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Landmarks from the Heritage of the Moroccan Thinker, Mohamed Abed Al-Jabri

Mohammad Moustakin

Interdisciplinary University of Nador,
Nador, Morocco,
Moustakin.mohamed09@gmail.com

Abstract. Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri (1935—2010) is one of the significant philosophical and scientific figures who left their strong and broad imprint in various fields of contemporary Arab culture. Al-Jabri created his philosophy towards various aspects of Arab history. This included philosophy, theology, politics, ethics, and other aspects. His philosophical works culminated in his famous book on "The Arab Mind," in which he dealt with "The Structure of the Arab Mind" and supplemented it with his famous book — "Critique of the Arab Mind." The article's primary task is limited to addressing the intellectual path of Al-Jabri by tracing what he wrote and the content of these works. Besides, in this article, what Al-Jabri wrote is arranged in chronological order in order to clarify the features of the general and particular course of his philosophical creativity. It is a necessary task for scientific research in his philosophy. It provides the reader and researcher with the complete basic set of his books.

Keywords: Al-Ash'ari, Al-Jabri, Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Rushd, Reason, Arabic Reason, Qur'an

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Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri (1936—2010) is a philosophy and Arab-Islamic thought professor at the Faculty of Arts in Rabat. He enriched the Arab library by authoring 30 books on issues of contemporary thought, the most important of which is "Localization of Arab Thought," and it has been translated into several languages. He received the Baghdad Prize for Arab Culture from UNESCO in 1988 and the Moroccan Prize for Culture in Tunisia in 1999. Al-Jabri is one of the most critical Moroccan thinkers who left a clear imprint in contemporary Arabic literature.

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He wrote on many topics and issues; and tried to provide solutions to a set of philosophical, metaphysical, and ethical problems that confronted the Arab Islamic reason and still confront it to this day. Returning to his legacy, we can see that he started his knowledge project by talking about issues of science and rationality, considering that the Arabs were far behind the ride of science and technology. Therefore, it is necessary to search for the reason that will make them keep pace with the developments that the world knows, which indicates and means that our friend is still concerned with the same question, that occupied the thinkers of the Arab Renaissance: "Why did the Arabic world turn away from science?"

Al-Jabri's project seeks to reformulate and arrange the relationships of knowledge fields in Arab culture with each other while researching the origins of each field and employing a critical conceptual apparatus that allowed him to rise in the process of criticism that he carried out to contemporary horizons, which enabled him to make our heritage contemporary Ours. At the time, he made sure to keep it contemporary to itself.

In the following papers of this article, we will focus on the entirety of Al-Jabri's legacy, and the details of the fields of knowledge that make up this heritage, as well as the goal that he was seeking, behind his writings, all this along with the developments that the man's thought knew, starting from the first book he wrote to the last Handwriting book.

Translated into many European languages, the author of *Criticism of the Arab reason*, which is considered one of the most essential books that Al-Jabri left for us, in which he attempted to provide a contemporary reading of the intellectual, religious, and political history of the Arab world. Although he is not the only one who has worked on heritage, his boldness, clarity and complex scientific background have made his reading of heritage a distinct example.

Before it was a book, it was a project that Muhammad Abdul Jabri carried on his shoulders, criticizing the Arab reason objectively, and what is meant by the mind here is not the actions and the Arab ideology, but the reason as a machine of theories or a common way in the Arab "Islamic" unconscious in which our reason works. Thus, culture is the first part of the reference system for mental thinking. Therefore, Abed Al-Jabri began his project by identifying the components of Arab culture in light of its comparison with the Greek and European cultures, because they had practiced, along with the Arab reason, rational theoretical thought, which contributed to the emergence of science, philosophy and legislation independent of myths.

Al-Jabri also followed a special methodology in dealing with issues and problems, which was to refer to the ancient heritage, and thus we find him to have chosen the legacy of the philosopher of Cordoba Ibn Rushd. Thus, he republished the most important works of the great commentator.

The purpose of returning to Ibn Rushd's books and reprinting them, accompanied by a preface from the entrepreneur, was to identify the most important contributions made by the Arab-Muslim reason to the development and prosperity

of the humanities, starting with medicine. This led Al-Jabri to reissue a book in medicine for Ibn Rushd, not because of his medical opinions on this or that disease, but because it ushers in a new moment in the history of practical thinking in medicine in Arab culture, it is a book that belongs more to the field of scientific thought than to medical practice [1].

