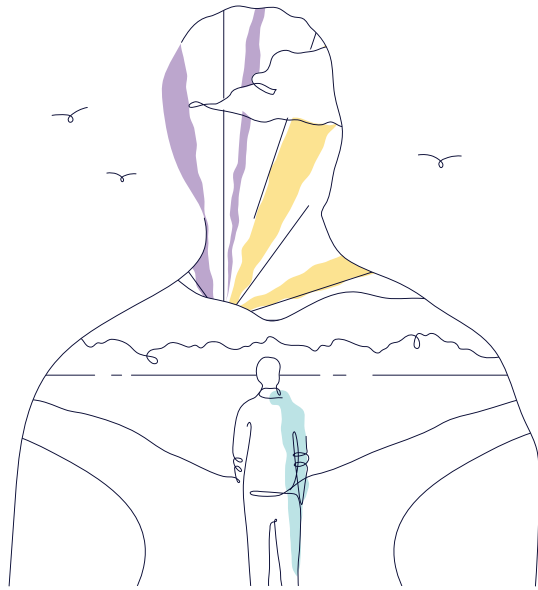
If enlightenment, in its abstract definition, is the dispelling of darkness, then we cannot practise the act of enlightenment without identifying the darkness out to fade. Is the darkness mental or realistic?

If we act from the fact that enlightenment is the extension of the mind with methods of thinking and knowledge on understanding and changing the world, then it is nothing but the battle of the systematic and logical mind directed against the other lacking these cognitive tools.

Thinking is basically centric on reality. It strives to create a requirement-based reality of a happy person and to counter a reality free from obstacles of thinking and freedom

of will. This relationship between reason and reality is the basis of the act of enlightenment. Let us go a step further in crystalising this concept. An enlightened mind is a realistic mind; it is devoid of illusion. The real mind here is not the one that recognises reality. Rather, it is the one that proceeds from understanding reality as the womb of the possibilities both the mind and will strive to achieve. Possibilities are realities that exist by force and require reason and a will to attain them. The mind's darkness is merely illusions whose holders believe they can achieve in reality.

Historical experience confirms to the enlightened mind there is no will capable of imposing a concluded historical era with all its components to regain it in reality. And if the mind of a violence-motivated group believes they can, then the result is the destruction of life and the ability of human beings to live. Clearly, what they aspire to is not a possibility born from the womb of the historical becoming. So the core of the real enlightenment mind in this realistically logical issue: what is not yet born from the womb of the historical becoming and turned into an illusory awareness is the irrational reality. Only the unreal mind does make free sacrifices to achieve an unreasonable reality. The mental impact, in turn, reinforces the enlightened real mind and enriches it with newness.



A vitally important enlightened judgement emerges from the aforementioned statement: the enlightened mind is absolutely liberated from fanaticism and from any means denying the truth and the right to disagreement. The enlightenment mind is perfectly a human mind.

There is a huge difference between the humanistic and the fanatic mind. The first is a winged mind that flies in the happiness-attaining space of possibilities. On the contrary, the fanatic mind is obstinate in front of the door of the cave to prevent the prisoners there from seeing the sun. The humanist thinks, and his tools are new concepts, logic, and methods, whereas the fanatic does not think at all. The humanist belongs to the horizons, and the future is crystalised in the reality, injecting his will with effectiveness. Unlikely, the fanatic is bereft

of will, makes his own decision and resort to killing. No one should perceive fanaticism as a moral characteristic of violent fundamentalist movements and religious ideology only. It is also an aggressive moral construct towards the other, the different. Intolerance is a moral mentality that is destructive to coexistence and to free and liberated individualism.

Fanaticism is a self-independent theology of all religions, a self-contained theology, regardless of its ideological interface, whether nationalism, religion, secularism, sectarianism, or racism.

Fanaticism is the religion of criminals, slaves of barbaric power. They are only masters in the art of murder and prisoners of sacred ignorance- the theology of darkness. People's culture is unfamiliar with the religious, national, or ideological intolerance. Intolerance, in all its forms and false formulations, is the fruit of intellectual illusions conveyed through the discourse to an audience. Therefore, enlightenment does not contradict popular awareness from this perspective, rather it spreads the persistent spirit of tolerance in the souls of people.

Enlightenment is a battle human victory

We and the Enlightenment

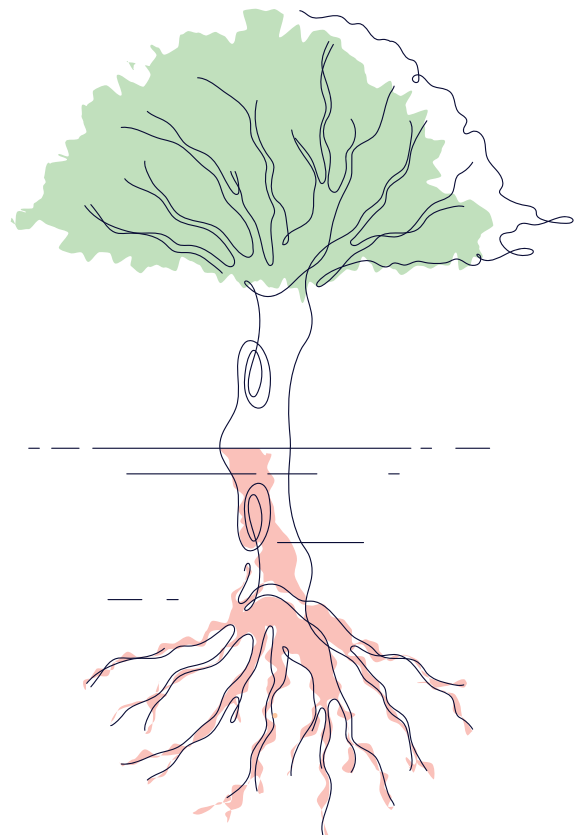
Confronting the authority of consciousness that contradicts reality and reasonableness with realistic awareness and realistic reasonableness, enlightenment metamorphoses a science into a conscious scientific awareness aside from the knowledge of the theories of physics, chemistry, biology and humanities that require a specialisation in disciplines.

Scientific awareness bonds consciousness to the earth, the community and man without relying on what is outside, and in isolation from belief, skepticism and discussions of a scientific nature based on a scientific awareness of the world and the relativity of objective facts.

At present, enlightenment cannot overlook the human-self as a reality-centric reference of knowledge should it aims to declare itself as defendant of the centrality of the human-self.

This would dismantle the foundations of the idolatrous consciousness and the prejudiced ideas behind which the regressors and those who seek to perpetuate reality are entrenched.

The battle of enlightenment is against the dormant and awakening idols dwelling in cavernous minds with all their violence, aggression and hatred for the logic of life. Unpredictably, the enlightenment found itself in the midst of a battle defending the spiritual life of man in our world and its artistic, poetic, literary, theatrical as well as the fictional



and musical creativity. Simultaneously, we hear regressive voices rising against these spiritual values with the baseless pretexts. If art is in a state of creative decline, it is owing to the historical stagnation that produced such art rather than the art itself. The corruption of taste itself reflects a globally widespread spoiled image.

The enlightenment philosophy is a rebellion philosophy against all this, and opposing the domination of any mental degeneration and idle thinking. Yes, since enlightenment is consciousness of the necessity of the man's birth, the free active self, it is then a victory battle of the man who raises the banner of the mind with all the courage of existence. Consequently, there is no room for separating material poverty from spiritual poverty, nor the victory of the body from the victory of the soul. For the soul is a body, and the body is a soul. Enlightenment is versus the plot of arbitrary separation of man.

As for as I am concerned, enlightenment is a discourse confronting all forms of idolatry, especially of the idea that possesses its advocator. Such an idea sometimes culminates in turning that person into a killer at times.

The idolatry of an idea is merely a belief that evolves into a much greater value than the person who embraces it. Consequently, he becomes a little servant striving to attain it even if he pays his life for it, or disperses the life of the other in defence of it.

If we contemplate the history of the idolatry of the idea, we hardly find any nation slipped away from it. The Crusades, for example, were launched based on a false idea, which is

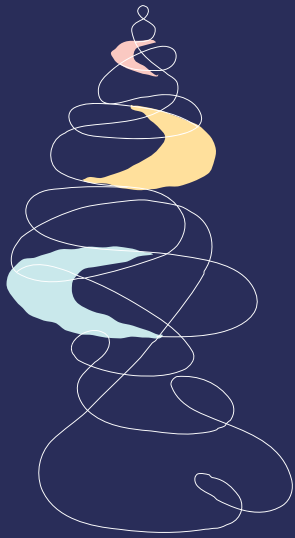
the liberation of Jerusalem from the Muslims in response to alleged call of the Christ. But the disguise of worldly interests in the idea of idolatry, which drives its powerful influence from a religious source, fuels the behaviour, feeding the belief with violence based on the principle: kill for, or die for.

The truth is that there is no ideology free of an idolatry idea that evolves into the cradle for a totalitarian fanaticism.

Unquestionably, there a difference between the idolatrous idea of a secular origin and that of a religious origin; the first proves short-lived by means of generation and reality, whilst the latter is grounded in a pattern of stubborn culture.

For this reason, criticising the idolatry of the idea, whatever its source, is extremely important, entailing cognitive and moral courage. Hence, we should not hesitate to refuse such an idea.

The famous English philosopher Bertrand Russell was once asked, "Are you willing to die for an idea you believe in?" He replied: "No, perhaps I was wrong." We say it is not permissible to die for an idea, even if we are right, so it is better to live for it.



Finally, I would say ✧

Enlightenment is not ideology, as some might think. Rather, it is a defence of the meaning of a happy life, and a strategy to attain this meaning.

❖ Criticism of the Enlightenment as Enlightenment

By Dr Khaldoun Al-Nabwani

Individual freedom, social contract, tolerance, justice, equality, freedom of thought, freedom of belief, freedom of expression, human rights, fraternity, citizenship, global citizenship, human as the top of values, sanctity of life, trust in reason, permanent peace amongst the nations and peoples, etc., are the framework of values that widespread in the era of European Enlightenment and in France in the eighteenth century in particular. Then these values were pursued and evolved by the German thinkers Kant, Mendelssohn and others. Based upon these intellectual human values, the West could establish its modernity and renaissance, translating them into policies, laws, institutions, liberal governance systems, democracies, rights, duties, ways of life, ways of dealing, communication, education, and universal values..etc. Thanks to the Enlightenment and modernisation, the European West shifted from the medieval ages dominated by myths and religion under the reign of the Catholic church into an institution of truth. It presented itself as a global model for modernisation, development and progress coveted and sought-after by other cultures and nations.



However, what always presents itself as an absolute, or a universally applicable model, inwardly encompasses the seeds of its own contradiction, distortion, finitude in time, limitations in space, privacy, powers, restrictions, and its shackles. And since I do not professionally practice criticism, nor advocate deconstruction merely to dismantle the discipline of deconstruction, I would rather investigate it carefully to prove its shortcomings, contradictions and paradoxes running deep below the polished outlook.

Criticism of the Enlightenment utilising the tools of philosophy

Criticism of the Enlightenment as Enlightenment

Here, criticism is not confined to a negative role taking the wraps off the defects, contradictions, deviations, and distortions; it reveals what the absolute authorities suppress and obscure in order to showcase the origin of its deviations and evaluate it intending to correct it, or to declare its invalidity and seek a new horizon. The Absolute and the Ideal are from the realms of thought and lie in the remote heaven and not from the worlds of earthly practice, i.e. the potential human worlds that are imperfect, and therefore impossible. In this sense, the criticism of the Enlightenment utilising the tools of philosophy is enlightenment; it is an integral part of what the Enlightenment brought and called for through confidence in reason, skepticism about the commons, sanctities tampering, the freedom of belief, questioning, and skepticism.

Within the framework of these critical insights, I will delve into reviewing the European Enlightenment model and its ideals on four main pillars:

- 1- Monopoly
- 2- Universalism
- 3- Holiness, emptying meaning
- 4- Distortion and consequences.



These insights have a primary aim of attempting to answer the much frequently asked question: "What is Enlightenment?" Does the Western model monopolise the term of Enlightenment and thus be the sole experience, or does it have a meaning beating the monopoly?

First: Monopoly

The word “Enlightenment”, once appears, spoken or written, reminds us of the Age of Enlightenment or the Age of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, especially in France, which witnessed the birth of a rational, human, and social thought represented in a set of philosophical ideals and ideas that gradually and politically applied with the French Revolution in 1789. In the French language, Les Lumières comes in the plural form, and with a capital letter, to refer to the intellectual era that prevailed in Europe and France in particular in the nineteenth century. It is the equivalent of Siècle des Lumières, the Age of Lights. The word Lumières in French is of the Latin origin luminaria, which originally means (the torch) or (the source of light). However, it does not connote a verb or an action, or even to a root of a verb from which it is derived. It metaphorically refers to awareness, clarity of mind, and clarity as opposed to blackness and darkness. The French word lumières does not have a verb which can drive from or the word is driven from either. When we want to say (lighted) or (enlighten), we use other verbs such as éclairer or illuminer, or we use a combination of several words, including the word “light” or “la lumière” as if we say: apporter de la lumière or faire la lumière or allumer la lumière etc. In this sense, the signifier and the signified in French agree to

make the Enlightenment a noun rather than a verb. Or rather a proper noun denoting only to a particular era in the French history, from the eighteenth century and the French Revolution until today. The signifier and the signified in French contrive to present a meaning monopolising the Enlightenment through Les Lumières and outlining it to the French time and geographical boundaries. Les Lumières the French, with its exclusive defining article Les and an initial capital letter with Lumières, has turned into a proper name. This proper nouns always refers to a specific identity, which is here the French thought of the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, this proper noun is not limited to the French pronunciation; it also refers to the term Aufklärung in German, Enlightenment in English, or Illuminismo in Italian.

However, these Western connotations in English, German and Italian slightly break the monopoly of the signifier in the French experience, although they do not depart from the centrality of the exclusive European identity. It slightly cuts the French monopoly on the Enlightenment, adding up certain things about the national identity of each country.

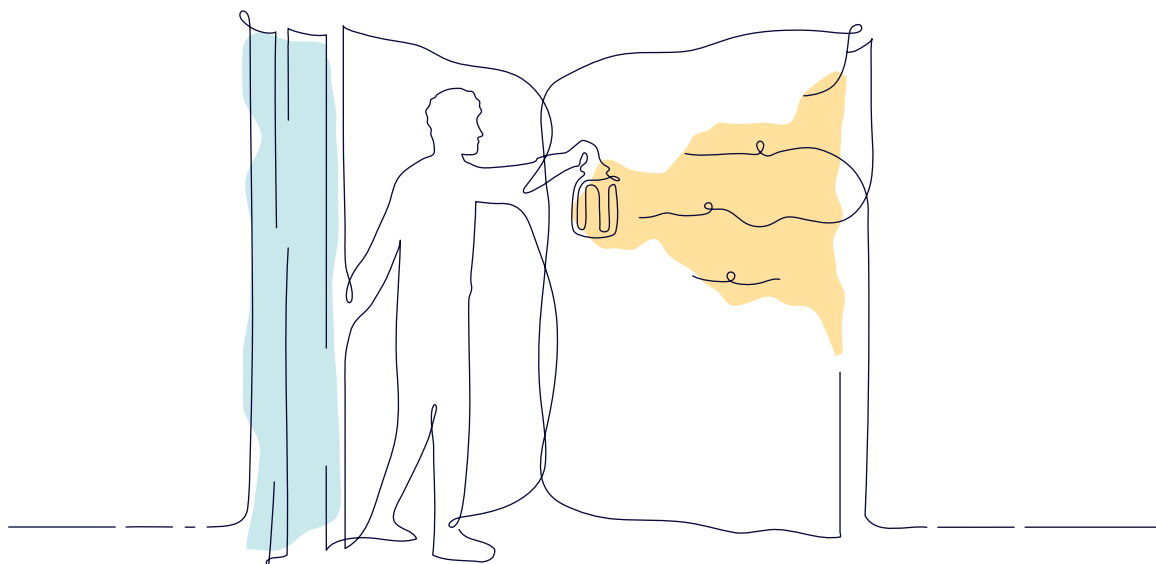
History of the Enlightenment in Europe The difference in national participation

Monopoly | A review of the European "enlightenment model"

The German word *Aufklärung*, for example, refers to a history close to the French Enlightenment, which also appeared in the eighteenth century, but to a geography close to Germany. It expands the word *Aufklärung* from the Enlightenment period, adding a German contribution to accomplishing the Enlightenment in France. Once we investigate the significance of the word *Aufklärung* in philosophical references, we will see it brings up, besides the French Enlightenment, the intellectual movement Germany had witnessed from 1720s until the last quarter of eighteenth century when the *Sturm und Drang* came into existence. Then followed the German Enlightenment movement with Mendelssohn, Kant, etc. Although the latter, for example, presented the Enlightenment as a departure from a state of frailty to independence and self-reliance (which we will return to later), the German word Enlightenment also maintained the historical and geographical connotation of Western Europe in the eighteenth century. While the *Encyclopedia Britannica* confirms the English

term of Enlightenment, which defines it as the French Age of Enlightenment and adds to it the German *Aufklärung*, the term expands again. It incorporates "the European intellectual movement in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries."

With this expansion in time and space, the English term for the Age of Enlightenment adds an English outcome previously influenced both the French and German Enlightenment just as the Newtonian physics (1642-1727) did on all the philosophical thought, especially on Kant. Or as Francis Bacon (1561-1626) influenced the works of some French enlightenment thinkers, notably Diderot, or as the great influence of John Locke on Rousseau, Voltaire and Condillac in France, and Mendelssohn and Kant in Germany, etc. The semantics of this vocabulary may shift slightly in European languages; they may differ in relative details in the national participation of each of its thinkers in establishing and supporting the "Enlightenment Age".



But they are all agreed the Enlightenment, as defined, is limited to the identity of Western European thought, with France being the centre of this thought, while the German Enlightenment represents its extensions or thesecondcircleofit. Withinthisorbitrevolves the work of other Western philosophers. Thus, the Enlightenment within language and its tricks outlining the consciousness have developed into a historical stage restricted to the European West and France in particular; it bounded by the geography of Western Europe and its borders in the eighteenth century. Modernity, therefore, is defined as the modernity of Europe and confined to its modern history and geography.

What I fear the most some might perceive my aforementioned words as a warning against a fresh Western conspiracy theory being promoted behind the scenes via the language and its conscious and unconscious psychological connotations to wash our minds. Surely, this is not my intention. Perhaps the conspiracy theory blossoms

amongst those who constantly live in a state of mental deficiency and who lack the courage to shift into a state of enlightenment by reason. Language, as I understand, is a living thing capable of growing and progressing with changeable features and connotations. It is not a metaphysical vessel living above or containing us, having an influence on us but immune against influence. Though it is the incubator of consciousness and its living body, language changes so long as the awareness and use change. Thus, languages alter, some get older, diminish and die out, whilst others renew, develop and create. The connection of language with consciousness is vitally critical, but my greater concern is about its invisible change in unconsciousness. Language, furthermore, in a written history of the authority's relation, people's conflicts and human history. It is, like history, taken down by the strongest, though history is an intentionally conscious act. The history of language semantics change is the history of unconsciousness, or its deaf authority.

Second: Universalism

A review of the European “enlightenment model”

We can briefly state the concept of universalism as philosophically based on the notion of a comprehensive universal model (which may be transcendental) where differences are united. Or, it may represent absolute facts claiming to be true in all cases at different times and places, regardless of the diversity of cultures, nationalities, religions and races. We owe to Kant (or rather we condemn him) the concept of universalism he developed within the framework of moral philosophy with the subjective truth which turned into an absolute and compulsory universal truth for everyone and place. It is summed up in his saying, “Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.” The Enlightenment philosopher reconfirms his concept of universality in another book in which he says, “Act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a universal law of nature.” Thus, Kant tried to build practical reason based on the “principle of universal law” in which the model is generalised. Despite his strict concept, Kant’s concept of universalism confers on Enlightenment values and human rights in their capacity as the values for all human beings regardless of time and place. It embraces the dilemma of what I call the “metaphysics of



the one” or “the metaphysics of the centre,” which cancels out differences by suppressing them, excluding them, or forcing them to take the absolute and unified form of the centre. If the Western Enlightenment and modernity embodied the civilised superiority of the West in the modern era, then this West was resolute to uphold such a power of the superior, and to establish itself as a master over the rest of the world, which it considered as peoples of varying degrees of brutality and primitiveness. Within the European Enlightenment and modernity, the “Eurocentrism” was born and embarked on sprawling its conceived central and universal culture to the margins, the rest of the peoples of the earth.

Western enlightenment and the identity of the center

Colonialism was the outcome of the modern liberal Western countries' fierce race to divide the world's wealth under the umbrella of spreading Enlightenment and democracy and helping colonised peoples establish justice, social equality, freedom of thought and belief, and respect for human rights, etc., the values of Enlightenment in short. But this political deviation stems from the utilitarian political practice and the narrow interests of power. However, like any universality inspiring project, the practical perception of Western Enlightenment's universality project have been polluted and infected with the identity of the centre.

