

The Intellectual representations according to Ammar Belahcen

Les représentations de l'intellectuel selon Ammar Belahcen

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Abstract:

This article is an attempt to monitor some of the inquiries and questions that constituted a research obsession in Ammar Belahcen's sociology and philosophy, and at the same time constituted a creative obsession. From it, we tried to approach questions of its uses, references, and starting points, and we focused on Gramsci's concept of the traditional and organic intellectual, which is the main reference in Ammar Belahcen's representations of this concept.

Keywords:

Organic Intellectual; Traditional Intellectual; Representations; Antonio Gramsci; Ammar Belahcen.

Resumé:

Cet article tente de suivre quelques-unes des interrogations et des questions qui constituaient une obsession de la recherche dans la sociologie et la philosophie d'Ammar Belahcen, et constituaient en même temps une obsession créatrice, à partir desquelles nous avons tenté d'aborder les questions de ses usages, références et points de départ, et nous nous sommes concentrés sur le concept de Gramsci de l'intellectuel traditionnel et organique, qui est la principale référence dans les représentations de ce concept par Ammar Belahcen.

Mots clés:

L'intellectuel Organique; L'intellectuel Traditionnel; Représentations; Antonio Gramsci; Ammar Belahcen.

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1. INTRODUCTION:

At the age of no more than forty years old, and at the end of August 1993, the Algerian thinker, writer and sociologist "Ammar Belahcen" (1953-1993) passed away, with a lump in his throat full of various socio-cultural questions, questions hanging in the void that he could not ask. And others that he did not answer, and a third that he made his many creative and thoughtful contributions in an attempt to answer them, and perhaps the most important of his questions were those on the side of the intellectual, which can be included within the specialization of "cultural sociology" or "cultural studies".

Ammar was born on February 13, 1953 in the "Msirda" region in western Algeria. He was self-taught, he studied, excelled, and succeeded. He studied at the University of Oran, where he became a professor of sociology. He had several intellectual contributions, among which we mention a writing on "Literature and Ideology" published in Algeria in 1984, and his very important book, which consisted of a rich and important discussion framed by "Ammar" and published in 1986, choosing a remarkable title for it: "*Intelligentsia or Intellectuals in Algeria?!!*" It's the one which will be the main source for our article. He also had several creative contributions to stories published in the collections: "*Sea Fires*" (1981), "*Voices*"(1985), and "*Lanterns*"(1991). His creative writing was distinguished by its reliance on "description more than its reliance on action as a result of its scenic

nature" (Boutadjine, 2005: 153). It is writing that "goes deeper and often the conscience of the ego is the focal point around which the utterances float" (Boutadjine, 2005: 156).

Ammar Belahacen was also a professor of sociology, and he enjoyed the enormous objective potential offered by the sociological lesson, subject and method, and therefore his main interest focused on the axis of "the Algerian intellectual and ideology", and about the "post-colonial Algerian identity", and about the self in its relationship to language and society, investing his broad vision in clarifying the articulated relations between "literature and ideology", moving away in his presentation from the prevailing, the repeated and the vulgar, questioning the various epistemological sects, and an interlocutor of Western concepts, Marxist ones in particular, Taking that necessary distance for the researcher, especially in the field of sociology.

He was also a distinguished cultural activist, as he was one of the pillars of the "*Al-Tabyeen Magazine*" along with other intellectuals, the most important of them was the novelist "Tahar Wattar" (1936- 2010), the thinker "Bakhti benouda" (1966- 1995), and the poet Youcef Sebti (1943- 1993), and he had contributions to this magazine, where he in it, he published nearly "23 articles that dealt with various and varied topics in the period between 1985 and 1993" (Mordhi, 02, 2018: 239), and he also made other academic contributions within the framework of laboratories and university lectures.

The departure of "Ammar Belahcen" at the end of August 1993 and exactly on the twenty-ninth of it, after suffering from illness, was a heartbreaking departure. The cultural and academic class at the time received it with much sadness and

grief. This is not evidenced by the special issue devoted by the magazine "Al-Tabyeen" to this heartbreaking departure. This issue, number seven, was issued in 1993. It is an issue of lamentation and grief over the departure of the great intellectual, Ammar Belahcen.

