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The Priesthood of Nationalism in Egypt: Duty, Authority, Autonomy

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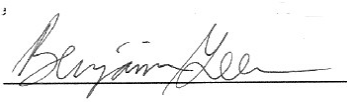
Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD in 2011

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Abstract

This thesis considers the effects of nationalism on the autonomy of intellectuals in Egypt. I argue that nationalism limits intellectuals' ability to challenge social hierarchies, political authority and economic inequality, and that it has been more readily used to legitimise new forms of domination in competition with old ones. I analyse similarities between religion and nationalism, using the sociological theory of Pierre Bourdieu together with cognitive linguistics. Focusing mainly on the similarities between priests and nationalist intellectuals, and secondarily between prophets and charismatic nationalist political leaders, I show that nationalism and religion are based on relatively similar concepts, which lend themselves to similar strategies for gaining credibility, recognition and moral authority. I present case studies of a few nationalist intellectuals, focusing on ones who advocated views that later became dominant. The translator and teacher Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī, who was trained as a religious scholar before studying secular subjects in France, brought nationalism to Egypt by blending European nationalist concepts with centuries-old concepts from Islamic religious and literary traditions. In the early 20th century, the nationalism of intellectuals such as Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal enabled them to compete with men of religion for prestige and political influence, and also served particular class and professional interests. Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's concept of the charismatic national leader influenced the young Gamal Abdel Nasser, who became a successful nationalist prophet and military autocrat. Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs articulated the concept of the nationalist martyr, who

dies for his country; this concept also contributed to Nasser's charisma. Both al-Ḥakīm and al-Quddūs arguably lost autonomy under Nasser's regime. Al-Ḥakīm was unable to criticise the regime until after Nasser's death. Al-Quddūs was imprisoned and tortured for advocating democracy, then became one of the most fervent supporters of Nasser's autocracy.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

7

Acknowledgements

A Note on Transliteration

For the transliteration of Arabic, I have used the DIN 31635 standard, which is well-known to students of Arabic thanks to its use in the Hans Wehr dictionary. I prefer it to the more common *IJMES* standard, because it has the advantage of being unambiguous: since each Arabic letter is represented by a single Latin letter, there is no question as to whether, for example, *yushir* means 'he indicates' or 'he keeps awake'. In order to avoid presenting the reader with a confusing array of different transliterations for the same word, I have changed all transliterated words in quoted passages to DIN 31635 form. In a few cases, I have retained common spellings of Arabic words and names that have become standard in English, such as 'jihad', 'hadith', 'sharia', 'shaykh' and 'Gamal Abdel Nasser'.

We have killed you, O last of the prophets [*Qatalnāka, yā āḫir al-anbiyāʾ*]

> – Nizār Qabbānī, 'Gamal Abdel Nasser'

To my heart, you [Egypt] are a religion after religion [*li-qalbī anti baʿd al-dīn dīn*]

> – 'Be Safe, Egypt [*Islamī Yā Miṣr*]', the Egyptian national anthem from 1923-1936

Introduction

This thesis attempts to answer a few questions, some of which are specific to Egypt, while others are more general. What is nationalism? When and why did nationalism appear in Egypt, and why did it become so popular there? What role did Egyptian intellectuals play in the development of nationalist concepts in Arabic, and what effect did nationalism have on their autonomy from economic and political power? Finally, how can we account for the many similarities between nationalism and religion, and what can the Egyptian case tell us about these similarities?

The field of nationalism studies, despite its rapid development since the 1980s, is still plagued with problems of definition. Özkırımlı's remarks (2000, 57-59) are as valid today as they were a decade ago:

> As Breuilly notes, nationalism can refer to ideas, to sentiments and to actions. Each definition will have different implications for the study of nationalism. . . . On the other hand, Kellas contends that nationalism is both an 'idea' and a 'form of behaviour'. Nationalism is a 'doctrine' for Kedourie, an 'ideological movement' for Smith, a 'political principle' for Gellner, and a 'discursive formation' for Calhoun.

At one level, this is a case of a 'conflict over definitions' (Bourdieu 1998, 365-369), in which each participant attempts to define the field's key terms, and thus its boundaries, in a way that is favourable to her own interests[1]. However, words relating to nations and nationalism also have a

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1 For example, it is sometimes asserted that there are distinctions between 'good' and 'bad' kinds of nationalism. Sometimes this is done by giving them different names:

wide variety of meanings outside academia, in everyday discourse in countless languages. Words that are translated into English as 'nation' or 'nationalism' have, to some extent, different histories and associations in their original languages. For example, Egyptian nationalists have often referred to the Egyptian nation as having thousands of years of history, while American nationalists make no such claim for the American nation. Moreover, different Egyptian nationalists have expressed markedly different nationalisms (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986; Gershoni and Jankowski 1995). What, if anything, do all these nationalist concepts have in common?

The dominant theories of nationalism view nationalism (correctly, in my view) as a modern invention, and have focused on attempting to explain it as a political phenomenon. The theory of Ernest Gellner 'is generally considered as the most important attempt to make sense of nationalism' (Özkırımlı 2010, 98). For Gellner, 'Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent' (Gellner 1983, 1). The influential work of historian Eric Hobsbawm on nationalism's 'invented traditions' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992; Hobsbawm 1992) adopts Gellner's political definition of nationalism. Similarly, the well-known theory of Benedict Anderson defines nationalism by defining 'nation' in the following way: 'it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (1983/2006, 6).

'"Our" nationalism appears as 'patriotism'. . . . This distinction would be convincing if there were clear, unambiguous criteria, beyond an ideological requirement to distinguish "us" from "them"' (Billig 1995, 55). Özkırımlı (2000, 5) concurs: 'nationalism' and 'patriotism' are 'manifestations of the same phenomenon'.

These theories have been extensively critiqued and debated; this is not the place to undertake a detailed evaluation of these debates, a task that has been done very well by others (Özkırımlı 2010; Spencer and Wollman 2002). Instead, this thesis proposes to construct an analysis of nationalism in a different way, one that may be able to explain some aspects of nationalism that, in my view, deserve more attention than they have been given.

First, while nationalism has often been used for political ends, it is possible to find examples of apolitical nationalism. Chapter 2 of this thesis considers one such case in depth: that of Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī, the founder of nationalism in Egypt. The aims of al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalism were basically economic rather than political; he was indifferent to the congruence of the political and the national unit, and did not regard the nation as sovereign. If nationalism is basically a political principle, how can we explain al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalism? Moreover, nationalists who make the sorts of political claims that Gellner and Anderson have in mind also use nationalism for a wide variety of non-political purposes. In this thesis, we will see examples of how nationalism has been used by teachers to legitimise their authority over their students, by writers to promote new literary genres, by journalists to gain credibility, and by members of certain social classes to compete in the job market. Can all these phenomena be explained in terms of a political principle?

This thesis takes a different approach: it proposes that nationalism is basically a moral principle rather than a political one. This moral principle, described below, can be used to legitimise political aims, and

indeed this is very common. But it can also be used to legitimise non-political aims, and even to formulate an apolitical nationalist belief system such as that of al-Ṭahṭāwī. There are other reasons to consider this a plausible approach. The justification for any political system is inevitably based on moral concepts, rather than the reverse. A person who believes in democracy justifies it by saying that it serves the common good; belief in the common good is not justified by saying that it serves democracy. In this thesis, we will consider detailed examples in which nationalist strategies for legitimising political power were based on moral concepts. Moreover, one of the main aims of theories of nationalism has been to explain how nationalism motivates people of all social classes to make great sacrifices, such as dying for their country. Mastery of political concepts is disproportionately found in dominant classes, while members of dominated classes who have not mastered political concepts are more at ease with moral ones (Bourdieu 1979, 463–514). If nationalism were fundamentally a political principle, one might expect it to be disproportionately popular among educated elites, but this is not the case. I suggest that it is precisely because nationalism is basically a moral principle that it has been so useful in politics.

The theoretical framework adopted in this thesis is partly an answer to the call issued by sociologists Brubaker, Loveman and Stamatov (2004) for the integration of cognitive theoretical tools into the sociological study of ethnicity, race and nationalism. In particular, as they argue:

Cognitive perspectives provide resources for avoiding analytical 'groupism' – the tendency to treat ethnic groups as substantial

entities to which interests and agency can be attributed – while helping to explain the tenacious hold of groupism in practice. . . . Cognitive perspectives enable us to analyze 'participants' primordialism' without endorsing analytical primordialism.

Cognitive linguistics, a type of linguistics designed to reflect what is known about the mind and the brain in the cognitive sciences and related disciplines (Evans and Green 2006, 40–41), has shown that abstract concepts in all languages are based on concrete, everyday concepts (Evans and Green 2006, 15). It has developed sophisticated theoretical tools for analysing such abstractions, and I will be using a small subset of those tools in this thesis, in order to propose an analysis of nationalist concepts that is compatible with what is known about human cognition in general. Thus I suggest that the emotional power of nationalism is generated by abstract concepts based on universal human experiences, such as bonds between parents and children. These concepts can be constructed in different ways in different social contexts, but on a highly schematic level they are the same: if one conceptualises one's country as a person (such as a family member) towards whom one feels moral duties, the emotional force that those duties carry in the domain of interpersonal relations can be experienced in the domain of nationalism. By focusing on duty as a key element in nationalist concepts, this approach neatly explains why people are willing to die for their country, without relying on the specifics of any particular social context[2].

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2 One recent cognitive treatment of nationalism is that of Hogan (2009). Surprisingly, Hogan does not attempt a precise definition of nationalism in cognitive terms, and instead defines it rather vaguely as 'any form of in-group identification for a group defined in part by reference to a geographical area along with some form of sovereign government over that area' (Hogan 2009, 4). The inclusion of 'sovereign

In keeping with this cognitive approach, this thesis does not use the concept of 'national identity'. Following Brubaker's and Cooper's (2000) pioneering article, I take the position that the word 'identity', with its now-inevitable accompanying adjectives ('fluid', 'constructed', 'negotiated', 'multiple', etc.) is inherently an oxymoron, wavering ambivalently between essentialism and social constructionism, and should be abandoned in favour of precise terms drawn from cognitive science. Thus this thesis is a study of *categorisation*, a cognitive process with social effects. While 'identity' is supposedly something that a person 'has', categorisation is something that a person *does.*

It is also necessary to explain why nationalist conceptualisations could appear *plausible* to so many people. I propose to answer this question by adapting Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus, the set of socially produced, unconscious or semi-conscious concepts and dispositions that shape perceptions and guide actions in each individual, and thus determine what an individual is likely to see as plausible in any given situation. Habitus, I suggest, is equivalent to what cognitive linguists call 'entrenched conceptualisation', i.e. conceptualisation that, through frequent use, has become relatively automatic and can be accessed and used with little or no conscious effort (cf. Schmid 2007; Fauconnier and Turner 2002, 103). I argue that nationalist concepts, even when new, could appear plausible for two reasons. First, like all new

government' in this definition seems to assume that nationalism is inherently political, and hence differs from the approach taken here. More important, Hogan's few attempts to link cognition with social realities do not engage with sociological theory. Thus he does not address the issue of competition for symbolic capital, which, I will argue below, is the main social interest that motivates the production of nationalist concepts.

concepts, these invented concepts were constructed using existing concepts as raw materials. In order to clarify exactly how this was done, I will be using the theory of conceptual blending, developed in cognitive linguistics, as explained below. Thus I will argue that nationalist concepts were constructed as conceptual blends, and that the use of familiar concepts as inputs in these blends could make these new constructions seem familiar as well. Second, these blends appeared plausible because, at a sufficiently high level of abstraction, they resembled other blends that people already believed in.

Another aspect of nationalism that this thesis explores is its resemblance to religion. Many scholars have noted similarities between religion and nationalism, but these observations have been more impressionistic than theoretical (e.g. MM Mitchell 1931; Hayes 1960; Smart 1983; Hobsbawm 1992, 72, 81, 85; Kedourie 1993, 40-43; Stevens 1997). It has been remarked that, like religion, nationalism has prayers (Billig 1995, 86), temples, hymns and catechisms (Bell 2001, 1-3, 137, 165-168), excommunication (Saad 1998, 402-403), saints and martyrs (Winock 1997; Bell 2001, 119-139), prophets (Tulard 1971, 85-92; Gülalp 2005; Younis 2005, 132, 158, 207; Hazareesingh 2006) and priests (Jacquemond 2003). Yet attempts to explain these similarities have produced few results (Burrin 1997; Maier 2007). As Bell (2001, 22-23) observes:

> Historically, Western nationalism, patriotism, and religion have twisted around each other like sinuous vines. . . . It is therefore surprising that few modern scholars have explored the connections in a satisfactory manner. . . . the tendency has been not simply to

connect, but to equate the two. . . . Religion often serves these writers principally as a convenient, uncomplicated symbol for something else. It can stand for irrational fanaticism. . . . Or it can stand for spiritual comfort. . . . In neither schema, however, does religion have much complexity or history, or do much of anything except vent its sound and fury and then, as modernity dawns, be heard no more.

Taking Bell's point further, I would argue that attempts to explain the similarities between nationalism and religion have been unsatisfactory mainly because they have not benefited from insights that have arisen in the sociology of religion, and have instead relied on *ad hoc* phenomenological explanations, typically focusing on the idea that both religion and nationalism provide people with a sense of purpose in life, or a moral justification of death (e.g. Apter 1963; Anderson 2006, 9-12). Lacking a sociology of religion, this approach does not consider how both religious and nationalist beliefs are related to forms of domination and social distinction, and leaves unexplained the vast array of social practices, institutions and forms of cultural production that are common to religion and nationalism. It also does not distinguish between the different ways in which a given religion, or a given nationalism, serves the interests of different sorts of believers. In particular, it does not explain the prestige and power that accrue to individuals who are seen as embodying religious or nationalist ideals. In this thesis, I argue that it is only by considering these social relations that we can explain the appearance and development of nationalism in Egypt, and at the same

time understand why nationalism and religion are so similar. In order to do this, I will be employing a particular sociology of religion to analyse nationalism.

Nationalist Conceptualisation

A great deal of research in cognitive linguistics has focused on categorisation: how human beings construct and manipulate categories, and how categories are reflected in language. Understanding categories turns out to be essential for understanding semantics, because polysemy – the existence of multiple related meanings for the same word – is the norm in language. Cognitive linguistics holds that a word with multiple related meanings represents a mental category. The different senses of the word form a 'semantic network', whose links are constructed by means of certain basic cognitive operations. One of these is what Langacker (2008, 17) calls *schematisation*: 'the process of extracting the commonality inherent in multiple experiences to arrive at a conception representing a higher level of abstraction'. More specific concepts are said to *elaborate* or *instantiate* more schematic ones. The theory of conceptual blending (Fauconnier and Turner 2002) describes another way that new meanings can be produced from old ones. According to this theory, conceptualisation involves the dynamic construction of 'mental spaces', which group together concepts for the purposes of thought and communication. Often the concepts in a mental space are structured by the use of a 'frame', which represents a conventional scenario in which actors play particular roles. New concepts can be constructed by mapping elements of different 'input' mental spaces onto one another, then
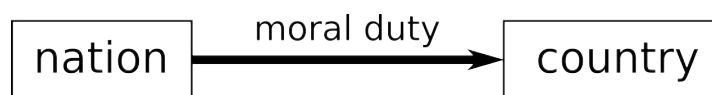
Figure 1: A schematic concept of nationalism

constructing a new, 'blended' space in which selected elements of the inputs are merged. In this thesis, I will be using conceptual blending theory extensively to analyse the construction of nationalist concepts.

'Nation' and 'nationalism', and similar words in other languages, could arguably be analysed as a semantic network. I suggest that there is a schematic concept that is compatible with all the senses of these words. Since this hypothetical schema is highly abstract, it cannot predict the multitude of more specific nationalist concepts that instantiate it. However, I will argue that it explains a great deal not only about nationalist concepts, but also about the social structures and practices that nationalism has involved. The proposed schema consists of two interdependent concepts and a relation between them, represented in Figure 1.

First, there is the concept of a geographical area, which in English is typically instantiated by the word 'country' (cf. familiar expressions such as 'to serve your country', 'he died for his country', and in the US, 'My country, 'tis of thee', 'My country, right or wrong', etc.), but also sometimes 'homeland', 'fatherland', 'motherland' or simply 'land' (as in the American song 'This land is your land, this land is my land...'). For clarity's sake, in contexts where the polysemous word 'country' might be

ambiguous, I will refer to this as the schematic concept of 'national territory'.

Second, there is the concept of a group of human beings, called a 'nation' or a 'people' in English, in which membership is normally inherited, but members are not typically related to one another by kinship. I will refer to this as the schematic concept of 'nation'.

Finally, what the members of a nation are conceptualised as having in common is a shared moral duty towards their country. In my view, it is this concept of duty that makes it possible to motivate actions on nationalist grounds, and thereby makes it possible for nationalism to serve social ends. The notion of moral duty, even in its most schematic form, depends on the concept of a person who is the beneficiary of this duty. Hence the national territory is inevitably personified. We will see many examples of this in the course of this thesis.

When I refer to the concepts 'nation' (or 'people'), 'country' (or 'national territory', 'fatherland', etc.) and 'nationalism' (or 'patriotism') in this thesis, these terms should be read as referring to the preceding definition of this conceptual schema. Clearly, all nationalisms involve more specific concepts, many of which are commonly found in most nationalisms. We will encounter a number of these common elaborations in the present study of nationalism in Egypt. For example, the concept of duty towards one's country is readily elaborated as a duty to defend territory in war, within the conceptual frame of military service. It is also very common to personify the nation, and to conceptualise it as fulfilling its duty by exercising a unified, conscious will. However, it is also

important to understand how the schematic concept of nationalism *motivates* these instantiations. Nationalism can be many things, but it cannot be just anything: the schema facilitates some types of elaborations, and makes others difficult or impossible.

In particular, the concept of moral duty, and the attendant personification of the country, has a crucial consequence. In order to fulfil one's duty towards a person, one must know that person's desires, needs or interests. However, in reality, a geographical territory is not a person, and does not have desires, needs or interests. Any beliefs or statements about these non-existent desires, needs or interests are therefore fictitious. Since the concept of 'nation' depends on the concept of 'country', it follows that nations, too, can only be fictitious. This is why there can be no scientific study of 'the national will' or 'the country's best interests', and why there are often many conflicting views about duties towards one's country. Thus I disagree with the view, expressed by Özkırımlı in an otherwise admirable critique of nationalism (2005, 46-47, 165-166), that nations are real because people believe that they are real, and because this belief has real social effects. To draw an analogy, religious people believe that their gods are real, and this belief has real social effects, but it does not follow that all gods (or even any of them) are real. And as any of us can attest from our everyday experience, mistaken beliefs (about all sorts of things) often have real social effects. It is easy to think of examples of false beliefs that have been widespread and long-lasting, and have had tragic consequences, but are nonetheless false.

In any given time and place, some nationalist ideas gain a degree of acceptance, while others do not. Since the popularity of these ideas cannot depend on their inherent validity, it can only depend on the harmony between them and their audiences' existing concepts and beliefs, and on social strategies of persuasion. In particular, it often relies on the same strategies that are used in monotheistic religion to legitimise claims about human beings' duties to God.

Religious and Nationalist Fields

Concepts of God and country have, as we will see in the course of this study, a great deal in common. At a basic level, however, there is a practical similarity: even among believers, God is not ordinarily thought to produce objectively observable utterances, e.g. by speaking in a voice that anyone can hear. Instead, it is claimed that messages from God are mediated through the intuition of special individuals (such as prophets) and are imperceptible to others. In this respect, claims to know the country's needs are like claims to know God's will.

Nationalism, too, readily generates the inference that there is valuable knowledge (about the country's desires, needs and interests) that is not readily accessible. Geographical areas do not have needs, desires, and interests, and do not speak. Nationalism therefore creates opportunities for individuals to make competing claims to possess this knowledge. Hence it lends itself to the formation of the type of social structure that Pierre Bourdieu calls a 'field': an arena of conflict in which players who have interests at stake in a given type of social practice compete to attain dominant positions (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 78).

Participants in a field seek to acquire some form of 'capital', i.e. an asset whose value is recognized in the field. For Bourdieu, forms of capital include economic capital (wealth), cultural capital (knowledge, know-how), social capital (the advantages one can gain from one's network of social relations) and symbolic capital (prestige, credibility, moral authority), which grants its bearer the power to determine what counts as legitimate in a field (Bourdieu 1986, Bourdieu 1977).

In his analysis of the religious field[3] (Bourdieu 1971a, Bourdieu 1987a; Swartz 1996; Rey 2007), Bourdieu describes it as a system of symbolic power: priests and prophets use different strategies for gaining religious capital, which is defined as a type of symbolic capital that consists of the ability to influence a lay audience by being perceived as a religious authority. Since the validity of religious beliefs (like the validity of nationalist beliefs) cannot be tested objectively, their popularity depends solely on their ability to satisfy the demands of the laity, specifically the dominant class's *demand for legitimation* (i.e. legitimation of their existence as the occupants of dominant social positions) and the dominated class's *demand for salvation* (i.e. the promise that things will be better for them in the future, either in this life or in the next).

For Bourdieu, the strategy of the prophets is based on charisma, the seemingly special quality of holy men that inspires awe and trust. Max Weber introduced the concept of charisma into sociological discourse, but was unable to explain why some individuals have it while others do not. Bourdieu solved this problem by analysing charisma in terms of habitus.

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3 Bourdieu's analysis of the religious field is clearly aimed mainly at accounting for monotheistic religions, but it has broader applications; see Rey (2007) for a discussion.

Charisma, he argues, is a relation between a prophet's habitus and his audience's habitus. Specifically, a prophet's particular social background and experiences shape his habitus in such a way that his words or actions seem, in the eyes of his audience, to embody ideals that form part of their habitus.

In contrast, the strategy of the priesthood is based on professional competence. In general, anyone who receives the proper training, i.e. acquires a certain type of cultural capital, can be *consecrated* as a priest, whether by a formal, institutionalised religious hierarchy or by the informal recognition of peers and laypeople. Thus the priestly strategy involves an initial acquisition of cultural capital, which is then converted into symbolic capital. There are often 'conflicts over definitions' (Bourdieu 1998, 365-369) in which rival factions struggle to preserve, or to change, the accepted definition of proper training, and thus the boundaries of the category of qualified priests. Relations between priests and prophets are characterised by interdependence as well as competition for lay followers. Priests often reproduce, systematize and adapt a prophetic message to meet the demands of different sorts of lay audiences. They are also responsible for inculcating a religious habitus in successive generations of the laity, particularly at times when there is no prophet.

As Gaffney (1994, 4, 30–40) observes, the question of whether there is a 'clergy' or a 'priesthood' in Sunni Islam has been a controversial one. In using these terms, I am not referring to a formal institutional hierarchy such as the one found in the Catholic Church or in Shia Islam. Instead, I

am using the term in the Bourdieusian sense of a group of individuals who, by virtue of their religious training, successfully claim 'the *monopoly of the legitimate exercise of the power to modify, in a deep and lasting fashion, the practice and world-view of lay people*, by imposing on and inculcating in them a particular *religious habitus*' (Bourdieu 1987a, 126). Thus I agree with Gaffney and with Høigilt (2010, 37) that in this sense, there is indeed a clergy in Sunni Islam. This category includes not only indivduals with formal religious training and credentials, such as *'ulamā'* who are graduates of the mosque-university of al-Azhar in Cairo, but also shaykhs who did not finish their studies at al-Azhar but are nevertheless regarded as religious authorities (such as the one in Maḥmūd Ṭāhir Lāšīn's short story 'Ḥadīṯ al-Qarya', discussed in Chapter 3), leaders of Sufi orders (such as the one in Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal's novel *Zaynab*, also discussed in Chapter 3), and all sorts of preachers and mosque teachers who successfully claim to speak authoritatively about Islam. Thus I use the term 'clergy' to encompass several Arabic terms with overlapping meanings, such as *mašāyiḫ* (a plural of 'shaykh'), *riǧāl al-dīn* (the men of religion) and *'ulamā'* (a term in which the concept of formal training is particularly salient), all of which refer to individuals who employ the strategy of priesthood (as defined here) within the Islamic field. There are naturally many divisions and conflicts within this very diverse category (Høigilt 2010, 30–52), but in this thesis I discuss the Muslim clergy only in terms of their shared interests, in order to consider how these interests brought them into conflict with the group that this thesis focuses on: intellectuals whose cultural capital was mainly non-

religious, who competed with the clergy to influence the habitus of the broader public.

In my view, the Muslim clergy in Egypt have occupied a dominant position in the field of cultural production throughout the 19th and 20th centuries and up to the present day. This dominance is to be measured not simply by their involvement in revolts, such as those discussed in Chapters 1, 2, and 3, but more importantly by their ability to shape the habitus of Egyptians deeply and durably. The importance that most Egyptian Muslims attach to Islam, and the lack of any significant public challenge to Islamic religious faith, is thus the best testimony to the symbolic power of the Muslim clergy. This power is also reflected in the clergy's ability to mobilise widespread condemnation of anyone who appears to challenge its competence or authority. The symbolic weapons used in these cases include accusations of apostasy (analogous to excommunication); the resulting material sanctions (which need not be carried out by the clergy themselves) include censorship, dismissal, exile and physical attacks. For example, ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq was expelled from the *ʿulamāʾ* in 1925 for publishing a book that argued for the separation of Islam from politics (as discussed in Chapter 3), and Ṭāhā Ḥusayn was forced to censor his book on pre-Islamic poetry in 1926 because it was seen as questioning orthodox Islamic doctrine (Berque 1966). In 1947, Azhar *ʿulamāʾ* accused Muḥammad Ḫalaf Allāh, a PhD student at Fuʾād I University, and his supervisor, Amīn al-Ḫūlī, of apostasy because of Ḫalaf Allāh's PhD thesis on narration in the Quran; the thesis was rejected, Ḫalaf Allāh was fired from his teaching position, and al-Ḫūlī was forced

into retirement (Abū Zayd 2006, 58; Reid 1990, 155–156). In 1959, the novel ʾAwlād Ḥāratinā by Naguib Mahfouz was censored by al-Azhar. After Mahfouz won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1988, several shaykhs used this novel as evidence to accuse Mahfouz of apostasy and blasphemy, and Mahfouz was then stabbed by Islamist militants in an assassination attempt in 1994 (Najjar 1998). In 1992, after the secularist intellectual Farağ Fūda participated in a public debate with an Islamist shaykh, he was assassinated; at the murder trial, the shaykh in question declared that Fūda's murder was a legitimate punishment for his apostasy (Najjar 1996). In 1995, in retaliation for scholarly work that implicitly questioned the competence of the ʿulamāʾ by suggesting that modern linguistics was necessary for intepreting the Qurʾān, Cairo University professor Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd was condemned by colleagues as an apostate; his marriage was annulled, and in response to death threats, he spent the rest of his life in exile (Najjar 2000). In 2005, one of Abū Zayd's intellectual compatriots, Sayyid al-Qimanī, received death threats after publishing articles critical of Islamism; he was intimidated into disavowing all his writings and promising never to publish again (Høigilt 2010, 34–35). Although, as I will argue, intellectuals with non-religious cultural capital have been able to use nationalism to compete with the Muslim clergy for influence over the habitus of the laity, they have not gained sufficient symbolic power to enable themselves to fend off these sorts of attacks.

Nothing prevents the same individual from using the strategies of priesthood and prophethood simultaneously, at different times or to

different degrees for different audiences; these are strategies rather than Weberian ideal types. Moreover, these strategies are not usually conscious or intentional. Instead, those who employ them generally *misrecognise* them as the disinterested pursuit of ideals (Bourdieu 1979, 94, 259-260, Bourdieu 1994a). If used successfully, they enable prophets and priests to exercise *symbolic domination* over believers, a domination that can function only because it is perceived, by those who exercise it and by those who submit to it, not as domination but as natural, legitimate guidance (cf. Bourdieu 1994b, 185, 200-211).

I suggest that nationalist concepts lend themselves to the formation of nationalist fields in which similar strategies are employed. In these fields, the 'prophets' are charismatic orators and politicians who draw cheering crowds by successfully claiming to speak and act on behalf of a nation, for the sake of a country. The 'priests' of nationalism, who are the focus of the present study, are cultural producers who successfully claim to have special expertise that qualifies them to make authoritative statements about their nation and their country. For example, we will see in Chapter 3 how an Egyptian writer formulated the view that the literati were especially qualified to lead the nation. Such arguments use nationalism to consecrate a certain type of knowledge, and thus bestow symbolic power on all those who possess that type of knowledge. Hence nationalism can be a vehicle for the rising prestige of some particular category of cultural producers and of the particular types of cultural goods they produce, whether these are novels, newspaper articles,

academic research or teachers' lessons. At the same time, these cultural goods can be used to promote new nationalist concepts.

