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PHILOSOPHY HOUSE

————— The impact of Arab philosophy on Western Thought

Alpharabius: a Bridge Between
Two Civilizations

**The Journal's
Philosophical Figure**

Abu Bakr al-Razi

Democracy Between the Liberal
and Republican Traditions







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Arabs' philosophical view

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Introduction

What is the theoretical and practical wisdom of the dialogue with the past?" One may ask, given the current awareness is a disappointment by those traditionalists who questioned yesterday's discourses to implore answers to today's inquiries. That is why they may no longer bear a go-back to those who passed away. In point of fact, people's existing lifestyle, their expectations and future are tied up with the present, rather than the past. This is unquestionable, but how can we cope with the past that still roams our streets? If the Westerner alludes to our thriving civilisation its dignities, he will underrate Arab innovators, particularly in philosophy. In a chapter of his History of Philosophy, Hegel views the Arabic philosophy as merely a commentary on Aristotle, so he termed Arab philosophers: "Aristotle's Commentators." Likewise, Thomas Aquinas, who hardly gauged Arab philosophers' arguments and interpretations of Aristotle, termed them Aristotle's commentators.

The verb sharaha (explained) refers only to the quoting process, and to some footnotes in clarifying the quotes. However, we are actually in the presence of a philosophical and intellectual movement barely confined to the explanation of certain Greek philosophers. Rather, we are amid authenticated questions that have thrived in an entirely fresh cultural aspect. This cradling aspect requires, as we can say, a knowledge detachment from the past.

If Ibn Rushd is, in some respects, a commentator on Aristotle, then the European Averroes is dissimilar to the Arab philosopher; the Arab Ibn Rushd, who journeyed to Europe in the thirteenth century, is the philosopher who got preoccupied with identifying philosophy and instating it in a world theology prevailed over awareness.

It is this very idea that drove the European to reiterate the question: what is the connection between philosophy and theology? However, Ibn Rushd, unlike Thomas Aquinas, who referred hundreds of times to him, sought to set philosophy apart from theology, as he emphasised the distinction between rhetorical discourse and demonstrative discourse. Thomas Aquinas, on the other hand, aimed to employ philosophy to serve theology. As such, there is a huge asymmetry between the philosopher Ibn Rushd and the theologian Thomas Aquinas.

One may ask: what promotes books on the history of philosophy to enrol Aquinas among the philosophers? It is possibly the Aristotle's employment in the service of theology that drove historians of philosophy to act accordingly. However, we believe that Aquinas, regardless of his Aristotelianism and away from the influence of both Averroism on some of his issues, and Maimonides (Moses ben Maimon), hardly departed the field of theology. Furthermore, the theme of this issue on the influence of the Arab philosophy on Western thought does not emanate from some sort of national pride. It is rather an assertion of an idea liberating us from national fanaticism; an idea that transferring knowledge, which denotes to transfer of thought, is one of the human thinking charters. This applies to the impact of Western philosophy on Arab philosophical awareness.

We, at the Philosophy House, have set about to revive the philosophical mind so that it flourishes amid Arab and global knowledge, and to re-attaché importance to dialogue. Our assertion that philosophy is a dialogue, and Plato has got the right idea.

- Editor in Chief



Articles

Democracy Between the Liberal and Republican Traditions

Saied Matar

We often define democracy as a political system seeking the will of the people to choose its representatives and hold them accountable through successive elections. However, empowering democracy solely to the people to elect their representatives and formulate the political authority overlook several democracy-associated theoretical and practical issues, particularly the structural difference between the old democratic model and the modern one (or the liberal which is procedurally based on the contract as a means of political meeting). This difference is rooted in the cultural and historical disparity between the ancient and the contemporary. What concerns us more in this research is not what the modern liberal tradition adds to the revolutionary epistemological concepts concerned with the autonomy of the individual and a new understanding of the existence and free nature of the human person, i.e. everything that opposes the ancient (Greek and Roman) democratic tradition; rather what the latter teaches us about the paramount importance of the citizens' participation in public affairs, or rather the necessity of mobilising all concerned civil forces in continuous involvement in the public affairs (res

publica). Accordingly, the old democracy is a moist in power and tendency, in contrast to the structural dichotomy imposed by liberal democracy between the public and private spheres, and between the state and civil society. This modern separation between the political and the civic is rather confusing if we look at the old democratic tradition as being republican that rightly associates citizen life to his city of reside. For, as maintained by the ancients, it is not possible to define and understand citizenship in an eschatological sense in isolation from direct and active political participation, which is represented in formulating laws (the legislative authority) and working to implement them (the executive authority) with an aim to preserve it for the common good and protect it from political tyranny.

Since liberalism primarily seeks to guarantee and protect basic individual liberties through the law and the constitution, all these liberties, whether civil and political, are equally important. Consequently, we should not attempt to differentiate them, neither in law nor in politics, as they are natural freedoms not created by political authority. They cannot be cancelled, changed, relinquished, or compromised.

For the source of these liberties is human nature, which has broken into constants that have historically been rooted as natural law whose concepts and connotations are diverse, and its sources and goals differ in different philosophical currents and legal schools. Debates still argued by the liberal and republican traditions since the nineteenth century do not relate to the correctness of individual liberties, which have become universal and have been proven righteous by the constitutions and legal systems of many contemporary countries. Since contractual liberalism did not distinguish the position of individual freedoms, the republican trend attempted to merge the concept of active citizenship in public affairs, on the accounts that the growth of liberal individualism inevitably leads to the abandonment of public space.

This promoted Tocqueville, though liberal in doctrine, to stress the disadvantages of individualism, as it isolates the individual from preoccupation with the management of the human destinies of the city, preventing him from involvement in public affairs and from performing his civic duties such as maintaining laws and state institutions and controlling political authority to abort any attempt to tyrannise the country, corrupt the institutions, and oppress people. Tocqueville's widespread maxim, contrary to what is the practice of classical liberal doctrine, is nothing but evidence of forward-thinking insight that the spearhead of an individualism culture inevitably galvanises the authority of the state, and not the other way around. Contractual or classical liberalism became judicial liberalism, both a political doctrine and an



approach. Since it adheres only to legal equality in individual rights as the ultimate means of managing the affairs of individuals and society, we perceive it as intrinsically individualistic or atomist in its essence. It is the liberalism of confrontation and competition over everything, as every individual possesses politically inalienable or unfringeable rights, no matter if others pretend to invoke the pretext of the supreme national interest. Any such violation may lead to resorting to the courts and filing lawsuits in order to preserve such rights. This type of legal liberalism is “motivated by a spirit of confrontation and contention that urges individuals to grip their rights and defend them, whatever the consequences of this for the group rather than communicating, sharing and debating as means to solve intractable and dangerous problems through the processes of understanding and persuasion.



Often the argument of liberalism in refraining from emphasising the necessity of citizens' participation in the public sphere indicated his amounts to a guideline aimed at ideologically directing citizens by framing their participation in a republican project and their coalition around a shared common good. We learn this from the ancient republican tradition practiced by the Greeks; it had a decisive influence on the tendency of Roman thinkers and lawmen, most notably the philosopher, politician, and jurist Cicero. According to the classical liberal dogma, one risk of agreeing on collective common good is that it bounds citizens by political or, most times, even moral views. This would affect the independence of the individual, exposing it to miscellaneous forms of political domination. For the concept of the modern state is functional, operating as per a simple and explicit equation: ensuring its stability and security, and preserving the unity of its components to prevent their disintegration. Hence, the greater it is diverse with more perceptions of the good (collective and individual), the more serious its challenges in strengthening political unity and maintaining social stability. This provokes the republican state to reduce the areas of conflicting differences by conceiving a common project (or good) cementing its political unity. The more this vision is comprehensive and approaches the establishment of political ideologies, the better the chances of unity and coalition will be, and the greater the risk of violating individual liberties. Acting from a will to protect the individual comprehensive conceptions of the good from the intensification of the goals of the public common good, the contemporary republican thinker Philip Pettit argues in *Republicanism* the republican

democratic state should refrain from adopting conceptions of the common good entailing essential binding components that restrict the horizons of individual freedom. Questing to refuse interference, Pettit defines his conception of republican freedom as "non-domination," or, rather, citizens' disloyalty to an authority that is not entirely under their control. This republican model shares the political conception put forward by the contemporary republican thinker Quentin Skinner, who entrusted the republican doctrine with its explicit rejection of any fundamental notions of the good represented in the definition of a comprehensive moral good that citizens are supposed, or forced, to adopt. In Pettit's and Skinner's perspective, the republican call does not stimulate citizens to adhere to a fundamental moral concept whose implications have been rooted in civic virtue. In fact, this model seeks only to establish an instrumental formation that appeals to the civic mind in political participation, not to engage in a fundamental civic moral conception, but in order to urge citizens to discern the importance of political participation entitling them to preserve their civil and social rights. This is in contrast to a political authority that has inevitably tyrannised whenever the culture of liberal individualism spreads.

Contrary to the republican model presented by Pettit and Skinner, John Pocock extended the old republican thesis of "civic humanism" in his celebrated work *The Machiavellian Moment*, which today ranks among the classic intellectual masterpieces.

Pocock had emphasised the necessity of reverting to the old Aristotelian republican model (to civil humanism), which definitively adhered to the definition of man as a civil and political animal who can only realise himself and his natural abilities within the community. This implies man handles his city, being directly concerned with administrating it with utmost care, protecting it from corruption, disintegration and fatal internal conflicts provoked by the irrational fluctuations of "Destiny and Fate". The crucial point is that the good of man stems from the good of the community and its political integrity, and vice versa. There is no other way for the citizen to face the risks arising from the vicissitudes of time that jeopardise the disintegration of his republic, other than to hold fast to civic virtues:

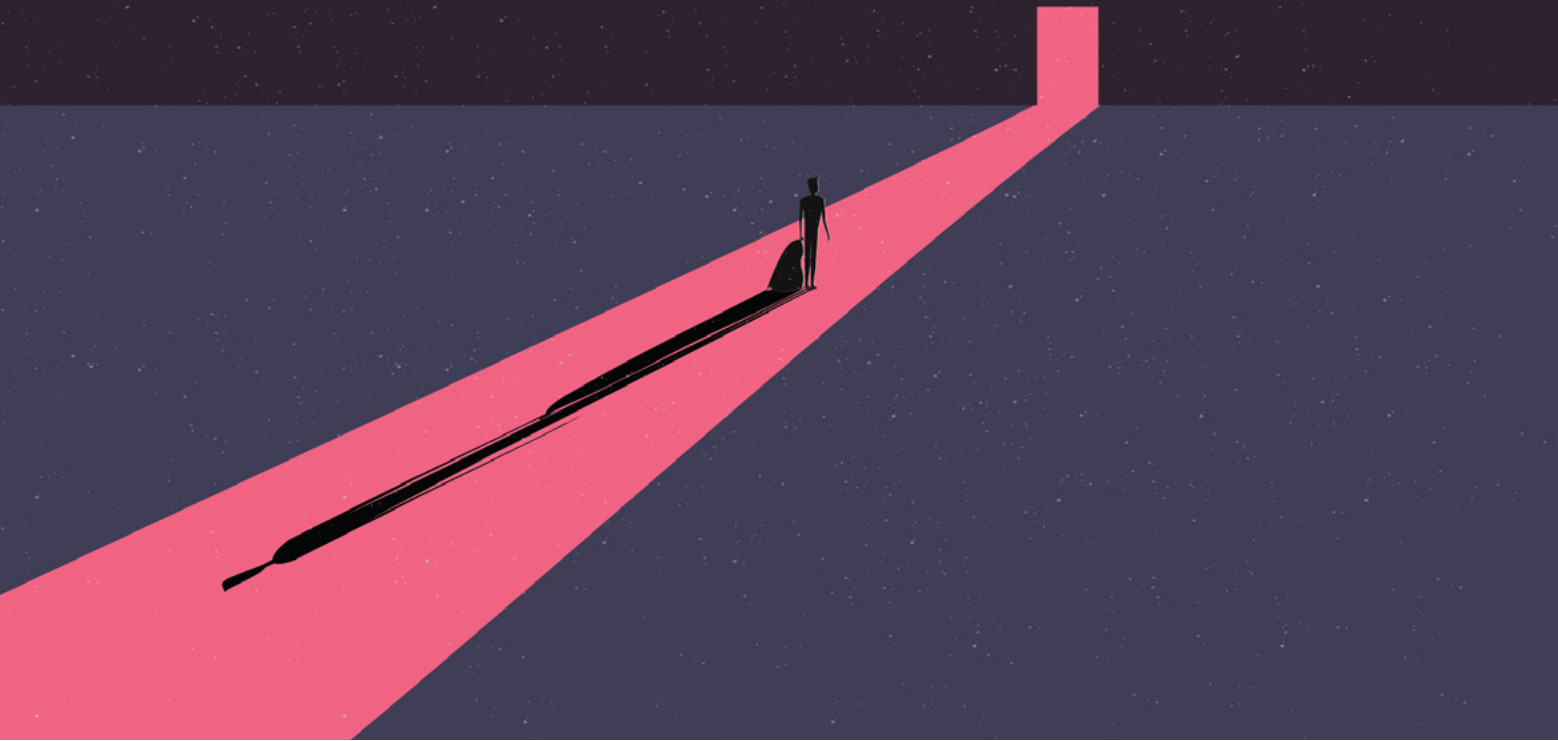
At a higher level, closer to that entrusted with an attempt at actual reconciliation between groups and classes, the republican theory faced a fundamental problem: how can a system of distributive justice, once defined as being limited in space and time, preserve its existence from the threats of fate and destiny (Fortuna)? For the threats are irrational and have always been immediate and not distant. It is not at all sufficient to state a system of distributive justice, in which every other virtue is enhanced, must be immunised against every cause of instability. Once we recognise the city is finite, it is indeed no longer self-sufficient, as it exists within an unstable temporal-spatial realm, the destiny domain where certain unreliable and necessary conditions of stability exist. The republican justice might be the form through which civic virtue systemises time issues of human life. However, we cannot verify the victory of republican virtue over the history of fate and destiny within

this conceptual scheme, unless grace operates in history in a way the republic, notwithstanding its time limitations, occupies the final timing.

The bottom line is that anthropology cannot be comprehensive and defined outside sociology. For sociology is associated with the (naturalistic) cosmology, which can also be linked to theology that we defined in the republican model set by Savonarola during the theocracy period he established in Florence in the four years (1494-1498). It is apparent the republican model does not ground in a single tradition; it oscillates between liberalism (neutrality of reason) and human nature (cosmology), all the way to royal theocracy (grace and technology). Accordingly, we can claim the marriage of the republic and the religious monarchy is a form of civilised awakening aiming at elevating the state of grace and restore the first state, the state of spiritual happiness free from conflict and social disintegration.

On accounts of this political identification between nature and grace, Thomas Aquinas' adherence to monarchy was an optimal system of government that could be reconciled with the Aristotelian doctrine of republican civilisation. Here, the republic, in which every person must devote himself to the common good, becomes a theocratic republic. This implies the attainment of the common good, and the higher human good as per the republican logic, is no longer the monopoly of a specific system, but rather considers the peculiarity of the historical city and the nature of the people, so that the latter works out the laws and institutions to guarantee unity and stability. This was clear in the distinction between the Republic of Venice and the Republic of Florence.





While the former was stable, run by the grand consiglio and headed by the executive governor (hereditary dogeship), the latter was less stable for several reasons, the most important of which it was not based, like Venice, on a combined system (regime mixed) that entrusts the Shura Council with the right to choose the executive governor (Doge), monitoring him lest he should turn into a tyrant monarchy. We also find this contrast in republican perceptions during the classical Greek era (480-323 BC). If we look at the difference in the political system (politeia) between the monarchy of Sparta and democratic Athens, we realise the former was more stable and outlived the latter. Based on all this, the purpose of the human city,

as defined by modernists, is no longer a merely political and legal tool aiding the individual in order to protect him and his assets from the evils and destruction of internal conflicts. The human city, according to the traditional republicans (old and contemporary), represents an (essential) common good without which man cannot attain his final good, his happiness. As such, man's natural ends are only achieved amid the community as the end of the ends (eschatology), which is centred in the deliberative political activity based on a constant reflection of its components in order to set its common good. This underpins the extent of the interdependence of active citizenship,

which seeks not only to preserve the unity of the city and its institutions, but also to get involved in communication and discussion to gain an understanding of the public affairs.

This contrast also emerges among the modern republican philosophers themselves. Whereas the duty of the republic in Rousseau's view is to compel man to change his subjectivity through a necessary transition from the chaotic, categorical natural determinism to the more general civil condition, a change intended to highlight the individual as "part of the comprehensive whole (the republic) from which he derives his life and being, the model planned by Tocqueville was more open and kind to public and private freedom. This model reshaped by Tocqueville seems to consider, in a better way, individual peculiarities and modes of life, observing in the exercise of political action a "slow and calm" quest to unite individuals around a republican

project whose nature and contents are determined exclusively by individuals. Then they amend it whenever they deem a necessary national need for such an action. For the republican public good proposed by Tocqueville does not theoretically seek to formulate previous epistemologically binding contents in political science; contents that would define the components of human nature (Aristotle) and the foundations of political society and its strict goals (Rousseau), from which it is difficult to deviate. The principal theme is that the individuals strive for a coalition around a single, inclusive political project based on the "will to coexist" in order to prevent confrontation and internal strife and to preserve their uniqueness and safety.

