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## Iraqology: An Introduction

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**Abstract:** Iraqology is a group of approaches specializing in studying Iraqi social dialectical situation according to its historical development. It works on utilizing of all relevant sciences and knowledge branches in order to produce a scientific overview of Iraqi issue. It aims to understand Iraqi case in a social, historical, dialectical and sophisticated manner. Iraqology is also an attempt to answer the basic Iraqi questions, think in its theoretical and practical problems, and find treatments to them. Therefore, it may be considered a new branch in humanities. It means an attempt to establish an understandable reality, in a wise manner, for things that Iraqi knows in non-philosophic experience to be cognitively essential.

**Keywords:** Iraqology, philosophy, reality, history, methodology, ideology.



## Introduction

Iraqology is a new science specializing in studying Iraqi social dialectical situation in context of its historical development. It is a full autopsy of Iraqi case in different aspects, philosophically, theologially, historically, politically, economically, socially and so on, in order to reach a better understanding of the situation in question. In other word, Iraqology works on utilizing of all relevant sciences and knowledge branches in order to produce a scientific overview of Iraqi issue. Here, I must emphasize that Islamic revelation is the final authority of this science. It should be noted that there are several sciences related to other contraries, like: Egyptology and Iranology. In order to compare between these sciences, their key concepts must be reviewed generally. Okasha Al Daly indicates that Egyptology, the study of Egyptian archaeology, is held to be a product of modern Western scholarship. Those concerned with the study of Ancient Egypt usually list them in this order: (1) Ancient Egyptian sources, basically the remains of the material culture. (2) Contemporary Near Eastern and later classical sources. (3) Renaissance sources from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. (4) Modern Egyptology (El-Daly, 2005: 1).

Iranology, Henry Corbin argues, is a conception of Iranian spiritual universe which has absolutely nothing in common with any talk of political eminence of Persia or Iran. Orientalists used the term Iran, it designated a linguistic, geographical, and artists entity which had nothing to do with any political concept of that time. The political entity was known by traditional designation of Persia. The free use of both Iran and Persia has been officially approved. The remarks-mentioned needed to be made in order to remove the philosophical concept of Iranian studies from the strictures of any sort of political affairs. The work of economics, sociological, or jurists may contribute data relating to the current sociopolitical structure (Corbin, 1998: 34). The previous sciences investigate history of civilizations in a pure historical and archaeological method. Iraqology aims to understand Iraqi case in a religious, social, historical, dialectical and sophisticated manner. In this way, Iraqi issue, in its historical manifestations, becomes useful at any moment of history to comprehend current and future status in Iraq. History in its dialectical evolution is the experimental model of investigating the development of Iraqi question.



## **i. Iraqology: Towards a New Branch in Humanities**

Humanities made great strides in understanding human, history and civilizations. In this introductory research, it is not possible to examine all human sciences in order to put the headlines of Iraqology. Therefore, I shall limit my concentration on philosophical methods.

### ***1.1. Institutionalizing Iraqology: An Overview Concentrating on Philosophical Method***

Peter Godfrey-Smith defines philosophy "as an attempt to ask and answer some very basic questions about the universe and our place within it". The questions mentioned can sometimes seem far from removed from practical concerns (Godfrey-Smith, 2003: 1). In comparison with it, Iraqology is an attempt to answer the basic Iraqi questions and thinking in its theoretical and practical problems and find treatments to them.

In this point also philosophy is not, as Arthur E. Murphy thinks, just what somebody thought and what somebody else said about it. "It is", Murphy says, "a way of dealing with problems and difficulties that arise in the course of men's attempt to set the various aspects of the experienced world in some sort of order, and the measure of its worth is its adequacy for that purpose". It arises out of the need to find an understandable "reality" for things that someone knows in non-philosophic experience to be essential but which current doctrines and preoccupations exclude or underestimate, and they man to eventuate in a view of the world that enables human beings to see its aspects in their appropriate relations and order and to respond them in their fullest discoverable significance. Taking philosophy stands on these elements may develop a method of its own and is able, by relating the abstractions of merely special interests and limited views to the truths it takes as central, to inform us something important and fruitful about them (Murphy, 1996: 4).

Therefore, we can say that Iraqology is a new branch in philosophy. It is a way of dealing with difficulties and problems that arise in Iraqi's attempt to set the various aspects of the experienced Iraq in some sort of order, and the measure of its worth is its adequacy for the purpose of deep understanding to Iraqi people, history and country. It means an attempt to establish an understandable reality philosophically for things



that Iraqi knows in non-philosophic experience to be cognitively essential. It enables Iraqi and those interesting in Iraqi issue to see the developed aspects of Iraqi history and civilization and contemporary reality in their appropriate relations and order and to investigate them in their fullest discoverable significance. Furthermore, it is not only a pure philosophical method, but it is a knowledge committing with the revelation that represents the final reference to it.

### ***1.2. Iraqi Reality: Philosophy and Understanding in Comparison***

On the other hand, Iraqology is the science interesting in Iraqi reality. The project of establishing a new philosophical theory of Iraqi reality contributes to answer deep questions about the nature of social formation in Iraq. Hosham Dawod points out that one of the complexities of this formation is the different political models of power organization (Dawod & Bozarslan, 2003: 12).

On reality, philosophically, Roberts Wallace points out that those philosophical critics raise important issues. It is difficult, he confirms, to know how to relate the idea of free thought to nature as we normally understand it, or to define the claim that such thought open for us an access to reality, i.e. the subject or self does often seem almost vanishingly abstract. The gap between fact and value seems wide. Factually, it does not seem unreasonable to imagine that these apparent intellectual and practical failures to feel at home in their social and natural world and to the lapses into fixed ideology, violence, selfishness, and despair that are sometimes associated with these failures. In the history of modern thought, Hegel was the major thinker who not only refuses to lapse into any schematic extreme position but addresses them into a uniquely constructive way (Wallace, 2005, xxiii-xxiv).