What made the experience a model for others to follow is the generalisation of the Western experience and giving it a universal identity-whether the thinker intended that, or he was aware of it or neglected it. Universalism is always a transition from a partialism to a totalism with a theoretical leap. So what follows is imposing the truth of this experience as absolute, abolishing the distinctions and differences, and eventually, transforming the results into premises and postulates for others to embark upon. All these theoretical tools within the leap to universalism will later make, almost permanently, access to

differentiations in politics and practice. These include trade-offs, hierarchies and relations of power, dependence and subjugation, whether it is related to major theories, religions, or political projects, and even in pure scientific theories that claim to be universal, generalising themselves as a real authority, while they are just the imposition of a specific paradigm. In the European Enlightenment experience, the universal conceptualisation of Enlightenment value validity turned to be universal, justifying the deviations of politics. Universalism that cancels out particularities often ends in counterproductive results, no matter how noble and genuine the intentions and premises are.

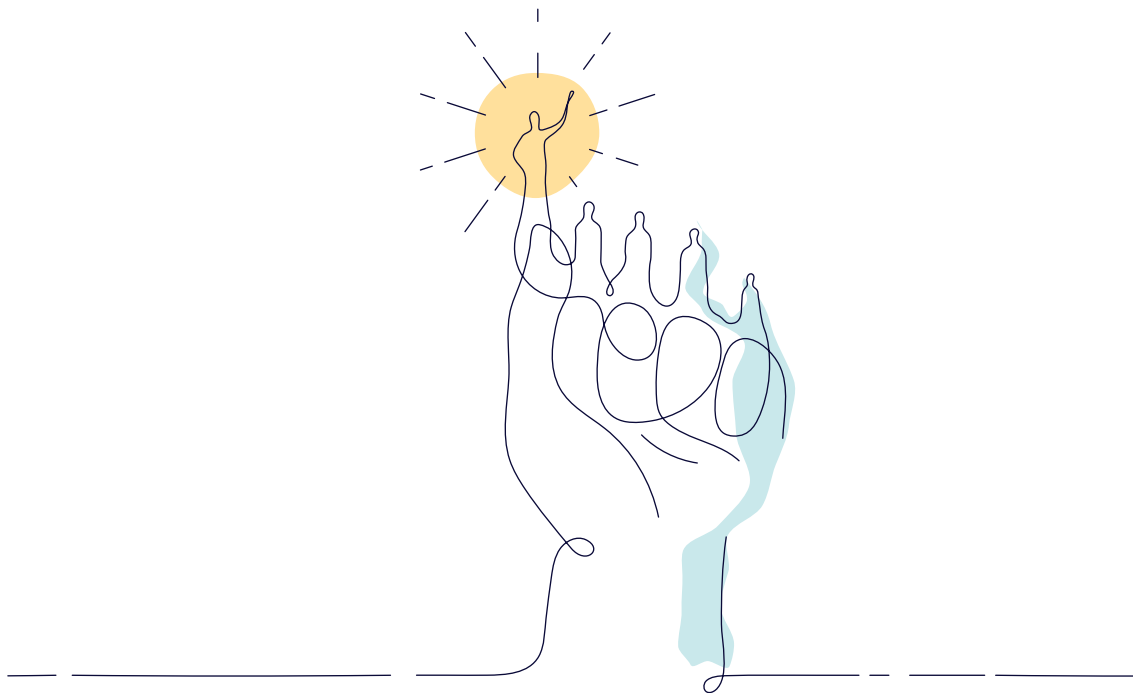
Third: holiness and the emptiness of meaning

A review of the European "enlightenment model"

The concepts, once sanctified, enter the realm of faith and the absolute, and break out of their philosophical context, which remains relative no matter how much it claims to be encompassing, comprehensive and universal. It is the confiscation of thought in favour of faith, and the objectification of the vibrant symbol and the impulse to action and change, turning it into a dead idol. Holiness surrounded by concepts includes all the constraints of the authority of belief that make the philosophical doctrine a belief similar to religion (as happened with Marxism) with absolute truths, fixed pillars, guiding universal values, and sacred references. Since the sacred needs to be profane to continue and differentiate, the authority of faith eternally has the capacity to prohibit, exclude, frame, centralise and marginalise. Regarding Enlightenment, we must first admit it has been surrounded by an aura of holiness and infallibility even in the world of thought and philosophical studies. For dealing with it with criticism and accountability has become an issue instantly

casting doubts and intentions.

It is a risky task if we attempt to question these ideals that have become sacred axioms to achieve human progress and advancement, and to strive on the path of Western modernity. Many philosophers have paid the price of smashing some of their idols, from Nietzsche to Sloterdijk. Here, the critic penetrates the circle of prohibition and the minefields that surround the sanctuary. If the ideas and ideals of the age of Enlightenment presented to us as the highest noble civil values produced by human thought, then how can a sane person, re-question the principles and values agreed upon their absolute correctness and universality. Let alone a philosopher- unless he is evil, absurd, hateful, or a terrorist hating the West and its civilization- how can he investigate topics such as the centrality of man, the universality of the mind, the sanctity of life, the value of freedom, social justice, equality in rights and duties, eternal peace between nations and peoples, or human rights?!



With this coercive intellectual power, some philosophers turned the defence of the enlightenment into an ideology, rallying in the battle of good and evil, with or against the enlightenment. Foucault objected to this ideological blackmail by saying, “The intellectual and political blackmail represented in ‘to be with or against the Enlightenment’ should be avoided where one must escape from the historical and moral confusion that blends the human theme with the question of enlightenment.”

The guardians of the European Enlightenment are not necessarily the publics, but they are philosophers and thinkers who found in the Enlightenment revision a kind of nihilism, conservatism, and apostasy, and even deviation and fascism. Didn't Habermas classify the critics of the Enlightenment into three categories of conservatives: the young, the old, and the new? Did not he and other guardians of the Enlightenment in its ideological sense such as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Horkheimer, Adorno, Bataille Foucault and Derrida follow

suit when they made critical reviews of the Western Enlightenment's sacristies and its consequences, and questioned the project of modernity?

If this was the case in the West, then I got the impression, which I hope not mistaken, that many people engaged in philosophy in the Arab world have transformed the Enlightenment into a set of sacred sayings often repeated in a meaningless manner. Justice, equality, human rights, and peace are a set of spells and amulets only a certificate of affiliation with the club of the wise enlightened.

The product of enlightenment accumulated ideas

Holiness and the emptiness of meaning

In this sense, Enlightenment is not completely emptied of its practical, enlightening content, but it ends up in a state of intellectual inertia and civilised stagnation stemming from complete dependence on the others' ideas. This is immaturity that Kant described as the opposite of enlightenment when he asserted that enlightenment is the inability to use one's own understanding without guidance from someone else.

This immaturity is self-imposed if its cause lies not in any lack of understanding but in indecision and in the absence of courage to use one's own mind without the help of someone else. Having the courage to use your own understanding is therefore the motto of the Enlightenment."

In this sense, the off-the-peg and ready-made Enlightenment statements should not be viewed as a magical stick that can transpose us out of the civilised darkness caves with one strike.

Had we just thought of Kant's own words or listened to his call for an independent way of thinking away from guardianship, we would conclude the Enlightenment with its own values and principles is not guardianship nor sacred ideas dictating its conditions.



Besides, Kant's call must not be a dictation or indirect thinking. For enlightenment is to think for yourself, and to decide for yourself, and you are in all stances (as of the European Enlightenment thinkers in the eighteenth century) not alone; the history of thought that I read is instantly present in your mind, and the ideas of dozens of thinkers who influenced you write with you and speak for you. One characteristic of authentic philosophical thought is the ability to transcend geography and history and contribute directly and indirectly to building new civilisations in different times and places. In this sense, the ideas of Plato, Aristotle, Ibn Tufail and Ibn Rushd, for example, are part of the European Enlightenment, the Arab Renaissance and the liberation revolutions, which in turn were influenced by.

Fourth: Distortion and consequences

With the shift towards capitalism and the resulting social transformations, and the widespread of the freedom and equality ideas of the French Enlightenment philosophers, the West witnessed several revolutions. Perhaps the most important of which was the French Revolution, which inspired the thinkers of the German Enlightenment, particularly Kant. The French Revolution paved the way eventually to the ideas of the French Enlightenment to be put into practice. Liberties became the slogan of revolutions, and reason was the authority of truth that overthrew the previous authority of ecclesiastical truth. The Enlightenment ideals became the catalysts for power, change, and revolution over the inheritance of the past. Then the Enlightenment assumed a proper authority through which it possessed its holiness and announced its universal principles. The authority and concentration, however, give access to deviations, and when authority becomes a dominant center, it flows towards control, domination, and expansion. In this course, the enlightened countries of Europe turned into colonial empires racing to divide the world with a ready-made theoretical interface: the values of the Western Enlightenment are

universal. The rest of the peoples must be helped to attain these values and get rid of their brutality and barbarism as judged by the Enlightenment reality, which has become a universal criterion imitated by all others.

This is how Western colonialism progressed in the freedom's name of colonised peoples; bloody wars erupted in order to achieve peace amongst nations. The most heinous violations of human rights took place in the application's name of human rights. The fundamental justice values have been breached through the justice application, and the peoples' cultures civilisational peculiarities were broken under the slogan of the universal European principles, etc.

The non-Europeans were required, in order to become civilised and modern as per the European Enlightenment norms, to resume from the point the Europeans halted at, to start directly with the aforesaid outcomes, which are not founding values, but an import of ready-made goods. There is no civilisational benefit, nor cultural cohesion, not even civilising in the systematic meaning of education and education.



Distortion and consequences

Rather, it is a state of rejection and resistance that results from civilisational coercion. Taking the results directly is a leap above the historical processes of adaptation and understanding that people need in the processes of change, transformation, and transition. By trying to impose the values of Enlightenment injected by colonialism, through violence, coercion, threat and danger, the colonised peoples repelled the European Enlightenment in the form rejection, resistance, obscure hatred and hidden fear to explicitly express their resilience once they lack the means for direct confrontation. Through violence and coercion, the most remarkable values prove hideous, and with the sudden intrusion of civilization as a violent storm, indigenous peoples cling to their roots. Enlightenment then turns into alienation, and into a counter powerful civilised rejection, leading to more fundamentalisms, and an escape towards the past represented here as the pure authenticity preceding the stage of identity-threatening corruption by other cultures. It is the misfortune of the Western Enlightenment

to employ colonialism to deploy it beyond Europe. Colonialism is the worst teacher in history, compelling the learned to reject all this arrogant tutor offers with his shining shoes and a loaded gun pointed at heads and hearts of others. In colonialism, the Enlightenment produced its opposite. Instead of getting rid of the dependence on others who think and acts on our behalf, as Kant theorised, it came to impose ideas by force.

The distortions of the Enlightenment were not confined to colonialism and abroad, its most devastating outcomes swept over the countries of the Enlightenment themselves.

A pause for contemplation And a critical review of the Ideals of enlightenment

Following two world wars that wrecked cities that cradled the era of the Western Enlightenment, the dreams of Enlightenment thinkers in France and Germany turned into appalling nightmares. Instead of the values of goodness and fair Rousseau firmly defended, modern European man revealed a face of primitive brutality and violence disguised in the mask of civilisation. And instead of realising Kant's idea of global citizenship and "common possession of the earth", the modern West countries raced to divide the world in the name of its Enlightenment, modernisation and shift from a state of backwardness and barbarism to development, civility and humanity. They ignited wars in the name of achieving "permanent peace" amongst countries and peoples, violating the most basic human rights in the name of human rights, and establishing colonies in the name of liberation. Thus, hopes for justice and humanity heralded by Enlightenment values ended up in frustrations, and sometimes even counterproductive results, and the mind and science deviated from moral standards. So

it fell on the lap of technology, with the mind thinking of its sole interests. As a result, the mind associated with the market, production increase, capital and gains control over nature to achieve more benefits, dominance and influence. Science has advanced in weapon-making techniques, and the coldness of the machine-dominated man deprived him of awareness and productivity. The modern Western democratic political systems deviated, paving the way to fascist regimes in Germany, France, Italy, and Spain, etc. The political experiences of Marxist socialisms produced only totalitarian regimes such as the Soviet Union. Coping with these outcomes, some Western philosophers had to take a stance and critically review the ideals of the Enlightenment, which, within less than two centuries later, revealed a kind of naïve optimism. Besides, these ideals blew wide open the huge gap between ideal theoretical thinking and practical reality advocating the greatest ideas as a disguise for its interests, power and control.

Conclusion:

A review of the European “enlightenment model”

I am not aiming to reject others, nor refrain from reaping benefit from what he has achieved, but an invitation to open to them. The rejection, the hatred and hostility towards the others are not the ethics of enlightened thinkers. It is rather a syndrome of fanaticism, radicalism, cultural seclusion, animosity towards the foreigner, sticking to the illusion of conspiracy, cultural invasion, and hibernation in the caves of the past and history, fearing any source of light. It is not, therefore, the rejection of the other's thought that prompts me to criticise the Enlightenment as presented to us, i.e., as sacred sayings carefully displayed in the Museum of Archaeological Finds of the Eighteenth Century Europe. My first aim here is to break down the monopoly of Enlightenment, availing it to all as a verb, not as a specific noun for a dead person who passed for ever. My second goal is to deprive Enlightenment of its sanctity in order to bring it down from the impossible metaphysical and ahistorical realm to the human realm. For the Enlightenment does not remain mere repetitive amulets devoid of meaning or inert and expired values. The third aim is to break up with the state of intellectual guardianship. If Kant had defined the Enlightenment

by getting out of the state of cognitive deficiency, and not allowing others to be guardian over us in thought and action, then this also means dropping the guardianship of the Enlightenment era and Kant himself. The fourth aim of questioning the Enlightenment is an attempt to remove the rust accumulated on it, filter it from the impurities of the ideology that formed with it, and facilitate its political distortion. My fifth aim is to retrieve it from the historical idea museums and shift it to the realm of private philosophical practice that requires some independence. Independence here does not mean a rupture with the other, as this is impossible. Enlightenment, as I understand, is a common intellectual human practice and not a monopoly for certain people, nation, time, or geography. Rather, it is an act in the present by throwing out the feeling of inferiority, hatred and hostility towards others; openness to the others and their thoughts is an integral part of the enlightenment act.

Therefore, it is neither the rejection of the other nor the fear of them that motivated me here to approach Enlightenment by criticism.



Besides, I am not seeking a credit and a praise, as almost everyone is used to doing. Rather, it is an inspiration- and not just consumption and copying their tools to take out the worn-out and much-repeated sayings that turned into nonsensical slogans that brought about the opposite results. In this sense, criticism of the Enlightenment becomes a remarkable enlightenment act. In a word, it is a philosophy, in the positive sense of the philosophy I understand.

To sum up all this article, I find the word 'enlightenment' in Arabic when probing the semantic linguistic meaning with which I began, is the source of the verb "light". Enlightenment in Arabic is a verb source and not just a noun. It turned into a proper noun in French Les Lumiere's, denoting a specific time and place, the French thought in the eighteenth century. The Arabic origin that rhymes with other verbs drives us to enlighten, think, and make change. Enlightenment in Arabic is an act that must be done in the present and the future, or now and here.



What is Enlightenment

By: Immanuel Kant

Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed nonage. Nonage is the inability to use one's own understanding without another's guidance. This nonage is self-imposed if its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in indecision and lack of courage to use one's own mind without another's guidance. Which is therefore the motto of the enlightenment.

Laziness and cowardice are the reasons such a large part of mankind gladly remains minor all their lives, long after nature has freed them from external guidance. They are the reasons it is so easy for others to set themselves up as guardians. It is so comfortable to be a minor. If I have a book thinking for me, a pastor acting as my conscience, a physician prescribing my diet, and so on—then I do not need to exert myself. I do not need to think, if only I can pay; others will take care of that disagreeable business for me. Those guardians who have kindly taken supervision upon themselves see that most of the mankind—among them the entire fair sex—should consider the step to maturity, not only as hard, but as extremely dangerous. First, these guardians make their domestic cattle stupid and carefully prevent the docile creatures from taking a single step without the leading-strings to which they have fastened them. Then they show them the would-be danger should they try to walk by themselves. Now this danger is not very great;



after stumbling a few times, they would, at last, learn to walk. However, examples of such failures intimidate and discourage all further attempts.

Thus, it is very difficult for the individual to work himself out of the nonage, which has become almost second nature to him. He has even grown to like it, and is at first really incapable of using his own understanding because he may never try it. Dogmas and formulas, these mechanical tools designed for reasonable use, or rather abuse, of his natural gifts, are the fetters of an everlasting nonage. The man who casts them off would make an uncertain leap over the narrowest ditch, because he is not used to such free movement.

Freedom to reach the lights

That is why there are only a few men who walk firmly, and who have emerged from nonage by cultivating their own minds.

It is almost possible, however, for the public to enlighten itself; indeed, if it is only given freedom, enlightenment is almost inevitable. There will always be a few independent thinkers, even among the self-appointed guardians of the multitude. Once such men have thrown off the yoke of nonage, they will stretch the spirit of a reasonable appreciation of man's value and of his duty to think for himself. It is particularly noticeable the public earlier brought under the yoke by these men compel afterwards these very guardians to remain in submission, unless the public are incited by some of its guardians who are themselves incapable of any enlightenment. That shows how pernicious it is to implant prejudices: they will eventually revenge themselves upon their authors or their authors' descendants. Therefore, a public can achieve enlightenment only slowly. A revolution may bring about the end of a personal despotism or of avaricious, tyrannical oppression, but never a true reform of modes of thought. New prejudices will serve, in place of the old, as guidelines for the unthinking multitude.

The private use of reason may frequently get narrowly restricted without especially hindering the progress of enlightenment. By "public use of one's reason" I mean that use

which a man, as a scholar, makes of it before the reading public. I call "private use" that use which a man makes of his reason in a civic post entrusted to him. In some affairs affecting the interest of the community, a certain mechanism is necessary in which some members of the community remain passive. This creates an artificial unanimity which will serve the fulfilment of public objectives, or at least keep these objectives from being destroyed.

Here, arguing is not permitted; one must obey. This, however, means to be simultaneously a part of this machine and a member of a universal community, or rather a world society of citizens, in his capacity as a scholar rationally addressing his public through his writings. He may indeed argue, and the affairs with which he is associated in part as a passive member will not suffer. Thus it would be very unfortunate if an officer on duty and under orders from his superiors should want to criticise the appropriateness or utility of his orders.

Knowledge is an enlightening behavior

What is Enlightenment

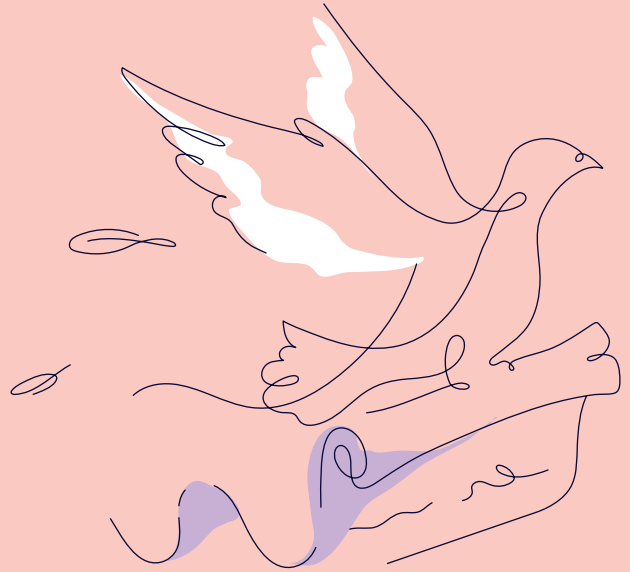
He must obey. But as a scholar, it could not rightfully prevent him from taking notice of the mistakes in the military service and from submitting his views to his public for judgment. The citizen cannot refuse to pay the taxes levied upon him; indeed, impertinent censure of such taxes could get punished as a scandal that might cause general disobedience.

And, outside this reservation, the groups united by their own concepts in order to modify the religious institution. But it is a project that does not compel those who want to remain loyal to the old institution. But to unite in a permanent institution is not to be subject to doubt before the public even in the lifetime of one man, and to make a period fruitless in the progress of mankind toward improvement. Thus it works to the disadvantage of posterity, which is absolutely forbidden.

A man may postpone his own enlightenment, but only for a limited period. And to give up enlightenment altogether, either for oneself or one's descendants, is to violate and to trample upon the sacred rights of man. If

a people have no right to decide on their destiny, then the monarch may not decide on behalf of them. For his reputation as a ruler consists precisely in how he unites the will of the whole people within his own. If he only sees that all true or supposed improvement remains in step with the civic order, he can, for the rest, leave his subjects alone to do what they find necessary for the salvation of their souls. Salvation is none of his business; it is his business to prevent one man from forcibly keeping another from determining and promoting his salvation to the best of his ability.

Indeed, it would be prejudicial to his majesty to meddle in these matters and supervise the writings in which his subjects seek to bring their views, even when he does this from his own highest insight. For he exposes himself to the reproach: *Caesar non est supra grammaticos*. It is worse when he debases his sovereign power so far as to support the spiritual despotism of a few tyrants in his state over the rest of his subjects.



When we ask,
are we now living in an
enlightened age?

The answer is,
no, but we live in an
age moving toward
enlightenment.