Where it was issued in a black cover whose area was dominated by the image of Ammar Belahcen's face in black and white, with his round ivory glasses, his dreamy look and clinging to hope until the last moment, with a confident beard, and on the left of the picture were two sentences written in white script and in bold, the first saying: "Goodbye Ammar", while the second It says: "Texts by Ammar from *The notebooks of pain and hope*". It's editorial was written by the late great "Tahar Wattar," and it was titled "Farewell (goodbye) Ammar... Against Lamentation."

2. Ammar's questions and his intellectual and creative concerns:

Ammar Belahcen engages in his questions and problems, which constituted his sociological and creative obsession, about the human being, the intellectual, and the society, the broken modern society, That society in which "new patriarchal systems prevail at the family level, individual, group and family life, status of women and children, It prevents the emergence of individuality, independence and difference, It hinders the development of a civil society, and prevent the transition from the traditional organic society to the society of the citizen and the different dialogue subjects, and this is reflected in the systems of education, behavior, values, standards, practices, and practical and social ethics." (Belahcen, 07, 1993: 12-13). Investing in his involvement in the multiplicity of his disciplines and the diversity of his specializations creatively and academically, and familiar with what

he called "Abdelkebir Khatibi" the "intersemiotic" that "allows the researcher to migrate between evidence and signs, questioning their relationships, and sneaking behind every meaning that leaks out" (Homida, 24, 2020: 597), and far from the appropriateness of Gramsci's terms "organic intellectual" and "traditional intellectual" and their harmony with the structure and entanglements of Algerian society (We can refer here to the objections of the late sociologist "Abdelkader Jaghloul" about these two concepts, and replacing them with my concepts: the employee intellectual, and the imitated intellectual. See: Ammar Belahcen: An Intelligentsia or Intellectuals in Algeria?!!, 1st Edition, Dar Al-Hadatha for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Beirut, Lebanon 1986, pg. 61 onwards, and there is an important introduction in some of the pages before it), in order to understand the intellectual structure that formed the "world View" of Ammar Belhacen, it is not good for us to It is not good for us to meander to ramifications, this is neither its field nor its place, accordingly, we will present here that intellectual ontological path and that vision of Ammar Belhacen, which was influenced by a tapestry of Gramscian concepts (Antonio Gramsci 1891- 1937) such as the organic and vulgar ideology, the organic intellectual and the traditional intellectual, these representations were based on the Marxist vision in its Gramscian dimension in particular.

3. The starting points of Ammar Belahcen's representations of the intellectual:

The sociological intellectual vision of "Ammar Belhacen" was formed according to a binary structure that looks at reality and the meta-reality, considering that "the social theory that studies this reality must accommodate the

dual role of man, that is, as a product of life as much as he is a product of it" (Al-Husseini, 1985: 67), and on this is based a vision of the relations of production stating that "the relations of production constitute (a whole), which can only be understood through a comprehensive analysis of it" (Al-Husseini, 1985: 71), It relies mainly on a Marxist perception of reality, of social consciousness, and of the intellectual, within the framework of a materialist dialectic, as "Marx's perception of social reality was a dialectical one. Perhaps this encouraged the emergence of modern intellectual attempts that took dialectics as a means to understand man's relationship with society." (Al-Husseini, 1985: 65).

Accordingly, the representations of the intellectual according to Ammar Belhacen stem from sociology, as it is a perception of the world, in the words of Max Weber (1864-1920) Max Weber, "embodied in values, standards, behaviors, and attitudes regarding life, society, and existence" (Belahcen, 1986: 16) from a conceptual network that represents theory Marxism is its base, and it is formed as a result of "critical thinking, which is a reconsideration and questioning, the aim of which is not only to define the position and role of the intellectual in society, but rather to reposition him as a subject and as a future social group in the context of the dynamic of contradictions and various social relations and their cultural expressions heritage and present, nationally and universally." (Belahcen, 1986: 05), This vision, which was based mainly on "Ammar Belahcen" on the vision of "Antonio Gramsci" because the latter was "the thinker of politics, the superstructure and ideology" (Belahcen, 1986: 14), as he thought of ideology as a perception of the world, as representation that "An intellectual is commonly defined as 'an intellectual being; a person possessing or supposed to possess superior powers of intellect'" (Crehan, 2002:131), and the "intellectuals may

