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Oppositional Politics and Gramsci's Civil Society: Patron-Clientelism in Jordan and Value-Centered Scholarship

Abstract

Patron-clientelism or *wasta* in Jordan is a historically engrained institution that crosses social, political and economic spheres. For those with sufficient resources to enter into its system of exchange, patron-clientelism grants access to university admissions, government privileges and employment. For those without sufficient resources, patron-clientelism creates a barrier to entry that sustains the marginalized status of persons from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Most scholarship about patron-clientelism portrays it as something dynamic, inherently neither morally constructive nor problematic but with the potential to be both. By focusing on various historical manifestations of patron-clientelism, such scholarship detracts attention from its reprehensible effects. Posing as value-free, this literature implicitly apologizes for patron-clientelism and reinforces the entrenched political and economic structures it reflects.

To step beyond existing literature surrounding patron-clientelism - the perpetually expanding but only marginally helpful registry of ways in which it manifests - requires deeper consideration of its effect. This thesis will argue that in the case of Jordan, patron-clientelism tends to function in the service of dominant fundamental social groups and at the expense of subaltern classes. Using Antonio Gramsci's *civil society*, patron-clientelism in Jordan will be shown to operate as a mechanism of authoritarian resiliency and a means of debilitating oppositional political currents. By understanding its existing ramifications in depth, potential for redirecting the function of patron-clientelism toward alternative and oppositional effects can be realized.

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OPPOSITIONAL POLITICS & GRAMSCI'S CIVIL SOCIETY: PATRON-
CLIENTELISM IN JORDAN AND VALUE-CENTERED SCHOLARSHIP

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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Stephen J. Preisig

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Late November protests and those witnessed in Jordan last summer¹ remind observers that reverberations from the Arab Spring continue to shake foundations of authoritarianism in the Middle East. Shortcomings of basic models of authoritarian governance indicate their weakening resilience and have been met with intensifying demands for transparency and accountability. Although defensive democratization— lip service to economic and political reform— has helped regimes subdue oppositional political currents, unimproved economic circumstances and increasing popular political self-consciousness call into question the viability of co-optation strategies as well as the longevity of authoritarianism.

Underlying these simmering tensions in Jordan exists an entrenched network of institutions that simultaneously reflect and perpetuate its distinct economic and political circumstances. These institutions function in favor of the dominant fundamental social groups so as to sustain the status quo and the subalternity of non-dominant groups. This has an effect that foments widespread corruption, but more gravely, exclusion of non-dominant classes from the political process as well as from access to fundamental rights and dignity. Patron-clientelism, referred to as *wasta* in Arabic is the focus of this thesis. It

¹ Late November and summer protests refer to those that occurred in 2018.

offers a strong example of an institution that reflects the political and economic circumstances in Jordan and frustrates efforts to upend them.

Despite the engrained nature of institutions like patron-clientelism, it is not the case that efforts to upend economic and political circumstances that leave subalterns in Jordan marginalized are hopeless. Nor is it the case that the political agency attributable to institutions like patron-clientelism is impossible to redirect. Rather, as economic circumstances worsen these possibilities only become more likely. In order to bolster prospects of success for oppositional political currents, understanding how institutions function in service of the dominant fundamental groups to sustain existing economic and political circumstances is necessary.

But conversations about revolutionary behavior in the Middle East and prospects for reconfiguring economic and political circumstances tend to be actor-centric. That is to say, they tend to present opportunistic accounts of ways in which revolutionary behavior can manifest and how it has the possibility to affect substantial change. An apt example is Asef Bayet's *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*. His argument is that social nonmovements, acts of quiet encroachment, street politics and inaudible collectives can play a crucial role in instigating political transformation.² What Bayet does not consider in depth, however, are the institutions and norms engrained in political, social and economic life that have greater salience in shaping behavior than the potential momentum of disconnected, spontaneous and accumulative dissent. This is a

² A Bayet. *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*. Stanford Press. 2010. p. 15.

thematic shortcoming in pre and post-Arab Spring scholarship, but one that is possible to rectify.

Attempts to characterize political and economic circumstances in places like Jordan so as to understand strategies of the dominant fundamental groups to sustain them— and revolutionary strategy to oppose them— first require space-centric analysis.³ In other words, one must realize how the process of defending the status quo by dominant fundamental groups shapes environments from which dissent might be articulated. This necessarily involves consideration of civil society, a notion of political space tracing back to Aristotle, which in the broadest terms is understood as an environment involving associations and non-governmental organizations with political import. Different theoreticians have presented conflicting definitions of civil society, but one with the greatest value for the discussion at hand— and one who will provide the theoretical backbone for this thesis— is Antonio Gramsci.

As will be developed further, Gramsci viewed civil society as a realm interrelated with political society (government) with the potential to either complement or oppose political leadership by the dominant fundamental groups. It is the sphere in which dissent to existing relations of hegemony can be articulated in order that consent to the dominant fundamental groups be redirected. Civil society, understood on the basis of political agency attributable to institutions within it, reflects the influence and interests of Jordan's dominant fundamental groups— ie. the monarchy, the political elite, influential tribes,

³ Space-centric analysis relates to consideration of how environments shape political behavior. In the case of Jordan this relates to the way civil society either empowers dissent or solidifies existing political and economic structures.

etc. On the other hand, civil society in Jordan also represents a space from which the possibility for re-education emerges, so that a culture critical of existing economic and political circumstances can be cultivated and hegemonic reconfiguration can be realized.

Equally important alongside any conversation involving Gramsci's civil society is consideration of the cultural frame of mind institutions like patron-clientelism solidify in support of the dominant fundamental groups. In other words, greater understanding is needed for ideas and norms people associate with the political process in Jordan because of their entrenchment in institutions like patron-clientelism. Understanding the general popular frame of mind toward politics, manipulated by fundamental groups so as to sustain their dominance, is essential in order to realize how these ideas can be redirected so as to enable reconfiguration of economic and political circumstances.

This registry of needs for greater understanding of institutions and their effects on the political process in Jordan represents, in broad terms, the intellectual context from which this thesis emerges. Having presented some of the key themes to be addressed here, the more concrete attributes and methodology of this thesis need introduction. Foremost, here, is acknowledgement that this thesis offers primarily political theory analysis. It does not pretend to emphasize a comprehensive study of Jordan, but rather uses political theory to introduce new ways of understanding political, economic and social life in Jordan. Vice-versa, it also uses circumstances in Jordan to help illuminate a novel development of Gramscian theory. The purpose for this is two-fold. In the first, case-study literature surrounding patron-clientelism in Jordan accounts for the bulk of existing scholarship. Offering further case-study analysis would not provide an especially

novel approach to the field. Secondly, theory-based analysis helps explain why and to what effect patron-clientelism exists as a salient factor in social, political and economic life in Jordan, stepping beyond the simple and existing registry of ways in which it manifests.

The fundamental premise of this thesis is that patron-clientelism⁴ is an institution that functions to sustain existing relations of hegemony in Jordan, leadership of the ruling elite and subalternity of non-dominant groups. The position espoused by this thesis is that current prevalent manifestations of patron-clientelism in Jordan, on one hand exclude people from political and economic life who do not have the resources required for entrance into patron-client relations; this sustains the marginalized status of subaltern groups. On the other hand, patron-clientelism debilitate prospects for popular contestation of political and economic circumstances by solidifying in the minds of Jordanians ideas and norms related to how the political process is imagined to function. In order for political and economic change to be effective in Jordan, patron-clientelism and other institutions operative in civil society in support of Jordan's existing dominant fundamental groups must be dismantled and redirected.

Contemporary scholarship surrounding patron-clientelism would disagree with the notion that patron-clientelism in Jordan is unequivocally harmful. It argues, generally speaking, that the manifestations of patron-clientelism are diverse and dynamic; and so, where patron-clientelism exists as a problematic in particular places and times, elsewhere

⁴ The relationship between someone who has authority, status, wealth or some other personal resource and someone else who benefits from their support or influence in exchange for payment, favors or loyalty.

it might be constructive. While it is true and there are prospects for redirecting the trajectory of political agency attributable to patron-clientelism and other institutions operative in civil society in Jordan, the shortcoming of this position is that it avoids making concrete value statements that identify moral wrongs when and where they exist. It is the position of this thesis that current manifestations of patron-clientelism in Jordan reflect a moral wrong and any scholarship about patron-clientelism that does not condemn its harmful expressions makes an apology for them.

Following a literature review, the third chapter of this thesis will argue that scholarship about politics necessarily carries with it an either explicit or implicit value judgements. Marx's comments on moral objectivity will be used to develop a barometer supportive of claims that patron-clientelism in Jordan represents a moral wrong. The third chapter is intended to demonstrate a kind of self-consciousness reflected by this thesis, an awareness of how it would see itself in relation to other scholarship and the moral argument it hopes to persuasively present. Also important in this section will be a brief reflection on the role of intellectuals and education in either serving existing arrangements of political and cultural hegemony or opposing them.

The fourth chapter of this thesis provides in-depth analysis of Antonio Gramsci's civil society so as to build conceptual understanding for the role of patron-clientelism in Jordanian civil society. The fundamental argument of this section is that civil society is characterized more so on the basis of political agency attributable to operative institutions and relations within it than on the basis of its distinction or location apart from political society. This also will be important to develop the idea that patron-clientelism not only

reflects the nature of civil society, but also overarching cultural hegemony in Jordan. Themes from Gramsci to advance this argument relate to the complexity of civil society— that is, the essential value of understanding complexity in civil society in order to understand how fundamental groups use civil society to reinforce their dominance. Necessity of unification and universalization is the second key theme which is used to explain the role of organic intellectuals to expand interests beyond their corporate origins and affect substantial change. Here a look at Gramsci's comments on the Italian south will be helpful to suggest certain types of economic circumstances lead themselves to certain types of societal organization and the prominence of particular organizing factors over others. The third theme will relate to the cultivation of a critical culture and means through which existing hegemonic configurations can be challenged.

The fifth chapter will attempt to bring all conceptual themes from preceding chapters together with vignettes descriptive of Jordan's economic circumstance and the effects of manifestations of patron-clientelism in Jordan. These will center primarily on the role of patron-clientelism within Jordan's education system, how it relates to Jordan's economic circumstance, debilitates civil society and empowers the ruling elite. This section will also make the argument that opportunity exists for the redirection of patron-clientelism so that instead of supporting the dominant fundamental groups in Jordan it can be used to champion the subaltern classes and affect overarching bottom-up economic and political change.

This is the roadmap for the following pages. If done right, this thesis should demonstrate why prevalent manifestations of patron-clientelism present an unequivocal

moral wrong in Jordan. It should also show how patron-clientelism sustains the marginalized status of subaltern groups and debilitates prospects for popular contestation of existing economic and political circumstances. Then, armed with a clearheaded understanding of how patron-clientelism undermines civil society and contributes to authoritarian resiliency, it will present means of redirecting patron-clientelism so that meaningful political and economic change in the interests of marginalized groups can be affected.

As a final brief methodological note, this thesis emerged from unsophisticated beginnings. It started as a broad inquiry directed toward whomever the present author was able to conversationally engage in bars and coffee shops around Amman, Jordan. Introductory questions usually involved the following: ‘how do politics in Jordan serve your interests?’ and ‘how do politics in Jordan fall short of meeting your interests?’ After repeated interlocutors made mention of *wasta*, the focus of questioning in subsequent conversations shifted toward how *wasta* manifest in their lives, either as a source of empowerment or frustration.

These informal interviews were then supplemented by research of a more scholarly nature and subjects like *wasta*, nepotism and, later, patron-clientelism were explored thoroughly using sources such as Google and Google Scholar. Much of the literature about *wasta* seemed to indicate that its processes, although having undeniable links to government, were expressed most prominently in society. This brought immediately to mind Antonio Gramsci’s civil society and led to a close reading of his prison notes and earlier writing.

The accumulation of reading about *wasta* and civil society brought this project to its initial form. After submitting one of the earlier drafts in the form of a Statement of Intent for PhD candidacy to mentor Alan Gilbert, the urgency for writing from a value-conscious perspective was realized. This brought into consideration the ideas discussed in the third chapter and shaped the pointed nature of writing found more generally in this thesis.

The two interviews relied upon as primary sources in the fifth chapter were friends made during the present author's time in Jordan. Amjad Tadros, as one of the founders of Syria Direct, was often in the Amman office and made himself entirely accessible for conversations and interviews. Akram Al-Deek became a close personal friend of the present author and welcomed long conversations about politics, literature and life in Jordan. Both Amjad and Akram were invaluable in the development of what is now this thesis. It is the present author's hope that in addition to making a compelling case about patron-clientelism in Jordan, both of their views will be represented authentically.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Patron-Clientelism

In order to characterize thoroughly the considerable body of literature surrounding studies of patron-clientelism in Middle East, both diachronic and synchronic approaches to analysis of its scholarship are helpful. Although patron-clientelism (in Arabic: *wasta*) was a phenomenon mentioned in passing by academics as early as the 1960s,⁵ its first substantive study in Middle East Studies was undertaken by Robert Cunningham and Yasin Sarayrah in the early 1990s. Reflecting what became a trend in research at the time, their focus was the adverse effect of patron-clientelism on internally generated economic growth in countries of the Middle East. Their seminal works defined *wasta* as a concept denoting the, “practice of utilizing social networks to attain goals... [and] favoritism based on tribal and family affiliation.”⁶ With regard to the particular mechanisms through which goals were attained, *wasta* was associated with, the act [as well as the related actor] of mediation or intercession.⁷ These ideas were contextualized

⁵ R Cunningham, Y Sarayrah. *Wasta: The Hidden Force in Middle Eastern Society*. Praeger Publishers. 1993. p. 3.

⁶ S Ali, et al. “Social Capital in Jordan: Wasta in Employment Selection.” *The International Conference on Organization and Management (ICOM)*, Abu Dhabi. 2015.

⁷ R Cunningham, Y Sarayrah. *Wasta: The Hidden Force in Middle Eastern Society*. Praeger Publishers. 1993. p. 1-2.

with reference to inter-tribal and inter-familial relations, and enunciated with examples crossing social, political and economic dimensions. From Cunningham and Sarayrah onward, common illustrations of patron-clientelism relate to dispute resolution,⁸ political candidacy,⁹ betrothal,¹⁰ employee selection,¹¹ school admittance¹² and procurement of government documents or services.¹³

Problematizing one directional conceptualization of patron-clientelism, subsequent scholarship sought nuanced approaches to register its potentially positive effects. For example, in a study of employment selection practices in Jordan authors Ali, Raiden and Kirk use a social capital lens to identify six distinct themes associated with patron-clientelism: (i) *wasta* as an enabler to get jobs, (ii) *wasta* as social ties/ solidarity, (iii) *wasta* as a method to transfer/attain information, (iv) *wasta* as a guide in decision-making, (v) *wasta* as an exchange, (vi) *wasta* as pressure.¹⁴ Their conclusion was that because *wasta* can be divided into different types and processes, and because those types

⁸ A Mohamed, H Hamdy. "The Stigma of *Wasta*: The Effect of *Wasta* on Perceived Competence and Morality." *German University in Cairo, Working Paper Series*. 2008.

⁹ M Branin, F Analoui. "Human Resource Management in Jordan." In *Managing Human Resources in the Middle East* by P Budhwar and K Mullahi. Edward Elgar Publishing. 2006.

¹⁰ R Cunningham, Y Sarayrah. *Wasta: The Hidden Force in Middle Eastern Society*. Praeger Publishers. 1993. p. 2.

¹¹ M Loewe, et al. "The Impact of Favouritism on the Business Climate: A Study on *Wasta* in Jordan." *German Development Institute*. 2007.

¹² R Cunningham, Y Sarayrah. *Wasta: The Hidden Force in Middle Eastern Society*. Praeger Publishers. 1993. p. 120.

¹³ A Richards, J Waterbury. *A Political Economy of the Middle East, Third Edition*. Routledge Publishing. 2008. p. 328

¹⁴ S Ali, et al. "Social Capital in Jordan: *Wasta* in Employment Selection." *The International Conference on Organization and Management (ICOM), Abu Dhabi*. 2015.

and processes are unequal in moral value, sweeping suggestions about the universally problematic nature of patron-clientelism tend to essentialize. They argue that whereas the first two categories of *wasta* in Jordan have the potential to, respectively, privilege personal connections over merit and foment exclusionary practices, its other manifestations such as information exchange operate on a plane of moral neutrality.