In this study, I explain how and why Egyptian intellectuals adopted, championed and shaped certain nationalist concepts that became mainstream in Egypt. I also show the effects of these concepts on Egyptian intellectuals over the long term, and in particular on their ability to fulfil the mission that has conventionally been assigned to them as intellectuals: to act, as Richard Jacquemond (2008) puts it, as the 'conscience of the nation'. Playing this role effectively means being able to critique the social status quo, to challenge widely held beliefs and to contradict those in power. By tracing the historical development of the Egyptian nationalist priesthood over a century and a half, I show that in the short run, certain intellectuals used nationalism to justify these sorts of critical stances, at least to a limited extent and for a limited audience. However, in the long run, it undermined their ability to do so, because of the inherent characteristics of nationalist concepts and the strategies available in the nationalist field.

This part of my argument hinges on Bourdieu's notion of the relative 'autonomy' of fields and of knowledge producers. The degree of autonomy of any field of cultural production depends on the degree to which it requires specific competence as an entrance fee and excludes external sources of legitimation (Bourdieu 1976). Thus, in a highly autonomous field, producers attain dominant positions by successfully producing for an audience composed only of their competitors in the field, who are their harshest critics. But by virtue of an apparent paradox, it is

only by acquiring credibility within a relatively autonomous field that an intellectual can gain the authority to challenge social orthodoxy in public debates (Bourdieu 1998, 543-558).

Nationalist fields and religious fields are inherently heteronomous, for identical reasons. Since claims about nations and national territories, like claims about God, cannot be evaluated objectively, it is impossible to formulate, on any objective grounds, a definite set of criteria for determining who is competent to make such claims. Hence nationalist cultural producers, like religious ones, are unable to protect the autonomy of their field by excluding unqualified interlopers. Crucially, this means that they cannot prevent the successful use of the strategy of prophethood. Anyone who possesses enough charisma can potentially claim to speak on behalf of a nation, particularly if he has the full resources of the state, including the media and the education system, at his disposal. And since the strategy of prophethood can appeal to a much wider audience than the priestly strategy, a highly successful prophet will tend to have much greater symbolic power than the priesthood. When it is widely believed that a nationalist leader is the very voice of the nation, it becomes impossible for the nationalist priesthood to claim to contradict him on behalf of the nation. The priesthood is thus left with no grounds on which to oppose him. This, I argue, is what happened to nationalist intellectuals in Egypt when Gamal Abdel Nasser became a successful nationalist prophet and autocrat following the military coup of 1952, using concepts that those same nationalist intellectuals had done a great deal to promote, and in many cases with their active support.

Nationalism in Egypt

At this point it will be clear that this thesis proposes a new way of understanding nationalism in general. But why is there a need for a new study of the origins of nationalism in Egypt in particular?

In fact, there is surprisingly little research on the reasons for the emergence of nationalism in Egypt. Baron (2005, 4) observes: 'Scholars point to the ʿUrābī revolt (1881–82), which ended in British occupation, or the anti-colonial movement that surfaced in the 1890s, as the earliest stirrings of Egyptian nationalism'. Khaled Fahmy (1997) suggests that military conscription and discrimination against non-Turkish-speaking army officers may have contributed to the emergence of nationalism in 19th-century Egypt, but argues that nationalism did not appear until the ʿUrābī revolt. Yet as I show in Chapter 2, it was a scholar, Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī, who introduced nationalist concepts into Arabic, long before ʿUrābī.

It might be supposed that the appearance of nationalism had something to do with a desire for Egyptian sovereignty in opposition to the French occupation of 1798-1801. Yet as I show in Chapter 1, while this occupation provoked strong opposition from Egyptians, this opposition was not nationalist. Moreover, during this period, Ottoman rule was welcomed by the Muslim inhabitants of Egypt rather than being seen as a type of foreign domination. On the rare occasions when ambitious military leaders in Egypt, such as ʿAlī Bey al-Kabīr and Mehmed Ali, rebelled against Ottoman rule in the 18th and early 19th centuries, they did so not because they believed it was wrong in principle for Egypt to be

ruled by foreigners, but because the Ottoman Sultan's authority conflicted with their ambitions to increase their own power; rather than fighting to create an Egyptian nation-state, each of them was simply fighting to establish his own personal dynasty (Crecelius 1998; Fahmy 1997).

It has been suggested that opposition to the injustices of British imperial rule, following the British occupation in 1882, at least helped make nationalism more popular once it had already appeared (Reid 1990, 25). This may well be true, but it does not explain why opposition to those injustices was expressed in nationalist terms, rather than, say, in purely religious terms. Similarly, Gershoni and Jankowski (1986, 82-83) have argued that the collapse of the Ottoman Empire signalled to Egyptian intellectuals that the old political order was finished and a new one needed to be created, and that many of them took inspiration from the creation of a nationalist state in Turkey. Yet there were many other possible responses to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Why was the most successful post-Ottoman, anti-colonial movement in Egypt a nationalist one, rather than a movement for a new Islamic polity, a campaign for local autonomy on the village level, or a Communist revolution as in Russia?

The explanation I propose, based on the theoretical framework outlined above, explains all these observations. Simply put, nationalism appeared in Egypt when it did, and became widespread when it did, because it served the misrecognised interests of a new social category, composed of individuals who possessed types of cultural capital that were new in Egypt, thanks to the introduction of a new kind of educational

system in the 19th century. Cultural producers who emerged from this group used nationalism to gain access to the priestly strategy described above, enabling them to convert their cultural capital into symbolic capital.

A brief introduction to nationalist terminology in Arabic will be useful at this stage; we will consider the history of the following terms in more detail as we encounter them in the study. Arabic now has two words for 'nationalism' (as defined above): *qawmiyya* and *waṭaniyya*. *Qawmiyya* now tends to refer mainly to Arab nationalism; the associated word for 'nation' is *umma* (pl. *umam*). *Waṭaniyya* is used for other nationalisms within the Arab world, such as Egyptian nationalism; its associated word for 'nation' is now *šaʿb* (pl. *šuʿūb*), often translated as 'people'. In both cases, the main term for 'national territory' is *waṭan* (pl. *awṭān*); other, less specific terms such as *bilād* ('land'), which also have non-nationalist senses, are also used in this sense. As we will see, *waṭan* – a word with a long history, examined in depth in Chapters 1 and 2 – was first used in a nationalist sense in the early 19th century. From that time until approximately the middle of the 20th century, the word for 'nation' in Egyptian nationalism was usually *umma*, another old word whose principal earlier meaning was a community of religious believers, especially the community of all Muslims. *Waṭaniyya* first appeared in the second half of the 19th century, as part of the explicit formulation of Egyptian nationalism. *Šaʿb* does not appear in any of the sources considered in this study until the 1890s; until then, it meant a large tribe (Lane 1968, s.v. šaʿb), and seems to have been a very rare word. Judging

by evidence considered in Chapter 3, *qawmiyya* (from *qawm*, another very broad term for tribe, community or group) probably appeared in about 1910, and was initially synonymous with *waṭaniyya*. The present division of labour between *waṭaniyya* and *qawmiyya*, and between *ša'b* and *umma*, seems to have gradually become conventional in a process that reached its completion shortly after World War II[4]. I will be drawing attention to the changing uses of these terms as they occur in the texts under consideration.

Primary Sources

This thesis focuses on the role of intellectuals in constructing and promoting nationalist concepts in Egypt, and on the effects of nationalist concepts on the autonomy of those same intellectuals. This raises questions about the choice of authors and works. These choices have been guided first of all by the need to identify the earliest appearance of nationalism in Egypt. Previous scholarship has suggested that the religious scholar, translator, educator and essayist Rifā'a al-Ṭahṭāwī may have introduced nationalist concepts into Arabic in the 19th century. Chapters 1 and 2 therefore offer a comparison of the nationalist concepts used in al-Ṭahṭāwī's works with related concepts in earlier Arabic writings going back to the 9th century, in order to provide detailed evidence for the claim that al-Ṭahṭāwī was most probably the first nationalist in Egypt. Here I have focused on those of al-Ṭahṭāwī's works that seem to indicate most clearly the development of his nationalist concepts throughout his career. The selection of texts from earlier

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4   The process by which this change occurred merits a study in itself.

historical periods has been guided by existing scholarship as well as by al-Ṭahṭāwī's own literary references, with the aim of looking for nationalist concepts in works where one would expect to find them if they had existed in those eras.

In choosing influential authors who were active during the first half of the 20th century, and in identifying important works by those authors, I have taken my cue, first of all, from Gershoni and Jankowski's (1986; 1995) comprehensive studies of Egyptian nationalist intellectuals. Moreover, I have tried to focus on thinkers who made crucial contributions to the core set of nationalist concepts that have been dominant in Egypt ever since, and whose careers illustrate particularly clearly the issues of competition for symbolic capital that are a central part of the thesis's argument. Hence Chapters 3 and 4 focus on key nationalist texts by the literary and political figure Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal and the writer Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm.

Chapter 4 completes the presentation of the key elements of the argument of the thesis. I would have liked to include several more chapters on later authors and secondary issues. For example, in recent years excellent research has been published on the relationship between women and nationalism in Egypt; Beth Baron's *Egypt as a Woman* (2005) is a notable contribution. The question of whether nationalism has been useful in feminist struggles has been the subject of some debate (Kandiyoti 1991; Hatem 1992), and I envisaged exploring this question in a chapter on the nationalist feminist Laṭīfa al-Zayyāt. The relationship between nationalism and Marxism in Egypt is also particularly

interesting, and I intended to explore it in a chapter on the nationalist Marxist ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Šarqāwī. However, time and space limitations made it possible to include only one such supplementary chapter. I have therefore reluctantly left out feminism and Marxism; instead, Chapter 5 deals with Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs and the concept of nationalist martyrdom. I chose ʿAbd al-Quddūs because he reached an exceptionally wide audience, through his novels and journalism as well as through cinema, and because the concept of dying for one's country is particularly relevant to the concept of duty that is at the heart of the analysis of nationalism proposed in this thesis. Similarly, I do not explore the differences or relationships between Egyptian nationalism and Arab nationalism; instead, I focus on phenomena that are common to both. In my view, the primary conflict in the intellectual field in Egypt in the 20th century concerned the relationship between religion and nationalism, while the issue of the relationship between Egyptian nationalism and Arab nationalism was secondary.

The works considered in this thesis belong to many different genres: historiography, lexicography, geography, essays, poems, novels, newspaper editorials, and feature films, among others. How, then, to analyse this disparate array of sources in a coherent manner? The answer to this question follows straightforwardly from the aims of this thesis. When considering pre-nationalist texts, I attempt only to mine them for evidence of the presence or absence of nationalist concepts, as well as to identify related concepts that were either integrated into, or replaced by, the nationalist concepts constructed in the 19th century. When considering

nationalist texts, I consider them only as expressions of nationalist stances (i.e. what Bourdieu calls *prises de position*), and as evidence of relations between nationalist concepts and the authors' social interests, particularly the accumulation of symbolic capital in the nationalist field and the conversion of this capital into specific capital in other fields, such as the literary, intellectual, journalistic and political fields. This is quite a narrow focus, and naturally leaves aside many worthy topics of study, not least the literary qualities of these texts, as well as the authors' stances on issues that are less relevant to nationalism. Since a writer's decision to work in a particular genre is in itself an intellectual stance, the differences between genres merit more attention than I have been able to give them here, but I have attempted to explore this issue to some extent in comparing novels with their film adaptations.

The analysis links texts, nationalist concepts and social structures in the following way. First, I analyse texts in search of nationalist concepts, and I attempt to explain their presence as an effect of habitus. An author's habitus can construct new concepts in response to a particular moment in his social trajectory, as well as to the state of play in the fields that he is involved in, by creatively blending entrenched concepts. Second, I trace the long-term effects of the author's investment in these concepts on his career as an intellectual, and particularly on his autonomy from political power and social norms. These effects are once again to be found in the author's own works as well as in biographical information.

Chapter 1: Before al-Ṭahṭāwī

In the next chapter, I will be arguing that the 19th-century Egyptian writer Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī introduced nationalist concepts into the Arabic language by importing them from France and blending them with concepts that already existed in Arabic. In order to make it clear what was new in al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalism, we must first look at the concepts that were already available to him in Arabic. In particular, the key word in al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalist vocabulary was *waṭan* (pl. *awṭān*), which he used to translate the French word *patrie* ('national territory'). What did *waṭan* mean before he used it in this way? More generally, how did Arabic speakers before al-Ṭahṭāwī conceptualise geographical areas such as Egypt, and the relationship between these areas and their inhabitants? This chapter attempts to answer these questions by surveying a selection of Arabic texts, from the 9th century to the early 19th century, in which such concepts play a prominent role.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I consider the concept of *waṭan* as used in the texts presented by al-Ǧāḥiẓ (776 – c. 868) in an anthology of writings on the theme of homesickness. I then analyse the definition of *waṭan* given in the 13th-century dictionary *Lisān al-ʿArab*. Next I turn to a 15th-century book devoted to praising Egypt, called *Al-Faḍāʾil al-Bāhira fī Maḥāsin Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira* (Dazzling Virtues in the Good Qualities of Egypt and Cairo), by one Ibn Ẓahīra. Finally, I analyse the concepts of Egypt and its inhabitants found in the chronicles of the French occupation of Egypt (1798-1801) written by the Egyptian historian ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ǧabartī (1754 – c. 1824).

Al-Ḥanīn ilā al-Awṭān: *Missing One's First Home*

Abū ʿUṯmān ʿUmar ibn Baḥr al-Ǧāḥiẓ (776 – c. 868), an illustrious writer who spent most of his career in Baghdad (Pellat 2010a), compiled a text called 'Risālat al-Ḥanīn ilā al-Awṭān' (al-Ǧāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:380-412), in effect an anthology of many short quotations and excerpts from literary works, on the topic of longing for *awṭān*[5]. In many of the texts he quotes, the implicit frame of reference is the lifestyle of nomadic desert pastoralists (Bedouin), who did not have permanent settlements, but instead roamed continually from one temporary campsite to another (cf. Barakat 1993, 48-54).

Al-Ǧāḥiẓ says that he got the idea to compile the text from a conversation with a king who had left his *balad* and moved to another one; when the king recalled 'the soil [*turba*] and the *waṭan*', he 'longed for it as a camel longs for its resting-place near a waterhole [*aʿṭān*]', even though his new home was in various respects better than his old one (9c/1964, 2:383-384). In this passage, *balad* (pl. *bilād*) and *waṭan* seem to be synonymous, but that does not help us much, since *balad* is a generic term for a place or geographical area of nearly any size[6]. However, the king's statement is an apt summary of the rest of the anthology, in which text after text expresses homesickness. Al-Ǧāḥiẓ (9c/1964, 2:385) sums up the idea by stating that 'one of the signs of good sense is that the soul longs for its birthplace [*masqaṭ raʾsihā*]'. The expression *masqaṭ al-raʾs*, literally 'the place where one's head falls (at birth)', evokes a small place,

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5   For a fuller discussion of this literary genre, see Antrim (2011).
6   Lane (1968, s.v. balad) defines it as 'a country, land, province, district, or territory: and a city, town or village: or any portion of the earth, or of land, comprehended within certain limits'.

and indeed, the places that the authors in the anthology long for are villages, towns and even small patches of desert; no reference is made to any larger geographical areas. Though this expression indicates that what al-Ğāḥiẓ has in mind are birthplaces, it seems possible, given the mobility of the Bedouin, that at least some of the texts he quotes might instead be concerned with the place where a person's first emotional attachments were formed. To be on the safe side, we can translate *waṭan* as 'first home' in this sense.

Al-Ğāḥiẓ quotes a poem according to which 'the most gracious people [*qawm*], in the eyes of a young man, are the inhabitants of his own land [*ahl arḍihi*]' (al-Ğāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:384). *Qawm* is a very broad term; it can refer to any group of people, to a kin group, tribe or other community, or to the followers of a prophet (Lane 1968, s.v. qawm). We will return later in this chapter to the various senses of the word *ahl*. Al-Ğāḥiẓ quotes an author who says that being deprived of your home town (*balad*) is like being deprived of your parents, for they nourished you and it nourished them (al-Ğāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:385). Another author concurs: a stranger (*ġarīb*) is like an orphan (al-Ğāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:391). We can represent the common structure of these metaphors as a conceptual blend, outlined in Figure 2.

Animal metaphors are also common in the texts quoted; for example, 'the stranger who is far from his home town, who has gone away from his family, is like a bull that has strayed from its *waṭan*, a prey for any hunter' (al-Ğāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:385). Here it seems fitting to translate *waṭan* as 'pasture'. Just as a bird longs for its nests (*awkār*), a person

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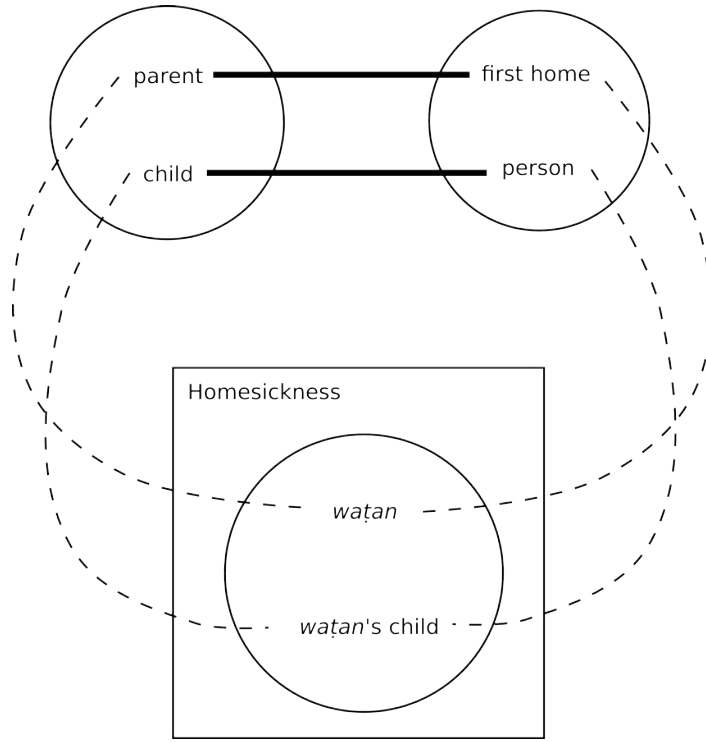
Figure 2: First home as parent

longs for his *awṭān* (al-Ǧāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 386). (Note that the plural *awṭān* can be used as a synonym of the singular *waṭan*[7].) Another animal metaphor: 'the most valuable camels are the ones that miss their *awṭān* the most' (al-Ǧāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:389). There is also a plant metaphor: a stranger is like a sprout that has been removed from its soil; it wilts and does not bear fruit. (We will return to the significance of these metaphors later in this chapter and in the next.) Among the signs of a reasonable person (*ʿāqil*) is 'his longing for 'his *awṭān*'. Not only do people benefit from living in their *awṭān*, but love for *awṭān* also has a positive effect on places; al-Ǧāḥiẓ quotes ʿUmar ibn al-Ḫaṭṭāb, the second caliph, saying

7   The same phenomenon occurs with other terms for places, such as *balad* (pl. *bilād*), *dār* (pl. *diyār*) and *mamlaka* (pl. *mamālik*). In such cases, the singular and the plural are used synonymously, and the choice of singular or plural form seems to be dictated either by convention or by the metrical demands of rhymed prose, with no apparent difference in meaning (Zayde Antrim, personal communication).

that 'God populates places [or makes them prosperous] through love of *waṭan* [*'Ammar Allāh al-buldān bi-ḥubb al-waṭan*]' (al-Ǧāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:389). The idea here may be that since people are attached to their home town, they tend to stay there rather than migrating; hence the population of the town increases, enabling it to flourish.

Al-Ǧāḥiẓ argues that people love their *awṭān* more than their livelihood (*arzāq*), and gives a number of examples to illustrate this claim. Bedouin, he says, dislike spending time in the countryside, and miss their desert; he quotes accounts of Bedouin declaring how happy they are to live in their *waṭan* and eat snakes and lizards, as well as a poem in which a Bedouin complains of the discomforts, diseases and pests of the city. The *waṭan* of one of these Bedouin is identified as a small place (*mawḍi'*) called al-Tasrīr (now in Saudi Arabia). Similarly, says al-Ǧāḥiẓ, the city dweller who travels to a more pleasant place than his city will still miss his *waṭan* (al-Ǧāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:387, 2:392-398) .

One of the examples of longing for *awṭān* that al-Ǧāḥiẓ cites is a line by the 9th-century poet Abū Tammām Ḥabīb ibn Aws, about longing for a *manzil*, literally a place where nomads descend from their camels, i.e. where they camp in the desert (cf. Lane 1968, s.v. manzil): 'Many a camp [*manzil*] does a youth get accustomed to / While his longing is always for the first camp' (al-Ǧāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:401). Thus a person's *waṭan* can be a *manzil*. Finally, al-Ǧāḥiẓ quotes a number of poems about how one's first home is the best place to be, several stories about people who fall ill while away from home and use a bit of soil from their first home as medicine, and examples of rulers such as Alexander the Great, and

biblical figures such as Joseph, who wanted to be buried in their home towns when they died (al-Ǧāḥiẓ 9c/1964, 2:401-410).

Hence in the examples collected by al-Ǧāḥiẓ, a *waṭan* is a person's first home, and in no case is it bigger than a town. It can even be a camp in the desert, or an animal's pasture. The concept seems to be mainly connected with a frame of travel, in which leaving home is thought to make one feel homesick. What is conspicuously absent from all these texts, in comparison with the nationalist writings that we will begin to consider in the next chapter, is any concept of moral obligation towards one's *waṭan*. God populates places by means of love for *awṭān*, but this seems to be purely God's affair; human beings are not expected to play any intentional role in it. These texts also lack the notion that people from the same *waṭan* form a distinct group capable of having a collective will. A young man prefers the inhabitants of his first home to people elsewhere, but those inhabitants, in this conception, are simply the objects of his preference. For al-Ǧāḥiẓ, it is individuals, rather than groups, that have active relationships with *awṭān*. In other words, there is nothing here like the concept of 'nation'. The actions that individuals take in relation to their *waṭan* are limited to seeking to return to it when they are far from it, or to obtaining a substitute for this return, e.g. a bit of soil from one's *waṭan*, to be used as medicine. Moreover, the modern words for 'nation', *umma* and *šaʿb*, do not occur in these texts.

A 13th-Century Definition of Waṭan

The famous dictionary *Lisān al-ʿArab*, by Ibn Manẓūr (1233 – c. 1311) (Fück 2010a), provides a useful definition of *waṭan* (Ibn Manẓūr 13c/1997, s.v. waṭan) for the period in which it was compiled. As in most Arabic dictionaries, definitions in *Lisān al-ʿArab* are arranged by root; all the words derived from a given root are presented under a common heading. There are usually illuminating relationships between words that share a root, so here we will consider the entry for the root *w-ṭ-n* as a whole. What follows is a guided tour of the entry, rather than a translation, which would be unnecessarily tedious. (Note that Ibn Manẓūr's definitions of different words are often interwoven.)

The entry begins by defining a *waṭan* as a *manzil* (i.e. a dwelling, a house, a stopping place or a place of settlement), adding that it is a place that one stays in (*tuqīm bihi*), a person's place of residence (*mawṭin al-insān wa-maḥalluhu*). Ibn Manẓūr then quotes a few lines of a poem by the 8th-century poet Ruʾba ibn al-ʿAǧǧāǧ al-Tamīmī[8], who grew up in the desert and eventually settled in Basra (Heinrichs 2010); the poem in question is a panegyric to a prince of Basra, and says, in passing: 'Until the inhabitants of Iraq saw that I had settled on a piece of land that was not part of my *waṭan* [*ḥattā raʾā ahl al-ʿIrāq annanī / awṭantu arḍan lam*

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8   Ibn Manẓūr's reason for quoting the poem is to note that Ruʾba used the pronunciation *waṭn* in one line: *awṭantu waṭnan lam yakun min waṭanī*. In Ruʾba's *Dīwān*, the same line does not contain this peculiarity, and instead reads *awṭantu arḍan lam takun min waṭanī*. If we follow the principle *lectio difficilior potior* from textual criticism, and assume that Ibn Manẓūr's reading is the earlier one, amended by a later editor, this would suggest that the editor saw *waṭan* as a synonym of *arḍ* in this context. The idea that a *waṭan* could be part of another *waṭan*, just as an *arḍ* can be part of another *arḍ*, seems compatible with this interpretation. In any case, in the context of panegyric, the line seems simply to emphasise that the poet left home and went to live in another place just to be where the addressee was, without specifying the sort of place that he left.

takun min waṭanī]' (Ibn al-ʿAǧǧāǧ, 163). It is remarkable that, unlike al-Ǧāḥiẓ, Ibn Manẓūr does not say that one's *waṭan* is one's birthplace or first home. If we were to read *waṭan* in this sense in this line of Ruʾba's poem, we would probably conclude that he was referring to a small place in the desert, like the Bedouin *waṭan* that we encountered in the previous section. However, nothing in Ibn Manẓūr's definition suggests that we should do so; instead, according to this definition, Ruʾba might simply be referring to his previous place of residence.

Ibn Manẓūr notes that the plural of *waṭan* is *awṭān*, and says that the *awṭān* of sheep and cattle are the places where they lie down to rest (*marābiḍuhā*) and take shelter. He quotes the 7th-century poet al-Aḫṭal: 'Return to your two stony areas [*ḥarrataykum*] to dwell in them, / As cattle return to their *awṭān*'.

Next, Ibn Manẓūr turns to the noun *mawṭin* (pl. *mawāṭin*). The *mawāṭin* of Mecca, he says, are the places where people stop there (*mawāqifuhā*). He then defines the verb *waṭana*, giving *awṭana* as a synonym: to stay (*aqāma*) in a place, to take it for oneself as a *waṭan*, e.g.: So-and-so *awṭana* such-and-such land (*arḍ kaḏā wa-kaḏā*), i.e. took it for himself as a place of residence (*maḥallan wa-maskanan*) to stay in (*yuqīm fīhā*). Then he defines the noun *mīṭān* as the starting line in a horse race, and gives details that need not concern us here. Returning briefly to the verb *awṭana*, he notes that among the qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad are that he did not *awṭana* places, i.e. did not habitually sit in any particular place. Returning to *mawṭin*, he notes that it can mean 'battlefield' (*mašhad min mašāhid al-ḥarb*), citing evidence

from the Qurʾān (Q 9:25) as well as poetry. Turning back to *awṭana*, he says that ʿ*awṭana* land [*arḍan*]' (or *waṭṭana*, or *istawṭana*) is to use it as a *waṭan*. Returning once again to *mawṭin*, he emphasises that any place (*maqām*) in which a person stays (*qāma*), for any purpose, is a *mawṭin* for him; for example: 'If you come and stop in those *mawāṭin*, pray for me and for my brothers.'

Turning back to *awṭana*, he cites a hadith (a quote attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad) according to which the Prophet forbade 'pecking like a crow' while praying (i.e. bobbing up and down hastily), as well as choosing a *waṭan* for oneself (*yūṭin al-raǧul fī makān*) in the mosque, i.e. getting accustomed to praying in a particular spot, as a camel gets accustomed to sitting in a particular place. The ensuing discussion explains that in this hadith, the movement of a camel, as it kneels down on a *munāḫ* (a place where camels lie on their breasts) which it has chosen as its *waṭan*, is being used as a metaphor for a person kneeling down to pray in his favourite spot in the mosque.

Ibn Manẓūr then says that the verb *wāṭana* can mean to secretly decide to do something with someone. The verb *waṭṭana*, he adds, can mean to make up one's mind to do something, and he cites a poem as evidence.

To sum up, this definition indicates that *waṭan* could mean any place where a person stays, for any reason, such as a campsite, and could also mean a pasture, or a spot where a person or animal habitually sits. The conception of *waṭan* described in this dictionary entry thus seems to be even further from 'national territory' than al-Ǧāḥiẓ's conception was

four centuries earlier, since it lacks even the notion of 'first home', as well as the element of longing. The only kind of attachment that is mentioned in this definition is the kind that arises from sheer habit (sitting repeatedly in the same place), and it is viewed as something undesirable[9].

Egypt's Good Qualities

Haarmann (1980, 55) argues that there is 'an unadulterable Egyptian regional or even national identity' that 'emerges from Arabic medieval sources'. He observes that there was a literary genre, 'stretching from Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam in the ninth century to the Ottoman period', consisting of texts on the *faḍāʾil* (virtues) of various regions, including treatises on the virtues of Egypt, the virtues of Syria, and so on. He contends that the texts 'on the *faḍāʾil Miṣr* prove an important source for the constituents of Egyptian national pride and sentiment in medieval Islam' (Haarmann 1980, 57). In his view, 'one of the most provocative' of these texts is a 15th-century book entitled *Al-Faḍāʾil al-Bāhira fī Maḥāsin Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira* (Dazzling Virtues in the Good Qualities of Egypt and Cairo), by one Ibn Ẓahīra[10] (Haarmann 1980, 58). In this section, I will examine Ibn Ẓahīra's book to see whether it indeed contains any trace of 'national identity', i.e. nationalist conceptualisation.

Ibn Ẓahīra begins the introduction to his book by thanking God for making places (*bilād*) different from one another, and giving advantages

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9   Antrim (2010) gives examples of 12th- and 13th-century Arabic texts in which the word *waṭan* is used in expressions of political loyalty. However, it seems to me that in these cases, a *waṭan* is not actually represented as an object of duty; instead, attachment to *waṭan* is used as a metaphor for attachment to a ruler's will, or to a religious duty. Moreover, Antrim's examples concern the political allegiance of an *individual*, not of a group; there is nothing like the concept of 'nation'.