produce representations, but the image of the intellectual, whether as disinterested authority or as engaged thinker, is one that is constructed within representation” (Jones, 2006: 81) including religion, considering that it is manifested in four embodiments and tangible forms, first of which is philosophy, in which Gramsci distinguishes “philosophy as a supreme ideological moment, consistent and essential between historical philosophy and ahistorical philosophy” (Belahcen, 1986:19), and secondly, religion, which he considers “A degree of ideology” (Belahcen, 1986: 20) comes in its order under “philosophy” (Belahcen, 1986: 14), Thirdly, common sense, which is “a concept that Gramsci uses to define the world’s most common and widespread vision among the ruling and dependent social classes” (Belahcen, 1986: 21). Then comes the rest of the Marxist concepts that embroider the conceptual fabric of Ammar Belahcen, such as “the infrastructure represented in the relations and forces of production.” The superstructure represented by systems, ideas, and ideals” (Al-Husseini, 1985: 66), hegemony, divisions of the intellectual, divisions of ideology, and the concept of “social consciousness” in its various forms, which is considered the basic incubator for the concept of ideology.

4. In the meaning of "organic and traditional intellectual":

Gramsci’s concept of the organic intellectual has a broad meaning that includes “everyone who practices an ethical, cultural, educational work” (Belahcen, 1986: 37) without distinguishing between those who do manual work and another, he is an intellectual who organically belongs to a certain class, carrying its ideas and concerns in a way that is “recognized, declared, theorized and politically desired, in order to defend in a good way the (new perception of the world) carried by that

class..." (Belahcen, 1986: 38), and therefore it is a vital and necessary element, as the absence of an elite will inevitably lead to "the failure and retreat of social revolutions and patriotism" (Belahcen, 1986: 35). By the way, These organic intellectuals in the Gramsci's thought "are distinguished less by their profession, which may be any job characteristic of their class, than by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong". (Gramsci, 1971: 3).

The organic intellectual, then, is the guarantor, and he is the necessary "cement" in every process of change, and he is the spreader of awareness, as he "creates, distributes, and spreads ideology on the one hand, and ensures the harmony of consciousness of the class to which he is organically linked, on the other hand" (Belahcen, 1986: 38), and no social or cultural reform can take place without the presence of this intellectual. This process of reform, which for him is like a sifting of common sense, because the organic intellectuals "do not exist like this, hanging in the void, and secluded in ivory towers, watching from behind their intellectual castles on the battles and conflicts of society away from the fragments of social wars, the dialectic of contradictions and people's perceptions, and the boiling of ideologies? (Belahcen, 1986: 39), this involvement in the womb of social problems and questions is mainly due to what he called "critical self-awareness," which "means, historically and politically, the creation of an elite of intellectuals. A human mass does not "distinguish" itself, does not become independent in its own right without, in the widest sense, organising itself; and there is no organisation without intellectuals, that is without organisers and leaders, in other words, without the theoretical aspect of the theory-practice nexus being distinguished concretely by the existence of a group of people "specialised" in conceptual and

philosophical elaboration of ideas" (Gramsci, 1971: 334), from this standpoint, the concept of "elite," "elite," or "intelligentsia" will crystallize as it is "a socio-cultural milieu rather than a specific social group with fixed and precise boundaries whose members are distinguished by a unified position, a single functional role in the social production system, and a single material and professional position with advantages" (Maximenko, 1984: 17), this concept is made clearer by Paul Valéry (1871- 1945) when he says that the intelligentsia "are the ones who produce values for those who do not possess them at all" (Maximenko, 1984: 13), on the other hand, Ammar Belahcen distinguishes between intellectuals in his definition of the intellectual, we can say that he resembles to Edward Said (1935- 2003) in this distinction, "In representations of the intellectual, he moves to distinguish, still further, between the work of the writer or artist and the work of the intellectual more properly and narrowly conceived" (Lazarus, 2005: 117).