While continuing to orbit the same argument, scholarship surrounding patron-clientelism has also evolved by way of expansion beyond the realm of political economy. Applying social movement theory to the study of patron-clientelism in the Middle East, Janine Clark examines the nature and significance of networks in which Islamic social institutions are embedded, as well as the type and behavior of participants within those networks. Professor Clark argues that whereas social movements tend to consist of horizontal social networks that are homogenous¹⁵ and reproducing,¹⁶ patron-client relationships are unequal and operational through vertical structures. The simplest of these relationships, “involve patrons who use their influence and/or resources to provide protection and/or benefits to clients who in turn reciprocate by offering support and assistance, potentially votes, for example.”¹⁷ Clark concludes by noting that, “although scholars disagree on whether these relationships serve as a form of social stability through vertical integration or as a means of entrenching the class system (in other words,

¹⁵ B Klandermans. “The Social Construction of Protests and Multiorganizational Fields.” In *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* by A Morris and C Mueller. Yale University Press. 1992.

¹⁶ D McAdam, R Paulsen. “Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism.” *American Journal of Sociology*. 1993.

¹⁷ J Clark. “Social Movement Theory and Patron Clientelism: Islamic Social Institutions and the Middle Class in Egypt, Jordan and Yemen.” *Comparative Political Studies*. 2004. p. 946.

ensuring that the poor remain poor), they agree that patron-client relations are entered freely, with both sides perceiving, at least in the short run, mutual benefit.”¹⁸

On the far side of the discourse alluded to, Aseel Al-Ramahi provides a genealogical perspective of *wasta*, frames it as a culturally bound dispute resolution process, and argues on behalf of its benefit for Middle Eastern society. With specific reference to the formation of the Hashemite Kingdom, Al-Ramahi outlines Abdullah bin Husayn’s arrival to Transjordan in 1920, and the salience of tribal networking in economic and political transactions at the time.¹⁹ Realizing the value of tribal support for any aspirations of rulership, bin Husayn gained favor with tribes by using them to channel resources and services originating from the central government. Through this process mutual dependence emerged as tribes became reliant on the resources from the central government and the legitimacy of the monarchy became contingent upon support from tribes. The centrality of *wasta* in the formation of the Hashemite Kingdom, Al-Ramahi argues, sewed seeds enabling it to prevail as a convention in Jordan society today. Despite increasing repudiation of *wasta* in the 21st century, Al-Ramahi concludes, the Jordanian state and its society have their origins in *wasta*; because of this, the concept is inextricably linked with the country’s future as much as its past.²⁰ Far from demonstrating specific positive moral value emanating from manifestations of patron-

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ M Hammami. “Political Uncertainty, Investment Decisions and Development Policy Implications.” *Workshop Paper: Research Bank on the World Bank*. 2006.

²⁰ A Al-Ramahi. “Wasta in Jordan: A Distinct Feature of (and Benefit for) Middle Eastern Society.” *Arab Law Quarterly*. 2008.

clientelism in Jordan, this article seems to at best present a thorough review of its historical basis, alongside a vague suggestion that the cultural rootedness of patron-clientelism implies its future utility.

Offering a less value-suggestive historical perspective, Alan Richards and John Waterbury provide a succinct characterization of the evolution of patron-clientelism in the Middle East, with specific reference to its classical and contemporary images. The classical example they outline is the landowner who, in a semi-feudal arrangement,

“Monopolizes in a given locale the most precious fixed asset, land...[and] controls access to it. His clients are his tenants, laborers and sharecroppers. He protects them... supplies them agricultural inputs and monetary credit, assists them if they fall ill... The clients in turn produce for him, supply him free labor, vote for him if elections are an issue, and fight for him if he is attacked by outsiders.”²¹

In comparison,

“Today, with the growth of large bureaucratic states... the patron is more likely to be a broker... [of] access to state resources... [or] protect[orate] against various forms of state action. He may help procure a birth certificate... [or] help place a son in university... [or] swing a loan through the agricultural credit bank. What the patron receives in return is somewhat amorphous.”²²

While focusing on the roles of patrons, this analysis is helpful because it highlights their role as protectorates across time. What Richards and Waterbury omit from their discussion is consideration of whether, though mutually beneficial, patron-client relationships produce equal benefits for both patrons and clients.

²¹ A Richards, J Waterbury. *A Political Economy of the Middle East, Third Edition*. Routledge Publishing. 2008. p. 328.

²² A Richards, J Waterbury. *A Political Economy of the Middle East, Third Edition*. Routledge Publishing. 2008. p. 329.

Having confronted the literature surrounding patron-clientelism since its introduction into academic consciousness, final consideration requires a look at its place in contemporary scholarship. The most recent and significant publication on the subject comes from de Elvira et al., who develop the concept of ‘networks of dependency’ to characterize the role of patron-clientelism in the Middle East and North Africa. They argue that patron-client relationships are “neither static (as a simple pillar of rule of a resilient authoritarian regime) nor do they evolve in a linear way, i.e. towards strengthening or weakening a political regime.”²³ As a research perspective, the ‘network’ directs attention to the complex, asymmetric and multifaceted character of the social relations, while ‘dependency’ implies mutually binding reciprocity and emphasizes the often-ignored agency of the client.²⁴ Although from a methods approach the application of networks theory to understand patron-client relationships is not novel, the perspective of de Elvira et al. is important because it injects nuance into a previously dichotomous discourse. Rather than arguing that patron-clientelism is a feature of Middle Eastern society with inherently positive or negative effects, they suggest it can be both.

Pertaining directly to the project at hand, de Elvira et al. also include in their book a case study of Jordan, written by Luis Melián Rodríguez, outlining the role of tribes as contributors to the resilience of Jordan’s authoritarian system, and how dynamics of patron-clientelism have evolved since the Arab Spring. This analysis emphasizes the

²³ L Elvira, et al. *Clientelism and Patronage in the Middle East and North Africa: Networks of Dependency*. Routledge Press. 2019. p. 13.

²⁴ L Elvira, et al. *Clientelism and Patronage in the Middle East and North Africa: Networks of Dependency*. Routledge Press. 2019. p. 7.

central role played by tribal organizations within the Jordanian monarchy,²⁵ considers tribes to be an intermediate structure that functions as patronage brokers and describes how this social structure is self-reinforcing, a quality that helps maintain the political status quo.²⁶

With regard to Jordan's experience during the Arab Spring, protests showed that the diminishing of the regime's distributive capacity had seriously shaken and eroded the entrenched foundations of its support.²⁷ However, because protestors did not identify tribal leaders as responsible for their impoverishment the structures of patron-clientelism situated around tribes remained. With their influence intact, tribal leaders worked to block privatization processes they saw interlinked with widespread corruption, warning "should the government forge ahead with these kind of policies 'the immunity enjoyed by the monarch might not be extended.'"²⁸ This enabled defensive democratization that side-stepped substantive change, bolstered authoritarian resiliency and perpetuated existing tribal power dynamics.

Rodríguez's chapter is important because it provides introductory analysis of how patron-client relationships shape politics in the Hashemite Kingdom. It also helps explain in tangible terms how patron-clientelism contributes to authoritarian resiliency. Related

²⁵ R Brynen. "The Politics of Monarchical Liberalism: Jordan." *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World, Vol. 2*. Lynne Rienner Publishing. 1998. p. 71-100.

²⁶ L Elvira, et al. *Clientelism and Patronage in the Middle East and North Africa: Networks of Dependency*. Routledge Press. 2019. p. 211.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 224.

²⁸ S Helfont, T Helfont. "Jordan: Between the Arab Spring and the Gulf Cooperation Council." *Elsevier Limited: Foreign Policy Research Institute*. 2012.

to this project more generally, this chapter is helpful because, as Rodríguez notes, “Jordan has in many respects been neglected by both the international political arena and scholarly analysis.”²⁹

With consideration to both the development and evolution of literature surrounding patron-clientelism in the Middle East, as well its position in contemporary scholarship, one overarching theme emerges. In almost every case, studies of patron-clientelism have an actor-centric focus, and usually the actor in question is the patron. This is important for understanding how patron-client relationships function and evolve but has less relevance for hopes to understand the effects of patron-client relationships on spheres of political exchange, or the likelihood of political movements emerging from below. In this vein, Rodríguez from the preceding paragraph comes closest to explaining how patron-client power dynamics affect political conditioning, but again focus primarily on the role of tribes, ie. the patron.

An opportunity for innovation within this subject of study is a closer examination of the bearing of patron-client relationship dynamics on spaces of political mobilization— i.e. civil society— and how the exclusionary practices perpetuated by patron-client relationships contribute to a broader and more collectively experienced debilitation of civil society. Acknowledging the cultural rootedness of *wasta* in the Middle East, this analysis would not serve as a source of value judgement, or to suggests its inherently malevolent or benevolent nature. Rather, stepping past the historic debate in

²⁹ L Elvira, et al. *Clientelism and Patronage in the Middle East and North Africa: Networks of Dependency*. Routledge Press. 2019. p. 211.

scholarship vis-à-vis patron-clientelism this project will demonstrate that a negative moral value can be attributed to prevalent manifestations of patron-clientelism in Jordan because they tend to undermine civil society, prevent democratization and contribute to authoritarian resiliency. In terms of its focus and method, this is a task yet to be undertaken.

B. Civil Society & Antonio Gramsci

Antonio Gramsci is simultaneously heralded as one of the most innovative and obscure political theorists of the 20th century. This makes understanding and attempting to appropriately apply his concepts a complex process with considerable reward— if only for the feeling of having completed a puzzle most scholars quickly abandon. One of the problems associated with reading Gramsci is that his writing is at times incredibly vague, with some of his most important concepts left only partially developed.

With reference specifically to his *Prison Notebooks*, the reason for this ambiguity, or censorship in places where more lucidity might have been possible, can be attributed to the circumstances under which Gramsci completed the bulk of his writing: a fascist prison cell. When comparing Gramsci's political writings with the more straightforward letters he mailed to his wife and sons, a measure of intentionality can be presumed of his vagueness in the former. This creates an alluring sense in readers that a sort of hidden message is available within Gramsci's political writings, if only one is willing to exert the requisite effort to discover it. Conceptually, this playfulness and inaccessibility in Gramsci's writings align with his thoughts on education insofar as he believed it should

be ‘an assiduous process in which truth is fecund only when one has made an effort to master it and reproduced in himself the state of anxiety which the scholar passed through before arriving at it.’³⁰

With regard to uses of Gramsci, an immense body of scholarship has applied his concepts in order to explain political circumstances and behavior across the 20th and 21st centuries. Among the most significant of scholars to confront Gramsci are Robert Cox, Sara Roy, Edward Said and Stuart Hall. What tends to vary between different applications of Gramsci, what makes reading Edward Said substantially different from reading someone like Robert Cox, is the way in which Gramsci’s concepts and methodologies are elucidated. Some ‘Gramscian scholars,’ such as Alastair Davidson, like to suggest a sort of range of legitimacy in terms true adherence to Gramsci’s work represented by those who study him. Gramsci himself recognized that no theory— even Marx’s— could be treated as if the author were a Messiah who had laid down a nostrum once and for all,³¹ so these claims tend to read as arrogant and polemical. A humbler and more fruitful digestion of Gramscian scholarship capitalizes and draws insight from their varied means of application— the different things different Gramsci scholars do well. After discussing the broader ways in which Gramsci has been most prominently applied, indicating how these applications inform the process of confronting Gramsci, a close discussion of lesser-known scholars’ employment of Gramsci’s *civil society* will follow.

³⁰ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 61-66

³¹ A Davidson. “The Uses and Abuses of Gramsci.” *Sage Journals*. 2008.

Robert Cox repeatedly stated that ‘his work does not purport to be a critical study of Gramsci’s political theory but merely a derivation from it of some ideas useful for a revision of current international relations theory,’³² and so the benefit of his methodological approach exists on the broadest conceptual level. What Cox attempted to accomplish in his 1996 article was an extrapolation of Gramsci’s concept of *hegemony*—one of the most referenced of Gramsci’s concepts— in order explain the international system. To do this, Cox took what Gramsci said about the Socialist political struggle during and around the turn of the 20th century and it applied it to contemporary circumstances.³³ This was a fruitful endeavor in the sense that it presented in accessible terms a Gramscian notion of hegemony— as well as some of Gramsci’s other concepts. One could also compliment Cox’s use of the history which Gramsci drew upon to expound some of these concepts. For instance, reference to debates within the Third International concerning the strategy of the Bolshevik Revolution and the creation of a Soviet socialist state.³⁴ These references are important because they, on one hand, acknowledge the domestic orientation of Gramsci’s thinking, and on the other, extrapolate onto an international field the strategies Gramsci presented as means for affecting hegemonic reconfiguration. In a word, Cox’s extrapolation represents a development of Gramsci’s hegemony that grows beyond its original conceptual

³² R Cox. “Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay on Method.” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 1996. p. 162.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ R Cox. “Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay on Method.” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 1996.

presentation. It uses Gramsci as a methodological point of departure such that concepts— applied to contemporary circumstances— become elaborated and dynamic in the specificity of particular historical moments.

Also important about Cox's application is his discussion of the relationship between Gramsci and Machiavelli. This is helpful for understanding the nuance with which hegemonic configurations exist and also the importance of both consent and coercion in pursuit and defense of hegemony. Gramsci's appreciation for Machiavelli's *Prince* is presented in relatively concrete terms and centers on ways in which leaders can conquer an existing state or cultivate a new type of state.³⁵ Leaders in politics, Gramsci indicates, can refer to either an individual or a more or less numerous political body, and so the usefulness of Machiavelli can be found in the parallels between strategies prescribed for a prince and those for a political party. Cox emphasizes this relationship in his discussion of consent and coercion: "The Machiavellian connection frees the concept of power (and of hegemony as one form of power) from a tie to historically specific social classes and gives it a wider applicability to relations of dominance and subordination, including...relations of the world order."³⁶ What Cox argues here is not that Gramsci imagines diminished saliency of class conflict, or diminished relevance of one type of power over another. Rather, he astutely describes the nuanced ways relationships of domination and subordination can exist and the ways in which (extending

³⁵ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 252-253.

³⁶ R Cox. "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay on Method." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 1996. p. 164.

beyond coercion) that domination can be secured. This is instructive for students attempting to grasp and apply Gramsci because it reminds them to look beyond static notions of hegemony particular to historical circumstance, toward the dynamic ensemble of its constitutive relationships: what Gramsci referred to as the “interplay of relations between principal groups of the fundamental classes and the auxiliary forces directed by, or subjected to, their hegemonic influence.”³⁷

Sara Roy is one of the few scholars who have branched out beyond Gramsci’s concept of hegemony and has done so with specific regard to civil society in the Middle East. In her chapter on the Gaza Strip from AR Norton’s book *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Dr. Roy defines two forms in which civil society can be manifest: the liberal pluralist model and the Marxist model. The liberal pluralist model is based on democracy as the ideal form of government and capitalism as the ideal form of economic organization. Within this framework, civil society is “independent of the state but not necessarily opposed to it and is assigned primacy as the realm of economic relations organized by the marketplace.”³⁸ For her Marxist model, Dr. Roy uses Gramsci to suggest civil society as a “weapon against capitalism, not an accommodation to it,”³⁹ the sphere of the exploited where the struggle against state domination must be waged.⁴⁰

³⁷ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 222.

³⁸ S Roy. “Civil Society in the Gaza Strip: Obstacles to Social Reconstruction.” In *Civil Society in the Middle East* by A Norton. Brill Publishing. 1996. p. 221-223.

