Arab National Identity Crisis: Political Strategies and The National Unity Conflict in Munis Arrazzaz's *Alive In The Dead Sea*

Ahmad Mohd Alkouri
School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Raihanah M.M.
School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Ruzy Suliza Hashim
School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Abstract
This paper explores the conflict between the Arab political strategies with its nation in order to identify the struggle of the Arab nation with the state system (nation-state) and the Arab nation's struggle for its unity. The concepts of new nationalism and old nationalism are used in the analysis in order to expose the conflict between the ethnic nationalism *Haweyya Qawmeyya* and the new political nationalism *Haweyya Wataneyya*. These two aspects of the nationalist struggles highlight the crisis, known as Arab Spring that afflicts the Arab world today. It is argued that the suppression of the political struggles to assert a new civic state identity collides with the original ethnic identity. Drawing from the novel of Munis Arrazzaz's *Alive In The Dead Sea* that shows the protagonist's struggle with two forms of nationalist ideals, we illustrate how the novelist foreshadows the Arab national unity crisis with its political strategies and the current conflict that beleaguers the present Arab world.
Keywords: Munis Arrazzaz, Arab National Identity Conflict, Arab Nationalism, *Haweyya Qawmeyya*, *Haweyya Wataneyya,*

Introduction
Munis Arrazzaz was a prominent writer from Jordan and a son of a nationalist leader in Albath Party; the leading party of Iraq and Syria. In his first novel *Alive In The Dead Sea* (1982), Arrazzaz points out a sensitive issue that could be a main cause of conflict between Arab politics and the national interests. The issue that Arazzaz problematises in his novel is significant due to the conflict between the political ideology of the State towards nation-building ideals and the nationalist ideology. This nationalist ideology refers to the Arab national identity that indicates a common identity of all nation-states of individuals from different Arab nations and nationalists based on mutuality of the Arab culture irrespective of geo-political boundaries. These two types of identities, one based on political ideology and another grounded on mutuality of ethnicity of Arabs have created a great tension in the Arab identity. Therefore, this paper examines the differences between the political national identity and the cultural national identity as presented in the novel. Furthermore, it discusses the consequences of the conflict between both ideologies. How is national identity constructed in the narrative? How is the notion of national identity different from that of the Arab identity? These questions will form the basis of the discussion into Arrazzaz's *Alive in the Dead Sea*.

Munis arrazzaz and the sarab National Identity

Previous scholarly studies on Arrazzaz reveal the political inclination of his novel. Arrazzaz's novel portrays intellectuals, aside from the political leaders and nationalists, as showing more reality and consistency to the fractured Arab national identity. As Qutaiba Alhabashneh (2008, p. 8) comments, "It exposes a relationship between politics and literature". In addition, Nazih (2001, p. 87) states on the comic style used in the novel that "Munis Arrazazz's humor is directed at the bitter and hard circumstances of the national struggle ever since the beginning of the century." Besides, Arrazzaz was well known as a political critic as Alhabashneh (2008, p. 31) extends his views that the novelist "was a political writer in *Al-ra'y* newspaper". Abdullah Redwan's *Ase'lah fee Arrewayah Al-Urduniyyah* (2002) highlights the representations of political oppression, and the nationalist struggle for the Arab unity in Munis Arrazzaz's writings. Similarly, Nazeeh Abunedal, (2001, p. 24) considers Arrazzaz as prominent in expressing the idea of "freedom" and the struggle for the "unity of *Ummah*". While these scholars have collectively pointed out the politics that is the focus of Arrazzaz's novel, they have not presented the crux of Arab crisis which arises from the conflicting ideologies of the many nation-state systems in the region that divides and disintegrates the collective Arab nation.
Primarily, an important issue in the foreground is the origin of the Arab nation. The first premise to understand is that the Arab nation is considered as one Muslim nation, or as scholars identify it, "the overwhelming majority of Arabs are Moslems" (Carmtchael, 1943, p. 148). Thus given the religious sensibilities of the majority, the collectivity of the people as described within Islam is as well significant. As Barakat Halim (1993, p. 348) asserts, "the Arab world [is] a single unit rather than as a number of nation-states". The Muslims are defined within Islamic parameters as being part of a unified *Ummah*, or one united nation. Historically, the Arab nation was a united nation under the Muslim *khalifah* for more than a thousand years. However, the colonial invasions of the Arab world had left the Arabs divided into many separated political entities based on the division of colonial power that broke up the Arab Muslim world map. The collective Arab nation became several autonomous countries, each with its own set of governance and administration which ultimately created a fragmented Arab nation. Zubair Hasan states that, (1998: 51) the Muslim world today "stand divided". Post-colonial Arab States

became a copy of its former colonizers with the management of these countries imitating the Western governance. M.Ghayasuddin (1986: 6) expands on this issue, "the west has managed to keep the power of Islam divided and defused". Therefore, these different forms of governance, instead of unifying the Arab world based on shared ideals, language, history, religion, and culture, have created a sense of identity estrangement between members of the otherwise collective Arab nation. In other words, the sense of *Ummah*, or a collective identity based on mutuality of faith in Allah (SWT) as seen from an Islamic perspective, is frail in the current Arab peninsular.