In this regard, Ammar Belahcen acknowledged the great intellectual efforts of Antonio Gramsci, from a narrative verbal fabric that fully reflects this recognition, when he said: "The analytical ability and competence employed by the Italian theorist in analyzing the field of intellectuals while he was in the fascist prisons of Mussolini, mental clarity and intellectual purity with which he coordinated his ideas, made him the sociological thinker par excellence for the intellectuals and the elite" (Belahcen, 1986: 34).

He appreciated the thought of Gramsci, who considered "Marxism the best solution and tool for understanding Italian society, but at the same time he considered, the path of Marxism fraught with (ideology), (traditions) and (old ways of thinking and life) and besieged by systems and devices that broadcast and

disseminate other perceptions and ideas of life!" (Belahcen, 1986: 14), and considering that Gramsci's study of "ideology is not systematically separated from the problem of intellectuals" (Belahcen, 1986: 34) and reiterating each time that it has four degrees: "philosophy, religion, common sense, and folklore" (Belahcen, 1986: 34), On the other hand, the relative independence and continuity of classes created a new concept for Gramsci, the "traditional intellectual", which appears as a representative of "an uninterrupted historical continuity" (Belahcen, 1986: 42) and portrays himself as "above history and the laws of social development." (Belahcen, 1986: 42), this intellectual was previously an organic educator for "previous social classes that prevailed at a certain time and in a certain society, and within a certain mode of production with that, so their winds went away, and their systems dissolved" (Belahcen, 1986: 43) and he remained a witness on her. "Traditional intellectuals are that cultural and social debris that remained from previous and past historical explosions..." (Belahcen, 1986: 43), Thus, they "produce an ideology that depicts them as independent and representative of timeless historical eras and of a suprahistorical cultural spiritual heritage." (Belahcen, 1986: 44), and accordingly, they live in what Ammar Belahcen calls the "ideological illusion" (Belahcen, 1986: 44), and their independence is strengthened when the rising social class is "weak in structure, fragile in form, and does not possess the ideological (cement) that strengthens its members" (Belahcen, 1986: 45) and when there is a political ideological renaissance, "the reunification of traditional intellectuals begins to disperse" (Belahcen, 1986: 45). Thus, the traditional intellectual turns into an organic intellectual in the rising social class "by abandoning (the glories and illusions) of his past class or by adopting" a new socio-political program.

Thus, Gramsci and after him, Ammar Belahcen, raise the problem of ideology in its organic connection to their representation of the intellectuals "in a unified conceptual field that is the field of class struggle and the practices of the social classes politically and ideologically" (Belahcen, 1986: 46), where the intellectuals will build with the fragments of the rising basic class "and its remnants (the historical bloc the new world according to the perception of the new world that this rising class calls for" (Belahcen, 1986: 46), and there will be a structural and social defect, as this is the case in the third world society. The adoption of ideology "as a machine to modernize the economy, import technology, and create forms of modern industrial organizations without modernizing culture, superficially changed society and its family, moral and social values, and dismantled its lifestyle and livelihood (...) This change led to the marginalization of society and left it to its own devices, and the civil society and its groups remained behind, lagging behind civilization and time" (Belahcen, 04, 1992: 7-8).

5. Conclusion:

The questions and inquiries that Ammar Belahcen's thought carries, are constantly multiplying and reproducing, and they cannot be anchored in the port of certainty, as long as systematic doubt is its main tributary and she did not announce it. It mainly revolves around the relationship of this intellectual of both types with power, with the center if he accepts himself and his thought on the periphery, his parallel relationship with domination and submission, the sources of his knowledge and the methods of disseminating it, especially the important question that the new critical schools insist on, which is: What are the possibilities of liberating knowledge from the authority of the center? Is it necessary that there

be mechanisms to disrupt the various relations between power and knowledge, for power “produces control and resistance at the same time” (Abu Al-Naga, 2008: 101), and power includes the question and the answer, the center and the margin, which is the same as what is included in the intellectual, especially his organic type, which Inevitably, his roles changed a lot after the departure of the great thinker Ammar Belahcen.

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