

Abstract

This study tries to contribute in the critique of Pan-Arabic discourse by examining four of its theorists. This study takes Mouhammad Darouaza as a sample of the first generation, Nadim Bitar and Qustantin Zuraiq of the second, and Azmi Bishara of the third. It then tries to interlace their thoughts starting from the argument “cultural becoming of thought” in order to understand the Pan- Arabic discourse.

Chapters of this study have not concerned in finding out the western influence on the formation of each of the four theorists. Nor has the study treated Pan-Arabic discourse as a branch out of original Pan-nationalism. It rather considered it as the original which expresses the dialectics with the problems of the Arab world.

The study comes to classify the Arabic Pan-nationalism into three periods. First: the period of Extention where the Arab Pan-nationalists used a discourse of correctness. So it reveals, by analyzing Darouaza’s writings that the theorist of Pan-Arabism who has viewed it with a sense of racism, has definitely studied the Arabic tradition, and early recognized that he should work on redefining Islam and its national history.

This means that many pan-Arab theorists of the first generation have not neglected the necessity of engaging the tradition in the Arabic renaissance project. But because of the pressure of the other\ colonialism they couldn’t reach a subjective understanding of its core.

Had the second generation continued the founding effort of this trend, there would not be a gab that has been bridged by political Islam. But the followers, as it will be clearly viewed through analyzing the works of Bitar and Zoraiq, who are theorists of the second generation, have slipped into a discourse of scientism.

In this period, pan-national theorists paid attention to the necessity of reordering the thesis of Arabic pan-nationalism and getting rid of its romantic sides. Shortly, they recognized the ideological nature of the pan-national idea. Thus, they modified and gave it a scientific tincture. So they

theorized that it is necessary to make use of the results of modern knowledge that have been achieved by sociological and historical studies.

The study also examines the second generation crisis when they took up the discourse of scientism. Some were confined to the synchronic methodology, or the dialectic of substance in terms of Hegel, that Bitar represents. He imagined the ideological pan-nationalism according to the necessity of analyzing the historical shifts from a divided society to a united one. In other words, it is necessary to examine the social strategies and rules that make such unity. Not only that, but also to recognize it as a structure bearing in itself its own constituents.

If Bitar has gone to the ideological extreme of the scientific pan-nationalism, Zouraiq has, in the name historianism, gone to its opposite. By that, he attributes pan-Arabism to ethics rather than to politics. He also includes it in a private space, and excludes it from a public one. This is due to the resemblance he sees between pan-Arabism and religion according to enlightenment.

This shift has not had the chance to take place unless Zouraiq has replaced the call for pan-Arabism with a call for modernization, getting the modern ways in utilization and production, and joining the scientifically and technically developed people. The machine, in his view, is the lord of society. The machine moves the society and guarantees freedom and independence. Zouraiq was a par excellent theorist for Instrumentalism.

If Bitar has left the political field to negatively mark the Arab world in assistance with pan-Arabism, then Zouraiq has left pan-Arabism in assistance with modernization. Zouraiq has been overwhelmed by the capitalist mechanic west, so he absorbed the modernist ideology of the west without realizing the colonial syndrome that is in its structure. Therefore, he has been trapped by the diachronic methodology, the dialectic of being in terms of Hegel.

In the contemporary period, the period of renewal, from the cultural process to pan-Arabism, Bishara bridges the gap that his previous made. He pays attention to the real romance of knowledge, so he can avoid the calls

of diving realism which results in sectarian and tribal identity politics. Romanticism is necessary for imagination, not only as a political legal project and as a vital refuge and reaction to resist the imperial center, but also as an alternative for the Eurocentrism.

The concept of pan-nationalism shifts from being a goal or a tool according to the previous theorists, to become continuity according to Bishara. When it becomes like that, we can then see it as part of modernity which can't be set aside from other parts as democracy. So, pan-Arabism is a process of continuation. Democracy is another one. Modernity is the biggest continuation in which all constituents interplay to make "a civil society directed towards inside and a nation towards outside". This couldn't be achieved unless Bishara has argued the dialectics of substance along side with that of being. The argument then has opened the door for the recovery of Romancism which has been divorced by the scientific discourse. Imagination has contained it.

Avoiding reading the "feeling" and "imagination" as scientific arguments, and asserting the scientific discourse leads to separate ideology from practice, and the intellectual from the social classes. Thus it leads to elitism. So theorists of pan-nationalism, in the period of renewal, had to follow up the ways of imagination in order to be able to imagine people themselves as a political group expressing itself as a nation.