Stephen Hetherington also invites us to think about reality and knowledge. He indicates that not only have these topics produced some of histories deepest and most sustainably rational philosophies; whereas, many questions remain unanswered; and thinking philosophically about such issues is a surprising way of improving as a person. Used carefully, sensitively and sincerely philosophical thinking can assist you in that process of self-improvement. Imagine coming to understand and to care about such matters as evidence, truth, reason, fallibility, moral responsi-



bility, the meaning of life and death, and so on. Philosophical richness is thus implicit even in everyday life, actions and interactions. It might enliven our mind with new possibilities for acting and interacting within the situation. Thinking philosophically about reality and knowledge could also burden or sense of life's moral aspects (Hetherington, 2003: viii).

Here, it can be said that Iraqology is a philosophical knowledge; it runs on answering raised Iraqi questions, and those which have not been considered yet. One of the main goals of the new knowledge mentioned is improving the level of Iraqi thinking and performance, by using careful, sensitive and sincere philosophical thinking that can assist in the process of Iraqi self-improvement, and activating the capabilities of Iraqi understanding for religious, ethical, social and philosophical conceptions such as: truth, reason, fallibility, evidence, moral responsibility, the meaning of life and death, and so on.

Robert S. Brumbruach argues also that Dewey points out two defects that must be remedied before appraising Platonism in a modern context. First, it must correct for the fact that Plato holds that aptitudes are strictly hereditary. The practical implications are quite clear. Only some people will have the inherited talent needed to take advantage of secondary and higher education, or, eventually, to decide questions of public policy wisely. A drastic correction is needed here to undo this fact or error. The second defect Dewey finds is that Plato's notion that society involves only three functional classes, each requires different training, is a disastrous oversimplification (Brumbruach, 1989: 75).

Perhaps, it is useful to say that the philosopher's object is to explain reality. Plato and Aristotle both set themselves this task, and started with the same idea of the reality to be explained, namely the reality that lies around us, i.e. the sensible world. Plato reasoned that reality must be something unchanging and constant. The world we live in is subject to continual change, as Heraclitus says. Therefore, either reality is unknowable or it exists elsewhere in the world. The philosopher's faith that it must be knowable thus led him to postulate a transcendent realm of eternal and changeable substances as the only reality and the object of true knowledge. Platonism appeared to Aristotle differently constituted mind, and so of the object of his criticism and reaction. Heraclitean flux and the



Socratic insistence on definitions combined, he argued, to convince Plato that the object of Socrates' study was nothing that existed in the sensible world, but something different. It is impossible for the common definition to apply to any of the sensible, since they are always changing. He called different class of existents forms, and declared that the sensibles are part from them and named after them (Guthrie, 1981: 102).

If any theorizing of Iraqology is heading to benefit from the reality in field of understanding the evolution of development of Iraqi reason in its social manifestations, so let it be an attempt to approach form theorizing it in terms of reasonable and scientific conceptions.

Alan Woods and Ted Grant argue that the content of pure mathematics is ultimately derived from the material world. It deals with the quantitative relations of the real world. It is so called axioms only appear to be self-evident to us because they are the product of a long period of experience and observations of reality. Theories of mathematics have been the source of tremendous scientific advance, and the origin of numerous errors and misconceptions which have had, and are still having profoundly negative consequences. The central error is to attempt to reduce the contradictory, dynamic and complex working of nature to static, orderly quantitative formulae. Nature is presented in a formalistic manner, as a single dimensional point, which becomes a line and then a plane, a cube a sphere, and so on. However, the idea that pure mathematics is absolute thought, unsullied by contact with material things is far from the truth (Woods & Grant, 2003: 145-146).

Sam G. Stolzoff indicates that it is difficult for westerners to understand the social structure of Iraqi society through the news, and it is difficult to find reliable scholarly sources upon Iraqi opinions and thought paradigms. Specialized western scholars in Iraqi issue find themselves doing catch up research, trying to connect the dots between what they think and know, and what recently happened. It is very difficult, he confirms, to keep their fingers on the pulse of what is going on in Iraq, as the news and other media sources report mostly on violence, not on the actual causes therefore. "Consumers of Western news media products face great challenges when trying to piece together a means of understanding Iraq, as most reports have to work through interpreters, or they have



agendas which they serve by selecting certain stories or issue over others in order to manufacture versions of reality that are politically expedient to them or their editors" (Stolzoff, 2009: 7; Becker, 2008: 147).

In order to get out of the dilemma that Stolzoff indicates, it can be said that there are many procedures can be taken to bridge the abyss. One of the solutions is using Iraqi's sources of information, in order to build accurate perceptions on its case. Better understanding of Iraqi information must be applied on scientific method, which is far from affiliation with prior framework. Arabic Language led a major role in access to original Iraqi information. Questionnaires, official statistics, TV, cinema movies and reports of civil society organizations has utmost important from a strategic point in detecting Iraqi facts on the ground. Everything has a fundamental value in uncovering Iraqi truth. In the end, the role of Iraqology is represented in installation of the overall analysis model and formulation of deep and final idea.

Reidar Visser and Gareth R. V. Stansfield quote the critical explanation of Eric Herring and Glen Rangwala, when they compromise the disconnection between US plans and Iraqi reality with the distinction between state building and state formation. They argue that while state building is a conscious program of organized development, state formation is its practical reality, where unintended consequences tend to dominate as conflicting state building strategies and other interests often clash with each other. "Indeed", Herring and Rangwala say, "Iraq provides an excellent regional focus for the question of the permanency of the territorial state- as a case in which the Western state system was directly through colonialism on a region, and as area of study where indigenous factors are seen as inherently contradictory to the state system and can be seen to create a 'colonial/indigenous mix'" (Visser & Stansfield, 2008: 101). In fact, the absence of wisdom of Iraqi reality has led to catastrophe errors on the military, geopolitical and strategic level (Jones, 2011: 415-468) and it also lead to correct errors on the other hand. The intricacies of the Iraqi reality, according to David Ghanim, have attempted Americans to de-emphasize democracy for the benefit of security, and encouraging exit, i.e. the idea of safe and responsible withdrawal, from Iraq with the lowest cost possible (Ghanim, 2011: 6).