In the same vein, we find him republishing a collection of Ibn Rushd's books. "Revealing the methods of evidence, which use to defend religious thoughts" [2]. In this book, as Abed al-Jabri tells us, Ibn Rushd tried to criticize the thought of Al-Ash'ari and demonstrate that its perceptions are not valid for the public or scholars. This criticism was devoted to Al-Ash'ari discourse because it was the pinnacle of the evolution of speech science then. This confirms that the rational criticism is directed not only to Al-Ash'ari but also to all the differences in speech; that are widespread in the Arab and Islamic world.

In 1998 he wrote a book *Ibn Rushd: Biography and Thought* [3]. Mohammed Abed al-Jabri says that in this author, he tried to touch on Ibn Rushd's biography and introduce his thoughts through his most important books, in jurisprudence and *Usul (Fundamentals of Fiqh)*, doctrine, philosophy, science, medicine, and politics.

In 1989 he wrote *Problems in Contemporary Arab Thought* [4]. In this book, he discussed a big problem, which confronted the Arab reason, in the past and still imposed itself, the question of the relationship of the current Arab situation in its relationship with the Arab past, and with the European present, which today imposes itself to the whole world.

In 1991 he wrote *Heritage and Modernity* to deal with a major topic related to the topic of approach and vision in heritage studies. Al-Jabri acknowledges that his goal in writing this book is to search for the approach to be followed in the study of heritage while not forgetting the openness to modern methods and openness to new visions and approaches.

We cannot fail to mention the books written during the period from 1977 to 1980. Though belonging to separate historical periods, they still deal with the same subject, working on crystallizing a new vision of our Arab Islamic heritage by making a new methodology in research, for understanding and making others understand.

In 1982, he wrote a book, marking the 100th anniversary of the Arab Renaissance Project, which is long enough for us to take a stand of accountability and review. He believes That the basic issues raised by pioneers of the Arab renaissance a hundred years ago are still present, and little has been achieved of them, and the matter is not limited to Islamic countries, even the European countries, which heralded freedom, enlightenment, progress, peace, and prosperity for the people of Europe and the whole world, under the slogan of modernity. All of this was not realistically achieved. Rather, the opposite happened.

In 1994 he focused the light on the issue of human rights through his book *Democracy and Human Rights* [5], where he examined the concept of democracy and how it develops and changes according to historical eras. In every age, and

perhaps even during the same era, there was a concept of democracy. If it is not different from the concept that prevailed before it, then it is at least very different to it.

As for the year 1996, he went to discuss the issue of religion and the state through his book entitled *Religion, the State and the Application of Sharia* [6] where he tried to get rid of the scourge of ideology in reading religious texts, distinguishing between historical facts and what is merely a whim and subjective desires, as long as the subject of religion is, the state and the application of Sharia are among the subjects that are affected by what is political and subject to its needs and logic, which leads to the loss of the truth in the maze of what is political. Therefore, we must study this issue according to a credible reference and not something else.

In 1984, he started his great project on what he called the Arab reason, and we find that he has devoted to this project a group of his most important books. Starting with his book titled *The Structure of the Arabic Reason, a Critical Analytical Study of Knowledge Systems in Arab Culture* in four parts [7].

In the year 1984, the first part came under the title *Formation of the Arabic Reason* [8] as it dealt with the problem of the Arab renaissance, and how it missed the path, by virtue that it did not undertake a comprehensive review of the mechanisms of the reason, its concepts, perceptions, and visions, and due to the absence of studies on this topic, Abed Al Jabri set himself up to do this. That was a problematic and challenging task. So he chose to begin his project by analyzing the components of Arab culture and thus forming the Arab reason itself and the cognitive systems that establish Arab culture and clash within it.

In the second part, he tried to analyze the cognitive systems that characterized the Arab reason, namely: The Rhetorical, mysticism, and demonstrative, with the aim of examining its mechanisms, concepts, visions, and their relationship to each other, which constitutes the internal structure of the Arab reason.

In his book *The Arab Political Reason: The Determinants and Manifestations*, he dealt with political practice and its manifestations in the Arab Islamic civilization and its extensions to this day [9]. The political reason is neither a demonstrative nor mystical; it is a reason that employs the categories and mechanisms of various cognitive systems as needed. Politics is based on pragmatism, that is, consideration of utility or interest.

Al-Jabri confirms that he will use a conceptual apparatus that will shine from two types of concepts: one that he will take from contemporary social and political scientific thought; and one that derives from his Arab and Islamic heritage.

Before delving into the political experience, Al-Jabri tells us about all the backgrounds that he will rely upon in deconstructing the topic of the Arab political reason; as he indicated in the introduction to the book, a set of approaches chosen by European thinkers in his approach to politics such as Michel Foucault, Lukach, and others. Through them, Al-Jabri will try to study the Arab political mind, how it was formed, according to which references, and what the nature of the political power spread in Islamic countries.