This fragmentation is obviously expected as an impact of the colonial practice of divide and rule which makes the management of different Arab states easier. As a consequence, the collective Arab ethnic identity or *Haweyya Qawmiyya*, has become a state-based identity, or *Haweyya Wataneyya*. The latter exists because it is entirely based on a particular nation-state which is dependent on the political sovereignty of the independent State. Therefore, this is a direct copy of the western view of the concept of nation-state. Thus despite the religious commonality of this region, the Arab nation's colonial legacy has erased the sense of brotherhood and fractured the *Ummah* mind-set among the people. As Steve Tamari (1996:1) explains "Like other peoples around the world, most speakers of Arabic did not identify themselves as belonging to a particular national group until quite recently. Modern Arab nationalism is a product of 19th- and 20th-century transformations". As a result, the Arab identity had experienced a silent crisis since the period of the Arab states' independence from colonial invasion. The term "silent crisis" is used to highlight that the dissatisfaction is not acted upon but lies seething beneath governance of normalcy. The Arab nation longs for a return to the old unanimity.

In addition, the struggle that the Arab people are experiencing is rooted in the numerous figure heads that compete for the independent sovereignty of an otherwise mutual landscape. As Rami G. Khouri (2008) argues:

> Led by presidents and rulers of sovereign states, sub-national ethnic and tribal leaders, and local militias and warlords, these identities and forces compete for the allegiance of a predominantly Arab population in the Middle East that has not had the opportunity to freely express its political sentiments or affirm its identities for many decades, perhaps even centuries. (p. 42)

The conflict between the Arab political authorities and the nation and nationalists is rooted deep since the postcolonial era and the end does not appear imminent. That conflict leads the Arabs' national identity to an unprecedented crisis. As seen in fiction, Arrazzaz's first novel *Alive In The Dead Sea* (1982) represents this viewpoint where he depicts the conflict between the ideology of the nation for the Arab unity and its contradiction with the political ideology of state identity. Arrazzaz's novel is uncannily visionary because he predicts the unrest that has sparked in many Arab nations which can be attributed to the tensions arising from the contradictory ideologies.

The Arab model of modern situation is somewhat dissimilar from a Western model. However, Benedict Anderson's (1983) renowned concept of the "imagined community" is somewhat applicable to the Arab context. Anderson (1983: 6) defines nation as "an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign." In his illustration of a nation, Anderson further explains that albeit the people of a nation can never fully know or meet all the members, they might think of each other as communities sharing some similarities. This concept corresponds with the notion of *Haweyya Qawmeyya* which presents the collective Arab

identity. Khalil Rinnawi (2006) comments that the imagining of new sense of community in the Arab world is developed based on "new" Arab historians and intellectuals of the Renaissance *Al-Nahda* period. For this new sense of community to emerge, people must see themselves as "groups who live parallel to other groups" where they share religion, history, language, customs, values, and so forth. Most people who belong to these groups will never know, meet or even really understand the people in their parallel groups, but they imagine that they are a community with a "deep, horizontal comradeship" (Rennawi, 2006, p. 8). Yet when the imagined sense of commonality is fractured by contesting nation-state values, the collectivity is both hindered and flawed.

In *Alive In The Dead Sea*, Arrazzaz depicts the protagonist Enad Ashahed as an individual championing for the collective identity of the Arabs and Arraed as an authoritarian campaigning his political agenda. The analysis in this paper uses them as the key instruments to position and identify the Arab national identity crisis today. It is significant to introduce the protagonist's position in the novel before the main discussion on the two concepts of Political Identity and Ethnic Identity begins. Firstly, the story describes the protagonist Enad as someone who insists on the Arab unity as a crucial solution to the Arab identity. He escapes Jordan for Lebanon due to the oppressive authority with the hope that the new place will give him the freedom to champion his cause. His dream of Arab unity drives him to start his journey with Lebanese authoritarian Major Arraed who initially welcomes Enad's mission. Araed subsequently gives up the idea of Arab unity and asserts his own political agenda which causes Enad to be entrapped in another state system that privileges the state identity and rejects the collective ethnic identity.