❖ Philosophy in the time Of COVID

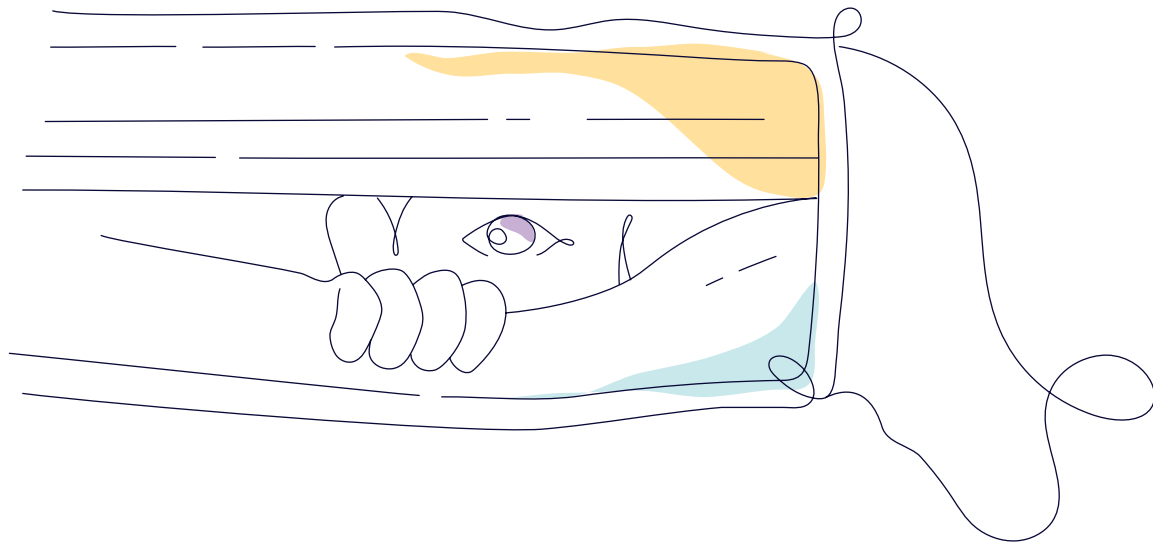
By: Thomas Nail

The COVID world is just like it was before, only more so. Every problem that already existed is worse. What can philosophy do in such a world? I think there are at least two opportunities for philosophy today. The first is that philosophers can seize this historical moment to intervene in almost every sector of social, political, and ethical life. Since political philosophers often look at the world under a critical magnifying glass anyway, now is a good time to say, “Look! This is what I have been talking about this whole time.” We, critical philosophers, may find a much more receptive audience than usual during COVID. We can use this moment to identify, analyze, and reframe existing, systematic social problems. We have a chance to drive home the insights of critical theory and fuel political action.

A Critical Diagnosis of Some Pre-existing
Conditions

Historically, anti-immigrant sentiment and xenophobia tend to increase when the economy declines, even though immigrants are not the problem. Immigrants also tend to be wrongly associated, in the xenophobic imaginary, with “bringing disease.” Now that there is a full-on economic depression and global pandemic, there is a perfect storm of baseless anti-immigrant sentiment. Asian and Mexican people have suffered tremendous discrimination in the US during this time due to the same idiotic tropes that have characterized xenophobia for hundreds of years. People have got to debunk and abandon these outrageous myths. Somehow, the rich have managed to get even richer, while millions of people are losing their jobs and facing mass evictions. The poorest are getting even poorer.

American billionaires got \$434 billion richer during the first months of the outbreak.



Diagnosis of some pre-existing conditions

It is painfully evident that capitalism does not serve any interests but its own.

Economic financialization even makes it possible for investors to make money independently of the real economy or real wages. Capitalism is a giant blood-sucking vampire draining the last bits of blood from our bodies as we lay dying. Now is the time to remind everyone of this.

Racism and racial violence have always been systematic problems. Now with police violence on full display in the streets and more national media coverage of murdered black Americans, it is impossible to ignore. People know that black, brown, and indigenous populations are disproportionately affected by COVID, yet millions of white people refuse to wear masks in public places or social distance. How many times will Native Americans be carelessly infected by white settlers? When it

was easy to talk the talk, many white people could adopt non-racist vocabulary, but millions of white people cannot be bothered to wear a mask to protect people of color. This is a consequence of a deep forgetting and dismissal of American racism and genocide. The systematic incarceration of people of color in prisons and detention centers is awful. Yet, now officials have willfully let jails and detention centers become death camps where COVID runs wild.

What role can philosophy play today?

Philosophy in the time of COVID

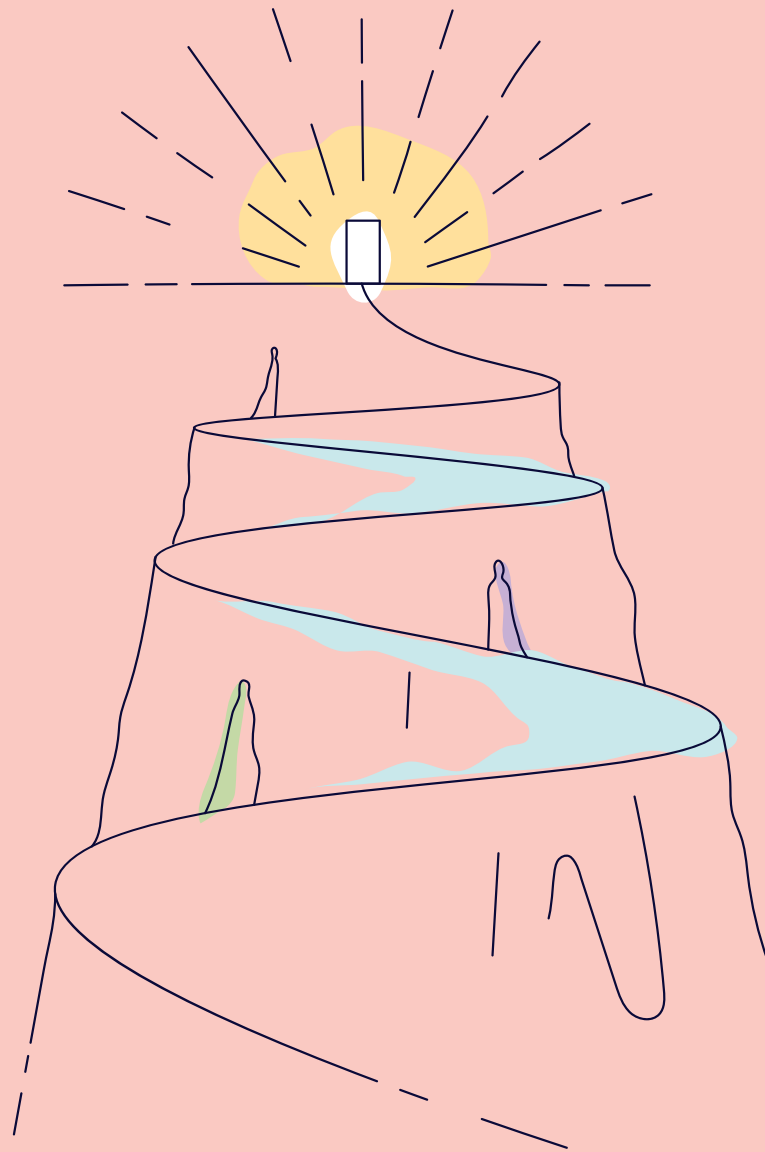
Women are disproportionately bearing the brunt of domestic labor during COVID because they were already bearing the brunt of it before COVID. Women are now quitting their jobs to take care of their kids who can't go to school, while men continue to work. Mental illness, opioid addiction, and domestic violence are all on the rise during COVID, and all disproportionately affect women.

Frontline nurses helping COVID victims are disproportionately women and are getting infected and dying. Why are male academics publishing more under COVID, while submissions from women are declining? More men are getting a taste of how hard domestic labor and childcare are. Some are stepping up, but most families are willing to or have to send their children back to school, which will endanger underpaid school staff, who are disproportionately women.

It is no coincidence that "essential services" such as cleaning, nursing, cooking, and childcare are also being done disproportionately by women.

Things were awful before COVID, now they are worse. Critical and social philosophers have a unique chance/obligation to spotlight these significant problems. They can show that these issues are not unfortunate exceptions of a crisis but part of an ongoing history of interlocking oppressions that were deeply part of "normal" life as well. Let's not go back to that "normal."

What else can philosophy do today? The second unique opportunity I think philosophers have is to create new concepts in response to new phenomena. A concept is a synthetic view or a way of looking at a lot of very different things and making sense of them together. New events call for new ways of thinking and being that change our world-view. COVID is not just an amplification of existing power structures. It has also changed our relationship to and awareness of the importance of social and viral mobilities. Might the concept of "motion" offer us a new perspective on the world?



On Circulation

On Circulation | Philosophy in the time of COVID

COVID has significantly altered our attention to the movement of invisible air currents and the vaporous clouds of droplets that float around us like a living microbial bubble. COVID has highlighted the materiality and mobility of the fluid dynamic processes that move through us daily. It has changed the way we move in the world.

People are now entirely restructuring daily life around the subtle and unpredictable flows of what we might call the “vapor-biome.” The vapor-biome is like the microbiome but instead consists of all the microbes swirling in the air around us. It is related to the microbiome in that we breathe it in and mix its microbes with our own and then breath it back out and mix our own with it. The air around us is alive and helps us stay alive. However, it can also make us sick.

Scientists believe that the transmission of COVID occurs primarily through this misty vapor-biome.¹ The virus can be expelled in large droplets three to six feet from the body through a cough or sneeze but does not live long on human skin or other surfaces. Primarily, however, the virus is vaporized into clouds of much smaller droplets called “aerosols.”



Aerosol clouds are created by talking or yelling and are so light they can linger in the air for minutes or hours.

Through the spread of these clouds, COVID has also shown us how difficult it is to stop matter from moving and circulating through us. Our bodies are permeable membranes swimming in a biome of vaporous clouds that come and go. Who knew we were breathing so many microbes from other people in these aerosol mists? Before any social contract, we have a more primary “material and kinetic contract” with our guts and our lungs’ living microbes. Our lungs are temporary whirlpools filled with the stuff of the world.

Many people have emphasized how COVID has stopped things from moving. My point is the opposite. The more we have slowed down, the more we realize that the things we thought were static are not. By slowing down and attending more closely to the vapor-biome’s circulation, we recognize how entangled we are in a

sea of turbulent flux. Our bodies are not islands. The act of breathing that keeps me alive can now spread a disease that can kill someone else. The social contract has never felt more fragile now that it overlaps with an impersonal material contract with air currents and circulating breezes with their own movements. The vapor-biome is not entirely under our control. It leaves our mouth and follows the turbulent winds of the moment.

For example, at a Starbucks in South Korea, contact tracing revealed that one person sitting in front of an air conditioner transmitted the virus to twenty-seven other patrons, but not to the mask-wearing employees.² Schools, businesses, and universities across the country are now taking the aerodynamics of their air handling systems seriously.

Something else new is happening. Never before has human mobility been so widely and precisely tracked with contact tracing apps. Far from stopping movement, we are now more aware and attentive than ever to the micro-movements, locations, and social circulation interactions. These days, what is coming to the foreground is that we live in a world of motion and circulating fluids. Personal information is

anonymous with contact tracing apps, but health officials are learning a lot about social circulation patterns on a large scale. Officials in China are discovering even more since they developed a mass surveillance system called Skynet, which uses a facial recognition system, big data analysis technology, and artificial intelligence to track people with public cameras. In this system, “good” circulation earns “social credit,” just like in the terrifying episode of the TV show *Black Mirror*, “Nosedive.”

However, might our newfound attention to social circulation’s importance also open up a whole new field of study of the patterns of motion that move us and move through us? A “philosophy of movement” could help us see how power shapes human motion into particular patterns that may otherwise have been invisible in personal experience. In this way, it might also help us see where certain kinds of resistance are needed and how metastable formations emerge from more primary motions.



Embracing Turbulence

Embracing Turbulence | Philosophy in the time of COVID

Just as the vapor-biome flows in turbulent and unpredictable streams, so does human mobility. Both are complex systems that officials cannot manipulate deterministically. For example, if health officials tell people where to move and where not to, this might also produce sudden crowds, erratic traffic, long lines, and even accidental exposures.³

Trying to monitor and control people's circulation is similar to tracking atmospheric pollution and global air circulation in that both are complex systems that are incredibly unpredictable and prone to sudden feedback loops. The closer we look at things that seemed relatively stable, the more we find turbulent movement. People and things are much more like metastable eddies in a river than marbles in a vase. These days, the global circulation of fluids is so complicated that it is virtually impossible to isolate original causes. The turbulence of the air currents that shape our vapor-biome is the source of much unpredictability and anxiety.

Our built environment is partly to blame. COVID spreads most easily in closed indoor spaces with recirculated air. By sealing ourselves up indoors and manipulating the stream of air in a circle, we have decreased turbulence and dissipation. But now this has made us vulnerable to organisms that can ride these flows and feed off the built up gradient of energy in these closed loops.

Turbulence, though, is not our enemy. It is the solution. Engineers need to let go of the dream of totality and closed systems and let in more fresh air. The same goes for philosophers who dream of universal ideas closed off from the turbulence of history. Better yet, we should move our activities outside and let the turbulence of wind dissipate our aerosols into the sky. Turbulence and vortices are nature's most efficient patterns of dissipation. That is why water drains down your bathtub in a spiral and not in a straight line. In short, instead of trying to dominate air flows, we can use their turbulence to help dissipate infectious aerosols.

¹Jose Luis Jimenez, "COVID-19 Is Transmitted through Aerosols. We Have Enough Evidence, Now It Is Time to Act," Time Magazine, August 25, 2020. <https://time.com/5883081/covid-19-transmitted-aerosols/>. | ²Heejin Kim and Sam Kim, "Starbucks Cafe's Covid Outbreak Spared Employees Who Wore Masks," Bloomberg, August 24, 2020. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-25/this-starbucks-in-south-korea-became-a-beacon-for-mask-wearing?sref=VGqaY5U2>. | ³Jessica Flack, "Uncertain Times," Aeon: A World of Ideas, August 21, 2020. <https://aeon.co/essays/complex-systems-science-allows-us-to-see-new-paths-forward>.



Whether critical diagnosis and creating concepts will lead us to a breakdown or a breakthrough remains to be seen. Let's try to see.

University of Denver





◆◆ Deleuze Battle Against the Eastern Thought

Written By: Takashi Shirani, translated by: Dr. Sherif Mabrouki

Deleuze voices in *Critique and Clinique* his caution towards the East in the context of a battle. From the outset, he follows D. H. Lawrence and Nietzsche's battles against the Judeo-Christian tradition, i.e. the deferred destiny, which constitutes, along with the infinite debt and the immortality of existence, the "doctrine of ruling"¹. In this context, the East is also criticised, because, according to Deleuze, there is no battle in the East whose ideal is no-battle, but self-annihilation.

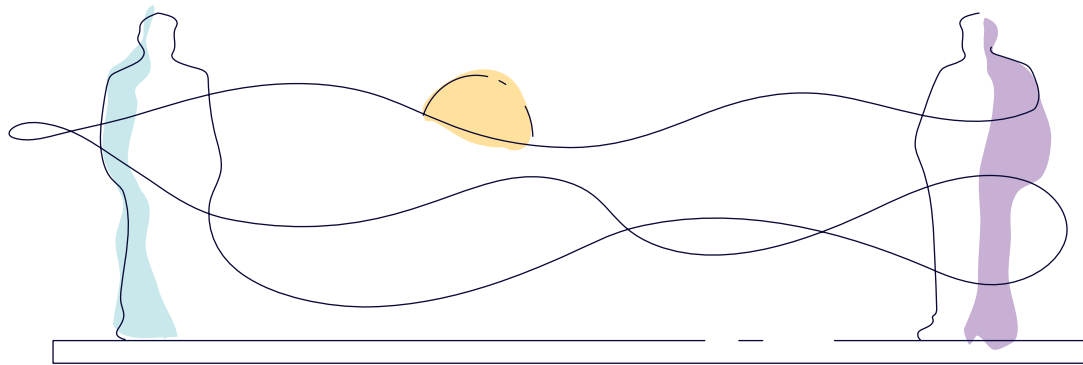
What Deleuze opposes to this Eastern model is the conquest of the soul, which, as a life of fluids, is a will for life, struggle, and battle. "What is individual is the relationship, the self, not the ego. The ego tends to identify with the world, but is already dedicated to death, while the soul extends the thread of its living 'sympathy' and 'aversion'. (...) There is a tendency in the ego to annihilate itself, which finds its path through the Christ, all the way to Buddhism. Hence Lawrence (or Nietzsche)'s caution about the East initiated"². Deleuze distinguishes battle from

war, that is, general extermination requiring the mobilisation of the ego, for the battle aims at conquest of the soul. "The inalienable part of the soul is one's ceasing to be me: this flowing, vibrant and struggling part must be conquered"³. Naturally, this soul cannot be understood within the framework of the Cartesian duality of the body/psyche. In fact, Deleuze, elsewhere, quotes Lawrence's phrase: "My soul and my body are one..."⁴.

Where does Deleuze's caution of the East stem from? Is this conception of the East not aggressive? More precisely, what Lawrence (or Deleuze) takes from the East is the idea of Buddha. Lawrence reminds us that man needs woman, and that woman needs man to be truly happy. "We have to admit that men and women need each other. (...) The mere fact of our need for another human being is a severe blow to our self-esteem"⁵. Whereas, according to the orally transmitted story, Buddha abandoned his family at the age of 29, after the birth of his first child, setting out on a solitary journey in search of Nirvana⁶.

¹Cf. G. Deleuze, « Nietzsche et Saint Paul, Lawrence et Jean de Patmos », dans *Critique et Clinique*, Les Editions de Minuit, 1993. Nous utilisons désormais le sigle CC pour ce livre | ² CC, pp68-69. | ³ CC, p69.

⁴ CC, p169. | ⁵ D. H. Lawrence, « Nous avons besoin les uns des autres » dans *Eros et les chiens*, Christian Bourgois, 1973, p300.



Lawrence says: “A man, especially among Buddhists, can never find the sky of Nirvana if he looks at a woman even out of the corner of his eye. “I did it on my own!”⁷, proudly confirms the man who has reached Nirvana.

The individualism of Buddhism and Christianity, according to Lawrence, is the cause of the disastrous selfishness of the modern individual; the Eastern ideal of nirvana only forces people to isolate. Lawrence’s criticism of Buddha himself seems perfectly valid. But for the people in most areas of Asian Buddhism, such an image of Buddhist solitude would seem very strange. One reason is that Buddhism has greatly changed when it spread from India, through Central Asia, to the East, that is, to China, Korea and Japan, especially after the emergence of the Great Chariot Buddhism. “Originally, Buddhism attempted to break away from the bonds (métempsychose) of this world. However, with the development of Great Chariot Buddhism emphasising on jihi (compassion - friendship), the Buddhist

paradigm altered; what is ideal now is to remain reincarnated, completely detached from desires, and freely to rescue the public. This is called homeless nirvana (does not dwell in reincarnation, that is, life and death, nor in nirvana)⁸. In other words, the Buddhist thought, with the Great Chariot Buddhism, becomes a nomadic thought.

According to this Great Chariot Buddhism, whose theoretical founder is Nâgârjuna, it is no longer a matter of saving only the same self (the same monks), but the soul of all living beings in this world. Hence, the concept of jihi (friendship - compassion) becomes the main lesson⁹. In contrast to Lawrence’s analysis, the human relationship is indeed important to a particular Buddhism.

We remember that Shinran, the medieval founder of Jôdo Shin-Shû (The True Sect of the Pure Land), one of the Japanese sects of the Great Chariot Buddhism, authorised marriage to the monks of this sect, including himself.

⁶ Cf. Tetsuo Yamaori, *Bouddha wa naze ko wo sutetaka ? (Pourquoi Bouddha a-t-il abandonné son enfant ?)*, Shûeisha Shinsho, 2006, p58. | ⁷ Lawrence, *ibid.*, p301. | ⁸ « Vision du Nirvâna selon le bouddhisme du Grand Véhicule », *Tetsugaku Shisô Jiten (Dictionnaire de philosophie et de pensée)*, Iwanami Shoten, p1248. | ⁹ The original technical words of Buddhism are usually in Pali or Sanskrit. But for convenience, we used Japanese words in our study.