³⁹ E Wood. “The Uses and Abuses of Civil Society.” In *Socialist Register: A Survey of Movements and Ideas* by R Miliband. The Merlin Press. 1990. p. 63.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Roy's insight is important because it draws attention to Gramsci's strategies for "industrially and socially advanced states... where civil society has become a complex structure resistant to catastrophic incursions."⁴¹ In advanced states, a dialectical relationship exists between political society (ie. the bureaucratic, coercive state apparatus) and civil society, wherein the ideologies and interests held by participants in the state apparatus are intertwined with and reflected by civil society. In this circumstance, the state (political society) is described by Gramsci as only an "an outer ditch, behind which there stood a powerful system of fortresses and earthworks."⁴² All of this is to say that in advanced states, direct confrontation with the state apparatus— what Gramsci calls a war of maneuver— is difficult, because civil society forms its reinforcing and protective element. What Roy alludes to is that in advanced states contests for hegemony must occur first in civil society (war of position), as in a war of ideas through the manufacturing of consent. Civil society must be toppled in the sense that the prevalent ideologies and interests within it— reflective of those attributable to political society— are undermined, making way for hegemonic reconfiguration and the eventual transition of control over political society.

What one should be cautious of while reading Dr. Roy is that her take on civil society could be misconstrued to suggest an inherently oppositional element (in conflict with political society) operative in an inevitable or binary contest of hegemony. This is

⁴¹ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 235.

⁴² *Ibid.* p. 238.

not something Dr. Roy suggests specifically, but it is something that could be inferred without background familiarity with Gramsci. On the first, although civil society can be a ‘weapon against capitalism,’ as mentioned in the previous paragraph it can also function as a reinforcement mechanism for existing hegemonic social and economic structures reflective and supportive of political society- which could be capitalist. On the second, an important note about processes of hegemonic reconfiguration is that Gramsci never used the term “counter-hegemony,”⁴³ though his strategies pointed toward obvious revolutionary objectives.

Instead of drawing from Dr. Roy to conceptualize civil society as a battlefield in which two dichotomous entities clash until one submits to the other, a better metaphor would describe it as a playing field where numerous teams compete. Rather than a two-party war (which can exist but only superficially characterizes competition), a renegotiation of the complex relationships of hegemony occurs. This idea can be linked to Cox’s discussion of Machiavelli and reinforces Gramsci’s notion of civil society being an,

“Ensemble of organisms... wherein the functions of hegemony comprise spontaneous consent given by the great masses to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant group and the apparatus of state coercive power which legally enforces discipline on groups who do not consent.”⁴⁴

⁴³ L Herrera, N Mirshak. “Critical Voices in Critical Times: Peter Mayo on Gramsci, Egypt and Critical Pedagogy.” *Open Democracy*. 2018.

⁴⁴ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 12.

Although Dr. Roy does not develop her interpretation of Gramsci's civil society further than a few pages, her portrayal of him offers an introduction that extends beyond simplistic presentations of his platitudinal 'hegemony' or 'war of position' concepts.

Edward Said provides a philological approach to Gramscian concepts, which— from a methodological perspective— is instructive for novice readers of Gramsci. His perspective is one aided by knowledge of the Italian language and exposure to Gramsci's earlier work in *Ordine Nuovo*.⁴⁵ As a scholar of comparative literature with keen appreciation for linguistics, Edward Said's primary interest with regard to Gramsci was the meaning of discourse and how intellectual work could be elaborated into a mass belief. In other words, how ideas become active and how actions reflect ideas.

This provides the conceptual undertones for Said's concern about the reasons for defeat of 'subaltern' voices of the 'Orient' by *orientalism*.⁴⁶ Using Gramsci's *hegemony* as a point of departure, Said characterizes how a complex of educational practices and institutions— whose object was to create mass consent to a particular world view— resulted in cultural hegemony and gave *orientalism* durability.⁴⁷ What is most fascinating about Said's research and use of Gramsci is that it related directly to his lived experience and personal ambition to raise up the marginalized voices of persons from the Middle East. In other words, he applied Gramsci's concepts not as a general theory but as a practical guide for action.

⁴⁵ A Davidson. "The Uses and Abuses of Gramsci." *Sage Journals*. 2008.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

The instructive value in Said is that he duplicates Gramsci's methodological approach. Said takes it to heart when Gramsci says,

“The starting-point of critical elaboration is the new consciousness of what one really is and is ‘knowing thyself’ as a product of the historical process today, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory... and therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory.”⁴⁸

In parallel, Said's *Orientalism* is, “an attempt to inventory the traces upon [himself], the Oriental subject, of the culture whose domination has been so powerful a factor in the life of all Orientals.”⁴⁹ This is important for novice readers because it guides them toward appreciation for the ways in which Gramsci employed his concepts, prompting them to step beyond superficial appreciation for them in abstract.

Stuart Hall, also important because of his methodological approach, offers several innovations. In the first case, having thoroughly digested the body of Gramsci's work, Hall categorizes Gramsci's concepts on the basis of how much attention and development they received. So, for example Hall gives, ‘pride of place to civil society [and] relegates the concept of hegemony because hegemony is a notion not well developed.’⁵⁰ Although Hall was not pretentious enough to suggest his methodological approach was superior to others’, this creates an interesting point of comparison to works that seem to operationalize concepts on the basis of relevance rather than Gramsci's own emphasis. This could be a point to make about Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist*

⁴⁸ E Said. *Orientalism*. Random House Inc. 1978. p. 25.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ S Hall, et al. “Politics and Ideology: Gramsci.” *CCCS Selected Working Papers*. 1977.

Strategy Towards a Radical Democratic Politics, although it is generally agreed that the hegemony they elaborate is a far departure from Gramsci's.

Another intriguing component of Stuart Hall's work is that it adheres closely to Gramsci's emphasis on the historicity of his concepts: the notion that his concepts are meaningless in the abstract and can only be fully developed when elaborated through historical circumstance and with regard to specific conjunctures. As an example of this exercise, it is worth examining briefly Stuart Hall's work on Thatcherism from the late 1980s. Hall begins his article with the suggestion that the conditions in Britain were,

“Strikingly similar to those Italy when fascism had defeated the workers movement in a struggle for ideological dominance... [and] that the conjuncture for this struggle for a new ‘common sense’ was the ‘organic crisis’ of the British economy and society owing to the oil crisis, massive debt and consequent inability to pay for the welfare state.”⁵¹

What results from analysis of Hall's work is a best usages guide for the practical application of Gramsci: a guide's guide. It is because of Hall's emphasis on the centrality of civil society in Gramsci's work that from here out, civil society will receive the bulk of attention.

One recent scholar to write about civil society in the Middle East used Gramscian frameworks to present an insightful empirical argument. J Leigh Doyle describes in her article how western conceptualizations of civil society have shaped the way civil society is imagined existing in the Middle East, contributing to the problematic belief that democratization is possible if only western countries support civil society organizations

⁵¹ S Hall. “Gramsci and Us.” In *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left*. Verso Books. 1988.

in the Middle East. Using Turkey as a case study, she argues that contrary to the dominant view which equates civil society with democracy, civil society organizations in the Middle East often assist elites, extending and consolidating their political and economic power.⁵²

Similar to the categorizations introduced by Dr. Roy, Doyle articulates a liberal conception of civil society by referencing Alexis de Tocqueville who argued that associations provided ordinary citizens with the power to prevent ‘either tyranny of parties or the whims of princes.’⁵³ But instead of framing civil society from a Gramscian perspective in solely oppositional terms, Doyle’s is more nuanced. Here, Doyle references Joseph Buttigieg who suggests that,

“Political society and the bureaucratic structures of the state can, and do intervene in civil society and, far from being necessarily opposed to the state (as with the liberal-democratic understanding) civil society is embodied with class relations and is thus very often its most resilient element; it is [the] arena wherein the ruling class extends and reinforces its power by nonviolent means.”⁵⁴

Doyle’s approach to Gramsci, in this sense, is important because it demonstrates how civil society can perpetuate authoritarian resiliency— despite what Western policymakers with liberal conceptions of civil society might think. This perspective does not supersede optimistic notions of civil society as a playing field in which ideologies compete and hegemony can be challenged. Rather, it presents an important reminder to readers that

⁵² J Doyle. “Civil Society as Ideology in the Middle East: A Critical Perspective.” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. 2015.

⁵³ A Tocqueville. *Democracy in America*. [Translated by Gerald Bevan.] Penguin Books. 1835. p. 224.

⁵⁴ J Buttigieg. “Gramsci on Civil Society.” *Duke University Press*. 1995. p. 26.

Gramsci did not see civil society as only a weapon for the subaltern, he saw it as being accessible by a swath of competitors: including the subaltern but also the existing hegemon.

Joseph Buttigieg, responsible for the most recent translations of Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*— and also father to Presidential Candidate Pete Buttigieg— offers a theory oriented and incredibly thorough discussion of Gramsci's civil society in his 1995 article. In it, Buttigieg provides important insight for how Gramsci's civil society should be applied, understood, and interconnected with his other concepts. For example, the suggestion that drawing excerpts from isolated and particular passages on civil society without contextualizing them in Gramsci's other and extensive discussions on the topic is fraught with problems.⁵⁵ He also contributes nuance to earlier mentioned discussions on the topic and argues that Gramsci's civil society is dynamic and not one directional. Perhaps most importantly, with reference to Gramsci's *Southern Question*, Buttigieg emphasizes that,

“While appearing to favor the seemingly common interests of industrial capital and the industrial labor force, the government protectionist policies were, in reality perpetuating the misery and exploitation of an enormous segment of the population in the South, who remained trapped in a quasi-feudal socioeconomic system.”⁵⁶

This last point is especially important because it draws attention to processes within civil society that can be co-opted by the state in order to present the guise of protection for members of subaltern classes, while in fact consolidating their own authoritarian rule.

⁵⁵ J Buttigieg. “Gramsci on Civil Society.” *Duke University Press*. 1995.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

While the publications surrounding Gramsci are vast and entail varying methodological approaches, those mentioned here provide a starting point and guide. What remains absent in scholarly literature is the application of Antonio Gramsci's methodological strategies to describe civil society in Jordan. More precisely, the application of Gramscian concepts and methodologies as a means of identifying and registering institutions within Jordanian civil society responsible for perpetuating authoritarian resiliency, so that they can be undermined. This requires acknowledgement of the historical similarities between the experiences about which Antonio Gramsci wrote, and the social, economic, and political circumstances of Jordan today, as well as an account of the interrelatedness of Gramsci's other concepts. This is a task that will require reference to Gramsci directly, but for the purpose of a literature review it was important to describe the ways in which Gramsci has been used.

CHAPTER THREE: VALUE-CENTERED ANALYSIS AND DEMOCRATIC INDIVIDUALITY

As was indicated with reference to trends in scholarship surrounding patron-clientelism in the Middle East, studies in contemporary political economy sometimes center on value-free analysis. Neutrality is pursued in the sense that rather than challenging institutions like patron-clientelism, attempts have been made to demonstrate their dynamism, ie. tendency to function along non-linear, both morally positive and problematic axes. This trend is particularly true for LR de Elvira, et al.'s *Clientelism and Patronage in the Middle East and North Africa: Networks of Dependency*. Their efforts, as illustrated with the concept of *networks of dependency*, suggest that patron-clientelism has the potential to serve a mutual benefit for both patrons and clients. Rightly, it indicates how— at least in a marginal sense— the client is as important in serving the needs of the patron as the patron is in serving the needs of the client. This analysis falls short, however, of registering the advantages of patron-client relationships in comparative terms. In other words, LR de Elvira et al. do not categorize or emphasize ways in which patron-clientelism operates as a self-reinforcing mechanism that, on one hand, serves the immediate short-term needs of a client, while on the other, solidifying the long-term

position and influence of the patron, ie. the systemic consequences that are not morally neutral.

The problem with this kind of analysis is that it falls short of identifying particular ways and circumstances in which patron-clientelism can be damaging, in terms of broader prospects for social mobility and political development. It poses itself as apolitical by instead reflecting upon the various ways in which patron-clientelism manifests, without challenging the effect of those manifestations. One can speculate about the reasons for this type of analysis, and in terms of academic rigor it makes sense that literature would avoid sweeping condemnations of historically and culturally engrained institutions. It would also be distinctly orientalist for Western scholars to comment on these institutions with the suggestion: if only you broke ways with these backwards traditions, your prospects for economic and political development would improve— you could be like us.⁵⁷ But something different is taking place in this analysis. Reference to important thinkers like Said, Gramsci and Marx will show that literature about politics is in its nature political, and thus carries with it an either explicit or implicit value judgement with regard to historical circumstances and behavior. It is therefore possible to identify, from a perspective of moral objectivity, historical circumstances and behavior that are problematic, and demonstrate concretely the ways in which they are so. With specific regard to patron-clientelism in Jordan, that is the task of this thesis.

⁵⁷ The irony in the orientalist's "you can be like us" attitude is that exclusionary institutions similar to patron-clientelism exist in the West and have- in some instances- as profound an impact on the function of business and politics as they do in the Middle East. This links to an overarching, but perhaps implicit, theme in this thesis that circumstances in the Middle East- with specific regard to patron-clientelism- are not as different from what can be found in the US as one might imagine.

The reason for this discussion here is that it categorizes the current project in relation to existing literature. It presents the simple argument that in a particular circumstance patron-clientelism functions in particular ways that foment barriers to entry into the political process, preventing broader opportunities for political development. The results of these manifestations of patron-clientelism are authoritarian resiliency, ie. solidification of existing socio-political structures and perpetuation of subalternity for non-elite classes. In other words, this project— in contrast to contemporary scholarship— presents a claim related to the morally objective value of patron-clientelism in Jordan. Using models from Said, Marx and Gramsci, a negative moral value will be attributed to prominent forms of patron-clientelism. This, of course, is something very different than suggesting patron-clientelism has universal morally negative implications. Such a claim would be essentialist and equally problematic alongside benign representations of patron-clientelist dynamism. Instead, this discussion is intended to present a kind of self-awareness in terms of the scope of its analysis and effect, while also offering unequivocal moral determination.

Taking a step backwards, the presupposed argument here is that literature about politics is inherently political. This is a claim attributable to both Antonio Gramsci and Edward Said. For Said, Western scholarship about the Orient demonstrates how political scholarship is incapable of presenting ‘pure,’ (apolitical) knowledge and reflects a power contest that exists on an uneven field of political domination. Further elaboration is helpful.

In the simplest terms, Said defines orientalism as “a way of coming to terms with the Orient based on the Orient’s special place in European Western Experience.”⁵⁸ Although by ‘Orient’ Said refers primarily to Arabs and Islam (what can be referred to loosely as ‘Middle Eastern and Muslim cultures’), the concept is not limited to geospatial or religious typology. Encompassing both, it refers more importantly to the relationship between, on one hand, Arabs and Islam, and on the other, the West, represented by literature. In other words, Said’s orientalism is a relational means to understand the distinction between Orient and Occident, the distribution of geopolitical awareness into texts and interests related to control, manipulation and incorporation reflected by texts.⁵⁹ At a broader conceptual level, it is analysis of discourse that is produced and exists in an uneven exchange between various kinds of power.

Said describes a dialectical relationship between Orientalists— that is, scholars writing about the Orient— and the orientalist body of work they contribute to. In parallel, a dialectic also exists between the ensemble of relationships that compose global political hegemonic power and literature or discourse that surrounds those arrangements of power. In other words, when an author produces literature about the Arab and Muslim world, he is either consciously or subconsciously affected by literature that came before his own and either consciously or subconsciously complicit in forwarding the objectives of what came before him. Said defines this as ‘strategic location:’ the way of describing an

⁵⁸ E Said. *Orientalism*. Random House Inc. 1978. p. 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* p. 12.

author's position in a text with regard to the Oriental material he writes about.⁶⁰ This leads to operation within self-perpetuating frameworks, in which the relationships between groups of texts (Said's 'strategic formation') acquire referential power and thereafter gain influence in culture at large.⁶¹

The result of this series of relationships is the production of what Said calls 'political knowledge.' What he means by this is that the knowledge reflected in literature, in his case about the Orient, is both a representation and extension of real-world power. This is not to suggest that political knowledge is inherently bad; Said admits that his own intellectual endeavors have political value. Rather, Said argues that intellectuals should stop trying to fool themselves by believing their work is 'pure,' uninfluenced by arrangements of hegemonic power. What is most important is the type of meta-consciousness and self-awareness referred to earlier. All work is bound to have some implication for power and be influenced by power— that is the dialectical relationship between author and literature/literature and real-world power. Only by acknowledging that component of academic life can academic endeavors be legitimized.

