

Introduction

by
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This introductory collection of essays by Mohammed 'Abed al-Jabri is the first of his works to appear in the English language. The fact that very little is known about him in North America may seem rather strange, as his writings and ideas have been at the center of academic debates in the Arab world since the mid 1970s.¹ This situation being so, my main objective is to provide the reader with some background on Jabri's life and work, to summarize the intellectual and cultural context within which his work is seen as a new and fresh challenge, and to point out some of his ideas and hypotheses that are not represented in the following essays. I will, therefore, try to complement the essays here rather than only summarize them. In doing so, my emphasis will be on certain aspects of his work that I think are crucial for researchers, scholars, and academics who are interested in Islam, the Middle East and the Arab world.

Mohammed 'Abed al-Jabri was born 1936 in Figuig in southeastern Morocco. He was brought up in a family that supported the Istiqlal Party (a party that led the struggle for independence and unity of Morocco when it was under French and Spanish occupation). He was sent first to a religious school, then to a private nationalist school (*madrasah burrah wataniyah*), which was founded by the Independence movement. From 1951-53 he spent two years at a government high school in Casablanca. Following Morocco's independence, al-Jabri earned the Arabic High School Diploma (Science Section).

Mehdi Ben Barka (who led the leftists in the Istiqlal party and later split from it to found in 1959 the Union Nationale des Forces Populaires (UNFP) [later Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires (USFP)], guided the youthful al-Jabri. He prompted him to begin

working for al-'Alam, which was then the official publication of the Istiqlal Party. In 1958 al-Jabri started studying philosophy at the University of Damascus in Syria, but left one year later to join the newly founded University of Rabat. His political activities never ceased, and in July 1963 he was incarcerated, like many of his comrades in the UNFP, under the pretext of conspiring against the state.

From 1964 al-Jabri taught philosophy at the high-school level and was active in the sphere of educational evaluation and planning. In 1966 he published jointly with Mustafa al-'Omari and Ahmed as-Sattati two textbooks designed for the final year of high school. One was on Islamic thought² and the other on philosophy.³ The latter book had a great impact on students during the late sixties and early seventies; it emphasized the relationship between culture and society, and the importance the role education and knowledge play in changing society.⁴ As a result of his activities in the educational sphere, problems of education constituted a fairly important part of his intellectual production during that period; every few years al-Jabri published articles on issues and problems of education, especially those found in Morocco.⁵

After completing his state examination in 1967 (his unpublished thesis was entitled *Falsafat al-tarikh 'inda Ibn Khaldun*, "The Philosophy of History of Ibn Khaldun," under the supervision of M. Aziz Lahbabi), he started teaching philosophy at the University of Mohammed V in Rabat. In 1970 he completed his Ph.D. (Doctorat d'Etat) with a thesis on the thought of Ibn Khaldun under the supervision of Najib Baladi.⁶ During the seventies al-Jabri began publishing a series of papers on Islamic thought that immediately drew the attention of many intellectuals and academics in the Arab World, including for the first time those in the Levant. He also published in 1976 two volumes on epistemology (one on mathematics and modern rationalism, the second on the empirical method and the development of scientific thought). However, most of his energies were then still dedicated to political work, and in 1975 he became a mem-

ber of the political bureau of the USFP, of which he was one of the founders. By the early eighties, however, he felt he had to concentrate his energies on his intellectual and scholarly work and quit his position in the party's political bureau (though not his other activities) in 1981 to concentrate on writing.

In 1980, he had collected and published a number of papers written earlier and presented in conferences on Islamic philosophers. The title of this volume is *Nahnu wa al-turath*, which can be loosely translated as "our heritage and us." Two years later he published a book on contemporary Arab thought, *al-Khitab al-'Arabi al-mu'asir: Dirasah tahliliyah naqdiyyah* (Contemporary Arab Discourse: A Critical and Analytical Study). This was followed by his three-volume magnum opus entitled *Naqd al-'aql al-'Arabi* (Critique of Arab Reason) published in 1984, 1986, and 1990.

Aziz Abbassi's English translation in the following pages is from the French *Introduction à la critique de la raison Arabe*, translated from Arabic to French by Ahmed Mahfoud and Marc Geoffroy, published by La Découverte in 1994. The occasion of this French publication was an effort to provide an introduction to al-Jabri's thought prior to publication of a translation of his three-volume *Naqd al-'aql al-'Arabi*, referred to earlier. The essays were selected from al-Jabri's earlier work, especially his collection *Nahnu wa al-turath*. The author advised in the selection of the texts and revised the French edition, thus making it authoritative. And, although the present text was translated from the French, it was compared with the Arabic original.