### 1.3. *A Continuing Historical Controversy: For Iraqi Dialectical Consideration*

Dialectical conception occupies a prominent position in theorizing for Iraqology. Here, we can take a closer outlook to the ideas of Mortimer Adler on dialectic. He indicates that dialectic might have been discovered otherwise than through the criticism of historical consideration and traditional theory. It might have been observed where it actually occurs in the conversational practices and activities of human beings, their controversies and arguments, or in dialogues which mind holds with itself in the solution of its intellectual difficulties. It might have been discovered in the proper sphere of its being (Adler, 2001:34).

Dogmatism, Henri Lefebvre confirms, is strong; it can call on the force of authority, of the state and its institutions. But for other point of view, it is simple and easily taught; it steers clear of complex problems; this is the aim and the meaning of dogmatism; it also gives its adherents a feeling of both vigorous affirmation and security (Lefebvre, 2009: 1).

Iraqi dogmatism is a system of knowledge that is being formed ideologically and historically in the social sphere. The knowledge system represents a convergence moment of rigid and non-dynamic consciousness with convulsive and unilateral act (Hussain, 2011: 149). I would like to add here that Iraqi ideology is social space which Iraqi reason moves within by social actors throughout history. What we disagree with the philosophy of dialectical materialism is that we emphasis on spiritual factor that this philosophy ruled out from movement of history.

Historically, Iraq was the main center of controversy in Muslim world. One of these controversial issues was the dispute over the primacy of reason and tradition, which persisted over centuries and preoccupied philosophers inescapably. Al-Kindi was one of Iraqi philosophers who engaged in philosophical debates over this issue. Theology and jurisprudence were significant, if often ignored, parallel discipline to philosophy. These are ancillary matters and rarely, if ever, mentioned by the philosophers as such; nevertheless, such Islamic sciences as theology, jurisprudence, and grammar were intertwined and had numerous points of juncture. Within the discussions of the philosophers themselves, furthermore, there exists an awareness of traditional concepts that they often concept seek to reconcile with the truths of reason and inherited truth of





the ancient Greek tradition (Ormsby, 2003: 113).

We must, Frank T. Deangelis argues, insist upon historical and dialectical analysis, procedure, and view point when we are interested in Iraqi and other Middle Eastern issues. Teleological and moral theorists distinguish between right and wrong, based on the good and bad consequences of actions. Deontological and moral theories, on the other hand, focus on the morality duty of the agent committing the act. Understanding and explaining human actions – even world historical actions – does not absolve people from their societal (i.e. moral, ethical, legal, etc.) responsibilities and obligations (Deangelis, 2002: 149-152).

We can also understand the need for an Iraqi dialectical philosophy when we look at the ideas of Christopher S. Yates, Nathan Eckstrand concerning on that any human individual or group has ongoing process and dynamics already underway. Any project is going to intervene in these processes: it is going to carry some of them forward and curtail or stymie others. In order to say, we must reconstruct the history of the group of people affected by the project. If the history of the people living near a proposed bridge can be reconstructed as a history of increasing commerce, building the bridge is probably a good idea. But if a more comprehensive reconstruction also reveals a history of increasing sensitivity to the natural beauty of the river on the part of the local population, the bridge will be more problematic (Yates & Eckstrand, 2011: 26). Iraqi dialectical philosophy could benefit from Yates and Eckstrand ideas on reconstruction of history of the group not merely by trotting out a lot of random facts about the group's past, but by identifying the processes underway in the group, and among those processes can further identify those that have historical power; those that are the most unified and comprehensive. A dialectical reconstruction of the kind enables us to think clearly about the intersection. Enormous national efforts, from welfare and urban renewal to Vietnamese and Iraqi democracy, have run into enormous trouble because the people involved in those efforts does not recognize the history of these groups they were seeking to transform (Yates & Eckstrand, 2011: 26).

#### ***1.4. Influentiality and Methodology: For a Philosophy of Iraqi History***

All people and cultures, Martha Howell and Walter Prevenier argue,



have stories about themselves that help provide the meanings that make a culture. This is what history is; the stories we tell about ourselves or that others tell about us. However, historians do not discover a past as much as they create it; they choose the events and people and that they think constitute the past, and they decide what about them is important to know. Sometimes historians think they need to know about an event because it seems to have had a direct role in making the present; sometimes they choose their object of study simply because it seems central to a past that is important today. But they always create a past by writing it. History is not just there, awaiting the researcher's discovery; history has no existence before it is written (Howell & Prevenier, 2001: 1).

It means that historical methods are multiples. Hegel refers to three types of historical approaches, which are: 1. Original History; 2. Reflective History; 3. Philosophical History. To original history Herodotus, Thucydides and other historians of the same order belong, whose descriptions are for the most part limited to events, deeds and state of society, which they had before their eyes, and whose spirit they shared. They simply transferred what was passing in the world around them, to the realm of representative intellect. Such original historians change the events, the deeds, and the state of society with which they are conversant, into an object for the conceptive faculty. What is present and living in their environment is their proper material. The influences that have formed are identical with those which have molded the events that constitute the matter of his history. The author's spirit, and that of the actions he narrates, is one the same. His aim is not nothing more than the presentation to posterity of an image of events as clear as that which he himself possessed in virtue of personal observation, or life-like description (Hegel, 2007: 1-2). The second kind of history, Hegel argues, is what might be called the reflective. "It is a history whose mode of representation is not really confined by the limits of the time to which it relates, but whose spirit transcends the present." The first kind of the reflective history is the aim of investigator to gain a view of the entire history of a country or a people or of the world; it is what might be called universal history (Hegel, 2007: 4).

A second species of reflective history, to Hegel, is what might be



calling the pragmatic. When dealing with the past, and occupy with ourselves with a remote world, a present rises into being for the mind - produced by its own activity, as the reward of its labor. The occurrences are various but the idea which pervades them is one. This takes the occurrence out of category of the past and makes it virtually present. Pragmatic didactic reflections, through in their nature decidedly abstract, are truly and indefeasibly of the present, and quicken the annals of the dead past with the life of today. Whether, such reflections are truly enlivening and interesting depends on the writer's own spirit (Hegel, 2007: 5-6).