The Other in the Ontology of the Self by Ahmed Barqawi

Basil Al-Zein

In his work *Ontology of the Self*, Ahmed Barqawi, undertakes philosophising in the Arab world, away from the forms of passing on or alienation. In his communique *For the Birth of the Self in an Arab Homeland*, he strives to establish a central Arab philosophy based on self-reflection and human contemplation, without relying on other authentic voices that affiliate the philosophical saying in Arabic on mongrel propositions, negating the self and celebrating such invalidation. "I am not one of those who follow the tyrants of philosophy... Let the Westerner announce whatever deaths he wishes, from that of man to the philosophy, and to the death of the self..." (p. 11).

In point of fact, the approach of this foundational book is narrative, confined to the presentation of ideas, which could overshadow his authentic proposition seeking innovation and novelty. Therefore, we preferred to approach this foundational maxim by unearthing the tacit, or unveiling what is hidden from the image of the Other, who from our perspective is the mainstay of the book and its focal point. In fact, the core theme lies in showing that the birth of the self depends on the Other; the self will be non-existent if destitute of the Other.

Apparently, the very theme of the book is based on the existence of the Other. For the alert of the necessity of the Arab self birth finds its root in a Western self that imposes its dominance over it, leaving it revolve in its orbit. Accordingly, the Arab self needs to liberate from the image of the Western Other in order to authenticate itself and devote its concepts; it will fall short of that so as long as its discourse is confined, its sovereignty is incomplete, and its voice is regressive: "The Arab becomes the Other when he wears an alien outfit... The self is active in its historical condition independent of the results of its effectiveness" (p. 12).

As such, the entire chapters of the book are grounded in evoking the image of the Other, affirmative and negative, in order to merge the concept of the self and originate it. There is no more vivid evidence for our statement than the author himself; he borrowed a role he did not own, assuming a mission that did not emanate from his pure possession. I here refer to the metaphor of the image of the apostolic evangelist who promotes the call to enlightenment, origination, building, and construction: "involved in a semi-apostolic call" (15).



Furnishing the course of Arab self formation, Barqawi wears a different dress, and is inspired by the Other- the missionary- to announce the birth of a new self he will be its master, the godfather of its concepts, and the anchor of its foundations. In a similar fashion, the rest chapters should be. But in view of the research limitation, our statements of quotation will restrict to several examples that seem brighter than others.

At the outset, Barqawi defines the self as: "The self cannot be so unless in relation to an object" (p. 24) ... It is the ego that was brought into this world to reform it again; this world in turn has matured to be the self in its activity" (p. 30). The formation of the self depends on the existence of the Other. For the self, any self, is aware of the conditions of its possibility based on the existence of the Other who robs it of its right to form or disputes it in the position of its creation. In other words, the self, while seeking to

negate the Other, aims to prove its existence, id est it searches for the conditions of another true self away from its existence conditions. Had it not been for the Other, the self would have not been existed, nor have grasped its dispossession, its non-realisation, its regression, and its oppression!

It is useful, in this context, to spotlight that Barqawi himself cited a line-up of Western philosophers, namely Nietzsche, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Descartes, and many others, to clarify their points of view, examine their experiences, and justify his propositions based on their biographies. Distinguishing the open-minded self from the colonised self, Barqawi, however, views "the open-minded self needs continuous tributaries"... while the colonised self always has "its ready-made toolbox which does not require any enrichment or change" (p. 53).



We would only reflect on the conditions for realising an open-minded self desirable by the author to distinctly and undeniably discern that the conditions for self-building are determined by other experience-enriching selves that embellish its course and refine its concepts. In contrast, the colonising self, which falls victim to its singularity, is closed in on itself. For its uniqueness is only attained by virtue of other selves and dissimilar experiences. In point of fact, the fusion of the established and incoming concepts renders it difficult to highlight a purely Arab or Western self since it is far-fetched to separate, except regarding social dimensions and historical verification conditions. This, in essence, is what Barqawi precisely ventured to explain. The image of the Other is clearly present when he brings up recognition. Such a recognition requires

the existence of the Other who acknowledges your right to exist, think, be creative, and contemplate philosophically, and vice versa. "Why does the Other always find himself in a position of recognition? Recognition is an acknowledgment of the right, either reciprocally or single-handedly. (p. 79). Undoubtedly, in such a case, it is natural to say the Other is the holiest to attain self-realisation. For the self cannot sense its realisation unless in difference and in the existence of a different. The different and his recognition of me are two must-have conditions for myself to take shape and be realised. For the existence of the Other is a vitally important condition for the formation of myself. As such, the absence and recognition of the Other decides the condition in question of the existence of the self or not.

In this sense, “the lust for presence in the authoritarian self” (p. 149) becomes a lust for the elimination of the different Other, and the denial of his right to exist. Accordingly, the authoritative self proves inadequate to be a real self for nothing but because it has renounced recognition of the Other, and its self-recognition depends on it alone. This invalidates the egoism characteristic of Other. Grounding the rise of the self on the Other does not validate in all stances. For, occasionally, negation of the Other is the channel for the self to attain self-comprehension. In this sense, the concept of parricide is essentially evident in Barqawi's ego philosophy. The parricide here does not denote the European West only, but also to any external impediment or cognitive voice that would take possession of the self, hampering any strives to release from the influence of the lingering ideas and concepts. As a matter of fact, advocating a particular philosophical system, or praising the ideas of a philosopher and calling for them, is a wrong endeavour and a reprehensible call; the parricide in general, and philosophical fathers in particular, is an indispensable prerequisite for the individual and able self to take shape. “A culture devoid of parricide

and such as act rituals is devoid of life. For no culture can renew except by parricide, not for the sake of inheriting his wealth, but for his wealth to be strewn by the wind” (p. 209) ... “The European Renaissance began with a deliberate parricide- the Church that ruined the achievements of the Greek and Roman civilisations” (p. 210).

In a nutshell, sum, Ontology of the Self is grounded in the presence of the other if we can suggest a title, Ontology of the Other, a Communique for the Birth of the Self in the Arab world. It is important for us to stress in these perceptions that the self, in its relation to itself, weaves its otherness, or rather it weaves itself through its association with its otherness. For the voices that reverberate us, inhabit our subconscious, direct our thoughts, and form our concepts, drive us to converse with the Other self, our very self, to the extent that we might borrow the title *The Self as Another* by Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005), and to commence later in the approach to the issues of ego and the Other.

Identity as a Living Industry: the Rebirth of Self in the Event

Khaled Kamouni

What evokes the concern of a person to know himself at all times? What is the need to retreat an authentic representation in the subsistence? Is identity a relic of time on the entity, or is it a step resulting from the achievement of the self in the arena of active entity, so the entity is the fruit of the action that is now mushrooming in the event?

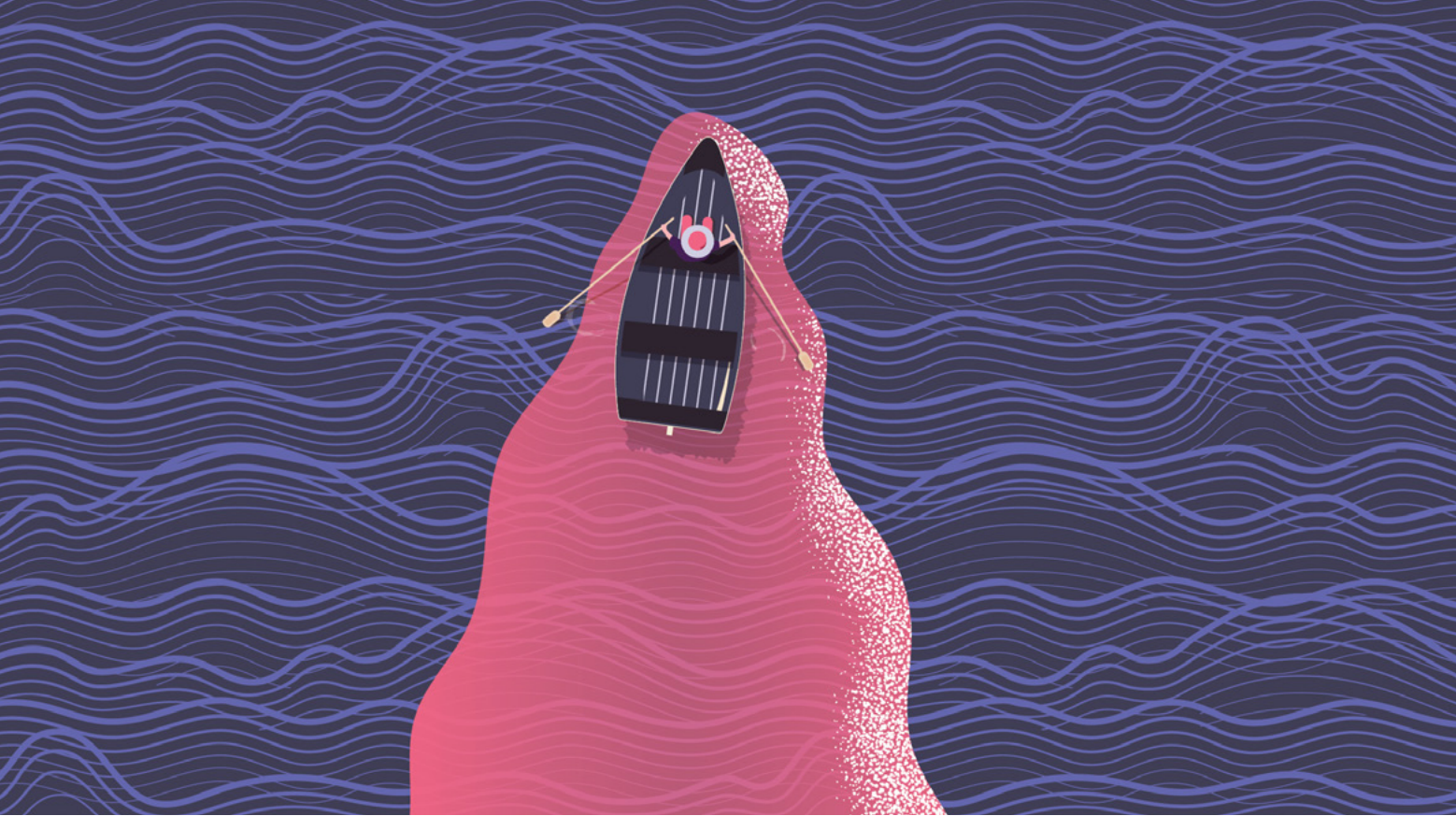
The maturity of identity is currently the scene; if we look at the status of the Arab self, we notice its present is now set in motion, uprisings, revolutions, acts of violence, occupations, blood and jasmine together. Such a humane self in its influential universal presence is miles away from being for conceived via a vision toward the world, emanating from a malfunctioning idea. What we might term malfunctioning identity is this entity emptiness stemming from a lack of characterising by a prominent appearance at the moment of presence. The ornaments of active subsistence in the universe are when being needs you, according to Heidegger; no entity can be realised without you. Or as the German philosopher expressed in his phenomenological philosophy of being, time and presence within what he termed “mutual affiliation”

(la coappartenance) and bring about an analogous “leap” which drives man to be affiliated to being and vice versa: where are we heading? To where we are originally accepted: belonging to being, but being is also a state of affiliation to us... The leap is a sudden arrival into the field as the launchpad; man and being always capture the essence of each other; thus they possess each other thanks to a single common giving”.

What concerns us in this proposition is this sudden leap for the sake of affiliation and arrival at being. Since the occupation of Iraq, we have been stricken by this event, by the attempt of active subsistence in the universe, to understand and overcome the defeat. The Arab Spring was the ideal moment to leap into existence; it was the first adventure of connecting the Arab with himself after the humiliating defeat.

All sentiments emerged along with their concepts, all the historical selves took their shape, and hatreds brimmed over the container of minds charged with injustice and complexity, paving the way for rogue selves that belittled violence and murder to compel the imagined identity into the living entity.





Amidst this chaotic entity, the renovative ideas took shape, putting forward the Arab existence following the official national governing era and its affiliated populist Islamism and sectarian religious movements the public arena or the absurdity and indifference that widespread as an expression of detachment from engaging in politics. Perhaps we are not touching today's movement as jointly organised, but the impact of the event in its related accounts is on the lips of everyone who thinks of Arab transgression. Therefore, the local Arab preoccupation, for each country independently, is one of the purest transgressive emotions of the crisis. Truly, it is purer since living the event as it is illuminates the image of the self as it is, so it realises where and how it should be.

The Iraqi or the Syrian today, for example, is aware of his geopolitical, moral, cultural, historical, social dimension with a mentality that has made him

practise focussing on understanding, saving vision, and implementing existing modern interpretations explaining his new stance. Whoever absorbs the concepts of occupation, subjection, authority, ignorance, backwardness, weapons and murder today will only know them in their current scenes which he practices and takes part in; he is a component element of these concepts, the updated events. Therefore, the current Arab revolutions, or uprisings, movements and protests, are a natural reaction to the loss of identity. It is the sense of losing identification with the self that pushes this self to accept the free being and to attain the inward entity. Therefore, it is not possible to claim the possession of an identity without activating its concrete development, id est, identifying the self with its places of thought in existence, so that it cannot be deprived of matters determining its living meaning.

The occupation of time with an identity is the achievement of being for the present verb, namely the attainment of existential coherence between the verb and the subject at the moment of time splitting up the past and the future, which is the present. The present is the captured boundary of the coming future, in which the existential tendency is to manifest the self as a developmental capacity for the event, i.e. identity is an involvement in the being's production, according to the understanding and interpreting thought that knows what is occurring now, based on its ability to allocate the mentalising semantic of the thing in its concrete existing presence. It is the heresy of opinion-making rather than recalling the previously visible images of the self. For recalling does not retrieve certain thing, but showcases, so it does not create the self now. What is worthwhile in presence is the creation of the existent identity now, the attainment of subsistence in the presence being, and the resurrection of this being in the present apparent identity; the possibility of conducting a free opinion and detaching it from what cannot take place now, by being able to state it in full, since the stronger the expression of the ID features standing before the opinion, the greater the possibility of obtaining the powerful identity in the living being.

As such, identity is the awareness of the possibility of my thought to appear in what I am in reality. This consciousness or intentional awareness is the entity renewal of the historical self, so that it does not become a burden on existence; it rather initiates existence with a new beginning. Identity is the scenery of the free interaction between the implicit and the explicit in the relationship between man and his active self in his cognitive environment,

so that the situation graphic is the one setting the free oscillation on a stable and honest stance; it is a meticulously crafted steadfastness, because it is the product of the awareness movement of the quality of the historical relationship existing between the ego and things. and its redraft in a manner appropriate to the whirlwind moment of presence. Identity, thereby, is the act of identity, not merely a remembrance of its past vitality, nor a foreshadowing of the possibilities of its aggressive future conjugation. Identification is the absolute attainment of presence, and the prevention of the leakage of knowledges of the selves of its actors. If this free capacity is achieved in the whole's assimilation with what is a phenomenon, then the innovation of identity and its new rebirth will be the advanced achievement of mentality in the concreteness, for the realisation of thought as a living procedure in reality.

Identity today is not sufficient with its language that put its owner on par globally one day; current world retardation is the renunciation of identity. Identity is the settlement of the world in its virtual, digital and presence manifestations, in a language that does not show me, the Arab, before the event, above it or after it, but amidst it. To be an Arab today implies to have a requisite in the event for the Arabism of my attitude in life; otherwise my will to settle my being betrays me. Identity is the settlement of the self following the will. Al-Askari states: "The difference between the will and the settlement of the self is that the settlement of the self over a thing occurs in the wake of its will and can be used when it implies hardship.

Isn't it a fact that you hardly state someone has decided on what he feels like for?" So, identity in today's world is not something obtained for free, but rather it is the civic connection of the self, whereas this epistemological connection takes shape between the will and its homeland, its realisation as a decision to live. The will is the strenuous act of understanding the event and its interpretation by dint of the comprehensive self to a conscious interpreting subject, to an identity-free entity.

There is no separate affiliation to the visible, but rather every affiliation is a transcendence brought about by mind when spreading the semantic repository of the things of the universe, by mobilising the historically accumulated values of the active subsistence in front of the present existence moment. Here, being has been altered in order for the vision to zoom, transferring from the "conversational being" to the "retracted being", id est the original controversy sprouts in the permanent dialogue, and the confusing gossip of the life disappears for the sake of clarity. For the conversational being seeks to buzz the activity of dialogue with a debate between the ego and everything, while upholding reflection as an open focus on the possibilities of reception, renewal, and change. Thus, the image of the instant man becomes clear, and then the self attains its sought after one. We will hardly grasp the essence of our potential identity unless directly spot areas of mal-functioning and emptiness, the abyss of affiliations, and the repetitive random subjections without judged consequences. Boldness and courage are not enough to achieve the initial harmony between self and the universe; what must be consistent with the actions of the will is the value repertoire and the language accompanying the event, which is always

present because of the intensity of the communicate the entity. The current Arab communicate must be at the level of understanding freedom, so the existential positioning among the world things in a language aware of this existing system is nothing but a semantic revolting in what is stagnant at present, attaining the concrete existence via a movement characterised by the features of a regenerative presence in using things to achieve a good subsistence system, in which innovation triumphs over exploitation. Consequently, the moment of civilisational revival grows into a permanent scene inseparable from the sound living. The real aspect of intentional productive identification is the current preoccupation with the event earning a permanent preoccupation with the fashioning of the Arabic moral philosophy, i.e. with the creation of the value language of the relationship between man and the universe. This aims at preserving the discourse of truth in a moment of permanent opinion, which perpetually sustains essential honesty for the truth. Otherwise, the event would take place with a language free of mine, specifically without me being a seeker of truth. As such, I would intentionally take out the "I" from the sphere of existence, that is, from the possibility of the active scientific community.