10 It is not known with certainty which Ibn Ẓahīra wrote the book. See Kāmil al-Muhandis's introduction to Ibn Ẓahīra (15c/1969) for a discussion.

to each one, so that people would not all agree on one place (*balda*), neglecting its sisters. Therefore, he says, God placed in their hearts 'love of *awṭān*' so that the latter would prosper, and God (*al-šāriʿ*, 'the Legislator') made this love part of religious faith, so they would be well cared-for (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 1). This is undoubtedly a reference to the hadith, 'Love of *waṭan* is part of faith [*ḥubb al-waṭan min al-īmān*]'. Modern scholars consider this hadith to be spurious[11] (al-Ǧarrāḥī 1932, no. 1102; al-Albānī 1992, 1:no. 110). As we will see in the next chapter, it became a key element in the legitimation of nationalist concepts in Egypt in the 19th century. Ibn Ẓahīra's introduction concludes with a short series of quotes on the theme of love of *waṭan*, which present the same concepts that we encountered in al-Ǧāḥiẓ's anthology; most of the quotes are identical to ones included in al-Ǧāḥiẓ's text.

The bulk of Ibn Ẓahīra's claims about Egypt can be divided into a few categories. First, he associates Egypt with the prestige of important religious figures, events and places. He presents a legendary account of Egypt's early history, claiming that sons of Noah were the first to settle in Egypt after the Flood (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 6); the significance of this claim is no doubt that it associates Egypt with a prestigious figure in the Qurʾān. He provides a brief and largely fanciful historical overview of the pre-Islamic rulers of Egypt (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 14-16). The main concern here seems to be a religious one: to explain who the Pharaoh in the Qurʾān was. In his discussion of the Muslim conquest of Egypt in the 7th century, he attributes an exaggerated role to Egyptians in the overthrow

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11 Antrim (2010) notes that it appears as an unattributed proverb in the 12th century, and as a hadith in the 15th century.

of the third caliph ʿUṯmān ibn ʿAffān (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 20-22; cf. Della

Vida 2010a), no doubt to emphasise Egypt's significance in connection

with an important event in the early history of Islam. He claims that the

prophet Joseph lived in al-Fayyūm and that Jesus Christ was born in a

village in Upper Egypt called Ahnās (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 60-61). He lists

Qurʾānic verses and hadith that mention Egypt, or can be interpreted as

referring to Egypt. One such hadith says that Egypt's non-Arabs are the

most noble of the non-Arabs (*ʿaǧamuhā akram al-ʿaǧam*). ʿAbd Allāh ibn

ʿUmar, the son of the second caliph, is quoted as saying that the

inhabitants of Egypt (*ahl Miṣr*) are not only the most noble non-Arabs,

but also the nearest in lineage to the Arabs, and to the tribe of Qurayš (the

Prophet Muḥammad's tribe) in particular (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 71-77).

Continuing in this vein, Ibn Ẓahīra claims various links between Egypt

and the prophets. Adam saw that the land of Egypt (*arḍ Miṣr*) was like

Paradise, and asked God to increase its agricultural productivity and make

the milk of its udder flow, and Noah is quoted as describing Egypt as 'the

mother of the lands [*umm al-bilād*]' (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 78). (We will

discuss these parental metaphors later in this chapter and in the next.) A

hadith is quoted: 'The Copts of Egypt are the Qurayš of the non-Arabs'

(Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 79). According to Ibn Ẓahīra, the Prophet

Muḥammad sent a messenger to the Greek ruler of Egypt inviting him to

convert to Islam; the latter sent back gifts from Egypt (garments, honey,

etc.), and Muḥammad was impressed. Then the ruler of Egypt sent

Muḥammad two beautiful Coptic sisters to marry, and Muḥammad

married one of them and gave the other to someone else (Ibn Ẓahīra

15c/1969, 93-94). The point, once again, is that Egypt found favour with the Prophet. Ibn Ẓahīra asserts that Egypt provides for Mecca and Medina as well as the rest of the world; if it were not for Egypt, it would be impossible to live in those two holy cities, nor would the pilgrimage be possible (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 101). Moreover, Egypt has the best mosques found anywhere except in Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 102-107). Ibn Ẓahīra lists various holy places (*al-biqāʿ al-šarīfa*) in Egypt, such as Mount Sinai, the place where the Red Sea parted, places associated with the stay of Mary, Joseph and Jesus in Egypt, and so on (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 107-109). One of the wonders of Egypt is the 'barrier [*barzaḫ*]' between the fresh water of the Nile and the salt water of the Mediterranean, which is mentioned in the Qurʾān[12] (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 154). The source of the Nile is said to be in Paradise (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 157, 173). Egypt has become the seat of the imamate and the caliphate (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 145, 185). Ibn Ẓahīra gives a brief history of the caliphs that have reigned in Egypt, and mentions the *maḥmal*, Egypt's yearly gift of the cloth (*kiswa*) that covered the *kaʿba* in Mecca (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 194-199).

Second, Ibn Ẓahīra stresses the fertility of Egypt's land and the high quality of its goods, particularly clothing and agricultural products, which fetch a high price, are prized by kings, and are exported far and wide (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 53-70, 101-102, 110-117, 131, 133-137, 145). Much of this material consists of long lists of these products, and reads like an investment brochure. One chapter (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 121-130) is

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12 Ibn Ẓahīra cites Q 27:61, which describes the same phenomenon, but the word *barzaḫ* appears in Q 25:53.

devoted mainly to a long list of tax figures, clearly to show that Egypt has been a huge source of wealth for its rulers, as well as to gently suggest that they should avoid overtaxing the population. The third caliph, ʿUṯmān ibn ʿAffān, and the first Muslim governor of Egypt, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, are quoted discussing taxation, using a conceptual blend in which a female camel represents Egypt, the camel's milk represents its agricultural production, and its young represent its inhabitants, who are hungry because they did not receive enough of the milk produced; the inference is that taxes are too high (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 123). The early caliphs called Egypt 'the bread basket [*sallat al-ḫubz*]'; it is the richest country in the world (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 128-129), and supplies the whole world with provisions, including Baghdad (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 145). There are more boats on the Nile than on any other river (a sign of productivity) (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 135-137), and Egypt is the only economically self-sufficient country. Continuing on the theme of fertility, Ibn Ẓahīra claims that the water of the Nile increases men's sexual potency, while the water of the Tigris decreases it (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 143); the inference is clearly that water that makes men fertile must make the land fertile as well.

Third, Ibn Ẓahīra says that Egypt deserves praise because many scholars, writers and other illustrious people have lived and studied there. Aswān has produced many scholars and writers (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 67-68). Ibn Ẓahīra gives an admiring portrait of Alexander the Great (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 84-85), who conquered Egypt in the 4th century BC, and mentions a number of philosophers, scientists and mathematicians,

including Plato and Aristotle, emphasising that many people have come to study in Egypt (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 85-87). Among the evidence for Cairo's greatness is that so many notable individuals have grown up or settled there (*istawṭanahā*) (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 185). Note that this verb, *istawṭana*, which we encountered above in our discussion of al-Ǧāḥiẓ, is from the same root as *waṭan* and means 'to take (a place) as one's *waṭan*', i.e. 'to settle in (a place)'. Thus Cairo – not Egypt – was the *waṭan* of the people that Ibn Ẓahīra is referring to here.

At the end of his book, Ibn Ẓahīra cites panegyrics in poetry and prose that praise Egypt and liken it to Paradise; most of the praise is directed specifically at the Nile (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 205-217). One poem, by the 15th-century poet Ibrāhīm Ḥāyik al-Miʿmār, says: 'Egypt is but a pleasant stopping-place [*manzil*], so camp there [*istawṭinūhu*], in both its eastern and western parts, / if you are travelling through it, and wipe yourselves with its clean sand' (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 206). Note again the use of the verb *istawṭana*. This is the earliest occurrence we have encountered of a conceptual blend implying that Egypt could be seen as a *waṭan*, in some sense of that word. However, let us note that the frame in this blend is clearly that of travel *through* Egypt, rather than settlement. The reference to wiping oneself with clean sand is an allusion to a verse of the Qurʾān (4:43), which instructs Muslims that if they are on a journey, and cannot find water for their ablutions, they can wipe themselves with clean sand instead. In keeping with this frame, Ibrāhīm Ḥāyik al-Miʿmār's poem explicitly blends Egypt with a *manzil*, a stopping-place on a journey. Since this was the main sense of *waṭan* at

that time (as we saw above, in the dictionary definition from *Lisān al-ʿArab*), the use of the word *manzil* motivates the use of the imperative verb *istawṭinūhu* ('camp there'). Ibn Ẓahīra also cites a poem by Kamāl al-Dīn al-Adfawī in which, he says, the poet is longing for his *waṭan*; the poem makes it clear that he is longing specifically for Upper Egypt (*arḍ al-ṣaʿīd*) (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 210); the sense of *waṭan* that Ibn Ẓahīra has in mind is no doubt 'first home'.

What does Ibn Ẓahīra's book tell us about the concepts that were in current use in his day to conceptualise Egypt and its inhabitants? He periodically refers to Egypt as a 'region' (*iqlīm*) (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 1, 2, 10, 57, 181, 185, 201), e.g. in the expression *iqlīm Miṣr*; he also uses the equivalent expressions *diyār Miṣr* and *al-diyār al-Miṣriyya* (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 69, 101, 180, 189, 194, 195, 201, 209). What of the word *waṭan*? Interestingly, Ibn Ẓahīra's book contains only one instance in which this word is explicitly used to refer to any part of Egypt; the place in question is Upper Egypt, and the sense of *waṭan* is 'first home' (that one misses when one is away). Other senses of *waṭan* appear indirectly in two instances, via the verb *istawṭana,* to conceptualise Cairo as a place that people have settled in, and Egypt as a pleasant stopping-place for travellers. All this is very different from the nationalist use of *waṭan* that we will encounter starting in the 19th century with al-Ṭahṭāwī.

As for Egyptians in general, Ibn Ẓahīra does not have a great deal to say about them. He asserts that they are quick to understand Islamic and other sciences, have a natural aptitude for eloquence, and have a good character. Egyptian women are the most beautiful women in the world,

especially those who have one Turkish parent and one Egyptian parent. Egyptians are polite, friendly and helpful, they like foreigners, and they mind their own business (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 204).

Ibn Ẓahīra consistently refers to Egyptians as *ahl Miṣr* (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 2, 17, 20, 77, 89, 98, 103, 110, 114, 122, 124, 125, 129, 135, 136, 138, 143, 167, 174). It seems to me that this expression can best be translated as 'the inhabitants of Egypt', perhaps more specifically those who have been settled there for some time. When discussing the early years of Muslim rule in Egypt, Ibn Ẓahīra uses the expression *ahl Miṣr* to refer only to Egypt's Coptic Christian population, not to its Muslim conquerors (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 125, 174-175); thus the Muslims, who had only recently arrived, were not yet part of *ahl Miṣr*. He makes a clear distinction between the words *ahl* and *umma*. For example, he says that in times of old, the inhabitants of Egypt (*ahl Miṣr*) were 'mixtures of communities [*aḫlāṭan min al-umam*]', including Copts (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 89). Likewise, he recounts a story told by the 10th-century Baghdadi author al-Masʿūdī (on whom see Pellat 2010b), in which an anonymous old wise man says that 'the inhabitants of Egypt have passed from one *umma* to another [*tadāwala ahl Miṣr al-umam*]' (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 166-167).

The word *ahl* has a number of senses. One early sense is 'members of a household', i.e. anyone sharing a dwelling, such as a family and its servants; this is the first sense given by Lane (1968, s.v. ahl). When followed by a noun designating a person, *ahl* means the members of that person's family, regardless of whether they live together; thus Ibn Ẓahīra cites a poet who longs to return to 'my family [*ahlī*]' (Ibn Ẓahīra

15c/1969, 210). When followed by a noun designating a place, *ahl* means the inhabitants of that place; thus every village has its *ahl* (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 125). *Ahl al-balad* means 'the settled, or constant, inhabitants of the country or town', and one can refer to 'the inhabitants of Paradise [*ahl al-ǧanna*]', i.e. the blessed, and 'the inhabitants of the Fire [*ahl al-nār*]', i.e. the damned (Lane 1968, s.v. ahl). As we will see later in this chapter, *ahl* can also refer to people who are temporarily located in a certain place (e.g. on boats), but do not dwell there. A further extension is 'those who practise a certain activity', as in 'the people of learning [*ahl al-ʿilm*]' (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 67), i.e. scholars, and 'the people of virtue and of admirable crafts [*ahl al-faḍāʾil wa-l-ṣināʿāt al-badīʿa*]' (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 185), i.e. virtuous people and skilled craftsmen.

I will propose a more detailed account of *ahl* at the end of this chapter, after citing other examples of its usage. For now, let us note that the inhabitants of Egypt, in Ibn Ẓahīra's text, are not conceptualised as a nation, nor are they shown behaving as if they considered themselves to be a nation. In particular, there is no sign of any individual or collective moral obligation towards the land of Egypt. No one is depicted as taking any action for the sake of Egypt itself. The inhabitants of Egypt, *ahl Miṣr*, are not personified collectively as an entity possessing its own emotions, desires or will. Ibn Ẓahīra also seems to be indifferent to the question of who rules Egypt, as long as the rulers are Muslims and the taxes are not too onerous. The Arabic words that have meant 'nation' in modern times (*umma* and *šaʿb*) are not used to refer to Egyptians collectively in Ibn Ẓahīra's text. *Šaʿb* does not occur at all in Ibn Ẓahīra's text. The word

qawm, which would be used to form a word for 'nationalism' (*qawmiyya*) in the 20th century, is used only in the most general sense of 'group', e.g. to refer to a group of scholars (Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 98).

In sum, Haarmann's (1980) claims about 'national identity' and 'national pride' in Ibn Ẓahīra's book are not supported by a careful reading of the text; in reality, there is nothing 'national' in it, because it lacks a concept of 'nation'.

Al-Ǧabartī and the French Occupation of Egypt

If nationalist beliefs exist in a given population, there is one type of event that should be expected to elicit forceful expressions of those beliefs: an invasion and occupation by a foreign power. In particular, if people feel that they have some moral obligation towards the territory that they live in, foreign occupation should provoke urgent discussion of how best to fulfil that obligation. Napoleon Bonaparte's occupation of Egypt from 1798 to 1801 therefore provides an ideal opportunity to look for nationalist beliefs in Egypt at that time (only 25 years before al-Ṭahṭāwī's fateful encounter with nationalism in France), particularly because it was an extremely violent and destructive occupation, which brutally suppressed two mass rebellions, and because we have a detailed eyewitness account of it, written by an Egyptian, the historian ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ǧabartī (1754-1824). As André Raymond notes, al-Ǧabartī is the best source, and on most topics the only source, for an appreciation of Egyptians' perceptions of the occupation.

A very wealthy member of Cairo's bourgeoisie and of the milieu of

Azhar scholars (*'ulamāʾ*) . . . [al-Ǧabartī] lived apart from the lower

strata of the population, had little knowledge of them and judged

them haughtily. He is therefore not as representative of the

Egyptian population as has generally been thought. Moreover, his

work requires careful interpretation. Circumstances led him to write

three successive versions of the events that he had lived

through. . . . These texts naturally contain significant differences,

because they were intended for different audiences and because of

the evolution of the shaykh's views over time. . . . But despite the

nuances and variants, the work is basically the same. . . . While the

elite (particularly that of the shaykhs) is well represented, the mass

of the population only appears occasionally, as a unit, in times of

crisis, and its actions are often judged harshly. We lack the account

of the occupation that a less cultivated Egyptian, less wealthy and

less prejudiced, could have written (Raymond 2004, 3-5).

Despite these reservations, al-Ǧabartī's three accounts of the French

occupation contain many revealing glimpses of the ways in which

Egyptians, including those in the dominated class, conceptualised and

responded to the occupation. Notwithstanding the differences between

the three accounts, a careful comparison shows that they consistently

present the same conceptions of the inhabitants of Egypt and of their

relations with the French occupation, using the same vocabulary; in what

follows, I will therefore interleave citations from all three texts. I will not

attempt to give an complete overview of the French occupation, since that

has already been ably done by others (e.g. Dykstra 1998; Raymond 2004; Cole 2007). Instead, I will focus on testing the following hypotheses: (a) Egyptian Muslims, who refused to be ruled by persons that they perceived as Christians or infidels, conceptualised resistance to French rule not as a duty towards Egypt, but as a religious duty; (b) Egyptian Christians saw the French as Christians, and therefore welcomed French rule; (c) Egyptians did not understand what Napoleon meant when he claimed to be invading Egypt for the benefit of the Egyptian nation, since this concept was unknown at the time; and (d) Egyptians did not refer to Egypt as a *waṭan* during this period.

Al-Ǧabartī begins his first account of the French occupation by identifying who was 'the Sultan of Islam' (i.e. the Ottoman Sultan) in the year of Napoleon's arrival (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 15). In June 1798, English ships reached the port of Alexandria, and a landing party told people on the seashore that they had come looking for Frenchmen. The people on the seashore replied: 'There are none among us, except those who have settled in the port [*al-mustawṭinīn bi-l-ṯaġr*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 19-20). Thus Alexandria was the *waṭan* of the Frenchmen, no doubt merchants, who lived there[13]. The British were also told: 'these are the lands [*bilād*] of the Sultan, and are not at risk from the French or from anyone else' (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:58). The British left, and ten days later, the French arrived and conquered Alexandria (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 20-21). When news of this reached Cairo, the Mamluk beys, the princes

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13 Similarly, later in his chronicle, al-Ǧabartī mentions two Mamluk beys who had 'settled in [*istawṭana*]' the town of Asyūṭ, and notes that thanks to one of them, Asyūṭ became a safe place where many people settled (*istawṭana*) for protection (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 224, 227; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:606, 612); thus Asyūṭ became their *waṭan*.

and the Muslim clergy met to discuss 'this matter which took the Muslims unawares'. The shaykhs blamed the beys' negligence in the defence of the port, which allowed the enemy to take 'the port of Islam [*ṯaġr al-Islām*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 23-24). (Note that they did not say 'Egypt's port'.)

> Bonaparte, having secured Alexandria, issued a proclamation setting forth to the Egyptians the reasons for the invasion and what the French government expected from them. The French Orientalist Jean Michel de Venture de Paradis, perhaps with the help of Maltese aides, translated the document into very strange and very bad Arabic (Cole 2007, 30).

Al-Ǧabartī reproduces the Arabic text of the proclamation in full (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 28-33). In language that clumsily and unconvincingly attempts to mimic the conventions of Islamic religious discourse, Napoleon claims that he has come as a friend of the Ottoman Empire, to free Egypt from Mamluk rule, and that he reveres the Prophet Muḥammad and the Qurʾān. He complains that the Mamluks have shown contempt for 'the French community [*al-milla al-Faransāwiyya*]'[14], treating French merchants in Egypt unjustly. He asserts that 'all people [*ǧamīʿ al-nās*]' are equal in God's eyes (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 29). No Egyptian, he says, will henceforth be excluded from positions of high rank, and 'the intelligent, the virtuous and the learned will regulate affairs; thus the state of the whole nation [*al-umma kullihā*] will be set right'. He exorts his readers to tell 'your nation [*umma*]' that 'the French are also faithful Muslims [*inn al-Faransāwiyya hum ayḍan Muslimīn*

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14 *Milla* was the standard term for non-Muslim minorities in the Ottoman Empire (Wendell 1972, 90-91).

ḫāliṣīn]' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 30). He boasts that his army has sacked Rome and destroyed the Papal See (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 30-31). The proclamation concludes: 'May God perpetuate the glory of the Ottoman Sultan. . . . May God curse the Mamluks and improve the condition of the Egyptian nation [*al-umma al-Miṣriyya*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 33).

We do not know how Egyptians interpreted the expression *al-umma al-Miṣriyya*. Wendell (1972, 91) surmises that it must have been incomprehensible to them. In any case, it had almost certainly never been used before. Napoleon's audience would have been familiar with several different senses of the word *umma*. In the Qurʾān, an *umma* could be a group of persons, however small[15], as well as category used to classify any sort of living creature[16].

> Far more often, however, an *umma* in the Qurʾān is a human society, usually of considerable size, viewed chiefly in light of its peculiar religious institutions. . . . During the late Medinese period, *umma* is almost entirely restricted to the specific type of grouping . . . [defined as] those who have been, or are being, tested by God through the agency of a prophet and a divine revelation. . . . (Wendell 1972, 25-27).

Hence the prototypical *umma* was undoubtedly the community of all the world's Muslims. 'It seems safe to say that after the Prophetic Age (570-632), the conceptualization of the *umma* . . . suffered no changes in essence until the nineteenth century' (Wendell 1972, x). As we will see,

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15 Cf. Q 28:23: 'When he arrived at Midian's waters, he found a group of men [*umma min al-nās*] watering [their flocks]'. When quoting the Qurʾān, I have used the translation by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem (2004) throughout.
16 See Wendell (1972, 25) and Q 6:38.

al-umma al-Miṣriyya would later become the standard way of saying 'the Egyptian nation' among Egyptian nationalists. Its appearance in Napoleon's proclamation is undoubtedly a reflection of the nationalist beliefs of Napoleon and his colleagues, beliefs that had recently found forceful expression in the French revolution.

> [T]he word 'Nation' . . . must, in a French context, be classified amongst the category of . . . words central to political discourse in France whose sense has changed significantly with the passage of time. Of indeterminate meaning in the eighteenth century . . . it was out of the Revolution of 1789 that was born the concept of the sovereignty of the nation and with that the related concept of the right of peoples to self-determination and the claim that the boundaries of France were to be set by its 'frontières naturelles'. Equally nationalism (the word itself first appeared in 1798 . . .) was always something of an ambivalent creed, humanitarian sentiment frequently giving way to jingoistic chauvinism. . . . and to displays of military prowess (Jennings 1991, 498-499).

Indeed, the word *nationalisme* was coined 'precisely as overwhelmed observers were struggling to make sense of the political deluge they had just witnessed in France' (Bell 2001, 6). I will discuss the French nationalism of this period in greater depth in the next chapter. It seems likely that nationalism was already so deeply entrenched in the habitus of the French occupiers of Egypt that they could not conceive of Egyptians as anything but a nation, and initially assumed that Egyptians saw themselves in the same way. As we will see, French nationalist

concepts were explicitly modelled on, and designed to replace, religious concepts. The French translators who chose *umma* as a translation of 'nation', a concept that as yet had no equivalent in Arabic, were perhaps searching for a term that would convey a similar sense of sacredness regarding a community of human beings.

Al-Ǧabartī's response to Napoleon's proclamation shows that this innovative use of the word *umma* failed to prompt for the nationalist concept that the French had in mind. Al-Ǧabartī penned a scathing and witty critique of the proclamation (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 33-41), in the style of a schoolmaster correcting a student's mediocre essay, pointing out its blatant hypocrisy and its many grammatical errors[17]. He observes that in reality, the French disagree with 'all religions [*milal*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 33; cf. Cole 2007, 32-34); they are guilty of 'unbelief [*kufr*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 36). If Napoleon really respected Muḥammad as he says he does, 'he would believe in him, accept his truth, and respect his community [*umma*]'; if he really respected the Qur'ān as he says he does, he would believe in what it contains, and he would believe that the Prophet's community (*umma*) is the most noble of communities (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 37). On the idea that everyone is equal in God's eyes, this is 'a lie and stupidity'; God has made some superior to others[18] (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 38). Al-Ǧabartī condemns Napoleon's appointment of 'low and vulgar people' to positions of authority, and agrees that the state of the *umma* would be set right if it were administered by intelligent,

17 Strangely, though, al-Ǧabartī makes many of the same grammatical errors, particularly in the *Mudda*.
18 Al-Ǧabartī perhaps has Q 43:32 in mind: 'We have raised some of them above others in rank, so that some may take others into service'.

virtuous and learned men, but objects that Napoleon has not appointed such men. Al-Ğabartī makes no comment on the phrase *al-umma al-Miṣriyya*; perhaps he interpreted the word *umma* in this phrase, and elsewhere the proclamation, as referring to the Islamic *umma* that Egypt was a part of, rather than 'the Egyptian nation', as Napoleon's translators intended. Disregarding the proclamation's nationalist terminology, he refers to French collectively as a *qawm* (al-Ğabartī 1798/1999, 40), an extremely broad term that (as we have seen above) could refer to almost any group of people (Lane 1968, s.v. qawm); he also calls them *hāʾulāʾ al-aqwām* ('those people'), using the plural of the same word (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 25). Perhaps the French subsequently realised that the meaning of *al-umma al-Miṣriyya* was unclear to their audience; they did not use it again in any of their proclamations, and instead used the standard expression, *ahl Miṣr* (e.g. al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 113).

Al-Ğabartī says that there was a general call to arms to repel the French invasion; many in Cairo responded, but most people in the countryside, and most peasants, did not, since they believed Napoleon's assertion that he was a friend of the Sultan, and therefore assumed that the Sultan must have told Napoleon to invade Egypt (al-Ğabartī 1798/1999, 43). This is one of many indications that we will encounter of Egyptians' support of Ottoman rule.

From the very beginning of the occupation, there is clear evidence that Egyptian Muslims understood it in religious terms. As the French were on their way from Alexandria to Cairo, the *ʿulamāʾ* gathered at al-

Azhar and elsewhere to support the Mamluks in their impending battle with the French, by praying and by reading hadith; the Sufi orders gathered for dhikrs. The head of the descendants of the Prophet (*naqīb al-ašrāf*) took a flag known as 'the Prophet's flag [*al-bayraq al-nabawī*]' down from the Citadel, and carried it to Būlāq, as thousands of people responded to this call by gathering around him with makeshift weapons, chanting the Islamic phrases 'There is no god but God [*Lā ilāha illā Allāh*]' and 'God is great [*Allāhu akbar*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:70-72). The houses of Copts and Syrian Christians in Cairo were searched for weapons. Al-Ǧabartī says that the common people (*al-ʿāmma*) would have been satisfied with nothing less than killing the Christians and Jews, but that the rulers forbade this (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 29; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:73; cf. Wendell 1972, 94). Note that al-Ǧabartī implicitly does not consider Egyptian Christians and Jews to be part of *al-ʿāmma.* The common people (again *al-ʿāmma*) chanted Islamic slogans to support the Mamluk troops during the Battle of the Pyramids, while 'reasonable people [*al-ʿuqalāʾ*]' scolded them for this, saying that the Prophet Muḥammad and his companions carried out jihad with swords, not with shouting; but no one listened (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:75).

In July, shortly after the French established their authority in Cairo, rumours spread that they intended to kill all the Muslims during the Friday prayer (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 37); this, too, suggests a perception of the occupation as a war of religion. In August, the French attempted to organise the traditional annual celebration of the Nile flood, but no Egyptians attended except Christians (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:92-

93). The French tried to get a group of prominent shaykhs to wear the tricolour sash, symbol of the French republic, but the shaykhs refused, not on the grounds that they would be betraying Egypt by displaying allegiance to a foreign power, but rather on the grounds that 'it would demean us in the eyes of God and our fellow Muslims'. Similarly, when the French attempted to require the inhabitants of Cairo to wear the tricolour cockade, ordinary people debated whether this was acceptable, but only in religious terms (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 44; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:98-99).

> In September 1798, the peasants in the villages surrounding Dimyāṭ (Damietta) in the Delta, boasted openly of how they were going to massacre all the Christians and French in that city, and ravage their women. The native Christians appealed to General Vial, as he was about to leave for the village of al-Šuʿarāʾ, where the insurgents had gathered, saying: 'General, they said to him, you intend going back to Cairo, and you are throwing us into the hands of these devils who have neither mercy nor reason. They are convinced that we are of your kind [*minkum wa-naḥnu min ǧinsikum*], because you are Christians like us' (Wendell 1972, 95).

> In the same month, the French celebrated their national holiday in honour of the founding of the French republic; prominent Egyptian Christians were delighted to attend (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:103-104). A messenger from the Sultan arrived, and al-Ǧabartī says that 'people [*al-nās*]' hoped eagerly that this was a sign of an impending Ottoman military intervention to overthrow the French (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 94-

95). It seems safe to assume that the Christians who were delighted to associate themselves with French rule were not hoping that the Ottomans would overthrow it; again, al-Ǧabartī clearly uses general terms such as 'people [*al-nās*]' to mean Muslims in particular. At around the same time, Napoleon visited a prominent shaykh at his home near the mosque of al-Ḥusayn, and 'the rabble [*ǧawǧāʾ al-ʿāmma*]' gathered round to heckle Napoleon, saying that he had come to convert to Islam, fearing for his life. As he left, they again heckled him by chanting the Fātiḥa, the first *sūra* of the Qurʾān (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 95, al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:103). The hecklers were thus undoubtedly Muslims.