During the past few years, al-Jabri has published essays and shorter monographs on issues ranging from democracy and human rights in the Arab world to further elaboration and discussions of his main theses in his previously published work. Al-Jabri's work is a direct and critical intervention in problems and issues that are central to modern and contemporary Arab thought. Because his interpretations and readings of modern and classical Arab thought in

more than one instance challenge that thought, I will not only summarize some of his ideas but also discuss briefly some of the main trends of intellectual discussions in the Arab world during the past few decades.

Arab thought, since the middle of the nineteenth century (a period generally called the Renaissance [*nahdah*]), has been dominated by acknowledgment of the inferiority of the Arab and Islamic world of the present, when seen in contradistinction to that of the modern West and the classical “golden” period of the Arab-Islamic Empire. Thinkers and intellectuals were torn between the seduction of Western thought with its superiority in the economic, scientific, technological, and military spheres, while being attracted to the Arab past, since it provided proof that Arabs and Muslims are also capable of holding a leading position in world culture and learning. It also provided reassurance that Arabs still held the upper ground in religion, literature and social ethics. Reactions and proposed solutions to this diverged, but all were implicated in this tension between the two intellectual traditions.⁷

The basic problem was how to catch up and rebuild Arab thought while preserving its identity and authenticity. There were, of course, those voices that advocated a return to the values of the early past, which was, according to them, the only way for Arabs and Muslims to regain their place in the world. There were also a few voices that proposed becoming a part of the modern world by completely shedding the past. However, most voices and movements advocated one type or another of eclecticism that combined what was seen as positive in both of the two models.

Following the second world war and the political independence of many Arab states, coupled with the rise of radical brands of nationalism, socialism, and Islamism, the discourse of the *nahdah* was conceived as having been too reformist and as having over-emphasized aspects of culture and education. A new “revolutionary” discourse developed, especially during the fifties and the sixties, that

emphasized the political and the economic, and laid more emphasis on the voluntarist revolutionary ideologies of transforming societies. Despite these differences, both the “reformist” and the “revolutionary” discourses were implicated within the same old problematic of catching up while preserving authenticity. The central aspect of these issues relevant to our purpose here is that the past was always part of the argument and determined in many ways the parameters for what was conceived of as authenticity.

With the Arab defeat in 1967, intellectual discussions began to change rather quickly. And although the more radical revolutionary discourses assumed central stage during the immediate aftermath of the war, it was a resuscitated Islamic discourse (in both its “conservative” and “revolutionary” brands) that gradually set the parameters for explaining the Arab defeat and the collapse of attempts at modernization. This does not mean that Islamist discourse reigned supreme. To the contrary, it was still a minority view among the educated elite and intellectuals. But, starting with the late sixties, at the center of most discussions was the issue of the Arab-Islamic past. Or to put it differently, there was a shift from discussing the problems of the present, as such, to discussing them as extensions of the past. But, as the past is always being constructed in ways that are implicated with the present, the intellectual battles shifted from being interpretations of the present to interpretations of the past.

Radical (including Marxist), as well as other modernizing discourses positioned themselves as agenda for the future. These agendas were formulated to show that they were extensions of age-old dimensions that go back to the early stages of the development of Islam, have indigenous roots, and are therefore authentic. “Liberal” modernizing trends emphasized that Islam promoted values like hard work and private property, or emphasized rational tendencies in Islamic thought (both philosophical and religious), or emphasized Islamic democratic practices that were re-interpreted to look like modern democratic ones.⁸ Many leftists, on the other hand saw their

own ideological and political roots in social and revolutionary movements in Islam, or tried to find since the earliest stages in the history of Islam a left and a right that represented well defined class interests.⁹ There were also pioneering attempts by some Marxists (like the Lebanese Husayn Muruwah and the Syrian al-Tayyib Tizini) to interpret and explain trends in Islamic thought and philosophy by relating them to social and political roots.¹⁰

The past (read as constructed tradition and heritage)¹¹ was seen to be the legitimizing basis for the ideas of the present, and the traditionalists fought the ideological battles of the present in what was considered their own historic turf, and gradually set the parameters of the ideological discourse and dominated it. This, I should emphasize, was not due to their presenting the most potent or convincing arguments and interpretations, but rather to having forced others to grant a conception of legitimacy that was their own. After all, it was traditionalists who had been constructing tradition and heritage in the Arab-Islamic area for at least the past nine centuries. The Arab World and especially its cultural institutions became more and more dependent upon money pumped into those institutions by conservative Arab oil-producing countries. It was in those countries' interests to promote ideological constructs based upon Islam and Islamic discourse rather than secular (nationalist, liberal, or Marxist) discourse. These governments, after all, had spent most of the previous decades fighting "revolutionary" nationalisms (like the Ba'th Party and Nasserism) as well as Communism in the Arab World.