Besides, it is no longer possible to consider there are accomplished purity-containing concepts possessed by the mind wherever and whenever it lands. Rather, what is indeed actually occurring is the living of understanding in a field of application. As such, opportunities of the empowered presence are uneven for all, except for those who grasped the concept and stated something interpreting the potential of his sound presence. It is not possible to overshadow the presence by claiming permanent possession of the concept.



Fakhr Al-Din Al-Razi states in *Mabahith Al-Mashriqiyya* (Oriental Research): “The ID calls for unity on the one hand, and contrast on the other.” Our awareness of the other is our awareness of being, because our understanding of the formative multiplicity of the event determines our position within it and rallies us in one opinion. Alfarabi argues in *Fusus Al Hikum* (The Benzel of Wisdom): “If the identity is not for the essence, which is not the identity for itself, then it is for it rather than for others; everything whose identity is other than its essence and other than the components as identity is from others, and it ends with a principle that has an indistinguishable [differentiation] of identity.” Here we devote the progressiveness of identity, since it is never the essence, but rather a permanent renewal in the very being of the essence, that is, the actual identity is the renewal of forms of identification with reality. Alfarabi states in commentary: “The

identity of a thing, its specificity, unity, personhood, specificity and its individual existence are one and the same. Our statement, ‘He is he’, refers to his identity, specialty, and single unshared existence.” Therefore, the self has a unique presence specificity by which it is defined and identified, id est for a person to be “he”, owning an identity. Here is the argument over the identity distinction among people. Is this a separation from the other or communication with him? The answer here requires an implicit morality in the attainment of identity because the realisation of uniqueness is not at the expense of existential sharing with the other; freedom here is normative, and societies set the standards and not each one alone. Therefore, the wider the circle of benevolent human society, the more harmonious and diverse the individual identities and the civilised social identities.

We should analyse some of what Ken Plummer states in the Blackwell Dictionary regarding the modern concept of identity. According to him, "It was reported to have recently linked to the emergence of individualism," and that "the term identity was not widely picked until the twentieth century, and then concentrated in the fifties of the last century in North America . . . a state of loss and meaninglessness in the mass society and the ensuing search for identity. In the meantime, the term got widely used in describing the endeavour to establish 'one's own self'. The author here alludes to the state of individual disenchantment from the collective existence; reference to the "individualism" identity is a description of a state of reaction and regression from the broader social existence. For a person to create his own essence is to build his one-minded mental predispositions about the world. Consequently, he will have dangerous opinions yielding abnormal actions on the human society in general. For we cannot imagine man outside society; individualism, no matter how climaxed in fragmentation, separation, and differentiation from the entire reality of human groups, every individual has their inevitable integration with others. Thence, these individual identities will have a negative impact on spreading psychological complications in comprehending a safe human existence in this world. Plummer goes on, "Society in the modern world has largely lost its sense of sharing—leaving modern people without a clear meaning of identity." Does the lack of sharing not imply a departure from the modernist pattern of free human being? The existing digital being and the virtual, commodity and political globalisation, coupled with the domination of the Western model over the world, did not serve global peace and security. We have not hitherto taken part

in setting clear standards for the righteousness; for instance, we have not created a "single human identity". For occupying and destroying countries, from various perspectives, are tearing apart the established ideas of freedom, independence, and respect for human rights

How would the identity of the mass destruction weapons producer himself, for example, would be in a society grounded in democracy, freedom, fair elections, and fair laws? When introspecting, he is a killer; an identity is stuck on him! Therefore, there is a flaw in grasping the relationship linking man with his fellow human being, which has led to the disruption of his own internal relationship, and to the tension and imbalance of international relations that preserve the quality of global human existence. This has spoiled the individual and civilised identities of peoples, and obscured the existential bliss in the relationship between man and the universe, as it became tainted with brutality and destruction, inducing pandemics and deadly diseases, where the possibilities of free being got denied, and readily overtaken by a wolfish situation.

Therefore, the resurgence of the civilisational identity in the event is an industry practiced by the living, i.e. the person who is aware of all these dangers surrounding him, and crafts his possible presence identity, which makes him a participant in the making of effective human civilisation.

Reason for the Monotheists Druze

A Brief Overview of the Origin of the Druze

Eman Abu Assaf

The Druze mission in Egypt had crystallised, and during the reign of Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah (the Ruler by the command of God), it was their Dawah (summon). It was at the time, the fourth Islamic century, the era of philosophy and science, and renowned for the plurality of religious sects and theology. Owing to the escalating strife and revolts plotted by kings and princes to extend their supremacy and gains, Muslims grew divided into varying sects, with the Holy Qur'an being the reference for all. The monotheists Druze is one of these sects. However, it is worth to highlight the Fatimid Caliph had not brought this sect into existence; it was rather the outcome of the conflict among the Esoteric, Shiite, and Sufi sects, a product of Islam. The Persian-origin Hamza bin Ali picked the historical moment and embarked on Dawah. Since this was a schism, advocating a philosophical reference teeming with criticism, interpretation, analysis, and explanation, it was reticent and put its epistles, renowned subsequently as wisdom, out of sight. Not unexpectedly, it would be subject to the avenger of the Shiism, which it split from, as well as the Sunnah. The sect was famed for the practice of Taqiya (denial of religious belief) and concealment owing, initially, to the fear of persecution and in order to ensure safety. Following the demise of the ruler,

secrecy emerged as one of the most prominent pillars of the Dawah. In fact, the epistles were subjected to a lot of abuse as tampering and distortion to spoil them, inflicting much distortion and accusations on the sect. In my approach, I relied on the epistles of wisdom in which Hamza spoke specifically about reason.

Reason in epistles:



When we delve into the subject of reason, the leader of reason, we find we require an abundance of impartial research, as the epistles of wisdom, which explain the Druze doctrine and their law, are still controversial.

It is believed that approaching this topic requires more efficiency in neutral research. This is because of a structural difference reflected in tackling the topic with approaches that are not, in most cases, objective. As such, we find that the hand-written epistles of wisdom are the best explanations for the first of the five limits, the limit of reason.

Reason from the Druze's perspective is at odds with reason perceived by Auguste Comte, one of the most eminent modern philosophers. However, in all cases, and given its era and status, the Druze law aimed to renew a stance on existence.



Reason as per the Druze is the first of the five hudud (limits), which are: reason, the soul, the word, the former and three others that follow it. And since our topic is reason, then that reason is Hamza bin Ali. As for the one who created this reason, it is our Master, the Creator of the causes. Baha Al-Din states in Epistle 53 of the Wisdom epistles: praise be to the Ruler, the Lord God, the Exalted of all mental illness. Hence, Hamza is reason manifested during the reign of Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah. In the texts of wisdom, the first limit is termed as reason, the will, as well as Hamza. Hamza-manifested reason at the reign of Al-Hakim had historical appearances. We can name three eras of reason's history: one extending from the first formation until the emergence of Hamza, then the second, which extends from the emergence of Hamza until his disappearance or concealment. The third era is the promise of his return, and the announcement of the limits he will exercise to support the religion of monotheism.

The Book of Wisdom specifies reason appeared seven times in all eras, from Adam to the Prophet Muhammad, christened in each time. It was Chatville during Adam's time, Pythagoras during Noah, Dawood at the time of Ibrahim, Shuaib during Moses, the true Messiah, Eliezer, during the time of Christ, and he was Salman the Persian in the Messenger's time.

Following the narrative of his creation story, and the appearances of reason, Hamzah states in the Epistle 14, titled the cause of all causes: between every period and period there are seventy weeks, and between each week and a week seventy years, and the year is a thousand years of what you count. Hardly was there any time I called people to worship our only Lord, the Most High, Glory be to Him, and to worship Him in different forms, in different languages, and

with different names. We halt at the straight biography 12 (the epistle) as it explains the origin of the Druze and the six phases prior to the role of the ruler. They throw light on Adam and the appearances of Hamza, universal reason. There are three Adams: of complete serenity, Adam of partial sinful, and Adam of the Germanic forgetful. All of them are male and female. He shows that Adam, the complete purity, is Dhuma, and he served in the call to monotheism and worship of our Most High, All-Aware Lord. When our righteous Lord, Glory be to Him, ordered the angels (who are the callers) to prostrate to Adam, it was the arrogant Iblis who did not obey. In the same epistle, Hamza states Iblis was one of the five limits, so he was expelled from the call after refusing to prostrate to Adam. The latter was named the mater and Imam of limit, id est the first universal reason with his first appearance. Those who followed him are the monotheists, and he is their father and his wife Eve; the latter embraced all the believers, and she is to be the mother of humanity as she will breastfeed them with accurate knowledge and educate them until they rise to embark on the Dawah.

The question raised frequently by the devotees and the followers: how do we know the honour of reason whose last appearance was Hamzah? Addressing this question, the wisdom states in the alert and warning epistle that he testified for himself and says: I am the origin of the creations of the Lord, I am His path, and the one who knows His affair, the Wise, All-knowing. I am the phase, the written book, and the dwelled house. I am the owner of the revival and the resurrection; I am the blower of the trumpet; I am the Imam of the pious.

It is evident that reason is the primary formation of the Creator and the witness to His abilities; reason emanates from God's own light, and it is He who gave life to all creatures, and Hamza bin Ali used to express this in many articles. As for Ismael bin Muhammad, the second limit or the soul, he states about the first limit, i.e. reason in the epistle titled Reasoning and Guidance 39: Our Lord created reason from the pureness of His light with divine power without a machine or likeness of an image, and brought about within it all things in one go. He rationalised all creatures by dint of it, setting it as the inception of innovations, and consolidate it with divine power (creed) and the supreme substance, ensuring it is safe from defects, existent for keeps, and a cause for all things. He also claims in the same epistle: It is universal reason, and the first precedent, with beginnings and ends, from it things sprout and to it things return. We come across the Druze creed within the same epistle; it implies the unification of reason with the soul, and that existence is made up of both of them. It states reason has self-admiration, so God created for it disobedience out of its obedience, darkness out of its light, arrogance from its modesty, and ignorance out of its forbearance. Through these four attributes, reprehensible (the natures of opposites) and emanating from vanity, God probed reason to prove its inability. Powerless, reason appealed for pardon from its Lord, asking Him for a supporter against the opposites, to act from it in defending the monotheists. God created the second ranking, the soul, which absorbs knowledge and receives orders from Him. The soul enjoys half of the mobility and act of reason. For reason is male, and the soul is female, and the rest of the limits are the children of reason and soul.

Describing reason in epistle 14 of Wisdom, Hamzah illustrates: The Lord, Glory be to Him, chose me, and created me from His light before there was a place, nor possibility, nor humans, nor jinns.

Explaining the term reason, Hamzah says in epistle 13 of Wisdom also: It is reason since it rationalises what is received from God's revelation, and because it is reason of the entire universe, managing and enumerating the deeds of all creatures. It is also reason since it validates all deeds denounced by God. In retrospect, Hamza's articles and the epistles of Wisdom appear for universal reason emanating from God, its existence origin, the originator which initially created reason, the cause of all things. We find here a common factor among the Druze's creed, the Brotherhood of Purity, the Mutazila and the Ismailis, who claim human's reason, when connected to universal reason, acquires wisdom, and such a relation is just like between energy and matter; they are inseparable and via them man arrives at the truth. They cite the Prophet's hadith (maxim): "Reason was the first creation of Allah, who told it to come and it did so, and then to turn around and it obeyed. Then the Lord said, "By My Might and Majesty, I have created nothing more honourable to me than you; by you I take and by you I give, and through you I will reward." The Mutazila, the Brethren of Purity, and the Ismailis agree human reason extracts from universal reason to realise God, the good and the evil, righteousness and wickedness before laws are enacted and legislations are revealed.

The Druze conforms with Aristotle in the name of the rational self, which they termed (the speaking) in order to distinguish selves from other unreasonable beings.



Opinions on reason by the Druze-sect writers:

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Approaching the concept of reason between the Greeks and the Druzes (pg. 60), and citing the words of Parmenides, Abdullah Al-Najjar, author of *The Druze Monotheist Doctrine*, states: "What we can think about, and what can exist, are one and the same thing." Al Najjar perceives the Druze embraced this doctrine by saying God, the causer, first created reason as the cause of all things. On page 61 of the same book, Al-Najjar shows that Alfarabi (Al-Farabi) and Averroes (Ibn Rushd) were influenced by this philosophical spirit, explaining that, thanks to this spirit, it was possible to confront ideological thought. He also declares the sages of Islam call for the arbitration of reason; Sheikh Imam Muhammad Abduh says: "If reason and transmission conflict, then he takes what is indicated by reason, i.e. the advocacy of definitive rational

evidence." Al-Najjar adds that universal reason in the explanations of wisdom conforms to the thought of Hegel, who said: "Human reason extends the universal one."

In his work *Transcendent Reason*, Kamal Jumblatt starts from a pivotal point, the centre of the circle, which literally denotes the limit of reason. In fact, all of Jumblatt's works are themed around this point. Moreover, his thought intersects with Hinduism, Hermeticism, and the Logos brought by the Greeks. Yet, Kamal Jumblatt confirms, in his philosophical approaches, the theory of knowledge is built upon the concept of transcendent reason over empirical sensuality. From his perspective, literally identical to Hamzah's view, reason is an emanation from the point of light. He might be aligned with the proposition of the Big Bang, as physics claims, for reason is the source of enlightenment, wisdom, revelation. The Sufism doctrine, which he advocates in his many works, is nothing but the science of reason.

In his book *The Doctrine of Druze 1*, Sami Makarem perceives supreme or universal reason, according to the doctrine of monotheism, as the source from which all beings emerge, and it is the essence of their survival in this apparent existence. As for beings, they were created from supreme reason, and both are interchangeably inseparable in terms of cause and effect. As such, supreme reason is the medium of revelation and knowledge, and every believing self can locate the truth and reveal it based on the light of reason.

Conclusion:



The Wisdom is set forth in 111 epistles and is divided into six books. The first book is called *Al-Sir*, the second is *The Response*, the third is *Part*, the fourth is *the Awakening*, the fifth is *Al-Mi'raj*, and the sixth is called *The Reprimand*. Wisdom books are found at Maqam Ain Azzaman in Suwaida, south Syria, among the eminent sheikhs of reason, including Sheikh Hikmat Al-Hijri, Sheikh Yousef Jerboa, and Sheikh Hamoud Al-Hanawi. It is also found in the Bayada retreats in Lebanon, as well as in many international libraries.

Against the backdrop, I found it very objective to approach the concept of reason based on the texts of Wisdom, being the source of these concepts. It is worth mentioning that the author of the first epistles is Hamza bin Ali bin Ahmed Al-Zawzani, the founder of the religion, and he himself is reason and Time Qaim (the one who rises). The second author is Ismail bin Muhammad bin Hamid Al-Tamimi, nicknamed *Al-Nafs* (the Self), and he is Ali's son-in-law and trustee in religion. The third is Baha Al-Din Abu Al-Hasan Ali bin Ahmad Al-Samouqi, nicknamed *Al-Tali* (the Next). The style of the letters relied on assonance, as it contains many symbols and

puzzles that are hard to understand with alien words and phrases, which were and still hand written. They vary in length.

The concept of reason in the Druze doctrine is a structure with spiritual meanings making the rational self an identity and essence of man, id est, it sets his life as a movement of this reason in the arena of light, goodness and righteousness. In short, reason here appears to be a perceptive power concerned with the realities of existence, as it is psychological and spiritual insight. When reason is the first limit, this means the purpose of human existence is to venerate reason, which enables man to look at existence with a logical and sound prospect.



Applied Philosophy

Fathi Al-Triki

It is time now, following the vast technological and digital revolution, to re-flourish philosophy in its realistic sense, which, as Alfarabi (Al-Farabi) notes, is concerned, with “the theoretical virtues principally and with practical virtues secondly”. Philosophy is the process of diagnosing the reality of man, its requirements and consequences through theoretical tools. It is grounded, as the French philosopher Canguilhem termed, in “serving the concepts”; it is comprehending them in their position principally, and then the potential of relying on transferring them from their birth domain into other fields, modelling them for multiple investigations and their reconfiguration and formation. Likewise, philosophy brings together this diagnosis to the lived reality with the possibility of change and reform in search of the ultimate human happiness.

The dilemma of philosophical thought's oscillation between theory and action has, as a matter of fact, always gone cheek by jowl with philosophy in all its phases. Does philosophising in its essence and outside every experience remain an abstraction and transcendence from the partial, social, and the daily, since its prime concern is to create ideas, build perceptions, and innovate concepts? Or does its main purpose lie in establishing principle-

borne accord and human communication as a normative model for benchmarking the universality of communication and free coexistence? In other words, is the French philosopher Deleuze right when asserting the exclusion and transcendence? Or is it the German philosopher Habermas in his assertion of communication?

Undoubtedly, communicativeness alone, in Deleuze's view, is incapable of being one of the philosophy's pillars. While dialogue between Socrates and Plato is inevitably the foundational characteristic of philosophising, the true philosophical dialogue is not among the public, and its scope does not lie in the public space, and does not require public engagement. The philosopher is not an orator, not a sophist, and not a writer. As such, the dialogue must, if deemed philosophical, embrace certain preconditions, involving outreach a target segment concerned with philosophical orientation and capable of inference, thereby endowed with the capability of thinking and freedom. In Deleuze's view, philosophical dialogue is originally between two friends, and friendship in philosophy single-handedly entails the concept, which, therefore, excludes the public and is stripped of the general.

Thus, Deleuze's philosophy remains associated with the philosophical traditions affiliating the philosophical process to transcendence and confines it amongst particular people. However, it thrives within the normative and elitist Nietzschean problem, barring "market", "noise" and "buzz" while unrecognising dialogue and communication with the public within the act of philosophising. For its first characteristic entails putting up concepts by which it peels off the prevailing, the market and the daily, and opens the mind to the unexpected to express the intensity of the complications it encounters and the conditions and possibilities of solving them. Concepts, by their own nature, ignore differences, details and narrow characteristics, but rather care about identification, abstraction and generalisation.