In 2001, his book *The Arab Moral Reason, A Critical Analytical Study of Value Systems*, came into being existence. This book is considered as a continuation of Al-Jabri's project on criticism of the Arab reason. It is the fourth and last part of the criticism of the Arab reason, and Al-Jabri complains about the absence of Arab references that are concerned with the issue of morality among the Arabs, but rather everything that exists, studies issued in their perception of the issue of morality on a model that belongs to another culture that has its system of morals. It is the European culture, which makes us judge the Arab moral thought in the Arab culture by the standards of that model [10].

Accordingly, the important task that Al-Jabri will undertake in this book is to study the entirety of the writings that dealt with the topic of ethics among ancient and modern thinkers, intending to identify the current situation on which there is a history of ethics in the Arab Islamic culture.

In 1997 he wrote a book under the title *Fossils in the Memory from Afar*. In this book, he tried to discuss the issue of biography by identifying what he tried to read at some stage of his personal life, from childhood to masculinity, in order to make an analytical presentation, with a kind of interpretation, for what seems to him to be entitled to be told and conveyed to the reader [11].

Thought of Ibn Khaldoun: Tribal Loyalty, or Nationalism, Features of Khaldoonism Theory in Islamic History. After ten years of studying the heritage of Ibn Khaldun, he concluded that there is still room for research, this important figure in the history of Islamic thought, despite the large number of studies that have been interested in him. Most of the interpretations presented to Ibn Khaldun's thought are contradictory and differ among themselves, which confirms that we need a correction process that would return the Khalduni thought to its original framework and preserve its entirety and its true identity [12].

In 2009 he wrote *In the Midst of Politics, Thought and Practice* in two parts. They are thoughts and obsessions, which characterized Al-Jabri's life, throughout the period between 1959 and 2002, related to political and intellectual issues, in addition to the biography, all issues that characterized Al-Jabri's life and confused his thoughts. He considered them as introductions to what will come in the future in the form of notes or books, reflecting the concerns of the cultural and political arena during that historical era.

In 2006 Al-Jabri began to be interested in the topic of Qur'an sciences, starting with the book *Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'an*, followed by three books entitled *Understanding the Holy Qur'an, Interpretation in Order of Verses* between 2008 and 2009. The issue of understanding the holy Qur'an is always a task and required at all times, and it may suffice for me to remind that our conviction that the Qur'an addresses people of every time and place requires us to acquire a renewed understanding of the Qur'an by renewing conditions in every age. Consequently, posing the question "How to understand the Qur'an, the clear interpretation according to the order in which the verses were revealed" does not involve an adventure, but the answer to it, in light of the facts of the era in which

we live, is the great adventure¹. Compulsory chooses for this task, an approach based on ridding the Qur'an of all the interpretations that were previously given to it, not by throwing it in the trash bin, but in order to link it with its time and place, so that we can connect us, we are in our time and the text itself as it is in its authenticity permanent.

In the year 2006, he moved towards writing on the subject of Quranic sciences. He wrote a book for which he chose a title *An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, in the Definition of the Qur'an* [13]. The owner of "Arab Reason" admits that his conversion to writing in the subject of the sciences of the Qur'an remains within the scope of the field in which he chose to write from the beginning of his intellectual project, namely the Arab Islamic heritage, and yet the task remains to determine the place that this topic occupies within his intellectual project as a whole. It is a foundation for the foregoing or is it like a continuation of the above or is the matter related to a different topic.

Al-Jabri tells us that this book, which consists of two parts. The first part is devoted to the definition of the Qur'an, while the second one is devoted to topics in the Qur'an.

In 1976 he wrote *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science, Contemporary Rationalism and the Development of Thought* [14]. Al-Jabri admits that, in the Arab world, we are still lagging behind scientific thought, technology, and our philosophical studies are still more preoccupied with metaphysical views than with issues of science, knowledge, and technology, which is reflected in its effects on our universities and the general cultural climate. This is at a time when we are in desperate need to modernize the Arab Reason and renew the Arab mentality, and this will only be achieved by pushing our groups to keep pace with the development of scientific thought and contribute to its enrichment on the one hand and work to spread knowledge on the largest scale on the other hand. In this context comes this book, which consists of lectures that Al-Jabri gave to his students at the university. The book constitutes al-Jabri's desire to be accessible to everyone, so he committed himself to simplification as much as possible, as he began with a history of the emergence and development of some scientific issues, and their analysis does not highlight their epistemological value and their philosophical connotations.