The absence of this academic self-awareness— what in platitudinal academic discourse is called positionality— is twofold. In the first case it leads to the production of exteriority representation. "Orientalism is premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 20.

⁶¹ Ibid.

its mysteries plain for and to the West.”⁶² What Said is describing is the manufacturing of an image, by the West and for the West, of something different from the West so that it can be digestible in the West. It is the process of putting the Orient into terms accessible for a Western audience, a process which has the effect of producing something altogether different from the Orient itself. In contrast to ‘natural depictions’ of the Orient, these representations respond more to agreed-upon codes of understanding for their effects and the culture that produced them than their putative object.⁶³ This presents a tangible way to think about how and why orientalism is manifest. It is manifest in ways that reaffirm its audience’s sophistication and cultural hegemony. It manifests this way because it assumes of those ‘lesser Orientals’ that they are incapable of representing themselves, and therefore the task must be undertaken by those with greater sophistication, ie. the West. This offers an apt example of how scholarship is not only political in that it reinforces and aggrandizes its own cultural hegemony, but also of how value judgements are implicit within it.

The second result of scholarship without awareness, the logical next step of what was described in the preceding paragraph, is that it becomes increasingly detached from reality. Scholars operating under the assumption that what they produce is ‘pure’ or apolitical knowledge ignore the series of relationships described above and the ways in which those relationships shape scholarship. “The general liberal consensus that ‘true knowledge’ is fundamentally non-political (and conversely that overtly political

⁶² E Said. *Orientalism*. Random House Inc. 1978. p. 21.

⁶³ Ibid. p. 22.

knowledge is not true) obscures the highly organized political circumstances obtaining when knowledge is produced.”⁶⁴ One could extrapolate from Said a warning about the risk faced by scholars oblivious to ways real-life power dynamics shape their work. If a scholar is unaware of his position within a scholarly corpus, or of the ways in which that body affect his work, then he is unable to control for that influence. Unwittingly, he continues contributing to the body— as that body continues influencing him— while the body and scholar together are unhampered in devolution toward greater absorption with representational frameworks suited for the needs of their audience. This is a process of increasing detachment from reality because it is a process absent of actors standing in the way of detachment from reality. At a point,

“Knowledge no longer requires application to reality: knowledge is what gets passed on silently, without comment, from one text to another... Ideas are propagated, disseminated anonymously, repeated without attribution; they have literally become idées reçues... what matters is that they are there to be echoed and re-echoed uncritically.”⁶⁵

This is perhaps the worst type of scholarship: that which is political but unaware; that which contributes to a particular end but does not realize; that which becomes so self-absorbed and uncritical that its only bearing on reality is the unintentional reinforcement of existing structures of political domination.

Related to the question at the outset about the inherent political quality of scholarship surrounding politics, Said is both insightful and instructive. His registry helps categorize the ways in which relationships that constitute real-world power shape

⁶⁴ E Said. *Orientalism*. Random House Inc. 1978. p. 10.

⁶⁵ E Said. *Orientalism*. Random House Inc. 1978. p. 116.

discourse, how actions and ideas reflect one another. He helps characterize what happens when scholars are unaware of their situation within existing structures of cultural hegemony and become unwitting mechanisms of reinforcement. And, he explains how this process in total foments an uncritical approach to reality- eventuating detachment from reality. This is precisely what the project at hand seeks to avoid. With regard to Elvira et al., one could make the criticism that they present an uncritical view of reality, one that does not challenge existing manifestations of patron-clientelism. Thus, their work provides a neutral register of ways in which patron-clientelism exists without emphasizing why those manifestations are harmful or reasons why they should be altered. This project, in contrast, seeks to present its case in such a way mindful of the influences of Western hegemony and to step beyond the unexamined assumption that institutions in Jordan are as they will be. By demonstrating how particular manifestations of patron-clientelism are harmful it will show both why and how changes in the institutions and relationships that represent existing global political dominance are essential.

Antonio Gramsci's perspective related to the political nature of scholarship has a critical underlying theme equal to that of Said's— in fact, Gramsci's model provided impetus for Said's work. Although the literature he produced is sometimes understood only as a guide for socialist strategy, a closer read reflects something more nuanced. His approach, one could argue, is a register of risks and opportunities related to particular historical circumstances. Risks were important for Gramsci to discuss because they helped explain why the communist party in Italy was unsuccessful in thwarting the rise of

Mussolini fascism. Opportunities were valuable for discussion because they presented strategies for what the communist party in Italy could have done differently.

Underlying these operational components of Gramsci's theory, however, is a forceful critique of the liberal/capitalist state and its claims of universality, exposing mechanisms and modulations of power within it.⁶⁶ In short, Gramsci's perspective is eternally critical; the risks and opportunities he describes with reference to particular historical circumstances are constantly interrelated with the object of challenging and changing the status quo. The reason for his critical approach to reality is worth unpacking and will help explain why he saw scholarship— education, more fundamentally— as political, with essential import to the revolutionary reorganization of existing relationships and structures constitutive of hegemony.

Two concepts Gramsci discusses at length, both which help readers understand processes whereby the plane of civil society can be exploited to wrest cultural dominance: intellectuals and education. Intellectuals, for Gramsci, constitute a demographic expanded beyond common conception; they are represented not only by what one thinks of as a 'traditional' academic— ie. professional intellectual— but also include the thinking and organizing members 'organic' to each class. In this sense, 'all men are intellectuals,' but not all men have the function of intellectuals in society.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ J Buttigieg. "Gramsci on Civil Society." *Duke University Press*. 1995. p. 3-4.

⁶⁷ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 9.

The key distinction for Gramsci between intellectual and non-intellectual is a simple fact of the direction in which their specific professional activity is directed, toward intellectual elaboration or simple muscular-nervous effort.⁶⁸ In simpler terms, Gramsci seems to distinguish between intellectuals and non-intellectuals on the basis of ideational intentionality attached to physical acts, pointing toward particular political end. One who functions as an intellectual in society contributes to the critical elaboration of intellectual activity, modifying its relationship with the muscular-nervous effort⁶⁹ towards a new equilibrium, ensuring that the muscular-nervous effort itself, in so far as it is an element of a general practical activity, which is perpetually innovating the physical and social world, becomes the foundation of a new and integral conception of the world.⁷⁰

In other words, and in close correspondence with the earlier discussion about Said, an intellectual serves the function of aligning actions with ideas framed upon a critical approach to the status quo. He is the driver of innovation, the ‘mover and shaker’ who directs whatever professional activity is his specialty toward the organization and cultivation of a particular hegemonic arrangement. Solidarity or momentum gained by any particular intellectual current— which elaborates a particular critical worldview— reflects the zero-sum competition of civil society and the prospect of hegemonic reconfiguration.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ This Gramsci reference which includes second mention of ‘muscular-nervous effort’ reiterates the relationship he saw for intellectuals between actions and ideas. Their purpose was to coordinate the two in pursuit of a particular political end, either in support or opposition to existing hegemonic configurations.

⁷⁰ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 9.

While the traditional intellectual also serves the role of elaborating a worldview so that actions are brought into alignment with the ideas and interests of a particular class, he is not organic to a particular class. “Traditional intellectuals experience through an ‘esprit de corps’ their uninterrupted historical continuity and their special qualification and thus put themselves forward as autonomous and independent of the dominant social group.”⁷¹ Therefore, “one of the most important characteristics of any group that is developing towards dominance is its struggle to assimilate and to conquer ‘ideologically’ the traditional intellectuals.”⁷²

The reasons for assimilating or co-opting traditional intellectuals might seem obvious, but are not exclusively related to the threat they would pose as a subversive element. By drawing them into the camp, so to speak, intellectuals can be employed as the deputies of the dominant group— or whichever group hopes to be dominant. As such, they exercise the functions of social hegemony and political government which comprise the spontaneous consent given by the masses of the population to a general direction imposed on social life, and the apparatus of state coercive power which legally enforces discipline on groups who do not consent.⁷³

The assimilation of traditional intellectuals is vital for dominant social groups and challenger groups on two planes: 1) the process of elaborating a worldview that then is disseminated as an organizing element in civil society for the purpose of ‘manufacturing

⁷¹ Ibid. p. 7.

⁷² Ibid. p. 10.

⁷³ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 12.

consent' is one which can either support or contradict existing hegemonic ordering. It would be impossible for a challenger group to alter significantly the existing hegemonic order while ideologies and interests reflective of the dominant group were upheld and consented to by the masses. 2) In the case of a challenger group, a war of ideas could be won in civil society so that the consent of the masses reflects a new critical worldview subversive to the existing hegemonic order. But, even if that is the case deputies are needed to serve the bureaucratic functions of the state when a transition in responsibility for governance— ie. control over political society— occurs. Rather than training a new cadre, it is better to co-opt the old.

So, the value of intellectuals, both organic and traditional, is practical. Their work serves to either solidify ideological support for the dominant fundamental group as well as to carry out bureaucratic functions in political society over which it presides, or to elaborate a critical worldview in the process of organizing opposition to the existing hegemonic order. With regard to both functions, one could extrapolate that intellectuals' agency—ie. their role in support or opposition to the existing hegemonic order— extends to and is reflected by the scholarship that they publish.

Gramsci believed that science (encompassing scientific literature produced by traditional intellectuals) was an inherently political activity because it, “transforms men and makes them different from what they were before... it enlarges their concepts of life, raises to a higher level life itself.”⁷⁴ This point is as true for assimilated intellectuals (by

⁷⁴ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 245.

the fundamental dominant group) as oppositional intellectuals because even a ruling class aims to “raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level which corresponds to the needs of productive forces for development.”⁷⁵ It would appear, therefore, in alignment with the earlier discussion about Said, that the production of scholarship is necessarily a political activity pointed toward one of the two ends attributed here to intellectuals.⁷⁶ If Gramsci is correct, one cannot view scholarship as simply a benign representation of life. Rather, it implicitly or explicitly has something to say about life, either reinforcing and enhancing the existing structure of relationships and institutions that compose the hegemonic order or challenging them.

Education relates to the role of intellectuals in two ways. First, in a purely mechanistic sense wherein, “the more extensive the area covered by education... the more complex the cultural world, the civilization, of a particular state.”⁷⁷ This has more to do with the development of an ethical state— one which seeks to elevate its population in correspondence to needs related to development and production— by assimilated intellectuals than activities directed toward hegemonic reordering carried out by subversive intellectuals.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 258.

⁷⁶ Suggesting ends of intellectuals in dichotomous terms is not the same as saying intellectuals remain in either oppositional or supportive groups. An oppositional intellectual could be assimilated to the fundamental dominant group, and vice-versa. In other words, the function of intellectuals is dynamic and therefore their association as assimilated or oppositional does not enable a fixed registry that transcends historical circumstance. This is an important point for the later discussion of patrons as intellectuals.

⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 10-11.

A ruling class would hope to empower its intellectuals in the development of a robust education system, one which produced subsequent intellectuals to carry out increasingly diverse and sophisticated functions of the state. But this can also mean that a ruling class— one responsible for articulating the ‘areas covered by education’— could prevent the emergence of subversive currents from within the ranks of its educational apparatus. This was true for Italy’s universities described by Gramsci:

“The universities, and all the institutions which develop intellectual and technical abilities, since they were not permeated by the life of the parties, by the living realities of national life, produced apolitical national cadres, with a purely rhetorical and non-national mental formation.”⁷⁸

In this sense, assimilated intellectuals through their educative functions specify the scope of education provided to students in order to serve and protect the needs of the ruling class. This can mean simultaneously the development of productive functions within the state and suppression of ideas counterintuitive to the state. Education, in this framework, represents a tool in the same way the function of intellectuals is a tool in either service or opposition to the existing hegemonic order.

The second way in which education relates to the role of intellectuals has more to do with the process of re-education, a foundational consideration in development of oppositional strategies. It is essential to realize, here, that disillusionment with existing structures reflective of hegemonic order and willingness to use force to upend them is not enough to affect revolutionary change in industrially advanced, modern states.

Intellectuals, especially those organic to particular social groups, play a role not only in

⁷⁸ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 228.

organizing support for ideologies oppositional to the state but also in educating the masses so as to cultivate an alternative form of consent— that is, consent to alternative ideologies oppositional to those of the ruling class.

This is an important point because for Gramsci, revolutionary activity had little or nothing to do with inciting people to rebel; instead it consisted in a painstaking process of disseminating and instilling an alternative ‘forma mentis’ by means of cultural preparation— intellectual development and education— on a mass scale, critical and theoretical elaboration and thoroughgoing organization.⁷⁹ Organic intellectuals are essential in this process because, in the first case, they reflect the feelings and lived experiences particular to their class, attach ideas to those feelings and organize action. In the second case, because of the “higher level of social elaboration, characterized by a certain directive and technical capacity... not only in the limited sphere of his own activity but in other spheres as well,”⁸⁰ the organic intellectual is suited to expand interests beyond corporate or class spheres and be an organizer of ‘masses of men.’⁸¹ Without the organic intellectual, cultivation of oppositional ideologies and interests in order for consent to be manufactured at a degree of critical mass eventuating revolutionary change is impossible. Their role in the extension of class or corporate interests beyond those spheres reflects the re-education process, without which challenge

⁷⁹ J Buttigieg. “Gramsci on Civil Society.” *Duke University Press*. 1995. p. 14.

⁸⁰ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 5.

⁸¹ The example Gramsci gives for the organic intellectual is the entrepreneur.

to existing hegemonic ordering— direct confrontation of the state apparatus by force— is futile.

Gramsci's thinking about the role of intellectuals and education is interrelated— one could even say dialectical. But the argument to be drawn from these concepts and applied to the overarching discussion about political scholarship is a simple one.⁸² No intellectual effort is benign. Either an intellectual has been assimilated within the relationships and structures reflective of hegemonic ordering in a particular historical circumstance, or he is operating in opposition to them.

The work intellectuals produce thus reflects a process of education that either serve the interests of the status quo or stand in opposition to it. Scholarship offers just one example of the ensemble of conduits through which educational processes can take place, but one should be left with the understanding that it is never neutral. If taken seriously, the positions of Gramsci and Said should compel intellectuals (of all sorts) to consider the effect of their work. With regard to commentary on patron-clientelism, what hegemonic structures do scholars contribute to or oppose by emphasizing its dynamism rather than its dangerous ramifications? What value statements about the status quo do they express or stand alongside, either wittingly or unwittingly? Here is the point at which a moral barometer becomes necessary, at which a concluding discussion of moral objectivity becomes relevant.

⁸² Admittedly, the depth given here to discussion of intellectuals and education served both the immediate purpose of identifying the political nature of scholarship, but also introduced ways in which hegemonic struggle occurs in civil society. This is helpful for the subsequent, further in-depth conversation about civil society.

There are competing models one can use to characterize historical circumstances and behavior in ‘morally objective’ terms. Alan Gilbert in *Democratic Individuality* categorizes several in order to expound a Marxian ethical model. For example, Adam Smith’s idea of moral progress centered on a capitalist economic structure in which, a “chain connection existed between accumulation and workers wellbeing.”⁸³ One can extrapolate from his perspective a positive value— in terms of moral objectivity— attributed to circumstances and behavior that advance capitalist accumulation. But this framework implies the existence— and perpetuated existence— of two classes with distinct life chances, reducing personality to appropriate class activities.⁸⁴ In other words, notions of moral objectivity drawn from Adam Smith presuppose inequity and anticipate its amelioration only as an indirect result of the fulfillment of its foremost objective: accumulation.

Applied to the subject at hand, one could argue that because patron-clientelism facilitates employment, enrollment in schools, development of social capital via inter-tribal or inter-familial relations, its productive function serves the same end important for capitalists. In this register, the possibilities of patron-client structures excluding those without resources from entering them or acting as barriers for participation in political spheres— upholding elites, sustaining the subalternity of non-elites— are inconsequential. Patron-clientelism could still be registered in morally positive terms, so long as it serves a productive and accumulative end. Because this notion of ‘moral

⁸³ A Gilbert. *Democratic Individuality*. Cambridge University Press. 1990. p. 256.

⁸⁴ A Gilbert. *Democratic Individuality*. Cambridge University Press. 1990. p. 256.

objectivity’ validates— or at the very least, registers as negligible— prospects of marginalization and political injustice, it is an inadequate ethical model.