In Habermas' perspective, reason formulating the concept is always subject to criticism according to Kant's rule, implying the criticism of reason is the work of reason itself, so that this open critical reason is always connected to public debate and its ethics and dialogue, which will turn into a tremendous communicative energy that may strike agreement among people. Thus, the aim of philosophising is to establish relationships of dialogue and agreement between people in order to foil violence, quarrels, and wars. The field of philosophy embraces dialogue, tolerance and respect, as well as the public space, where people interact via their ideas, discussion, freedom and various expressions, where their identity is determined. Thus, self-similarity and communication occur through pacifist love or competitive confrontation. Accordingly, the politics remains, in Habermas' view, as the ideal field for philosophising.

So, whether Deleuze or Habermas, we either consider

philosophy as an intellectual process oriented to the particular, or it is a general communicative process that searches for an agreement between all.

As a matter of fact, Deleuze may not always be right in asserting the isolationism of philosophy, given he defended the philosophy of difference, diversity and displacement. Likewise, Habermas is not always right when he perceives philosophy as a public dialogue with a sole purpose of warding off violence. Both of them may defend philosophising, the former standing by the immanence of the concept and the extraction of philosophising at the same time, and the latter affiliating it to communication, recalling its logistic and dialogic origin.

The concern of philosophy stems from that aforementioned dilemma, which is referred to by either the alternation: either Deleuze or Habermas. The more philosophy tries to immerse itself in the public, the more isolation it encounters. And the more it achieves its abstraction, the more it discovers the necessity of connecting with the daily reality.

Whatever the case, the role of philosophy now, in the wake of the digital revolution, involves reformulating concepts according to Deleuze's friendship rule, and in going down to the public arena for clarification, criticism, diagnosis, and theorising. For communication with the public is useful, setting conscience and minds free, so that the process of modernisation does not contradict the entity, but rather gets implanted in the general idea of originating technology, science, and the shining modernity manifestations, and updating references and affiliations. Consequently, the philosophical fluctuation between consideration and action will erase, and philosophical anxiety will innovate the entity and liberate the self.



Through this radical, deconstructive criticism, and built upon the Kantian criticism, the interest in abstractness has once again refashioned to be the subject of creative philosophical thought. But this time, unlike the sophists, the interest will be subject to inference, and will be the topic of prudence. As a matter of fact



Perhaps through this comparison between Deleuze's theoretical philosophy and Habermas' practical philosophy, we may realise there is a new trend philosophy has been gradually fuelling; it lies in the new philosophical practices, id est the applied philosophy that has crystallised globally. For philosophy, being an intellectual practice with special techniques and specific goals, undertakes the tasks of clarification, criticism and diagnosis of interest to everyone seeking to intelligently and successfully tackle their realism and society. The basic Kantian project, for example, of descending reason from heaven to earth, and searching for a basis other than the one found in the ancient philosophy of life, would only attain its aim by virtue of the commitment philosophy, which obligates man to fully care about his stance, alter it if deemed essential, and set off his business projects based on prudence. Francois Chatelet notes: "As a theory of knowledge, Kant's philosophy had a rather odd outcome; it sterilised German philosophy. Was it the result of its grandeur, or of its precision and cruelty? Whatever the case, in the wake of Kant's death, the Kantian emerged as an obstacle to the evolution of thinking. In this fashion, the young intellectuals stood up to this philosophy, attributing cruelty to it." Denoting a firm connection among the German philosophical life, the French Revolution, and the young Hegel, Chatelet adds: "Within this atmosphere, a form of thinking took shape, eagerly yearning for concrete reality." However, Hegel's philosophy aspired, through this retreat to the concrete, to penetrate the absolute spirit, and to grasp the essence of absolutes, thus attempting to transcend Kantian critical thought. The question which might pose here: how can philosophy halt exhuming its corpse and dissecting its organs? Unquestionably, reason has been, both

through its theoretical and practical aspects, the master of thinking and rationality with its strict and open aspects since the beginnings of philosophy in the Greek civilisation. Kant's philosophy has been critical to this rationality, setting the scene for its subject, field, and conditions of possibility. Nonetheless, Western civilisation underwent its major crisis through the development of various technologies, involving techniques of death, wars, and destruction. Philosophy, particularly with Hegel, advocated the approach of absolute arrogance, which is of knowledge over life. The outcry of Nietzsche, who doubted the capacities of reason in the second half of the twentieth century, accused it of being the enemy of life. For reason and its theoretical and practical mechanisms and perceptions, such as ethics, public values, justice and others, are ultimately based on tranquillity and the search for security in the life of this world; ergo, man loses his happiness, as he sacrifices it for the sake of this alleged security. Rather, he demolishes what institutes him as an existent human living with a strong desire, a trait to innovate and create, and with freedom of decision and will. Through this radical, deconstructive criticism, and built upon the Kantian criticism, the interest in abstractness has once again refashioned to be the subject of creative philosophical thought. But this time, unlike the sophists, the interest will be subject to inference, and will be the topic of prudence. As a matter of fact, contemporary philosophy will endeavour to delve into the daily, its fields, and all its manifestations, without retreating to philosophical patterns. Nevertheless, it must question reason in all its manifestations when venturing to dismantle reality and its data, lest it should be descriptive in its approaches.

Thus, applied philosophy will be defined in a thinking, clarifying and enlightening method linked to the current rationality, which opened multiple horizons of life and nature, and paid greater importance to the partial, the possible, and chance in general, as being effective elements of our perception of space and time, so that this philosophy will be bracketed with various daily manifestations. It will adapt to contemporary and harmonise with its coordinates, chancing on its path on the topics of its interventions because the contemporary coordinates, represented in its continuous changes, and its ongoing recognition of the diversity of cultures, furnished the information and digital revolutions with their intellectual spheres. Applied philosophy, thus, is this sort of thinking that has taken shape and operated through philosophy's mechanisms and tools. It interferes in verbal and nonverbal practices, in sciences and knowledge, or in contrast expressions, to define areas and topics, intent on criticism, clarification, setting conditions for possibility and action, and intent to diagnose and control the problems at hand, examining them and trying to find possible solutions. Finally, it aspires to theorise and set hypotheses so that each verbal practice has its own developed theory.

There are several evidences of this type of philosophising. Ibn Khaldun, for instance, attempted to change our understanding of philosophy when he created this occultism in human civilisation. He was not in accord with philosophy; he rather rejected its metaphysical and ontological characteristics and preserved its method and applicability. Positivist philosophy, in conformity with Ibn Khaldun, freed philosophy from being confined to metaphysical frameworks, and steered it toward an optimum occultism in understanding the mechanisms of human society.

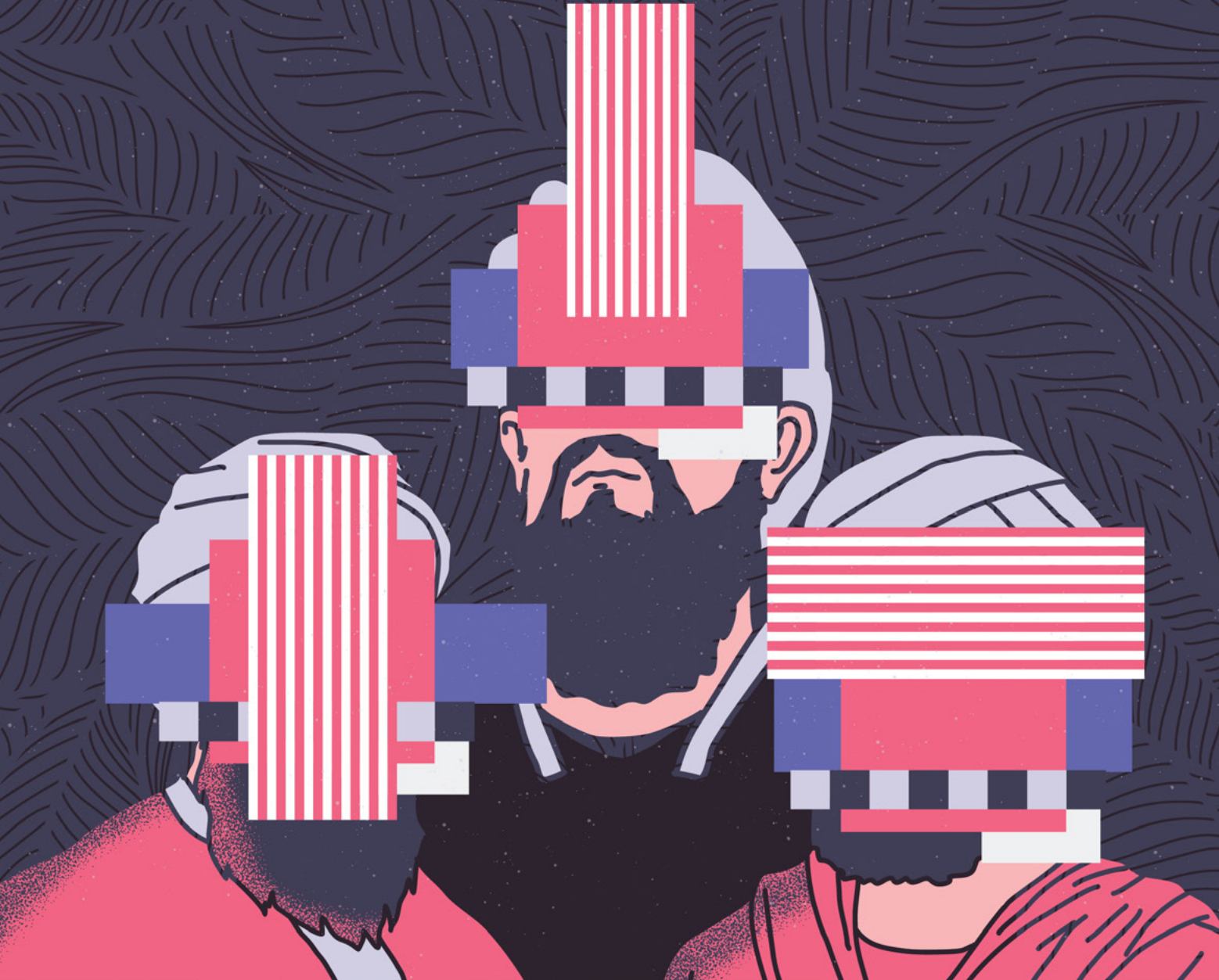
In other words, this also applies to language and to our scientific perceptions and to modern aesthetics, which employed philosophy to grasp the patterns of receiving sensations depicted by the artist's creations. There are many examples of such endeavours to apply philosophy to various arenas of our daily lives, and in our human expressions, parallel to the philosophy of science and epistemology, and what is currently called applied ethics and "cyber ethics."

Perhaps it is useful here to expand a bit on the example of the applied communications ethics; for, undoubtedly, the scientific revolution spearheaded by the information technology is the largest revolution ever known to modernity, because it altered our various relationships with our surroundings and information concerning man and nature. At the outset of the last century, the radio was a tremendous shift for information transmission. Then, the multi-channel television came into being, followed by the computer with its various programmes and later on the internet, allowing us to browse many fields. This has refashioned the way we interact with our surroundings, influencing our daily behaviour and our normal relations with nature and society. At present, the discipline of artificial intelligence and robotics looks for philosophy to shape new concepts and perceptions, signalling the possibilities of this new technological experience, its social and ethical consequences, and its impact on the idea of man himself.

We all know that ideas, concepts, and perceptions are being conveyed at an amazing speed to a mounting number of audience in the world, and that various cultures have grown intertwined and interweaved through these advanced technologies, with none for such cultures existent in one place and at a time.



My conviction is that philosophy in our Arab societies needs to devote its diversity by putting forward variant points of view on which major theories, systems and doctrines originate, nurturing the unintentional philosophical thought that we view among the ,innovative novelists, poets, painters and others



This large-scale information revolution set the scene for progress of education, knowledge acquisition, and intelligence advancement, so that many people, unlike before when thought was the preserve of the elite, can comprehend general ideas and concepts.

Therefore, a new public arena took shape, with ideas and opinions being shared on the double and hassle-free. Yet, it reduced the depth of thinking, referring it to the public and the advertising communications having to do with the public. While thought appears everywhere, it has lost the depth of its propositions, despite the relative ease of the transcendental conception.

The scene of this information arena should hide the diversity of ideas, images, information, knowledge, games, explanations, studies, and social, political, religious, and ideological interventions that may exist, intertwine, combine, and accumulate. This deems sorting and thinking tough and demands a profound profession of a strict method related to reading and organising information. In addition, such an arena often drives in new sophist experts, who, specialised in everything, pick information, organise it, and interpret it according to the requirements of their ideologies or the ideologies of those who commission them. In this fashion, they direct the comprehension and interpretation of such information to a certain path, building up opinions whilst influencing decisions and stances.

Following the new purposes of contemporary philosophy, we notice this new information scene requires the intervention of applied philosophy in its ethical element lest it should be overshadowed by the violent attitudes of the new policies of globalisation, or extremist policies and rigid ideologies, and unbridled passions which render the citizens unable to

understand certain information and place it in its sound position. We can term these ethics, which denote values of transaction within the new informational arena, the information ethics or "cyber ethics", and this philosophy expresses cyber philosophy.

We can also define these ethics as a set of values, rules and principles that guarantee reasonable behaviour within the informational arena and which rebuffs all extremism and all unacceptable manners of dealings with others.

Of course, we cannot identify, study and analyse this web of values and norms; this requires hard work we will not embark on at present. But we will try to clarify some conditions for the establishment of this "cyber ethics". The first condition is the need to take care of the other, while the second is the necessity of adopting a philosophy of prudence in the way of dealing within this information arena. The third condition is the pursuit of purposeful and responsible work.

Such care implies the ability to be proper with the other, and try to build relationships of mutual respect as per the rule of hospitality. Perhaps the essence of this ability is to give the maximum value on man to distinguish him from his surroundings, and to place him on a par with others, regardless of his biological, social, political, and other status. Ethics remains a remarkable and grand domain of values on its own. It is horizontally fashioned, transcending almost all sciences and verbal practices of the humanities, as we find it in anthropology, economics, financial sciences, political science, law, criminology, environmental sciences, sports sciences, and others. All these scientific practices require the intervention of moral and life values, which abort the inhumane trend that may occur in the mode of their operation and use.

We should, of course, distinguish morals from ethics. Ethics is based on values we have woven and formulated in rooted traditions, while ethics, which is primarily concerned with lifestyle, is grounded in values built in the formation's light of sciences and practices, anecdotal and non-verbal. These latter values change and grow according to profound shifts in our way of thinking and grasping of existence.

Thus, applied philosophy keeps pace with the development of sciences, the change of values, their formation and their disappearance, and it is linked to the manifestations of ethics in all fields. Yet, it does not evade the theoretical process, which remains the basis of philosophising, as Alfarabi emphasised once he declared that philosophy should concern with "theoretical virtues first and then the practical ones."

My conviction is that philosophy in our Arab societies needs to devote its diversity by putting forward variant points of view on which major theories, systems and doctrines originate, nurturing the unintentional philosophical thought that we view among the innovative novelists, poets, painters and others, and among scientists, technologists and people of different specialisations. Besides, it should give birth to what I coined the stray, open and diverse philosophy that always embraces daily life and listens to people's concerns and preoccupations. Applied philosophy, first and foremost, illuminates

concepts and perceptions, defines ideas and areas, and criticises theses and stances. It is an unceasing creativity and openness to all ideas and beliefs with no exclusion, and thus it is the actual driving engine of the perpetual process of modernisation. Applied philosophy's current association with the technological, cultural and political manifestations of contemporary life and with people's daily concerns prompted it to direct philosophical thinking toward anthropological horizons in order to find out its diverse and cultural field. Thence, philosophy becomes creativity and rationality, homogeneity and uniqueness, synergy and friendship, extraction and immersion, transcendence and convergence, since it has come into contact with people, sharing with them its benefits, while possessing hopes and lights. It is a daughter of the special elite, but it looks toward the public in order to promote rationality, coexistence of life, and self-complacency.