In 1998 he wrote *An Introduction to Plato's book The Essentials on Politics* [15]. In the introduction, he tried to address the common idea of Arab thinkers about Ibn Rushd, which distances him from Arab concerns and interests, and that he reveres Aristotle and an extension of his previous thesis, which tries to reconcile religion and philosophy. All these prejudices about Ibn Rushd; we must be Freedom from it permanently, as long as Ibn Rushd is something other than what is conveyed by the inherited provisions.

¹ How to understand the Qur'an, the precise interpretation according to the order in which the verses were revealed, In three parts, the first and second in 2008, the third in 2009, Moroccan Publishing House, Casablanca, Morocco.

Consequently, we are facing an opportunity to correct our knowledge of Ibn Rushd, which we lost for a long time, by reviewing previous books on Ibn Rushd, due to what it suffers from the "crisis of understanding". In this context comes this book, which is considered a revolution in Ibn Rushd's studies. The book "What is necessary in politics" responds to our contemporary political concerns. Instead, it challenges our courage and our ability to act on our behalf in criticizing the styles of governance in our time.

This book is necessary for building political practice on scientific knowledge, and what is necessary and practical in Plato's *The Book of Politics*, known as the *Republic*, the eternal dialogue that people read in every age and find it speaking on their behalf. Ibn Rushd did not limit himself to extracting the necessary scientific myths in the Plato dialogue but added to him the theoretical and methodological matters framed by those sayings, and what he differed from Plato and replaced him with opinions and analyzes related to the Arab civilization experience in general and the Andalusian reality in his era in particular.

In conclusion, it becomes clear to us through all of Al-Jabri's books that his intellectual journey is full of authorship in various fields of human knowledge, starting from the real sciences and ending with the sciences of the Qur'an. This raises many questions, perhaps the most important of which is: Why did the owner of the *Structure of the Arab Reason* finish his project with the sciences of the Qur'an? Why we find in Arab and Islamic heritage that most of the thinkers have finished their scientific careers by addressing the topic of the sciences of the Qur'an?

A list of the most influential books by Al-Jabri

1) Religion and the state, and the application of Sharia. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1996.

2) Necessity in politics for Plato. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1998.

3) The Arab moral reason. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 2001.

4) The Arab political reason. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1995.

5) Disclosure of evidence approaches in the beliefs of religion. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1998.

6) Universalis in medicine. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1999.

7) Intellectuals in Arab civilization, the Nakba of Ibn Hanbal and the plight of Ibn Rushd. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1995.

8) The Arab Renaissance Project, a critical review. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1996.

9) The Structure of the Arabic Reason. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1986.

10) *The Formation of Arabic Reason*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1984.

11) *The Incoherence of the incoherence*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1998.

12) *Fossils in memory from afar*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1997.

13) *Dialogue of the East and the Maghreb*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1990.

14) *The final says regarding the problematic relationship of philosophy and religion*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1997.

15) *An introduction to the sciences of the Qur'an*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 2006.

16) *Thought of Ibn Khaldoun: Tribal loyalty or nationalism*. Beirut, Lebanon: Center for Arab Unity Studies; 1992.

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About the author:

Mohammad Moustakin — Professor of Philosophy and Islamic Thought, Interdisciplinary University of Nador, Nador, Morocco (e-mail: Moustakin.mohamed09@gmail.com).

Вехи наследия марокканского мыслителя Мохамеда Абеда Аль-Джабри

М. Мустакин

Междисциплинарный университет Надора,
Morocco, Nador,
Moustakin.mohamed09@gmail.com

Аннотация. Мухаммед Абед Аль-Джабри (1935—2010) — один из самых значительных деятелей философии и науки, оставивших сильный и заметный след в различных областях современной арабской культуры. Аль-Джабри создал свою философию, ориентируясь на различные аспекты арабской истории. Его система включала философию, теологию, политику, этику и другие аспекты. Кульминацией его философских трудов стала знаменитая книга „Арабский разум“, в которой он рассмотрел „Структуру арабского разума“ и дополнил своей знаменитой книгой „Критика арабского разума“. Ключевая задача настоящей статьи — рассмотреть интеллектуальный путь Аль-Джабри через призму его работ. Труды Аль-Джабри располагаются в хронологическом порядке для того, чтобы отметить особенности формирования и развития его философского творчества. Это необходимая задача для научного исследования его философии. Также в статье приводится список его ключевых книг.

Ключевые слова: Аль-Ашари, Аль-Джабри, Ибн Халдун, Ибн Рушд, разум, арабский разум, Коран

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Сведения об авторе:

Мустакин Мохаммад — профессор философии и исламской мысли, Междисциплинарный университет Надора, Надор, Марокко (e-mail: Moustakin.mohamed09@gmail.com).