It is within such an intellectual climate that al-Jabri made his contributions. His criticism is directed at the three trends mentioned earlier: the traditionalist, the liberal (which includes the orientalist tradition), and the orthodox Marxist. His earlier works had emphasized three-dimensional readings of the Arab past as alternatives. By this he means that he reads texts structurally, historically and ideologically. His justification lies in that he sees thought being determined by two things: the field of knowledge (*al-haq al-ma'rifi*) and

the ideological content (*al-madmun al-idyuluji*). The first implies the field in which thought moves, which is composed of material of knowledge (*maddah ma'rifiyah*) and a thinking apparatus (*jihaz tafkiri*). The second implies the possible social and political functions of that thought. Such a reading, according to al-Jabri, provides an alternative to those other readings that emphasized either the material of knowledge or the ideological content. Al-Jabri also starts from the premise that, due to the development of knowledge and especially the sciences since medieval times, the substantive knowledge in classical Arab-Islamic philosophical and scientific thought is useless from our perspective. Emphasis should be given to the thinking apparatuses, but within the context of ways the material of knowledge was treated. This means that although the material of knowledge is useless for us today, it is nevertheless relevant to any intellectual enterprise that attempts to understand classical Arab-Islamic thought.

The second aspect in these essays that needs to be highlighted is that although these were separate essays written on different occasions, they are connected by a thread of thought.¹² This hypothesis disagrees with a consensus among almost all (orientalists, traditionalists, liberals, and Marxists) who have studied classical Arab-Islamic philosophy. This consensus is that Muslim philosophers have operated within an Aristotelian paradigm (or at least a paradigm that followed the late Hellenistic interpretations of Aristotle, tainted with some Neo-Platonism mainly derived from the false ascription of the *Enneads* of Plotinus to Aristotle). Accordingly, though there are some differences as to the extent to which the Muslim thinkers conformed to (and even understood) Greek thought, especially that of Aristotle, they are seen as a chain of transmitters and commentators on Greek philosophy.

Al-Jabri developed a new hypothesis in which he maintained that there was not such a chain, nor was there such a continuity among all these philosophers. To the contrary, there was an episte-

mological break¹³ between the philosophers of the East (the eastern parts of the Islamic Empire) and those of the West (Andalusia and Morocco). This epistemological break can be seen not only in the writings of philosophers, but also in the writings of jurists and legal scholars (such as Ibn Hazm), as well as theologians (such as al-Shatibi), and very prominently in the writings of Ibn Khaldun. In conjunction with this, al-Jabri provided a controversial and unorthodox interpretation of Ibn Sina as not being the best representative of Islamic rationalism in the East, but as being a thinker who consecrated irrationalism not only in his texts on Eastern philosophy, but also in his philosophical legacy. According to this interpretation, both Ibn Sina and al-Ghazali (considered to be opposing intellectual figures by most historians of Islamic thought) are seen as a part of the same philosophical problematic. They disagreed about solutions to certain problems within it but, nonetheless, shared it, along with al-Farabi and most other Eastern thinkers.¹⁴

These and similar ideas were later developed in al-Jabri's three-volume *Naqd al-'aql al-'Arabi* (Critique of Arab Reason). Since this work represents the most developed form of the thinking of al-Jabri, which is seen in its early conceptions in the following translation, it is instructive to look at the ideas in *Naqd al-'aql al-'Arabi* in some detail. In the first volume, he developed the basic concepts to be used in his analysis and emphasized that the purpose of his study was not the ideological content of Arab-Islamic thought, nor its substantive content, as much as the epistemological systems present in it. He then developed another concept (well represented in this translation) that the frame of reference for early Arab thought is neither the pre-Islamic period nor the era of Muhammad and the first four Caliphs, but is rather the age of "codification," or recording (asr al-tadwin), during the second hijra century (eighth century). He followed with a genealogy of the main ideas present in Arab thought in the classical period and concluded that there are three epistemological systems represented. He called them the system of indication, or

explication (*bayan*), the system of illumination or gnosticism (*'irfan*), and the system of demonstration or inferential evidence (*burhan*). By epistemological system, al-Jabri means something that is similar to Foucault's *episteme*, and not just merely procedural rules or protocols of research.