The third form of reflective history, Hegel indicates, is the critical. It is not history itself that is here presented. We might properly designate it as a history of history: a criticism of historical narratives and an investigation of their credibility and truth. Its peculiarity in point of fact and intention consists in the acuteness with which the writer extorts something from the records which was not in the matters recorded. This higher criticism has been the pretext for introducing all the anti-historical monstrosities that a vain imagination could suggest. It is a method that makes the past a living reality; putting subjective fancies in the place of historical data; that is; the scantiness of the particulars on which they are based, and the peremptoriness with which they contravene the best established facts of history (Hegel, 2007: 7).

The last kind of reflective history, according to Hegel, announces its fragmentary character on the very face of it. It adopts an abstract position when taking general points of view. It forms a transition to the philosophical history of the world. Such branches of national life stand in close relation to the entire complex of people's annals (Hegel, 2007: 7-8).

The third kind of history, according to Hegel's classification, is philosophical. He defines the philosophy of history as it "mean nothing but the thoughtful consideration of it." He indicates that the only thought which philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of history, is the simple conception of reason; that reason is the sovereign of the world, therefore, presents us with a rational process. This intuition and conviction is a hypothesis in the domain of history as such. In that of philosophy it is no hypothesis. It is therefore proved by speculative cognition, that reason is substance, as well as infinite power. It is all infinite material



underlying all the natural and spiritual life which it originates, as also the infinite form that which set the material in motion. Hegel affirms that "Reason is the substance of the Universe; viz., that by which and in which all reality has its being and subsistence... It is the infinite complex of things, their entire Essence and Truth." (Hegel, 2007: 8-9).

For Iraqi history, it is immemorial one. Iraq witnessed the emergence of many civilizations that influenced on human history for a long time. The Sumerian, Akkadian, Assyrian and Babylonian, and then the emergence of the Abbasid Caliphate after Islam were the most influential civilizations in the history of humanity. Unfortunately, in spite of this ancient and influential history, we cannot find a systematic and deeply study, which engages on a philosophical institutionalizing for the reasons that stand behind the emergence of Iraqi civilizations and their decline.

Benjamin and Karen Foster compare between the emergences of Manhattan and the oldest city in Iraq. They indicate that an archeologist of the future, studying the development of urban life in Manhattan from 1600 to 1900 might reasonably conclude that the enormous changes seen in the material culture of it begin with the advent of new peoples, and then took with incredible rapidity; a town grew to a metropolis, all within a 300- year period. They confirm that this is what an older generation of scholars concluded about Iraq. They believe that the impulse that led from villages to huge, walled cities had to have been the result of an influx of settlers, whom they suggested came by sea or down from mountains. They name the new comers the Sumerians, who they arrived about 3600 B.C., and their swift transformation of the plains of southern Iraq, just as European had done in Manhattan over an equivalent span of time (Foster & Foster, 2009: 10; Nissen & Heine, 2009: 21).

So, we have a very old history, which calls for understanding this history by using different methods. One of the approved curriculums in the study of Iraqi history is the mathematical social method, according to Eleanor Robson. In the 1970s, new philosophical and historical movements begin to stir. Henk Bos and Hubert Mehrtens articulated a program for considering the historical relationships between mathematicians and society, while David Bloor argued forcefully that mathematics itself was socially constructed. Constructivism argues that mathematics is not



discovered but created by social groups just as spoken languages. Within the contemporary global community of professional mathematicians it is probably fair to say that social constructivism is a minority view, but it is increasingly recognized as a powerful means of understanding mathematics in history (Robson, 2008: xxii).

While, "the history of modern Iraq is a history of ways in which the people who found themselves living in the new Iraqi state were drawn into its orbit." Charles Tripp defines. The state centered on Iraq in 1920-1, with its frontier, its bureaucracy and its fiscal system, established a new framework for politics, embodying distinctive ideas about government. The new state made new demands upon its inhabitants, causing people to rethink existing political identities, interests and values. Sometimes they were adapted to serve the state and its rules; sometimes they were marginalized or suppressed. Therefore, the history of the state is in part a history of the strategies of co-operation, resistance and subversion adopted by various Iraqis trying to come to terms with the force the state represented. These forms of engagement shaped the politics of Iraq over the years and contributed to the composite narrative of Iraq's modern history (Tripp, 2000: 1).

Philosophy of history, which Iraqology tries to establish relating to Iraqi history, does not stop at the borders of virtual description of historical events, but it also tries to penetrate deeply in the meaning of these events. Deeper understand of reasons behind history is required. It is not only for theoretical knowledge, but it is for consideration, which means a deep comprehension of the causes of Iraqi progress and decline. In other word, it is a methodology that works on the study of Iraqi influence in history of humanity; when Iraq was moving on it, and in other times, when it was located in the extreme civilized decadence.

## **2. Iraq into Philosophy: Multiple Methods on One Issue**

The relationship between philosophy and Iraq is too long, dating back to early period of history of philosophy, that is, to the era of Greek philosophy, and to era before it too. Unfortunately, however, this relationship has not been detected in the same way that we are trying in this thesis, i.e. through establishing a philosophical science on Iraq.



### *2.1. Reason and River: Convergence between Greek and Ancient Iraqi Civilizations*

Jürgen Hengelbrock believes that the philosophical tradition that have surface and taken place in the region today known as Iraq extend as far back as antiquity. Iraq's golden age is best known through the mass cultural and scientific achievements that took place during the Middle Ages, and yet not all limited to this period. Pre-Islamic Iraq is the site of the world's most ancient civilizations, dating back to the Paleolithic times. It was in Iraq where Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians and Assyrians civilizations flourished in pre-biblical times. Iraq has the first known cities, states, irrigation systems, empires, monuments, universities, and hospitals. It was in it also that writing was first invented; this is where the clay of the Epic of Gilgamesh, the oldest known work of literature, was discovered. In ancient Mesopotamia, there were hundreds of thousands of precious archeological sites, which contain vast details about ancient human cultural origins. It is in Iraq were the Stele of Hammurabi was found, which is the first legal code in the world that later served as predecessor to the modern mens rea principle in the west. In Iraq, we can find crucial biblical cities, such as Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire well noted in the Old Testament, Ziggurat of Ur and the Ishtar Gates, etc. (Hengelbrock, 2006: 343-344).