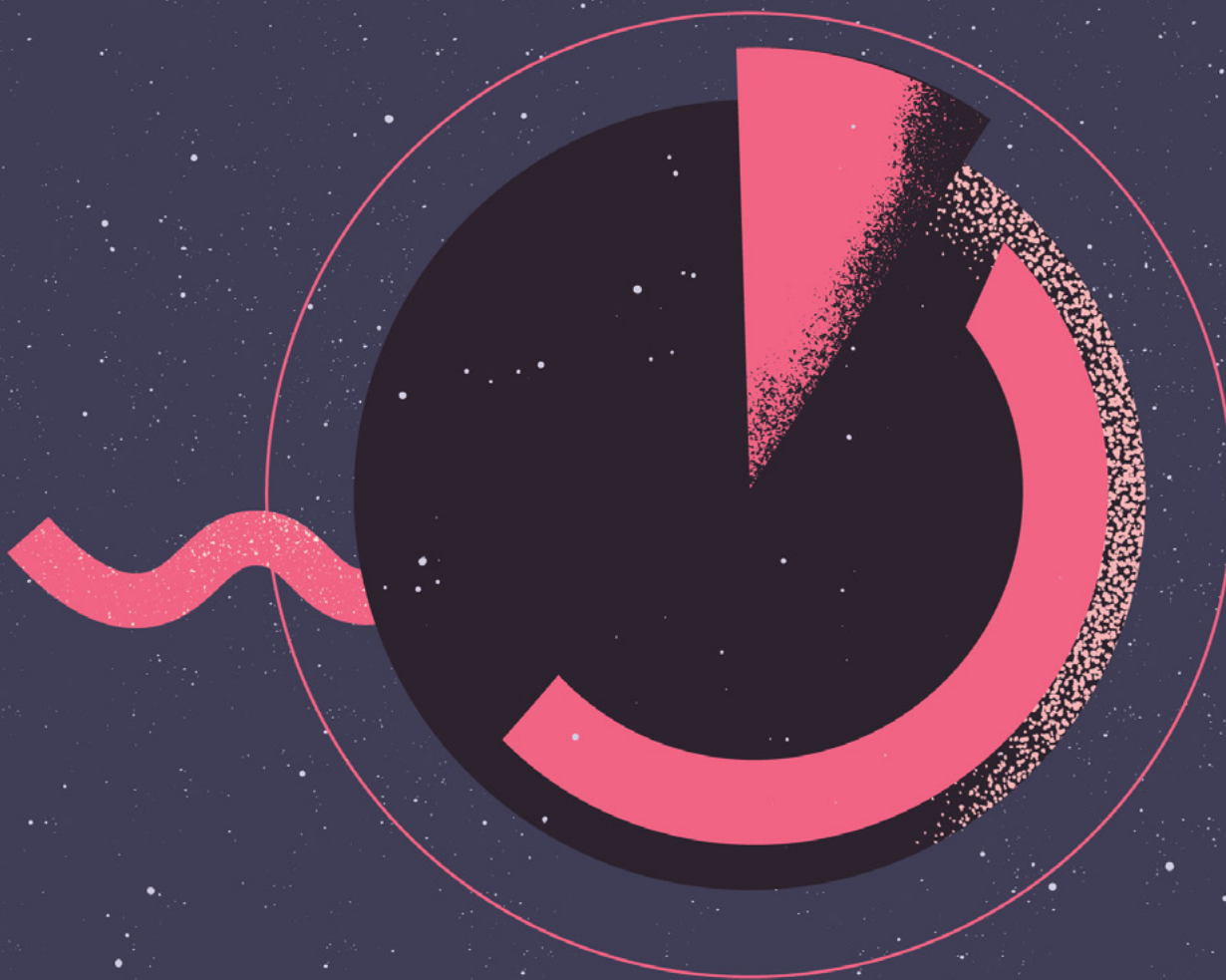
Phenomenological Descriptions of the Gift

Abdullah Al-Mutairi

Philosophy has recently turned to events and relations which, in most classical philosophies, belonged to the changing and unreliable world. Thanks to the contemporary phenomenology, consciousness has sprung up from its paradoxical position to permanently associated with something out there, where consciousness, hence, has become a tendency a purpose for things. With phenomenology, consciousness does not only play the role of a producer of knowledge from its first principles, but also of a listener, trying to convey what it hears. Indubitably, it does not transmit everything, rather the core of what is heard. In what follows, we will try to tackle the gift, which here represents for us a particular relationship connecting man to his peers. We do not exaggerate if we claim we open the door wide to the possibility that such a relationship depicts an unusual existential pattern underlining a variant approach for man to interact with others and with things.

The modern philosophical blog dealt with the question of the gift in details, one of which extends from the anthropologist Marcel Mauss in his celebrated book *The Gift*. In this work, Mauss sets forth his thoughts on rituals practiced by some peoples beyond the boundaries of modern civilisation, such as the peoples of Bologna,

Melanesia, and the American Northwest; he gathers the gift as reciprocity customs to preserve public peace in the face of the ever-present possibility of war. Mauss also notes that this reciprocity is neither declared nor explicit, but rather belongs to a holistic perspective in which culture marries religion and arts. This perspective differs from the direct economic reciprocity that we know within modern economics. According to Mauss, the reciprocity of these peoples is undertaken in the belief that things have souls, and that upholding something and ceasing the process of its rotation imprison that soul; I must give back to those who awarded me as there is a soul in the first act that must return to the giver. This elucidates to Mauss the obligation to give back the gift, as he noticed. Mauss' study raised various propositions, beginning with his student, the well-known anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, who criticised Mauss for falling victim to these internal peoples' interpretations, and ignored the driving structure of all those interpretations. As a matter of fact, Bourdieu drew attention to the importance of direct saying, and its essential role in social relations; what is not conveyed about the gift, and what is implicit in the behaviours surrounding gift exchange and in the social perception of the gift is the real and active capital.



According to Bourdieu, the awarder's personal experience belongs to a world at odds with that of economic reciprocity and trading. This experience is authenticated and must be taken seriously. At the same time, we should be heedful to the silent anticipation demanding the gift return. While nobody openly states to bring back a gift, there is an entire structure of muted suppositions pushing in that direction. This extrinsic silent structure fuels the reciprocity of gifts, whereas individuals consciously deny this structure by exchanging gifts among themselves. Here lies the paradoxical framework of the gift, ensuring its sustainability. Philosophically, Derrida offers an analysis of the gift, showing its impossibility. For a gift to be a gift, it must not appear in this fashion; once

it turns out to be a gift, it brings with it the burden of exchange, becoming an in return, id est it is no longer a gift. A gift without an exchange is a "gift in lieu of no pay back" as the common proverb states, implying it is not for something in return. In Derrida's view, paradoxically, the conditions for the realisation of the gift are far-fetched. Hence, the realisation of the gift, as it seems, requires the denial of its peculiarity. This is exactly what the honest do when they say "I brought you a simple thing" instead of "I brought you a gift," or they present it silently, if they are embarrassed to grant it hand by hand, and place it in front of the gifted one, as if they are avoiding the scene of giving.



We also notice the silence of the awarder about their gift, as if they refrain from mentioning it, and should it be acknowledged, they hardly refer to it, and sometimes they even demand it be forgotten. These behaviours seem to deal with the aforementioned paradox inherent in the gift.

In the same vein, Jean-Luc Marion offers phenomenological analyses of phenomena, unfolding, contrary to what Derrida claims, the attainment of the gift. Marion's non-reciprocity of the gift reveals the collapse of one of its three sides: the awarder, the receiver, and the thing presented to the latter. According to Marion, if there is a gift without an awarder, then we are out of exchange. Sometimes the awarder prefers to remain anonymous, rendering impossible the return of the gift. On the other hand, the awardee may be unknown, as with the blood donor who does not know to whom his blood will go. Likewise, the gift itself may not be something in the embodied sense of the word. It may be a status, an opportunity, or possibility that does not specifically include what was received. In fact, Marion's analyses put us before a necessary task: examining the relationship between unrequited giving and the gift. Every gift, undoubtedly, is betting on unreturned giving, but is every returned giving a gift? As a matter of fact, the gift implies a paradox that always keeps the passion for contemplating it. Ole Pettinen says the gift, that unrequited giving, is far-fetched. It may be impossible to grasp an instance of an entirely unreturned gift in reality, but we know full well that this is the gift, and that it must be. In any case, paradoxes are a pretext for philosophising, so Kierkegaard states, "A paradox is the passion of thought, and a thinker without a problem is like a lover without passion." On the other hand, Al Hady (guidance) in the Arabic language means heading in the right direction, and Al

Huda is the righteousness, and Al Hidaya (guiding) is a directing to the right path. The stars in the sky guide people to the path they want. While stars do not show people the route, they tell them about the right way to reach their destination. Man, in point of fact, feels easy-going when he owns and knows his route. That is why some people name their daughters "Hidaya", denoting at the same time the calm girl, and the gift from God. Abu Jaafar Al-Mansur named his son Al-Mahdi, who in return named his son Al-Hadi. As far as man is concerned, to be Hadi (guiding) and Mahdi (guided) are the same; they attain the aim and both are aware of their path. Whereas Al-Hadi is one name of Allah, Al-Mahdi is not; it is submissive to guidance from outside, and this is a reception and a negative. Alhady is the livestock that are slaughtered for the sake of Allah, even though their meats are dispensed among people. If we sacrificed them for the sake of Allah as worship, then the sacrifice existence is in the middle of people. All these linguistic derivations refer to the orientation, intent, and submissiveness within the gift, which is a clear-route movement; it is a journey to the other through another being. As a matter of fact, tripartite relation: Al-Mahdi (the awarder), Al Muhda (the awardee) and Al Hadiyah (the gift) implies more flexible and intertwined internal equations. For such tripartite relation allows secrets and surprises, and such an association collapses once one party fades away.

In short, when we are awarder we go, while we receive when we are awardee. This tendency is what we term as intention and purpose; gifting does not occur accidentally. Therefore, if we find something pleasant, we forget it for another will: to be a gift. Al-Mahdi (the awarder) is the guiding, and the awardee is the destination, while the destination and the gift are the way.

The awarder is the hospitable guest, and the awardee is the received host. The gift path is variant: whoever awards should follow a fresh path. This path is his gift that made his coming different. And if directing to the other is motivated by a direct-need purpose, then the direction of the gift is at odds. As a matter of fact, we head to the other through means they like: we like what they prefer. For every gift entails anticipation and adventure; it unfolds man's inability to understand man, so all he has is to take risks and attempt with no guarantees. What do they like? A question we do not address them! It is a question about them but they never reply; it is our self responding on behalf of the other.

The gift is shrouded in secrecy, but with no conspiracy. It is a secrecy shared by the awardee yet through the awarder, but with the question: what do they like? We walk abreast them but toward them, and if this march is in their place, we then walk cheek by jowl, unnoticed by them. The awardee is a partner in choosing the gift even though they are non-attendant. What will your non-attendance pick for you? The non-attendance that attends and takes part in the selection. Such an absence always falls between certainty and doubt, that is, in the betweenness. As such, the gift is an answer and a guide for the route toward them; they will love this rose or this watch. In point of fact, the gift is an answer relying more on hope than on knowledge, an answer that comes from intuition, not from randomness. This makes it transcend us. Accordingly, when the gift doesn't work, it's a failure, not a mistake. Truly, we do not know whether we choose the gift or whether the gift chooses us, so we ponder our choice not to observe it, but to listen to it, perhaps in the hope it might respond to and share our selection.

Whether we pick the gift or the other way round, we wrap it. We hide it in a bet on a future moment, the surprise moment. Here an awardee is prepared, and by dint of surprise, existence gets confused in safety. Nonetheless, it is fearless, riskless, and loss-free confusion; it is a surprise turning networking into play and fun. It is a confusing surprise owing to the future outset through the present. Yet, the transformation of the future into the present implies a small death, whereas the surprise is the future as the future, unperishable in the present. The future is turned on, waiting for the hands that receive it. It does not attend except in the gift, and the receiving hand does not grab it, but remains with it.

The gift wrap is an attempt at immortality, resistance betting on kindness to extend the moment of impatience and waiting. As a result, confusion surrounds the opening of the gift; the packaging seeks to sustain a special moment when the gift takes possession of existence. When it is unwrapped, when it arrives and before the networking, and when attends as a secret, and when it takes hold of all the attention, nothing is left outside. Wrapped, the gift remains an unchallenged mystery. As for the awarder who knows what lies behind the fold, he is taken as well because he is now there, monitoring the eyes of the awardee and the trembling of his hands. Furthermore, the awarder is awaiting a meeting that has been prepared for him and has gone for. He is still there behind that moment, face to face with the gift and the awardee, between the route and its intention. The welcome of the gift begins by taking care of its envelope, by unwrapping it gently and carefully, and walking toward it without intrusion.



**What will your non-attendance pick for you?
The non-attendance that attends and takes
part in the selection. Such an absence always
falls between certainty and doubt, that is, in
the betweenness.**

Nothing compares to the first moment, the first welcome. The awarder watches with dwindling silence but not fading away, unwilling to be between the gift and its owner; he only wishes they get together. He dislikes the awardee reaction landing on him, rather than on the gift itself; a triumphant gift is self-sufficient.

The gift confuses subjective ownership, giving rise to possession of things without ownership. The awarder buys it, but it is no longer his. It is out of possession at the moment of purchase. When he paid his money for it, the gift, in his hand, became for others. He holds it in his outstretched hand, which can no longer grasp it; it is in his possession of the other. It is neither a mortgage nor a loan for its owner; it belongs to him, even though it has not been his property in a previous world. But the awarder cannot take away the gift's identity in order to turn it into the possession of another hand. The awardee owns it; no one may lay hold of dispossessing it, not even the awarder. Still, he does not own it either, as the gift is neither sold nor awarded. It remains outside the commodity world. When asked about that watch in his hand, he identifies it directly as a gift from so-and-so. The phrase "my watch" would be a betrayal in a way.

It is obscene that the awarder demand it return to him; he disposes of it as if it were no longer a gift,

so he keeps it, sells it, or demands it from the one whom he awarded. As highlighted in the Prophet's hadith, "the one who retrieves is gift is like the one who returns in a vomit." This physical analogy is striking; it shows that the relationship here is between a person and what inside him, rather than with something else. The food that a person vomited was a part of his life and his biological existence a while ago, but after he regurgitated it, it became something else. Likewise, the gift he got in exchange for his money has come out of him, now in another relationship in the world. The refusal to receive the gift leads to disintegration and a rejection of the entire relationship. Marcel Mauss pointed out that refusing the gift was a declaration of war for those peoples he studied. Therefore, we state that the gift is an adventure, as it does not allow things to return to the way they were before it was given. Refusal of the gift is a refusal of the journey and direction, and a declaration that it was in the wrong direction.

These primary descriptions refer to the gift as a relationship with others, things, time, and place. It is a relationship of orientation, intent, attention, anticipation of time, and the will to seize the future. In short, it is an existence outside the realm of certainty and causation, as well as a bet on hope.

Philosophy and the Question of Destiny

Hassan Hammad

Introduction:

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Some contemporary philosophers, especially of scientific schools such as empirical positivism, logical and analytical positivism and others, argue that science is the password to discover the truth, and that philosophy has become out of commission; philosophy today must abandon the role of building metaphysical systems and doctrines, delegating researching scientific issues to the empirical sciences. Furthermore, it should be content with analysing language, examining our empirical knowledge, and revealing its relationship to sensory implications. Philosophers need to, in the best-case scenario and should they want to survive, assume the role of scientists, and try to simulate their experimental methods just as some modern philosophers did: Herbert Spitzer, Karl Marx, Bertrand Russell, Wittgenstein, Carnap, Reichenbach, and others. Each philosopher has viewed his philosophy as scientific in their own way. Such claims, in essence, overlook that science is part of life and not the whole of life, and that there are many problems scientists fall short of coming up with solutions to, above all what we call the great questions: existence,

non-existence, freedom, happiness, meaning, and value identity, time, place, life, death, and destiny. This article seeks to deconstruct the question of destiny as problematic and not merely simple since it is linked to many other questions, especially of meaning, and of nothingness or death.

First, the problem of meaning:

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Evoking the endeavours of the philosophers, including Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, the Epicureans, Avicenna (Ibn Sina), Alfarabi (Al-Farabi), Averroes (Ibn Rushd), Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Marxists, existentialists, and others, we will notice all of them have viewed philosophy, to varying degrees, as an attempt to rearrange life as maintained by reason. Hence, there has been always a close affiliation between reason and action, or between theory and practice. Not only does philosophy teach us how to think but also how to live; it is in either teaches us the art of living.

Man's first and foremost act is to live, and life involves passions, beliefs, desires, doubts, and courage. But critical contemplation of all these concerns is philosophy itself.



For philosophy is life, a critique of life, and an attempt to live ideally. At all times, we must locate ourselves within the system of this universe and grasp the way we should live; ergo philosophy is our approach to understanding life, being the rational light we follow when walking on life's winding, contradictory, and dark roads.

While science can answer many important questions related to man, nature, and the universe, it falls short of solving other unsettled questions. This is what the French philosopher Albert Camus believes, arguing that all the achievements of scientific knowledge could not release man from illusion since we literally have not arrived at a satisfactory answer to the central questions in philosophy à propos of human existence: why man exists, breathes, eats, marries, and reproduces? Why does he live? Is life worth living? From Camus' perspective, the question of life meaning is the key philosophical question; it is one that distinguishes me as a human being. Had we been a tree among trees, or a cat among its peers, there would have been not such a dilemma and we would have not been tortured by searching for

meaning; rather, we would have been affiliated and accorded with such a world. Nonetheless, Camus answered the question of meaning, arguing life is meaningless. He does not evoke us to commit suicide, but invites us to live it with our utmost desire. Although reason does not satisfy our unbridled longing for knowledge, we should not denounce it, since it is our only tool. Hence Camus refuses to sacrifice reason on the altar of faith, for the choice of consciousness is man's true heroism, being the experience depicting the authentic existential status. Awareness is the guide to the honour of human capable of withstanding and sustaining life glorification despite our realisation this world is absurd and incomprehensible!

If Camus admits the world is absurd and meaningless, then the word with which Sartre likes to describe the absurd condition of man is "freeness," a term in conformity with Heidegger's description of man as "abandoned," "thrown there," or "neglected." For Sartre, freeness means human existence is accidental, aimless, valueless, meaningless, and therefore superfluous.

Sartre advocates this term and intentionally reiterates it in many of his literary and philosophical writings. He repeats it in his novel *Nausea*, and in his book on Baudelaire. Yet, Sartre explains the consciousness-free existence that we find ourselves in this world with no pretexts, excuses, or reasons and justifications for the existence of this being, which is "I".

Camus, Sartre, Heidegger, and beforehand Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and others got preoccupied with the question of destiny, conceiving philosophy as a search for the meaning of life and a preoccupation with the existence of man in this world, with his anxiety, freedom, weakness, uncertainty, fears, loss, alienation, torment, his endless bewilderment, and his panting desire to find a purpose to live for. We are not off the mark when claiming existential philosophy has particularly spearheaded the revival of the genuine spirit of humanism, injecting life to major philosophical questions. Philosophy, notwithstanding, has never ceased to evoke haunting questions such as what is the truth? What's wrong, certainty, an illusion, and what is evil? What is good? Where did we come from? And where are we heading? What is our purpose in this existence? etc.