The second volume in the Critique is dedicated to the analysis of these three epistemological systems. The analysis develops their basic characteristics and concepts, and then follows with an analysis of examples, taken mostly from texts that have assumed a classical position within Arab thought.

For al-Jabri, the epistemological system of Indication or Explication is historically the earliest within Arab thought. It became dominant in the so-called indigenous sciences: philology, jurisprudence and legal sciences (*fiqh*), Qur'anic sciences (interpretations, hermeneutics and exegesis), dialectical theology (*kalam*), and non-philosophical literary theory. It started out being a combination of rules for interpreting discourse and determining the conditions of discourse production.¹⁵ Its fundamental concepts combined the methods of *fiqh* as developed by al-Shafi'i with that of rhetoric as developed by al-Jabiz. It was centered on the relationship between utterance and meaning, in addition to which later jurists and theologians have added conditions of certainty, analogy, subject matter of the report, and levels of authenticity or reliability.

The overall result was a theory of knowledge that was explicatory (*bayani*) at all levels. At the level of its internal logic, that theory of knowledge was governed by the concept of indication, which implied elocution, enunciation, understanding, communication, and reception. This is true also at the level of the material of knowledge, composed mainly of the Qur'an, the hadith, grammar, *fiqh*, and Arabic poetry and prose; and true also at the ideological level, since the determining authoritative force behind this level had been Islamic dogma, and was therefore restricted from the beginning to equating knowledge with belief in God. It also applied at the epistemological

level, where humans are conceived as being endowed with the capacity of *bayan*, which is grounded in two types of "reason": one innate, the other acquired.

The type of reason that is innate is God-given. That which is acquired is through report and cogitation as determined by the authenticity of transmission, whereas cogitation involves thinking not about reason as much as about the proof that lies outside or beyond the boundaries of reason. Reason's function is to examine the world as manifestations or signs of that which is there, but cannot directly be perceived. This is according to the rules of reasoning, by analogy of the unknown after the known (*qiyas al-gha'ib 'ala al-shahid*), which is explained in the essays that follow.

Al-Jabri proceeded to uncover the basis of the *bayan* mode of reasoning and showed how it operated in Islamic law, in grammatical and philological studies, and in theology (*kalam*). He concluded that the system of Indication is governed by the two principles of discontinuity, or separation (*infisal*), and contingency, or possibility (*tajwiz*). These principles are manifest in the theory of individual substance (*al-jawhar al-fard*), which maintains that the relationship between individual substances (bodies, actions, sensations, and everything the world is made up of) is one based upon contiguity and association, but not influence and interaction. This theory leaves no place for a theory of causality or for the idea of a (natural) law.

Al-Jabri posited that the origins of such an epistemological system lay in a misconstrued idea of the Bedouin (*Arabi*): the sole referential authority was not simply to the Qur'an, but also to its reading through the world view of the pre-Islamic nomadic Arab (the vehicle of which was the pre-Islamic Arabic language). That language became the sole arbiter and frame of reference, because it was seen as the language of the Qur'an. This, according to al-Jabri, is a construct that was made during the age of codification and which was used as a legitimating principle.

Illumination, or gnosticism, for al-Jabri originated in Eastern and hermetical thought and is based upon what is termed “inner revelation and insight” as an epistemological method. These practices include Sufism, Shi`i thought, Isma`ili philosophy, oriental philosophy of illumination, theosophy, magic, astrology, alchemy, and esoteric and Sufi Qur`anic exegesis. Gnostic epistemological systems are based upon the dichotomy of the obvious or manifest (*zahir*) and esoteric or latent (*batin*). The latent is accorded a higher status in the hierarchy of gnostic knowledge. Gnostic analogy (*mumathalah*) is different from both explicatory analogy (*qiyas bayani*) and from logical syllogism because it is based upon direct similarities. But, since gnostic analogy is based upon similarity, it is not rule-bound and can acquire an infinite number of forms and levels: it can take the form of a simile or a figure of speech; it can be a representation, but it can also be borrowed from the analogy of the unknown after the known; and it can also be based upon correspondence. But al-Jabri argues that there were basically three types of such analogies in gnostic epistemology: similarity based upon numerical correspondence, similarity based upon representation, and rhetorical and poetic similarity. Al-Jabri saw that this epistemological system had been productive in literature and the arts, but as a rationalist, he saw no value to it in matters of reason. To the contrary he called it “resigned reason” (*al-`aql al-mustaqib*).