Assertion Of Ethnic Identity (Haweyya Qawmeyya)

Enad knows the Arabs are one nation but the strategy of "divide and rule policy" (Akhtar Hussain Sandhu. 2009) is applied to maintain the fragmentation and divide the nation into several nations. Enad feels a strong sense of attachment to the Arab unity as he says: "the country of unity is the home of all Arabs alike" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 202), thus allowing him to find a new "home" in Lebanon as promised by Arraed. Therefore, his decision to assert the Arab national identity based on ethnicity is part of his believe in the *Haweyya Qawmeyya* of the Arabs which he thinks is the ideal form of collective identity in which Arabs should return to.

As previously stated, Enad's unconditional belief of Arab unity regardless of the political borders drives him to be exiled to Lebanon. In this sense, Enad does not recognize the modern geographical borders of the Arab nation-states and puts his faith in the original *Haweyya* of Arabs, the ethnic identity. In other words, Enad considers his belonging to the national identity based on ethnicity, but not based on the political borders drawn by colonization. His idea of being an Arab as an individual with the aspects of the entire Arab ethnicity allows him to be a member of that collective Arab ethnicity. Milton Esman (1994, p. 27) in *Ethnic Politics*, defines the substance of ethnic identity as "The set of meanings that individuals impute to their membership in an ethnic community including those attributes that bind them to that collectivity and then distinguish it from others in their relevant environment". It is this 'collectivity' or 'Haweyya' that 'binds' Enad as an individual to the Arab community despite its disintegration due to geographical demarcations.

United in their objective to resist the enemies and to assert collective identity, Enad and his cousin Methgal bond together in the fight against the Israeli attack. As Enad says; "A sound of bomb shells. We ducked down...that was near...I whispered: no this was launched by us...you don't know military" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 72). The conversation directs the situation from the battle field to expose the sacrifice of individuals to win over the enemy. Enad and Methgal are

not trained for military service, but they do fight together in the battle field against the attack of Israel. As Enad states; "If I am still alive I will record this day and tell my child about the sacrifice of his father" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 73). The narrative clearly exposes the sacrifice of an individual's life for the sake of the entire nation's freedom. Both Enad and Methgal are members of the bigger group that resist colonial invasion and reject outsider interference by asserting and only accepting the Arab national identity. As a result, Enad's participation in the Lebanese Fight with Israel is a clear indication of his principles of Arab ethnic unity. Although Enad is a Jordanian, his voluntary act to fight for Lebanon is testimony to his ideological standpoint regarding ethnic national unity. His sense of belonging to the collective Arab nation is in keeping with his loyalty to the Arab nation. Enad's views of his identity is akin to how a sociologist describes "the 'core' of ethnicity" that which is situated "in the myths, memories, values, symbols and the characteristic styles of particular historic configurations." (Anthony D. Smith. 1994, p. 50). Hence, ethnic nationality in the case of Enad has more importance and assertion compared to the political nationalism or the state nationality.

A fundamental belief in Enads' mind is the necessity to have unity among the Arab nations given their shared ethnicity. Enad as a poet attempts to write a novel on the Arab's world conditions; however Methgal criticizes the "fragmented structure of the narrative", for which Enad replies: "You say fragmented? Of course fragmented… isn't the human... Aren't I... Aren't you… fragmented? Aren't we?" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 222). The answer from Enad explains the individual attachments to the larger Arab ethnicity which is akin to Brown's definition of ethnicity as an "instinctual bond" (1994, p. xii) which cannot be explained by rationality. Therefore, this ethnic bond does not consider the political identity of state sovereignty.

Another episode that illustrates the individual's belonging to an ethnic group and the exclusion of the Other by resisting colonization is when Enad and the Lebanese Mariam, guard the sea from the outside interference of Israel. Enad says; "They say that Rashedieh came under heavy attack with bomb shell…Tyre too... But Mariam is guarding the sea…" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 141). Both Enad and Mariam target one dream of freedom and unity regardless of the political borders, despite being from Jordan and Lebanon, respectively. This 'Other', in this case the Israelis and their invasion of Lebanon, inadvertently reunites the two characters based on the mutuality of their Arab identity (Gellner, 1982). Enad and Mariam thus are symbolic of the two states of Lebanon and Jordan, and their mutual struggle against Israel is akin to a return to the original identity of the Arab nation as they stand together against a common enemy regardless of their political sovereignty.