In fact, these and other questions are often raised by anyone willing to philosophise, or seeking to affiliate with the kingdom of philosophy.

Second: The problem of death, escaping the fate:

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Death is the prime reason for exploding a person's sense of absurdity, driving him to view it as a nightmarish fate. We read in *The Old Testament*: "Vanity of vanities is all vanity." Macbeth, one of Shakespeare's protagonists, yells: "Life is a stray shadow, like a miserable actor

who keeps screaming and babbling on the stage until his role is over, when no one hears his voice anymore" (Chapter V, Scene V).

Death fear implies a fear of nothingness, emptiness, the uncharted, and of annihilation. For the humanity's greatest dream has always been that one day we can conquer death. When Descartes died, one newspaper wrote: "A fool who often claimed he could long live as he desired passed away in Sweden." Bernard Shaw also claimed he would not die, because there was no justification for his death. This desire to escape death prompted Bossuet to believe people's concern in burying their thoughts about death is perhaps no less important than burying their dead!

While most existential philosophers agree on man's loneliness, and that we have come to a world alien to us, they differ in how they reckon death as an incident, with some, including Martin Heidegger, venturing to envelop the horror of death by creating a positive dimension that enriches the human experience. From Heidegger's perspective, death is not a mere external event or a general reality within this world; he sees in it an internal possibility linked to the basis of our existence. I may die at any moment, and therefore death is the possibility that I always shoulder. It is like a trap that my feet may slip into at any moment.

Here lies the tragic dimension of the incident of death, *id est* the constant threat of death. But Heidegger does not succumb to the temptation of this idea; he rather perceives death as the highest potential of human existence, because it is the possibility that has not yet existed, which would put an end to all other possibilities. Moreover, death is the most subjective and intrinsic possibility. For it brings man face to face with his destiny, since, unquestionably, there is no other one able to die for me.

Sartre, on the other hand, advocated a particular stance on the idea of death in out-and-out contrast to Heidegger's. He necessitates the preclusion of any endeavour to view death as the acceptable end of the drama of life; death is not only incapable of granting life any meaning, but it deprives life of all meaning. And since death is the permanent possible obliteration of my potential, it remains beyond my capabilities, and therefore I cannot wait for it, because I cannot throw myself at it just when I throw myself toward one of my possibilities.

Death, for Sartre, derives its absurd character from being a "continental fact" - just like the event of birth; it stems from the outside and refers us to the outside so that we cannot adopt stance against it. Death is nothing but one aspect of the reality and existence of others, nor anything else than what is given. It is also absurd both we are born, and we die. This absurdity, on the other hand, represents a kind of continuous alienation of the possibility of my being; the possibility which is no longer mine, but has become of someone else.

André Malraux is one of the contemporary French thinkers and writers who discussed the absurd dimension of the death incident. While Malraux was not a professional philosopher, he influenced contemporary existentialist philosophers, notably Sartre and Camus.

Malraux, indeed, is one of the most profound writers who discussed the issues of the human condition: freedom, despair, hope, struggle, torment, sacrifice, suffering, fear, death, etc. His world is formed in the womb of anxiety and despair; the characters of his novels attain self-consciousness via an experience unveiling the absurdity of this existence and the mediocrity of human destiny. At the same time, this feeling is fused with the undoubted certainty

that death is inevitable, and that this trivial, fleeting moment is the only moment in our hands. Garen, one of Malraux's protagonist, says: "Life is nothing, but nothing is worth of life."

Malraux does not succumb to death, defying the complacency or surrender toward death shown by Montaigne, Gorky, Freud, Tolstoy, and others. Malraux, who has jeopardised his life hundreds of times, fiercely rejects this passive acceptance of the laws of the universe. One can accept one's own death, and even desire it, invoking the maxim of Epicurus: "Death ought not to frighten us, for it is that moment of life that we never have to live."

Yet how can we accept the death of our loved ones, of our children, friends, and our loved ones? How do we comply with the pointless torments that turn the energetic beings into mute corpses?

It is a matter of fact that the forms of slavery surround us; we are confined in everything and unqualified for permanence or immortality. We only have one life even though we can live thirty lives. In fact, all human feelings are characteristic of tragedy, including love and happiness; the most tragic feeling is certainly of helplessness in the face of death.

According to Malraux, man is the only being who perceives he is immortal. For nothing for him has value, price, or meaning. Even this earth is nothing but a dead planet among mortal planets, and only man needs freedom, but this need gets thwarted within the walls of a universe indifferent to anyone of us.

Yet, the tragic death for Malraux, like Sartre, is that it renders what preceded it irreplaceable, and forever. Death transforms life into a destiny, and from the moment of death, we can no longer make up for anything, and man has no power over himself or over things.



In addition, Camus's stance toward death is like that of Malraux; death has the final absurd wall where all desperate attempts to justify the human illusion that life has meaning at its periphery are aborted. According to Camus, death is the existential attitude that we do not possess, and the experience we can never live. Likewise Heidegger and Sartre, he grasps we learn about death through the passing of the other; people practice the game of life as if it were not their own concern and they merely converse about the tragedy of other people's death! Camus concludes from the fact of death that as long as we die, nothing has meaning, and the human adventure seems futile. The great tragedy, says Caligula, is that "a man dies deprived of happiness."

Like Malraux, Camus adamantly refuses to bow to death, viewing it as evidence of the absence of divine providence, and a justification for denouncing the universal justice. In other words, Camus adopts a death-defying stance, a metaphysical rejection or rebellion. From his point of view, the true rebellion entails confronting the principle of injustice, which he views applied in this world with the principle of justice inherent in himself. He stands on the ruins of a crumbling world, demanding its unity. Hence, he protests against this death, and the collective punishment, which turns all things into nothingness,

rebuffing this evil that deprives the life of its taste and meaning. Thence, he rebelled against the force forcing him to live in this tragic condition.

Camus' Doctor Ryo is the character personifying this form of rebellion in his novel, *The Plague*. Seeing innocent children suffering and dying for no apparent reason, Ryo shudders with an overwhelming inner feeling against this existence that only gives us death and torment. So, he screams in the face of the Priest Panlo: "No, Father... I will remain until death denouncing this world in which children are thrown under the torture wheels."

To sum up, awareness of life's tragic fate should not propel us to despair; for while life may be meaningless, it must be lived. Besides, reason does not quench our unbridled thirst for knowledge and our desire to possess the truth, but we must not reject it since we are endowed with no other tool. Life inevitably concludes with death; yet we must not fear death since, as Epicurus noted, it is the moment that we will never live in. And while our human effort is shackled by failure and by thwarted desires, we should, however, believe in what we do, have confidence in ourselves, and search whether inside and outside us for something, anything, endowed with the splendour of meaning and truth.

Abu Bakr al-Razi as a Philosopher

Omar Kush



The widespread fame of Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakaria al-Razi amongst the Arab, Islamic, and European circles goes beyond his status as one of the most acclaimed philosophers of the time. Rather, he was famed as one of the most prominent physician in the antiquity. On that account, he was underestimated as a philosopher owing to many considerations concerning his philosophical ideas and propositions which were marked by boldness, criticism of the beliefs of his contemporaries, schools and sects, and his embarking in debates and arguments with the theologians and the Ismailis, and his disagreement with the Peripatetic philosophers. Furthermore, he aroused the ire of religious scholars, which widened the front of his opponents and critics, whether by the people of religion or by the people of philosophy, who responded to his theses and discredited him as a philosopher. Most historians and scholars of philosophy in the Islamic world followed their path. Some historians and thinkers view Al-Razi as one of the greatest pillars of Islamic philosophy, having contributed to the development of philosophy and thought. Ibn Al-Nadim described him in *Al Fihrist* as one of his age, unique in his time, and could gather knowledge of the ancient sciences, particularly medicine and chemistry. Richard Walzer, one of the most celebrated historians of Arab-Islamic philosophy, wrote about him, "When we read each line written by Al-Razi, we feel we are in front of an acute thought, and a man who enjoys self-esteem with no arrogance. He hardly sees himself as a philosopher or a physician at any level." Alas, only did a few of his writings and books survived, though they, according to him, amounted to nearly two hundred books and articles on various topics

in sciences, philosophy, monotheism, theology and wisdom. Al-Biruni concluded Al-Razi had one hundred and eighty-four books on philosophy, logic, theology, medicine, chemistry, mathematics, arts, etc.

It is likely that Al-Razi was born in the city of Rayy, near Tehran, in the year 250 AH, and died in the year 313 AH. He studied medicine in Baghdad, and lived his life in a period in which philosophical engagement was shared by the Peripatetic, Neo-Platonic, and atomistic philosophers, and with the influence of these three major schools, Sufism grew inclined to philosophising. As far as Al-Razi is concerned, he sought, amid these spaces, to construct his independent philosophy, based on the entire philosophical heritage, but without recourse or commitment to a particular school. The path of philosophising led him to a philosophy different from the prevailing trends and schools, embracing nature, knowledge, metaphysics, prophecy, deism, and others.

However, Al-Razi's time was marked by attaching great status to science, scientists, philosophers, and thinkers. Arabs translated works of the ancient Greek philosophers and their scholars; many Muslim philosophers and translators played a prominent role in interpreting and explaining the various trends and schools of Greek philosophy and made many additions in all known fields of natural and human knowledge of the time. In entirety, this helped shape the key features of Abu Bakr Al-Razi's personality, his deep rationalistic view, prolific know-how, and his critical thinking, which he did not hesitate to resort to when confronting all forms of worldly and religious authority.



Al-Razi opted for his own independent approach of thinking and living, and he coined it “the philosophical biography,” after the biography of his teacher Socrates, who was followed suit by most revered philosophers. It entails, in a broad statement, “treating people with justice, committing them to gratitude, exposing to view chastity, mercy and advice, and striving in favour of all, except for those who launched into injustice, oppression and endeavour to corrupt politics.” However, his opponents denied it, and accused him of mixing with the common people and receding from retirement and austerity. As a result, he demanded them repeatedly to be fair to him, since his philosophical biography does not contradict the ideal philosopher model. For he defended it by stating: “I have never entered the service of a king as a military man or state leaders; in any conversation I had with a king I did not go beyond my specialisation in medicine, and my role in giving advice. He who has seen me knows I have never had much food and drink, nor deviated from my path. Everyone who knows me is jolly well aware I have devoted my life since youth solely to science. My patience and perseverance in pursue of science helped me get as far as the point where I wrote over twenty thousand small-size pages on just one scientific topic. Besides, I spent fifteen years of my life preoccupied day and night writing my medical encyclopedia (Al-Hawi). Throughout this time, I lost the sight, my hands got paralyzed. Deprived as I am know of reading and writing, I have not given up, and my friends help me accomplish that.”

Al-Razi delved into the meaning of the virtuous life that he sought; it is the attainment of happiness in the afterlife that culminates in a worldly life filled with justice and knowledge, far from physical

lusts. Accordingly, he set the limit of the virtuous philosophical biography in not descending beneath the lower limit of obtaining pleasures, whilst not going beyond its upper boundaries. It is a criterion deduced by his pure reason, and then he had to thank “the giver of reason, the clearer of concern, and the abstractor of uneasiness.”

He did not hesitate to cherish the values of reason, which calls for knowledge and justice, as the most ideal route to attain an honourable conduct, wisdom and virtue. As a matter of fact, it is not confined to the worldly affairs attained by diligence and materialistic thinking only, but embraces issues of afterlife salvation as well, so that reason is guiding toward that desired salvation, unlike nature and passion that lead to destruction. From his perspective, he believes reason judgement has significance in various issues related to the unseen, resurrection and reckoning, as they are concerned with the text through revelation and prophecy, while the limits of reason are confined to the worldly benefits. Therefore, Al-Razi wanted to ration it as per the authority of reason, particularly those associated with the pleasures and permissible affairs pertaining to people’s lives. As such, “all of this is grounded in a purpose, ways, and the path and a just rational doctrine that does not transgress and does not violate it.” Hence, the person follows the road of salvation, imitating his high account of the ethics of mercy, justice, and science. This is the highest aspiration of the ideal philosopher from Al-Razi’s attitude; he set his heart on analogising the One and conforming to his morals directly without the intermediary of anyone, so that philosophy embodies, in the philosopher’s view, “emulating Allah Almighty as much as man can do. This is the approach of the philosophical biography.

Thus, Al-Razi followed a philosophical approach that prompted him to sanctify reason and arbitrate it in various issues and questions, notably those concerned with the unseen, resurrection, and reckoning. He gathered his arguments solidifying the proposition of fairness among people who are in equal footing in the eyes of their Creator who bestowed them with the same stance, with no differentiation between peoples. This led him to criticise religions and prophecy, by dropping the mediation of revelation, and calling people to an independent search for personal salvation, as a prelude to the religion of the individual conscience, and with no juristic laws of the prophets. Consequently, reason turns into a doctrine and a course of thinking and consideration, independent of other perceptions.

Al-Razi's philosophy touched on the issue of reason sufficiency, unguided previously by revelation, in perceiving the benefits and abuses. He emphasised the necessity of resorting to evidence of reason only and reliance on it in judging matters negatively or positively. Justifying this stance, he states: "The Creator - the glory of His name - has bestowed upon us reason in order to attain through it the immediate and future benefits, which we could achieve. If this is reason's status, value, and greatness, we ought not to degrade it or belittle its ranking. or rendering it subject to judgement while it is the judge, and an affiliate when it should be followed." Thus, Al-Razi surpassed what was renowned for the Mu'tazila who attached greater importance to reason over transmission in the event of conflict, and in assigning reason with ugliness and improvement in the law's absence. He went miles away from the intention of the theologians so that knowledge and wisdom descend from the Lord to people directly, with no prophet mediation. All

such views aimed to attain his theory of deism.

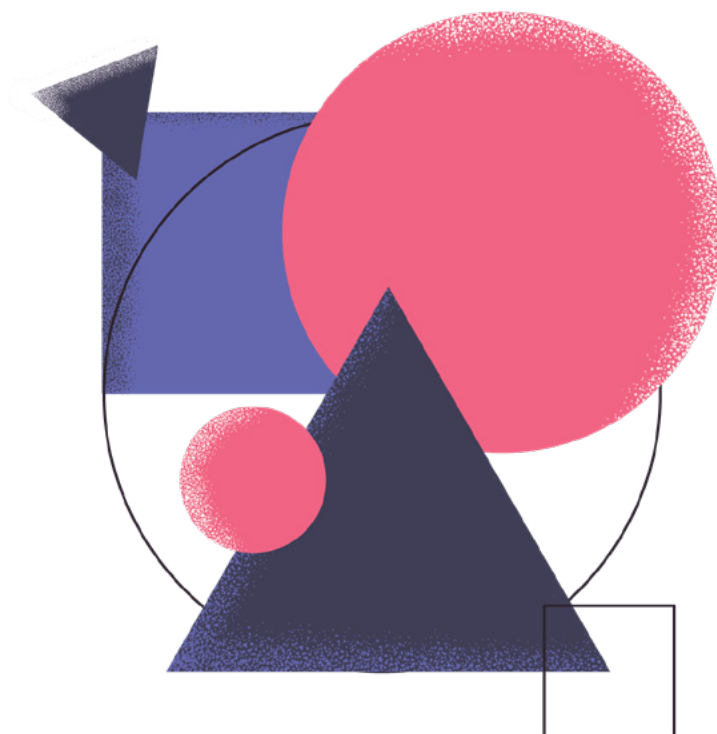
Besides, Al-Razi rejected the principle of leadership in issues of knowledge. In his capacity as a philosopher, he associated topics of knowledge with the subject of diligence in philosophy within the framework of his quest to praise his philosophical system that dealt with consideration of various issues and embraced existence and the world it contains. He attributed the world to five eternal components, namely: the Creator (Allah), the universal self (the soul), the absolute hyle (matter), the absolute space (void or emptiness), and age (time). These five components exist simultaneously, as they all share in eternity.

As for the five absolutes that distinguish the Creator, He is a perfect and pure reason, from which life flows as light flows from the sun. Al-Razi set forth his theory of the divine action and its role in creating the world, viewing the Creator existed before the appearance of the world; the other four absolutes derive their absoluteness from non-composition. For the transition of the Creator from the unwillingness to the willingness to create the world requires a motive for it. Such a change in the will cannot be in vain. Hence, this motive stemmed from the second absolute that shares the Creator in action and life, id est the self.

To put it simply, the self avails in its capacity as a living substance, but it is also characterised, unlike the Lord, by being ignorant. Owing to its ignorance, it became attached to the *heyoli*. In a parallel context, the Lord created the world in order for the self to enjoy the desires it aspired to.

As for the hyle, the Lord and the self enhance it collectively; there must be a conformity divine, it is based on the Creator and the self at the same time,





**the absolute hyle (matter), the absolute space
(void or emptiness), and age (time).
These five components exist simultaneously,
as they all share in eternity.**

and there must be an existence alignment for both. While the world, as perceived, is made of the hyle (matter), by structure rather than creativity, the hyle precedes it; it is eternal. Void present as an exigency necessitated by the constructing of the hyle, i.e. the existence of the void is necessary for the existence of the absolute hylar, namely the matter, which is also old. In this context, Al-Razi distinguished between absolute and partial time, opting to use era as a prolonged time.

Hadi Al-Alawi sees Al-Razi's five absolutes share in eternity and infinity, and in being immobile from the outset. The Creator is unique with the mind, and shares with the self of both being living and active. The hyle is characterised by being active while time and space share in the non-life and reason, with in the non-action and emotion.