In his attempt to monitor the wider context of Greek thought, Eugene F. Bales indicates that in the ancient thought, long before the Greeks had invented the term "philosopher" (meaning "one who loves wisdom") to refer to specific kind of intellectual, the idea of wisdom had a wide currency. The Greek may most appropriately be said to have invented a certain ideal of philosophy, but they most certainly did not invent the idea of wisdom itself. In comparison with it, Sumerian civilization, and its later Babylonian successor, remained strongly polytheistic, but wrestled with the question of immortality in various religious narratives and most famously in the Epic of Gilgamesh, dating before the second millennium BCE. The pessimistic view of this civilization was that as much as human might want immortality; the latter was reserved to the gods alone. The tension between what humans want and what their natures require was never resolved, but the Greeks would gradually come to



explore this problem, especially in Plato's thought (Bales: 2008: 1).

Hans J. W. Drijvers and John F. Healey indicate that there was a linguistic and philosophical relationship and substantial outside influence on Syriac by Greek. Even in Early Aramaic (e.g. Biblical Aramaic) there are elements of Greek influence, but from the time of Alexander Greek come more and more to the fore. The most obvious spheres of this early influence were in law, administration, military affairs religion (especially architecture). Greek influence came to be felt through the influence of philosophical writings, especially Neo-Platonic and Christian tradition. Perhaps, there was Christianity in northern Mesopotamia which showed much less Greek influence (cf. Aphrahat, early 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.). In the Edessa region Greek linguistic influence at least was strong from the beginning, through of course Syriac-speaking Christianity came in due course to be dominated spiritually and intellectually by the Greek and classical Syriac is full of Greek words, especially in theology, philosophy, spiritually and liturgy (Drijvers & Healey, 1999: 32).

Merbings, Michael Newton points out, are legendary humanoid creatures said to inhabit earth's seas and oceans. Their generic name comes from the old English word mere "sea", and individual specimens are generally described in terms of their supposed sex, as a merman or a mermaid. Mermaid legends are found in very historical culture that had access to the seas. The first known stories, from ancient Assyria in the Middle East, began circulating around 1000 B.C.E. The tales involved the goddess Semiramis, who fell in love with a mortal shepherd and was no embarrassed that she leapt into a lake to drown herself. Instead, she was transformed into a hybrid mermaid, human from the waist up, with a fish's tail. Babylonians knew Semiramis as the mermaid-goddess Atargatis, while ancient Greeks and Phoenicians called her Derketo. Residents of the Akkadian Empire worshiped Ea, a fish-tailed god who lived in the Red Sea. Anaximander, the Greek philosopher (610-546 B.C.E.) believed that humans had evolved from ocean-dwelling creatures, some of which survived in semi-human form (Newton, 2009: 164).

John Burnet indicates that Xenophanes, in all probability, a disciple of Anaximander, and he may quite well have spoken and seen with Tales. However, he must have known scores of people who were able to re-



member what happened, and he had no conceivable interest in misrepresenting it. The prediction of the eclipse is better attested than any other fact about Thales whatsoever, and the evidence for it is about as strong as for anything that happened in the early part of the sixth century B.C. It is impossible, Burnet argues, to predict eclipses without knowing their true cause. It seems, in fact, that Babylonians actually did so, and this fact is suggestive enough. Moreover, as it happens, we know something of their method of calculation. On the basis of their astronomical observations, they had made out a cycle of 223 lunar months, commonly called the Saros, within which eclipses of the sun and moon recurred at equal intervals of time. We do not occupy a position at the centre of the earth, and what astronomers call the geocentric parallax has to be taken into account. Therefore, it would be only possible to tell by means of the cycle that an eclipse of the sun would be visible somewhere, and that it might be worthwhile to look out for it. If we may judge from a report by a Chaldean astronomer which has been preserved, this was just the positions of Babylonians (Burnet, 2003: 36).

In this context, we cannot forget, according to John Andreadakis, that when Pythagoras was 20 years old his parents sent him to Egypt so that he would be trained by the wise men of Pharaohs. Ten years later King Nebuchadnezzar defeats both Israel and Egypt and carries wise men of both countries captive to Babylon. It is positively known that he was carried to Babylon as captive from Egypt. But there is only one release for such wise men from Babylon and that was done by King Darius. Andreadakis strongly believes that Pythagoras was carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar for another reason. If he had not lived in Babylon together with the wise men from Israel, then all the influence he would have had in his life would be from the Egyptian wise men and teachers and this would have not changed by much his religious understandings (Andreadakis, 2011: 6).

Finally, Andreadakis adds, he was freed and allowed to return home. When back on the island of Samos he opened a school, but his teachings were no in agreement with the local authorities and religion. His school was closed and he was threatened to be put to death. He spent several years in the caves of the rugged mountains in the west part of the island





and finally escaped to Croton in Italy where his teachings were better received. His students were young men from all the known Greek cities of those days. The subsequent philosophers of Greece were greatly influenced by his teachings and secretly reading his books. His philosophical teachings indicate monotheistic ideas. But his intent was not to be captive even he was in a place of great ruler. The only place he would like forward to going would have been his homeland and this is what he did (Andreadakis, 2011: 6).

Furthermore, Pythagoras in Babylon penetrated the arcana of ancient magic and witnessed a glorious spectacle; on the ruins of the crumbling religious of the East; above their decimated and generate priesthood, a band of dauntless initiates, ground together, were defending their sciences, faith and as well as justice. Boldly facing the despots, like Daniel in the den of lions, ever prepared to be torn to pieces, they tamed and fascinated the wild beast of absolute power by their intellectual might, disputing, foot by foot, the ground they had own (Schuré, 2007: 28).