Contradiction and Confrontation

In asserting ethnic identity and Arab unity, efforts by a nationalist may appear in conflict with the political ideologies and strategies of the Arab nation-states. Enad's belief in nationalism involves his rejection of the state-system of nepotism. Enad understands the need for a paradigm shift vis-a-vis Arab politics towards enhancing a collective national identity. He condemns the Arab political strategies as seen in an episode in the narrative during a ceremony held by the Jordanian government; "I loathe the minister of culture. He sits there on his chair that he sees as an imperial seat. I only see it as a toilet seat which he got because of our machine guns and not his education or university degree" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 208). Enad condemns the political authorities for their nonchalant attitude towards individuals who, in Enad's point of view, have sacrificed their lives to remain loyal to the Arab identity.

In addition, politics is used as a tool to assert the state-led identity at the expense of Arab unity.

Enad's view of ethnic identity opposes the authoritarian reaction to the individual right of asserting the ethnic national identity. Enad's poem on this issue is censored due to its questionable content. As the minister explains to him, "the one who objected to the poem was an employee in the Department of Censorship" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 109). This censorship exasperates Enad as he questions the curbing of freedom in the society. Enad's actions thus is rooted in his need to assert his rights in the society especially loyalty towards his Arab nationhood.

However, Enad's uncompromising mission of uniting the Arab people based on ethnic commonalities inadvertently has unintended repercussion especially when dealing with others. For instance he refuses to keep a maid in his home thinking she might be a spy to the authorities: "I dismissed the maid. She may be a member of the intelligence department" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 62) Enad's decision to dismiss the maid is due to his fear of the political authoritarians to block his ideas of Arab unity. Albeit understandable, Enadbelieves that in the return to the unity as an origin of the Arab ethnic identity is the main cause that would consolidate the Arab power.

Political Identity (Haweyya Wataneyya)

The Arab political strategies which followed to maintain the state ideology after independence are oppression and suppression to the nation. Accepting the fact that the Arab nation becomes fragmented and divided will only serve the political authorities for their longevity in leadership. As Jean-Pierre Filiu (2011, p. 7) comments, the Arab regimes "were breaking records of longevity". Therefore, implementing the new nationalism that serves the state interests is the main cause of the national interests of the entire Arab nation. Concerning the point of the hidden agenda of the Arab political practices with its nation will divulge the silent crisis of the Arab national struggle as the narration reveals. Therefore the following analysis imposes the political strategies of Arabs in order to assert the state political identity instead of the ethnic national identity of Arabs.

Assertion Of Political Identity *(Haweyya Wataneyya)*

The role of government is to lead the nation and manage the opposition parties; Arraed teaches Enad about the nation and about the leader of the country whom he deems as an authoritarian. Enad says, "He lectured me on the differences between negative and positive times of the ruling government and its oppositions" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 103). Arraed does his job of initiating the strategies of the state as a political entity. Arraed desires to change Enad's mindset towards the state identity since Enad's exile to Lebanon with the hope of pursuing the ethnic identity for the sake of Arab unity. Arraed refers to the ideology and strategies the governance should follow to rule the country especially when it has an opposition party. Therefore, according to Colonel Jayne A. Carson (2003, p. 2), "Nation-building is the intervention in the affairs of a nation state for the purpose of changing the state's method of government." This refers to various strategies the authoritarians should use to lead the nation in such way to serve the state ideology. Arraed elucidates to Enad about the necessity to build the nation according to the present situation of Lebanon as a state among the Arab states. In that sense, Arraed tries to convince Enad of his role as an authoritarian in leading the country though it causes destruction of the Arab unity based on the ethnic attachments. From this point, Arraed begins to change his direction away from Enad's mission of Arab unity.

Decidedness, manipulation, and oppression are the main strategies of Arab leaders to rule their nations. Arraed's mindset has fundamentally permitted all the possible ways and strategies

weather legal or illegal to maintain his leadership and position as an authoritarian. For example, he is a politician in Lebanon who occupies the "fourth ranking position after the president" while being aware that the leadership "needs decisiveness" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 240) and should have manipulative manner. To illustrate, Arraed asksEnad a simple question, (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 240):

-   If I plotted against you…and you were the president, would you sentence me to death?
-   He answered in childish foolishness: Of course not. You are my friend…we went through things together, and…
-   I answered immediately: "…go away from here; you are not fit to be a man of the state".