Deleuze warned towards the east

Deleuze Battle Against the Easter Thought

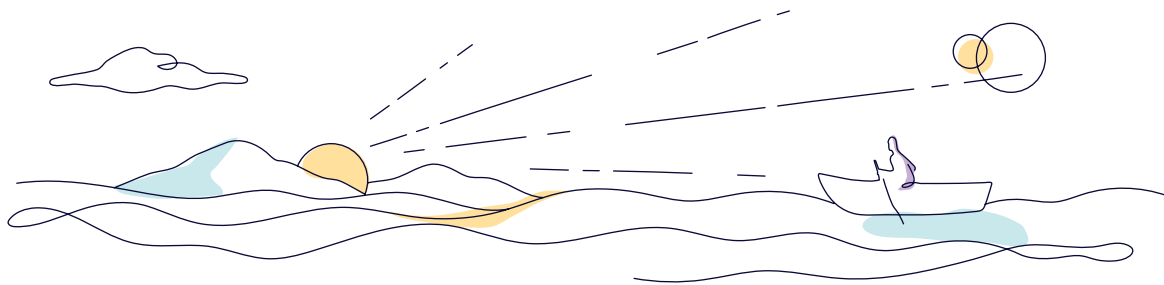
Another basic concept of Great Chariot Buddhism is the concept of Kû (emptiness). Early Buddhism advocated an outlook of the world as a void. "By eliminating the ego-oriented view, we see the world as a void. With this, we can overcome death"¹⁰. Then, it names the Han-nya Ku Sutra, a way of not being attached to anything. It was Nagarjuna who perfected the concept of Ku (emptiness), distinguishing it from nothingness. "It is the void of being and non-being, excluding all nihilism as well as all ontology"¹¹. The Ku (emptiness) is the hypothesis stating all things are dependent on each other in some relation. It is an expression of the philosophy of relationship, including that of contradiction or negation; all things do not contain themselves as essence. Therefore they relate to emptiness, which is nothing but nirvana for Nagarjuna¹². In this sense, this Nagarjuna's philosophy of

relationship has strong ties with Lawrence, who says: "Our individuality is found in relationships. We must acknowledge this important and embarrassing fact.

Beyond our relationships with others, we are nothing but worthless individuals. It is the living connection that streamlines between us and other beings, other lives, and other phenomena that make up our environment and work round to our existence"¹³. Lawrence's description of the human relationship is a living physics, not a pure theory. "Every person, man or woman, is a flow, a flow of life. Without others, that stream cannot flow, just as a river cannot course without its banks. (...) It is the relationships with women and men like me that make me a living river, and it is they who give me breath as well.

A person who has never had an essential

¹⁰ Woven Cadences of Early Buddhists (Sutta-nipata), tr. E. M. Hare, 1944, §1119, p163. | ¹¹Cf. dictionnaire de philosophe, puf, p2088. | ¹² Pour cette théorie de vacuité, on se reportera aux articles de kû (vacuité), et de Nâgârjuna dans Tetsugaku Shisô Jiten (Dictionnaire de philosophie et de pensée), Iwanami Shoten, pp373-374 et p1197. | ¹³ Lawrence, op.cit., p306.



relationship with another human does not really have a soul¹⁴. There is a sexual relationship between a man and a woman. But Lawrence tries to extract a spiritual relationship out of it, in which sexual desire only depicts its strongest manifestation¹⁵. “I was born with an initial self, and I must create via this self in its entirety. By self, I mean my whole. (...) I would say that the relationship between real spouses changes profoundly over the years, often without their knowledge although every change is

a pain, even if it causes some joy. The long path to marriage is an extended series of continuous changes in which both the man and the woman build their own selves and attain their fulfilment”¹⁶. Lawrence pinpoints his view out of these ideas: “We live in an age that believes in the abstraction of human relations of their content”¹⁷. Hence, the battle of Deleuze is also aimed at overcoming that vibrant, free, and struggling part of the group spirit, which can only be achieved by annihilating the ego.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp310-311. | ¹⁵ Ibid., p316. | ¹⁶ Ibid., pp311-313. | ¹⁷ Ibid., p311.

* We preferred to keep the translation of the “Buddhist” meaning (Buddha means spiritual awakening) with wakefulness instead of the term enlightenment popular in Western translations of Hindu and Buddhist literature in particular, in order to distinguish it from the concept of rational enlightenment that appeared in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century. All margins proceeded by a star are the translator’s.

Escape to Nirvana

The Great Chariot Buddhism emphasised the salvation of all living beings rather than the separation from the self, and not only hermit Buddhist monks. However, all living beings can achieve the awakening* (l'Eveil) or nirvana. Hence, the idea of jihi (friendship - compassion) becomes the main one. Therefore, Lawrence's (and Deleuze's) criticism that "Buddhism is the cause of selfishness in modern society" does not seem sound. On the contrary, Nagarjuna's theory of emptiness as a relationship philosophy aligns with Lawrence's idea, which supports the importance of the human relationship, and man's association with woman.

First, it is close to Nietzsche's concept of eternal return and Deleuze's philosophy of event. Still, there is a sharp variation between Buddha's thought and that of Nietzsche and Lawrence and Deleuze. The basic teachings of Buddha are: the reality of this world is full of pain originated from the human heart's hesitation, a result of human's lusts and addiction to them. Buddha sees this world of suffering as metempsychosis, i.e., the

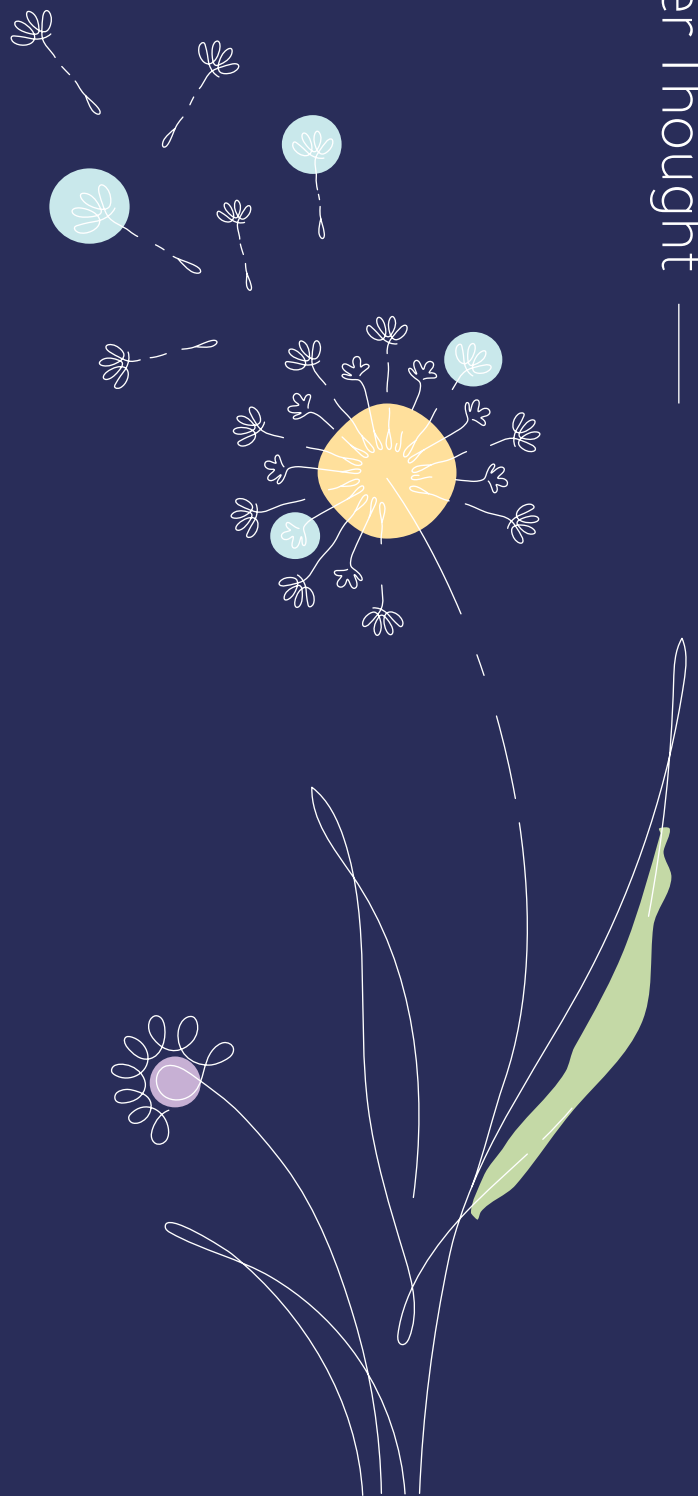
cycle of life and death, from which one must emerge into nirvana, into a waking state. "Since we do not think of anything in this way, then we are hardly attached to whatsoever in this world. And as we do not think in this way, and need not to be disturbed, and so long as we are not disturbed, we will reach nirvana"¹⁸.

The Great Chariot Buddhism, as we have seen, has transformed this view of the Buddha's world by placing value on this world as reincarnation. According to this Buddhist trend, we can attain nirvana while preserving our body. However, as far as the Buddha himself is concerned, this world is nothing but the realm of suffering, which must be banished in order to access nirvana. This is the doctrine Nietzsche and Deleuze opposed; Buddhist nirvana, as for Nietzsche, is nothing but a nihilistic escape from life. For Buddha, flighted from life as he believed our existence in this world has no value: "One thinks of (...) existence itself, which is of no value in itself (nihilistic rejection), yearning for nothingness or inclination to "opposite," to another being, Buddhism and the like"¹⁹.

¹⁸ The Connected Discourses of the Buddha—A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikāya, Vol. II, tr. par Bhikkhu Bodhi, The Pali Text Society, Oxford, 2000, p1171. Pour ce résumé de la philosophie de Bouddha, on se reportera aussi à l'ouvrage suivant : Yutaka Yuda, Bouddha vs. Nietzsche, Daitō Shuppansha, 2001.

¹⁹ Nietzsche, Généalogie de la Morale, II, §21, GF Flammarion, p105.

Here, Buddha's idea resembles the Christianity's one of the negation of this world, the affirmation of the metaphysical world and the immortality of the soul. On the contrary, Nietzsche emphasises desires in this world, even if they mean suffering. He focuses on the role of emotion, and attempts to creation by means of this suffering. For he only recognises the phenomenon of this world, and disapproves the dual phenomenon of the world and its metaphysical realm. Lawrence and Deleuze shared the main line of Nietzsche's idea, which is indeed what is at stake in the Battle of Deleuze. Nietzsche and Deleuze's Becoming is a variation of the Buddhist concept of reincarnation as an eternal cycle of life and death. The only difference is that Buddha denies it while Nietzsche and Deleuze affirms it. Instead of escaping reincarnation like Buddha, both remain firmly defending the Becoming.



Beyond good and evil

Deleuze Battle Against the Eastern Thought

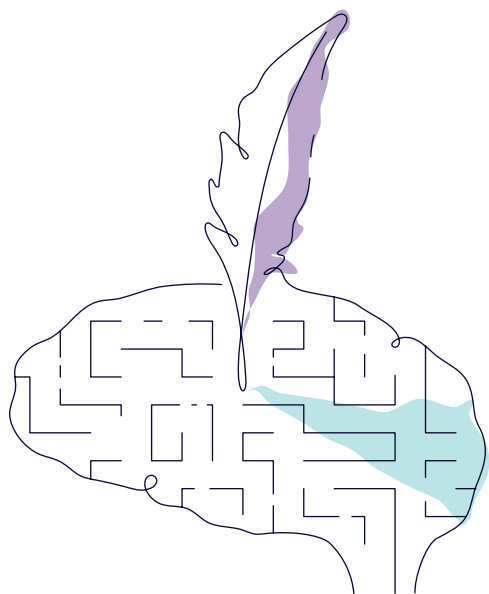
In another chapter of *Criticism and Clinic*, Deleuze resumes the same theme of caution from the East, in the context of the battle²⁰. It is about the battle-against, and the battle-between. The latter turns into one of the characteristics of Artaud's cruelty system against the Judeo-Christian rule. "Undoubtedly, the battle appears to be against the government and its bodies and personalities.

But, more profoundly, it appears the combatant himself is the battle, among his parts, the forces subjecting to him or he subjecting to them, and amongst the forces that express these power relations"²¹. According to Deleuze, all of Kafka's works can earn the title of "description of a battle": a battle against the palace, the rule, the father, against the betrothed. But these external battles, the battles- against, find their justification in the battles- between, which determine the composition of the forces within the warrior²². We must distinguish

between the battle against the other and the battle with oneself. The battle- against seeks to destroy or repel a force (to fight the "evil forces of the future"). But the battle-between, on the contrary, seeks to seize power and possess it. The battle-between is the process by which power is enriched by appropriating other powers and joining them in a new whole, in a process of Becoming.

Deleuze identifies Lawrence and Nietzsche's teacher as Heraclitus, the thinker of battle: all good comes from a battle²³. In this context, pacifism or "lack of will" in the East is being pushed aside. Neither Artaud, nor Lawrence, nor Nietzsche tolerate the East and its ideal based on non-battle. For they find their high ideals in Greece, Turania, and Mexico, and wherever things come and become in the context of battle that constitutes their forces²⁴. But at the same time, Deleuze carefully rejects the war or battle-against as the lowest degree of the will to power, being merely a will to destroy, a judgment of

²⁰ Cf. Deleuze, « Pour en finir avec le jugement », dans *Critique et Clinique*. | * The concept of judgment here bears the meaning existing in the Abrahamic religions in the sense of the last judgment, or the day of judgment, which is derived from the Hebrew (Yom Haddin). Laws and transcendent ends. In classical Arabic it corresponds to the concept of judgment, and your Lord has decreed, for example, that is, a judgment, which is why we chose to keep its translation with judgment. | ²¹ CC, p165. | ²² Ibid. | ²³ CC, p166.



God that makes destruction something 'just'. "The battle is, on the contrary, that powerful vitality which integrates force by means of force, and enriches all that overwhelms it. The child represents this vitality, the stubborn and indomitable will to live which is different from all organic lives"²⁵.

We are compelled to acknowledge Deleuze for the richness of this battle- between; the Deleuze battle is a way to end the rule. But if this battle is nothing but a powerful inorganic vitality, then is there no such thing in turn in the East? To begin with, there is there is no such thing in Buddhism as a transcendent God like the God of Christianity.

Therefore, there is no deferred destiny as the Judeo-Christian. On the contrary, we can observe in the mainstream of Great Chariot Buddhism a trace of immanence philosophy, because according to it, anyone can benefit

from the character of Buddha. It is true that there is Buddhist asceticism, but some thinkers have attempted to investigate it by invoking the primal energy of the body. In fact, Hakuin, one of the famous monks in Zen Buddhism during the Edo period, stressed "Naikan-hô (the method of introspection)", which gives us primal energy and vitality²⁶. Even if it is not of the same kind as a Deleuze battle, it is at least not a no-battle. Even in the East, there is a certain battle, not a war, for self-conquest.

Besides, it is inaccurate to look upon the Eastern as passive, calm and peaceful. Aside from Buddhist thought, there is an ancient Chinese philosophy, and one of its most prolific thinkers was Lao-Tzu. His stance echoes Nietzsche's, because he criticised the morality of Confucius. Lao-Tzu and Nietzsche have one thing in common: they both aim "beyond good and evil." Lao-Tzu's core hypothesis thesis is actionless, by which one can show the great movement of nature or of Tao.

²⁴ Ibid. | ²⁵ CC, p167. | ²⁶ Cf. Hakuin, Yasen Kanna (Entretien sur un bateau nocturne), édité par Shun Takayama, Daihōrinkaku, 2008.

Ratio of non-existence

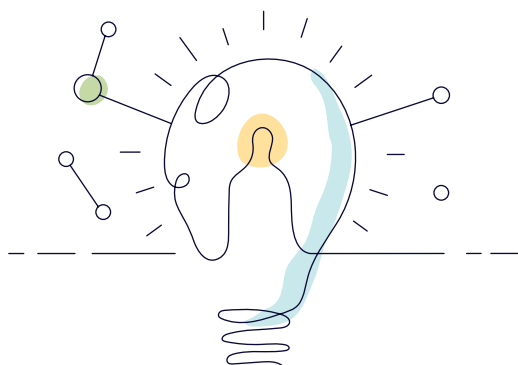
Deleuze Battle Against the Eastern Thought

The latter is merely nothingness, absolute and positive, transcending the duality of being and nothingness, i.e. the negative nothingness. Nietzsche criticises the Buddhist craving for nothingness, or negative, calm, and peaceful nirvana, as being nihilism. But Nietzsche's belief of the Eastern nothingness was merely a relative one, which differs from what Lao-Tzu conceived as a fundamental principle. Following Lao-Tzu, Chuang-Tzu, another great Chinese thinker, developed this idea of the Tao. According to him, Lao-Tzu conceived nothingness as a beginning, from which existence emerges. However, if this is the case, then nothingness is no longer an absolute. Rather, it is a relation to being, because, it is seen then as something with limits in relation to being. That is why Chuang-Tzu abandoned the idea of nothingness (Tao) as a beginning; it is simply infinity²⁷. However, although many Western thinkers believe so, this nothingness (Tao), as infinity in Chuang-Tzu, is not the passive and calm state. On the contrary, the Tao, being a force of nature, is full of energy. The idea of Lao-Tzu and Chuang-Tzu is to cancel human voluntary action in order to reveal this infinite energy of the Tao or force of nature as destiny. This idea of nothingness, as

infinity or a force of nature, is quite different from what Nietzsche and Deleuze believed to be Eastern nothingness. On the contrary, we can even approach it with Deleuze's strong inorganic vitality.

Another common point between Chuang-Tzu and Deleuze is that both try to act according to circumstantial necessity. "Whoever wants to calm down, let him regulate his breathing. Whoever wants inspiration, he must follow his heart, and he who wants to act righteously, he should do only out of necessity; This is the way of the saint"²⁸. The essence of Chuang-Tzu's thought is to follow the Tao, or the infinite force of nature. Since the Tao has no boundaries, it is the one comprising inside him all the world's differences. In a word, the human being evaluates the differences²⁹. This thought of the Tao is confused with an emphasis on destiny. Deleuze, in the era of the logic of meaning, also approached the idea of the love of fate (*Amor fati*). He describes Joe Bousquet's injury, "We become what happens to us, and therefore we want it and extract the event from it, and we become the child of its own events"³⁰. This Deleuze's passage has a strong correlation with

²⁷ To summarize the thought of Lao-Tzu and Chuang-Tzu, we refer to the following text: Mikisaburô Mori, Lao-Tzu, Tchouang-tseu, Kôdansha, 1978 | ²⁸ Tchouang-tseu, *Oeuvre complète*, tr. par Liou Kia-hway, Gallimard/UNESCO, 2007, p193. | ²⁹ Ibid., p41



Chuang Tzu's following idea: "He who does not let himself be affected by these events (death and life, misery and glory, wisdom and ignorance, etc.) keeps himself intact. He also maintains his balance, comfort and sense of humour day and night, as smooth as spring, adapting to all conditions. Such a person has a complete power"³¹.

The Judeo-Christian tradition, with the infinity of religion and the immortality of existence, constituted the "doctrine of governance." According to the latter, the man's destiny is deferred, the true value resides beyond, and the life of this world is viewed negatively: there is a higher standard than life. Deleuze objects this view degrading the earthly life by standing against Spinoza, Nietzsche, Lawrence, Kafka, and Artaud. Deleuze's critique of the East,

and for Nirvana Buddha, descends in this context; the social dilemma is to establish, create or find maximum connections in this world through the condensation of life. Deleuze battle-between aimed at enriching the life of this world, and the conquest of the collective spirit. He develops monogamous dichotomy, or polyploidy of fusion, from Artaud's image of the hermaphrodite³². The Battle of Deleuze is closely related to that waged by Héliogabale through Artaud. At the beginning, it is a battle between "two images of the soul which incarnate and struggle with the body"³³.

Then he shares the masculine and feminine principles. "It (Elagabalus) realises in itself the identity of opposites, but it does not achieve this without difficulty. Its religious homosexuality is baseless. It is a stubborn and abstract battle between the masculine and the feminine"³⁴. In fact, it is a matter of a battle inside Elagabalus, "from the one who is divided and remains one. From a man who becomes a woman and remains a man forever"³⁵. While we may find a battle for self-conquest in the East, it would be difficult to come across such a battle of the androgynous type there.

³⁰ Deleuze, *Logique du sens*, Les Editions de Minuit, 1969, p175. | ³¹ Tchouang-tseu, *op.cit.*, p63. | ³² CC, p69.

³³ Antonin Artaud, *Héliogabale ou L'Anarchiste couronné*, Gallimard, 1979, p64. | ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p67. | ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p95.

The Battle of Deleuze and Immortality

Deleuze Battle Against the Easter Thought

It seems Deleuze's caution about the East stems from his wariness of death. Deleuze's view of death could have been linked to the thermodynamic concept of Entropie, a word meaning "transformation" in Greek³⁶. The German physicist Clausius formalised the second principle of thermodynamics as follows: "The entropie of the universe tends to a certain maximum value (the law of entropie growth)"³⁷.

He presented a picture of the universe where the irreversible processes of an isolated system continue until they reach a state of thermodynamic equilibrium. This thermodynamic movement, in Deleuze's philosophy, is a movement parallel to the activation of the virtual, all the way to its lowest levels. Counter-activation is conceived in order to counteract this activation movement to the equilibrium state. Deleuze believes the moment of creation is always in an unbalanced state. On the contrary, death is an equilibrium state, upon which this eschatological concept of thermodynamics will be built. With this vision of death, Deleuze attempts to practise

his dualism of monism or plural fusion for life and death by borrowing the concept of 'inorganic life'. But as for this life-and-death pair, Deleuze fusion does not seem to work well.