During the exile in Babylon, Pythagoras studied with the city's priests, known as magi, because Babylonian religious centers were, as Egyptians ones, the main centers of learning. Pythagoras's studies with the magi focused on subjects ranging from mathematics and religion to astrology and music. For him, the exile in Babylon was actually a lucky turn of events. Babylon, like Egypt, boasted an old and expert tradition in mathematics. Babylonian mathematics was based on the number 60, a number system borrowed from the Sumerians. Today we use 10 as the base of our numbering system. Historians believe that the Babylonian had been using the so-called Pythagorean Theorem more than 1,000 years before Pythagoras came to the city (Karamanides, 2006: 27-29).

Porphyr described Pythagoras's ideas in Babylon: "in Babylon he associated with the other Chaldeans, especially attaching himself to Zaratus [Zoroaster], by whom he was purified from the pollutions of his past life, and taught the things from which a virtuous man ought to be free. Likewise he heard lectures about Nature and the principles of wholes. It was from his stay among these foreigners that Pythagoras acquired the greatest part of his wisdom." (Kardaras, 2011: 152).

If we go further into Greek philosophy, it is possible for us to note



that there are many philosophical relationships between Greek philosophers and ancient Babylon. Eva Maria Räßple compares between Babylon and the city of Plato. She indicates that Naming Babylon in the metaphor reveals her character and the character of her citizens. Religious, social and economic oppression, diverse dimensions of sinfulness, are metaphorical reference for a community on the way toward failure, toward nothingness, none being. The origin of this city is foremost lack of education and wisdom as in the fevered of city of Plato. Both the biblical and philosophical concept of the ideal/ heavenly/sate, are an attempt to surpass the evil city, the failure of human beings. Despite important similarities, the philosophical concept of an ideal city/state and the metaphor of the city in the Book of revelation, accentuate values and believes very differently. The image of the city, which evokes a visualization of diverging conceptual possibilities, embodies communities of human beings as Babylon and Jerusalem (Räßple, 2004: 149; 159).

Plato's critique, Räßple adds, must raise a suspicion against the textual visuality of the metaphor of the city. Interestingly, Plato does not enclose his discourse within the limits of the immediate present as expressed in argumentative philosophical language. He quite ingeniously ventures out into dimensions of visionary evocative language. The evocative power of mythological language, extending boundaries of argumentative discourse, has rarely been exploited more skillfully than in Plato's myth in his republic. Accordingly, Plato effectively utilizes the paradigmatic quality of poetic-mythical language throughout his work to illuminate his philosophical reasoning, and, with regard to his concept of the ideal city, convey dimensions of the city/community beyond the intelligible world (Räßple, 2004: 169-171).

It is possible may be to understand the comparison between Plato and Babylon by saying that Plato reflected on human knowledge and the ever-changing phenomena of the sensible world came to assume the hypothesis transcendent Ideas. In Babylon, a philosophy existed at an earlier date in which two kinds of being were assumed, one of them transcendent, the other that of sensible things. These were the archetypal pattern of sensible reality (Vogel, 1986: 42).

Taylor affirms that there is no doubt that the sciences of the Medi-



terrean peoples were an indigenous development, started by observational knowledge picked up through contact with Babylon and Egypt. Then, where Plato really got the materials of his story? We still see in the Critias the train of reasoning by which he arrived at his conception of the physical geography of the prehistoric Attica. To endow its inhabitants with the characteristics institutions of the early books of the Republic, as he as good as tells us, a stroke of his own imagination. The marvelous wealth and engineering skill with which he credits their antagonists are demanded for the moral of his story; and the details given of the great hydraulic works of their monarchs and the incredible fertility of their territory are, strikingly reminiscent of Babylon and the Babylonian plain, of which Plato would get his knowledge from Herodotus, Ctesias and Xenophon (Taylor, 2000: 133; Brisson, 2000: 27).

However, Aristotle considered that Babylon was too large to be considered a city-state. The best city-state is autarchic and self-sufficient; because the purpose of the city is to promote virtue and justice, citizens must know each other's characters (Ferrarin, 2004: 356).

Aristotle claims that the best ought to have a population that is surveyable, and it ought to have a population that is self-sufficient. But he does not tell us how many citizens there ought to be if self-sufficiency is to be achieved or how few there ought to be if they are to be surveyable, and so we should ask whether there is any material elsewhere in his writings that can answer this question. Aristotle in his Politics critiqued one of Socrates' plans for a city because Socrates wants this city to include 5000 male citizens (Aristotle indicates that it must contain a throng of women and attendants that would be "many times as large"). Aristotle's dissatisfaction with a population of 5000 stems from his belief that a body of that size "will need the territory of Babylon or some other that is unlimited in extent" if the citizens are to live "in endless". He also indicates that a territory the size of Babylon is too large for his version of the good society, because a part of it went unaware of this for three days (Chuska, 2000: 71).

Aristotle said "It is further asked: When are men, living in the same place, to be regarded as a single city- what is the limit? Certainly not the wall of the city, for you might surround all Peloponnesus with a wall. But



a city, having such vast circuit, would contain a nation rather than a state, like Babylon, which, as they say, had been taken for three days before some part of the inhabitants became aware of the fact. This difficult, may however, with advantage be deferred to another occasion; the statesman has to consider the size of the state, and whether it should consist of more than one nation or not" (Aristotle, 2008: 104-105).

Therefore, we can observe that there are many philosophical links between Greek and Ancient Iraq. We believe that it is necessary to detect these relationships especially in philosophical area, which will allow for more disclosure of unknown issues of history.