The conversation between Arraed and Enad leads to the strictness and sharpness of Arab leadership which can never allow a friendship or other ties to destroy the authority. Besides, Arraed confesses the importance of decisiveness for the sake of the authorities' longevity. As Dina Shehata (2011, p. 1) comments, the Arab leaders' longevity in administration as exemplified by the Egyptian leader Husni Mubarak: "For almost 60 years, Egyptians have celebrated Revolution Day on July 23, to commemorate the day in 1952 when Gamal Abdel Nasser and the Free Officers overthrew the monarchy to establish a republic.[…]For the 18 days from January 25 to February 11, when Mubarak finally stepped down, millions of Egyptians demonstrated in the streets to demand, as many chanted, "*isqat al-nizam*," "the fall of the regime." Jean-Pierre Filiu (2011, p. 8) provides a reason widely practiced in the Arab authoritative states as a result of the ideology of decisiveness, "this dynastic institution led to the coining of the concept of *jamlaka*—literally "repumonarchy", an amalgam between "republic" and "monarchy"—to describe the transmission from father to son of the supreme authority even with a republican constitution." However, Arraed with his intention continues his strategies that maintain the longevity of these political figures and their power-centeredness.

The Arab authority, as Arraed represents, takes over the leadership and uses self-rule and centeredness to rule. The conversation shows the necessity of autocracy in leading-positions Arraed (Arrazzaz, 1982,) says:

> Those talkative intellectuals are only born to babble in cafes like women…not to lead the nation…we are the ones who make history because we are decisive and firm. As for them, they only write history. (p. 239)

The Arab authority simply implies the decisiveness as the main way to lead the nation. Manipulation, firmness, strictness, decisiveness and oppression are the mainstream skills and strategies of the Arab politics to lead the nation.

The assertion of Arraed's view of the political identity drives him to use multiple ways and strategies against Enad to stop his assertion of Arab unity. The following episodes elucidate Arraed's plans and strategies to destroy Enad as an individual who asserts the Arab unity *Haweyya Qawmeyya.*

Firstly, the discussion of political national identity and assertion of the state identity works against the national interests of Arab nation. His own confession exposes the assertion of the authority on the importance of political national identity while denying the nations' demands for an ethnic-based national identity.As Arraed says: "I said to myself, I have to mould this Enad otherwise – *another authoritarian*- Abdulhameed will be angry with him" (Arrazzaz. 1982, p. 90). It is clearly a starting mission of the State authoritarian Arraed toward the exiled political Jordanian Enad. The word `mould` indicates to Arraed's un-acceptance of Enad's mission and

current state of mind. Arraed needs to reform Enad to match the state's rules and identity formation. Therefore, the ideology is entirely different between Enad as an individual and the authoritarian Arraed. The narration exposes two different ideologies between them to reveal the conflict between the nation's will and the politics' will. Delanty (1996, p. 3) summarizes the issue of new and old nationalism: "Taking up some of Rex's suggestions, the main difference can be said to consist of the fact that the new nationalism is primarily a nationalism of exclusion, while the old nationalism was one of inclusion." (See Hobsbawm, 1991, 1992a, 1992b; Salecl, 1993; Ignatieff, 1994; Judt, 1994). The new nationalism in the Arab world has taken place as Arraed implements the state territory and focuses only on the Lebanese nation. Then, Arraed excludes Enad as an alien or otherwise have to form him to be a member of the new national identity of Lebanon.

The first episode starts when the Lebanese authority realizes that Enad's mission might affect their positions or ideologies in the country. Major Arraed as an authoritarian tries to mould Enad to be lenient and open-minded in order to accept the state's rules and visions. Arraed feels the leadership is based on the leader's ability of decisiveness and strength with oppression as opposed to Enad's way of intellectuality and theories shown in this dialogue: "Despite Enad's negativity and idealism he envies me because I am decisive and firm. So, shall I envy his intellect? I don't think so" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 239). It seems that Enad's idea of Arab nationalism and unity is based on ethnicity and has no place in Lebanon; it runs contrary to the new civic nationalism as a political state system. As Rex (1996) argues the same idea of new nationalism and its fragmentation to communities. He states that;

> This new cultural nationalism differs from the older kinds of nationalism in that it is not about cultural superiority, but is about preserving differences. The colonial or social imperialist idea of nationality has been replaced by one that stressed the incompatibility of cultures and the inability of the welfare state to provide for all. The new nationalism is a nationalism of social insecurity and discontent. (p. 3)

Therefore, Major Arraed in that sense serves the country's political identity. Although they both belong to the same Arab ethnicity, same religion, same language, and same culture or at least close cultural aspects, Arraed places his loyalty to Lebanon rather than the Arab race.