Likely, it is somehow due to the fact all the philosophers and novelists Deleuze cites (Spinoza, Nietzsche, Lawrence, Kafka, Artaud) and Deleuze himself are defenders of life. Nietzsche's Zarathustra is a protector of life and pain³⁸; it is the philosophy of life that strives to overcome death and to intensify the life force to its maximum limits. Deleuze adeptly conceptualises and understands death as an event. But does Deleuze prefer life over death? In the book *What is Philosophy*, he states philosophical books are anti-death. "They (philosophy books and artworks) share resistance to death, slavery, shame, and the present"³⁹. He asserts that even death can become fluid⁴⁰. Nietzsche also hints at the affirmation of death: "The value of life: but life is a certain case. All existence must be justified, not just life"⁴¹. But there seems to be some hesitation in these hints. If Deleuze's philosophy is one of transformation and

³⁶ Cf. *Logique du sens*, p134

³⁷ Cf. l'article d'« entropie » dans *Tetsugaku Shisô Jiten* (Dictionnaire de philosophie et de pensée), Iwanami hoten, p173.

³⁸ Nietzsche, *Ainsi parlait Zarathoustra*, III, *Convalescent* §1, GF Flammarion, p270.

³⁹ Deleuze-Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie ?* Les Editions de Minuit, 1991, p105.

⁴⁰ CC, p68.

⁴¹ Nietzsche, *Fragments posthumes*, Automne 1887, 9 (13), Gallimard, 1976, t. 13, p23.



reincarnation, can he not simply affirm death, or both life and death?

On such a philosophy, Chuang-Tzu's thought is based on emphasizing both life and death. "In ancient times the true man knew neither the love of life, nor the terror of death; he is neither happy with how looked, nor is he afraid of his disappearance. (...) He was satisfied with what was bestowed upon him (life), and he did not cling to it when he gave it back"⁴². In the West, the philosophy of Marc-Aurèle coincides with the idea of Chuang-Tzu. "If you had to leave now, you would just disappear as easily as if you were doing one of those things that requires awareness and order. (...) If you keep your devil in a state of purity as if you had to bring it back at once, (...) you will live happily"⁴³. Epictetus, another Stoic, also said: "What I can do, I do: I hide without fear,

weeping or reproach upon God, knowing well that a born being must perish"⁴⁴.

The battle-between for Deleuze is worthy; it is the philosophy of defending and enriching life, and establishing as many connections as possible in this world. However, while maintaining this Deleuze battle, we can affirm or accept death at the same time, like those ancient philosophers. We can pursue the battle without getting trapped in. "It is difficult to draw the attention of a man who seeks other things, and draw him to the calmness while he is indifferent. But this is not impossible"⁴⁵. That is why, as Deleuze did, we must renounce the existence of the immortal soul. For as long as we believe in it, we are bound to cling to life firmly. Deleuze says the battle-between is based on the conquest of the soul, which is not the immortal, but rather the 'mortal one'⁴⁶. "I am entirely a body and nothing else. Soul is a word that refers to a part of the body"⁴⁷. The soul and the body are but one thing. Even if it is mortal, the soul is on the move, hovering ceaselessly between the actual and the virtual. In this sense, the East is not as far away as Deleuze might seem.

⁴² Tchouang-tseu, op.cit., pp 66-67.

⁴³ Marc-Aurèle, Pensées, dans Les Stoïciens, Pléiade, Gallimard, 1962, pp1155-1157.

⁴⁴ Epictète, Entretiens, dans Les Stoïciens, Pléiade, Gallimard, 1962, p891.

⁴⁵ Epictète, op.cit., p891.

⁴⁶ Nietzsche, Par-delà le bien et le mal, I, §12, Le Livre de Poche, p69. |

⁴⁷ Nietzsche, Ainsi parlait Zarathoustra, VI, GF Flammarion, p72. | * The word actuel, according to Deleuze, has a double meaning. It means what is actually achieved and what is now present, given that what is actual can only be present. This is the meaning to which the author also goes.



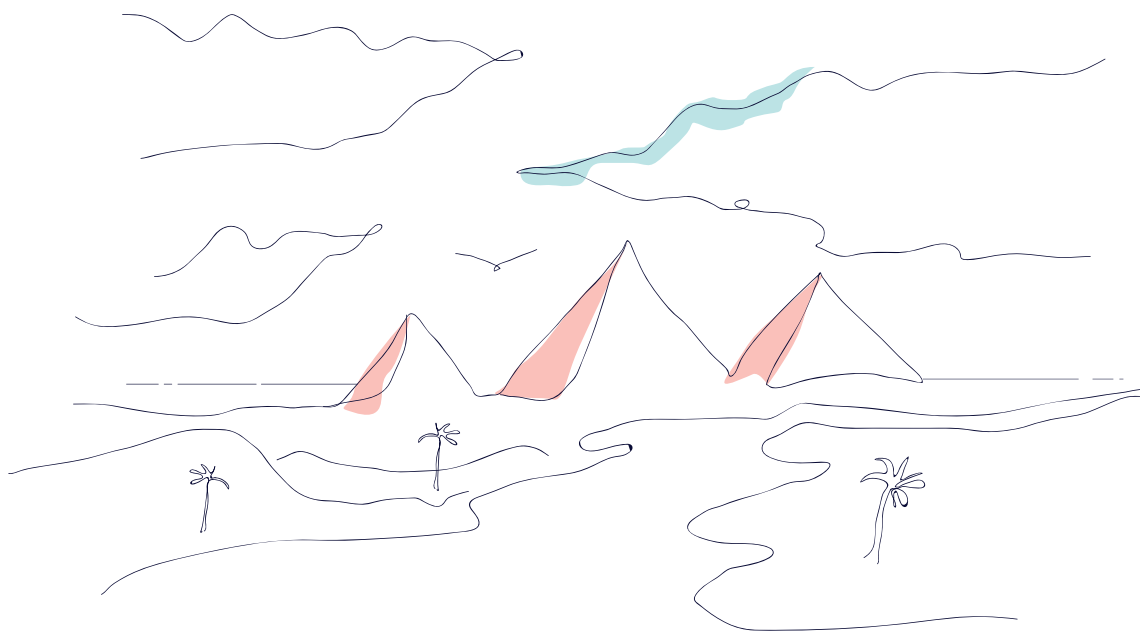
✦ 1- The concept of the individual in Arab culture

By Dr Ahmed Al-Ansari

The contemplator of the cultural status of the twentieth century will observe the conflict between two cultures or two segments of intellectuals has reached the point of disharmony and discord. Cultural depth between them disappeared, each now aiming to dominate the intellectual arena. The first segment comprises thinkers influenced by Western culture, while those who call for a retreat to the past and adherence to the ancient heritage are the second one. Although both claim their intention is the welfare renaissance of society, they have left behind the role of the individual in this renaissance, seeking out systems to replace the existing social ones. They therefore lacked any survey on the Arab individual, his reality, requirements, and desires.

The first segment strives to retrieve and literally imitate the Western culture, deeming it indispensable and a standard of civilization despite time change. If the West is experiencing the Renaissance era, then Arab culture is living the Middle Ages as per the West's civilizational classification

of time development. The second segment demands a return to the heritage. For it seeks to renew it, seeing it as a solution to the problems of the times. As a result, they live in the past instead of the present. Difference between both segments has mushroomed into somehow a conflict of two cultures rather than a search for a solution to the problems of the Arab individual and the cultural and civilisational requirements. The first segment prevailed in the first half of the twentieth century and then surrendered to the second cultural trend in the second half. However, the problem is the conflict more theoretical than practical, for the reality of the individual remained marginalised. The conflict grew isolated from the individual's life, who took no role. This alienated the conflict from the reality it aimed to solve its problems. Cultural conflicts always take place to attain one aim. Such differences relate to the degree and does not escalate to the point of discord between two opposites with no common ground, and which depicts reform to come above and by imposing Western or religious supremacist systems.



All attempts to reconcile the two cultures, even the ones undertaken by intellectuals, reached a deadlock. For every conciliation movement is accused of fabrication and ends in failure. The conflict has, therefore, become an end. The first culture viewed the Arab as a Westerner, and the second as an Arab Muslim. Both fell short of seeing him as a distinct individual, with his own way of life, his unique vision, and his definite place in the changeable universe. As a result, the concept of the individual got lost in the Arab culture. Identity search for the Egyptian, for instance, and determining his affiliations and loyalties, have become a preoccupation for intellectuals of both segments. Besides, the value of the individual in himself got lost, and the definition via the gender and segregation became the first aim of every researcher. To what gender does an Egyptian belong? What are the characteristics that distinguish him from others? It seems as if the Egyptian is an entity with must- defined borders, and he stands alone on one side, and the rest of the

world peoples on the other.

Attention always focused on stressing the theme of the home, the nation, the state, or the sect. There are extensive studies on the Arab personality, detailing its characteristics and features. It is as if individuals are one of Aristotle's logical types, with their own characteristics that separate and distinguish them from other types of humankind. The question that imposes itself now: what are the reasons that led to disregard the concept of the individual from culture? Is this related to the difficulty of the notion and inability to define it? Rather, did it stem from empirical reasons that led to its disappearance? Is the concept absent owing to its nature? Or was it absent because of the Arab cultural environment and the social and political systems? Or because of a long historical heritage or emergency circumstances that affected Arab life? Is it possible to reconstruct the concept of the individual in culture?

First: Reasons behind the lack of the concept of the individual

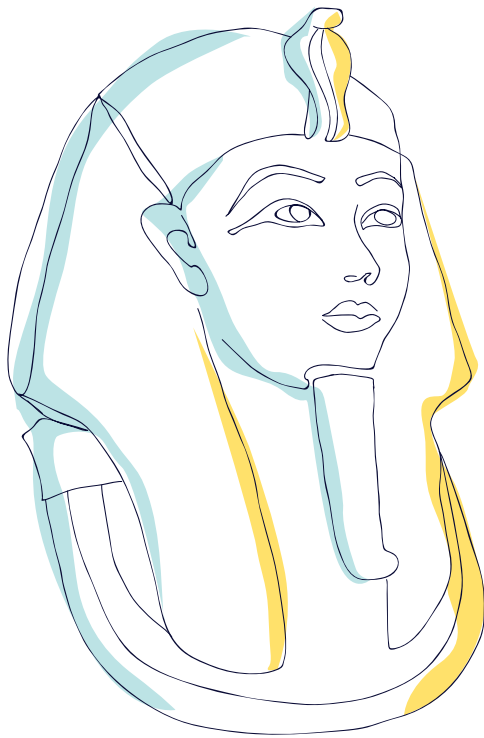
Egypt as an example

The disregard of the concept of the individual as a perception and thus as a reality dates back to the Pharaonic civilization. Remarkably, ancient Egyptian art glorifies only one individual, the pharaoh. And when art depicted the daily life, as stated in the inscriptions on the walls of temples, it hardly differentiated individuals from each other; artists pictured resemblant faces and bodies. Paintings portrayed the Egyptians as army soldiers standing in well-formed and congested lines in the same form and look as they granted sacrifices or practice their daily activities such as farming and harvesting. We also do not find a name for an ancient Egyptian artist, despite the splendour of Egyptian art. The religion of “monotheism” preached by “Akhenaten”, which is a revolutionary religion against the god “Amun”, did not call for the freedom of the individual and individuality; it strengthened Akhenaten’s notion of “all in one, and one in all”. It is also recognisable that the ordinary individual hardly mentioned; we never heard of a reformer or a revolutionist or a rebel despite the document of the eloquent peasant.

Perhaps this prompted a thinker like Ernest Renan to highlight Egypt was among the most conservative of all countries in a study published in the magazine (Al-Alamein) in 1681 under the title Over the Nile from Aswan to Cairo. There was no single revolutionist, reformer, great poet, famous artist, scientist, or philosopher. And if some competent men existed in Egypt, they always worked under the authority of routine and general framework. The king is the only one with recognisable existence; he is the sole name⁴⁸.

Renan also concluded that the Pharaonic civilization was of slavery and tyranny. Regardless of the lack of sufficient historical evidence for the validity of this conclusion Renan arrived at, it was an overview based upon the artistic comparison of both the Pharaonic and the Greek civilisations. His outcomes, however, were gathered from his observation of the lack of the concept of the individual and individualism. Although the Egyptian life depended on the spirit of group and cooperation, it never offered the individual the opportunity or the right to

⁴⁸Dr Muhammad Mahdi: An article entitled «How do we see history» (Al-Araby) magazine, June 1996.



record his name on the paintings he drew or the stones on which he engraved. We have not heard of individuals who played a role in Pharaonic history; there is only the ruler, the priests, the people, and the army. These segments do not give existence to the specific individual, the leader, or the spiritual father. Some may attribute the absence of geniuses, for example, in Pharaonic history to the lack of historians. But this is baseless; the pharaohs wrote everything on stones, and they left a well-defined civilization. However, glorifying the individual was forbidden, as no individual had the right to immortality except the pharaoh.

Jamal Hamdan compares the rain environment with the irrigation one, seeing nature as the master of the farmer in the former. Yet, the farmer is the master of himself. Besides, the individual has somehow the opportunity to be independent. In the irrigation environment, it is different, as there is no cultivation or reconstruction without human works to prepare the land for cultivation. To do that, it is essential to have natural resources, control the river, and observe people. Without controlling the river, the Nile will turn into a sweeping waterfall, and uncontrolling the people, water distribution will mushroom into a bloody conflict⁴⁹. Considering this natural framework, organising becomes a prerequisite for life, and it is imperative for everyone to give up their freedom and subject to a higher authority that distributes water and spread justice among all. Therefore, nature is not only the master of the farmer but also the irrigation system which has its word. The ruler, as a result, becomes a mediator between the farmer and the river⁵⁰.

⁴⁹Dr.. Jamal Hamdan: The Personality of Egypt, Al-Nahda Library, Cairo, p. 33.

⁵⁰Ibid.: 39.

The Egyptian society was founded on three pillars: the landowners, the clergymen, and the employees. These are based on a broad spectrum of the crushed agricultural proletariat. Perhaps one factor that helped the growth of tyranny is the small size of the country's built area, and its strict borders; there are no strongholds of refuge or escape routes widely known in mountainous or desert environments. No fugitive, rebellious or reckless can get away from the hand and grip of the Pharaoh⁵¹. The law of the flood environment abolished individuality, enforcing collective stereotyping, peaceful coexistence, and herd instinct, and focusing on the ruler's control and power. This grants safety for people by submission, turning the farmer into a crushed machine. Moral texts of ancient Egypt always stress silence as a fundamental virtue required by the poor peasant⁵². Egypt never experienced individualism and the independence of the personality; the farmer ends up by being a reception and submission device, as if the absence of the individual concept is part of the social and ecological system.

When Christianity spread in Egypt, the concept of the individual remained absent. Perhaps this is consistent with Christian theology stressing the concept of the believing community or the community of believers, or the first Christian community from which Christianity and the church

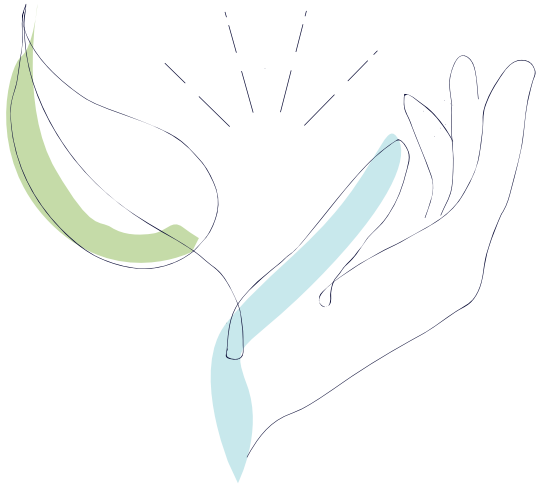
derived their foundations. These concepts focus on more the group than on the individual and his role. It is also recognisable that Christianity generally looks at humans; there is the concept of the first sin, and the collective punishment of humanity, except for those who achieved salvation or joined the community of believers. There is no direct relationship in Christianity between the individual and his Lord as in other religions, and there is no salvation for the individual himself; it must be through a mediator represented by the church. There is only one person left, "the Christ", who was crucified and his spirit incarnated in the Church. Thus, loyalty in Pharaonic Egypt shifted from the ruler to the Christ; Akhenaten's notion of "all in one" transformed into the concept of "all taking part in the body of Christ". The individual remained marginal.

With Islam, the ancient Egyptian Pharaonic and Coptic culture remained a stumbling block on the way of abstractly and concretely defining the individual concept; it interpreted Islam in a way consistent with the culture of Egyptian society. The notion of the group overshadowed the concept of individuality. In fact, the influence of society's culture in the religious thought is questionable; there are those who believe revelation is firm and cannot be influenced by the social culture it lives in.

Some others believe it is difficult to deny the

⁵¹Ibid 13.

⁵²Ibid 19.



role of the prevailing culture in a society in understanding the text; each environment has its own characteristics, and history and cultural heritage of the people play a role in understanding and interpreting the text. Regardless of these arguments, it is obvious the conceptualisation of paradise differs between the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula living in the harsh desert and the Egyptians dwelling on the banks of the Nile. All people have their own general characteristics that create their culture. Therefore, the Egyptian culture recognised Islam as ignoring the individual and emphasising the spirit of the community. In fact, this conception of religion does not agree with revelation. Islam achieves harmony between the individual and the group and does not disregard him. The individual prayer has its value, even if the

group prayer is better. The individual's interest in his being, his desires and ambitions does not conflict with his existence in a Muslim community. Responsibility is primarily individual, testimony is an individual decision, and reward and punishment are individual. There is no mediation between the individual and his Lord. Turning to the modern history of Egypt at the dawn of the nineteenth century, Muhammad Ali, the ruler of Egypt, declared himself the sole owner of the land. He deprived the farmer of his properties, having only the usufruct rights over his land. The government possessed water under the name of the people for whom it sold and distributed as per the farmers' land size. Since water is the mainstay of life and the most vital tool of production, the construction of collective villages could only be accomplished by a coordinated collective and cooperative action. This paved the way to cooperative communities, and Egypt became a large agricultural unit run by the Ministry of Agriculture⁵³. It can also be said that the concept of a single ruler remained in place following the 1952 Revolution, which marked the beginning of political independence. Egypt has put in place a strict political system under the pretext of protecting the revolution from its enemies. For this end, it abolished the political parties, so that no voice is louder than the voice of the masses. Consequently, any call for the freedom of the individual disappeared.

⁵³Ibid.: 19.

The dominance of some moral concepts and religious perceptions led to the disappearance of the concept of individuality within the Arab culture, and the downgrading of the individual. The moral characteristics of a people become influenced by their general cultural environment and social structure. Naturally, the conscience of the Egyptian people despises the concept of individuality, always associating it with selfishness. Altruism, self-denial, and sacrifice for the sake of others are always emphasised. So, the value of the individual is less than that of others. In fact, the concept of individuality is not related to that of selfishness. Rather, it can be said the feeling of individualism, and the individual's sense of himself, always require prior recognition of the existence of others. Altruism, therefore, is a means of self-awareness and a sense of individuality. The conscience of the Arab people, unlike the Chinese, for example, tends to misery and unhappiness, unwilling to seek happiness in life; the fear of misery accompanied such a sense. If a person feels happy, he quickly remembers that this is a bad omen, and calls for pleasant moments to pass. The Egyptian, for example, is destinable and does not imagine that the affairs of the world are in his hands. And if the Egyptian is famed for his sense of humour, it does not relate to the feeling of his legitimate right to happiness.

Rather, it is a kind of catharsis as highlighted by the psychological analysis of the joke, and to avoid law breaching. It is striking there are no philosophies of pleasure and happiness in culture. For they get associated with the feeling of freedom, which Arabs constantly fear⁵⁴.

Religious values are alike to a great extent. Noticeably, the prevalence of some of these values over others is always subject to the whims of the authority, and to the political and social conditions. Religions are always seen as a justification for conditions rather than a revolution against them, and therefore certain social concepts prevail to serve this end.

In fact, understanding the religious text in one way is a matter closer to superstition; there is no single interpretation of a religious text. Therefore, it is always remarkable a particular concept, or an interpretation, dominates in a particular historical moment of a culture, and then disappears in other moments and cultures. A researcher in the Arab culture will observe the dominance of the group concept throughout its history, elevating its status, and shrinking the focus towards individualism. The rights of individuals turn into duties, and individual liberties are eliminated. There are no rights but of the group, and there is no respect except for the collective opinion. As a result,

⁵⁴Dr Ahmed Al-Ansari: "Belonging," the article on Fear of Freedom, Egyptian Book Centre, Cairo 2012, p. 18

the individual's interest gets sacrificed for that of the group.

The idea of the social contract is missing in the Arab culture, as there is no clear contract between the individual and society. As a result, the individual lacks knowledge of freedom he should hand over to the community to preserve it. The concept of the individual or the individualism has not dawned on the pioneers of the Renaissance. For they had not imagined a renaissance away from a central government. Whether it was a civil government (Farah Anton) or an Islamic one (Rasheed Rida), as it was called by Al-Jamiaa newspaper or Al-Manar newspaper. The pioneers of the modern renaissance in the second half of the twentieth century viewed individuals as human masses. Contemporary publications such as *The Concerns of the Intellectuals*, *The Concerns of Youth*, *The Concerns of Thought*, and *The Homeland*⁵⁵, which never themed around the concerns of the individual. Pioneers of the renaissance had perceived it as the revival of the homeland, the nation, the state or the people. It had never unveiled the individual's renaissance and how to advance his personality. Although some attempts called for the renaissance of the individual first (Rifa'a Al-Tahtawi), they received not back up, though it coincided with the outset of the liberal trend.