The epistemological system of demonstration, based on inferential evidence, al-Jabri saw as having its origins in Greek thought (especially Aristotle), but he did not restrict it to those who had based their analysis on logic. His concept of demonstration is much wider and encompasses the rationality of Ibn Rushd, the critical attitude of Ibn Hazm, the historicism of Ibn Khaldun and the fundamental theology of al-Shatibi. In contradistinction to *bayan*, which develops its understanding of the world on the principles of discontinuity and contingency, and gnosis, which bases its understanding on the principles of correspondence and similarity, the epistemological sys-

tem of Demonstration is based upon the causal connections between elements, thereby making the idea of a (natural) law possible. Since al-Jabri equates this with rationalism, which is generally well-known, I will not spend more time discussing it, but will move towards the last two points to be highlighted in this introduction.

Al-Jabri developed a hypothesis that the Demonstrative epistemological system was used in many cases in the service of the two other epistemic systems. A case in point is Ibn Sina, who utilized inferential evidence to serve his fundamentally gnostic philosophy. Al-Jabri maintained that this was essentially the destiny of the system of demonstration in the East (again implying the eastern parts of the Islamic Empire), but was generally not the case in the West (Andalusia and Morocco), thereby emphasizing the earlier hypothesis of an epistemological break between the two.

Another point to be emphasized is that al-Jabri did not see these three epistemological systems present in ideal forms in the thought of any individual thinker. Each is always present in a more-or-less contaminated form. However, he differentiated between having elements of one system present as a minor part within a dominant system in the thought of a specific thinker (Ibn Rushd is basically a proponent of the system of demonstration), and two systems (or even three) present in the work of some thinkers. To return to one of his earlier hypotheses that Ibn Sina and al-Ghazali belong to the same problematic, he emphasized that both thinkers were hybrid, in the sense that in their work one can see the epistemological systems of demonstration and illumination. What is also interesting is that, despite many of the points in which they disagreed, both, according to al-Jabri, opted for using the system of demonstration (rationalism) in the service of the system of illumination.

In the third volume of *Naqd al-'aql al-Arabi*, entitled "Arab Political Reason," al-Jabri shifts his focus from uncovering the epistemological systems governing Arab thought to those governing thinking about reality. He, therefore, does not resort to his earlier classifi-

cation based upon the three epistemological systems, but introduces new concepts that fit his different subject matter. Utilizing a number of concepts from the modern French *imaginaire sociale* (social imaginary) in conjunction with concepts derived from classical Arab thought, he develops his ideas around three concepts: the tribe (*qabilah*), plunder (*al-ghanimah*), and dogma (*al-'aqidah*). He then studies the manifestations of these conceptual frameworks, especially during the latter stages of the development of the Islamic polity.

I hope that this brief and overly simplified summary has given the reader a taste of the depth of the ideas and hypotheses of al-Jabri. I think one has to reiterate here that in addition to these general theoretical hypotheses, al-Jabri is at his best when he analyzes texts—not only texts that are relatively unknown but, most importantly, texts that have been analyzed many times by competent scholars. What he does with these texts is discover something new and interesting. This is due not only to his method of textual analysis, nor his knowledge, but also to the fact that he does not approach texts as instances of institutionalized knowledge as much as he attempts to reconstruct them from a new conceptual perspective. A text by a grammarian, or one by a legal scholar or a theologian, turns in his hand into a fresh and “new” text. The chapters that follow represent al-Jabri’s own introduction to his major interventions in this regard.

¹ There is a short summary of some of Jabri’s ideas in ‘Issa Boullata’s book: *Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1990, pp. 45-55. See also a different kind of exposition of his ideas with a special emphasis on his reading of Averroes in Anke von Kugelgen: *Averroes und die arabische Moderne: Ansätze zu einer Neubegründung des Rationalismus in Islam*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994, pp. 260-288.

² *Al-Fikr al-Islami li-tullab al-Bakaluriya*. Al-Dar al-Bayda’: Dar al-Nashr al-Maghribiyah, 1966. Many later printings of this book were made.