Secondly, various tactics are used by Arraed to ensure that Enad subscribes to the Lebanese state ideology. Bodyguards are used to keep Enad under surveillance. The authorities use a new style of habituation and disciplining towards Enad to make him obedient and follow the government policy. Arraed says; "I ordered my men to shoot his car. Then he agreed to keep my men as bodyguards all the time with him. My men were professionally shooting up and down the car but not his body. I indoctrinated him deeply with the scary feeling" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 90). The Lebanese authority as a state authority in the Arab map tries to assert its own specific identity. Arraed's strategy plays an effective role to prevent Enad's mission of *Haweyya Wataneyya*. Arraed's plan is deviously executed. Thus, the authority never leaves a chance or even a hope to a nationalist to emerge a new way of civic nationalism of Arabs based on the nation-state system. Meanwhile, the Arab authority emphasizes the political nationalism.

Thirdly, Arab politics uses manipulative plans as part of its strategies and ideologies to maintain power and control the state even though it destroys the national interests. The following is Arraed's confession by forcing the nationalist Mariam, who fights the Israeli, to write a fabricated letter to trap Enad since he deeply admires her nationalistic resistance and loves her (Arrazzaz, 1982):

I instructed to arrest his friend Mariam. He came to me as I expected... I called an inspector and slapped him harshly in front of Enad and shouted loudly: "free her immediately". Before Enad left the place another inspector came and put a big file on the table - exactly like how I planned - suddenly there were some pictures of Mariam naked in a compromising position. Besides, a letter in her hand writing, cursing the president and accusing him of insanity....and describing Enad Ashahed –here is the view point- as foolish and idiotic and now is the proper time to exploit him to 'serve our plan' because I trapped him easily in my love. (p. 91-92)

This could be a clear sign of the authority's strategies against the nationalist in the Arab world. Mariam never committed act of any betrayal. However, Arraed entangles the relation between Enad and Mariam knowing they are nationalistic to the Arab nation and in specific Enad believes in Mariam's conception of resisting the enemy to assert the identity. The purpose of this deceitful manipulation is to push the individual Enad to change his principles of ethnic identity and trust the authoritarian Arraed's formation of state identity. Finally, the authority achieves what they want through whatever means to assert the new nationalism as political national identity.

Fourthly, in order to assert the political identity and progress of the state, many attempts are successfully implemented by Arraed, though it may oppose the national unity of the Arab nation. The following scene shows the end of Enad's mission and his entire struggle and sacrifice when Arraed was having a meeting with the chief detective from Jordan "who previously tortured Enad and imprisoned him" (Fahad Salameh, 1997, p. 9-10). Enad comes to realise that the country of unity is no more. He is shocked with the incident and became unable to accept it. The sight makes Enad doubt his senses and consciousness: "Meyeballes protrudes, belying my sight. I said to myself, I must be in a dream. I shouted inaudibly, p. But the chief is a detective officer in the enemy sister-state!" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 13-14) The confusion of consciousness is the product of the sudden change in positions, lack of principles in determining enemy camps from friendly ones. This makes individuals unable to differentiate between reality and illusion. That episode explains the contradiction between the individual and the authority which can be said in different words; the crisis between the Arab nation and its politics.

Finally, the last scene of the political crisis in the Arab world is when "Arraed said lustfully: do you still with your squinting-look, see the priorities of revolution and not those of the state? The chief (from Jordan), by the priorities of the state is my friend. Go, Apologize to him and I will forgive you" (Arrazzaz, 1982, p. 14) Arraed is loyal to his state more than to any other concerns including that of the collective Arab unity. Arraed serves his state and plays his role as an authoritarian to achieve sovereignty to his country Lebanon. He thinks that the ethnic attachment to the collective Arab nation should be abolished and a new nation based on the political border of the state of Lebanon should be strengthened. As Eriksen, (2001, p. 45) comments; "ethnicity as something that can be changed, constructed or even manipulated to gain specific political and/or economic ends". Therefore, the civic identity based on state and its nation formation is the main structure of political ideology in Arraed's mind. He looks at his nation-state as an entity to build and structure according to the country's rules and conditions.

In summary, Arraed views the state as an entity that is concerned with the political and geographical borders irrespective of the collective Arab interests. Arraed's vision of his state of Lebanon is as an independent entity that develops its own nation albeit part of the Arab nation. Accordingly, Walker Connor (1994, p. 22-66) argues that the nation building focuses on "assimilation into the larger society and the eradication of ethnic peculiarities," therefore, Connor believes that "in world history it had produced more nation-*destroying* than nation-

building." Connor's view indicates to the nations in the world as being destroyed rather than built due to the ignorance of the ethnic groups' ties and bounds in the one hand. On the other hand, nations are split and divided due to the political strategies and policies to build the state irrespective of the Arab nations' interests. The example for that is the Arab nation identity crisis until now.

Enad's journey with the authority drives him finally to be manipulated and oppressed by the Lebanese authority. This manipulation is to change his personal interests and values. In that sense, the situation indicates a clear conflict between the political national identity and the ethnic national identity. As Miller explains, the issues of political intentions are in opposition to the will of the ethnic community.