In October, the French issued a proclamation describing Egypt as the most fertile country, and asserting that science, industry and written language originally came from the earliest ancestors of the inhabitants of Egypt. Hence, according to the proclamation, the nations (*umam*) coveted Egypt, and one nation after another invaded it, the worst of them being the Turks; the French have come to save Egypt from misrule. A hundred years later, these claims (apart from the one about France) would become standard fare in Egyptian nationalist historiography (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 143-163). But they made no positive impression whatsoever on al-Ǧabartī; he dismisses the entire proclamation as 'corrupt [*muḥarraf*]' and 'twisted [*muʿawwaǧ*]', and does not dignify it with any further comment (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 113-114, al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:116-117).

In the same month, the first major uprising against French rule took place in Cairo, sparked by the imposition of property taxes, even though

the taxes were lower than those that had been customary. Al-Ǧabartī notes that some shaykhs stirred up rebellion (*iṯārat al-fitna*); the word *fitna* ('revolt', 'disturbances', 'civil war') has strong negative connotations dating from the early history of Islam (Gardet 2010). These shaykhs delivered sermons in which they said: 'Muslims, you must carry out a jihad. How can you, who are free persons, accept paying poll tax [*ǧizya*][19] to the infidels [*al-kuffār*]?' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 124-125) In André Raymond's view,

> The feeling that Islam had been scorned . . . [and] the impression that the occupiers relied on Christians to humiliate Muslims . . . clearly played a decisive role, as can be seen, from the very beginning of the movement, in its religious and anti-Christian character. . . . Ottoman propaganda also played a role in preparing minds for revolt. Letters from Istanbul . . . incited Egyptians to rise up against the occupier and join a holy war (jihad) that had been proclaimed in the [Ottoman] capital. . . . A certain number of middle-ranking shaykhs were active in the movement. They were all Azhar-trained shaykhs, probably rather young and at the beginning of their careers. . . . A prominent role was played in these events by a well-known personality, the *šārīf* [descendant of the Prophet] Badr al-Dīn al-Maqdisī. . . . It is incontestably Badr al-Maqdisī and the five shaykhs that played the most important role in organising the revolt. . . . The Cairo Revolt may have begun with calls of a religious character. . . . Nicolas Turc mentions an Azhar

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19 *Ǧizya* was the tax that, according to Islamic law, non-Muslim subjects were required to pay in Islamic states (Cahen, İnalcık, and Hardy 2010).

shaykh who is said to have run through the streets, calling on Muslims to rise up: 'Let all those who believe in the unity of God go to the Azhar mosque. Today is the day to fight the infidels' (Raymond 2004, 124-132).

The rebels chanted 'May God give victory to the Muslims [*Naṣara Allāh al-Muslimīn*]' and 'May God give victory to Islam [*Naṣara Allāh dīn al-Islām*]'. Many parts of Cairo remained calm, but the rebels mistakenly believed that 'all Muslims were in agreement'. They pillaged Christians' houses, determined to carry out a jihad. As for al-Ǧabartī, he was categorically and consistently opposed to all insurrections. He refers to the rebels as 'riffraff' (*al-ġawġāʾ*, *al-sūqa*, etc.) and says that 'reasonable people [*al-ʿuqalāʾ*]' saw rebellion as pointless, because the rebels were in no position to defeat the French army (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 124-133; al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 58-59; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:122-127).

Despite al-Ǧabartī's condemnation of the rebellion and his contempt for the rebels, he clearly shared their perception of the conflict as a religious one. He repeatedly refers to them as 'the Muslims' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 134, 136; al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 58; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:130), describes the French troops as 'like devils or the soldiers of Satan', says that they 'incurred God's wrath', and refers to them as 'the enemies of religion' and 'the army of Satan' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 138). The French executed many people in retaliation for the uprising; Gabarti says that 'innumerable people [*umam kaṯīra lā yuḥṣā ʿadaduhā*] died during these two days and those that followed' (note the

use of *umma* in its older sense to mean 'a number of persons'). He makes it clear that he means Muslims: 'the desire and stubbornness of the infidels [*al-kafara*] lasted a long time, and they inflicted as much harm on the Muslims as they wished' (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 61-62; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:131). Similarly, Wendell (1972, 113) notes a striking example of at least some Egyptian Christians' perceptions of the situation a few months later:

> In January 1799, General Andréossy visited the Coptic monasteries of Wādī al-Naṭrūn. . . . The leading question asked by the monks may have jolted even an eighteenth-century revolutionary. 'Our travelers, having been welcomed by them with kindliness, were favored with a most unusual disclosure on this subject: "When are you going to kill all the Muslims?" they asked General Andréossy.'

The month of Ramadan began in February 1799. The French dispatched heralds in the streets of Cairo to order the Christian inhabitants of the city (*naṣārā al-balad*) to maintain the custom of not eating in public during the Ramadan fast. A Muslim jurist (*faqīh*) saw a Christian smoking in public and scolded him, the Christian replied with an insult, and the jurist struck the Christian. The case was brought before the French authorities, who punished the Christian and let the jurist go. Al-Ǧabartī regarded all this as an attempt by the French to win over the sympathy of 'the subjects [*al-raʿiyya*]' (of the Ottoman Sultan) (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 85; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:196-197). This implies that in his view, only Muslims were subjects. In the same month, Bonaparte's troops took the Mediterranean town of al-ʿArīš, captured a

group of Mamluks there and brought them to Cairo; 'this saddened the Muslims'. The French celebrated their victory, and the Christian inhabitants of Cairo celebrated as well, much to al-Ǧabartī's disgust (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 85-86).

On his way to Syria, Napoleon sent proclamations to the inhabitants of the region, telling them to stay in their towns, urging those who had fled to return home; these proclamations use the word *waṭan* in the sense of 'place of residence', as well as the synonym *maḥall* (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 87, 90-93; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:201-202). Napoleon and his troops camped en route at an unnamed location in north-eastern Egypt; al-Ǧabartī refers to this camp as Napoleon's *waṭan*: 'When the General reached his camp [*fa-lamma waṣala Sārī ʿAskar ilā waṭanihi*] . . .' (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:216).

In May 1799, a Moroccan shaykh arrived in the town of Damanhūr, accompanied by about 80 men and claiming to be the Mahdī[20], and called people to jihad. Some of the locals joined him and fought the French with him, without success (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 102-103; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:229). A young Mamluk ran through the streets of Cairo with a drawn sword, also calling people to jihad, before being caught and executed (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 103-104; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:231-232). In the same month, Napoleon's forces were defeated at Acre; al-Ǧabartī quotes a poem that celebrates this defeat, portraying it entirely as a victory for God and the Muslims against the infidels (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 108-111). In his obituaries, al-

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20 The Mahdī, '"the rightly guided one" is the name of the restorer of religion and justice who, according to a widely held Muslim belief, will rule before the end of the world' (Madelung 2009).

Ǧabartī mentions several individuals who, he says, were 'among the martyrs killed [*qutila maʿa man qutila šahīdan*]' by the French (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:238, 240, 249-252).

In an amazing display of transparently deceitful bluster, a French proclamation asserted that Napoleon had converted to Islam (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 115); no one seems to have taken this claim seriously, and al-Ǧabartī does not bother to comment on it. Another French proclamation mentioned in passing that the French had abolished Ottoman rule in Egypt (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 116-117). Al-Ǧabartī includes a short text by his friend Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār[21] in which the latter responds to this proclamation; launching into a stream of invective, al-ʿAṭṭār heaps contempt on the very idea of ending Ottoman rule, and condemns Napoleon, 'the accursed infidel [*kāfir*]', who 'does not wish to become one of the sons and men of Egypt [*abnāʾ Miṣr wa-riǧālihā*]' (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 117-118). This is a very revealing statement, because it implies that Napoleon, if he had wished, could have become a 'son of Egypt', presumably by converting sincerely to Islam and embracing Ottoman rule.

In July, a group of Mamluk fugitives were betrayed to the French by Egyptian peasants (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 119). News arrived that Ottoman troops had arrived in Alexandria; 'people [*al-nās*]' (i.e. Muslims) rejoiced and 'cursed Christians openly'; one was arrested for telling a Christian that 'in four days we'll be rid of you all' (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 121; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:276-277). Reports

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21 On al-ʿAṭṭār, see Appendix 2.

arrived that 'the Muslims' (i.e. the Ottoman army) had retaken Alexandria; 'people [*al-nās*] rejoiced and congratulated each other' in Cairo, but the reports turned out to be false (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 122-123).

Bonaparte 'secretly slipped out of the country in August, leaving behind a note for the surprised General Kléber informing him that he was henceforth in charge of Egypt' (Cole 2007, 244). The French and the Ottomans signed a treaty, stipulating that the French would leave Egypt, returning control of the province to the Ottoman Empire. An Ottoman delegation arrived in Cairo and was greeted enthusiastically by throngs of overjoyed Egyptians. The Ottomans immediately imposed a tax on merchants to raise the money required for the evacuation of the French, and the merchants gladly paid up, delighted that 'the infidel dogs [*al-kilāb al-kafara*]' would soon be leaving Egypt (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 138; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:316-317). As for the masses (*al-raʿāyā wa-hamaǧ al-nās*), they started openly cursing the French as well as Christians, and acclaiming the Sultan (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:317-318). (Here again, *al-nās* can only refer to Muslims.)

The French attacked the Ottomans, breaking the treaty. The Ottoman representative, Naṣūḥ Pasha, then entered Cairo, accompanied by Mamluk princes and Mamluk and Ottoman troops, and told the population to launch a jihad against Christians. When 'the common people [*al-ʿāmma*]' (i.e. the Muslims) heard this, they went into a fury and ran around attacking any Christians they found. Muslims went to Christian neighbourhoods, killed any Christians they encountered and

pillaged their homes. The Christians, who had armed themselves in preparation for just such an eventuality, fought back. The next day, a battle took place between the French and 'the Islamic troops [*al-ʿasākir al-Islāmiyya*]'. Anyone who captured 'a Christian, a Jew or a Frenchman' took him to an Ottoman official in exchange for a reward; some of those captured were imprisoned and others were killed. Some Muslims also killed non-Muslims, decapitated them, and brought their heads to the authorities in exchange for the reward. This was 'a war against the infidels'; there were constant calls to jihad in the streets (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 143-151; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:325-341).

Finally, the Muslim forces surrendered and a treaty was signed, with the shaykhs acting as intermediaries. When word spread of the treaty, 'people [*al-nās*]' were angry and said: 'Those shaykhs have become apostates from Islam [*hāʾulāʾ al-mašāyiḫ irtaddū*]' (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 151). Note that they did not accuse them of betraying Egypt. The Moroccan mentioned above was especially active in stirring up this sort of opposition. In al-Ǧabartī's view, this Morrocan provoked strife (*fitna*) for his own material gain; his desire for jihad was not pure, unlike those who had been sacrificing themselves to please God during the fighting. The Moroccan should not, in his view, have meddled in the conflict, which men like Naṣūḥ Pasha had well in hand (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 152-153).

The Muslim forces, and 'the common people [*al-ʿāmma*]' (i.e. Muslim commoners), refused to accept the treaty, apparently preferring to fight to the death. They insulted the shaykhs and beat them for handing

victory to 'the accursed infidels'. Fighting continued, and the French retook Cairo, burning, massacring and pillaging. Al-Ǧabartī repatedly describes the two opposing forces as 'the French' and 'the Muslims' (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 153-155; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:346-351). 'The local Christians [*al-naṣārā al-baladiyya*]' took the opportunity of the French victory to gloat and abuse Muslims, to mock Islam and to declare that the days of the Muslims were finished (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 162-163; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:366). As for al-Ǧabartī, he condemns the second Cairo uprising, saying that it brought 'people [*al-nās*]' nothing but ruin (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:354).

Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār fled to Upper Egypt and stayed there for 11 months, until the French had left. During that time, he often wrote to al-Ǧabartī, stressing how much he missed Cairo. In one of these letters, he complains about being separated from his *waṭan* (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 163-164; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:367-369); clearly Cairo, not Egypt, was his *waṭan*. Note that it does not seem to have occurred to him that perhaps he should have stayed in Cairo to fight the French; his relationship to his *waṭan* was one of emotional attachment but not duty. This is consistent with the senses of *waṭan* that we saw in the previous chapter.

Summarising the events of the year 1214 AH (1799-1800 AD), al-Ǧabartī mentions that an Ottoman butcher went to visit the shrine of a saint in Ṭanṭā with a few companions. There were a few Frenchmen in the town. The inhabitants of the town mistook the butcher and his companions for Ottoman soldiers sent to drive out the French; they cried 'May God give victory to Islam [*Naṣara Allāh al-Islām*]', cheered the

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Ottomans wildly, and attacked the Frenchmen (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 166; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:372). Al-Ǧabartī reports that in July 1800, Frenchmen and local Christians were subjecting Muslims to widespread humiliation (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:521).

In June 1801, a British-Ottoman military alliance finally defeated the French army in Egypt. Al-Ǧabartī describes the atmosphere in Cairo as the Ottoman forces re-established their authority:

> People were delighted and congratulated one another, and displayed joy and happiness at the arrival of the Muslims [i.e. the Ottoman troops] and the departure of the infidels. They went out to greet them and to invoke blessings on their arrival. Women let out trills of joy, in the markets and from their windows, when they saw them. People made a great din, and children and youths gathered in the usual way, lifting their voices to cry: 'May God give victory to the Sultan' and the like (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 235-244; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:649-651).

It seems safe to assume, given what we have seen thus far, that by 'people' he means Muslims. The arrival of the Ottoman vizier was the occasion for further rejoicing (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:656-657). Two Ottoman edicts were issued, forbidding attacks against Christians and Jews, for the latter were among the subjects (*raʿāyā*) of the Sultan (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:657-666); this suggests that such attacks were still taking place. According to al-Ǧabartī, within a few months, the depredations of the Ottoman soldiers stationed in Egypt made most people, especially peasants, wish for the return of French rule (al-Ǧabartī

1806/1997, 4:824-825). Yet this was a purely material grievance; no one objected to Ottoman rule on the grounds that the Ottomans were foreigners. Moreover, no mass uprisings against Ottoman rule ensued. Religious affiliation seems to have trumped material grievances.

Let us now take stock of al-Ǧabartī's terms for Egypt and its inhabitants, as we did above for Ibn Ẓahīra. Like Ibn Ẓahīra, to refer to Egypt as a whole, he uses the words *iqlīm* ('region') (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 14, 219, 220; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:246, 596, 598, 600) and *diyār* ('lands') (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 83; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:583, 602, 655). He also calls Egypt a *quṭr* (another word meaning 'region') (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 113, 114; al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 29, 218; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:253, 583) and a *mamlaka* ('realm') (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 154; al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 188, 220; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:246, 545, 602). The terms *arḍ Miṣr* ('the land of Egypt') (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 250; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:658) and *al-mamālik al-Miṣriyya* ('the realms of Egypt') (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 76) also occur. Each of the regions within Egypt is likewise called an *iqlīm* (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 153-155, al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:375, 658). Al-Ǧabartī often uses the term *al-bilād* to refer specifically to the settled areas of Egypt outside Cairo (e.g. al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 83, 113, 134, 145, 151, 153, 158; al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 56). Hence the term *ahl al-bilād* means 'the settled inhabitants of Egypt outside Cairo' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 79). While for Ibn Ẓahīra, the name *Miṣr* usually meant Egypt, for al-Ǧabartī it nearly always means Cairo (e.g. al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 27, 28, 50, 55, 59, 61, 69, 71, 73, 74, 84, 85,

86, 88, 122, 166, 171, 172); he rarely uses the name al-Qāhira (e.g. al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 128, 173). Thus *ahl Miṣr* means 'the inhabitants of Cairo'; this term is explicitly contrasted with *ahl al-aryāf* ('the inhabitants of the countryside') (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 151; al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 27, 31, 145; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:328, 331). Al-Ǧabartī occasionally uses the word *awlād* ('children') to mean people who normally inhabit a particular place; thus *awlād al-balad* ('the children of the city') are people who live in Cairo (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 180; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:533, 823), and *awlād al-Qarāfa* are the living inhabitants of the Qarāfa necropolis[22] (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:328). In one French proclamation written by shaykhs, the inhabitants of Egypt are called *al-maḫlūqāt*, a term that could be translated as 'God's creatures' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 153).

In stark contrast to 20th-century Arab nationalists, al-Ǧabartī uses the words *ʿarab* and *ʿurbān* ('Arabs') only to mean Bedouin (e.g. al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 22, 44, 45, 55, 72, 73, 94, 101, 112, 134, 135, 151, 153, 158, 171, 172), i.e. desert nomads. When they appear in his narrative, they are usually plundering the inhabitants of settled areas. He describes them as 'the worst sort of people [*aqbaḥ al-aǧnās*]', notes that they were loyal to neither side in the conflict between the French and the Muslims, and contrasts them explicitly with *ahl al-bilād*, using the latter term interchangeably with *ahl al-qurā* ('the inhabitants of the villages') (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 165). An Ottoman edict notes that each Bedouin tribe in Egypt has a traditional stopping-place in the desert; the

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22 The Qarāfa cemetery has been inhabited since the Arab conquest of Egypt in the 7th century (Di Marco 2009).

edict uses the word *waṭan* to refer to each of these stopping-places (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 260). There can hardly be any doubt that the Arab nationalist expression *al-waṭan al-ʿarabī*, which designates an Arab national territory stretching from Morocco to Iraq, would have been incomprehensible to those Arabs.

It seems that the word *ahl* was, in al-Ğabartī's accounts of the French occupation as well as Ibn Ẓahīra's text on the good qualities of Egypt, the most common way of associating a group of human beings with a place. Let us pause here to consider the range of meanings of the word *ahl* in these texts. We have already noted the senses 'members of a household' and 'members of a person's family'. We often have seen the meaning 'inhabitants', e.g. 'the inhabitants of the Ḥusayniyya district [*ahl al-Ḥusayniyya*]' (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 60) and 'the inhabitants of Suez [*ahl al-Suways*]' (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 74). A slight extension is 'people located in a certain place', who do not necessary live there, e.g. 'the people on the boats [*ahl al-marākib*]' (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 167). A further extension, which we encountered in Ibn Ẓahīra's text, is 'people who practise a certain activity', as in 'the unbelievers [*ahl al-kufr*]' (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 53), 'the members of the council [*ahl al-dīwān*]' (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 57), 'scholars [*ahl al-maʿrifa wa-l-ʿulūm*]' (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 71), 'those who practise lowly trades [*ahl al-ḥiraf al-sāfila*]' (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 77) and 'wanton, licentious people [*ahl al-ḫalāʿa wa-l-muğūn*]' (al-Ğabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 254). These senses form a network; a plausible structure for this

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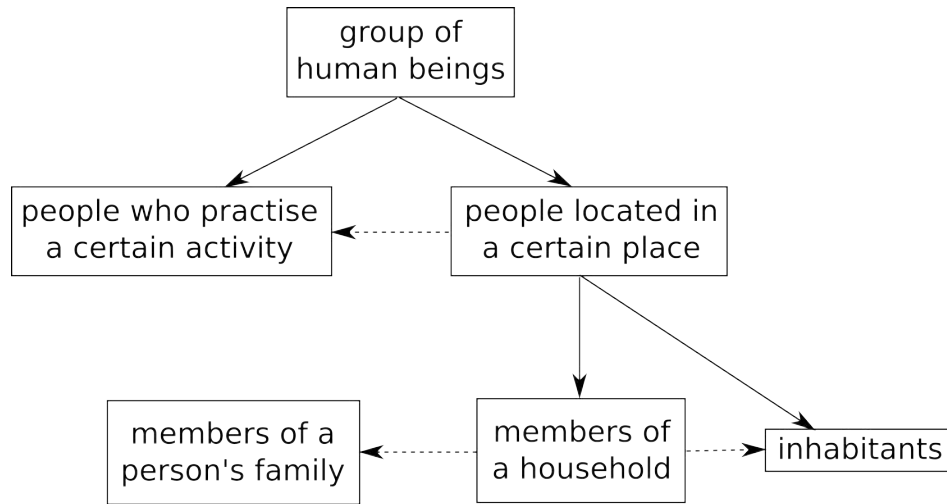
Figure 3: Network of senses of *ahl*

network is suggested in Figure 3, following the notational conventions used in (Langacker 2008, 37): 'The arrows represent categorizing relationships: solid arrows for the elaboration of a schema, and dashed arrows for extension from a more central meaning.'

As for the Arabic words that have meant 'nation' in modern times (*umma* and *šaʿb*), al-Ğabartī, like Ibn Ẓahīra, does not use them to refer to Egyptians collectively. Only Napoleon's first proclamation in Arabic, discussed above, uses *umma* to mean 'nation'. The word *šaʿb* does not occur at all in al-Ğabartī's accounts of the French occupation. As for *qawm*, it appears rarely, and is used in the broad sense of 'group', to refer, for example, to the French in general (al-Ğabartī 1798/1999, 40), the French officers in particular (al-Ğabartī 1798/1999, 135), a part of the French army that was bombarding an area in Cairo (al-Ğabartī 1806/1997, 4:128), the group of Mamluks who were defeated by the French (al-

Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 3), or a group of shaykhs (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 133).

In these texts, al-Ǧabartī rarely refers to Egypt as a whole. One exception is his second account of this period, whose introduction consists largely of a panegyric to the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan and the Sultan's vizier. Here, al-Ǧabartī echoes some of the claims about Egypt's good qualities that we found in Ibn Ẓahīra's text, and also focuses on the issue of the defence of the province. The French, he says, coveted the fertility and gardens of 'the region of Egypt [*iqlīm Miṣr*]'. Ever since Egypt's creation, it has been a light in the darkness of the regions (*al-aqṭār*), and has been protected from the wicked. 'The soldiers of Cairo', led by the Mamluk ruler Sayf al-Dīn Quṭuz, repelled the Mongols in 1260 (cf. Little 2010); in those days, 'the soldiers of the inhabitants of this region [*ǧund ahl hāḏā al-quṭr*] were awake to the defence of the ports'. God established the Ottoman Empire and made it great, and the Empire put Egypt's affairs in the hands of rulers whose courage and protection was well-known, until the complacent, decadent Mamluks took over and neglected its defence (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 2).

Al-Ǧabartī then personifies the province, saying that Egypt became worried because of the Mamluks, called for their rule to be abrogated, and complained to the Ottoman Empire. The heedless Mamluks allowed 'this great region [*quṭr*]' to come to harm; its 'good qualities' or 'charms' (*maḥāsin*, the same word used in the title of Ibn Ẓahīra's text) were 'disfigured [*mušawwaha*]'. Rich people became poor because the Mamluks confiscated their wealth, and ignorance and nonsense became

widespread. Egypt had been a gathering-place for the virtuous, the noble and the eloquent, it had united the good qualities that were dispersed in other regions, and marvellous arts had been invented there. But because of the Mamluks' neglect of defence, when the French arrived, it was easy for them to conquer the region (*iqlīm*) (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 3). Hence 'the rule of the infidels [*dawlat al-kuffār*]' oppressed 'this great region', and Egypt's unique charms (*maḥāsin*) were obliterated. Like Ibn Ẓahīra, al-Ǧabartī notes that God mentioned Egypt in many verses of the Quran, that the Prophet recommended it to his Companions, and that its virtues, particularly the Nile, have been praised far and wide (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 4).

The disaster of the French occupation might have turned out like the one in al-Andalus (i.e. Islam nearly lost Egypt as it had lost al-Andalus), had it not been for the great Ottoman Sultan, 'may God prolong his reign and give him possession of the whole world'; he saved Egypt from those wicked people (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 5). Al-Ǧabartī lavishes similar praise on the Sultan's vizier, rescuer of Islamic law and of the Islamic community (*umma*), who saved the Muslims from the infidels, and returned security to their homes (*awṭān*) (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 6-7). The vizier eliminated 'the rule of the infidels' and returned Egypt to its former beauty. Drawing an analogy, al-Ǧabartī praises Saladin for saving Egypt from the Fatimids and for renewing the praiseworthy 'rule of the Kurds' (cf. Richards 2010). A poem by Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār emphasises the point, and praises the Ottoman vizier for getting rid of the French, 'who emptied the lands [*diyār*] and humiliated their

children [*abnāʾ*]' (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 8). The vizier removed the darkness of unbelief from Egypt, raised up the pride of the Muslims and restored them to their rightful position; hence they rejoiced (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 8-9).

It is striking that, for al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār, the responsibility for defending Egypt and protecting its charms lies not with the inhabitants of Egypt collectively, but instead falls solely on the shoulders of its rulers and military elite, whoever they may be. The ordinary inhabitants of Egypt seem to be assigned no moral responsibility towards the province whatsoever. If Egypt flourishes, the rulers are to be praised; if it is harmed, the rulers are to be blamed. One can almost detect a metaphor: Egypt is like a beautiful slave girl, whose owner is solely responsible for protecting her and ensuring that her charms are not disfigured. Like the texts of al-Ǧāḥiẓ and Ibn Ẓahīra, al-Ǧabartī's text also uses conceptual blends involving the frame of parenthood in order to represent the relationship between a place and the human beings who live there; this is particularly clear in the use of the words *awlād* and *abnāʾ* ('children'). From these expressions, we can infer the existence of an abstract conceptual blend, illustrated in Figure 4.

Yet in al-Ǧabartī's text, as we have seen, it is not necessary to have been born in Egypt to be considered one of its 'children'; a foreigner can become a 'child of Egypt'. More importantly, the moral aspects of the relationship between parents and children are not projected into the blend, as they are in the 19th-century nationalist discourse that we will see in the next chapter. In the 18th century, the 'children' of Cairo, or of the
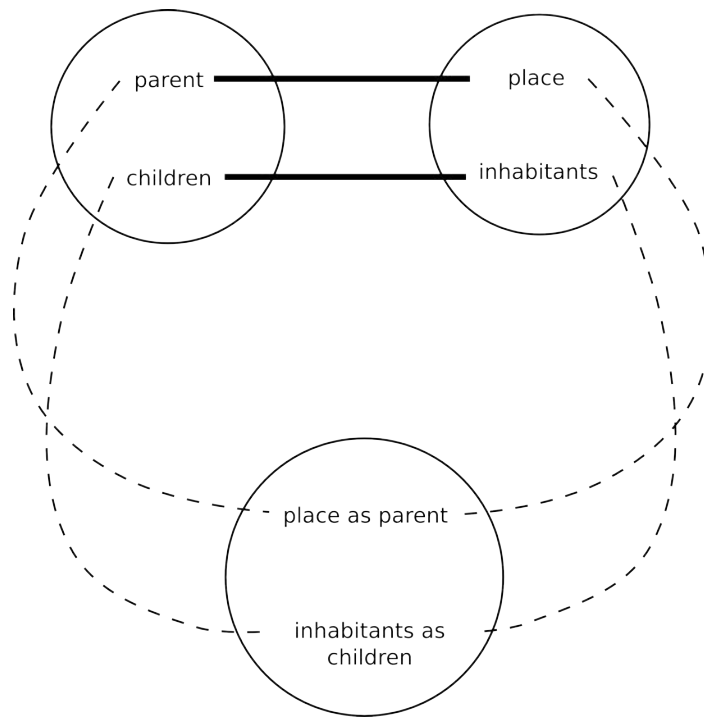
Figure 4: Place as parent

lands of Egypt, are not conceptualised as having any moral duties towards their 'parent'. All the evidence we have seen suggests that al-Ǧabartī, and the Muslim inhabitants of Egypt that appear in his narrative, saw the moral obligation to oppose the French occupation as a religious duty, on the grounds that Muslims should not be ruled by non-Muslims, rather than as a duty towards Egypt itself. Similarly, his narrative provides ample evidence that the Christian inhabitants of Egypt welcomed French rule. A phrase such as 'for the sake of Egypt' (*min aǧl Miṣr*), which would later become a standard part of nationalist discourse, is completely absent from al-Ǧabartī's accounts of the French occupation.

In sum, the evidence we have considered here is consistent with the four hypotheses given above. Not only does no Egyptian refer to Egypt as a *waṭan* in al-Ǧabartī's accounts of the occupation, but the concepts of

'nation' and 'national territory', as defined in the introduction to this thesis, appear to be absent from his conceptual world and that of the other Egyptians he wrote about. Faced with this evidence, but apparently reluctant to accept the idea that human beings might once have existed without nationalism, Delanoue (1982, 1:74-75) writes:

> It is noticeable that, in [al-Ǧabartī's] accounts of popular resistance movements and insurrections against the French – movements that he does not seem to approve of, considering them more dangerous than useful – there is no trace of expressions or battle cries suggesting nationalist or patriotic feelings in the modern sense. Everything is Islamic: slogans, symbols of struggle, figures in command. But this does not necessarily mean that such feelings did not exist among Egyptians; it could be that the Islamic appearance of all these movements is largely due to the way in which al-Ǧabartī, an *ʿālim*, sees and reports events. Moreover, the ideological expression of new feelings is not necessarily found immediately. Perhaps Egyptians, driven by something other than religious feeling, expressed themselves in religious terms because they had no other language.