Marx’s nonrelativist, nonhistoricist model of ‘moral objectivity’ is nuanced in the sense that it synthesizes instrumental and intrinsic goods, utilitarianism and individual rights. For him, a dialectical relationship between behavior and historical circumstances reflective of instrumental and intrinsic goods explains his “utilitarian extenuation of capitalism, his indictment of its exploitiveness, his concepts of social individuality and distribution according to need.”⁸⁵ Instrumental goods are those that contribute to the limited present, such that broader ultimate individual self-realization occurs at the expense of the contemporary producing class.⁸⁶ The effect of an instrumental good is one which contributes to the elaboration of a higher good than that achieved by the limited act or process itself. Capitalism can be registered in terms of an instrumental good because as it advances through phases of development, proletariat exploitation and revolutionary fervor intensifies; the former instigates the latter, the latter reflects the fact of the former. An intrinsic good, on the other hand, is a good for its own sake, eg. struggle by the oppressed to emancipate themselves. Progress reflective of neither intrinsic nor instrumental good is called by Marx ‘alienated progress.’

Marx’s position can be registered in terms of a response to the utilitarian, for whom salience is attributed to the fact that human nature is modified through historical

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 258.

⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 239.

achievements, ie. different phases of economic development.⁸⁷ Bentham, for example, provides a relativist approach in which value judgements about behavior take into primary account the influence of historical circumstance. But Marx attributes an equal and interrelated weight to human creativity and intelligence, meaning man is capable to understand his historical circumstance, himself within it, and able to reshape both.⁸⁸ It is not the case that man's behavior is solely a result of whatever historical circumstance he finds himself within, nor that circumstance necessarily follows as the result of human behavior. Instead, mutual and interrelated influence affects both processes— that is, processes of human action and history's movement forward.

If one were to compare the two models just introduced, one could say that utilitarianism tends to work in an opposite direction than Marxian ethicism. A utilitarian would argue that man's pursuit of his own interests, the act of him accumulating personal wealth, has the eventual effect of raising the level of economic existence for his community. Selfishness and zero-sum competition are extenuated because their result is— in a vague sense— a collective advantage. But in this ethical framework, no mechanism is incorporated capable of elevating members of subaltern classes who, without prospects for accumulating their own wealth, are written off as being unlikely to affect the overall wellbeing of their community. Social individuality, how they and their productive potential are viewed, is delimited to their class. Only through sufficient enough accumulation would societal level, class transcendental change occur so that the

⁸⁷ A Gilbert. *Democratic Individuality*. Cambridge University Press. 1990. p. 239.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* p. 240.

individuality of subalterns could be realized. Worse, this ‘sufficient enough accumulation’ is not an end intentionally pursued by productive classes in order to elevate the existence of their community; rather, it is the eventual surplus the productive class would be incapable of consuming so that bestowing it upon the subalterns is the only alternative to wasting it.

From the opposite direction, Marxian ethicism begins with incorporation of egalitarian recognition, at least in broad political terms, for the lives of individuals.⁸⁹ It centers on acknowledgement of the intelligence and productive potential of individuals, while realization of their personal interests occurs simultaneously, or in reflection of the realization, of the interests of their broader community. In this context, it is not the case that individual endeavors to accumulate wealth represent instrumental goods in the sense that they might later elevate the prospects for a communal or historical existence reflective of an intrinsic good. Rather, individual productive endeavors reflect an intrinsic good insofar as they serve the interests of the community because community and individual interests are one and the same.

The model that Marx uses to exemplify this notion is that of the Paris commune, in which “reforms occurred simultaneously alongside longer-term political mindedness, manifest in assertions of democratic internationalism... an elevated sense of self-worth and purpose and an overall political environment framed upon cooperation.”⁹⁰ In other words, democratic individuality relies upon an individual’s outward notion of his

⁸⁹ A Gilbert. *Democratic Individuality*. Cambridge University Press. 1990. p. 258.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 249.

interests alongside those of his community and the ability to align both interests unencumbered by the constraints of capitalism. Instrumental goods, then, are only those that advance the possibility of such an alignment— an alignment representative of an intrinsic good. Other instances of productivity, for example those mentioned earlier with reference to ways in which utilitarian models would register effects of patron-clientelism in positive value terms, represent alienated activity.

The essential import of this discussion is that it determines standards by which the nature and effect of particular behavior can be measured, and equally, how particular historical circumstances reflective of particular behavior can be measured. With regard to patron-clientelism, one could argue that by standards of utilitarianism its effect of accessing employment, education and social-capital serves a productive end— an instrumental good in the sense that its productive outcome could at some later point serve communal interests. But productive, precisely, for whom? It would make little difference to a utilitarian if the access granted by patron-client relationships served exclusive social groups, so long as productive and accumulative processes continued. The problem with this perspective is that it diminishes the severity in risk of productivity by an elite class determined to uphold their elite status and sustain the subalternity of non-elites. If it is true that patron-client relationships serve a productive end, but the community at large is excluded from benefits characteristic of that end, a greater good is not being served. It is also not the case that the individual advantages accessed via patron-client relations are necessarily reflective of a later potential or intention to champion community wellbeing.

The stronger ethical model, Marx's, acknowledges the limited effect of benefits accessed through patron-client relationships, as well as the fact that entrance into those relationships rarely occurs with intentionality toward communal wellbeing. This is important not only to characterize the ethical shortcomings of patron-clientelism as it is currently understood, but also to indicate its alternative potential— its potential from an alternative frame of mind. Marx's perspective is therefore essential for extending the critical postures represented by both Said and Gramsci.

In other words, yes, it is true that scholarship is political and yes, it is also true that there are competing ethical models one can hold against historical circumstances or behavior to express judgement. The question becomes: which model is most compelling to understand and characterize facts of the status quo thoroughly and work toward its betterment. Utilitarianism falls short of appreciating nuances of individuality, and by extrapolation, nuanced individual instances of patron-clientelism; it therefore offers no serious impetus for challenging the problematic manifestations of patron-clientelism. Marxian 'moral objectivity,' mindful that particular manifestations of patron-clientelism serve neither instrumental nor intrinsic goods, provides foundation for a critical approach to analysis of its prevalence in Jordan. This serves the ultimate end of this thesis which is to rethink and redirect patron-clientelism so that 'conditions can be created for a consensual society wherein no individual or group is reduced to subaltern status.'⁹¹

⁹¹ J Buttigieg. "Gramsci on Civil Society." *Duke University Press*. 1995. p. 7.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANTONIO GRAMSCI AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The value of a thorough discussion of civil society, one that precedes dissection of the tangible manifestations and effects of patron-clientelism in Jordan, is to make the following argument: a) patron-clientelism is one institution amongst an ensemble of institutions, relations and associations that comprise ‘civil society’ in Jordan. b) The institutions, associations and relations that comprise civil society in Jordan are considered as such— that is, are considered component parts of civil society— because of their political agency. c) Political agency reflected by processes within civil society do more to characterize civil society than the fact of these processes occurring in a ‘private sphere’, a space distinct from political society.⁹² d) Because civil society is characterized more on the basis of the activity that takes place within it than where that activity takes place, its component institutions, associations and relations simultaneously reflect and define it. If these points are true, patron-clientelism can be used to understand civil society in Jordan, its nature, the ways in which it intertwines private and public spheres and the direction of political agency that predominates within it.

⁹² This also implies processes that occur in civil society have the ability to transcend the private sphere and interlink the public and private.

On a deeper level, activities and processes attributable to civil society reflect not only the fact of civil society, but also the political dominance held by a fundamental social group and its auxiliary groups, ie. the monarchy, the political elite, etc. So, patron-clientelism is an institution that reflects simultaneously the fact and character of civil society in Jordan, as well as the overall nature of political dominance. This is the overarching theme of this section. For purposes of elaboration, Antonio Gramsci's model of civil society will be relied upon as a guide.

It would be difficult to present comprehensive analysis of the ideas developed by Antonio Gramsci, but for the purposes of this chapter there are three themes worth discussion. These themes will be used to support the argument from the previous paragraph and clarify how it is possible for one institution— ie. patron-clientelism— to reflect and define civil society in Jordan, as well as indicate the direction of political agency within it, parallel to overall arrangements of political dominance. These three key themes are: a) dynamism and complexity, b) necessity of unification/universalization and c) cultivation of critical culture. Not only do these themes help explain political agency within civil society, but they also will contribute to the argument in the subsequent chapter detailing how existing institutions can be redirected for the purposes of reconfiguring political dominance.

One could say about Antonio Gramsci that a fundamental innovation of his contribution to political theory is the fact of its complexity. This begins with his characterization of the state as something more than a monolithic, bureaucratic and coercive entity— ie., the state as a monopoly of legitimate violence. Two key points are

important to develop Gramsci's state. First was the argument drawn from Daniel Halevy's *Decadence da la liberte* that the most significant events in French history were due to initiatives by private organisms, not by political organisms deriving from universal suffrage.⁹³ The second argument emerged in response to Ferdinand Lassalle's notion of the 'State as Gendarme,' which was— from Gramsci's perspective— a phase in a state's evolution toward regulated society, but one that is self-eliminating by design.⁹⁴ Both arguments have several implications. In regard to the first, the agency and saliency of private organisms necessitated for Gramsci a conception of the state that encompassed non-governmental institutions and activities. This does not diminish the possibility of an apparatus of state coercive power able to legally enforce discipline on those groups that do not consent either actively or passively— to a point.⁹⁵ But it implies the limit of conceptualizing a state on the sole basis of its coercive element; that is, to neglect the sphere of culture, of hegemony, of spontaneous consent. Gramsci's state, in other words, includes what one would think of as the traditional sphere of government, but also a separate sphere representative of the thoughts and feelings of the masses. The combination of this latter 'ideological' sphere alongside the former coercive element leads to Gramsci's general formula: state = political society + civil society.⁹⁶

⁹³ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 233-234.

⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 235.

⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 307.

⁹⁶ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 235.

With regard to Lassalle, emphasis on a state's protective functions is both problematic and instructive. Gramsci's idea of an ethical state was one that put an end to the internal divisions of the ruled and created a technically and morally unitary social organism.⁹⁷ Gramsci imagined the realization of such a political existence occurring through the following process: passage from,

“A phase in which state will equal government and state will be identified with civil society to a phase of the state as nightwatchman, ie. of a coercive organization which will safeguard the development of the continually proliferating elements of regulated society and which will therefore progressively reduce its own authoritarian and forcible interventions.”⁹⁸

In other words, after a war of ideas has been waged in civil society and a reconfiguration of hegemonic relations has taken place, government will reflect the state in the same way the state reflects civil society. This will present an initially precarious moment for whichever social groups are responsible for hegemonic reconfiguration, and a coercive state element will be necessary to ensure pockets of dissent are not able to mount counter-revolutionary assaults. Here, the protective and coercive state is also essential so that ideas reflective of the new hegemonic arrangement— ie., ideas pointed toward regulated society— can take root. As these ideas become prominent/hegemonic— and this is the point of contention between Gramsci and Lassalle— the need for a coercive state apparatus diminishes and the state itself becomes increasingly reflected by a regulated society.

⁹⁷ Ibid. p. 234.

⁹⁸ Ibid. p. 235.

Gramsci problematizes Lassalle's *gendarme* state because for Gramsci a coercive and protective state is only a pathway to a higher level of social existence. The coercive state is not reflective of an end by itself but is rather a means more or less valuable depending on the historical circumstance. Therefore, applied as an overarching definition of state— one ill-equipped to explain state processes and functions beyond those related to protection, and one for which notions of advancement toward an ethical state do not correspond with diminished reliance on force— Lassalle's *gendarme* is inadequate. The instructive value in Gramsci's discussion of Lassalle is that it brings attention not only to different concepts of state, but also to different manifestations of political power. On one hand, he concedes that under certain circumstances force will be necessary, ie. the initial post-revolutionary moment just mentioned. But on the other hand, Gramsci's civil society introduces into readers' consciousnesses the idea of political change being affected— fundamentally, initially— in the realm of ideas. The earlier discussion of intellectuals and education begins to illustrate how this process occurs.

The overarching point which the example of Gramsci's state contributes to is that Gramsci injected nuance into models and labels used to understand political circumstances and behavior; this is especially true for civil society and ways in which political outcomes can be cultivated from within it. Related in more concrete terms to the subject at hand, this requires understanding civil society in Jordan, not as something permanently one-directional or delimited on the basis of location, but rather as a something dynamic and all-encompassing— or, at least with the potential to prompt all-encompassing political change. In alignment with the four-tiered argument outlined at the

outset of this section, this analytical approach demands consideration of how institutions and activities (patron-clientelism) within Jordanian civil society reflect the nature of civil society— ie., its general trajectory— and interests of dominant fundamental social groups. Equipped with an understanding of how social forms can reinforce themselves, one can develop an informed critical posture toward existing hegemonic configurations so that reconfiguration is possible.

An important discussion from Gramsci that extends this theme— ie. the endeavor to register the intricacies of political life vis-à-vis particular institutions, civil society, the state in general— is his notion of *caesarism*. While caesarism itself relates to a historical moment where conflicting forces in hegemonic competition balance each other so as to eventuate internecine destruction and an either progressive or reactionary intervention must arbitrate resolution,⁹⁹ one can extrapolate some of Gramsci's descriptive terms. For instance, when Gramsci suggests it would be an error in method to conceptualize caesarism as the result of an equilibrium of the fundamental forces, and that one must also see the interplay of auxiliary forces,¹⁰⁰ this notion has broader applicability to social forces that emerge from civil society.

Earlier the argument was made that intellectuals either are or are not contributors to the existing hegemonic arrangement. This is true in terms of post-hoc characterization appropriate for intellectuals or for the political party— what Gramsci called 'the

⁹⁹ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 219.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. p. 222.

collective intellectual’ — but one must be careful to avoid falling into the idea that social forces originate in such a way that can be categorized in binary terms— ie., hegemonic and counter-hegemonic. This would be a misleading characterization for two reasons. In the first case, social groupings do not form on the basis of intentional support or opposition to existing hegemonic arrangements. Rather, they form on the basis of relations of forces: “The level of development of the material forces of production provides a basis for the emergence of the various social groupings, represents a function and has a specific position within production itself.”¹⁰¹

Gramsci would argue that social groups form first at the economic-corporate level and gain awareness of their own situation and interests in relation to the existing hegemonic arrangement only after passing through a process of political maturation. Having matured, “one becomes aware that one’s own corporate interests, in their present and future development, transcend the corporate limits of the merely economic group... it marks the decisive passage from the structure to the sphere of superstructures; it is the phase in which previously germinated ideologies become ‘party.’”¹⁰²

The process through which social groups form, cluster and develop into parties is not one, therefore, that originates as a coherent, broadly relatable challenge of existing relations of hegemony. It begins with interests that are much more intimate, diverse and dynamic. Because of this intricacy, it would be misleading to suggest that processes of

¹⁰¹ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 204.

¹⁰² Ibid. p. 205.

hegemonic reconfiguration occur with regard to agreement or disagreement about the same interests, in binary, dichotomous competition. With regard to Gramsci's caesarism—which, one could appropriately label as a moment in processes of hegemonic reconfiguration occurrent in civil society—his mention of auxiliary groups alludes to the complexity within civil society generally. To neglect this complexity within civil society would be to misrepresent it and misunderstand its processes.

The second reason why binary notions of hegemony and counter-hegemony are unproductive is because hegemony itself represents a process. To suggest a hegemon and counter-hegemon would be to suggest that the process of hegemony has been completed. That would mean the ideologies of the dominant fundamental social groups had been thoroughly disseminated, that the material forces of production reflected their interests and, similarly, that political and civil society reflected consent to their leadership. Under this circumstance, one could imagine a rebellion, an oppositional force versus an incumbent force, a hegemon and a counter-hegemon.

But Gramsci describes the cultivation and diminishment of hegemony differently.

As far as cultivation of hegemony occurs,

“The life of the state is conceived of as a continuous process of formation and superseding of unstable equilibria between the interests of the fundamental groups and those of subordinate groups... in real history these moments imply each other reciprocally... combining and diverging in various ways.”¹⁰³

¹⁰³ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 206.