Miller (1997) explicates,

> Scholars have long detailed, and for the most part accepted, a dichotomy between civic (or political) and ethnic (or cultural) nationalisms. The first asserts the primacy of political ideals in the composition of a national identity; the second posits the ethnic group as the fundamental basis of nationhood. (p. 10)

Enad Ashahed as a symbol of the Arab nation presents the resistance and assertion of the national ethnicity. The oppressed Arab national masses start when confronted with its own authority. The scenes of blood and death are shown as a spreading plague that infected the angry nation as the Arab Spring shows every day. However, the real defense of the Arab authorities to the nation is brutally dreadful. Therefore, the strategies of the authorities are to destroy the nationalists. The authority's assertion on the political national identity comes first. Therefore, the ethnic national identity- especially for Arabs- is smashed by the Arab state policy. Finally, the civic identity which cannot fit the Arab nation, is taking place through the time and periods of autocratic regimes instead of the Arab ethnic national identity. In the end, the individual suffers and pays the price for the political will of the State driven authorities.

4. Conclusion

What Arrazzaz tries to reveal in his novel is that Arab politics and the nation state system have caused the Arab state's fragmentation and weakness. Copying the western nationalism concept has led the Arab state to be split into many nations. Ghayasuddin (1986, p. 4) in the forward of his book *The Impact Of Nationalism On The Muslim World* states that "The political fragmentation of the *Ummah* was achieved by the imposition of the nation-state system. If despite this, the disintegration has remained peripheral, it is because of the political culture of the Muslim masses, which has resisted the breakdown of their traditional societies." The influence of the Nation-state system on the Muslim nation is widely adopted by the Muslim political authorities. The Muslim nation has fallen apart into many different states with different ideologies in operation. This has led to a deterioration of brotherhood or ummah, as each state is concerned only with itself. Zubair Hasan (2003, p. 51) states that: "…the position of the Muslims in the world today is not very elating. Economically they are weak and vulnerable and politically they stand divided." Arrazzaz through his fiction demonstrates that the authority of Arab states' practices is the main crisis of Arab national identity. Therefore, the cruelty of the authority's oppression after the creation of the state system in the Arab region has made the Arabs backward, ruining their lives, and leaving the Arabs in dissolution and catastrophe. The current Arab revolutions prove the vision of Arrazzaz regarding the crisis of the Arab national identity.

Another important point explains the extent and degree of an Arab authority when it uses all the ways to keep itself in power and maintain ruling the country. The people who ask for their rights are humiliated. Abdel Razzaq Takriti (2011, p. 1) expresses his opinion about the present Arab demonstrations: "Something we couldn't get hold of was preventing us from representing ourselves or defending our rights." The blatant lack of democratic practice is the advertent result of autocratic rule. In Alive, Enad becomes exiled and struggles in Lebanon for the national rights. Although, there are many nationalists who want the freedom and the progress among the Arab nations, they still cannot get the chance to prove the right ideas they have. Finally, they found themselves living with the past only. In reality, Arab generations are still growing up with a keen awareness of two realities: that they do not have any word in choosing their leaders due to the "political oppression" (quoted in Salameh F. Shareen Audi 1997, p. 6). Thus, the Arab countries are still living the colonial present but within its own leaders. Adeel Malik and Bassem Awadallah, 2011, p. 2) comments that "the challenge for the Arab world is no different: offering greater political representation is desirable" as (Huntington, 1991, p. 21) affirms that "The Middle East region remains the world's authoritarian stronghold and has yet to experience a wave of democratization". Enad as one of those nationalists who has left his country and travelled to another country to find the way of developing Arab nationalism and identity as one identity. Practically, the system of nation state does not fit the Arab nation. Therefore, the states have failed due to their adoption of their copied western system. In reality, the Arab demonstrations are the main evidence to prove the failure system of the nation-state.

Finally, throughout the incidents between the Arab policies and the nationalist policies, the outcome of the struggle is predictable, since there is no compatibility between the individuals who resist and the political power that crushes them. This drives the individuals on the main to despondency, or turns them into outsiders and exiles, even in their own homeland. Out of the scenes of oppression and conflicts, Arrazzaz tries to expose the reality of individuals in the Arab world, the frustration and depression of Arab individuals under the hopeless autocratic regimes. Nevertheless, and because of their actual frustration in the real world, the idyllic dream of having to back the unity of one national identity remains true in many individuals up to today.