Similarly, in his otherwise superb study of Egyptian perceptions of the French occupation, André Raymond refers to the fervour of resistance to the occupation as both 'patriotic' and 'religious' (Raymond 2004, 92, 193). He provides abundant evidence of religious fervour, but no evidence of patriotic fervour. Discussing the two revolts in Cairo, he writes:

Religion appears to be the common element in these movements. The inhabitants of Cairo rose up to defend Islam, which was threatened by a Christian occupation. ... But this is probably because religion was the natural means of expression of an opposition that was, in reality, many-sided, and which involved the equivalent of the patriotic and nationalist feelings of the modern era. ... However, Islam was inevitably the catalyst of these various emotions and reactions; as Gilbert Delanoue observes, Egyptians expressed themselves 'in religious terms because they had no other language' (Raymond 2004, 341).

Yet neither Delanoue nor Raymond gives any evidence to support this claim. Following Wierzbicka (1992), I assume that emotions have a cognitive basis, and that different feelings are based on different concepts, which are reflected in language. Thus in order to have nationalist feelings, one must have nationalist concepts. In the absence of evidence of nationalist concepts, instead of assuming that Cairenes used religious language to express nationalist feelings, we should apply Occam's Razor, and assume that they used religious language to express religious feelings. Moreover, it seems difficult to reconcile Delanoue's and Raymond's speculative view with Egyptian Christians' enthusiastic embrace of the French occupation, and with Egyptian Muslims' enthusiastic embrace of Ottoman rule. The explanation proposed here is preferable because it avoids speculation unsupported by evidence, and fits the available evidence in a straightforward, plausible manner: Egyptians had no

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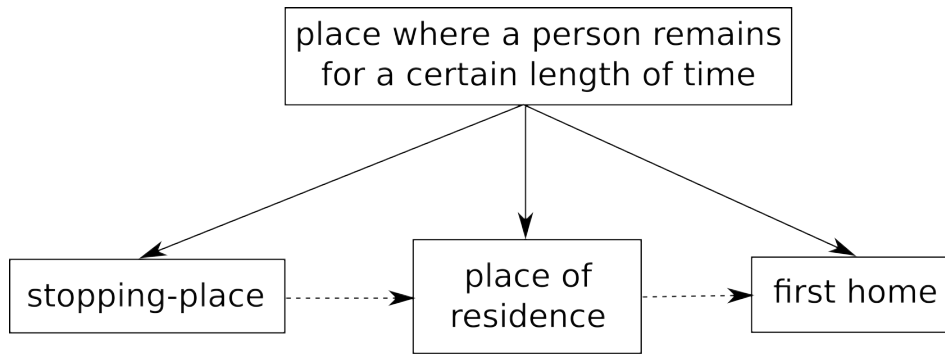
Figure 5: Senses of *waṭan* before the 19th century

nationalist (or 'patriotic') feelings, because they lacked both a concept of 'national territory' and a concept of 'nation'.

Conclusion

On the evidence considered here, it appears that the word *waṭan*, which would come to mean 'national territory' in the 19th century, did not have this meaning in pre-19th-century Arabic. Instead, it had a network of other senses. Leaving aside the senses that relate to non-human animals, we can plausibly sum up the main senses, as reflected in the texts considered in this chapter, in Figure 5. The diagram includes a hypothetical schema, 'place where a person remains for a certain length of time', to reflect the main commonalities between the senses we have seen in actual usage, which the diagram shows as elaborations of this schema. The word 'place' in the diagram should be taken to refer to a place of indeterminate size, at least as large as a campsite or a village, usually no larger than a city, rarely as large as a 'region' (*iqlīm* or *quṭr*). In the texts examined here, there is only one instance in which the word

waṭan is used to refer to something that would have been considered a 'region', specifically Upper Egypt. A single instance of the verb *istawṭana* ('to settle'), in a line of poetry, suggests that it was possible to conceptualise Egypt as a *waṭan*, but only as a highly unusual conceptual blend.

Judging by the texts I have considered in this chapter, Arabic speakers before the 19ᵗʰ century normally conceptualised Egypt as a 'region' (*iqlīm* or *quṭr*). Those who lived there were its 'inhabitants' (*ahl*); the Arabic words that have meant 'nation' in modern times (*umma* and *šaʿb*) were not used to refer to Egyptians collectively. Egypt's inhabitants were not seen as having a collective moral responsibility towards the region; this responsibility belonged to its rulers alone. When ordinary Egyptian Muslims rebelled against the French occupation, they did so on religious grounds, because '[m]edieval Islamic law and traditions taught Muslims that they should attempt to avoid living under the rule of non-Muslims if at all possible' (Cole 2007, 112); there is no evidence that they believed they were acting out of a duty towards Egypt itself. Moreover, there is no evidence that Egyptians objected to being ruled by non-Egyptians during this period. Instead, their religious beliefs shaped the way they conceptualised grievances, and thereby determined their choice of rulers: Egyptian Muslims were strongly attached to Ottoman rule and opposed to French rule, while Egyptian Christians welcomed French rule. More generally, in the texts considered here, we have not encountered the

idea that human beings have moral duties towards the places they inhabit or the places where they were born[23].

In short, in the texts considered thus far, we have not encountered the concepts of 'nation' and 'national territory', as defined in the introduction to this thesis. With this background in mind, we are now in a position to understand the novelty of Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī's translation of these concepts from French into Arabic in the 19th century.

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23 It is not possible to conclude, from the limited selection of evidence we have presented, that this idea never appeared in Arabic before the 19th century. However, it seems fair to assume that, at the very least, it cannot have been common or widespread.

Chapter 2: The First Priest of Nationalism in Egypt

Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī (1801-1873), an Azhar-trained religious scholar who studied in France, is best known as the author of *Taḫlīṣ al-Ibrīz fī Talḫīṣ Bārīz* (*Purifying Gold in Summarising Paris* [1834], hereafter the *Taḫlīṣ*), the first description in Arabic of French society (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 23), and as a prominent teacher and translator. Scholars have tended to agree that al-Ṭahṭāwī introduced nationalism into Egypt and chose the word *waṭan* to express the concept of 'national territory' in Arabic (Louca 1970, 69-70; Delanoue 1982, 451, 456; Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 11; Powell 2003, 48; Hourani 1983, 68-69). However, there has not been a detailed study of al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalist concepts, showing how they relate to nationalist concepts that he is known to have encountered in France as well as to earlier Arabic concepts of lands and their inhabitants. In this chapter, I examine the nationalist concepts he articulated in the *Taḫlīṣ*, in his principal works on contemporary Egypt and in his nationalist poetry, and identify the French and Arabic sources of these concepts, as well as the precise manner in which he blended together elements from these sources. Finally, I attempt to explain why he did this, considering his social trajectory and his influence in Egypt.

The Origins and Development of French Nationalism to the Early 19th Century

It will be useful to begin with some historical background on nationalism in Europe generally, and France specifically.

In a celebrated article, Ernst Kantorowicz (1951) surveyed the evolution of the concept of dying for one's country in medieval Europe. He notes that this concept had its origins in Greek and Roman antiquity. 'It is sweet and fitting to die for one's *patria*', wrote Horace in his second 'Roman Ode', and Cicero said, 'The *patria* is dearer to me than my life' (Kantorowicz 1951, 474, 490). However, at the time, the word *patria* 'referred chiefly, if not exclusively, to the city. . . . [T]he Roman Empire . . . would not have been referred to as a *patria* . . .' (Kantorowicz 1951, 474). With the arrival of Christianity, the *patria* was moved from Earth to Heaven; thus for Augustine, Paradise is the 'eternal *patria*', and Christian liturgy contained prayers for souls to be received 'in the *patria* of Paradise' (Kantorowicz 1951, 475-476).

During the period of European feudalism, *patria* ceased to be conceptualised as an object of service or sacrifice; 'its meaning . . . was practically always "native town or village", the home (*Heimat*) of a man' (Kantorowicz 1951, 476), much like *waṭan* in the texts we considered from al-Ğāḥiẓ's anthology in the previous chapter. In the 12th and 13th centuries, however, *patria* came to mean 'kingdom', particularly in France, and kings began to levy taxes 'for the defence of the *patria*' (Kantorowicz 1951, 477-479). Kantorowicz describes what I would call a conceptual blend of France, the Holy Land and Heaven. The Crusaders believed that, if they died fighting for the Holy Land, they would be admitted directly into Paradise as martyrs. 'By the middle of the thirteenth century . . . the crusader idea of a holy war was all but completely secularized, and its place was taken by a quasi-holy war for the defence of the realm or of the

nation symbolized by the "crown" of France' (Kantorowicz 1951, 479-482). The state began to be conceptualised as a sacred, 'mystical body' (Kantorowicz 1951, 484-487), which was explicitly compared to God: a 14th-century Florentine wrote that one should love one's *patria* 'immediately after God "for the similitude which the city has with God"' (Kantorowicz 1951, 488-489). In the 15th century, a future pope wrote that a prince may require citizens to sacrifice their lives to defend the state, on the grounds that a foot or hand of the 'mystical body' may be amputated to save the head, i.e. the prince (Kantorowicz 1951, 490).

The word *patrie* itself first appeared in French in the 16th century. 'A poet depicted his "poor *patrie*" as a mother whose children must, by virtue of a natural feeling, offer her all the assistance they can', and another wrote: 'Whoever dies for his country lives eternally' (Contamine 1997, 1684-1685). In 1683, a Jansenist gave a sermon in Paris in which he argued that all good Christians must cherish their *patrie*: 'A Christian, motivated only by the desire to do his duty, feels that he lives only to sacrifice his life to his God and his *patrie*' (Contamine 1997, 1686-1688).

In general, the French Enlightenment philosophers of the 18th century had the highest praise for 'the patriotic ideal', which they identified with Greco-Roman antiquity. Thus Montesquieu (whose influence on al-Ṭahṭāwī we will consider below) asserted that 'it is the love of *patrie* that gave to Greek and Roman history that nobility that our own history lacks' (Contamine 1997, 1688-1689).

The French revolution of 1789 simultaneously brought with it two momentous developments. First, as noted in Chapter 1, it linked the

concept of *nation* with that of *patrie* to form the conceptual pairing discussed in the introduction to this thesis. Second, the French Revolution unleashed a militant atheism that regarded religion as harmful superstition and crushed the Catholic Church, its clergy and its institutions with overwhelming violence. During the 'dechristianisation' campaign of 1793, churches across France were closed or destroyed, and many priests were executed or lynched (McPhee 2002, 98, 114, 120, 127-128, 133-134).

At the same time, the nationalism of the French revolution borrowed heavily from Catholicism. In a ground-breaking study, David Bell (2001) traces the ways in which it did so. He notes that in 18th-century France, 'descriptions of the *patrie* as a "God", "divinity", or something "sacred", and of patriotism as "a vast chain linked to Divinity" or a "sacred love", were utterly commonplace'. Going even further, the spokesman of the revolutionary demonstrators who stormed the National Assembly on 20 June 1792 declared that 'the image of the *patrie* is the sole divinity it is permissible to worship'[24] (Bell 2001, 38).

If the *patrie* is a god, it follows that reverence for it should motivate the sorts of social practices that are motivated by reverence for gods. In 1792, a member of the National Convention called for a national educational programme to 'make of the French a new people'. The model he proposed was that of 'the priests, who, with their catechisms, their processions . . . their ceremonies, sermons, hymns, missions, pilgrimages, patron saints, paintings, and all that nature placed at their disposal,

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24 The French text of this quote can be found in Kerverseau (1797, 8:385): 'l'image de la patrie est la seule divinité qu'il soit permis d'adorer'.

infallibly led men to the goal they designated'. Thus there would be 'National Temples', along with national 'hymns' and 'catechisms' (Bell 2001, 1-3). A cult of 'great men' was created to take the place of the cult of the Christian saints (Bell 2001, 107-139). Religious festivals were replaced by nationalist ones. These festivals involved a '"vertigo of imitation" of Christian practices', such as 'hymns, processions, sermons, altars, the Declaration of Rights taking the place of the Bible, the obsessive use of words such as "holy", "temple", "catechism", and "gospel"', and revolutionary leader Maximilien Robespierre descending from a mountain 'in the manner of Moses, bearing a torch, applauded by ranks of patriots dressed in red, white, and blue and singing the Marseillaise [the French national anthem]' (Bell 2001, 167). The *patrie* was symbolised as a goddess called Marianne (McPhee 2002, 120). In 1831, the year in which al-Ṭahṭāwī returned to Egypt after his stay in France, a French historian wrote: 'My noble country, you must take the place of the God who escapes us, that you may fill within us the immeasurable abyss which extinct Christianity has left there' (Bell 2001, 23). At the same time, the *patrie* was still conceptualised as a parent. The *Marseillaise* – a hymn to war composed in 1792, at the height of the French Revolution (McPhee 2002, 101) – addresses its listeners as 'children of the country', and its refrain begins, 'To arms, citizens'.

There was a paradox in French nationalism, one that we will encounter in al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalism as well:

It was a rare speech, newspaper, pamphlet, or book published in the years after 1789 that did *not* invoke the icons of nation and *patrie*.

Yet . . . many writers made the sudden and singular discovery that, contrary to previous assumptions, France was actually *not* a nation. . . . [T]he great orator Mirabeau called France 'nothing but an unconstituted aggregate of disunited peoples'. . . . Thus was posed the great nationalist paradox: political leaders making wholly unprecedented demands on behalf of 'the nation' and justifying their actions by reference to its sovereignty, but simultaneously acknowledging that the nation did not yet exist. . . . (Bell 2001, 14-15).

In sum, the *patrie* was conceptualised as both a parent and as a god. Gods have often been represented as parents. DesCamp and Sweetser (2005) have analysed the conventional Christian concept of 'God the Father' as a conceptual blend. I would add that this blend serves a social function: it generates inferences about duties. In particular, the concept of filial duty is projected onto the blend, producing the concept of duties towards God, as illustrated in Figure 6. It is no doubt very easy for children to learn, at an early age, that God is like a big father in the sky. Perhaps this blend is so widespread precisely because it tends to be internalised in childhood, and therefore remains entrenched throughout adulthood.

In Figure 7, the blend in Figure 6 is used as an input to a further blend, enabling *patrie* to be conceptualised as a god. This blend also serves a social function: to generate inferences about duties of service to the state, such as military service. The result is, once again, a blend that can be taught to children: the *patrie* is like God, and thus is also like a
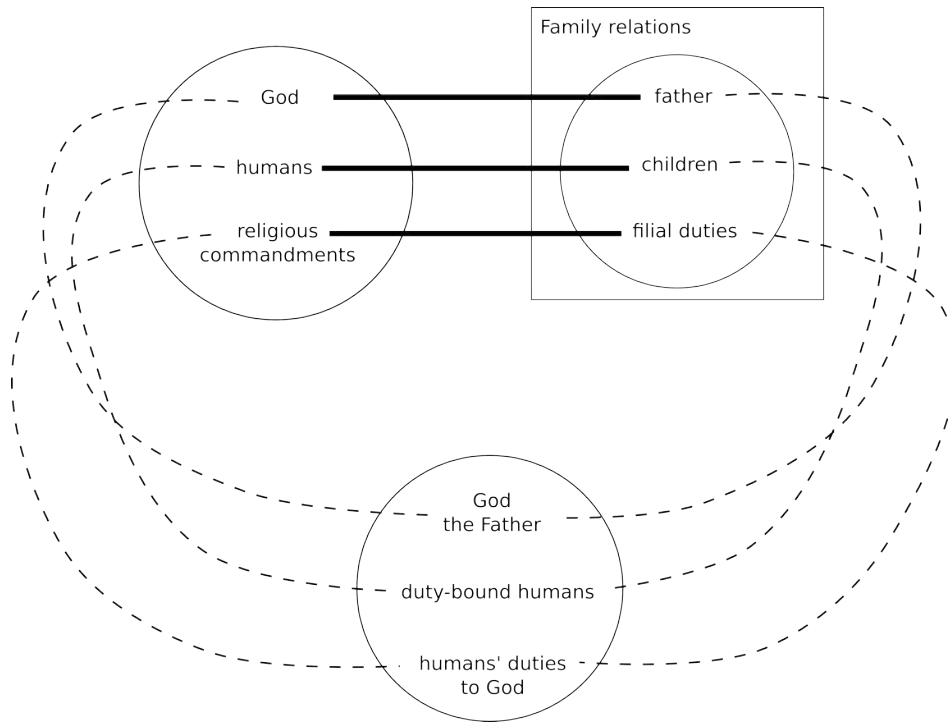
Figure 6: God the Father

parent; hence one has duties towards the *patrie* as well. Naturally, the relevant duties are not quite the same in each case, and this follows from the differences between the inputs to the blends. God is intangible and is conceptualised as residing in Heaven, a place that is inaccessible to humans during life on Earth; hence there is no need to defend God from attackers. However, these aspects of God are not projected onto the God-*patrie* blend in Figure 7. Instead, the *patrie* is located on Earth and is identified with a particular territory. Territories can be attacked and defended. Hence it is straightforward to infer that one has a duty to defend the *patrie* in warfare, just as one would have a duty to defend one's parents if they were attacked. Straightforward but not inevitable: crucially, this was not the case in the blends we considered in the
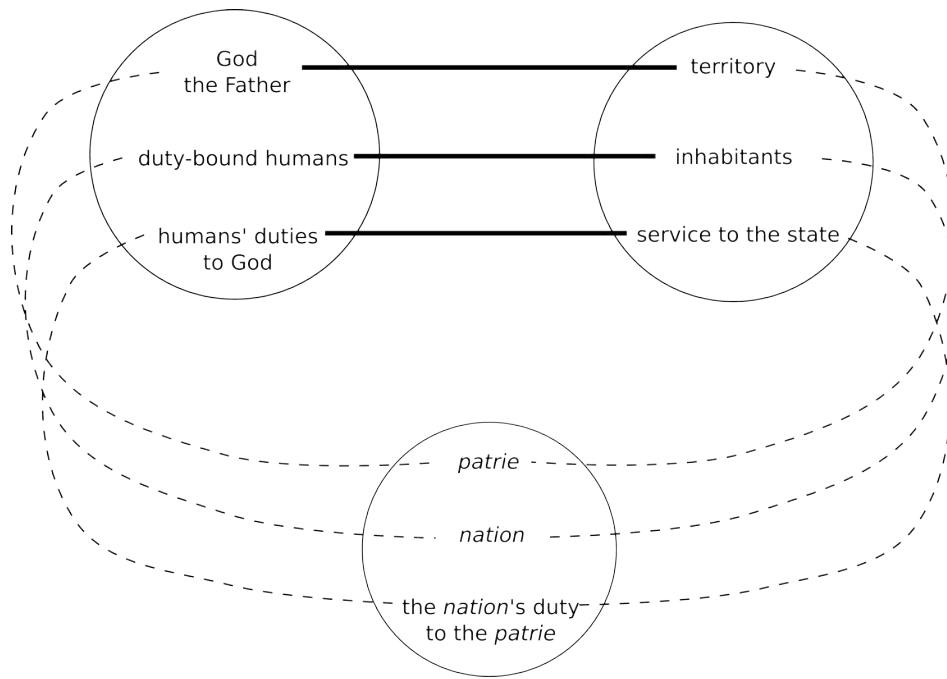
Figure 7: *Patrie* as a god

previous chapter. In those blends, parenthood was an input, but the concept of filial duty was not projected onto the blend as it is here.

In the God-*patrie* blend, religious duties are also projected from the God-parent input. Hence one can also worship the *patrie* as a god, build temples to it, and so on, as we have seen above. Finally, it is worth noting that while God is specifically a father, a more abstract parenthood is projected onto the concept of *patrie*, enabling it to be conceptualised as a mother as well.

Education and Knowledge Production in Egypt at the Beginning of the 19th Century

Since the argument of this chapter rests on the premise that education in Egypt underwent radical changes in the 19th century, and that al-Ṭahṭāwī was at the forefront of these changes, it will be worth

outlining the state of education in Egypt just before al-Ṭahṭāwī began his career.

There were two types of formal educational institutions in 18th-century Egypt: the *kuttāb* and the *madrasa*. At the *kuttāb*, children learnt the elements of Arabic orthography and memorised the Qurʾān. 'The meaning of the text and its grammatical analysis were definitely not included in the syllabus' (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 2, 5)[25]. Higher education was reserved for the class of shaykhs, whose sons continued their education at a *madrasa* once they reached puberty (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 6-7, 36). Most of these *madrasa*s had fallen into ruins and their libraries had gradually disappeared (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 15-16). The most prestigious *madrasa* in Egypt was al-Azhar mosque in Cairo (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 15), which had perhaps 50 teachers and 1,500 students at the beginning of the 19th century (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 27-29). Two types of subjects were taught. The first type, *al-ʿulūm al-naqliyya*, consisted of purely religious subjects such as theology, Qurʾānic exegesis and Islamic jurisprudence. The second group, *al-ʿulūm al-ʿaqliyya*, included the Arabic language (grammar, morphology, etc.), logic, arithmetic, algebra, calculation of the lunar calendar and of prayer times, astronomy, philosophy and debating skills (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 41-42). One can readily see what all the subjects in the second group have in common: they were all useful for religious purposes. Arabic was necessary to understand the Qurʾān and hadith; logic was needed to evaluate arguments in Islamic jurisprudence; arithmetic, algebra and

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25 Heyworth-Dunne's huge, detailed survey of education in Egypt in the 19th century remains the most comprehensive work on its subject, and has aged remarkably well.

astronomy were essential for determining the lunar calendar (on which the timing of religious holidays depended) as well as prayer times; philosophy was useful for understanding medieval theology (which had borrowed heavily from ancient Greek philosophy); and debating skills were useful for training teachers. A list of the textbooks used to teach this second group of subjects reveals a preponderance of texts written in the 13th-15th centuries, many that were considerably older, and only two whose authors lived in the 18th century (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 57-65). It seems clear that al-Azhar did not encourage original scientific research or the study of topics that served no religious purpose. The Azharite bias against non-religious studies was to be long-lived. In about 1880, an Azharite scholar remarked:

> What is decreed in the law of the Muslims is that the branches of knowledge which are to be sought are the theological sciences and their tools, i.e. the sciences of the Arabic language; other knowledge is not to be sought, indeed is to be proscribed (quoted in Cachia 1956, 86).

The clergy of al-Azhar would, in general, maintain this contempt for non-religious studies well into the 20th century (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 71). It is true that a few 18th-century *ʿulamāʾ* were interested in other sciences for their own sake or for non-religious practical purposes, and studied them as a hobby. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ǧabartī mentions over thirty such scholars in his chronicles. Chief among their interests was astronomy; some were also interested in geometry, medicine and geography. Yet, once again, the texts that these men relied on dated from

the 10th-15th centuries, and among their own writings, one finds that 'nearly all that was produced was in the shape of some commentary or gloss on a previous work' (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 77-84). Moreover, the fact that these pursuits were not taught at al-Azhar, the most prestigious educational institution in Egypt, is a clear sign that they held little prestige. No wonder al-Ǧabartī, after visiting the French scientists in Cairo many times during Napoleon's occupation of Egypt, and seeing demonstrations of modern chemistry and electrical technology, remarked: 'They had strange things in [the Institute], devices and apparatus achieving results which minds like ours cannot comprehend [*la yasaʿuhā ʿuqūl amṯālinā*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:160; Rogan 2009, 64). There seems to be no evidence, however, that al-Ǧabartī or any of his Egyptian contemporaries attempted to study modern European science or to learn a European language. Non-religious studies were thus dominated and marginalised in relation to religious ones. This, I will argue, would become a crucial factor motivating al-Ṭahṭāwī's use of nationalist concepts.

Mehmed Ali

Mehmed Ali Pasha (1769-1849), known in Arabic as Muḥammad ʿAlī[26], was the second-in-command of a contingent of Albanian soldiers that arrived in Egypt as part of the Ottoman forces sent in 1801 to expel the French. In the political chaos that followed the end of the French

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26 I am following Fahmy (1997) in using the Turkish spelling of the Pasha's name, which is undoubtedly closer to the way he himself would have pronounced it; he 'was Turkish-speaking and as far as is known he never spoke Arabic' (Fahmy 1997, 72).

occupation of Egypt, the Mamluks (Egypt's ruling caste until the arrival of the French) were in disarray. The Albanian troops successfully rebelled against the newly appointed Ottoman governor over unpaid wages, driving him out of Cairo. Their own commander was then assassinated. Mehmed Ali thus found himself 'in charge of the most powerful military force in Egypt'. With the assistance of leading *'ulamā'* and notables, who were exasperated with the high taxation that the Mamluks had imposed, he defeated the Mamluks and established himself as the *de facto* ruler of Egypt. He was then recognised as *wālī* (governor) by the Ottoman Sultan in 1805 (Fahmy 1998, 143-144).

Egyptian nationalist historiography since al-Ṭahṭāwī has represented Mehmed Ali as 'the founder of modern Egypt', a national saviour who sought to modernise the country by promoting science and industry, for the sake of the Egyptian nation (Fahmy 1997, 12-16). Khaled Fahmy's groundbreaking study, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Fahmy 1997), based on extensive archival research, decisively refuted this view. Fahmy shows that Mehmed Ali 'despised the fellahin [peasants] and could not respect them except as a source of cheap and hardworking manpower' (Fahmy 1997, 282), and that his sole aim was to found a dynastic empire ruled by himself and his descendants. To this end, his overriding concern was to create an army capable of expanding his realm by conquest:

> [T]he army occupied central stage among the Pasha's numerous institutions and was the *raison d'être* of various other impressive institutions. For example, the many factories that were founded

were intended mainly to produce commodities for the use of the army, which was their most important market. Similarly, most of the schools that were opened were aiming at graduating officers for the army. Likewise, the earliest modern hospitals to be built in Egypt were essentially military hospitals that were constructed near camps with high troop concentration. . . . Moreover, using this army Mehmed Ali managed, albeit for a short period of time, to extend his control over wide areas of the Middle East including the Hijaz, the Sudan, Syria and parts of southern Anatolia. . . . (Fahmy 1997, 12)

While nationalist historiography has portrayed this army as a national institution in which Egyptian peasants learned to love serving their country (Fahmy 1997, 18-19), it was in reality an army of unwilling Arabic-speaking peasant conscripts commanded by a Turkish-speaking elite. Mehmed Ali invaded Sudan in 1820, mainly in order to enslave large numbers of its inhabitants to serve as his soldiers. By 1822 he had completed the conquest of Sudan, but had realised that the idea of conscripting its population was unworkable, since many of the slaves had died while being shipped back to Egypt. Hence, as a last resort, he turned to the conscription of peasants, which began on a large scale in 1823 (Fahmy 1997, 86-93). The peasants expressed their unwillingness to serve in unequivocal terms. In 1824, for example,

A big revolt erupted in Upper Egypt against the Pasha's conscription and tax policies. Over 30,000 men and women joined this rebellion which was headed by a certain Shaykh Raḍwān who

claimed himself to be the *mahdī* and declared Mehmed Ali to be an infidel (Fahmy 1997, 95).

Peasants often deserted their villages or maimed themselves in order to avoid conscription (Fahmy 1997, 100-102). Moreover:

> The soldiers fighting in Mehmed Ali's army deserted when they were given the slightest opportunity. . . . [F]or every two conscripts, one soldier managed to desert. . . . Ultimately . . . a new method of resistance developed which reflected the Egyptians' utter despair: they simply refused to marry and have children (Fahmy 1997, 256-261).

Nor did Mehmed Ali claim to carry out any actions for the sake of Egypt or the Egyptian nation. On the contrary, he treated Egypt as an Ottoman province that he nevertheless considered to be his *personal* possession. Hence, for example, when his troops went to war, 'the flags and banners carried during the actual fighting as well as the medals cast to commemorate the subsequent victories were decorated with Mehmed Ali's name and nothing else' (Fahmy 1997, 241).

> [Mehmed Ali] once told a distinguished French visitor, 'I have not done in Egypt except what the British are doing in India; they have an army composed of Indians and ruled by British officers, and I have an army composed of Arabs ruled by Turkish officers.' . . . The officers, rather than thinking of themselves as serving in a national army, were behaving as mercenary officers who moved from one patron to the other depending on who paid better. Joining the 'Egyptian' army for them meant joining the force of an Ottoman

pasha who had a better organized and better paid army than the Sultan. . . . [H]ow then did the soldiers themselves think of the army at large and their role in it in particular? None of the battles that these men were about to fight in were ever portrayed to them as national battles, i.e. battles in which the word 'Egypt' as meaning a nation-state was referred to. Instead, to incite them to fight or to encourage them to excel in training, reference was made either to religion or to their superior training and better organization. . . . Not only did the idea of the army as being a national one never cross anyone's mind from the Pasha all the way down to any of his soldiers, there was not even a pretense at portraying the wars that the men were dying in as national wars waged to defend 'Egypt' or to deliver her from foreign tyranny (Fahmy 1997, 246, 251-252, 313).

Even if Mehmed Ali had tried to use nationalist concepts to persuade peasants to accept conscription, it is doubtful that the peasants would have been receptive:

As far as the fellah-soldiers were concerned, the allegation that this was their army, and that they were fighting for their own sake, would have been the most ludicrous claim they would have heard. For them, nothing could be further from the truth (Fahmy 1997, 276-277).

Instead, Mehmed Ali hired Muslim preachers to tell peasants that serving in the army was a religious duty. However, these messages

fell on completely deaf ears. . . . It is here that we come to the nub of the problem facing Mehmed Ali and his military authorities: the

Pasha never succeeded in inducing the fellahin to join the colors out of their free will by employing ideological or religious arguments (Fahmy 1997, 98-99).