Educational systems regularly underestimated the value of the individual. Since education is a social tool invented by society to cast individuals into certain social moulds, it is always linked to a specific educational theory. There is a theory viewing the individual as an end in himself, thriving his personality and culture. Another theory views the individual to make overtures to something else than himself. This furthers him as a fuel for cannons, or a means to support a particular religion that it perches somewhere. Family or government education system does not allow individual independence or the development of an individual's culture or instilling a spirit of adventure and freedom. The individual is not a tree that grows according to its nature and capabilities, but a brick in a building amidst thousands of concrete blocks. Traditions and customs play a negative role in eradicating the value of the individual. If Mr Abdul Jawad of Naguib Mahfouz's trilogy was a symbol of oppression of the past, then the school recently is a symbol of eliminating the individual's personality to become a good citizen.

⁵⁵ See: (*Concerns of Youth*) by Dr Abdul Rahman Badawi, (*Concerns of Intellectuals*) by Dr Zaki Najib Mahmoud, and (*Concerns of Thought and the Homeland*) by Dr Hassan Hanafi.

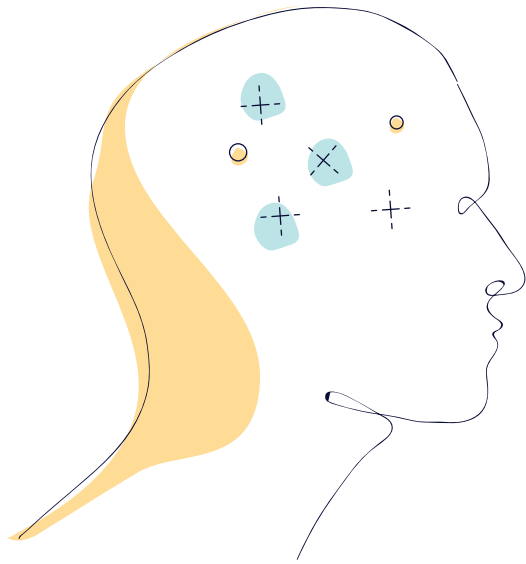
Second: Individualism as a civilised duty

The concept of “individual” is one of the ambiguous and tough philosophical concepts to define despite its popularity and frequent use. Perhaps the hardest element thinkers frequently come across is the clear and familiar concepts, which the one often feels they are beyond definition. Obviously, Arab culture generally studies concepts such as the nation, the homeland, the state, the society or personality and its general features such as the Arab or Egyptian personality. The concept of individual is often envisaged as self-existing independent notion, but as an element making up these concepts or blocs. The concept of man or citizen often interchanges with that of the individual.

In fact, the concept of man differs from that of the individual; it often raises the corresponding relationship, the relationship of man with nature or Allah, or the qualities differentiating man from other creatures, being bestowed with mind. Once we leave behind total meaning and move to the conception of the Egyptian person, for example, it quickly comes to mind a sense of history and time; there is a feeling restoring the vision of the Pharaonic Egyptian, and the well-established civilisational features that distinguish him from other members

of humanity. The vision of the Arab or the Muslim is excluded; we envisage him as a civilisationally extended image linked to a specific civilisation that has its own characteristics. Although the term Egyptian man is more specific than the word human, it is less visible in the Egyptian culture; the Egyptian intellectual refuses to be specific, preferring to generalise, as if privatisation is an immoral issue.

The concept of the individual often gets confused with that of citizen or citizenship. The citizen is the individual as envisaged by the state, or it wishes him to be. We can say the citizen is the individual in the form designed by the state, deciding for him how he behaves and how he thinks. It sets his duties with no care for his desires; it sees him as a tool to achieve its will. And if the word is specified and, the Egyptian citizen becomes an example, it quickly leads us to an idea of what the Egyptian individual should be in the future. It is a futuristic outlook on his relationship with the community, how he will be, and the qualities he must possess in order to gain the status of a good citizen. The concept does not deal with the reality of the individual; it rather focuses on how the individual should be. It is a normative view far from the concept



of the real individual. In fact, it is necessary to differentiate the individual's and group's vision, or the individual as an independent individual and as a citizen of particular people. Although individuals are categorised into types, and in return into species the distinction and uniqueness still exist. All life's secret, starting with plants, ascending through its animals, until it reaches the human being, is the uniqueness of the living being by what distinguishes him from all others⁵⁶. The individual is always envisaged as part of a class, and not a self-existing entity, as if all individuals are a species of resemblant creatures in characteristics and features. And just as members of the animal species are together categorised with their own distinctive characteristics, the human individuals are seen and treated

as one entity, disregarding their differences. philosophers recognise each individual with his own entity, most of them pay attention to the overall idea, starting with Socrates and Plato. Despite Aristotle's interest in the partial, he ended up paying attention to the overall. There is a preference for the overall compared to the partial. Indeed, when highlighting the individual, the partial, and the overall in logic, Hegel went back and abolished the value of the individual in politics, granting the state the great value. Individualism does not mean the absolute individualism that emerged as a reaction to collective ideas attempting to abolish the individual's entity, whether its source is political or religious authority. Neither does it mean the theme highlighted by the story of Robinson Crusoe, i.e. the individual's ability to dispense with others for his living. Neither does it indicate the story of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan by Ibn Tufail which depicts the individual's ability to reach the facts by his own. We cannot envisage true individuality as self-enclosed or isolated. Although the call for absolute individualism has prevailed for long periods in history, experimental human experiences have proven the invalidity and contradiction of this conception.

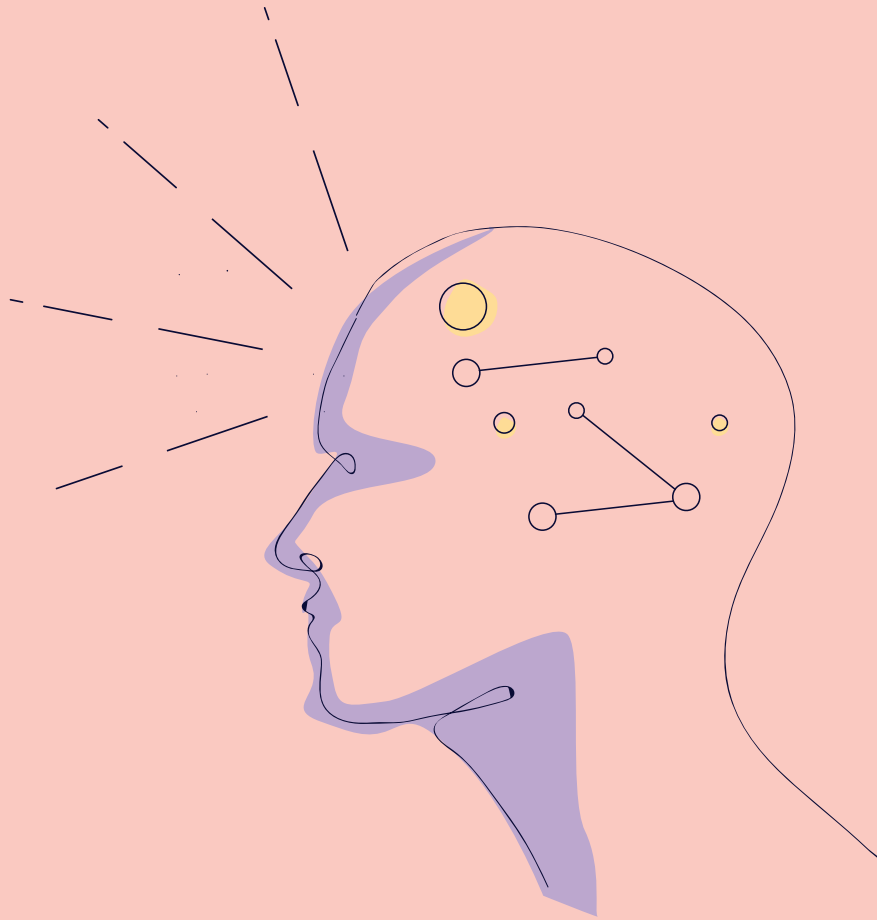
⁵⁶Dr Zaki Naguib Mahfouz: Values from Heritage, General Book Organization 1996, Cairo, p. 21.

The individual is not a solid unit that can isolate itself from others, but a system of integrated and aim-driven ideas, thoughts, feelings, and actions. But it derives its existence via contact with others. The individual realises himself and his independence, starting from his contact with others, and their reactions to him. He perceives their existence first, then he realises himself. Therefore, true individuality is not a self that lives in an enclosed shell or a cave. Even if philosophers recognise each individual with his own entity, most of them pay attention to the overall idea, starting with Socrates and Plato. Despite Aristotle's interest in the partial, he ended up paying attention to the overall. There is a preference for the overall compared to the partial. Indeed, when highlighting the individual, the partial, and the overall in logic, Hegel went back and abolished the value of the individual in politics, granting the state the great value. Individualism does not mean the absolute individualism that emerged as a reaction to collective ideas attempting to abolish the individual's entity, whether its source

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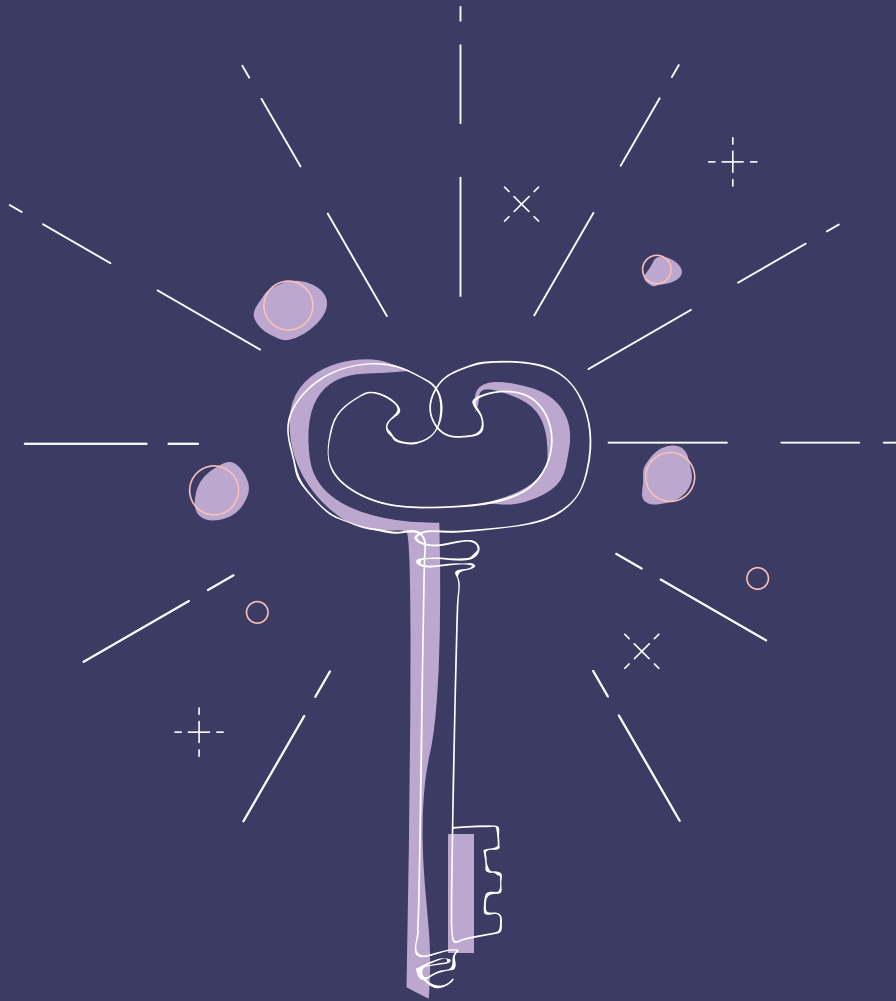
⁵⁷Josiah Royce: *The World and the Individual Part 1*, translated by Dr Ahmed Al-Ansari, The National Centre for Translation, Cairo 2008, p. 341 and beyond

⁵⁸Dr Ahmed Al-Ansari: *The Philosophy of Religion for Josiah Royce*, The Book Centre for Publishing, Cairo 2004, p. 376 and beyond



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Third: The self is a will and an aim

The concept of the individual is one of the controversial notions in the theory of knowledge. So how do we know that there are individuals and do we know the individual by mind senses? Senses transmit sensations to us, but they do not connect them in such a way to distinguish one person from another. How can mind connect a group of sensations transmitted to it by the senses, combine them into one unit, and describe the individual who bears them as an individual distinct from other individuals? Does the feeling of individualism stem from the outside, and we know it through the senses and mind? Or do we derive it from the inside and self-awareness? How do we recognise individualism and judge the existence of the individual?⁵⁷

Regardless of the philosophers' multiple answers to this problem, and the attempts of the Sophists in the past, Locke, Descartes and Kant recently, and a contemporary Sterner, and other Western philosophers, or the attempts of thinkers of the modern Arab renaissance starting with Rifa'a Al-Tahtawi and Lutfi Al-Sayyid and modern liberalism, it is necessary to note the individual cannot exist independently in isolation from others. But he must feel his own entity, as if the world created for him, and that humanity with all its qualities is embodied

in his existence. It is possible to combine the inside and the outside, the subjective and the objective, the ego and the other in one entity. It does not cancel the individual's feeling of his individualism, nor does it overshadow the freedom of others.

If the self derives its existence and entity from the presence and contact with others, this does not mean its absolute submission. The question that imposes itself now: if the self derives its nourishment from them, how can it be independent from them? In fact, despite the self's awareness of the importance of the existence of others, it realises it cannot continue to exist and feel its value unless it becomes an objective. The true self is an objective, and there is no genuine feeling of individualism except through the self's sense of having a purpose upon which it establishes its sense of existence⁵⁸. And when Socrates recited his famous saying: "Know yourself by yourself," he meant knowing your target in life, because no one sets your target and objective for you. Descartes said: "I think, therefore I am," emphasising the independence of the individual and his ability to probe the depths of himself and know its truth and its components. True individualism is associated with a life aim the individual seeks to achieve.

⁻⁵⁷Josiah Royce: The World and the Individual Part 1, translated by Dr Ahmed Al-Ansari, The National Centre for Translation, Cairo 2008, p. 341 and beyond

⁻⁵⁸Dr Ahmed Al-Ansari: The Philosophy of Religion for Josiah Royce, The Book Centre for Publishing, Cairo 2004, p. 376 and beyond



If the self is an objective, and there is no sense of individualism without striving to achieve it, then individualism is associated and integrated with it. In fact, the Arab intellectual interest lies in the concept of mind, its role definition, its separation from the will, and the perception of man as composed of closed rooms. Some of them are specific to ideas, others to emotions, and a third group to actions. This had a significant impact on the lack of interest in and neglect of the concept of will. The mind's share of attention was more than that of the will. The core undertaking was to reconcile wisdom and Sharia, Allah's actions and the acts of people. Although Sufism concerns with the will, it is a negative will rather than a positive one based upon prevention and control, serving metaphysical objectives with no value in practical life. It seeks to abolish the existence of the self, mortify lusts, and

perish in Allah or the universe. Initially at the beginning of the modern renaissance, the Arab world firmly believed such a renaissance aimed to liberate mind from superstition, raise the status of science (Salama Musa), and grant mind the right to religious interpretation (Muhammad Abdo). Mind comes first, followed by the will, based on a false conception of the separation between reason and will. Perhaps that separation was one reason for the failure of the Arab Renaissance. The pioneers of the renaissance perceived freedom would be accomplished by liberating mind from superstition and giving it the right of interpretation. However, they disregarded the role of the will. Freedom is not just liberating from restrictions; it is the ability to act. There is no liberation without a clear-cut aim in mind and a will integrated with this aim.

⁴⁸Dr Muhammad Mahdi: An article entitled «How do we see history» (Al-Araby) magazine, June 1996.

⁴⁹Dr.. Jamal Hamdan: The Personality of Egypt, Al-Nahda Library, Cairo, p. 33.

Fourth: The Tasteful Self

Individual's sense of his own value is the essential characteristic bestowed upon him by Allah. The conscious individual is a unique human being; no one can replace him, exercise his role, attain his sought-after aim, or experience same feelings and hopes as his. Since humans are resemblant in their physical structure, they differentiate by their own selves. And if there is a permanent connection between man and Allah, or a divine whiff in each individual self, this whiff is embodied in the self's sense as a unique and independent entity able to feel, sense, think and do. Its act, motivated by its free will, is not imitated anywhere in the world; this act is the imprint that leaves traces there.

And if Allah has granted us our souls, He endowed us with the quality of uniqueness and a sense of individuality. Through this feeling, the ego is transformed into

itself, so it sees others as an integral part whilst feeling Allah's lights on all sides. The individual does not share with anyone else his endeavour to build capabilities and form his own perspectives for each undertaken. This individual goes through moments he must decide on his own; it is his sole decision. He, therefore, is an uninterchangeable entity in the world without altering the meaning and order of the world. The world exists through him; the individual governs his existence according to his own perception. No one can share this perception and sense of things. The Platonic division of the three forces of the soul prevailed in Arab thought and influenced most Muslim philosophers. This division gives the mind the right to dominate the other forces of the soul, so that virtue or justice can be attained in the Platonic sense.

⁵⁰Ibid.: 39.

In fact, these divisions of the forces of the soul lose their realm and essence; there must be a tasteful power to achieve interaction and overlap between these divisions and ensure its unity by tasting senses, picking up ideas and accomplishing acts. Its role resembles a maestro who leads symphony players; he places his own signature to stand out from other orchestra conductors. The term tasteful self may seem strange and ambiguous, or we may understand it as the tendency towards mysticism and the so-called mystical taste. But a tasteful self means the person who looks at life particularly; we can say it tastes life as we taste the music. This self judges things as per its own lifelong standards set for itself. It is not intended as a selfish view that measures things through pleasure, or what benefits interest or happiness they yield. It is rather a personality looking at life as he views music, mixing with it, living its details and sensing its obscure melody and inherent spirit. The tasteful outlook of life differs from the friendly view of things and others highlighted by Bertrand Russell for what the personality is⁵⁹. For the friendly view is optimistic and intimate towards



things and life. The tasteful personality enjoys a more comprehensive view of life, with the friendly view being the first phase, integrating personality and life. Then, follows the phase of control and tasting. The tasteful personality requires the highest levels of awareness, culture, independence and individuality of the person.

Envisaging the concept of the individual and surveying it puts Arab culture on the right track. The absence of such a notion has yielded to the loss of Arab's feeling of himself, and his uniqueness and distinction. The initiative consequently died out, the flame of intellectual creativity faltered, and political experiments, especially the

⁵⁹Dr Ahmed Al-Ansari, Social Ethics according to Bertrand Russell, The Book Centre for Publishing, Cairo 2003, p. 153

democratic experiment, proved fruitless. Indeed, there are other reasons behind the failure of the democratic solution in the Arab world. However, the individual's sense of his electoral vote's value is a unique phenomenon, felt only by those with a clear insight into the meaning of individuality and exclusivity. The absence of a sense of uniqueness also leads to moral duplicity, and the spread of hypocrisy and lies. For the feeling of uniqueness is a basic requirement and a part of the psychological structure of man. Otherwise, the result will be a loss of self-confidence and a sense of dignity. The formulation of the concept of individuality and the meaning of singularity will soon put an end to many moral contradictions. Recognition of individuality and its existence leads to a proper solution to the problem of the relationship between the freedom of the individual and society, setting its genuine position on par with the notion of the class and the state. The individual, the class and the state are three concepts always in need of meticulously observed relations. They represent a firmly sided triangle, and the absence one of these three pillars will dismantle it.

The emergence of globalisation represents a new reality, a self-imposing phenomenon worldwide. Regardless of the contradictory attitudes of those who support or oppose it, globalisation has become a reality challenging the sovereignty of states and their economic, political, and cultural independence. Therefore, redefining the concept of the individual and individualism turned out to be the only weapon states can resort to uphold their existence. This will be attained once the individuals of these countries enjoy a unique identity able to preserve its entity and independence, so long as it has self-driven values. The new globalisation-emanating economic system moves toward emphasising the role of the individual as producer and consumer, furnishing him with a key role to maintain this system. Therefore, the individual's role is even challenging the role of the state itself. The sophistication of state-of-the-art communications and equipment elevated the individual's potential and capabilities, enabling him to interact with the entire world from his secluded room. He is likely to take part in the world's fateful decisions in the future.