Al-Razi believes Allah did not create the world out of nothing. Rather, He rearranged it from the other four pre-existing components and deliberately reshaped the soul, injecting it with physical properties that suit His will. He then bestowed it with the ability to think in order to find its way toward slavery and freedom and be able to perceive the other four principles, namely the Lord, space, matter, and time. Moreover, he crystallised his conception of the world creation based on the concept of creation as a representation of formless matter, according to Plato's belief. In addition, the idea of emanation was invented by Neoplatonism, as well as the fusion of Irfan (gnostic) elements in Al-Razi's metaphysical philosophy, in order to explain the formation of the world through the union of the self with the hyle through the act of creation. For him, the significance of creation is manifested in marking the movement with an orderly character for the formation of the world.

Al-Razi believes Allah supported the self when He

created the world, and brought about powerful, long-lived images in it; He enabled it to obtain in those images the physical pleasures. Accordingly, Allah created man or innovated him, and produced in him reason from the essence of his divinity, in order to awaken the self from its slumber in the human structure. By dint of reason, the self could remember its true world. Besides, it perceived this material world was of pain. In point of fact, Al-Razi shaped the world's fin on accounts of the separation of the total self from the hyle, while such separation appears as the fruit of the self's awareness of the material world sufferings of, and its gradual purification in all its earthly journeys. Abu Bakr Al-Razi is present as a philosopher who made up a philosophical and scientific system. His boldness, critical spirit marked his philosophy and a plain human tendency made up the legacy of his philosophical approach. Besides, his critical approach spread out into many proceeding philosophers, including Aristotle, as he contended with the latter's natural and metaphysical propositions. His philosophy also got into religions and attempts to align philosophy with religion. However, his philosophical and scientific biography was the subject of philosophical and theological debate.

For Al-Razi appeared as a concerned philosophical stature, owing to its bold questions, strong in its severity and novelty, given that he disagreed with both: his predecessors and contemporaries in clear parity. For Al-Razi "put himself in the place of his predecessors, and did not act as their commentator or a guru of philosophy," but as a bold, discerning and diligent critic. He had believed throughout his life that philosophy is not only a path to analogise Allah in its higher ranking the philosopher seeks to arrive at, but also a way of human salvation from the world evils, and might be the salvation from the world itself.



The theme of issue:

**The impact of Arab philosophy
on Western Thought:**

Alfarabi: a Bridge Between Two Civilizations:

From Greek Philosophy to Medieval Arabic Philosophy

Suleiman Al-Daher

Preamble:

Over hundreds of years, Alfarabi's philosophy has earned wide Arab and international recognition and studied. However, there is still much that we can state about the role of this universal philosopher and his influence on the temporal levels existing since the era, and the spatial one. Such an influence transcended his local culture, in its Arab and Islamic dimensions, setting out to have impact westerly and easterly until he duly deserved the designation of a global thinker, in terms of this influence, engagement in global philosophical themes, and building a holistic, non-discriminatory conception of human thought with one authentic nature.

From our perspective, Alfarabi's thought corroborated this as it represented a bridge connecting ancient and modern civilisations and continents, in the West and the East alike. As such, we will follow in this research the most substantial points and topics validating the interactive civilisational role played by Alfarabi's philosophy in connecting the East and West, and observing the mutual influence.

First: Alfarabi and authenticating Arabic philosophy:

The Arabs gained knowledge of the Greek philosophy, and embarked on their concerned criticism, translation and approach before Alfarabi. Yet, the change brought about by the second teacher in this respect was remarkable so that we can claim Arab philosophy before him is not the same as in his aftermath.

In the second chapter of The Book of Letters, titled the occurrence of words, philosophy and religion, Alfarabi sets forth a sort of historical philosophy, venturing to explain in it the advancement of culture in human societies from the stage of personalised gesturing and voting expression to the highest stages of abstract expression. He signifies to philosophy, endeavouring to corroborate its existence since the early eras of the human consciousness.

In his account of the evolution of philosophical thought, Alpharabius traces the transfer of philosophy among nations since the early eras of human consciousness until the establishment of Arab philosophy in the Middle Ages. He argues: "Philosophy originally appeared in Chaldeans, natives of Iraq, then spread to Egypt, and later to the Greeks, the Syriac, and the Arabs afterward." Thus, philosophy, from the second teacher's point of view, was not only a Greek heritage, but a human heritage, not an exclusive privilege to one nation or people; everyone shares his own peculiar imprint in progressing it. In other words, philosophy was not innate, national, or a signature of one nation; it rather embodied a dialogue between nations and peoples.

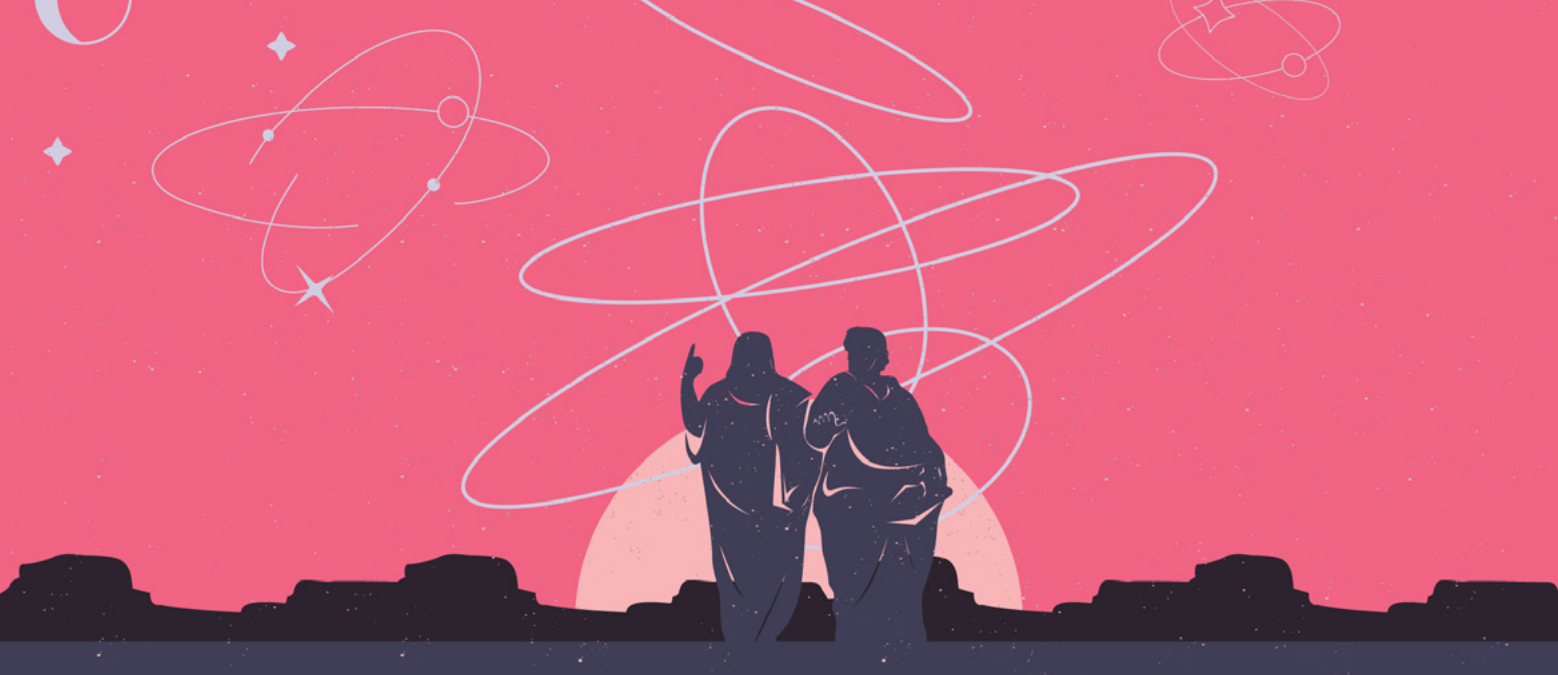
When philosophy ended up at the Arabs, and Alpharabius entered Baghdad in the tenth century AD, the Arab community embarked on heated debates. Philosophy got branded with extraneous sciences, and met a lot of rejection and opposition; fatwas were issued prohibiting philosophy and logic. Consequently, attitudes on philosophy were different and varied, as stated by Alpharabius: "Some favoured it, some others denounced it, others were non-partisan while some of them forbade it." Amidst these conflicting stances and faced with these opposing positions, involving ideological fanaticism, which widespread its influence and became entrenched in people's minds and grew a catalyst for conflict and rivalry, Alpharabius set out to defend philosophy, and he had the greatest credit for Greek philosophy to outreach the Arabs.

Alpharabius defended philosophy and engagement in this field, acting from our need for rationalising and contemplation. He was a committed philosopher who shouldered the responsibility of interpreting philosophy, showcasing the righteousness to better living conditions he experienced, steering people

toward what is more beneficial and finer through his works and attitudes, and exerting efforts to introduce philosophy in Arab thought to be of one of constituting intellectual elements of medieval Arab culture. He notified the need for philosophy, and highlighted its necessity, viewing it as the inevitable rational knowledge for every science; for there is no science or knowledge unless with philosophy so long as it is a logical, rational trial, and a systematic vision without which sciences prove inadequate. Besides, it is a holistic knowledge stretching out to all sciences, and therefore the need for it stems from our sheer interest in science. Consequently, philosophy is not viewed alien to Arab thought; it is rather latent in our knowledge, being the essence of all knowledge. In his Attainment of Happiness, the second teacher foregrounds the role and necessity of philosophy, being the oldest and principal science. He states: "This is one of the oldest sciences, and the most accomplished as principal; all other major sciences are under the leadership of this science."

We can set the necessities of engaging in philosophy on both the theoretical and practical levels according to Alpharabius:

- ◆ Obligations to engage in philosophy on the theoretical level stem from the fact that it is inherent in all sciences, being the essence of all knowledge and science, addressing our need for rational thinking, contemplation of existence, and the realisation of the first principle or the necessity of existence.
- ◆ Obligations to engage in philosophy on the practical level lie in managing the affairs of civil society and state policy; the need of the sect or the nation for philosophy- according to the requirements of human civilisation- stems from the fact that the religion does turn into virtuous, and happiness is attained there by dint of philosophy only. Furthermore, a person gains happiness if he acquires sciences.



As such, Alfarabi compared the city's happiness to the extent of its philosophy custody in contemporary language: the extent of philosophy custody measures the level of a nation's progress and advancement. "Whereas happiness is only attained when we possess beautiful things, and beautiful things become our possession through the art of philosophy, then inevitably, philosophy is the happiness gainer." Therefore, the necessity of philosophy practically stems from our need to establish a virtuous political reign and empower it; thus, we set the value and effectiveness of philosophy in its civic function and social role.

Alfarabi aspired to reform the state of the Islamic nation and the rifts that prevailed over it. He had theorised to put it out of the standstill on accounts of his role as a philosopher committed to the issues of his community. For he weighed the sterile discourse arguments that predominated Baghdad circles galvanised the rift and rivalry among the social and intellectual groups, jeopardising the unity of the Arab state. He reflected on how to halt many divisions and on all levels and correct the corrupt opinions widespread among people. For ignorant and abandoned cities only appear when religion is based

on some corrupt opinions", and philosophy is the only way to eliminate these intellectual differences.

Therefore, from Alfarabi's point of view, the philosopher does not live in an ivory tower, transcendent or introverted. Rather, he must transfer theoretical and practical knowledge to his community, seeking to attain his happiness in order to become a virtuous state. For philosophy is the mainstay of kingship, politics, and the state. As such, it is not an individual subject for him, rather a political issue, as it is linked to attaining happiness, which is the focus of the activity of society, and the goal of man and the virtuous state. In point of fact, philosophy is a requirement demanded for happiness and nation building.

Moreover, Alfarabi, having elucidated the obligations of philosophy acceptance, affirms the unity of philosophical truth, showcasing it is the basis on which the religion transcends, and a city becomes virtuous and everyone attains happiness. Thus, in the long run, philosophy ripens into a favourable judge who leads to the rightfulness and safeguards the nation from the poison of controversy and disagreement that ripped it.



Second - From West to East (Alpharabius and the spread of Greek Philosophy to the Arabs):

◆◆ —————

Alpharabius profoundly influenced the cultural interaction between Arab and European thought in the Medieval. He was an intellectual bridge that facilitated the two-directional cultural communication, from the West to the East first, and conversely.

In the first direction, Alpharabius embarked on revising the erstwhile translations and philosophical works, categorising their themes and classifying them, amending bad words used in the translation, or correcting the erroneous commentaries that delineated philosophy from some of its most important contents. This enabled him to accurately master the Greek philosophy.

Alpharabius is credited with disseminating philosophy among the Arabs and opening up to other civilisations to enhance the intellectual role of Arab culture. He strived to introduce the Greek philosophical thought, spearheaded by the wises Plato and Aristotle, to the budding Arab philosophical thought despite the fierce objection cast by the

theologists to prohibit teaching and preoccupation with philosophy. As a matter of fact, Alpharabius' life in the Caliphate's capital triggered in a bright intellectual activity in the disciplines of authorship, explanation and interpretation. He emerged as a disseminator, publisher, and a contributor to the cultural interaction between the Greek heritage and the Arab philosophical thought.

Most of Alpharabius works were fashioned as commentaries, explanations, and summaries of the philosophy of Aristotle, Plato and Galenus. He delved into the books of logic, natural sciences, laws, ethics and post-nature, so he widespread Greek philosophy in the Arab civilisation and extracted philosophical terms in his own works. We can present the explanations and summaries of the Greek philosophy that he accomplished as follows.

Commentaries and explanations of Aristotle's writings, the most important of which are:

He explained and classified Aristotle's eight logical works, which are hitherto approved in his classification and arrangement until now.

They are: quotes (Categories), phrase (Pari Armenias), analogy (Agnostics), proof (Second Analogue), debate (Dialectics), sophistry (Sophistic), and Rhetoric (Ritauriga), poetry (Poetics). He also explained other works, which are: The Heaven and the World, the Upper Effects, Natural Hearing, and Nicomachean Ethics.

There are other miscellaneous explanations in Greek philosophy, including:

An essay on Reason by Alexander of Aphrodisias, an explanation of the Almagest book by Ptolemy, an explanation of the Greek letter Zenon the Great, a summary of Plato's The Laws, besides his interpretations and commentaries on the writings of Galenus.

Alpharabius epistemologically classified the Aristotelian literature, which has been hitherto viable, starting with the books of logic, next the book of physics, followed by the metaphysics (or first philosophy), and then the practical sciences: ethics, housekeeping, and politics.

He took great care in classifying and enumerating the sciences, to the extent that he classified entire books with them, such as Statistics of Science, and The Attainment of Happiness. In the two books, the Categories and On Interpretation, he was also a commentary. Alpharabius sometimes elucidated the purpose of the book, as in his book Aims of Aristotle's Metaphysics, or illuminating a specific science or a branch of science such as the books of Measurement and Argument, analogy, or illustrating the entire doctrine of Aristotle. Occasionally, he would compare himself with other Greek philosophers, and sometimes he would delve into Aristotelian philosophical texts to retrospect their interpretations among the ancient commentators.

In sum, Alpharabius explained, interpreted, and summarised the Greek logical and philosophical books, illuminating the equivocal and revealing the vagueness to become easily approached. The far-reaching influence of the second teacher is clear in the works of the most eminent thinkers of the tenth century AD (such as the Brethren of Purity, Al-Masoodi, Miskawayh, and Abu Al-Hasan al-Amiri), and his impact reached as far as Avicenna, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Baja and Ibn Tufail. He unavoidably influenced even Averroes, who criticised him. Apart from this, most of his own many closed writings had unfortunately got lost, and only about thirty treatises survived in the Arabic language.

These traces and examples pay witness to the value and centrality epitomised by Alpharabius in consolidating the foundations of philosophical thinking in the Arab culture, by defending reason and its necessity in the nation's civilization and the preservation of religion. Therefore, the second teacher advocated legitimate authentication to engage in philosophy as a necessity for the integrity of the faith and the preservation of community. This was followed by introducing the Greek thought, and inculcate it in the Arab culture in a necessary step toward the authentication of Arab philosophy.



(Section two follows in the next issue)

Renans reading of Ibn Rushd

(The Book of Averroes and Averroism)

Adnan Al-Ahmad

Most writings of the French orientalist Ernest Renan, since the founding book (his doctoral dissertation) *Averroes and Averroism*, published in 1852 and dealt with the philosophy of Averroes (Ibn Rushd) and its influence in the West, have a tendency to extract the innovative trait of Arab and Islamic philosophy.

This thesis belongs to the field of orientalist knowledge, which we can term as the awareness of awareness, of the different other, an awareness that single-handedly paints the Westerner when studying the conditions of the Oriental from diverse knowledge disciplines. This is what we call the critical approach to ideas.

Ernest Renan is a rich philosophical experience that originated and grown in a firm tie with Arab Islamic philosophy in general, and Averroes' philosophy in particular.

The author embarked on a critical debate with Averroes' philosophy, burrowing into his philological method, unearthing he possessed Aristotle's rationalist, logical philosophy; a method that indicates, from Renan's perspective, nothing else than a commentary, summary, collection, and copying Greek philosophy, and sometimes they are negatively modified.

The philological investigation, which Renan carried

out in Averroes' philosophy, led him to exclude the distinctiveness of the Arab-Islamic philosopher, as he is preoccupied with the problems of his Arab-Islamic nation.