About the Author:

Ahmad Mohd Alkouri is an English lecturer who has experience in teaching to the local and international students. He obtained his master in 2006 from UPM Malaysia and currently attached with UKM for PhD. His writing focuses on the Arabic literature in English especially the postcolonial era. Engaging the identity and nationalism as portrayed by Arab novelists become his main target as well as the social, economic side of today Arab world. At present, he is working on a research on the fragmented Arab national identity in a Jordanian novelist.

References

Abunedal, N. (2001). *Novels And Novelist From Jordan.* Translated by Naina Jada , Sweiss. Amman: Ministry Of Culture.

Alhabashneh, Q. (2008). *Alghaeb Almahki: Derasah Fe Adab Munis Arrazzaz.* Amman: Amanat Amman.

Arrazzaz, M. (1982). *Alive In The Dead Sea.* Amman: Ministry Of Culture.

Attal, S. (2006). *Haweyyat Alensan Felwatan Alarabi.* Amman: rawae'e Majdalawi.

Brown, D. (1994). *The State and Eethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*. London: Routledge.

Carson, C. J. A. (2003). Nation-Building, The American Way. USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT. U.S. Army War College. Available at http://www.fas.org/man/eprint/carson.pdf.

Connor, W. (1994). *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Delanty, G. (1996). Beyond the Nation-State: National Identity and Citizenship in a Multicultural Society - A Response to Rex, *Sociological Research Online,* vol. 1, no. 3, available at http: //www.socresonline.org.uk/1/3/1.html.

Eriksen T. H. (2001). Ethnic Identity, National Identity and Intergroup Conflict: The Significance of Personal Experiences. In Ashmore, Jussim, Wilder (eds) *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, And Conflict Reduction*, pp. 42-70. Oxford: Oxford University Press'.

Esman, M. (1994). *Ethnic Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Filiu J, P. (2011). *The Arab Revolution: Ten Lessons from the Democratic Uprising Comparative Politics and International Studies.* USA: Oxford University Press.

Gellner, E. (1983). *Nations and Nationalism.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Ghayasuddin, M. (1986). (Ed). *The Impact of Nationalism on the Muslim World*. London: Open Press.

Halim, B. (1993) *The Arab World: Society, Culture, and State.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hasan, Z. (1998). Islamization of Knowledge In Economics: Issues And Agenda. *IIUM Journal of Economics & Management, 6*,(2), 1-40.

Huntington, S. (1991). *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Heaven: Yale University Press.

Khalil Rinnawi. 2006. *Instant Nationalism: McArabism, Al-Jazeera, and Transnational Media in the Arab world*. USA: university Press Of America, Inc.

Khouri, R. G. (2008). Apples and Oranges: Identity, Ideology, and State in the Arab World. In A. P. E. Laipson (Eds), *Transnational trends: Middle Eastern and Asian views*. pp. 41-61.Washington: The Henry L. Stimson Centre.

Malik, A. & Awadallah, B. (2011). The Economics of the Arab Spring. CSAE Working Paper WPS/2011_23.   *Oxford   and   Jeddah.*   Retrieved   at   12/10/2013. http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/workingpapers/pdfs/csae-wps-2011-23.pdf

Miller, N. (1997). *Between Nation and State: Serbian Politics in Croatia before the First World War*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Redwan, A. (2002). *Ase'lah fee Arrewayah Al-Urduniyyah.* Beirut: Almoassasah Al-arabeyya Lederasaat Wa Annasher.

Rex, J. (1996). National Identity in The Democratic Multi-Cultural State. *Sociological Research Online*, *1*, (2), Retrieved 23/8/2013. <http: //www.socresonline.org.uk/1/2/1.html>.

Salameh, F. (1997). *The Jordanian Novel: A Study And An Assessment*. Amman: Ministry of culture.

Sandhu, A. H. 2009. Reality of 'Divide and Rule' in British India. *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, *XXX*, 1) 61-80.

Shehata, D. (2011). The Fall of the Pharaoh: How Hosni Mubarak's Reign Came to an End. Diplomatic academy of Vienna, Vienna school of international studies. Published by the council on foreign relation. Retrieved 12/10/2013. http: //www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67687/dina-shehata/the-fall-of-the-pharaoh.

Smith, A. D. (1998). *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism*. London & New York: Routledge.

Takriti A. R. (18 Feb, 2011). Arab Youth Don't Lose Moment Now. *The guardian*. Retrived 13/3/2012. http://www.theguardian.com/profile/abdel-razzaq-takriti.

Tamari, S. (1996), *Historical Research and Resources in Damascus, Middle East Studies Association Bulletin 30. 10-17.*

Tamari, S. (1996). *"Who are the Arabs?: A Teaching Module"*, Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, DC