Moreover, it was impossible to justify conscription in religious terms when Mehmed Ali went to war against the Ottoman Sultan, who was recognised throughout the Ottoman Empire as the Caliph of Islam. After losing his fleet reluctantly fighting European forces in 1827 at the Sultan's demand, in order to keep Greece in the Ottoman Empire, Mehmed Ali resolved to confront the Sultan militarily, and in 1829 he started building a new navy in preparation for invading Syria. Hostilities began in 1831, the year in which al-Ṭahṭāwī returned to Egypt, and continued until 1840, when the Ottomans and the British expelled Mehmed Ali's forces from Syria (Fahmy 1997, 51-67, 74, 197, 253, 310-311, Fahmy 1998, 175).

> Most telling is the answer he gave to [his son] Ibrāhīm when the latter had reached Kütahia, a day's marching distance from Istanbul, and when his victorious son was pleading with him to press for independence. In response to these repeated pleas, and finding no plausible excuses to legitimate his rebellion against the Sultan, Mehmed Ali replied saying, 'My Mehmed Ali-ness is enough for me' (Fahmy 1997, 283-284).

Later in this chapter, I will show that Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī used nationalist concepts to claim that Egyptians had a national duty to serve in the army; the strength of peasant resistance to conscription can help us understand his reasons for making this argument. As we will see, it is

likely that al-Ṭahṭāwī tried to promote this idea among army officers during Mehmed Ali's lifetime. However, Mehmed Ali failed to perceive its potential, and perhaps never even noticed it.

> [T]he Pasha's world was an Ottoman world; he understood things within that context and it made sense to him to view matters from that perspective. . . . [H]is culture, his manners, and his language were all 'Ottoman' in the sense that they were more connected to, and influenced by, the Turkish centre of the Empire than its Arabic speaking provinces, of one of which he was governor (Fahmy 1997, 73, 279).

Al-Ṭahṭāwī Before and During His Stay in France

Al-Ṭahṭāwī came from a wealthy family of rural notables in the town of Ṭahṭā. The family claimed descent from the prophet Muḥammad, and had included many religious scholars and judges, as well as some Sufi saints. In 1813, when Mehmed Ali confiscated all the farmland that had been subject to the tax farming system (*iltizām*), al-Ṭahṭāwī's family was ruined and impoverished. His father became an itinerant small tradesman; overwork took its toll on his health, and he soon returned to die in Ṭahṭā. Before his death, he decided that Rifāʿa, now the family's last hope, would dedicate himself to scholarship. Al-Ṭahṭāwī memorised the Qurʾān during his teens, then studied Arabic grammar with his Azhar-educated maternal uncles. In 1817 he enrolled at al-Azhar (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 265; Louca 1970, 55; Delanoue 1982, 384-385; Newman 2004, 29-31). Thus he was well prepared to succeed in his studies thanks to the cultural capital he had

acquired from his relatives, while his family's descent into poverty gave him a strong motivation to become a diligent student.

At al-Azhar, al-Ṭahṭāwī became a disciple of Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār. He was an excellent student, became especially well-versed in literature, and soon began teaching at al-Azhar (probably in 1822), but the teachers there were poorly and irregularly paid. In 1824 he took a slightly more lucrative but still mediocre job as a preacher and prayer leader in one of Mehmed Ali's new European-style military regiments (Louca 1970, 55-56; Delanoue 1982, 386-387; Newman 2004, 33-34). This job offered not only a better salary; it also brought al-Ṭahṭāwī into direct contact with the army, which would become the driving force behind the transformation of the cultural field in Egypt during Mehmed Ali's reign.

As we saw above, Mehmed Ali's efforts to build a modern army led him to establish a range of new economic and governmental institutions. This project involved substantial educational reforms, since it required technical knowledge that was not yet available in Egypt. To this end, Mehmed Ali began sending students to study in Europe in 1809, and started creating state-run schools in Cairo in 1816. Students in these new schools were trained almost exclusively in military technology and tactics, as well as a wide variety of other technical subjects that were deemed useful for the military or for the state bureaucracy; in nearly all of these schools, there was no religious instruction whatsoever (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 104-159).

Thus Mehmed Ali's military project had the side effect of creating a new type of audience for cultural products. Bourdieu (1996a, 252-

253) observes that in any field, the appearance of new sorts of consumers creates opportunities for new categories of producers, and can thus upset the balance of power within the field. As we will see, al-Ṭahṭāwī became a heterodox cultural producer, and the students and graduates of state schools were most probably his main audience.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's break with the norms of the Azhar-dominated field of knowledge production in Egypt did not occur until after his stay in France (1826-1831). Available information about his earlier writings – a didactic poem on theology (now lost), a supplement to a classical grammatical treatise, a didactic poem on geometry (now lost except for two lines quoted in the *Taḫlīṣ*), and a didactic poem on the methodology of hadith scholarship (Delanoue 1982, 618-619; Newman 2004, 32-33) – suggests a type of knowledge production very much in keeping with the prevailing norms at al-Azhar.

In 1826, Mehmed Ali sent 44 students to study in France, where a special school, the Ecole Egyptienne de Paris, was created for them under the direction of the French Orientalist Edmé-François Jomard (Silvera 1980). Mehmed Ali intended these students 'merely to acquire certain qualifications so that they could aid him in his work of military conquest' (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 157-159). Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār recommended that al-Ṭahṭāwī should be sent along with the group as prayer leader and spiritual guide (Louca 1970, 33, 56). For al-Ṭahṭāwī, then 25 years old, it was the opportunity of a lifetime, and he embraced it with extraordinary zeal. Though he had not been sent to France as a student, he immediately began studying French along with the others, and soon specialised in the

study of translation. He became, by far, the most successful student in the group. There was, in any case, little competition. Most of the others had been chosen simply because they belonged to the ruling military caste. Lacking an adequate elementary education in any language, they barely had time to learn French before returning to Egypt, and were ill-prepared to absorb whole fields of science and technology, as Mehmed Ali expected them to do. Moreover, they lacked al-Ṭahṭāwī's intense motivation to learn (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 167; Louca 1970, 50-53; Newman 2004, 27). While other students spent their evenings in the cabarets of Paris, al-Ṭahṭāwī stayed up late at night reading, against the orders of an ophthalmologist, and spent his allowance on books and extra private lessons (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 217). Upon his return, he had a draft of the *Taḫlīṣ* nearly ready for publication. It was published by order of Mehmed Ali in 1834, and free copies were distributed to civil servants and to students in the new schools. In 1839, it was translated into Turkish, and copies were sent to Istanbul (Delanoue 1982, 387-388). The *Taḫlīṣ* is our main source of information about al-Ṭahṭāwī's activities in France and his perception of the nationalist concepts that he encountered there.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's Exposure to Nationalism in France

Al-Ṭahṭāwī gives us considerable information that can help us identify the sources in which he encountered nationalist concepts in France. In the *Taḫlīṣ*, he lists his readings in the classics of Enlightenment philosophy (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 210-211), including Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws* (1758). Albert Hourani (1983, 70) suggests that al-

Ṭahṭāwī may have derived his concept of *waṭan* from Montesquieu; let us therefore consider the latter's concepts of *nation* and *patrie*.

For Montesquieu, a *nation* has a 'spirit', as well as 'customs and manners' (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 3:95, 3:98, 3:107, 3:112); it can be civilised (*policée*)[27] or barbarian (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 2:107, 3:39, 3:80, 4:27, 4:43, 4:78, 6:128, 6:141, 6:148), free or subjugated (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 2:71, 3:32, 3:42, 3:113, 3:118, 4:26, 6:140); and, most importantly from a political standpoint, its members can be assembled (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 2:56, 3:94, 6:41, 6:142, 6:143, 6:146, 6:152, 6:162), it can deliberate (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 2:56), it has a voice (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 2:49), and it can choose its leaders (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 5:54, 6:148, 6:150-153). In short, it is a personified entity conceptualised as having a collective will. In contrast, for Montesquieu, a *patrie* is almost always something passive, something that one loves (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 1:22, 1:47, 1:64, 1:99, 1:136) or serves (Montesquieu 1758/2002, 1:37, 1:126, 2:86; cf. Bell 2001, 60).

The Spirit of the Laws also articulates a theory of environmental determinism. As Gourou (1963) observes, the overall import of this theory is that 'northern people are taller, calmer, more industrious, more honest, more enterprising, more trustworthy and more disinterested than southern people', because 'climate and terrain create major differences in the "character of the mind" and the "passions of the heart"'. Bourdieu (2001, 331-342) adds that the notion that climate shapes character goes back to antiquity, and argues that Montesquieu's theory is basically a

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27 The word *civilisé* did not appear in its modern sense until 1791 (Anon. 2009).

mythological belief system covered with a veneer of scholarly language. We will return to environmental determinism later in this chapter and in the next.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī also tells us that he was an avid reader of French newspapers (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 211). These, too, may have played an important role in familiarising him with prevailing nationalist concepts in France. His stay in Paris coincided with a period of intense conflict between the liberal press and the monarchy (Hatin 1864, 8:443-444; Bellanger et al. 1969, 2:53-110). The revolution of July 1830, which he describes in detail and with great sympathy (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 219-242), was triggered by a struggle over freedom of the press (Agulhon 1988, 37). The leading opposition newspaper of the July revolution was *Le National*, edited by the nationalist firebrand Armand Carrel (Pilbeam 1995, 18; Jennings 1991). It is thus very likely that al-Ṭahṭāwī read some of Carrel's articles. More generally, Carrel's nationalism may be taken as representative of an influential current of thought that al-Ṭahṭāwī must have encountered. It is therefore worth our attention here.

Carrel's nationalism included resounding calls for the improvement of the material well-being of society: the sciences, arts and industry, he said, should become a 'national Pantheon' (Carrel 1857, 5:32; cf. Jennings 1991, 502). This theme, which would become central for al-Ṭahṭāwī, was also dear to other prominent opposition journalists of the day, such as Benjamin Constant, who wrote: 'The sole goal of modern nations is repose, and with repose ease and as the source of ease industry' (quoted in Jennings 1991, 503).

Carrel's personification of *nation* went much further than Montesquieu's. His *nation* not only exercises its sovereignty (Carrel 1857, 5:74) by means of elected representatives (Carrel 1857, 1:216); it also reads newspapers, engages in political debate, commands industry and owns property (Carrel 1857, 1:131). It has desires (Carrel 1857, 1:251, 1:390) and rights (Carrel 1857, 1:392, 1:464), is heroic (Carrel 1857, 1:142), and can punish an unjust regime (Carrel 1857, 1:240).

As for *patrie*, in Carrel's writings, it is nearly always something that must be saved (Carrel 1857, 1:154-155, 1:158, 1:226, 1:251, 1:273, 1:348). Every citizen has a duty to defend it by taking up arms (Carrel 1857, 5:74; Ledré 1960, 112), and those who die for its sake are heroes (Carrel 1857, 1:348). Moreover, Carrel was a staunch advocate of wars of aggression (Carrel 1857, 1:393; cf. Jennings 1991), and his belief that France had 'natural borders' (Carrel 1857, 5:137) reflects an irredentist view of the *patrie.*

The theme of conquest was connected to that of the national prophet who leads his nation to glory. During al-Ṭahṭāwī's stay in Paris, this role was commonly associated with Napoleon Bonaparte. At the time of Napoleon's exile to St. Helena in 1815, he had seemed destined to be remembered as a despot, an 'illustrious villain', yet he soon became the object of a widespread cult (Hazareesingh 2004, 3). The image of Napoleon as a national prophet gained a major boost from the publication by Emmanuel Las Cases, in 1823, of a hugely successful collection of Napoleon's reminiscences in exile (Tulard 1971, 16; Hazareesingh 2004, 164-165). Las Cases described Napoleon as the 'martyr and messiah' of the

French Revolution (Las Cases 1823, 1:86), and other prominent writers, such as Balzac and Nerval, followed suit (Tulard 1971, 85-92). Napoleon was transformed into 'a synthetic emblem of national unity' (Hazareesingh 2006, 81). The information that would have been available to al-Ṭahṭāwī about Napoleon would thus have reflected this dominant view, and it is unlikely that he would have come across information that might have challenged it. He tells that he read a biography of Napoleon while in France (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1979, 209); it was probably Léonard Gallois's *Histoire de Napoléon d'après lui-même* (Gallois 1825), a work of hagiography composed almost entirely of Napoleon's own self-aggrandising statements, which was later translated into Arabic under al-Ṭahṭāwī's supervision (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 319). Thus in the *Taḫlīṣ*, al-Ṭahṭāwī is under the impression that the French loved Napoleon during his reign, and that the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in 1815 took place against their will (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 222). As we will see below, in later works, he constructed a Napoleon-like myth around Mehmed Ali. The Pasha liked being compared to Napoleon (Fahmy 1997, 79), and later generations of Egyptian nationalists would develop a legend of Mehmed Ali that bears striking similarities to the legend of Napoleon, and indeed portrays the Pasha as a sort of saviour (Fahmy 1997, 14-18, 77).

Finally, al-Ṭahṭāwī encountered nationalist concepts in the discourse of the French authorities who oversaw his education in Paris. At a ceremony to distribute prizes to the best students of the Egyptian School in Paris, a French general made a speech in which he told the students

that they were called upon to regenerate their *patrie* (Egypt) (Louca 1970, 45).

Nationalist Concepts in the Taḫlīṣ

To understand how al-Ṭahṭāwī constructed a nationalism that would be intelligible in Arabic, we must examine his efforts to translate *nation* and *patrie*. In other cases where he needed to discuss a French concept that had no equivalent in Arabic, e.g. *spectacle* and *théâtre*, he took the reader explicitly through the process of translation, first transliterating the French term, then comparing it with the Arabic terms that were nearest to it in meaning, and finally explaining the reasons for his choice of translation (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 141). In contrast, he never acknowledged that *nation* and *patrie* did not yet have Arabic equivalents, and that, by rendering *nation* as *umma* and *milla* (among other words, as we will see below) and *patrie* as *waṭan*, he was giving these Arabic words new meanings. Instead, he devoted considerable space in his writings to a paradoxical endeavour: explaining these unfamiliar concepts to his readers while simultaneously insisting, no doubt sincerely, that they have always been familiar.

Let us consider *waṭan* first. The first occurrence of this word in the *Taḫlīṣ* is in the introduction, in the midst of a section in which al-Ṭahṭāwī is justifying his trip to France by explaining the benefits of travel: 'It is well known that pearls and musk become precious only when they have left their *waṭan* and place of origin. However, none of this contradicts the fact that love of one's *waṭan* is one of the branches of faith' (al-Ṭahṭāwī

1834/2002, 41). This is no doubt an allusion to the apocryphal hadith, 'Love of *waṭan* is part of faith', which we encountered in Chapter 1. As we will see, it would later become an important element in al-Ṭahṭāwī's legitimation of nationalist concepts. Here, al-Ṭahṭāwī adds that attachment to one's *waṭan* and birthplace (*masqaṭ ra's*) is instinctive, and quotes a few lines of poetry by the 9th-century poet al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf[28] (on whom see Blachère 2010) from the homesickness genre discussed in Chapter 1. At this stage, there is nothing to suggest a departure from the literary traditions we surveyed there.

Later, in a section of the book on 'the inhabitants [*ahl*] of Paris', al-Ṭahṭāwī connects the word *waṭan*, for the first time, with concepts of service and sacrifice. Here he is talking about Parisians' attitudes towards their country, and he writes as a detached observer, as if describing something strange and unfamiliar:

> Despite their great attachment to their *awṭān*, they love to travel. Sometimes they travel around the world for years and years, from east to west, and may even hurl themselves into peril for the benefit of their *awṭān*. It is as if they confirm the words of al-Ḥāǧarī (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 92).

He then quotes quotes two lines of verse by the 13th-century poet Ḥusām al-Dīn ʿĪsā ibn Sanǧar ibn Bahrām al-Ḥāǧarī, in which the poet simply says that all places are dear to him, but his native land (*mawāṭinī wa-bilādī*) is dearest. This is followed by a fragment of poetry by the 9th-century poet Abū Tammām (on whom see Ritter 2010), also quoted by al-

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28 Al-Ṭahṭāwī usually quotes poetry without attribution. In this and other cases, I have attempted to ascertain the source of the quotation.

Ǧāḥiẓ (9c/1964, 401), about homesickness for one's first campsite (*manzil*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 93). It is important to stress that these quotations do not express any notion of service or sacrifice; hence al-Ṭahṭāwī is mistaken in claiming that the attitudes and behaviour of the French confirm the sentiments expressed in this poetry. This is an example of al-Ṭahṭāwī's use of a literary tradition to lend an aura of conventionality to a nationalist concept that was, in Arabic, utterly unconventional.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī is not quite as consistent in translating *nation*. In the *Taḫlīṣ*, he renders it as *umma* on a number of occasions. Towards the end of the book, he quotes a long passage (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 266-268) from a text called 'A Historical Discourse on Egypt', by Joseph-Elie Agoub (1835). The author had been born in Cairo in 1795 of Christian (Armenian and Syrian) parents; his family had fled Egypt with the departing French troops in 1801, and settled in Marseille. He had worked as an interpreter for the Ecole Egyptienne de Paris, and had a brief moment of recognition in French literary circles before his death in 1832 (Newman 2004, 70-71; Silvera 1980). In the *Taḫlīṣ*, al-Ṭahṭāwī refers to Agoub as a French author. The original French version of Agoub's text begins: 'History is a public school in which nations [*nations*] are educated'; al-Ṭahṭāwī translates *nations* as *umam*. When Agoub asserts that a person who studies history witnesses a spectacle consisting of 'peoples [*peuples*], eras and empires', al-Ṭahṭāwī also translates *peuples* as *umam*. Turning to ancient Egypt, Agoub asks: 'what people [*peuple*] made a greater effort than the Egyptians to establish the edifice of their grandeur on durable foundations'? Again, al-Ṭahṭāwī translates *peuple* as

umma. Echoing the paradox in French nationalism mentioned above, Agoub writes: 'Egyptians today are not even a nation [*nation*]. They are a heterogeneous assemblage of different races of Asia and Africa, a mixture without unity, diverse traits that do not compose a distinct type [*physionomie*].' Here al-Ṭahṭāwī translates 'Egyptians' as *ahl Miṣr*, *nation* as *ğinsan min ağnās al-umam*, and *races* as *ğunūs* (pl. of *ğins*); we will see below that he considered *ğins* and *umma* to be synonymous[29].

Elsewhere in the *Taḫlīṣ*, al-Ṭahṭāwī clearly echoes Montesquieu in asserting that nations (*'umam*) can be ranked according to their degree of advancement; he puts the Europeans and the Egyptians in the most advanced category, and the Sudanese in the category of the barbarians (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 26-27). Similarly, he refers to the French as 'the wisest of nations [*aḥkam al-umam*]' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 147). In his discussion of the revolution of July 1830, he says that the king should have given freedom to the French nation (*umma*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 227).

Al-Ṭahṭāwī also uses the word *milla* to mean 'nation'[30]; on several occasions, he refers to the French as *al-milla al-Faransāwiyya* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 129, 222, 231, 234). In one place he calls them a *ṭāʾifa* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 221), a word that can mean 'faction', 'sect' or simply 'group'. On a number of occasions, he seems to render the phrase 'the people' (Fr. *le peuple*) as *al-raʿiyya* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 221, 224, 227, 234), i.e. 'the subjects' (of the king).

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29 In the next sentence of Agoub's text, which falls just outside the section quoted by al-Ṭahṭāwī, Agoub refers to Egypt as the '*patrie* of the Pharaohs'.
30 On his use of this term, see the discussion of his definition of it below.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's Nationalist Poetry

In 1841 (Delanoue 1982, 624), al-Ṭahṭāwī published a translation of the French national anthem, *La Marseillaise*, translating 'children of the country' as *banī al-awṭān* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1979, 199). In 1856, he published 'four patriotic poems, to the glory of the Egyptian army, extolling military virtues' (Delanoue 1982, 626). One of these (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1979, 97-102), which is clearly modelled partly on *La Marseillaise*, begins: 'Come, brothers, let us swear to one another / With firm pledges and oaths / To strive sincerely for the sake of the *awṭān*'. The poem is in the form of a song with a refrain: 'Let us go to war, brave ones / Love of *awṭān* is part of faith'. Another verse begins: 'Unite, unite / Your swords assist the nation [*milla*]'. Here, once again, we find the nation conceptualised as a family ('brothers'). Fighting in war is presented as part of 'love of country', which in turn is presented as part of religious faith, hence as a religious duty. In all likelihood, al-Ṭahṭāwī composed these songs for the use of the military officers in the state schools where he worked or that he directed[31] (on these schools, see Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 266-271); he may well have suggested that they should use these songs to motivate their troops at war. In order to analyse the concepts involved, we must now turn to his later works, in which he discusses these concepts in considerable detail.

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31 Even at the School of Languages, '[a]ll students held military rank' (Fahmy 1997, 173n); 'graduates were automatically awarded the rank of army lieutenant' (Newman 2004, 45).

Manāhiǧ al-Albāb al-Miṣriyya

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's book *Manāhiǧ al-Albāb al-Miṣriyya fī Mabāhiǧ al-Ādāb al-ʿAṣriyya* (The Paths of Egyptian Hearts in the Joys of the Contemporary Arts[32]), published in 1869 (hereafter the *Manāhiǧ*), is a wide-ranging work of economic and moral guidance, probably intended mainly for teachers and students in the state schools in which he served as teacher and administrator. Its central argument concerns the importance of what he sees as a vast project, begun by Mehmed Ali, for the economic and military development of Egypt, as well as the means by which this project should be pursued. Al-Ṭahṭāwī justifies this project on the grounds that its fulfilment is one of Egyptians' duties towards their *waṭan*. The book thus provides considerable evidence of his conception of the proper relationship between nation and national territory. Along the way, it touches on a wide variety of moral, technical and political topics, many of which will not detain us here; we will focus on the main elements and functions of the nationalist concepts that al-Ṭahṭāwī employs, particularly those concepts that went on to become dominant in Egyptian nationalist discourse.

The National Duty of Economic Activity

The author's preface begins by praising Mehmed Ali and his successors for restoring Egypt's greatness (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 2). Thanks to the promotion of knowledge (*al-ʿulūm wa-l-maʿārif*) and economic activity (*al-manāfiʿ al-ʿumūmiyya*[33]), Egypt has joined the ranks

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32 This loose but felicitous translation of the title is due to Albert Hourani (1983, 72).

33 I am following Hourani's (1983, 72) translation of this term. Al-Ṭahṭāwī explains that *al-manāfiʿ al-ʿumūmiyya* is a translation of the French word *industrie*, which, he

119

of civilised states (*al-mamālik al-mutamaddina*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 3). Egyptians have been borrowing, for their *waṭan*, industry and science from foreigners. It is to be praised for fulfilling 'its national duties [*ḥuqūqihā al-waṭaniyya*]' and maintaining friendly relations with other states. The manners of Egyptians (*ahl al-waṭan*) towards foreigners have been improving, exercising a 'magnetic' pull on foreigners, just as foreigners' manners towards Egyptians have been improving. Al-Ṭahṭāwī quotes a poem, attributed to the 14th-century Andalusi scholar al-Ruʿaynī (on whom see Bonebakker 2010) advising the reader not to offend people when visiting their *awṭān*. Turning to the purpose of the book, he asserts that 'it is the duty [*wāǧib*] of every member of the *waṭan* to aid society [*al-ǧamʿiyya*] as best he can, and contribute capital [*raʾs māl*] for the material benefit of his *waṭan*' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 4). Similarly, the last part of the book is on 'the duties of the honourable *waṭan*'s children towards it' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 348).

The book's introduction, entitled 'On the Renown of this *Waṭan* and What Perceptive People have Said about It', sums up much of al-Ṭahṭāwī's conceptualisation of the *waṭan*. He begins with a brief economic history of Egypt, asserting that Egypt got its name in Arabic (*Miṣr*) from the migration of people into it (*maṣīr al-nās ilayhā*) to enjoy its economic benefits, which are due to its good location. This quickened the widening of the realm of civilisation (*dāʾirat al-tamaddun*) there. The

says, means 'progress in skill', and is 'an art that enables a person to gain mastery over raw material'. He adds that the term designates the advancement of trade (*tiǧāra*) and industry (*ṣināʿa*), and refers more generally to 'the art of work and activity that serves to increase wealth and human happiness', and thus includes agriculture (*zirāʿa*), trade (*tiǧāra*) and industry (*ṣināʿa*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 129). Hence I think Hourani's translation of *al-manāfiʿ al-ʿumūmiyya* as 'economic activity' is accurate, while 'industry' can be reserved for *ṣināʿa*.

morals of the people (*ḫalāʾiq*) who lived there became polished over time, their character became refined, and they clung to the fruits of knowledge. By mixing with other nations (*umam*), they enjoyed an abundance of mutually beneficial relationships (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 7).

Two factors, he says, worked to improve Egyptian civilisation. The first is the improvement of Egyptians' morals through religion, which is the strongest base for the well-being of this world (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 7). The second is economic activity, which brings wealth and improved conditions to society (*al-ğamʿiyya*), removing it from its primitive, natural state. The light of civilisation unites these two factors. God did not put the useful things of this world all in one land (*arḍ*); instead he spread them around, and made them dependent on one another, so that people would have to travel in order to find them (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 8).

In al-Ṭahṭāwī's view, civilisation (*tamaddun*) has two parts. The first is moral (*maʿnawī*), and involves ethics, customs and manners, 'i.e. civilisation in religion and Islamic law'. This is 'the foundation of a civilised religious community [*al-milla al-mutamaddina*], which is called by the name of its religion and its race [*ğinsihā*]'. (Here *milla* seems to mean 'religious community' in the Ottoman sense.) The second part of civilisation is economic progress, such as agriculture, trade and industry (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 9). Similarly, he later says that there are two kinds of *manfaʿa* ('benefit', 'useful service', 'advantage'): the religious kind, which includes religious obligations such as charity, and a second kind that includes 'what is done in the interest of a town, city, or realm [*mamlaka*], for the comfort of its inhabitants and the organisation of their

condition . . . by means of which the *waṭan* progresses' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 23-24).

Economic development, he says, is necessary for the advancement of prosperity. He acknowledges that some refined people fear the power of the progress of technicians and manufacturers as well as these groups' rising status. Some see industry as a despicable profession, and feel that industrialists go too far in expanding economic activity and in making profits for themselves. Having acknowledged these concerns, al-Ṭahṭāwī seeks to defuse them by attributing an ethical basis to the desire for economic progress. Only love of one's *waṭan*, he says, can make one wish to civilise it (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 10).

He then quotes a great deal of literature from the classical genre of writings on homesickness, which we considered in the previous chapter. None of these quotations, however, actually support his argument, since they do not express the idea that one could have a desire (still less a duty) to seek economic progress for the sake of one's *waṭan*. In this section, al-Ṭahṭāwī quotes two sayings that we we encountered in the previous chapter: the apocryphal hadith 'Love of *waṭan* is part of faith', and the aphorism 'God made towns prosperous through love of *awṭān*'. He tells an anecdote, whose source is the 9th-century philologist al-Aṣmaʿī (on whom see Lewin 2010), about a Bedouin who asserts that if you want to know whether a man has a good character, consider his longing for his *awṭān*. Al-Ṭahṭāwī then quotes poetry by Ibn al-Rūmī (on whom see Boustany 2010) saying that when people remember their *awṭān*, they remember their youth (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 10-11). A fragment of a

poem by the 10th-century philologist Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (on whom see Fück 2010b) expresses the poet's longing for the land of his clan and his first campsite. Al-Ṭahṭāwī says that even uncivilised people love their *waṭan*; the mountain Bedouin is attached to the mountains of his *awṭān* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 11). (This recalls al-Ǧāḥiẓ's anecdotes, discussed in the previous chapter.) A poem by Maysūn, wife of the caliph Muʿāwiya, expresses her homesickness for her birthplace (*masqaṭ ra'sihā*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 11-12). A line of poetry by Ibn al-Rūmī illustrates the idea that Bedouin pride themselves on living in the desert. Al-Ṭahṭāwī cites Q 4:66 ('if We had ordered, "Lay down your lives" or "Leave your homes", they would not have done so, except for a few') (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 13-14), which al-Ǧāḥiẓ (9c/1964, 389) also cites as evidence of the tendency of human beings to be attached to their homes. A fragment of poetry by Ibn Ḥamdīs (on whom see Rizzitano 2010) expresses the poet's homesickness for Sicily. Similarly, a fragment of poetry by Abū Tammām (also quoted in the *Taḫlīṣ*, as mentioned above) is about homesickness for one's first campsite (*manzil*), and a fragment by Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī (on whom see Gibb 2010), is about longing for one's lands (*diyār*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 14). In an unidentified fragment, the poet, standing in the desert, refers to it as his beloved (*ḥabīb*). The Prophet Muḥammad was reluctant to leave Mecca because of his attachment to the place, which al-Ṭahṭāwī refers to as the Prophet's *waṭan* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 14-15). Al-Ṭahṭāwī concludes this section by characterising love of *awṭān* as a great virtue, which is only truly fulfilled by those who have the most noble qualities.