### ***2.2. Baghdad, the Capital of Philosophical-Religious Dialogue: Iraq into Philosophy of Middle Ages***

In fact, Joel Kramer believes, philosophy and science were cultivated from the ninth through the twelfth centuries in the heartland of Islam, as well as in the Maghreb and Andalusia. Christianity adopted philosophy at early stage, making it a handmaiden to theology. Islamic philosophers considered themselves affiliated with 'the sciences of the ancients', the Greek, Persians, and Indians. They believed that the Greek derived their wisdom from the East, so that the study of the ancient thought was a renovation rather than an innovation. Alfarabi (d. 950) located the birthplace of philosophy in Iraq, whence it was transmitted to Egypt, then to Greek, and finally rendered into Arabic and Syriac. He envisioned a re-birth of philosophy in its original, ancient wisdom thus coming full circle (Kraemer, 2003: 39-40).

The transmission of learning, according to Kramer, from Greek into Arabic, and then from Arabic into Hebrew, Latin, and other European languages was a formative of the western consciousness and a momentous achievements of human civilizations. Medieval European intellectual, Jewish and Christians, studies Muslim thinkers such as al-Kindi (d. c. 866), Ibn Sina (Avicenna) (d. 1037), al-Ghazali (d. 1111), and Ibn Rush (Averroes) and early (ninth and tenth century) scientists such as al-Balkhi and al-Battani. Translators in Sicily and Toledo translated Arabic works into Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, and French without a substantial loss of meaning, thereby creating a true internationality of sciences. Medieval thinkers – Jewish, Christian and Arabic confronted identical philosophi-



cal issues, refracted through different linguistic prisms, their methods and basic postulates being similar. Without the intense Greco-Arabic translation activity in the Islamic world and transmission of these texts into Hebrew and Latin, medieval Jewish thought and Latin Scholasticism are inconceivable (Kraemer, 2003: 40-41).

The Greco-Arabic translation movement began in full vigor under the caliph al-M'mun (813-33), and was centered at the Bayt al-Hikma (House of wisdom in Baghdad). This was a library contacting writings on science and philosophy, including manuscripts brought from Byzantine Empire. There was Hunayn ibn. Ishaq, the Nestorian and his colleagues translated Greek philosophy and science, particularly medicine, into Arabic and Syriac, hunting down and collating Greek manuscripts, and using sound philosophical methods. Al-Kindi, the Muslim philosopher, fostered this enterprise too. A second wave of translation, mainly from Syriac versions, took place in the tenth century, with the Nestorian Matta b. Yunus, and the Jacobite Yahya b. 'Adi in the forefront. These scholars along with other Muslims and Christian philosophers in Baghdad wrote commentaries on Aristotle's works (Kraemer, 2003: 41)

The Christian theologians, who wrote in Arabic in the early Islamic period, were associated with monasteries and other ecclesiastical institutions, many of them played a major role in the burgeoning intellectual life in the caliph's capital of Baghdad and beyond. Christian philosophers, scientists, logicians, copyists, mathematicians, or translators, all of them contributed to the newly flowering culture of the classical period of Islamic civilizations. Christian participation in the famed translation movement undertaken in Baghdad from the eighth to the tenth centuries was influenced; i.e. the translation of philosophical and scientific texts from Greek, Syriac, and Pahlavi into Arabic. This enterprise not only brought the learning of ancient Greece and Persia to the Islamic world, it also became the impetus for new developments in philosophy itself in the Arab world, and for a new appreciation of the philosophical way of life, which some Muslim and Christians intellectual together could become the vehicle for a more fruitful dialogue between members of different religious communities in the caliphate (Griffith, 2010: 106).

The Baghdad Peripatetic included among their numbers such figures



as al-Fārābī, Yaḥya ibn 'Adi, Ibn as-Samḥ, Abū Sulaymān as-Sijistānī, Abū Bishr Mattá, Abū Ḥayyān at-Tawḥidī, as well as Abū al-Ḥasan al-'Āmri. They were centered in Baghdad, the capital of Abbasside caliphate, and the period of their activity extends approximately between 870 and 1023. Their works focused on aspects of Aristotelian logic, yet all of them also wrote treatises on subjects other than logic, although usually from an Aristotelian aspect, as it witnessed in the selection included here. The founder of the Baghdad Peripatetic was the Nestorian Christian Abū Bishr Mattá (d. 940) who was of Syriac origin. He was both a logician and translator of some of Aristotle's logical works, as well as the teacher of al-Fārābī, Yaḥya ibn 'Adi and Abū Sulaymān as-Sijistānī. He is best known for his famous debate with the Arabic grammarian Abū Sa'īd as-Sirāfī concerning the value of Greek logic within and Arabic milieu. Mattá also wrote on aspects of Aristotle's physics and *On the Heavens*, and seems to have had a part in the translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (McGinnis & Reisman, 2007: 121).

Yaḥya ibn 'Adi (d. 974), like Mattá, was a Syriac Christian, although of the Jacobite persuasion, and a translator of Aristotle's *Sophistical Refutations*. He was a student of both al-Fārābī and Mattá, and like both of his teachers he had a particular interest in the relation among logic, grammar and logic. He was interested also in epistemology as well as on Christian theology ethics and questions. He in his turn was the teacher for nearly all the subsequent Baghdad philosopher active at the beginning of the eleventh century. His students included such figures as Abū Ḥayyān at-Tawḥidī, Abū Sulaymān as-Sijistānī, Ibn Zur'ah, 'Īsā ibn 'Alī, Ibn Suwār and Ibn Abi Sa'īd. The treatise was titled "Establishing the Nature of the Possible" (McGinnis & Reisman, 2007: 121-122).

The Muslim philosopher: Abū Sulaymān as-Sijistānī, known as "the Logician" (al-Mantiqī). (ca. 912-985) had been a student of both Matta and Yaḥya ibn 'Adi. With death of Ibn 'Adi, the leadership of the Baghdad Peripatetic, it would seem, fell to as-Sijistānī, who set aside the task of editing and commenting on the works of Aristotle and instead took up the project of introducing Aristotelian modes of thought to a wider audience, which would include theologians, lawyers, grammarians, and humanists (McGinnis & Reisman, 2007: 122; Hengelbrock, 2006: 344-345).