As a matter of fact, it is an unscientific approach to dissipate the authentication of a philosophy by dint of the philological method, by referring it to elements alien to it, and attributing everything intent to another. While such a method is significant in the research, and scientific and objective services that he furnished in all the disciplines of knowledge he embarked on, using it, nonetheless, for racist purposes aimed at undermining our civilisational heritage, and attributing all our philosophy to Greek philosophy, is blasphemy-laden act. Even the Greek philosophy itself, if subjected to the philological method, would unearth ancient non-Greek Eastern elements! Still, Renan strove to ascribe Averroes' philosophy to Aristotle's in order to evince its adherence and its cynicism with an aim merely to deprive it of its originality and privacy. This Renan's Orientalist study of the Averroistic text via the philological method gave rise to an odd and abnormal phenomenon; Averroism is a fabricated philosophy, id est a Greek philosophy with Arabic letters. This is because Averroism has turned into the advocacy of ready-made Aristotelian views.



Ernest Renan is a rich philosophical experience that originated and grown in a firm tie with Arab Islamic philosophy in general, and Averroes' philosophy in particular.

As far as I am concerned, I see Renan proceeding from a preconceived view of philosophy, viewing it as purely Greek. In other words, Renan believes the Greek philosophy has become a prototype so that no other one can be authentic unless it follows its footsteps.

Such an outlook of sublime mentality shortcomings suggests a lot of racism and superiority, which is not without ideological bias, a lack of objectivity, and a measure stripping philosophy of its authentication in creativity and renewal. Ahmad Barqawi says: "The European discovery of the East is therefore governed by an ideological nature, whether the Orientalist denied this, whether he disavowed it directly".

Renan applied his method on Averroes' philosophy selectively, advocating a prejudgment of denouncing and dispelling every philosophy that targets it. In this respect, he excludes the fact that every civilisation was influenced by previous ones, delivering something new to the subsequent one.

His dissertation comprises an introduction and two parts, and is appended to pieces of various biographies dealing with the life of Averroes. The first part, headed Averroes, has two chapters, and each is divided into sub-headings. This chapter introduces Averroes' life and his writings, while the second chapter exhibits Averroes' doctrine, which is the focus of our discussion in this article. The second part, titled Averroism, is subdivided into three chapters. In the first chapter, it dealt with Averroism in the Jews, and in scholastic philosophy in the second, and Averroism in the Badu School in the third chapter. We will not cease at the discussion in the second part of this dissertation, since it is, in its entirety, a presentation of the impact of Averroes' commentaries in the Western schools.

In the second chapter of the first part, Renan portrays the entire doctrine of Averroes. At the backdrop of all his endeavours, Renan purposes to associate Averroes' philosophy with Aristotle's philosophy on the origin of beings, the hyle (matter), the first cause, divine providence, the theory of heaven and reasons, collective immortality, resurrection, morals, and politics. In digest form, he views Averroes as merely a commentator, not a creator; namely, he just transfers thought and philosophy. This denial of creativity and innovation, with a derogatory and excisional discourse, is far from objectivity. The underestimation of Averroes' philosophy in Renan's dissertation, rendering it as a purely Greek philosophy in Islamic dress, and asserting that it is a syncretic philosophy that aims to reconcile between reason and transmission, implies a hostile and fanatical view in which there is a lot of slander against Arab philosophy.

I would enquire here: was Renan fair in his judgment? Is Averroes' philosophy really consequential or creative?

Renan attributed the Arabs' distance from philosophical thinking to the Semitic race. He says: "Philosophy among the Semites was nothing but a purely external metaphor, devoid of a fertile great, other than following the example of Greek philosophy. Likewise, we can say about medieval philosophy." He goes on, "The Semitic and medieval East owes Greece exactly all their philosophy. Therefore, if deciding a philosophical argument for us in the past, only the Greek had the right to teach us lessons."



Although some scholars viewed Averroes as a messenger of rationality and free thought, adjudging him as the architect of modern Europe renaissance, as Thomas Aquinas' philosophy was fashioned on his views, and from him Maimonides (Moses ben Maimon) bought his revolt against the rigidity of the Jewish teachings, not to mention that his philosophy dominated for several centuries in Europe as well, as highlighted in the second part of Renan's book, the Arabs, according to the latter, were unaware of the importance of Averroes. He states: "Although Averroes had schooled a great number of Jews and Christians for four centuries, and his name came to light several times in the human mental debates, he did not establish a school for him among his citizens, and while he was the most celebrated Arab by the Latins, he was utterly obliterated among his fellows." Renan believes Averroes knows no better than others, "He is acquainted with medicine, like Galenus, and philosophy, like Aristotle, and astronomy, like Almagest, but adds up a degree of criticism rare in Islam."

Responding to those who believe Averroes was the first to translate Aristotle and made lengthy

commentaries from Greek into Arabic that backed Saint Thomas and the Sclecs, Renan says: "Aristotle was translated into Arabic three centuries earlier than Averroes; it was the Syriac who embarked almost on all translations of the Greek authors. Barely could you find a Muslim scholar, whether an Andalusian Arab who was undoubtedly acquainted with the Greek . Renan criticises everyone viewing Averroes as "innovator of doctrines that he could only explain better than his predecessors." Rather, Renan strips all Arab philosophers of the label of philosopher, "and we do not have to be deluded by the importance of those dubbed as philosophers among the Arabs; philosophy was merely a discursive accident throughout the history of the very Arabs."

In addition, Renan suggests it is theology, not philosophy, that should be researched among the Arabs: "It is the theological distinctions in which one should search for the philosophical movement in Islam, such as Qadariyah, Jabriyah, the Safatiyyah, the Mu'tazilah, Batiniyah, and the Ash'arite." Here Renan arrives at the fact that it is not acceptable to name some classifications as an Arab philosophy:

“While Arabs injected their national mark into their religious innovations, poetry, artistic structure, and speculative theology sects, they hardly revealed any creativity in their endeavour to pursue the Greek philosophy. It is more pertinent to state it is a fascinating confusion to term “Arabic Philosophy” on a collection of books.”

Renan believes nothing but that Greek philosophy was written in Arabic since this language became the language of science and religion in all Islamic countries. From his perspective, the real Arab genius was manifested in the composition of poems, and in the eloquence of the Qur’an, and this entails a discord with the Greek philosophy.

The ill-disposed attitude toward this Arab-Islamic philosophy notwithstanding, Renan maintains: “Arab philosophy could draw out the great Peripatetic problems with boldness and insight, and actively seek to solve them; this seems to me superior to our medieval philosophy, which downsized the dilemmas and tackled them from a dialectical point of view.”

Having totally de-authenticated Averroes’ philosophy, attributing all topics he delved into to Aristotle’s philosophy, Renan claims: “Averroes’ theory of the celestial bodies is nothing but a lengthy explanation of the twelfth part of metaphysics, and his theory of the human reason is merely the third part of The Book on the Soul (Kitab Al-Nafs), which has been accurately interpreted, and what philosophy was marked by in terms of a bold reconciliation and fusion of Sufi sects.” Renan also held that the Arab philosophers perverted their translations distortedly: “The Arabs perverted all the Peripatetics by enlarging some theories in particular. Strikingly, theories they preferred appear casually or ambiguously in Aristotle’s philosophy.” Still, Renan views no role played by Averroes regarding

the political and moral philosophy: “Averroes’ politics does not involve brilliant innovations as expected; it is merely a collection of Plato’s politics.” Renan comes up with: “So far, Averroes does not seem to me but an honest and brilliant commentator of Aristotle’s attitude.”

Renan, in a nutshell, judges that the lack of pure creativity, and the ambience of Aristotelian philosophy in Averroes’ writings, do not prompt us to acknowledge the existence of an authentic Arab philosophy, and that its existence remained marginal and alien to the Arab reality, and that it did not accomplish any historical mission. As such, Averroism is nothing more than an imitation and echoing of the Aristotelian model. In this sense, it is a repetition and rumination, extraction and copying. Therefore, Averroes’ eminence, in Renan’s opinion, is confined to the explanation of Aristotle’s philosophy.

In point of fact, he recapitulated his standpoint applied to Averroes’ philosophy of Islam.

One might enquire, at the backdrop of all that, to what extent Renan was right in weighing up Averroes’ philosophy? Is it possible for us to abandon these features that united most of the views of the Orientalists and some of our scholars like Farah Antun? Can we evoke genuine Arab and Islamic philosophical innovations out of Averroes’ explanations? Is it right to deprive Averroes of his partaking in bringing into light an authenticated philosophy in the ancientness of science and God’s knowledge? Aren’t they significant innovations in our Arab antiquity? Averroes’ contribution was knowledge productive rather than a disseminator. He was an attentive commentator; dispossessing his attribute of authenticity is incorrect.

Barely are we off the mark if we state Averroes played a key role in the formation of European thought, and Badou University bears witness to that. As a matter of historical fact, Aristotle grew more influential in European philosophy in medieval thanks to the commentaries of Averroes, who was the last of the great rational, critical Arab philosophers; the era that followed was termed the era of decadence.

Averroism had firmly affected the European philosophy, and motivated Christian philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas, and Jews like Maimonides. Despite the negative reactions cast by Jewish and Christian clergy, Averroes' writings were taught at the University of Paris and in other medieval universities. Averroism remained the dominant thought in Europe until the sixteenth century.

Should there be a causal association, from the scholars' perspective, between what happened with Averroes and the decadence, decline and the frightening civil and political deterioration in the aftermath, there is nonetheless a close link between his philosophy and the progress that began shortly after in the West. The West has picked Averroes' explanations, ideas and theories following their ban in their native homeland; it occurred that there was decline here and a progress and advancement there! While some researchers might deem Averroes' presence in Western thought negative, in view of the ecclesiastical authorities' confrontation with him, his positive aura was so dominant in Western philosophical schools.

As we recall Averroes in this light article, we seek a contemporary Arab rationality advocating critical rationality as a method; evoking Averroes' philosophy to our Arab contemporary is a restoration of the rationality lost in the Arab cultural space, and the

critical reason freed from fanaticism and explicit self-closure, as well as the explicit call to widen the space for the liberated thought and tolerance.

The reinstatement of Averroes on account of his eight-century forced exile is a recapture of the foundations of renaissance, enlightenment, and the true awakening.

Averroes passed away in Marrakesh, Morocco, and his remains were transported to his ancestral cemetery in Cordoba in a large procession. These remains were placed on the back of a beast, equivalent on the other side to his surviving writings and books. This funeral, in actuality, was the last procession of the defeated rational Arab philosophy at home at the hands of its people, after it was a pioneer of immortal intellectual and scientific contributions and achievements.

Avicennas Influence on Roger Bacon

Fatima Ali

History tells us the Arabs spoke the languages of other peoples, so they did not live in isolation from the neighbouring civilisations, not only in the era of Islam but also in the time proceeding and outset of Islam, in the era termed as Al Jahiliyah (ignorance). Otherwise, how could Imru' Al-Qays demand the Roman Emperor for help to restore his father's authority as narrated in Ibn Qutayba's *Tabaqat Al-Shu'ara'*. Likewise, the poet Umayyah bin Abi Salt Al-Thaqafi, nicknamed (Abu Al-Hakam), was reported to be fond of travel, and was very familiar with books of religions and works written in other languages. This enabled him to introduce foreign words that were not used before into Arabic. Zaid bin Thabit's narration may be the most renowned account at our hands about translation in the Prophet's era. The Prophet ordered him to learn Hebrew and Syriac, and indeed he mastered both languages in a short time, the former in fourteen days, and the latter within seventeen days. The Abbasid era, on the other hand, is viewed as the most lucrative Arab eras regarding literature and science incontrovertibly. For, Arabs of the time matched the progress attained by neighbouring civilisations in terms of urbanisation and culture. Besides, this era was replete with great Arabic translations of important international materials related to philosophy and science from

Greece, Persia, and India. The pioneers of this golden age drew from it and developed it to produce Islamic knowledge, which became a major tributary and an influential number in enriching the global intellectual and knowledge production.

In his book *The Adventure of Islam*, the historian Marshall Hodgson points out that this era witnessed an immense expansion at the linguistic and cultural levels, as the society was multilingual and multicultural. One of its most prominent translators was Hanin bin Ishaq, the Nestorian Christian who mastered many languages, including Syriac, Persian, and Greek. Indisputably, the Arabic-Latin translation movement in the Middle Ages played a major role in the fundamental change experienced by all branches of philosophy afterward. The role of Islamic philosophy was not only confined to preserve these sciences; the influence cast by Islamic philosophy and Muslim philosophers, notably Alfarabius (Al-Farabi), Avicenna (Ibn Sina), and Ibn Rushd was evident in the progress achieved by Europe later in fields of knowledge and thought.



He was the most conversant amongst his contemporaries with Avicenna's life and works, favouring him to Averroes, and it is said he owed all philosophers to him. He did not hesitate to coin him the «leader of the philosophers

Arab-Islamic philosophy flourished, and Avicennian (after Avicenna) was one of its most flagship schools. Abu Ali Al-Hussein bin Abdullah bin Al-Hassan bin Ali bin Sina, known as Avicenna (Ibn Sina), was born to a father from the city of Balkh (today in Afghanistan) and a villager mother from the village of Afshneh of Bukhara (today in Uzbekistan) in the year 980 AD. He died in 1037 AD in Hamadan (present day in Iran). Avicenna was one of the most rigorous philosophers in method and expanded on the topics of his works. He was renowned for his prolific author and encyclopaedic knowledge. Avicenna was particularly interested in classification, so he categorised philosophy into two parts: speculative and practical. From his perspective, the speculative philosophy further divided into a lower science (physics), a middle science (mathematics), and a higher science (metaphysics and theology), while practical philosophy is subdivided into ethics, (which concerns the individual), economics (which views the individual as a member of a community), and politics (which views the individual as a member of a civil society). This classification had an important impact on the arrangement of the study of philosophical schools, where the philosophy of Avicenna is rated as a preface to the study of Aristotle's philosophy.

In his *The History of Philosophy*, Fedric Copleston, one of the most celebrated historians of Western philosophy in the Middle Ages, highlights: "Avicenna is unquestionably the greatest philosopher in the Eastern group, being the true architect of the scholastic system in the Islamic world." Avicenna's attributed works exceeded two hundred and forty, covering a wide spectrum of aspects including metaphysics, logic, poetry, rhetoric, physics, mechanics of solid minerals, meteorology, mystical treatises, music, psychology, medical treatises and others, and were translated into over nineteen languages. His debut

book *Al-Qanun fi Al-Tibb* (Law in Medicine) had been the primary reference in medicine for seven centuries, as it was taught in European universities until the mid-seventeenth century. Other works, *The Encyclopaedia of Healing*, *The Encyclopaedia of Rescue*, and *The Encyclopaedia of Signs*, are viewed as the crown jewels of his philosophical collection as they embrace his most critical principles in metaphysics and logic, besides psychology and others.

The translated texts from *The Book of Shifa* (Healing) were among the most influential Arabic texts in the science of logic, particularly Avicenna's theory of the art of the first and second reasonable meanings, where he defined the first meanings by the way one reaches from the unknown to the known. He pointed out that the science of logic deals with the second reasonable meanings, "which are based on the first reasonable meanings to attain the known." This theory was employed to prove the independence of logic; it is a stand-alone branch of philosophy, and not just a tool for accessing philosophical knowledge. Many philosophers adopted this theory, including Roger Bacon, who was clearly influenced by Avicenna's philosophy.

In fact, Roger Bacon is a prominent English Medieval philosopher (1214-1292), and was rated as the pioneer of modern experimental science. Roger contributed to the widespread of this theory, where he defined the rationalities as the intelligible mental images, the mental symmetries of things.

Some sources claim Avicenna's influence on Roger Bacon was exaggerated, but there is much proof showing the latter's fascination with Avicenna's philosophy. He was the most conversant amongst his contemporaries with Avicenna's life and works, favouring him to Averroes, and it is said he owed all philosophers to him.



He did not hesitate to coin him the “leader of the philosophers”. As a matter of fact, this fascination was not subjective; as we saw he did not shrink from criticising Avicenna’s opinion on the eternity of the world, as well as the theory of emanation (emergence). Furthermore, Roger was the first to present Aristotle’s studies as interpreted by Avicenna on the campuses of the University of Paris in 1240 AD. In psychology, Islamic theory distinguished between degrees and levels of reason.

Avicenna and others classified active reason as being among the lowest levels, and Avicenna and Augustine linked that reason to God. Scholars described this trend as Augustinian Avicennian, and Roger was one of those who tended to this direction. The influence of Avicenna also emerges in Roger Bacon’s writings on experience, remarkably on animals’ perception of individual things. Besides, Avicenna classified the self into vegetal, animal, and human. The animal one is characterised by its consciousness of molecules, while the human self by its consciousness of the totality, plus its will and the ability to choose from among alternatives. Roger described the experience as a science based on expertise, singling out human,

rather than animals, with this capacity. As for natural philosophy, the impact of Avicenna was clear in Roger’s proposition about the matter. In point of fact, Roger Bacon opposed the monistic position explaining the material world, i.e. the belief that all beings comprise one element. In Bacon’s attitude, the matter is composed of substance and form, which unite to make matter, and this is exactly what Avicenna highlighted when he showed that the matter cannot be devoid of the basic form, and that form cannot be separated from substance. He also opposed the contemporary position, which subjected the individual to the universal or general nature, as obedience was called, and the preservation of hierarchy and subordination. He came across the desired answer in Avicenna’s metaphysics, which categorised nature into a general universal and a private individual. In sum, the philosophy of Avicenna had deeply influenced the thought of Roger Bacon. This bears witness the Arab-Islamic philosophy was not a mere explanation or interpretation of Aristotle’s philosophy, but rather was rightly an addition whose influence cannot be ignored or disregarded.



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