Next he turns to love of Egypt in particular. Egypt is, he says, the dearest *waṭan* to its children (*banīhā*), and deserves their filial piety (*birr*); it is a mother to its inhabitants, and filial piety is a duty (*wāǧib*) for every human being. Here al-Ṭahṭāwī develops the classical conceptual blend between land and parent by adding the elements of filial piety and duty towards parents, which were not projected onto the blends we saw in the previous chapter. This filial piety, he says, also benefits Egypt's inhabitants (*ahālīhā*) by increasing the good things that Egypt produces for them. Although foreigners are not deprived of Egypt's fruits, he adds, it is more appropriate for its relatives (*aqārib*) to enjoy them (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 15).

Then he describes the good qualities of Egypt, in the style of the *faḍāʾil* literature that we considered in the previous chapter. He quotes three sayings of the Prophet in which Egypt is praised; all three are also quoted by Ibn Ẓahīra (15c/1969, 76-77). He cites a work from the *faḍāʾil* genre, called *Al-Mufāḫara bayn Miṣr wa-l-Šām* (Boasting Between Egypt and Syria)[34], whose author's *waṭan* was Damascus, but who nevertheless praises Egypt, in the manner of Ibn Ẓahīra. Al-Ṭahṭāwī quotes the laudatory comment about Egyptians (asserting that they are close to the Prophet's tribe, Qurayš) that is attributed to ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar, the son of the second caliph, and that we encountered in Ibn Ẓahīra's text (15c/1969, 77), and interprets it in the same way that Ibn Ẓahīra did (as a reference to the idea that Hāǧar, the mother of Ismāʿīl, and Mārya, the mother of Abraham, were from Egypt). He quotes two more sayings of

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34 I have found no other information about this work.

the Prophet, which are also similar to ones that Ibn Ẓahīra quotes (15c/1969, 74, 76), and mentions an account according to which Egypt got its name because it was settled by a grandson of Noah called Miṣrīm (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 16); this is similar to Ibn Ẓahīra's explanation (15c/1969, 6). He refers to Egypt as 'the mother of this world [*umm al-dunyā*]' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 16), now a common saying.

Other claims similar to Ibn Ẓahīra's follow. An unidentified fragment of poetry portrays Egypt as a land of plenty. Al-Ṭahṭāwī mentions various figures from Islamic history who showed a preference for Egypt. He says that Egypt has been the land of learning since times of old, and has produced many great scholars. Students still travel there to study. He emphasises the idea that Egypt was 'the world's storehouse', and that it enriched those who came to it; he cites a poem to this effect by the 12th-century writer Al-Faqīh al-ʿImāra al-Yamānī (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 17). As evidence that Egypt was already civilised in times of old, he quotes Q 10:88 and Q 43:51 on the wealth of the Egyptian Pharaoh, as well as interpretations claiming that Egypt was then the greatest realm (*mulk*) in the world, and that all other lands depended on it. In those days, Egypt's rivers had fine bridges (i.e. engineering), to the point that there was running water under houses and courtyards. This, he says, is the very essence of civilisation, since it can be accomplished only with advanced technology (*bi-taqaddum al-ṣanāʾiʿ wa-l-funūn*). Ancient Egyptian monuments are evidence of this technology (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 17-18).

Egypt is the world's port, whose goods are exported all over the world, especially now, thanks to the Suez Canal (opened in 1869, the same

year the book was published). For the same reason, Egyptians increasingly mix with other nations (*umam*). Therefore it is not surprising that its civilisation is becoming firmly established. Different civilisations shine brightly at different times, by turns; thus each country (*mamlaka*) takes its share of the light of civilisation for a few centuries, thanks to its inhabitants' enthusiasm in their love for their *awṭān* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 18).

Some, he says, have compared true love of *waṭan* to 'a new heat [*ḥarāra ǧadīda*]' that comes over people's bodies, vanquishing the heat of primitive instinct. If nationalist enthusiasm (*al-ḥamiyya al-waṭaniyya*) were ignited amongst the children of Egypt, people would make the necessary strenuous efforts so that the *waṭan* could attain the heights of civilisation (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 18-19). Here the use of the words 'new' and 'if' seems to acknowledge implicitly that nationalism is not the ancient phenomenon that he has made it out to be, and that it is not widespread in Egypt.

Militarism, Conquest and Education

Al-Ṭahṭāwī devotes a chapter to the duties of the military class (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 407-432). It is full of standard Islamic quotations on jihad; however, he also gives soldiers a nationalist role, describing them as 'protectors of the *waṭan* and of religion' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 407, 409). A soldier who lacks self-control 'forgets to serve the *awṭān*' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 423).

He asserts that in ancient Greece and Rome, all those who respected their *awṭān* would willingly give the government whatever 'patriotic

126

assistance [*al-iʿāna al-waṭaniyya*]' it needed to prepare its armies. During the Punic Wars, he says, some Roman landowners objected to paying a war tax, complaining that the state had conscripted their peasants and that agriculture had suffered. The Roman senators then set an example by paying the tax first themselves, inspiring everyone else to join them, and so Rome won the war thanks to the sacrifices, in money and lives, that its inhabitants made for their *awṭān* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 137-140). This could easily be an allusion to Egyptian peasants' widespread, fierce resistance to conscription and taxation during al-Ṭahṭāwī's lifetime, and an implicit suggestion that nationalism could solve this problem.

As a shining example of how wealth is produced, al-Ṭahṭāwī paints a glowing portrait of the British Empire along with other European empires, which 'conquered extensive lands' throughout the world, 'in order to advance their industry and trade. . . . This type of progress is called colonial industry [*andūstriyā qūluniyya*], which means foreign trade [*yaʿnī tiǧāra ḫāriǧiyya*]' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 134). Similarly, he praises Louis XIV of France, including that king's many wars, which were aimed at conquering additional territory for his kingdom. Al-Ṭahṭāwī describes these as 'magnificent conquests that widened the realm of the *waṭan* for its inhabitants' (he refers to France as a *waṭan* several times in this passage) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 217-221).

Mixing with foreigners, he asserts, greatly improves economic activity, even if it takes place via conquest and coercion (*al-taġallub wa-l-iġtiṣāb*). To support this contention, he asserts that 'one sickness can cure another'. Consider, he says, the example of Alexander the Great's

conquest of Egypt; it restored Egypt's splendour, and he ruled Egyptians in the best possible way (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 194). Al-Ṭahṭāwī devotes an entire chapter to demonstrating that Alexander's conquest of Egypt improved civilisation and economic activity there (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 194-206). Moreover, he claims that Alexander united the inhabitants of all the regions he conquered as one nation (*umma*) around a central *waṭan* (i.e. an empire with a centre and a periphery) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 195-196).

A large part of the book is devoted to praise for Mehmed Ali, who, in al-Ṭahṭāwī's view, saved Egypt from the Mamluks, restored its glory, and drew Egyptians' hearts towards loyalty to the *waṭan*; hence everyone gladly helped the government to the best of their ability (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 206). He claims that Mehmed Ali tirelessly promoted civilisation (*tamaddun*), and spared no expense 'in his zeal for the advancement of his exalted *waṭan* and for the elevation of his subjects out of the plight of their uncouth ways' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 248). As we have seen above, there is ample historical evidence to contradict this portrayal. If the reader is inclined to suspect that al-Ṭahṭāwī's praise for Mehmed Ali might have been insincere, it is worth recalling that Mehmed Ali had been dead for 20 years. Here as elsewhere, as I suggested in the introduction, misrecognition is a more plausible explanation than insincerity.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī extols Mehmed Ali's wars of conquest, on the grounds that he always had good intentions. The proof of Mehmed Ali's good intentions is that they resulted in the founding of a dynasty in Egypt that

'lightened burdens'. (No doubt the conscripted Egyptian peasants would have disagreed.) Al-Ṭahṭāwī asserts that Mehmed Ali went to Sudan both to look for gold and to promote 'civilisation and progress' there. The conquest of Sudan 'widened the realm of national benefits [*al-manāfiʿ al-waṭaniyya*]'[35]. If Mehmed Ali had not remained in the Ottoman Empire (*al-dawla al-ʿaliyya*), he would have conquered as much as Alexander the Great, thus improving civilisation and prosperity. Hence Macedonia can pride itself on being the birthplace (*mawṭin*) of two great princes: Alexander the Great and Mehmed Ali (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 211-212). Al-Ṭahṭāwī is enthusiastic about the size of 'the land of Egypt [*arḍ miṣr*]', including 'the Sudanese lands [*bilād*] that have been annexed to it' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 283); he refers to these territories as 'the Egyptian lands of Sudan [*bilād al-Sūdān al-Miṣriyya*]' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 313).

In a discussion of agriculture, he asserts that Mehmed Ali's intended improvements to irrigation, which are of utmost importance to the population (*al-ahālī*), were delayed because it was more important to Mehmed Ali to enlarge the military in order to establish his rule, and to protect himself and the *waṭan*. Moreover, al-Ṭahṭāwī acknowledges that in Mehmed Ali's view, the purpose of all economic activity was to serve the army; therefore he attended to agriculture only secondarily (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 228).

When al-Ṭahṭāwī describes the establishment of modern schools in Egypt, a development that he is clearly very proud of, he uses, for the first

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35 Note that *al-manāfiʿ al-waṭaniyya* here seems to be synonymous with the term *al-manāfiʿ al-ʿumūmiyya*, discussed above. For al-Ṭahṭāwī, there is clearly a close association between the concept of *waṭan* and the concept of economic activity; I will analyse the reason for this association at the end of the chapter.

time in this book, the expression 'the Egyptian nation [*al-ʿumma al-miṣriyya*]': God, he says, helped Mehmed Ali create, from the Egyptian nation, doctors, engineers, translators, administrators, army officers and businessmen, and this was all thanks to schools (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 243). He mentions the educational missions (*irsāliyyāt*) to France, and asserts that the Language School produced many civil servants who greatly benefited the country (*al-bilād*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 243-244). Similarly, he argues elsewhere that it is important to teach 'all useful sciences' (i.e. not just the religious ones), and stresses that 'all sciences are honourable' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 49-50). If a child is inclined towards a trade that is 'useful for the inhabitants of his *waṭan*', he should learn it, after his basic schooling, which should be given to all members of society. This elementary education should include, for boys, 'horsemanship, marksmanship, and the use of spears, swords, and other instruments of war, to train them in the defence and protection of their *waṭan*' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 65-66).

In his view, 'the principles of political and administrative affairs' should be taught to all boys at an early age, after they learn the Qurʾān, becasue this is the key to 'understanding the secrets of economic activity'. The teacher of these lessons would explain 'the reasons why the government obliges the population [*al-ahālī*] to serve their *waṭan* personally in the army, and why they are obliged to pay a portion of their wealth in taxes' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 350). Thus they would learn 'their rights and duties concerning their material possessions'. (Al-Ṭahṭāwī does not specify what these rights are.) The desired effect of these lessons

would be 'a moral influence'; the population would understand that 'their personal interests can be fulfilled only through the fulfilment of the public interest [*al-maṣlaḥa al-ʿumūmiyya*], which is the interest of the government, which is the interest of the *waṭan;* hence their souls would yield' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 351). In other words, these would be civics lessons that would use nationalism to legitimise conscription and taxation. It seems highly likely that al-Ṭahṭāwī is here describing something that he had been doing, at least informally, for many years in his work as a teacher.

In his chapter on the clergy, al-Ṭahṭāwī says that respect should be given to scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) who are involved in 'honourable sciences' that are beneficial in 'the state and the *waṭan*', such as medicine, engineering/geometry (*handasa*), astronomy, natural science (*al-ṭabīʿiyyāt*), geography, history, administration and finance (*ʿulūm al-idāra wa-l-iqtiṣād fi-l-maṣārīf*), military technology (*al-funūn al-ʿaskariyya*), and anything else connected with technology (*fann*) or industry (*ṣināʿa*). People involved in these activities, as well as those who teach 'literary knowledge and Arabic eloquence', must be respected by 'the inhabitants [*ahl*] of the state [*dawla*] and the *waṭan*' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 371). Mehmed Ali, he says, raised up 'the lighthouse of the *waṭan*' and renewed education and scholarship in Egypt, but did not manage to introduce these various sciences into the Azhar. This should now be done, for both nationalist and religious reasons: these 'philosophical, scientific sciences [*hāḏihi al-ʿulūm al-ḥikmiyya al-ʿilmiyya*]' will benefit the *waṭan*, and they should be taught by the Islamic

ʿulamāʾ because they were originally Islamic sciences, although they now seem foreign (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 372-373). Al-Ṭahṭāwī concludes that the Azharite scholars should devote themselves the study of 'the contemporary sciences [*al-ʿulūm al-ʿaṣriyya*]'. He adds that they may make excuses, alleging that they need help from the government, but in his view, the government has done a great deal already, and it is up to the clergy to take the initiative now (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 376).

Political Philosophy

Al-Ṭahṭāwī praises the Khedive Ismāʿīl for founding the Council of Delegates (*Maǧlis Šūrā al-Nuwwāb*) in 1866. In reality, the Council of Delegates provided only the appearance of political participation:

Viceregal Egypt under Ismāʿīl was developing a modern form of autocracy comparable to that of eighteenth-century France or nineteenth-century Russia. The viceroy increasingly depended on a council of ministers, but before 1878 yielded no privileges to it that would detract from his absolute power. . . . [The Council of Delegates], made up of village headmen and a few guild officials appointed by the khedive (and thus only indirectly 'selected by the people'), could only forward requests to the viceroy for his approval, lacking any actual authority. One might compare Ismāʿīl's new chamber of deputies to the 'parliaments' of fourteenth-century Britain, which had a largely ceremonial purpose within a society dominated by the nobles (Cole 1993, 30).

In al-Ṭahṭāwī's view, the Council of Delegates is important because 'a free nation [*al-umma al-ḥurra*]' should be consulted on matters of

administration and organisation whose reform is seen as desirable. One of the benefits of this consultation is that it enables the ruler to be certain of his 'moral domination [*al-tasalṭun al-maʿnawī*]' of the souls of his subjects, and to obtain their assistance in his efforts to 'please their *waṭan* [*isʿādihi li-waṭanihim*]' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 323). This 'moral domination' that al-Ṭahṭāwī envisages is unmistakably a type of symbolic power. As we will see in later chapters of this thesis, this concept was to have an illustrious future in Egyptian nationalist thought and practice.

Without kings, says al-Ṭahṭāwī, there would be chaos. The king is to his subjects as the soul is to the body (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 348). Borrowing from Montesquieu, he observes that government (*al-quwwa al-ḥākima*) is divided into three branches: the legislative, the judicial and the executive. However, he undermines the democratic potential of the separation of powers by asserting that all these branches are under the authority of the monarch, who simply delegates these matters to them (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 349-350). In al-Ṭahṭāwī's thought, as Delanoue (1982, 469-470) observes,

> There are no institutional restrictions on the prince's authority; no established body shares power with him in taking final decisions. Rifāʿa proposes only moral limitations on the prince's power. . . . As for the prince's subjects, they owe him total obedience, by virtue of the Qurʾānic verse that is constantly cited in this regard: 'You who believe, obey God and the Messenger, and those in authority among you [*ulū al-amr*]' (Q 4:59). This verse, notes Rifāʿa in a very traditional manner, closely links obedience to the prince with

obedience to God and the Prophet. The subjects must therefore aid their prince if he is attacked, by supplying him with soldiers and money. In no case do they have the right to rebel. If the prince is unjust, they have no recourse but prayer[36].

Al-Ṭahṭāwī says that government requires a king and subjects, and he defines the term 'ruler [*walī al-amr*]' as 'leader of the nation [*raʾīs al-umma*]' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 353). In most realms (*mamālik*), he says, kings were originally elected by the nation (*umma*), but elections caused all sorts of corruption, conflict, war and disagreement, so monarchy became hereditary; this policy has guaranteed the maintenance of order. Kings have rights and duties, but the king is 'God's successor on earth [*ḫalīfat Allāh fī arḍihi*]' and is accountable only to God, not to his subjects. His advisors merely remind him of things that may have escaped his attention. If he does something that is not in accord with his nation (*umma*), his conscience will punish him. The function of councils such as the Council of Delegates is merely advisory (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 354-357). As Cole (1993, 42) observes,

> In rejecting the effective, modern constraints on absolutism developed in Europe, al-Ṭahṭāwī reveals a thoroughly late-Ottoman mindset. One of Egypt's great landlords, he demonstrated a strong loyalty to Ismāʿīl, and he wished to socialize the public to the values of the viceregal elite, of which he formed a part.

Thus for al-Ṭahṭāwī, the nation is not sovereign; sovereignty belongs only to the monarch.

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36 Cf. al-Ṭahṭāwī (1869/2002, 368-369).

Similarities between Nationalism and Religion

Al-Ṭahṭāwī makes a number of analogies between nationalism and religion. First, he says, that whenever someone serves his *waṭan*, the *waṭan* feels sympathy for him and improves his condition (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 4). The parallel with divine mercy here is plain.

After citing several hadith to the effect that all Muslims are brothers (and thus have duties towards one another), he argues that this principle can be generalised to 'the members of the *waṭan*', who therefore have the very same duties towards one another, by virtue of the 'national brotherhood [*al-uḫuwwa al-waṭaniyya*]' that exists between them (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 99).

Finally, al-Ṭahṭāwī asserts that the duty of 'the children of the *waṭan*', regardless of their social class, is to serve the *waṭan*, the realm (*mamlaka*), the nation (*milla*) and the state (*dawla*); if they do this, the *waṭan* will thank them (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 433). Anyone who refuses to do useful work for the *waṭan* is thereby guilty of 'sins [*āṯām*]' and has betrayed his era (*ʿaṣrahu*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 436). Note that the refusal to serve one's country is a sin, just like the refusal to serve God.

We will see in a moment how al-Ṭahṭāwī developed these parallels even further.

Al-Muršid al-Amīn li-l-Banāt wa-l-Banīn

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's treatise on education, *Al-Muršid al-Amīn li-l-Banāt wa-l-Banīn* (The Trustworthy Guide for Girls and Boys), published in 1872, also contains considerable material that clarifies the structure of his

nationalist concepts and the inferences that he drew from them. Once again, we will concentrate our attention on the relevant passages of the book.

Education in the Service of the Waṭan

In the first few pages of the book, al-Ṭahṭāwī says that the good education (*tarbiya*) of individuals (*al-āḥād*) is the basis of the good education of 'society, i.e. the nation [*al-hayʾa al-muǧtamiʿa yaʿni al-umma*]'. The nation (*umma*) whose children (*abnāʾ*) are well-educated and ready to serve their *awṭān* is a happy and praiseworthy nation and does not fear to entrust to its children the happiness of the *waṭan* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 6). No doubt this is exactly what al-Ṭahṭāwī told the young students in the schools he directed: that they should study hard in order to be ready to serve their country. It is also worth noting the personification of both nation and national territory here. This passage seems compatible with a conceptualisation in which the *umma* and the *waṭan* are seen as the two parents of Egypt's inhabitants. Perhaps the *umma* is conceptualised as the mother, raising her children in a way that would please the *waṭan*, her husband. (Also note that al-Ṭahṭāwī uses *umma* and *milla* synonymously.)

Education, he says, should be appropriate for the condition of the nation (*umma*) and the principles that are accepted in its *awṭān*. For example, if the character of the country (*balad*) is military, education for boys should be military as well, and education for girls should teach them to love brave, heroic fighters, to encourage their sons to go to war, and to respect their sons' service to the *waṭan.* The same goes for nations whose

136

character is agricultural, commercial, seafaring, etc. This is in keeping with natural law (*al-nāmūs al-ṭabīʿī*), whose course has been determined by God. Thus God made some people to be scholars, and others to do manual labour, and gave them characteristics appropriate to the profession that they are destined for (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 6-7). Thus al-Ṭahṭāwī invokes both God and nation in order to naturalise socially produced realities, including war, economic structures and social inequalities.

An *umma* in which education progresses will also 'advance in progress and civilisation' and thus be qualified to gain its freedom. (Considering al-Ṭahṭāwī's views on imperialism, considered above, we can deduce that this need not mean freedom from colonial rule.) Education is the basis of putting the 'children of the *waṭan*' to good use (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 7). Love for one's brothers and the inhabitants (*ahl*) of one's *awṭān* is a sign of faith (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 10). Once again, it is a happy nation (*umma*) that refines the morals of its children; the education of the nation's children (*awlād al-umma wa-ṣubyān al-milla wa-aṭfāl al-mamlaka*) is one of the most pressing duties. (Note once again that al-Ṭahṭāwī uses *umma* and *milla* as synonyms.) In ancient times, the nation (*umma*) of the Greeks gave the children of its kings the best education (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 16). Education in military courage among the ancient Greeks and the modern Europeans is nothing compared to the education that the Arabs gave their children in times of old, including the encouragement that Arab mothers gave their sons to fight in battle (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 18).

Environmental determinism, which we encountered above in the work of Montesquieu, appears in al-Ṭahṭāwī's remark that 'the names of races [*asmāʾ aǧnās al-umam*]' reflect 'the adaptation of each race [*ǧins*] adaptation to the nature of the lands [*arāḍī*] in which it was born'. Hence, he says, there is a white/Caucasian race, a yellow/Mongolian race and a brown race, to which are sometimes added an Indian race, an American race, an Arab race, etc. (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 28).

Secondary education is the means for achieving 'the civilisation of the society of the nation [*tamdīn ǧumhūr al-umma*]', and includes 'foreign languages that are useful to the *waṭan*' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 63). Competition (*tanāfus*) is beneficial and springs from 'love of the good of the country [*ḥubb al-ḫayr li-l-waṭaniyya*]' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 82). A competitive person should aim to serve his *waṭan* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 84). Once again, a ruler should base his arguments on love of the *waṭan* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 88-89). It is useful to leave one's *waṭan* in search of knowledge; whoever does not find a teacher to teach him in his *waṭan* should find one elsewhere (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 89).

Nation and National Territory

The topic of Part 4 of the book (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 90-134) is the ways in which education can contribute to civilising the *waṭan*. Here al-Ṭahṭāwī tries to define explicitly what he means by *waṭan*. It is, he says, a person's nest (*ʿušš al-insān*), in which he grows up. It is the place where his family gathers (*maǧmaʿ usratihi*) and the place where he is born (*maqṭaʿ surratihi*). It is the place (*balad*) whose soil, food and air raised him (*naššaʾathu*). Here al-Ṭahṭāwī quotes a saying from the homesickness

genre that we considered in the previous chapter, according to which one of the signs of a man's good character is 'his longing for his *awṭān*' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 90). This is very similar to the quote we saw above, attributed to al-Aṣmaʿī, in *Manāhiǧ* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 10). Al-Ṭahṭāwī quotes a saying, 'A sensible man longs for his *waṭan* as a fine camel longs for its usual resting place [*ʿaṭan*]', which is also quoted by al-Ǧāḥiẓ (9c/1964, 2:391). He quotes a fragment of poetry in which the poet nostalgically recalls the first land (*arḍ*) whose soil (*turāb*) touched his skin (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 90); al-Ǧāḥiẓ (9c/1964, 2:399-400) attributes the poem to the 9th-century musician Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī (on whom see Fück 2010c). Al-Ṭahṭāwī quotes fragments of similar poetry that he had already quoted in *Manāhiǧ* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 10-11) and that I have discussed above. Another fragment of poetry, from the poem *Lāmiyyat al-ʿAǧam* by the 12th-century writer Muʾayyad al-Dīn al-Ṭuġrāʾī, says that it is honourable to stay in one place rather than to travel. Another fragment mentions longing for *awṭān* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 91).

Al-Ṭahṭāwī goes on to say that it is customary for people who travel to miss their *waṭan*. He again refers to Egypt as 'the mother of this world [*umm al-dunyā*]', and adds that it, in his view, it is 'the first *waṭan* in the world that deserves to have its children's hearts incline towards it'. No one doubts, he says, that Egypt is an 'honourable *waṭan*' (note the personification). It is 'the land [*arḍ*] of glory in former times as well as recent ones'. In language that recalls Ibn Ẓahīra, he says that Egypt is like 'the picture of Paradise'; the hand of God has gathered in it 'the good

139

things of this world'. Like Ibn Ẓahīra, al-Ṭahṭāwī praises Egypt's soil (*turāb*), and notes that Egypt has produced many kings, sultans, wise men and other distinguished people, as well as sciences. Its nation (*umma*) is the first nation in glory and high-minded endeavours (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 91). Al-Ṭahṭāwī then quotes two lines of poetry by the Abbasid poet Marwān ibn Abī Ḥafṣa, praising a *qawm* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 91-92), which seems to mean 'tribe' in this context (the poem has nothing to do with Egypt); this juxtaposition prompts for the inference that a *qawm* is something like a nation. This is the first occurrence of this inference in the texts considered in this thesis.

Continuing in this vein, al-Ṭahṭāwī lists the virtues of the Egyptian nation: courage (*šağāʿa*), enthusiasm (*ḥamāsa*), sagacity (*kiyāsa*), leadership (*riʾāsa*), intelligence (*ḏakāʾ*), perspicacity (*fiṭna*) and kindness (*laṭāfat al-ʿawāʾid wa-l-aḫlāq*). Egypt deserves respect from all nations (*al-umam wa-l-milal*), kings and states, for they have borrowed a great deal of science and knowledge from it. It is highly civilised. An unidentified fragment of poetry consisting of a panegyric to Egypt, similar to the ones quoted by Ibn Ẓahīra, praises the Nile. Al-Ṭahṭāwī says that Egypt possesses great weath and enriches those who go there (cf. Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 129). He quotes a poem that claims that Baghdad (which no doubt stands metonymically for Iraq) is more fertile than Egypt; al-Ṭahṭāwī says that this is false (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 92). Egypt is a wellspring of happiness, the ornament of the Islamic world (*zīnat bilād al-islām*) (cf. Ibn Ẓahīra 15c/1969, 82). It inhabitants are people of dignity (*ahluhā ahl karāma wa-taʿzīz*). (In a later chapter, we will find the

same concept in Gamal Abdel Nasser's slogan, *al-ʿizza wa-l-karāma.*) It is loved by the children of the *awṭān*, and attached to the (apocryphal) hadith, 'Love of *waṭan* is part of faith' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 93).

God, he says, has ordained that the *waṭan*'s children are always united in language, ruled by a single king (*malik*), and subject to the same laws. God has prepared them to cooperate in improving their *waṭan*, and to be like members of one family (*ʿāʾila*), as if their *waṭan* was their parents' house (*manzil*) and the place where they grew up (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 93). The nation, says al-Ṭahṭāwī, should not split into factions (*aḥzāb*), because this would cause conflicts and threaten national security (*amniyyat al-waṭan*). Instead, they should be like the heart of a single man. Their only enemies should be those who seek to subvert their system of government (*niẓām mulkihim*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 93-94). Later he repeats that internal conflicts (*al-fitan* and *al-iḫtilāf al-dāḫilī*) must be avoided so that the nation (*umma*) can be strong and defend the *waṭan* (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 130). As we will see, these were to be important elements of Nasser's anti-democratic nationalist discourse.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī emphasises that the nationalist who sincerely loves his country sacrifices everything for it, serves it with all he possesses and sacrifices his life for it (*yafdīhi bi-rūḥihi*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 94). He defends it from anyone who would harm it, just as a father defends his son from harm. The children of the *waṭan* must always have virtuous and honourable intentions towards it, and never do anything that would violate its rights or those of their brothers. Similarly, the *waṭan* defends

its children (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 94). These notions of familial duty and honour will be central to our analysis of al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalist concepts.

Moreover, says al-Ṭahṭāwī, a person who defends his *waṭan*, even if he is harmed in doing so, is happy. Nationalism (*waṭaniyya*) does not means simply that people ask their *waṭan* for their rights; they must also fulfil their obligations towards it. Any children of the *waṭan* who fail to do so lose their civil rights. The ancient Roman nation (*umma*) was attached to the love of its *waṭan*; hence it was able to dominate the world. (Clearly al-Ṭahṭāwī sees world domination as an admirable goal, as we saw above when considering his view of the British Empire.) When the Roman nation (*milla*) lost its nationalism (*waṭaniyya*), he says, its members failed to work together, and it fragmented (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 95). (Note once again that Tahtawi uses *umma* and *milla* interchangeably to mean 'nation'.)