³ *Durus fi al-falsafah li-tullab al-Bakaluriya*. Al-Dar al-Bayda’: Dar al-Nashr al-Maghribiyah, 1966. Many later printings of this book were made.

⁴ See M.A. al-Jabri: "Masar katib" in: *al-Karmel* 11 (1984), p. 162, and the roundtable discussion under the title "Naqd al-'aql al-'Arabi fi mashru al-Jabri" in: *al-Wahdah*, vol. III, 26-27 (October/November 1986, pp. 135-165).

⁵ His book *Min ajl ru'yah taqaddumiyah li-ba'd mushkilatina al-fikriyah wa-al-tarbawiyah*. Al-Dar al-Bayda': Dar al-Nashr al-Maghribiyah, 1977, includes some of these essays. He published articles in *al-Aqlam* on education in Morocco, as well as some in the daily *al-Sharq al-Awsat*.

⁶ This thesis was published as *Fikr Ibn Khaldun: al-'Asabiyah wa-al-dawlah: Ma'alim nazariyah khalduniyah fi al-tarikh al-Islami*. Al-Dar al-Bayda': Dar al-Thaqafah, 1971. This book was later published in Lebanon and went through a number of printings.

⁷ For a fine survey of Arab thought during this period, see Albert Hourani's *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939*: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

⁸ The most prominent of these was the thought of Zaki Najib Mahmu, who was until the sixties the most prominent logical positivist in the Arab World who had completely rejected classical Arab-Islamic thought as completely irrelevant to our modern times, but then turned his attention to it and produced a number of books showing his change of mind by emphasizing what he saw as the rationalist trends in Islamic thought.

⁹ It is worth noting here that many books were published during the late sixties and early seventies with titles like "the left and right in Islam" or series of books on the Qur'an, Muhammad, and the caliphs Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Ali reinterpreted from a rather mechanical and naïve right/left dichotomy that was seen as reflecting a class struggle between the poor classes and the rich classes. I have to emphasize a number of points in this respect. First, there were a number of Marxists who did not accept these simplistic interpretations of Islamic history. Second, that these interpretations were not new but were basically developed by historians like Bandali al-Jawzi (a Palestinian who studied and taught in the Soviet Union during the thirties and forties) and depended mostly on the writings of orientalists. Third, that with the rise of religious minorities in the political leadership of some Arab countries and some "leftist" political parties, such interpretations were welcome as they tended to justify the "revolutionary" traditions of these same minorities or their historical antecedents.

¹⁰ Works by these authors were criticized by many scholars including Marxists like Nayif Balluz and Tawfiq Sallum. Muruwah and Tizini were taken to task because both resorted to what was seen as a simplistic materialism/idealism dichotomy which was dominant in soviet Marxism, and for resorting to a rather crude interpretation of the socio-economic history of the Islamic Empire. Tizini, who teaches philosophy at the University of Damascus, studied with the (then) East German

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philosophy Professor Hermann Ley, while the work of Muruwwah was originally his doctoral dissertation prepared in the Soviet Union. Both, but especially Tizini, had some influence on the work of al-Jabri.

¹¹ The Arabic word "turath" is a loaded term both semantically and ideologically. I have not been able to find a word in English that conveys the sense of the word in Arabic. I have, therefore, resorted to the words "tradition and heritage" as a pair.

¹² This thread of thought is embodied in all al-Jabri's readings, whether it is the political philosophy of al-Farabi, or the re-interpretation of Ibn Sina, or the reading of the philosophers of North Africa and the Andalus (especially Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Bajah, and Ibn Rushd) as rationalists who have broken with the philosophical paradigms of the eastern parts of the Islamic world.

¹³ Al-Jabri borrows the (by now very popular) term from the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard.

¹⁴ This hypothesis is developed in al-Jabri's papers on al-Farabi and Ibn Sina in his book *Nahnu wa al-turath* pp. 55-166.

¹⁵ Al-Jabri here disagrees with an idea advocated by most orientalists and many Arabs, including Taha Husayn, that the shift within indigenous sciences from the emphasis on the conditions of discourse production to one on rules of interpretation was the result of the influence of Greek thought and logic. He maintains that it was actually due to the development of *'ilm usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence). He also goes into detail showing the many differences between the Greek (read Aristotelian) logical *qiyas* (syllogism) and the *qiyas* (analogy) of the jurists and grammarians.