❖ 2 - Philosophy and Literature: Philosophy is the essence of literature and its mirror in poetry: Abu Al-Ala Al-Maari as an example

By Dr Maryam Al-Hashemi

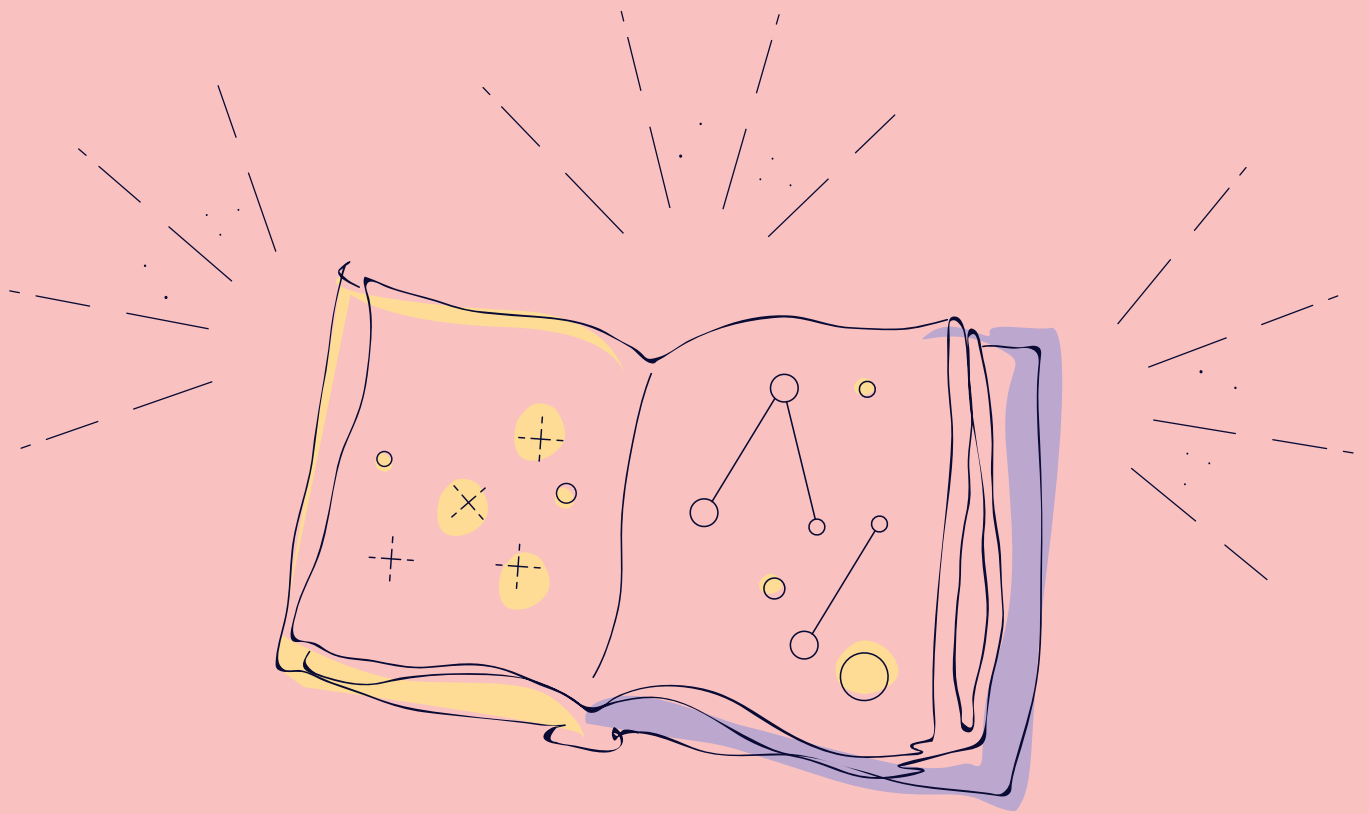
History is two-faced, one for life, and the other is thought. It is a life as something lived by certain people in a given time and under certain circumstances. On the other hand, it is an archive left behind by some people for us to think over and insight. Philosophy is mediation on history; it has gone through many roles and phases, and influenced and been influenced by other sciences and concepts. But it has gone far in its association with literature in particular.

Abu Al-Ala lived in the Abbasid era, which witnessed remarkable political, social, cultural, and literary events. On the social and cultural levels in particular, Al-Azhar Mosque was built in Egypt, and the House of Wisdom and the House of Science in Baghdad were established. This set the scene for prominent philosophers, scholars, writers and poets, who were contemporary to Abu Al-Ala, to shine. Some of them are: Al-Sharif Al-Radhi, interpreter of Nahj Al-Balagha, Ferdowsi, the author of the Shahnameh, Al-Sirri Al-Rifa', the Mosul poet, Al-Awwa' Al-Dimashqi,

Al-Khwarizmi, Al-Tha'alibi, and Al-Jurjani. He was also a contemporary of the Brethren of Purity, and Abu Hayyan Al-Towhidi, the author of Al-Imtā' wa al-Mu'ānasa, and Ali bin Sina, the author of "The Healing" and The Law, and others. Certainly, he would be influenced by the aforementioned figures and other social circumstances prevailed at the time, particularly the Shu'ubiya, the intensification of strife, the extravagance of art and decoration in various aspects of life, and the emergence of intellectual movements and philosophical trends. All of this had an impact on Abu Al-Ala's intellectual and literary approach. He is the one who says:

**This is what my father inflicted on me
Yet I have no harm on whosoever**

During the period of history, the concepts of instinct, life and power surfaced, taking a centre stage of some philosophers' interpretation of knowledge.



❖ He saw me in my three prisons
So do not ask about the bad news
To lose my sight, to stay at home
And to be in the malignant body

The dominance of such concepts crystalised in a pattern of thinking that sacrificed thought truth for the sake of life and vital benefit. We can find a similar justification for such insight in the influence of the Germanic Romanticism which called upon glorifying life values already affected by the mental description of the world. This can be clearly evident in Abu Al-Ala Al-Maarri's literature, who called himself Raheen Al-Mahbeseen (the prisoners of the three hermits): the blindness, the house, and the body:

We find Romanticism declared life's values broke with the frameworks of disciplined rational thinking or prudence. This dichotomy of thought and life, or the abundance of vital energy and prudence and work to resurrect life the Romantics introduced, is an objection doctrine; it proposes the duality of thought and life, or instinct and reason. They objected the Cartesian or Newtonian formulations that transformed the world into empty skeletons and emptied of the blood of life. For the word Romanticism has become a philosophical doctrine opposing the philosophy of Enlightenment and the values of rationality, and fights against imagination, intuition, spontaneity, and whims. This is what Al-Ma'arri did when confronting time and virtue adaptation. He disparaged those who resort to plot and treachery, and called for a pioneering human tendency and a tolerant social gesture:

**Think of the rest of the brothers as evil
And be watchful of your heart's secret
If the Gemini disclosed my news to them
I would not sally off fearing their plot
I alienated from people, and now have no
brethren**

**And I bear no malice to my enemies, who
are none**

He also says:

**I have a soul that descends on the hills
And stands up to dwelling on deserts
It stretches out to hold the two moons by
hand**

And carry them to overshadow the star

We find personal relationship between the romantics and philosophers, especially with Hegel and Schelling. So, these mutual relations between philosophers and writers, and the terminological regulator between them all, are the word of life, and the integration of philosophy and poetry. Life in this context is a core theme of belief-based Romanticism, the principle of all facts regardless of their resources: physical, social or spiritual, and it is the ideal target for any action. We find Nietzsche, for instance, placed philosophy in the kingdom of poetry, and left the demonstrative writing methods saturated with imagery and abstraction mastered by other philosophies, especially Kant and Hegel. He developed a style of writing that combines lyric and analytical since he hardly trusted philosophical concepts that freeze life in its moulds. For Al-Ma'arri, discourse-consistent philosophy is what corresponds to truth and righteousness, and comes out to express the truth, including the poetry of wisdom, which belongs to lyrical poetry:

**We contemplated time, but found no
Way to the goodness of life
Leave the world if you had no gain**



**Live there, in the plenty of the little
For whoever bitten by poison of snake
Will live unwell if he could survive**

Hence, literary writing bears roots and goals closely related to man, who is the origin, objective and audience of creativity. Humanism, as a literary-philosophical concept, is present in the literature and philosophy, the two creativity poles. As a term, its room exists from man and as a philosophical concept and trend, humanism centralised on man as the core to interpret and understand the entire universe. Humanism, as a literary-philosophical movement and stance in the Renaissance, deals with research in the human-evolving arts and sciences. The professors of grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry and moral philosophy depended on the resources of the old times; their roots extend to the classical Greek and Roman era, and perhaps even before that. Some claim they date back to ancient China. At

the same time, the humanists were scholars in the Greek literature language, as they were themselves elegant writers. We see Ann Petrarch, the great humanist, and his followers, seeking the renaissance of man on the basis of the thought of the ancient era. He emphasised the impossibility of separating rational thought from cultural language. For it means focusing on literature, developing oneself through education and training, and practicing the love of goodness for all through the fields of rhetorical and political arts and history. This was the trend in the Renaissance era, and a source of inspiration for the interpretation of human existence and the universe. We find that, according to Al-Ma'arri, man has not changed according to the people of humanism. So we sense the individual and social dimension clear in his product, based on human society:

**When I saw ignorance widespread
amongst people**

**I neglected it and other thought
me ignorant**

**Good heavens! How many dishonest
people claim credit**

**Alas! How many nobles showcase their
defect**

**He also highlights the human and moral
contradiction:**

**You, the conceited, had mistaken
That I owe you, but none of such a debt
You travel to Kaaba in reverence
And a miserable neighbour and a friend
complain about you**

The concept experienced a tremendous development - if not a change - in the age of enlightenment and the nineteenth century represented in the freedom of rational criticism. It took also a philosophical shape, emphasising the freedom and human reason. Obviously, it had transcended all changers; neither the lexical meaning nor the exemplifications of the word can precisely comprehend the term. As a result, we arrive at the existence of many types of humanism in the contemporary world, such as the scientific, moral, democratic, religious and others. This is often mirrored in literature incessantly, and reflected in Al-Ma'arri's, which is consistent with philosophy in the terms of persuasion and establishing argument and inspiring emotions. Perhaps the secret behind the literary persuasion lies in his reliance on rhetoric; persuasion merely has inward influence, and this is attained through rhetoric.

Reason is in mind, both meaning and word
The good nurtures it, and the insane
wallows in it
The soul is familiar with life
So, tears for departing life spring too much
It does not hold fates, they are many
Just like rain; it strikes, whether heavy or
light
The evil of time is a grey-haired burden
And its youth is most precious and finest
I wonder if the listener grasps my advice
So that I stay up listening and explaining
People are either unfair on their path but

need guidance

And a brother who guides them to the
wrong path

When philosophy called for humanism and other concepts addressing the high soul and moral values and ideals, literature shared the very end. Critics found moral discipline one of the goals of literature, seeing poetry in particular as an incentive to discipline, through which noble morals are conveyed and praises are acquired. The Arabs are almost unanimous that poetry had a social purpose in the pre-Islamic era. Therefore, the poet was much respected, distinguished in stature, and often was the stimulus and the motivator of his people towards the noble morals.

The least of my reluctance, I hate you
And easiest for me to abandon you

He also says:

I am a knight who has not put his bridle off
And a blessed arrow survived the swords

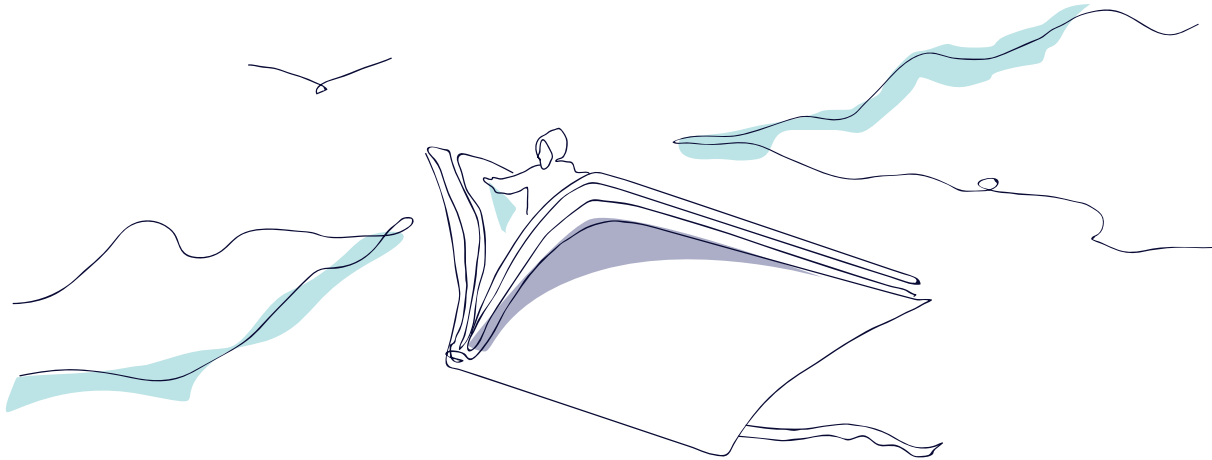
The poet's themes often accord with the high human feeling and the sublime human nature. Critics also unanimously agree the main purpose of literature is to stir up conscience, spread righteous principles, and better guide others towards the noble goals perfecting their humanity and ensuring happiness for them. The point of every moral action is to achieve happiness. Hyper-activating or invoking emotions is not a deliberate spontaneous purpose,



rather a means to be attained through the dissemination of principles and the embracing of ideals. Morals are nothing but the main pillar of humanism philosophy calling upon upholding this humanity. The poetic text needs philosophy as a vision and theory, particularly in the phases of poetic theoretical foundation, which are most recent, compared to the emergence of the poetic text. The essence in Greek philosophy, and in the opinion of Aristotle specifically, is the subject of the first philosophy. It was unchangeable, but its imagery manifestations are infinitely variable. Therefore, working on the essence, and trying to grasp it, is a harder endeavour compared to the useless work in the endlessly dissipating images. We realise that poetry has been immersed in the structure, and defined by it. Al Shatre (part of the verse) is a hierarchical musical structure while the tafi'lah is a central musical structure, and what is called the inner rhythm is a deep musical structure that does not exist. Poetry bears this existential philosophy;

existence rises by itself when it revolves around a core Logosian pole and remains at the ignorant level once not transformed into a word. Therefore, the elevation of existence appears in its highest layers in the mind. The word's outer existence becomes a set of phenomena, structures and lives governed by physical, chemical or biological systems. However, existence within the word is the truth, and through the word, man sought to do everything. Partially, poetry come into sight thanks to the use of the word, including what is termed the "poem". The lyrical poetry, aforementioned, is one of the most interesting objects of poetry, provided that it is not just an ordinary imagery. Rather, it should possess a literary creativity proving the poet's unique intelligence, imagination and feeling. Thereby, it elevates him from the tangible and material world to the realm of abstraction, conscience and discovery. We come across this sensual tendency of Al-Ma'arri's poetry:

**I encounter the shielded barely chested
And called upon the armed not to miss me
Their horses seemed like flocks of beasts
I wrestled them bravely in a fierce war
And I never dashed to combat out of
caution
But comparison had weighed me down
The dark nights encumbered my shoulders,
And the weight of the shield overburdened
them**



The poet also cites:
A night brightened just like morning
Even if it seemed as a black scarf,
We ran into it for fun
When the star halted and bewildered
It is as if, what I said, the full moon was a
child
And the darkness was youths in ferocity
My that night this was a Zanj bride
Wearing necklaces from Juman
Sleep fled from my eyelids
Like security getting away from the
coward's heart

Poetry is the first trembling in the language, the earliest controversy, the initial secret, and the opening departure from the language system. Therefore, poetry is associated with language, ensuring the intellectual advancement, through language first and writing second, places poetry at the heart of the existence battle. Philosophy believes imagination is the innovator of poetry. The position of poetry in philosophy hardly has changed much. Philosophers have often divided logic measurement into degrees, the proof first, followed by argument, then

sophistry. Discourse comes fourth and finally poetry. But through language, we can look at philosophy as a rational and logical linguistic system, while poetry is open linguistic, aesthetic and imaginative space. There is no room for a comparison of differentiation between the two, for each has its own function. Poetry follows in language and writing, while philosophy constitutes a solid branch of the writing structure. We find an intersection in more than one angle between them - as we mentioned above in humanism and values. So, logic interferes and has influence as we can see in poetry. Arabic poetry is doomed to unconscious logical inward understanding, which consolidates the role of rhyme and rhythm in poetry. Therefore, musical rhyme and rhythm are logical structures to better control the imagination.

Literary criticism is in fact concerned with raising several philosophical questions. The most persistent one relates to the core of fictional literature. We might pose a question regarding the role of literature and cite more inquiries to difference the good literature. We could also resort to descriptive questions to create all methods of inference and analysis in order to arrive at a valuable judgment.

❖ 3- The relationship between logic and philosophy

By Dr.H.M

We are not mistaken by declaring Aristotle as the first philosopher who raised this problem. This is justified since logic rested in its earlier manifestations on classification of sciences on the basis of the teleological principle. So he divided them into:

1. **Theoretical sciences: metaphysics, mathematics, nature.**
2. **Practical sciences: ethics, politics, housekeeping.**
3. **Technical production sciences: poetry, rhetoric, architecture⁶⁰.**

Logic in the previous sense lies beyond the sphere of sciences, because it is the form of thought, as he declared in his book *Metaphysics*. It is therefore not possible to search for science and its form at the same time⁶¹. Accordingly, Aristotle claimed logic is both a means and methodology for all sciences and cannot be a standalone science. The Stoics logicians, on the other hand, showed a different conception of the relationship between logic and philosophy;

they divided the latter into three integrated and inseparable sections⁶². The Aristotelian stance, not the Stoic one, prevailed in Islamic thought. There was a correlation in the mindset of the Muslim thinker between philosophy and logic, given the latter is an introduction to the former. For Ibn Al-Salah, when he prohibited logic, did not forbid it for being logic, rather as an introduction to philosophy. (Philosophy is the core of idiocy and decadence whilst logic is an introduction to philosophy, the evil, whereas engaging in its teaching, has been permitted by legislation.)⁶³

⁻⁶⁰Mahmoud Hamdi Zaqzouq: A Preface to Philosophy, Golden Star Press, Cairo, 4th edition, 1992, p.: 54

⁻⁶¹Quoted from: Maher Abdel-Qader, Muhammad Muhammad Qasim: Foundations of Formal Logic, Dar Al-Marefa Al-Jami'iyya, Alexandria, 2001, p. 14.

⁻⁶²Rist . I.M . Zeno and The Orgins of Stoic logic . les stoiciens et leur logique .librarie philosophique . paris . 1978 , P : 387

⁻⁶³Ibn Al-Salah: Fatwas of Ibn Al-Sallaj, investigated by: Abd al-Muti Amin Qalaji, Dar al-Wa'i: Aleppo, 1st edition, 1983.

However, the Eastern philosophers⁶⁴ thought about the unsettled relationship between philosophy and logic. They repeatedly asked if it was a part of it, a science of its many, or it constituted an introduction to it. Their stance was unobvious; sometimes they regard logic as a science. Al-Kindi, for instance, placed logic and mathematics at the top of the sciences as a fundamental introduction to teaching them. Also, Al-Farabi followed the stance of Aristotle's commentators, considering logic as a tool for acquiring sciences. He divided in his work *Alert for the Sake of Happiness* sciences into two categories: theory and practical, with logic being placeless. Therefore, logic remained a tool for distinguishing between falsehood and truth⁶⁵. However, he regarded logic in another work as topping all other sciences⁶⁶. Then, he put forward a new opinion, seeing it as part of philosophy⁶⁷. Perhaps this contradiction in Al-Farabi's stance is due to the large number of his resources and references he studied, such as the Stoics and students of Aristotle. Avicenna had preserved the Aristotelian heritage, so logic for him was a tool to access to the rest of the sciences. This is what he discussed in his treatise devoted to dividing

the sciences. However, in other places, he considered this problem false, as there is no contradiction between the logic being an introduction to philosophy or a part of it. Logic is considered a tool for sciences if we deal with things in terms of their existence in reality or in perception. Those who considered logic part of philosophy attributed the role of philosophy to study theoretical research from all aspects, with logic being one of them. Hence, we see Avicenna put forward a conciliating solution for others. Consensually, some of them followed him, such as Al-Tusi and Al-Ghazali, and others appealed to the Aristotelian heritage, such as Ibn Rushd. Fakhr Al-Din Al-Razi adopted a different stance than all those who preceded him, criticising the conciliatory views of Avicenna and Arab logicians, as well as the vacillating Aristotelian theory. He announced from the outset, following the Stoics, that logic is a part of philosophy and a verbal topic that searches for facets of the subject that do not exist outside⁷¹. So, the logician has no business with words; he searches for the explanatory saying and the argument and how to arrange them and should stop at meaning, rather than at the words.

- ⁶⁴It is not known whether the Moroccan philosophers (Ibn Bajja - Ibn Tufail) engaged in this problem, but Ibn Rushd too literally followed suit the example of the first teacher.

- ⁶⁵Abu Nasr Al-Farabi: *Alert for Happiness*, Majlis Othmani Encyclopedia Press, Hyderabad, 1346, p. 21

- ⁶⁶Othman Amin: *Foreword to the Book of Statistics of Science* by Abu Nasr Al-Farabi, investigation: Othman Amin, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Cairo, 2, 1949, pp. 12-13.

- ⁶⁷See, for example: Abu Nasr Al-Farabi: *Combining the Two Opinions of the Two Wise*, investigated by: Ali Abu Melhem, Al-Hilal Library House, Beirut, 1996, p.: 29. Likewise, Al-Farabi: *The Book of Acquisition of Happiness*, investigated by Jaafar Al-Yassin, Dar Al-Andalus, Beirut, 1981, pp.: 88-89.