Gramsci provides no examples of hegemony realized in total as a permanent thing, but instead draws attention to particular moments of hegemonic arrangement. These he uses to articulate opportunities and risks within particular circumstances for political change. The diminishment of hegemony, on the other hand, occurs as the dominant fundamental group no longer expands, fails to assimilate new elements and begins to disintegrate.¹⁰⁴ These processes, of hegemonic cultivation and diminishment, do not appear strictly reactive to one another— as hegemony vs. counter-hegemony implies. Instead they appear much more to be the result of fundamental groups' ability or inability to meet the needs of subordinate groups; or, in other words, the consent a fundamental group is able or unable to garner in civil society.

These notions of state and caesarism, therefore, carry similar lessons about both Gramsci's methodology and the complexity of hegemonic competition in civil society. Related to the complexity of hegemonic competition in civil society, it is important to reiterate that Gramsci saw the longevity of any particular hegemonic arrangement as a matter in constant relation with the satisfaction of interests of subordinate social groups. This implies a perpetual competition within which as one cluster of dominant fundamental groups increasingly neglect the interests of subordinate groups, those subordinate groups become more likely to assert themselves or appeal to other larger groups and be assimilated by them. This notion will become especially important in discussions of the role of patrons in the next section.

¹⁰⁴ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 260.

In terms of broader methodological application, two lessons emerge: In the first case, Gramsci's state and caesarism represent a tendency to look deep within social or political phenomena to identify points of origin of interests. This reflects a bottom-up approach to understanding— a necessary account of the nuances within— formation of social groups, of parties and of aspirations for altering existing arrangements of hegemony. It would be impossible to characterize these various processes— that is, the various ways various groups vie for dominance— in strictly binary, dichotomous terms. Secondly, one can infer from the present discussion the insufficiency of analysis centered on only the functional attributes of patron-clientelism. Besides, the wealth of scholarship referred to in the literature review has sufficiently categorized historical functional manifestations of patron-clientelism. More important, to channel Gramsci, is a registry of the various ways in which patron-clientelism functions in the service of particular fundamental groups and, likewise, determination of whether those services also satisfy the interests of subordinate groups. This links back to the conceptual theme of this chapter that institutions and processes of civil society reflect the prominent direction of political agency within it, as well as of the state generally.

The second conceptual theme derived from Gramsci, also one that helps understand civil society in terms of how its institutions reflect the interests of the dominant fundamental groups as well the means through which those institutions can be redirected, is that of unification and universalization. The process through which social groups mature toward party life was introduced earlier, but further understanding for

what happens in the absence of unification can be drawn from Gramsci's *Some Aspects of the Southern Question*.

Gramsci's bones of contention with the Italian communist party during the 1920s indicated by his remarks on the Italian south are twofold. The Turin communists— ie. northern Italian communists and spokesmen of communism in Italy, generally speaking— held the position that the success of communism in Italy depended on emancipation of the northern proletariat from capitalist slavery so as to then later emancipate the southern peasant masses.¹⁰⁵ This they saw as essential in order to increase southern agricultural production and orient northern industrial production toward work which promoted peace and brotherhood.¹⁰⁶ But the first problem, related particularly to the Turin communists, was that despite calls for north-south solidarity, their attitudes toward southerners represented the influence of bourgeoisie education.¹⁰⁷ 'Southernist' literature emanating from Northern communists reflected a pejorative frame of mind toward the south, characterized southerners as 'biologically inferior beings' and the south as Italy's 'ball and chain that prevented social development.'¹⁰⁸ So one of the

¹⁰⁵ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 171.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 172.

¹⁰⁷ It is striking, as an aside, how Gramsci's writing in *Some aspects of the Southern Question* is uncharacteristically lucid and employs terms like 'proletariat' and 'bourgeoisie.' According to J Buttigieg's *Gramsci on Civil Society* (p. 24), this was because it was the last article Gramsci wrote before being arrested. So, when one reads Gramsci's prison notes and finds repeated usage of terms like 'social groups' instead of 'classes' and the 'dominant fundamental groups' instead of 'bourgeoisie,' one catches a glimpse of the influence of the fascist prison censors.

¹⁰⁸ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 174.

preventative factors impeding the Turin communists from unifying with their southern counterparts was the problem of how to modify the political stance and general ideology of the proletariat as a national element unconsciously subjected to the influence of bourgeoisie education.¹⁰⁹ In Gramsci's mind, for the proletariat to become capable of governing— for unification to be possible— it needed to strip itself of corporatism and prejudice.¹¹⁰

The problem of north-south unification was, at its core, one related to the influence of an institution that shaped attitudes and ideologies to the advantage of the fundamental dominant social group. Having been subjected to bourgeoisie education, northern communists developed subconscious prejudices against the south and believed that southern emancipation was only possible with northern assistance. In other words, the northern communists believed they needed to do for the southerners what the southerners could not do for themselves. This also implied the priority of northern emancipation because to attempt emancipation alongside or in collaboration with the southerners would be to jeopardize its potential for success.

This serves an apt example to extend the discussion from the last chapter about the political function of intellectuals and education. The effect of bourgeoisie intellectuals and processes of education that took place in Italy during the 1920s had definitive political outcomes. In Joseph Buttigieg's commentary, it caused "civil society to become

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. p. 173.

¹¹⁰ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgas.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 174.

sick, culturally impoverished, politically impotent, lacking the moral fiber to resist demagogic onslaught.”¹¹¹ Ultimately, the *forma mentis*— the general cultural frame of mind, the attitudes and ideas prevalent in Italians— cultivated through education by Italy’s dominant fundamental social group fomented prejudice and disunity that eventuated the failure of the communist party.

As a broader thematic result of communist disunity in Italy, and one related to Gramsci’s second criticism of Italian communist strategy, southern marginalization perpetuated economic circumstances that reinforced the prevalence of ‘old types of intellectuals.’¹¹² This is a more complex problematic and helps explain the relationship between what Gramsci called the structural and superstructural elements of society. Because Italian communist strategy in the 1920s centered on northern emancipation as a presupposition to the empowerment of the south, communists did not aggressively pursue division of big estates in the south. Similar to the advice they gave the workers at Fiat and Reggio Emilia, the Turin communists believed transfer of ownership— in the case of the factory workers from their board, in the case of the southern peasants from their landowners— to cooperative management would leave the workers reliant on the bourgeois state.¹¹³

¹¹¹ J Buttigieg. “Gramsci on Civil Society.” *Duke University Press*. 1995. p. 25.

¹¹² A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 179.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* p. 175-177.

In the case of the factory workers they saw Fiat being cut off from institutions of credit controlled by the bourgeoisie, thus placing the workers at the mercy of the bourgeoisie and turning the Turin proletariat into an appendage of the bourgeoisie state.¹¹⁴ For the southern peasants, they saw no value turning unskilled workers loose on uncultivated land without tools or credit from landowners. A 3 January 1920 passage from *L'Ordine Nuovo* probably not written by Gramsci affirms:

“Without Machinery, without accommodation on the place of work, without credit to tide him over till harvest-time, without co-operative institutions to acquire the harvest (if— long before harvest time— the peasant has not hung himself from the strongest bush or the least unhealthy-looking wild fig in the undergrowth of his uncultivated land!) and preserve him from the clutches of the usurers— without all these things, what can a poor peasant achieve by occupying?”¹¹⁵

Awaiting northern emancipation in hopes of their own, southern peasants were solidified within a parasitic semi-feudal agrarian bloc. It consisted of three social layers: the peasants, an amorphous and disintegrated mass; medium rural bourgeoisie, the social group from which a majority of the southern intellectuals emerged; and, the big landowners.¹¹⁶ Had the south matured beyond a feudal economic circumstance reliant on agriculture, to organize commerce its dominant class would have bred a particular type of intellectual organizer that specialized in applied science.¹¹⁷ This would have been

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p. 177.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. p. 172.

¹¹⁶ A Gramsci. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*. [Edited by D Forgacs.] New York University Press. 2000. p. 178.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. p. 179.

essential in order to remain competitive in advanced economic circumstances. Because this was not the case for the south, the old type of intellectual prevailed; he was the small landowner, the medium rural bourgeoisie.

At this social layer— not far off from the peasant and in constant pursuit of upward mobility— the intellectuals derived a fierce antipathy to the peasant who they regarded as a machine for work to be bled dry, and one which can be replaced, given the excess of the population.¹¹⁸ In this arrangement, the southern intellectual served as intermediary between the peasant and big landowner, acting as land administrators, rent collectors or bureaucrats. (As an interesting side note, southern intellectuals, the intermediaries of the south, made up more than three fifths of the state bureaucracy, a striking parallel to the nearly 80 percent of Jordan's GDP accounted for by its public sector.¹¹⁹) This created a,

“Monstrous agrarian bloc, which as a whole functioned as the intermediary and overseer of Northern capitalism and banks; big southern landowners relied upon the Northern industrial bourgeoisie for machinery, tools, etc. Its single aim was to preserve the status quo. Within it, there existed no intellectual light, no program, no drive towards improvements or progress.”¹²⁰

Several important points can be drawn from Gramsci's discussion of southern intellectuals. Because of prejudice and disunity within the communist party, no creative attempts were made to alter or improve the southern economic situation. No one in the north saw altering the southern economy as a necessary step to liberating southern

¹¹⁸ Ibid. p. 180.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. p. 179.

¹²⁰ Ibid. p. 182.

peasants because northerners were preoccupied with their own emancipation. So, the feudal bloc that remained— what Gramsci could have referred to as the ‘structure’ of the south— had a direct impact on the nature of intellectual the south produced and the type of organization that stemmed from him. This enabled the old type of intellectual just described to serve as an ordering element in society, to solidify in peasants’ minds their reliance on intellectuals as intermediaries, to cultivate a general ideology supportive of the status quo.

These are what Gramsci would have referred to as superstructural elements that existed in a dialectical, reinforcing relationship with the economic structure. The fact that the communist party in Italy was unable to unify and dismantle the economic structure in the south meant that it was also unable to unseat the type of intellectual common in the south and the organization to be expected from the old intellectuals. One could speculate about what might have happened had large estates been transferred into co-ops and the relevance of old intellectuals had waned. This could have empowered a different— potentially oppositional— intellectual in the south, helped dismantle the agrarian bloc, undermined the northern bourgeoisie, and reduced the influence of the bourgeoisie in total. If that had been the case, perhaps the proletariat would have had greater success in becoming a national element and at preventing the rise of fascism.

This discussion of unification and southern Italy is important with regard to the overarching topic of civil society because it demonstrates— again— complexity in terms of points of origins of interests as well as competition and relations between various social stratum. It also indicated how disunity prevents a movement from presenting a

serious challenge to the status quo. But more deeply, it shows how what happens in civil society— ie. what intellectuals gain prominence, what type of societal organization they make likely— is closely intertwined with economic circumstance. In the next chapter, when these ideas in abstract are given concrete examples with different manifestations of patron-clientelism, this will notion will apply directly. In the case of Italy, economic circumstances perpetuated the influence of intellectuals who worked more to sustain the status quo than to elevate the situation of the masses.

Related to the fundamental argument of this chapter, that the agency of particular institutions reflect and define civil society as well as the overall nature of state political hegemony, it seems clear that the organizational role southern intellectuals played as intermediaries between peasants and landowners indicated a definite and representational institution. As mentioned, it reflected a similar intermediary relationship between the agrarian bloc in the south and the northern industrial bourgeoisie, and so the overall dominance of the bourgeoisie in general. These are the fundamental insights to be drawn from Gramsci's *Some Aspects of the Southern Question*. Similar lessons will be discernable from Gramsci's last important theme related to critical culture.

The cultivation of critical culture, for Gramsci, is one of the essential steps toward hegemonic reconfiguration. It presupposes an understanding of the complexities within civil society, awareness of how institutions function within civil society in the direction of a particular political end and of how a unified effort can redirect them. But fundamentally, for Gramsci, a critical culture means that the state can be criticized,

“precisely in order to develop and produce new forms of state life.”¹²¹ This implies the development of a new outlook on political life, the conception of an ideational challenge against incumbent arrangements of hegemony and their products. Gramsci describes this as a cyclical process in which,

“The development of the party and state into a conception of the world, ie. into a total and molecular transformation of ways of thinking and acting, reacts upon the state and the party, compelling them to reorganize continually and confronting them with new and original problems to solve.”¹²²

In order to fully understand this process, and the ways in which a critical culture can have the effect of reorganizing hegemonic relations, two points of consideration are relevant: first, defensive strategies that fundamental groups employ in order to prevent the rise of a critical culture that might jeopardize them; second, processes and mechanisms through which critical culture can be cultivated.

One of the most striking references related to the subject at hand found in the Hoare/Smith edition of Gramsci’s prison notes is mention in a footnote of a speech given by Benito Mussolini on 26 May 1927. In the speech, Mussolini was addressing the question of whether opposition within a state was necessary in order to ensure efficiency of the state. This was his response: “Here the problem arises: but how do you manage to do without an opposition? Opposition is not necessary to the functioning of a healthy political regime. Opposition is stupid, superfluous in a totalitarian regime like the Fascist

¹²¹ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 268.

¹²² Ibid. p. 267.

regime.”¹²³ Although Mussolini was speaking on behalf of a very specific type of hegemonic configuration, this sentiment can be extrapolated to explain the psychology of dominant groups in general. It would not be in the interests of the Italy’s Fascist government to participate in the cyclical process described above in which political circumstances— ie. particular hegemonic arrangements— came in repeated contact with new ways of thinking and then were forced to react and accommodate them.

Totalitarianism itself implies the absence of accountability, so this would present a feeling of existential jeopardization. But put in more broadly relatable terms, it is in the interest of any dominant fundamental group that the interests of its members and auxiliary members are met by its party, precluding the need for them to appeal to other parties. Related to civil society, Gramsci suggests that “it always happens that individuals belong to more than one association... an ‘all embracing and unifying’ policy is aimed at ensuring that the members of a particular party find in that party all the satisfaction that they formerly found in a multiplicity of organizations.”¹²⁴ A dominant fundamental group can ensure the needs of their members and auxiliary members are met by destroying or incorporating other organizations. This is one way in which the prevention of a critical culture can take place.

But one would be remiss not to acknowledge that this is a process with multidirectional application. It would be equally in the interest of an oppositional group

¹²³ Ibid. p. 254, fn. 56

¹²⁴ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 265.

to meet the needs of as many subsidiary groups as possible in order to cultivate a ‘new culture’ with broad appeal. This relates directly to the recent discussion of the Italian south. Had the communists been able to unify in Italy, had their party gained control over industrial and agricultural means of production, it would have been in conflict with their interests to allow— say, for example— the continued functionality of bourgeoisie banks and creditors. This would position the bourgeoisie in such a way that would enable them to serve workers’ needs, increasing the likelihood of proletariat dependence on them and potential for workers to defect to the bourgeoisie camp. One could make a similar ideational argument in the abstract. If it is the case that oppositional intellectuals are cultivating a new culture critical to existing arrangements of hegemony, it would be counterintuitive to their interests to let themselves be assimilated by the dominant fundamental groups or be out shined by some conglomerate of competing oppositional intellectuals. This would quickly render their party useless. So, from two directions, as a defensive and offensive mechanism, a way of preventing the formation of a critical culture and a way of bolstering a new critical culture is by ensuring a party meets needs as broadly as possible, so that other supplemental parties are unneeded.

A second way dominant groups can reinforce their position by making the emergence of new critical culture difficult is through the use of their negative coercive functions. Implied here is that this is not a multi-directional tactic available to rising oppositional groups because they would not have reached a point— when it would be necessary to defend their critical view of the state— where they would have control over both civil and political societies. Nascent social groups, as discussed throughout this

thesis, must first pursue success on the field of ideas in civil society, and only later can manipulate political society in reflection of their interests. One way dominant groups can apply institutions in political society to defend their ideational positions is through the negative educational function of the law. Gramsci suggested that, “If a state tends to create and maintain a certain type of civilization, and to eliminate certain customs and attitudes and disseminate others, then the law will be its instrument for this purpose.”¹²⁵ This should not be understood to mean that the law functions to punish people so as to force one particular frame of mind upon them. Rather, Gramsci saw the educative function of law as a means of preventing ‘cultural dangerousness.’¹²⁶ In other words, if employed deftly, institutions in political society can be directed so as to shape the flow of ideas in civil society, ensuring they do not come into conflict with the *forma mentis* reflective of the existing hegemonic relations of the state. A similar theme can be extended from the discussion in the last chapter about education. Schools and universities, if given free range, have the potential to become hotbeds of oppositional thinking. But if controlled closely they become an extension of state bureaucracy; the bureaucratic hierarchy replaces the intellectual and political hierarchy.¹²⁷ In the cases of

¹²⁵ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 246.