Baghdad in the middle ages was the link between the ancient civilizations in East and Greek; furthermore, it was the center of dialogue among the three religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam (For more discussions, see Gil, 2004: 421; Pourjavady & Schmidtke, 2006; Brague, 2006: 61) Therefore, it occupies an important place when considering establishment of a philosophical science on Iraq.

### *2.3. Mythological Sources: Modern Philosophy and Iraqi Issue: Toward Deepen the Level of Analysis*

Belus, in Voltaire's "the Princes of Babylon", is king of Babylon, who thought himself the first man upon earth, for all his courtiers told him so, and his historians proved it. His place and park situated at a few parfangs from Babylon, extended between the Tigris and the Euphrates, which washed those enchanted banks. His vast house, three thousand feet in front, almost reached the clouds. The platform was surrounded with a balustrade of white marble, fifty feet high, which supported colossal statues of all the kings and great men of the empire. These platforms, composed of two rows of bricks, covered with a thick surface of lead from one extremity to the other, bore twelve feet of earth; and upon the earth were raised groves of olives, citron, orange, palm, cocoa, and cinnamon trees, and stock gillyflowers, which formed alleys that the rays of the sun could not penetrate (Voltaire, 2007: 52).

Hegel thought in Mesopotamia in the context of philosophy of history, perhaps his ideas can be dealt as one of features of Iraqology in philosophy. He compared between the Zend Race which was, according to him, the higher spiritual element of the Persian Empire and, so in Assyria and Babylonia, where is the element of external wealth commerce and luxury. Hegel observed, in regard to Assyria, that it is a rather indeterminate designation. Assyria is a part of Mesopotamia, to the north of Babylon. Atur or Assur on the Tigris, and of later origin Nineveh, said to have been built by Ninus, the founder of the Assyrian Empire, all of these cities were the chief towns of the empire. Nineveh, according to Diodorus, Hegel quoted, was 480 Stadia [about 12 German miles – [55 English] in circumstances. On the walls, were fifteen hundred towers, within which a vast mass of people resided (Hegel, 2007: 182-183).



Hegel added that Babylon included an equally immense population. These cities arose in consequence of a twofold necessity. Older traditions indicate that this entire valley district was traversed by Nomads, and that this mode of life gave way before that of the cities. Abraham wandered forth with his family from Mesopotamia westwards, into mountains Palestine. Nineveh has been built approximately 2050 years before Christ; consequently the founding of the Assyrian kingdom is of no later date. Finally, we read to Hegel his saying that "To hear is ascribed the building of the Tower of Babel, respecting which we have in the Bible one of the oldest of traditions—Babylon lay to the south, on the Euphrates, in a plain of great fertility and well adapted for agriculture." (Hegel, 2007: 183-184).

This text, and other similar texts, reveals the attention of ancient, medieval and modern philosophy in Iraqi issue especially in its methodological dimensions. This concern, as we want to confirm, is not being achieved in a way intended to draw new philosophical science in the same way that we want to establish, but it is reasoning on other philosophical subjects expressed through old Iraqi mythologies. What is required, when using Iraqi topic, is to express philosophical issues on the basis of a purely scientific and philosophical way. This is the goal of Iraqology.

### **Conclusion**

Iraqology is a group of approaches that specialized in studying Iraqi social dialectical situation according to its historical development. It works on utilizing of all relevant sciences and knowledge branches in order to produce a philosophical overview of Iraqi issue. It aims to understand Iraqi case in a social, historical, dialectical and sophisticated manner. It is an attempt to answer the basic Iraqi questions and thinking in its theoretical and practical problems and find treatments to them.

Iraqology also is a new branch in philosophy. It is a way of dealing with difficulties and problems that arise in Iraqi's attempt to set the various aspects of the experienced Iraq in some sort of order, and the measure of its worth is its adequacy for the purpose of deep understanding to Iraqi people, history and country. The role of Iraqology is represented in installation of the overall analysis model and formulation of deep and





final idea. Iraqi ideology is social space which Iraqi reason moves within by social actors throughout history. Iraqi history is immemorial one. Iraq witnessed the emergence of many civilizations that influenced on human history for a long time. Unfortunately, in spite of this ancient and influential history, we cannot find a systematic and deeply study, which engages on a philosophical institutionalizing for the reasons that stand behind the emergence of Iraqi civilizations and their decline.

### Future Works

Establishing an understandable reality philosophically for things that Iraqi knows in non-philosophic experience to be essential cognitively. Using philosophical thinking to comprehend theoretical and practical Iraqi problems and find treatments to them. Detecting the long historical relationship between Iraq and philosophy. Iraqi topic must be expressed on the basis of a purely scientific and philosophical way. Dialectical philosophy occupies a prominent position in theorizing for Iraqology. Discovering philosophical institutionalizing for the reasons that stand behind the emergence of Iraqi civilizations and their decline. The goal of Iraqology is to express philosophical issues on the basis of a purely scientific and philosophical way. Iraqi philosophy of history does not stop at the borders of virtual description of historical events, but it also tries to penetrate deeply in the meaning of these events.

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**Öz:** Irakoloji, tarihsel gelişimine bağlı olarak, Irak'a özgü sosyal diyalektik durumun araştırılmasında uzmanlaşan yaklaşımlar gurubudur. O, Irak'a özgü soruna bilimsel bir bakış üretmek için, ilgili bütün bilimler bilim dallarından yararlanmaya çalışmaktadır. Irakoloji, Irak'a özgü durumu sosyal, tarihsel, diyalektik ve sofistike bir tarzda anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Yine Irakoloji, Irak'ın temel sorunlarına bir çözüm üretme, onun teorik ve pratik sorunlarını düşünme ve onlara çözüm bulma girişimidir. Bu nedenle o, insan bilimleri içinde yeni bir bilim dalı olarak görülebilir. Irakoloji, bilge bir tarzda, Iraklının bilişsel olarak gerekli olduğunu felsefi olmayan bir deneyimle bilmekte olduğu şeyler için anlaşılabilir bir gerçeklik kurma girişimi demektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Irakoloji, felsefe, gerçeklik, tarih, metodoloji, ideoloji.