- ⁶⁸Muhammad Ali Abu Rayan: *Classification of Sciences between Al-Farabi and Ibn Khaldun*, The World of Thought, Volume Nine, Number One, Ministry of Information, Kuwait, 1978, p.: 102.

- ⁶⁹Avicenna: *The Message of the Sections of Intellectual Sciences in the Book of Nine Messages on Wisdom and Nature*, The Fifth Message, Hendeba Press, Egypt, 1908, p.: 116.

- ⁷⁰Avicenna: *The Introduction from Al-Shifaa*, Investigated by: Father Kanawati, Mahmoud Al-Khudairi, Fouad Al-Ahwani, Al-Amiriya Press, Cairo, 1952, pp. 15-16.

- ⁷¹Fakhr Al-Din Al-Razi: *Explanation of the Eyes of Wisdom*, Part One, Investigated by Ahmad Hijazi Al-Saqqa, Al-Sadiq Institution for Printing and Publishing, Tehran, 1373 AH, p. 48.



Ibn Khaldun arrived at what Fakhr Al-Din concluded when he classified the philosophical sciences into four divisions, with logic being the first. He defined it by saying: “A science immunising the mind for error when grasping the unknown requirements in the core of sensible known matter. Its advantage is to differentiate the right from the wrong when man engages in studying things and their states, to come up with the truth in beings, whether in denial or affirmation⁷².

Perhaps Ibn Khaldun’s statement of logic being one of the philosophical sciences is what Arab Islamic thought concluded regarding the relationship between logic and philosophy. It is, as the Stoics said, part of philosophy along with physics, metaphysics and ontology; a science aims at preserving the philosopher from falling into philosophical errors by controlling the forms of his thought with logical rules. Logic’s interest in meaning and argument likely helps it detect the misconceptions and fallacies a philosopher may commit. Besides, it provides him with a set of concepts to comprehend the various cosmic phenomena and other rules to control his

reasoning and correct the philosophical meanings.

The controversy of Arab-Islamic philosophy history over the Aristotelian notion on philosophy and logic relations was not echoed in the history of modern philosophy. However, we can observe two types of development concerning that relationship: 1. From the technical point of view, logic distanced itself from the problems of philosophy through its development in symbolic systems. De Morgan discovered the logic of relations through the so-called De Morgan’s laws in the history of modern logic. George Paul tried to give a mathematical identity to logic within what is known as the algebra of logic. He utilised concepts, symbols and mathematical relationships to solve the problems of logic and its issues. He aimed to remove the ambiguity so that logic and its topics resemble the mathematical one. His research in mathematical logic paved the way for a great logical, Peano, who laid the foundations of this logic at the beginning of the twentieth century. He accomplished the qualities of a symbolic language of logic, giving birth to the deductive logical system.

- ⁷² Ibn Khaldun: Introduction to Ibn Khaldun, Investigated by Abdullah Muhammad al-Darwish, 1st edition, Dar al-Balkhi: Damascus, 2004, pg. 462

As result, he paved the way for the efforts of both Russell and Frege by establishing symbolic logic. Russell's efforts in *Principles of Mathematics* represents a milestone in the development of logic from a mathematical point of view; it moved closer to high mathematics than to studying issues and concepts related to the world of philosophy. We can see a logic ambition crystalised by Frege, Russel and Wittgenstein who attempted to establish a comprehensive logical-mathematical language exhibiting the vocabulary of existence and its relations. With this elevating line of logic in technical terms, and at the hands of logicians-philosophers, logic remained an obsession for philosophers. So, they tried to develop their own away from Aristotelian logic to suit their philosophies.

2. From the philosophical point of view: Descartes tried to break with Aristotelian logic, out of his conviction it was to no avail; most of his measurements and rules are ambiguous and take a great amount of time by

the researcher to learn them to no purpose. Perhaps these combined reasons prompted Descartes to seek for another errorless method but with these three sciences⁷³. Descartes, then, wanted a logic free of complicated grammar, and preliminaries, and based upon the four basic rules⁷⁴ of the systematic skepticism principle.

As for Leibniz, he thought of logic as a clear way to prevent the philosopher from making mistakes. He attempted to institute a philosophical language to facilitate international relations, and to initiate fraternal relations between peoples. This language has a logical advantage free from grammar; it is a comprehensive tool for the mind, just like the language of algebra when dealing with numbers. It must be able to express all the components of the physical and intellectual world. Leibniz attempted to establish his philosophical language based on two principles: non-contradiction, and sufficient cause⁷⁵.

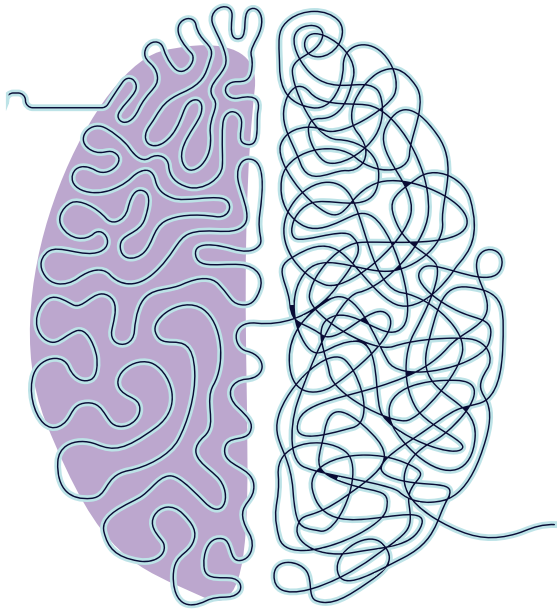
- ⁷³What is meant by the three sciences: logic, geometric analysis, and algebra - Descartes: an article on the method, translated by: Mahmoud Al-Khudairi, The Egyptian General Book Organization, Cairo, 3rd edition, 1985, pp. 186-189.

- ⁷⁴Descartes names them the rules of the curriculum:

1. Not to accept something as true, unless I know for sure that it is. Meaning: to avoid recklessness, and to enter into my judgments only what appears before my mind in clarity and distinction, where I have no room for doubt.
2. To divide each one of the philosophical dilemmas into parts according to what needs to be solved in the best way.
3. To arrange my thoughts in a system from the simplest to the most complex, and to impose an arrangement among them.
4. To make all the statistics and reviews so that I can be sure that I have not left anything out.

See: Descartes: An article on the method, previous reference, pp. 190-192.

- ⁷⁵Youssef Karam: *Modern Philosophy*, Authorship, Translation and Publishing Committee Press: Cairo, 1936, p.: 133



He embarked on hieroglyphs, Chinese writing, and chemical and astronomical symbols. Then, he subjected these letters to new conditions to integrate them into a readable and simple language to express

the ideas and problems raised by natural, metaphysical, moral and social philosophy. Thus, these problems become regulated and the philosopher will not be under the influence of whims and inclination when using this language in argument. Leibniz's trial was doomed to fail owing to the exaggerated ambition of his project on the one hand. We cannot imagine a discussion between two philosophers on philosophical, moral and civilisational issues with symbols and numbers. It is as if you were in the presence of two robots, each loaded with linguistic, philosophical and economic dictionaries. However, it contributed to the development of logical language, and the gradual separation of logic from philosophy. Leibniz wanted to streamline logic and elevate it in a symbolic language dispensing with words to end the philosophical dispute. He aimed to galvanise the role of the mind in solving philosophical problems. His experience resembled Descartes'; both admired the trial of the philosopher Ramon Llull⁷⁶.

- ⁷⁶One of the most admired personalities of the Middle Ages. He was born in the year 1225 and was stoned to death in 1315. He learned the sciences and language of the Arabs in Andalusia in order to preach Christianity. He has many books, including what he wrote in Arabic, and most of them have been lost. In these books, he presented his experience in discovering a universal language.

Leibniz, however, did not degrade the Aristotelian logic; he rather attempted to progress it, and start from it. Conversely, Descartes dispensed with it, and resorted to a few rules that he thought would really protect the mind from falling into error. Kant viewed logic as being born complete with Aristotle, and he has not advanced any step since then. Kant objects to those who attempt to expand it with psychological research on intelligence and imagination, or metaphysical about the origin of knowledge and certainties, such as idealism and skepticism. This, according to Kant, stems from their ignorance of logic, which has been confined generally to the detailed presentation of the formal rules of thinking and their strict grounds, whether this thinking is a priori or imperial. Accordingly, logic, as a prelude, is merely an introduction to sciences. Advocating this standpoint, Kant employed Aristotelian logic to clarify knowledge and its empirical or rational origin. He distinguished between analytical and synthetic issues in formulating a critical philosophy around epistemology, ethics, and beauty.

Thus, after Leibniz broke the shackles of Aristotelian logic, and directed it towards a

horizon morroring all philosophies, attempts frequented to create languages for logic. These were spearheaded by logicians such as Jean Bernoulli (1685), Holland (1764), Wolf (1779), Castion (1803), and Bolzano (1837). They endeavoured to renew Aristotelian logic as a tool and method for upholding thought against errors.

In effect, all of them believed in the necessity of borrowing mathematics approaches so that logic could control metaphysical philosophical issues and make them obvious, just like mathematics. Logic cannot shoulder this impossible mission at this stage unless it possesses various manifestations, in the form of a theory of knowledge, or a specific approach to avoid error. Or it should be as a science of meanings, or as a comprehensive mathematical method that controls all disciplines of knowledge.

Thus, logic remained manoeuvring in its relationship with philosophy; it was a tool at hand controlling it and preventing its issues not to fall off the track. In addition, it was sometimes part of language research with more symbolism-tendency and get alienated from the content of thought to a formal formalism that makes irrational philosophers reject its topics.

- ⁷⁷Immanuel Kant: Critique of Pure Reason, translated by: Musa Wahba, Centre for National Development: Beirut, pp. 31-32



Thus, logic remained manoeuvring in its relationship with philosophy; it was a tool at hand controlling it and preventing its issues not to fall off the track. In addition, it was sometimes part of language research with more symbolism-tendency and get alienated from the content of thought to a formal formalism that makes irrational philosophers reject its topics.





◆ the Journal's Philosophical Figure

Al-Kindi is chosen
as the first Arab
philosopher with Mind
Tendency:

❖ Section Five: Al-Kindi



By Dr Suleiman Al-Daher

Debate in the Arab-Islamic thought had been fierce since its outset between two opposing trends: the Mu'tazila whose intellectual stance led them to adhere to the necessity of interpreting the Qur'anic text, and the Ash'ari, the second trend, who rejected rational interpretation and adhered to the literalism of the text. This obliged them to fight philosophical tendency, accuse its supporters of heresy and infidelity, and consider it a science alien to the Islamic faith. So they dealt with it as they deal with heresies and misguidance. Amid this intellectual strife, Al-Kindi emerged as a representative of the Islamic thought's transitional era from discourse to philosophy.

Al-Kindi advocated mentalism in tackling several epistemological issues, which we will discuss in this research. One of the most important issues we believe in is his defence of philosophical truth. It encompasses three intellectual elements: the universality of philosophical truth first, his endeavour to reconcile philosophy and religion, and finally

his application of the rational "philosophical method to interpret the Qur'anic verses."

On the first point, an in-depth analysis of Al-Kindi's letters shows his clear emphasis on philosophical truth as a common heritage among nations throughout the generations. In A Letter to Al-Mu'tasim by Allah he praises the interest and engagement in philosophy, urging to study it and gain the philosophical truth (wisdom) regardless of its spring, whether it was the Arabs or others, and whether it was the saying of Muslims or non-Muslims. He also stresses in his letter the need to favour righteousness, out of moral and human impulse, even if we receive them from races far from us, or nations different from us. According to him, it is a must to acknowledge the righteous and appreciate who followed it. This contradicts with the attack upon philosophers; we should rather relish their contributions in terms of opinions and ideas in philosophy, reasoning and the search for truth beyond the national and religious boundaries. For reason and wisdom are not confined to one race or religion.



Based on this conviction, Al-Kindi defined philosophy as “the science of things with their facts,” regarding it “the industry of industries and the wisdom of all wisdoms”. He vigorously defended it against narrow-minded jurists and clerics who declared philosophers infidels, accusing them of heresy out of their false belief that religion does not allow mind thinking. He described them as short-sighted, narrow-minded and ignorant. In his defence of philosophy, Al-Kindi urged not only others to pursue their philosophical study but also negated surmise of infidelity and heresy. This promoted him to seek a reconciliation between the philosophical and religious facts. As a result, he became the first to embark on the grand controversy in the history of Islamic philosophy: the questionable relationship between reason and written heritage, or wisdom and the law according to the well-known term adopted by Ibn Rushd later. Once Al-Kindi established his defence of philosophy by emphasising the nobility of its theoretical and practical topics and intentions, he had to prove the religious and philosophical truths are uncontradictory.

Since philosophy is “the science of things with their facts” and religion “the science of truth,” both are right in his opinion. He clearly expressed his rational tendency, as we think, in his treatise *On First Philosophy*. He said, “In the science of things with their realities, there is the knowledge of Godliness, the Oneness, virtue, as well as the science of all beneficiaries and how to access them, and avoidance and guarding against everything harmful, and the acquisition of all the teachings of noble Messengers conveyed from Allah.” Al-Kindi concludes from these undeniable premises that philosophy is in harmony with religion. Accordingly, he compares those who deny philosophy as devoid of religion and deprived of truth with the ones who are defendant of their undeserving status and who advocate religion for trading.

Al-Kindi supports his position of defending philosophy by emphasising the need to embark on it. He attempted to prove this necessity through rational judgment and by religious exigency. Following his claim philosophy is “the science of things with their facts,” he argued it is the science of deism, oneness, virtue, and what the messengers

brought conveyed from Allah. He concludes we should advocate philosophy, rather than reject it, or deny it. He also proves philosophy is indispensable for those who oppose it. For their claim of the philosophy's invalidity is baseless and they cannot support their stance unless by studying philosophy and learning its evidence-proving deductive method.

Second, despite Al-Kindi's emphasis on the necessity of acquiring philosophy and striving to master it as the path to the truth or rational consideration, he never called to abandon revelation or prophecy. He differentiated philosophers' sciences, which combine that of people and prophets, attributing unique means, tools, and method for each science. He stressed philosophy is gained through intent, intellectual effort and deductive consideration by relying on mathematics and logical arguments, according to the philosophical contemplative approach.. As for the "sciences of the prophets", although it includes the apparent and inward realities that the philosophical sciences embody, it takes another path; it occurs without request by the prophets. But rather through a divine act that purifies these souls, enlightens them, and prepares them for the divine sciences by the will of Allah. Besides, the prophets' sciences are precise, clear, and close to the pure and luminous mind. For the asset of science of things, the philosophy, does not conflict with religion; knowledge of Allah and His Oneness lie there. Since the first philosophy or theology is the most honourable of sciences for philosophers, this leads to its legitimacy

and encouragement to embark on studying it. For theology, in which the philosophers engage in, is very close to the religious issues the theologians and jurists embark on.

Al-Kindi's views and opinions lay the foundation for the emergence of the mental trend in Islamic culture to defend religion in a new way. For the rational consideration is inherent in the Islamic faith, and an integral part of it. This is what Al-Kindi strived to tackle the ostensible contradiction between philosophy and religion. The solution to this problem, as far as he is concerned, lies in the interpreting the text according to the Arabic language and its requirements; Arabic discourse has two meanings: real and figurative. This means it is essential to interpret some Qur'anic verses as per the figurative meaning, unclearly revealed from the ostensible meaning, in the event of ambiguity in the real and apparent meaning. Rather, the interpretation from the meanings deduced by the scholar, who should be well religious and versed and able to understand the purposes of the words of revelation.

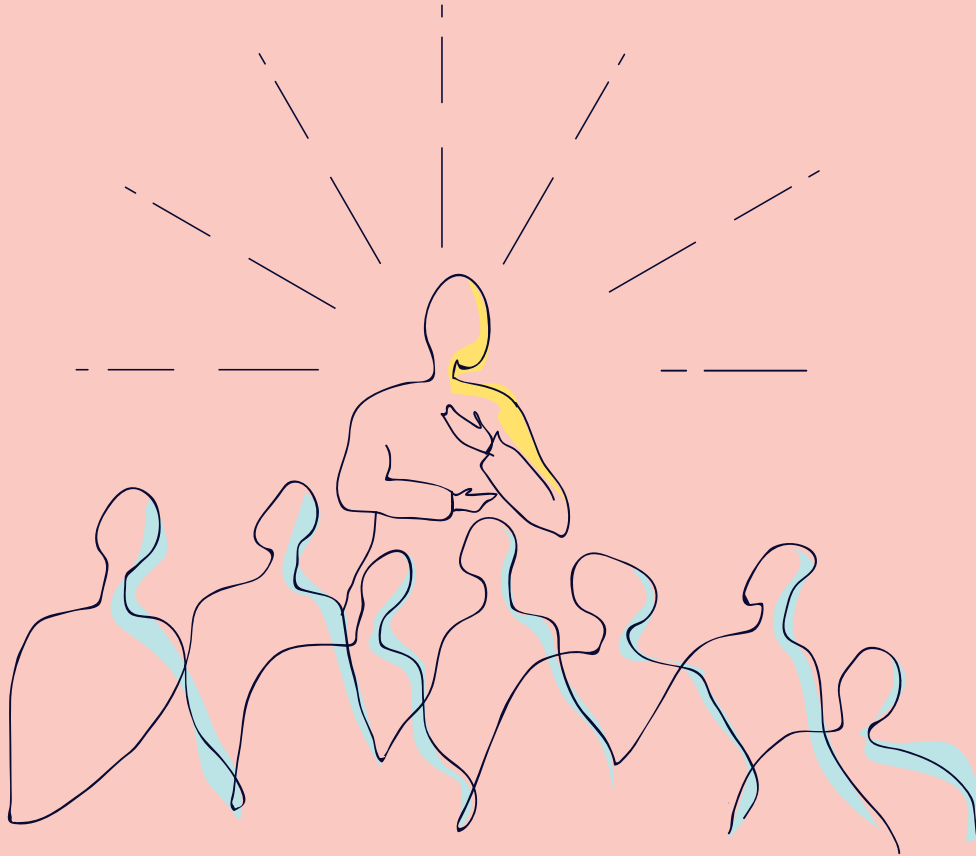
Al-Kindi's mental tendency is clear in deeply researching and interpreting the Qur'anic texts written within his works. He strives to interpret them on philosophical rational foundations and patterns, especially in "A Treatise on Al-Ibanah on the Prostration of the Maximum Judgment and Obedience to Allah Almighty". He wrote it to his student Ahmed bin Al-Mu'tasim to explain the meaning of the verse: "And the star and the tree both prostrate".

He defends that the prostration in the noble verse is not resemblant of the humans'; the heavenly bodies do not fall from the real prostration according to the legal terminology. For they do not prostrate, having no means they can do that for prayer. But their prostration expresses the greatness of Allah, and compliance with His commands, obedience to Him, and submission to His authority. This is what can be metaphorically expressed by the word prostration. By analogy with al-Kindi's explanation of the previous verse, considered a precedent for that time in the rational thinking, the Arab philosopher attempted to reveal the contents of the Qur'anic verses of calling and urging rational consideration, contemplation of the aspects of the universe and its laws and understanding the facts of existence. This prompted him to elaborate on the statement of Allah Almighty: "In creating the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding", clarifying their rational significance. He concluded mind is the tool for understanding the realities of existence, being the principle of human perfection and honour, and by which we distinguish man from animals and transcend them. He cited the interpretation of the noble verse in the Almighty's saying: "For the worst of beasts in the sight of Allah are the deaf and the dumb, - those who understand not". According to him, the verse highlights that those who do not use their minds are on an equal par with the degraded beasts.

We can say Al-Kindi, is considered, as aforementioned, the framer of the first modern mental approach in Islamic thought.

He opened the door wide to attach religious knowledge to philosophical knowledge. Furthermore, he attributed the prime role to the mind to comprehend the content of religious reality, granting it dominance and the final say in understanding and interpreting the meaning of the religious text.

Finally, the rational tendency in Al-Kindi's philosophy is clear in his defence of philosophy and in his primitive attempt to reconcile heritage with reason. This stage has represented the beginning of the association of discourse with philosophy since the early days of Arab-Islamic philosophical thought. We can say Al-Kindi was the most philosophical and staunch speaker keen to merge the foundations of the rational method. In comparison with the fundamentalist trend prevalent in his days, it is not exaggerated that we gave him the lead in establishing rationality in Arab-Islamic philosophy. He was the first to open the door to reconcile philosophy and religion, outlining the directions of this approach as he better tackled its intertwined issues for later philosopher. Al-Kindi put forward a systematic outlook based on solid philosophical foundations stemming from mental reasoning and linguistic interpretation. He accorded philosophy with and religion as one of the top issues, and was right in predicting this issue to turn into a central dispute upon which the core Islamic philosophy revolved.



The individual realises himself and his independence, starting from his contact with others, and their reactions to him. He perceives their existence first, then he realises himself. Therefore, true individuality is not a self that lives in an enclosed shell or a cave.



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