¹²⁶ Ibid. p. 247.

¹²⁷ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 228.

both law and education, a dominant fundamental group is able to employ functions in political society to influence ideas— in particular, critical ideas— in civil society.¹²⁸

From the opposite direction, there are several points to consider in characterizing ways a critical culture can be cultivated so that hegemonic reconfiguration becomes possible. This begins with the party. According to Gramsci, the role of the party is not to provide “simply a mechanical and passive expression of [its] classes, but react energetically upon them in order to develop, solidify and universalize them.”¹²⁹ If the party— at least initially— reflects the interests of a particular class, the way in which those interests are articulated is likely to be in comparison with the status quo. If the needs of a particular class had already been met, the class would have been assimilated amongst the auxiliaries of a larger class and formation of a party would not have been necessary in the first place. So, the party— conceptualized as the collective intellectual— necessarily carries with it the function of cultivating a critical culture, one that views the product of the current arrangement of hegemonic relations lacking and itself as the purveyor of improved conditions.

A related component in the cultivation of a critical culture, which offers specification to comparison of the status quo just mentioned, is for a newly rising social group to present an unequivocal critique of the past. When Gramsci describes the process

¹²⁸ This is also an example of how political behavior can originate in one field and have implications for others. This broadens the notion of civil society and what behavior should be attributed to it. It also reinforces the argument that civil society is better defined on the basis of the activity that takes place within it- regardless of what later external implications emerge- rather than on the basis of its location.

¹²⁹ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 227.

of a social group founding a new state, he suggests that initially the hegemonic content of that social group is predominantly of an economic order. In this circumstance the superstructural elements associated with this newly hegemonic social group are few in number, but the cultural policy they project must necessarily be a negative critique of the past.¹³⁰ In other words, it is not enough for a newly formed social group to present an idea about economic reordering that they believe is more substantial than ordering of the present circumstance.

Taking a step further, the new social group must present their economic ideas alongside a *forma mentis* that— while perhaps not fully conceptualized at the outset— is necessarily critical of the past. The example Gramsci gives of this going wrong is the mediaeval communes because despite their innovative ideas about economics, culture remained a function of the church; the church was anti-economic in character and so its culture was not directed toward allowing the communes to gain hegemony, but rather preventing them from acquiring it.¹³¹ This demonstrates that a new social group must ensure that its culture, the frame of mind and superstructural elements that contribute to its economic reasons for forming in the first place, is opposed to the status quo and critical of hegemonic arrangements of the past. Without this posture, potential auxiliary members will be unsure why the social group formed or uphold a cultural frame of mind counterintuitive to its existence.

¹³⁰ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 263.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* p. 264.

As a party forms and aspires to dominance, attempts to cultivate as broad a base of appeal as possible, attempts to pose itself in contrast to the present and as an improvement on the past, another key aspect of this process is that it assimilates as principles of moral conduct the rules which will be legal obligations in the state.¹³² This is the final and overarching theme related to the cultivation of a critical culture so that hegemonic reordering becomes possible, but one that again involves the superstructural components of a party. In order for a rising party to gain significance and membership it is necessary for people join it, in the first case, because they imagine their immediate economic needs being met, and in the second case because they register its tenets, the core cultural platforms and ideas of the party as being morally palatable. This could require a re-education process, but if a compelling case is made against the past or the status quo, it would not necessarily be a difficult one.

This links back to some fundamental themes of this chapter. In the first case, it serves as reminder that gains hoped for with regard to society as a whole or political society in particular are only accessible after a war of ideas in civil society has been won. It would be much more difficult to inculcate in people as principles of moral conduct rules that already existed through a top down approach reliant more on coercion than on the cultivation of consent. As Gramsci often repeats, coercion and domination by force are not the most effective means of control and subordination in society.¹³³ This also

¹³² A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated: Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 267.

¹³³ J Buttigieg. "Gramsci on Civil Society." *Duke University Press*. 1995. p. 6.

serves as a reminder that the content of civil society, the political agency that stems from actors within it, provides a clearer source of characterization for civil society than reference to its location. None of the discussions in this chapter would have gone very far if each one circled back to emphasis on behavior in a ‘private sphere’ in relation to overarching political circumstances. Instead, this chapter should have demonstrated that a significant interrelation exists between activity in what is called civil society, economic activity in a state, and the overall political circumstances of a state. To delimit these ‘spheres’ into superficial and easily managed categories would be to overlook the intricacies of their intersectionalities.

Ultimately, this chapter was intended to show that the relationship between civil society and the society overall, the relationship between civil society, are mutually reinforcing. Civil society can reflect the dominant fundamental social groups who hold sway over political society, can reinforce their position and can act in a preventative mechanism against the rise of opposition. On the other hand, civil society is the only place in which opposition to a state can originate, especially in advanced and modern economies. If these things are true, then defining civil society on the basis of anything other than its content— that is the political agency of actors within it— is to be superficial and reductionist. Understanding the complexity of civil society, its outward interrelation and the dominance reflected by institutions within it is essential.

Related to the subject of patron-clientelism, this chapter should also demonstrate that more important than the different ways or spheres in which patron-clientelism functions is the outcome of that ensemble of functionality. In other words, patron-

clientelism can serve purposes that cross political, economic and social spheres— all of which have attachments to civil society— but deeper analysis strives to uncover the product of that functionality. Realizing which direction that functionality points helps understand political agency in civil society and overall political dominance in a state.

CHAPTER FIVE: PATRON-CLIENTELISM IN JORDAN

Taking into consideration the preceding chapters, one should not be left with the impression that concepts drawn from Gramsci offer ready-made explanations or solutions to contemporary problems in Jordan, related to civil society in general or patron-clientelism in particular. Instead, as Buttigieg reminds us, Gramscian concepts, like those introduced here, should serve to animate inquiries into the present condition of civil society, offering clues of where to look.¹³⁴ What follows is a characterization not of the different ways in which patron-clientelism functions, but rather the effect of its functionality. Several fundamental questions will need answering: 1) In Jordan, does the role of patrons in civil society— the salience of *wasta*— reflect and reinforce current overarching arrangements of political hegemony— ie. dominance of the monarchy, tribes and influential families— or operate in opposition to them? 2) Do economic circumstances in Jordan indicate likelihood of particular organizing elements or *intellectuals* predominant within civil society? 3) Is the ability of patrons to meet clients' needs expanding or diminishing; what implications or opportunities does this reflect for the current hegemonic ordering?

¹³⁴ J Buttigieg. "Gramsci on Civil Society." *Duke University Press*. 1995. p. 32.

Before delving into these questions, as a conceptual presupposition, the remainder of this chapter will hold the function of patrons in Jordan parallel to the role of organic intellectuals; it will characterize patrons as intellectuals. This comparison is persuasive because both patrons and organic intellectuals elaborate a worldview that then is disseminated as an organizing element in civil society for the purpose of manufacturing or solidifying consent in contradiction to or in support of existing hegemonic ordering. Patrons in Jordan provide an organizational element in society in the sense that they establish the rules clients must play by in order to sustain their patron-client relationship. But these rules are not just imagined ad hoc, they reflect a historically engrained vertical structure that connects patrons operating at the lowest levels within civil society to the highest, and even into political society. Another point of similarity between the organic intellectual and the Jordanian patron is that, like the entrepreneur, the patron is well acquainted with knowledge and people that extend beyond his immediate corporate purview. A patron in Jordan is only as effective as he is able to serve the needs of his clients and so by necessity must be outward informed and oriented. Further points of comparison could be made, but for now others can be left to elaboration in later examples.

As a secondary preliminary remark before engaging in a brief study of Jordan, justification for choosing Jordan is worth mentioning. The reasons are as follows: First, accessibility provided an incentive because interviews conducted between June and August of 2018 will be relied upon— in part— as primary sources for this chapter. Secondly, Jordan presents a unique study because it is a Muslim-majority state. This is

valuable because analysis of institutions in civil society helps demonstrate their salience in sustaining the existing social, economic and political order, compared to the imagined adverse implications of Islam. If, operating from the Islamophobic presumptions of *orientalism* that religion is inextricably linked to all aspects of life in Muslim-majority countries and thus religion is culpable for social, political and economic underdevelopment, Jordan is a good place to be proven wrong. Lastly, Jordan is situated at the heart of the Middle East and is deeply affected by the historic conflict between Israel and Palestine, as well as the more recent turmoil experienced in Iraq and Syria. One could describe Jordan as a cultural melting pot, with rich Bedouin and Palestinian heritage, and more recently an increasingly influential influx of Syrian culture. Interaction and differing stature between social groups, to include racial prejudice often imposed against Jordanians of Palestinian origin, contribute to a dynamic social environment rich for analysis. If something important can be understood about civil society and patron-clientelism in Jordan, it might provide a roadmap for analysis of other nation-state systems within the Middle East.

Perhaps the easiest to answer of the three questions posed at the outset of this chapter is the second- the question relating to the overall economic circumstance in Jordan and what it means for the role of intellectuals. Jordan's economic circumstance can be inferred best from reform efforts articulated by Marwan Muasher in his *National Agenda: 2006-2015: The Jordan We Strive For*.¹³⁵ It is important to note that this was a

¹³⁵ M Muasher. "National Agenda 2006-2015: The Jordan We Strive For." *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*. 2005.

government document produced by Mr. Muasher during his tenure as the Deputy Prime Minister of Jordan and because of this document Mr. Muasher was dismissed. One could say about the termination of Mr. Muasher's government employment that the ideas he proposed in order to boost economic efficiency would have jeopardized the otherwise uninterrupted political lives and practices of the ruling elite. Although this does not provide an example of patron-clientelism per se, it does reflect how institutions— in this case, norms related to behavior appropriate for government officials— shape ideas about common practices and marginalize ideas deemed uncommon. As an ultimate result of Mr. Muasher's dismissal and the rejection of this document, many of the reform efforts pursued today relate to problems his report was— more than ten years ago— intended to address.

Mr. Muasher's report can be summarized with the following paragraph: Jordan's continued economic and political improvement depends on the quality and effectiveness of its public administration. Major steps are required to develop a public service focused on delivery results and founded upon merit. *The National Agenda* aims to improve the quality of life for Jordanians, build a strong economy, and guarantee basic freedoms and human rights and strengthen democracy and cultural and political pluralism. *The National Agenda* is founded upon Jordan's Constitution and a conviction that political development is implicit in comprehensive economic, social, cultural, and administrative development. Reforms directed by the *Agenda* must create a favorable investment environment, fiscal discipline, internal political stability, administrative development, justice accountability, transparency, labor policies, vocational training, employment

support, minimum wage, maximum working hours, economic competitiveness, freedom of capital movement, reduction of trade barriers, support for small and medium sized enterprises and quality education.

Phase One of the *National Agenda* requires the formulation of regulatory legislation, elimination of discrimination against women, liberalization of state-controlled markets and investment in key infrastructure. Phase Two will promote capital-intensive industries and induce the newly educated workforce into value-added jobs. In this phase partisan life and political pluralism are expected to develop. In Phase Three selected economic sectors in the knowledge economy will be developed.

One can draw from this document that a sense of urgency was felt, then and to a greater degree now, on the development of domestic, self-sustainable industries, particularly with eventual emphasis on a knowledge economy. This is a reasonable response to the fact that Jordan's debt as of 2016 reached \$35.1b and represented 93.4% of its GDP.¹³⁶ International factors, such as the influx of Syrian refugees and regional turmoil leading to a decrease in tourism, have accentuated Jordan's economic vulnerability. But, as the report also indicates, a bloated and inefficient public sector also contributes to Jordan's economic insolvency. This explains efforts to emphasize accountability, transparency and merit, and is also indicated by the fact that the public sector accounts for roughly 77% of Jordan's GDP.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ K Sowell. "Jordan is Sliding Toward Insolvency." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. 2016.

¹³⁷ A Tadros. Personal interview conducted in Amman Jordan. 16 July 2018.

Acknowledging the obvious nuances as well as country and regionally specific particularities, the point of comparison against which economic circumstance in Jordan can be understood is the earlier discussion of southern Italy. Economic circumstances in southern Italy were such that there was not a significant push for intellectuals— both of the organic and traditional sorts— to pursue economic innovation. A stage of capitalism had not been reached in which they presented a necessity. Jordan now is scrambling to innovate and diversify its economy, harvesting as many capital producing, STEM oriented intellectuals as possible, but these initiatives are fresh and the entrenchment of old types of intellectuals is old.

One could assume, then, that is more likely that the dominant body of intellectuals in Jordan continue to operate as they have, working counterintuitive to reform efforts and in support of the status quo. This presents an obvious tension between the economic structural elements in Jordanian society as they exist today, and what they need to become in order for Jordan's economy to survive. This implies, that as economic circumstances are forced to evolve, the ability of patrons to serve the needs of their clients— of intellectuals' ability to organize society in alignment with Jordan's economic needs— will diminish. This reflects also the ability of the fundamental dominant groups to meet the needs of its auxiliary or subordinate groups and an opportunity that might emerge for hegemonic reconfiguration.

Another conclusion to draw from the National Agenda and the fact of its rejection is that a problem of social unification existed at the time of its publication— and considering a lack of substantial reforms, probably remains in existence today. This links

back to the initial and causal element behind southern Italy's poor economic circumstance, which led to the perpetuated existence of old intellectuals and regressive feudalistic norms. It was because of the northerners' prejudicial ideas about southerners that the Turin communists were unsuccessful at elaborating a national ideology capable to unify the party. A point of comparison for Jordan, with reference to the National Agenda, is the role of women. Still a vastly patriarchal society, in Jordan women hold only fifteen percent of the national parliament,¹³⁸ relatedly, seventy-four percent of Jordanians believe men are better at political leadership than women and fifty-eight percent also agree that husbands should have the final say in decisions concerning the family.¹³⁹

This seems to represent a similar disunity to that based on prejudicial thinking identified by Gramsci in the Italian south. In Italy, it was the case that because of a disdainful attitude toward the south, Turin, ie. northern communists were unable to elaborate a national platform that enable north-south unification. Because of this lack of unification, southern Italians were trapped in an anachronistic and semi-feudalistic economic structure that perpetuated their reliance on the bourgeois state. Similarly, antiquated gender norms in Jordan exclude women from its workforce and perpetuate economic circumstances that are at best unproductive and at worst on an inevitable collision course towards insolvency.

¹³⁸ Proportion of Seats Held by Women in National Parliaments. *The World Bank: The Inter-Parliamentary Union*. 2018.

¹³⁹ H Ceyhun. "Jordan Five Years After the Uprising." *The Arab Barometer*. 2017.

Related to the larger themes of this thesis, though, it means that institutions can and do create and shape norms that govern political behavior. It would be difficult to attribute prejudices toward women in Jordan to one causal root over others, but the thrust of this argument reinforces the claims made about the function of patron-clientelism in civil society. Patron-clientelism both reflects and shapes how people imagine politics functioning under normal circumstances. The fact of appealing to a patron to gain government access— for paperwork, privileges, etc.— is understood broadly as how politics in Jordan function. To push back against that system would be to act counterintuitive to a frame of mind engrained broadly in Jordanian society, in opposition to the social *forma mentis*. Acting outside systems of patron-clientelism would perturb the ruling elite because they would become immediately inundated by requests and concerns articulated by the broader public, as opposed to the public being funneled through patron networks on the basis of clients' ability to access them. More importantly, if the broader public felt empowered to hear its grievances directly to the government, which incidentally is a right guaranteed by Article 17 of the Jordanian Constitution, solidarity could be realized and a significant challenge to the ruling elite could be waged. This offers one example of how patron-clientelism reflects an institution supportive of the dominant fundamental groups in such a way that debilitates popular political movements from below.

The second and third primary sources important to consult in order to answer the questions outlined at the outset of this chapter both come from interviews conducted last summer. Both relate to the nature of education in Jordan, which provides an important

indication of how ideas are cultivated in society, but also how structures within society tangibly reinforce Jordan's hegemonic arrangements. The first interview comes from an external perspective, a person not directly employed in academia, and discusses processes of admission at the University of Jordan. The second interview comes from a traditional academic and relates to how patron-clientelism influenced his prospects for employment, publication and tenure. These interviews will be used to explain how patron-clientelism in Jordan functions in the service of the fundamental dominant group— ie. the political elite, monarchy, members of parliament, etc.— as well as its auxiliary groups— ie. what could be referred to as the medium bourgeoisie, employees of the public sector.

During the interview between Amjad Tadros¹⁴⁰ and the present author, Mr. Tadros explained the effect of patron-clientelism on education and public sector employment in Jordan. He described that the admittance process to the University of Jordan was based largely on royal decree. The King determined the percentage of school seats available to children of members of the armed forces, children of members of the Ministry of Education and the children of parents employed by the UN. In simple terms, parents of an applicant— the *wasta* of the parents, or the parents' patronage— had more to do with admittance than did test scores or other concrete measures of merit. The result of this system of admission prompted a situation in which students would enroll in classes but not have considerable interest or incentive to perform. If a student's

¹⁴⁰ Amjad Tadros is an entrepreneur and investigative journalist. He is the point person in the Middle East for CBS news and has managed the network's coverage and operations in the region since 1990. In 2001 he was awarded an Emmy in investigative Journalism and in 2007 we received the Alfred Dupont Award for excellency by the University of Columbia. He was the co-recipient of the Peabody award in 2008. (source: IMDB)

underperformance resulted in poor grades, the student's parents would appeal to the teacher, and again through the process of patronage, ensure their student would not be expelled. This resulted in a body of college graduates unemployable in terms of skills, again reliant on their parents to find jobs. Most often, this meant appointment to mundane ministerial positions. This, Mr. Tadros suggested, created a self-perpetuating cycle that contributed to Jordan's bloated public sector.¹⁴¹

This discussion with Mr. Tadros indicates that the accumulation of particular incidents of patron-clientelism can and do have system level implications. In the first case, it shows that institutionalized reliance on patron-clientelism in the process of admission to the University of Jordan creates a barrier to entry for applicants without parents employed in the public sector. For applicants from low socio-economic backgrounds, this means the likelihood of access to education is minimal. In the second case, persons employed by the Jordanian government, those whose children have a higher likelihood of access to education and post-graduate employment, have little incentive to suggest changes in admissions policies because they— or their children— will be most directly and negatively affected. One could suggest that this presents a system of free-riding wherein the free-riders are most capable to change the system but to do so would be at the detriment of their ability to ride free.

A tertiary but equally fundamental point to make about the system of patron-clientelism in education that Mr. Tadros describes is that of the relationship between Jordan's structural and superstructural elements. As mentioned earlier, a significant

¹⁴¹ A Tadros. Personal interview conducted in Amman Jordan. 16 July 2018.

portion of Jordan's workforce is employed by the government. This represents a concrete economic circumstance— a structure— that the system of patron-clientelism— a superstructural element— reinforces. Also perpetuated in the minds of young Jordanians, what one could think of as a process of assimilation— another superstructural element— is the notion that through their parents' patronage, employment is a given. This frame of mind, this cultural perspective, this *forma mentis* disincentives innovation, initiative and aspiration to something higher than a government job, for which salary is guaranteed and responsibilities are minimal.

One could extrapolate how this relates to dominant fundamental groups and existing arrangements of hegemony. Tribes, for example, whose loyalty was integral to the formation of the Hashemite Kingdom and who continue to hold significant influence in Jordan today, have traditionally opposed privatization because they see in it possibility for corruption.¹⁴² Maintaining an educational system in which children of bureaucrats become bureaucrats serves the present economic arrangement in which the public sector dominates, as well as the perceived longevity of the current ruling elite. If, on the other hand, entrance to the education system became strictly merit based and performance was mandatory for continued enrollment, it is difficult to imagine ambitious graduates willing to while away their professional lives serving in non-demanding government jobs. This would upend the current relationship between Jordan's economic structure and the superstructural elements that support it.

¹⁴² S Yom. "Jordan's New Politics of Tribal Dispute." *Foreign Policy*. 2012.

The second interview conducted this past summer offers a similar sentiment but from a more personal and opposite perspective— that of an academic. Akram Al-Deek¹⁴³ opened the conversation by saying in exasperation, “wasta affects everything in Jordan.” Dr. Al-Deek explained how upon his arrival he struggled to find appointment at a university, despite being credentialed in Europe and at a higher level than most of the people he competed with for employment. He described working tirelessly to contact Literature departments with job vacancies, but never heard back. Everyone had told Dr. Al-Deek that people who facilitate by means of wasta are those who are in power and are successful. This, he noted, was particularly true for tribes and members of parliament. But Dr. Al-Deek was opposed to the concept of patron-clientelism because he wanted to be responsible for his own accomplishments. As the semester approached and Dr. Al-Deek became discouraged, his father went behind his back and contacted a friend who happen to be employed at the University of Jordan. Dr. Al-Deek was granted an interview and accepted a job offer shortly after.

Some time passed and Dr. Al-Deek became frustrated with the system at the University of Jordan, so began looking for other opportunities. He happened to teach a workshop that the daughter of the owner of The Middle East University in Jordan attended; she forwarded his name to her father and he was offered employment. A few

¹⁴³ Akram Al-Deek is the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Communication, Head of the Department of English Language and Literature and the Department of Translation. He is an Assistant Professor in World Literatures at the American University of Madaba, Jordan. Al-Deek was awarded a PhD in Post-Colonial Studies and Literature from Sunderland University in northern England. He is the author of *Writing Displacement: The Politics of Home and Identity in Post-Colonial English Fiction*. He is also the author of the fascinating recent article *A Cultural Revolution or Renovation in Amman?* which can be found here: <http://www.jordantimes.com/opinion/akram-al-deek/cultural-revolution-or-renovation-amman>

years later, Dr. Al-Deek's friend began working at the American University of Madaba, he heard it was a more liberal environment with a better curriculum, and so asked her to put his name in with the dean. Again, Dr. Al-Deek was offered employment.

With regard to publication, Dr. Al-Deek said that the process could be incredibly slow; if you submit a paper without knowing anyone it can get lost in a pile. He has been trying to publish a paper for the last year and has yet to hear a definitive response. The only exception to this all-encompassing influence of *wasta* that Dr. Al-Deek described was in regard to promotion. *Wasta* is still important for professors hoping to be promoted from Assistant to Associate, but that is not the case for professors moving from Associate to full professorship. The rationale behind this exception, he explained, was because professors at a higher level than Associate are rare and needed. For Associate professors hoping to become full tenured professors the likelihood is higher to be promoted without *wasta* and on the basis of merit.

Ultimately, Dr. Al-Deek has attempted to resist the influences of *wasta* as much as possible. He realizes that *wasta* played an important role in his initial employment but has worked hard to build a name for himself so as to be responsible for his own accomplishments. He also realizes that he would probably be more successful if he succumbed to the system of patron-clientelism in Jordan. But this he said would come at a cost. In particular, he mentioned a previous landlord of his who had generously offered to provide anything Dr. Al-Deek needed for his apartment. It was only later that Dr. Al-Deek realized his landlord's cousin was enrolled in one of Dr. Al-Deek's classes. The clear expectation was that Dr. Al-Deek would receive services from the landlord in

exchange for passing his cousin. This was a compromise in integrity that Dr. Al-Deek was unwilling undergo, and so was cautious not to make any requests of his landlord.¹⁴⁴

Several important points can be drawn from this interview with Akram Al-Deek. In the first case, it is striking that the same system of patron-clientelism that applies to students also applies to teachers. Without his father's initial intervention, it would have taken Dr. Al-Deek considerably longer to find employment, if he had at all. For unconnected academics without resources, prospects for employment exist on an uneven playing field. This seems to have the structural implication that not only is the education system shaped in order to perpetuate circumstances that produce students to the advantage of the ruling elite, but also, teachers are equally swept into this structure and their behavior is shaped accordingly. If teachers are unwilling to participate in the system of patron-clientelism in order to access employment, publish scholarship or pursue promotion from assistant to associate professor, that would also imply their unwillingness to react favorably to parent patrons that attempted to pressure them. These are the types of professors that would find difficulty gaining employment.

At surface level, this vignette indicates parallels to the claims made by Dr. Doyle about Turkey, referenced in the Chapter Two. In Jordan's education system, a microcosm for broader political life in Jordanian civil society, it is the case that institutions— and patron-clientelism, more specifically— reflect and reinforce the interests of the ruling elite, the dominant fundamental social groups. This is indicated by the trends of education and bureaucratic employment described by Mr. Tadros. Although civil society

¹⁴⁴ A Al-Deek. Personal interview conducted in Amman, Jordan. 13 July 2018.

has the potential to be weaponized by oppositional groups, it is also the case that it can function, in Gramsci's words, as the 'powerful system of fortresses and earthworks' supportive of the state.¹⁴⁵

On a more nuanced conceptual level, however, one could say that Dr. Al-Deek represents an exception. If it is the fact that intellectuals are assimilated by the existing arrangements of hegemonic relations in order to benefit the dominant fundamental social groups, there are also those intellectuals— like Dr. Al-Deek— who choose not to play by the rules. It serves as a rebuke to the present system of education in Jordan that Dr. Al-Deek does not use or act as a wasta.

This links back to two fundamental themes of this thesis. Dr. Al-Deek represents a critical approach to the existing arrangements of hegemonic ordering in Jordan. But related to the non-binary nature of hegemonic competition described earlier, he does not oppose wasta necessarily because it is a representative of functions attributable to Jordanian government. It is true that patron-clientelism is an institution engrained in Jordanian social and political life, but Dr. Al-Deek's bone of contention with wasta is a fact of integrity. He did not want to accept free services from his landlord because he knew that he would become indebted to the landlord and enable his landlord's cousin to underperform.

If one wanted to think about this from a moral perspective, the early discussion of instrumental and intrinsic goods offers a fair barometer. Accepting free services from his

¹⁴⁵ A Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Edited/Translated by Q Hoare, G Smith]. International Publishers. 1971. p. 238.

landlord and passing the landlord's cousin— even if she did not show up to class— would not present an intrinsic or an instrumental good. Absence of economic exchange that usually would be involved in the services procurement from a landlord would not serve any good to the landlord. Passing a student who does not show up for class because of that student's connections does not serve any good. If anything, this would demonstrate an alienated good that in the long run would benefit neither Dr. Al-Deek nor his landlord.

This also can be considered from the perspective of a relationship between a professor and a student. A professor who invests his heart in his teaching and forms a relationship with students based on mentorship and genuine interest in learning is one who takes his craft seriously. Such a relationship, such a means of instruction would represent an intrinsic good, a positive moral value. To willfully sacrifice that relationship and that intrinsic good in accordance with norms emergent from institutions designed to support the ruling elite would be a moral wrong.

The more profound point to be drawn from this interview, though, is that oppositional currents can co-exist within institutions dominated by existing hegemonic arrangements. This is what Dr. Al-Deek represents. He represents disillusionment with a system, but ability to operate within it. Gramsci would argue that this is the only way to cultivate a critical culture within civil society and upend the existing arrangements of political dominance. Say, for example, that Dr. Al-Deek continues for the rest of his career to deny attempts by parent patrons to procure grades for their children which the children did not earn. Say Dr. Al-Deek was able to continue finding new employment, if

he wished, continue being promoted and continue publishing without reliance on *wasta* and instead reliance on his own merits. This behavior would be subversive to existing norms related to the function of education, the function of politics and the nature of Jordanian society in general and could represent a compelling starting point for the cultivation of a culture oppositional to the status quo.

In a sense, a different sense than has been employed throughout the bulk of this thesis, Dr. Al-Deek begins to represent a different type of patron and a new intellectual. He as an instructor who refuses to act as a *wasta* draws students into a different type of patron-client relationship— one that is oppositional to existing norms and practices prevalent in Jordanian civil society. Realizing that grades would only be received from Dr. Al-Deek on the basis of merit, students could enter into an educational relationship with Dr. Al-Deek so that in exchange for their commitment to academic integrity they would receive from him genuine, rigorous and quality education. This would empower them to develop their own intellectual worth and ability to pursue educational opportunities beyond undergraduate education, so as to potentially become educators and patrons of their own. Once the value of this type of educational experience and pride in having achieved academic accomplishments independently was realized broadly, that is to say new institutions and frames of mind regarding education took root, the structural economic element in Jordanian society would be forced to react.

In terms of the broader themes introduced in this chapter, patrons sharing functional similarity to intellectuals— represented particularly in the case of academia— demonstrate the salience of *wasta* as an institution that reinforces existing political

circumstances in Jordan and overarching arrangements of political hegemony. The economic circumstance in Jordan makes this a predictable reality. But there is both room and opportunity for these circumstances to be upended by oppositional intellectuals, which do exist— as Dr. Al-Deek represents. An irreconcilable tension exists between the current needs met by patrons and the economic development required for Jordan to remain solvent.

This means that the immediate advantages of patron-clientelism for children of bureaucrats do not reflect a sustainable system capable of adapting to the inevitable economic advancement Jordan needs to undergo. This makes people like Dr. Al-Deek reflective of a new wave of patron, a new intellectual, capable of meeting the new needs of ambitious students hoping to be informed and innovative. One can draw the fundamental lesson from this section that despite the prevalence of patron-clientelism as a salient and organizing principle for civil society and society in general in Jordan, its current configuration is bound to erode. The new patron, the intellectual oppositional to political and economic circumstances reflective of existing arrangements of hegemony is imminent.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

These chapters have attempted to develop new ways to think about political and economic circumstances in Jordan. They began with the argument that all literature surrounding politics carries with it either implicit or explicit value judgements. This served to push back against scholarship that emphasizes the dynamism of patron-clientelism, as opposed to its potentially harmful manifestations. This last chapter in particular demonstrated ways in which patron-clientelism in Jordan stands in the way of intrinsic goods in order to sustain existing economic and political circumstances and the leadership of the political elite. This was intended to represent the various ways— across various fields— in which patron-clientelism excludes subalterns from the political process and sustains the status quo. It has been argued that a value position is worth taking on the subject of patron-clientelism in Jordan, and that the negative value attributable to its prevalent manifestations today represents an opportunity for tomorrow.

The fourth chapter dove deep into the concepts of Antonio Gramsci and helped provide a clearer understanding for civil society in Jordan. This was crucial as a precondition to understanding behavior in civil society and how circumstance shapes behavior. This section also was important to develop an understanding for the relationship between economic circumstances and superstructural elements in society like

institutions, norms and general cultural frames of mind. Related to the final section, this discussion of Gramsci also demonstrated how economic evolution in Jordan will occur only after institutions currently prevalent in civil society are realized to be insolvent.

The fifth and final chapter attempted to bring all of the conceptual themes together, demonstrating how patron-clientelism is a salient force in civil society reflective of the interests of the current hegemonic order. But the most important part of this thesis came from the interview of Dr. Al-Deek. The experiences he had represented not only what was wrong with institutions reflective of economic and political circumstances in Jordan, as well as the interests of its political elite, but he also represented Jordan's opportunity. Rather than a basic representation of enthusiastic but fragmented oppositional currents in Jordan, Dr. Al-Deek represents how the inevitable economic shift in Jordan will carry with it a necessary reconfiguration of what patron-clientelism means and how it shapes behavior.

So, despite earlier criticism about optimism for revolutionary behavior in repressive political environments like Jordan, this thesis is itself optimistic. This is not just because of the valiant and oppositional efforts by people like Dr. Al-Deek, but because of the understanding developed here for the relationship between economic and institutional factors in Jordanian society. It is likely that more Al-Deeks will emerge, but it is even more likely that Jordan's need for economic evolution will require it. Yes, currently patron-clientelism represents a morally problematic and regressive institution in Jordan's civil society that generates and reinforces norms reflective of the interests of the dominant fundamental social groups. But patron-clientelism also presents an opportunity,

as it has the potential to one day reflect economic and political circumstances that are not regressive and marginalizing.

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