Here al-Ṭahṭāwī gives a definition of *milla* ('nation'): like a race (*ǧins*), he says, it is a group of people who live in the same place, speak the same language, have the same morals and customs, and are usually governed by the same laws in a single state (*dawla*). Such a group, he adds, is also called *al-ahālī* ('the inhabitants'), *al-raʿiyya* ('the subjects'), *al-ǧins* ('the race') and *abnāʾ al-waṭan* ('the children of the country') (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 95). Let us emphasise here that al-Ṭahṭāwī is clearly not interested in any possible distinctions between these terms (though he is no doubt aware that they can be distinguished), and that he presents them as interchangeable for his purposes. Moreover, in the following sentence, he refers to such a group of people as an *umma*, and this seems

to be his preferred term for this concept. An *umma* that has these attributes, he says, should be noble-minded, courageous, intelligent and inclined to love glory, pride and honour (*šaraf al-ʿirḍ*). It should love its freedom, be passionately fond of the power of its head of state (*tatawallaʿ bi-quwwat raʾīs dawlatihā*), and obey the laws of its realm (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 95). (We will see this conception of love for the leader's power become a reality when considering the career of Gamal Abdel Nasser in a later chapter.) A nation (*umma*), says al-Ṭahṭāwī, cannot do without a leader (*raʾīs*) who governs it well and looks after its interests; otherwise it cannot enjoy its civil rights (*ḥuqūqihā al-madaniyya*), nor protect itself, its wealth and its honour (*ʿirḍ*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 96).

Freedom

Al-Ṭahṭāwī devotes several pages to a discussion of freedom and rights, but only in very vague terms. Once again, he does not propose any real limitation of the power of absolute monarchy. In his view, a native son of the country (*ibn al-waṭan al-mutaʾaṣṣil bihi*) or an immigrant (*al-muntağiʿ ilayhi alladī tawaṭṭana bihi*) enjoys the rights of his country (*yatamattaʿ bi-ḥuqūq baladihi*). The most important of these rights is complete freedom (*al-ḥurriyya al-tāmma*). An inhabitant of the *waṭan* is free only if he obeys the laws of the *waṭan*; this implies the *waṭan*'s guarantee of his civil rights (*al-ḥuqūq al-madaniyya*) and privileges (*al-mazāyā al-baladiyya*). Thus he is a member of the society of his country (*ʿuḍwan min aʿḍāʾ al-madina*)[37], as an organ is part of a body (al-Ṭahṭāwī

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37 I take *madina* here to be a calque of the French *cité* in the sense of 'state, society'.

1872/2008, 94). (Note the similarity with the concept of the 'mystical body' discussed above.)

This, says al-Ṭahṭāwī, is the greatest privilege in civilised nations (*umam*). In the past, most nations were deprived of this privilege, because rulers (*wulāt al-umūr*) ruled according to their whims. The governed had no way to oppose their rulers, had no role in governing, and could not express their opinions. They were like foreigners (*aǧānib*) as far as the affairs of government were concerned. Now, ideas have changed, and the *waṭan*'s children are safe from these dangers. The heart of a true nationalist (*al-waṭanī al-ḥaqīqī*) is full of love for his country (*ḥubb waṭanihi*) because he has become one of its members (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 94).

Al-Ṭahṭāwī defines freedom (*ḥurriyya*) as 'authorisation to do permitted work, without forbidden restrictions' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 127). (This is a tautology: permission to do what is permitted.) He adds that freedom includes freedom of movement, the freedom to dispose of oneself, one's time and one's work as one pleases, subject to restrictions established by law. One is free not to be exiled, to be punished except according to the law, or to be limited in how one spends one's money. One is free to express one's opinion as long as it does not violate the law. (This allows the king to restrict freedoms arbitrarily.) There are five types of freedom: natural (*ṭabʿiyya*) freedom, behavioural (*sulūkiyya*) freedom, religious (*dīniyya*) freedom, civil (*madaniyya*) freedom and political (*siyāsiyya*) freedom. Natural freedom, which includes eating, drinking and walking, is part of human nature and cannot be suppressed except

144

unjustly. Behavioural freedom is good behaviour and good morals. (Here again, the freedom to do only what is already regarded as good is no freedom at all. Without the freedom to challenge existing conceptions of the good, one's only option is conformity.) Freedom of religion is freedom of belief, as long as it is not heretical (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 127). (The added restriction renders the concept meaningless.) Similarly, there is also freedom of political schools of thought, which means the freedom is the freedom to espouse different political opinions (but not, as we have seen, to exercise power), and freedom for different kings and ministers to take different approaches in governing (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 127-128).

Political freedom, al-Ṭahṭāwī explains, means that the state protects people's property and natural freedom. Freedom is thus a means for making people love their country. It is, he adds, is basically the right to do what is permitted and not to be forced to do what is forbidden. A free person should honour his *waṭan*, his brothers and the head of state (*raʾīs dawlatihi*). If a person is attached to benefiting his *waṭan*, he will not consider it a violation of his rights when the government tells him to fight in war or to pay taxes, for these are among his duties (*wāǧibāt*) to his *waṭan*; when an enemy attacks a country, its inhabitants (*ahl*) must fight the enemy (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 128). A free nation (*umma*), he adds, rejoices in the freedom of other nations and does not like to see them enslaved (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 128-129). (Considering al-Ṭahṭāwī's enthusiasm for imperialism, and his tautological concept of freedom, this assertion does not seem to amount to much.)

No doubt the vagueness of al-Ṭahṭāwī's political thinking partly reflects his much greater preoccupation with economic development. Indeed, he asserts that the most important freedom in a civilised realm is freedom of agriculture, trade and industry (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 129).

Nationalism, Civilisation and Religion

Al-Ṭahṭāwī defines civilisation (*tamaddun*) as follows: 'The civilisation of a *waṭan* means the acquisition of the tools that prosperous people need to improve their physical and moral condition; it is their superiority in the improvement of morals and customs, the perfection of education, the promotion of praiseworthy qualities, the attainment of civilisational virtues (*al-kamālāt al-madaniyya*), and progress in material prosperity (*rafāhiyya*). This is the civilisation of the nation that lives in the country (*al-umma al-muqīma fī al-waṭan*) (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 124).

Islam, he says, brought civilisation through its principles and laws. The principles on which civilisation is based in the other civilised nations (*umam*) are similar to the principles of Islam. (Note that here, *umma* is used both in the sense of 'nation' and in the sense of 'religious community'; al-Ṭahṭāwī is comparing the Islamic *umma* with the European nations.) What Muslims call the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*ʾuṣūl al-fiqh*), he says, is called natural law (*al-ḥuqūq al-ṭabīʿiyya wa-l-nawāmīs al-fiṭriyya*) elsewhere (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 124). Then, in a particularly revealing passage, al-Ṭahṭāwī equates Muslims' religious faith with Europeans' nationalism, adding that for Muslims, nationalism is part of religious faith:

This attachment that Muslims have for their religion, and their zeal to defend it, which enables them to surpass other nations [*umam*] in strength, is known to non-Muslims as love of *waṭan*. However, among us Muslims, love of *waṭan* is one of the branches of faith [*min šuʿab al-īmān*], while the defence of religion is a principle that unites all obligations [*wa-ḥimāyat al-dīn maǧmaʿ al-arkān*]. Hence any Muslim realm [*mamlaka*] is a *waṭan* for all the Muslims who live there; it unites religion and nationalism [*fa-hiya ǧāmiʿa li-l-dīn wa-l-waṭaniyya*], and its children thus have a duty to defend it in both respects. We are in the habit of mentioning only religion, because of its great importance, but we also mean the *waṭan* [*ānamā ǧarat al-ʿāda bi-l-iqtiṣār ʿalā al-dīn li-quwwat ahamiyyatihā, maʿ irādat al-waṭan*][38] (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 124-125).

Al-Ṭahṭāwī has clearly understood that religion and nationalism are profoundly similar. At the same time, he is keen to argue that, for Muslims at least, nationalism is part of religion, rather than a competitor to it. Hence he tells his fellow Muslims that, in effect, they have been nationalists all along without realising it.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's Nationalist Vocabulary and Concepts

As we have seen, the key term in al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalist vocabulary is *waṭan*, which clearly means 'national territory' as defined in the introduction to this thesis. Crucially, unlike all the earlier senses of

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38 My translation roughly follows that of Delanoue (1982, 433).

waṭan that we considered in the previous chapter, al-Ṭahṭāwī's concept of *waṭan* is morally linked to a concept of 'nation': in his view, the members of a nation have a moral duty to serve their *waṭan.* Thus he embraces what I have described as the schematic concept of nationalism.

In his earlier work, his most common term for 'nation' seems to be *abnāʾ al-waṭan* ('children of the country'); later he increasingly seems to prefer *umma.* He also uses a number of other terms, including *milla* ('community'), *ahālī* ('people' or 'inhabitants'), *raʿiyya* ('subjects') and *ǧins* ('race'), and makes it clear that for him, these are all synonyms. To refer to the relationship between 'nation' and 'national territory', he uses the terms *waṭaniyya* ('nationalism') and *ḥubb al-waṭan* ('love of country') interchangeably.

There are no occurrences of the words *šaʿb* ('people', 'nation') or *qawmiyya* ('nationalism'), two nationalist terms that would later become common, in those of al-Ṭahṭāwī's works that we have considered here. As we saw above, he quotes a poem in which the word *qawm* occurs; the context suggests that he is drawing an analogy between *qawm* and 'nation', but he does not actually use the word *qawm* to refer to any nation.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalism was Egyptian, not Arab. He repeatedly refers to the Arabs as an *umma*, and praises them highly (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 94, 150; al-Ṭahṭāwī 1872/2008, 101, 256) – though without specifying where their *waṭan* might be, unless it is Mecca, which, as we saw above, he identifies as the Prophet Muḥammad's *waṭan* – but never refers to Egyptians generally as Arabs, or gives the impression that he

considers himself an Arab. He notes that in Egypt, in the area called al-Buḥayra, there are 'groups of Arabs [*ṭawāʾif min al-ʿArab*]' (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1869/2002, 440). We can infer that for him, as for al-Ǧabartī before him, not all Egyptians are Arabs; only the Bedouin are.

We can analyse the basic elements of al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalism as a conceptual blend, whose inputs are (a) concepts drawn from the Arabic literary traditions that we considered in the previous chapter and (b) concepts drawn from French nationalism. This blend is illustrated in Figure 8. It includes a generic mental space, which contains an abstract concept common to all the input spaces: a place is conceptualised as a parent, and its inhabitants are conceptualised as its children. The generic space thus captures a commonality that would have made it easier for al-Ṭahṭāwī to conceptualise the three inputs as equivalent. As we have seen, this concept generates an inference about duty in French nationalism, but not in Arabic literature before al-Ṭahṭāwī. Hence in the generic space, this inference is absent. It is present in the blended space because it has been projected from the input space of French nationalist concepts. This input space also provides the concept of nation as defined in the introduction to this thesis.

The Influence of al-Ṭahṭāwī's Work in Egypt

Gilbert Delanoue argues that most of al-Ṭahṭāwī's readers were probably 'advanced students and graduates of the government schools . . . hence, above all, the new class of bureaucrats, officers, doctors, and engineers, a class that was in the process of taking shape, and that
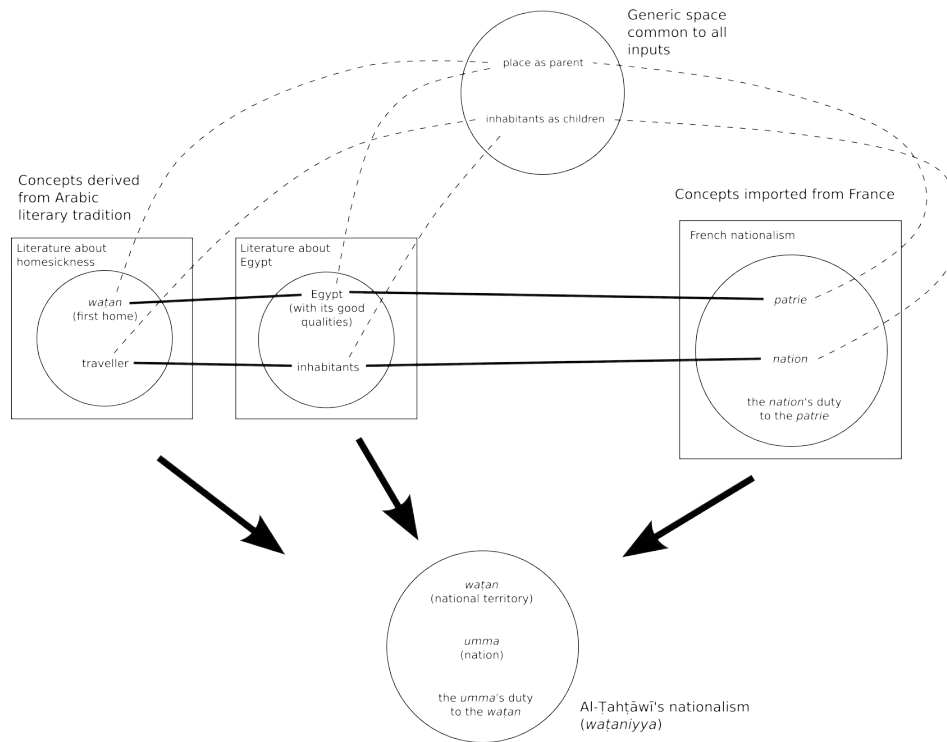
Figure 8: Al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalism

represented a very small part of the overall population' in Egypt (Delanoue 1982, 416-417). Al-Ṭahṭāwī himself directed several of these schools during his long career. As a result of the reorganisation of state schools in 1836,

> Three types of schools were to be organised: primary, preparatory and special. . . . [In the primary schools], the students had to be between the ages of seven and twelve years. . . . The subjects of study were to be: (1) reading and writing, (2) Arabic, (3) elementary rules of arithmetic, and (4) religious instruction. . . . [In the Preparatory Schools], the following subjects were to be taught: (a) Arabic, (b) Turkish, (c) Persian, (d) arithmetic, (e) elementary algebra, (f) elementary geometry, (g) general notions of history, (h)

150

general notions of geography, (i) calligraphy, (j) drawing (linear, figure and landscape) (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 195-196).

The seven 'special schools', which students could enter after leaving the Preparatory Schools, were the School of Languages, the Polytechnic School, the School of Artillery, the School of Cavalry, the School of Infantry and the Veterinary School; in these schools, the topics studied were purely technical (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 197-202). This was a radical departure from the type of education that had been available in 18th-century Egypt. In the new schools, religious instruction disappeared completely after primary school, and even there, it occupied a much smaller place than in the *kuttāb* and *madrasa* system. More importantly, non-religious subjects were no longer subordinated to religious purposes; instead, they were subordinated to military aims.

> The programme of reorganisation was, indeed, a very ambitious one, the military character of which cannot be disguised. . . . Most of the schools were essentially military establishments; if one or two of them were not called military, they were either recruiting depots for the military services or else they were destined to provide for the technical needs of the army as in the case of the Medical, Veterinary, and Polytechnic Schools (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 202-203).

The School of Languages was created in 1836 on al-Ṭahṭāwī's suggestion; the following year, he became its director. It was primarily a translation school, intended 'to form translators from French into Arabic and Turkish and to provide students knowing these languages for the

other special schools' (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 197). From the outset, in addition to Arabic, Turkish and European languages, it offered courses in mathematics, history and geography, in the interest of training future administrators. In 1841, a Translation Bureau (*Qalam al-Tarǧama*) was created under al-Ṭahṭāwī's direction and staffed with about 50 employees, most of whom he selected from among the advanced students and graduates of the School of Languages[39]. In 1842, following another reorganisation, departments of accountancy, agricultural administration and European administrative law were added to the School of Languages, as well as a department of Islamic law, staffed by some of the best-known Azhar scholars. Having started with 50 students, the School of Languages had 320 by 1849. Al-Ṭahṭāwī's students are reported to have been intensely devoted to him and proud to have studied under him, and many went on to successful careers in various branches of the state (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 266-268; Delanoue 1982, 399-402; Newman 2004, 48-49). It seems likely that, in one way or another, many of these young men received a nationalist habitus from al-Ṭahṭāwī. In order to verify this hypothesis, our best source is perhaps the earliest biography of al-Ṭahṭāwī in Arabic, apparently written immediately after his death in 1873 by one of his students, Ṣāliḥ Maǧdī.

According to Ǧamāl al-Dīn al-Šayyāl, the biography's 20th-century editor, Maǧdī was one of al-Ṭahṭāwī's best students and closest disciples. He was born in 1242 or 1243 AH (1826-28 CE), received his primary education in a state school in Ḥilwān (a suburb of Cairo), and was

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39 'In total, the school would produce 2,000 translations of foreign (European and Turkish) works' (Newman 2004, 46).

selected by al-Ṭahṭāwī to enrol in the School of Languages in 1252 AH (1836-37 CE); this means that he was no more than eleven years old when he became a pupil of al-Ṭahṭāwī. He excelled in both Arabic and French, and when the Translation Bureau was created in 1841, he was appointed assistant director (*wakīl*) of its department for the translation of mathematical texts, though he was only about 15 years old (Mağdī 1873/1958, 6). In 1260 AH (1844-45 CE), not yet twenty, he was transferred to the Muhandisḫāna, an engineering school, where he worked for about ten years, teaching Arabic, French and translation, and translating many books. Two years after his appointment there, he was given the military rank of *yūzbāšī* (captain). He was close to ʿAlī Mubārak, another important figure in the Egyptian state school system, and worked for him during the latter's tenure as director of the Muhandisḫāna. During the reigns of Saʿīd Pasha (ruled 1854-1863) and Ismāʿīl Pasha (ruled 1863-1879), Mağdī again worked for al-Ṭahṭāwī at the Translation Bureau, where he helped edit the magazine *Rawḍat al-Madāris* (The Garden of the Schools) and translate the Napoleonic Code into Arabic. In 1292 AH (1875 CE) he was appointed a judge in the civil court system, and remained in this post until his death in 1298 AH (1881 CE) (Mağdī 1873/1958, 7-8). Mağdī was thus a product of the state school system through and through, and he owed his very successful career to that system and to al-Ṭahṭāwī's guidance.

At the time when Mağdī wrote his biography of al-Ṭahṭāwī, there was not yet a tradition of introspective autobiographical narrative in Arabic. It would be very useful to have a first-person account of Mağdī's

childhood memories of his studies with al-Ṭahṭāwī, but Maǧdī does not provide this. However, his biography of al-Ṭahṭāwī contains many clues that can, to some extent, substitute for such an account. The title of the work, *Ḥilyat al-Zaman fī Manāqib Ḫādim al-Waṭan*, which could be translated as *The Ornament of the Age in the Glorious Deeds of the Servant of the Country*, clearly shows the importance of the concept of service to the country (*waṭan*) in the author's conception of al-Ṭahṭāwī, and no doubt (considering the close relationship between master and disciple) also reflects the way al-Ṭahṭāwī would have wanted to be portrayed. Introducing his subject, Maǧdī writes:

> It is well-known that this master, this prince, this famous scholar, was unparalleled in his knowledge, whose generous shade sheltered his *waṭan*. This was thanks to his firm footing in Arabic sciences, and the elevation of his outstretched flag in the advantages of foreign, European knowledge . . . (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 19).

> Discussing al-Ṭahṭāwī's early life, Maǧdī says that al-Ṭahṭāwī's father, having moved from place to place, returned to Ṭahṭā because of 'homesickness [*al-ḥanīn ilā al-awṭān*]' (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 20-21). (This shows that a town could still be a *waṭan*.) Later, Maǧdī asserts that al-Ṭahṭāwī was a very popular teacher at al-Azhar, because his explanations were clear and useful; he was good at explaining the same thing in different ways, so that both young and old could understand easily. Many fine Egyptian teachers studied with him (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 26-27). Again, Maǧdī emphasises that al-Ṭahṭāwī blended Azhari learning with foreign sciences, and thus benefited his *awṭān*, i.e. Egypt (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 28).

154

In his explanation of Mehmed Ali's educational missions to Europe, Maǧdī gives the standard narrative that has been adopted by nationalist historiography; he also claims that al-Ṭahṭāwī's decision to go to France was motivated by a desire to serve his country:

At that time, the *wālī* [Mehmed Ali] saw that the needs of Egypt, whose advantages are magnificent, required progress in this land [*bilād*] and the civilising [*tamaddun*] of its inhabitants, and that this aim, to which he was wholly devoted, could not be achieved unless he sent some of Egypt's children [*abnāʾ*] to Europe, which in our time has become a source of the advantages of progress, in order to learn sciences and technology [*al-ʿulūm wa-l-funūn*] that would benefit Egypt in the present and in the future. . . . [Therefore] he selected a few superior individuals from among the sons of the notables of his state . . . and sent them to France to acquire knowledge, then return to their *waṭan* to raise the banners of agreeable arts. The noble soul of the departed subject of this biography . . . chose to travel far from his *awṭān* . . . only because he knew that . . . if he worked hard to learn French, and became proficient at translating great books into Arabic, this would provide long-lasting benefit to his *awṭān*. . . . When his test results reached Egypt, and were shown to the *wālī*, the latter was all the more pleased, and expected him to be among those who benefit the *awṭān* . . . (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 30-32).

As we have seen, this nationalist view of Mehmed Ali's motivations is false. As for Maǧdī's account of al-Ṭahṭāwī's decision to go to France,

he is writing about events that he did not witness, and that had occurred nearly fifty years earlier. Considering his long acquaintance with al-Ṭahṭāwī, this could well be the account that al-Ṭahṭāwī himself gave his students, as an example of the type of national service that he saw as their duty. However, in the *Taḫlīṣ*, al-Ṭahṭāwī did not say that he went to France in order to benefit his *waṭan*; instead, he drew attention to the inherent benefits of seeking knowledge wherever it may be found (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 29-30, 36, 41), and provided a *religious* justification by quoting the well-known hadith 'Seek knowledge, even in China'[40] (al-Ṭahṭāwī 1834/2002, 30). In the *Taḫlīṣ*, it is only the French who serve their *waṭan*. Perhaps al-Ṭahṭāwī's own memory of his experiences in 1826 was coloured by his subsequent adoption of nationalist beliefs. Projecting those beliefs backwards onto his own past, he may well have thought that his must have been the reason why he had gone to France. Mağdī's account would then reflect this anachronistic view.

Mağdī mentions one student who studied under al-Ṭahṭāwī at the medical school in Cairo, went to study medicine in Paris, then returned to his *awṭān* and was appointed to a high post. The student remained full of gratitude towards al-Ṭahṭāwī. This, says Mağdī, is an example of al-Ṭahṭāwī's fame as a teacher in his *waṭan* and elsewhere. Indeed, he says, al-Ṭahṭāwī was widely praised by his students, and he deserves this praise, for the achievements that he gave to Egypt. Mağdī lists some of these: al-Ṭahṭāwī was the first of the 'sons of Egypt' to become a translator, he was the first person to found a newspaper (*ṣaḥīfat aḫbār*) in

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40 Al-Albānī (1992, 1:no. 416) argues that this hadith is spurious.

Egypt (here Maǧdī is mistaken[41]), and he was the first person to succeed in teaching the 'children of the *waṭan*' foreign languages (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 33-34).

Describing the founding of the School of Languages (*madrasat al-alsun*) in 1836, Maǧdī notes that al-Ṭahṭāwī selected the pupils from the *kuttāb* schools discussed earlier in this chapter[42] (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 36-37). This confirms that al-Ṭahṭāwī taught his pupils from a very young age[43]; hence he had ample opportunity to make a decisive contribution to their habitus.

Listing the government jobs that al-Ṭahṭāwī held during his lifetime, Maǧdī makes a point of mentioning al-Ṭahṭāwī's ever-increasing salary – which rose by a factor of ten between his job at the medical school and his highest-paid appointment – as well as the increasingly prestigious military ranks that he received, up to the aristocratic title of bey. Once again, he emphasises al-Ṭahṭāwī's many benefits to his *waṭan* (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 40-43). He then provides a list of 69 of al-Ṭahṭāwī's former students at the School of Languages (no doubt selected for their prestige), along with their titles and occupations. Of these, 58 had the title of *afandī* (discussed below and in the next chapter), and eight had the title of bey. He specifically praises several of these students for service to their *waṭan*, adding that there are other students he has not listed, whose

41 The first newspaper in Egypt was 'a Turkish-Arabic court bulletin for official use only . . . entitled *Ǧurnāl al-Ḫidiww*', created in 1821 (Newman 2004, 22-23). The first newspaper that al-Ṭahṭāwī edited, another official bureaucratic bulletin called *Al-Waqāʾiʿ al-Miṣriyya*, was founded in 1828; its first editor was Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār (Delanoue 1982, 346-347).
42 He adds that the total number of pupils in *kuttāb* schools at that time was 15,000.
43 This contradicts Delanoue's (1982, 400) Newman's (2004, 45) assertion that new students in the School of Languages were recruited from the preparatory schools at ages ranging from 14 to 18. In any case, a preparatory school was annexed to the School of Languages in 1841 (Delanoue 1982, 400).

'accomplishment of their duties [*wāǧibāt*] towards their country [*awṭān*]' is beyond description, and that all the students in Egypt's state schools (*al-madāris al-mīriyya*) could trace their learning back to al-Ṭahṭāwī (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 43-54). This is a clear sign that these very students, particularly those listed by name, were the book's principal audience, and hence that it expressed an ethos that they would have recognised as their own.

Maǧdī notes that initially, al-Ṭahṭāwī employed some Frenchmen to teach French, but soon these were replaced by capable Egyptian teachers (who, we may note, included Maǧdī himself); thanks to them, the *waṭan* achieved its aim (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 58). He mentions that many students in the state schools (*al-madāris al-malakiyya wa-l-makātib al-ahliyya*) attended al-Ṭahṭāwī's funeral (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 59). Finally, Maǧdī has high praise for al-Ṭahṭāwī's character, generosity, humility, pleasant conversation, lack of concern for material things, and devotion to his work (Maǧdī 1873/1958, 65-66).

In short, this brief biography seems to confirm that al-Ṭahṭāwī made a deep impression on generations of students who spent childhood and adolescence in the state schools. It seems safe to assume that Ṣāliḥ Maǧdī was representative of this generation. He clearly internalised al-Ṭahṭāwī's concept of *waṭan*, particularly the idea that Egyptians have a duty to serve their *waṭan* by bringing it practical benefits. It is not difficult to imagine how this happened. We may suppose that al-Ṭahṭāwī told his pupils, again and again, that it was their duty to study diligently, to master French, mathematics, and so on, in order to serve their *waṭan.*

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's Strategy of Symbolic Power and the Ethos of the State-School Graduates

Why did al-Ṭahṭāwī embrace nationalism? As we have seen, he used it primarily to legitimise Mehmed Ali's military and economic projects. Hence we must answer two questions: First, why did he legitimise these projects, in stark contrast to the other *ʿulamāʾ*, who were hostile to them, with the notable exception of Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār (Newman 2004, 34)? And second, why did he do so using nationalism rather than simply using Islam, or some other belief system? Any answers to these questions must necessarily involve a measure of speculation, because we do not have sufficient evidence to settle them with certainty. However, if we consider the circumstances in which al-Ṭahṭāwī found himself, the challenges he faced, and the options available to him for facing those challenges, we can make the case that his course of action was a plausible and reasonable one.

In order to explain al-Ṭahṭāwī's support for Mehmed Ali, we can draw an analogy between al-Ṭahṭāwī and one of the categories of French academics studied by Bourdieu in *Homo Academicus*: those whose careers led them to high administrative positions in academic institutions. 'It is logical', argues Bourdieu, that these positions

> should be occupied by agents who, being produced by and for the academic institution, have only to follow their natural dispositions in order to produce *ad infinitum* the conditions of reproduction of the institution. . . . The 'oblates' are always most inclined to think that without the church there is no salvation – especially when they

become the high priests of an institution of cultural reproduction. . . . They offer to the academic institution which they have chosen because it chose them, and vice versa, a support which, being so totally conditioned, has something total, absolute, unconditional about it (Bourdieu 1988, 99-101).

In an analogous fashion, al-Ṭahṭāwī was, to an extent, an 'oblate', a product of the institutions that Mehmed Ali had created to serve his army, institutions that saved al-Ṭahṭāwī from a poorly-paid career as a teacher at al-Azhar. Ever since his employment as a preacher for a military regiment in 1824, his entire career was directly subordinated to the needs of the army. As we have seen, the Ecole Égyptienne de Paris, where he studied for five years, was designed with military aims in mind, as were the schools in which he subsequently taught and which he directed in Egypt. Moreover, within this highly militarised state cultural apparatus, he rose from poverty, had a very successful career, was granted land and titles of nobility, and 'bequeathed his family a large fortune when he died' (Colla 2007, 124). Since his livelihood and prestige were an integral part of an institutional structure whose *raison d'être* was the ruler's military ambitions, it was in his interest to see both that structure and those ambitions as legitimate.

At the same time, he clearly could not assume that everyone else would take for granted the legitimacy of Mehmed Ali's military and economic projects. As we have seen, the legitimacy of military conscription was violently contested by the peasants who were its

victims. Moreover, Mehmed Ali lacked a convincing way to legitimise his war against the Ottoman Sultan, the Caliph of Islam.

The legitimacy of the types of education and translation that supported these projects could not be taken for granted, either. The dominant version of Islam in Egypt, disseminated at al-Azhar, viewed non-religious sciences as marginal at best, accepting them only insofar as they facilitated the study of religious subjects or were necessary for carrying out ritual duties. The importation and translation of knowledge produced outside the Islamic world was no longer regarded as a legitimate activity.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's students would not have been immune to the influence of these attitudes, which could have undermined their motivation to study. Like any teacher or school administrator, he needed his students to believe in the value of what they were studying in order to get the best possible results. Thus he had little choice but to instil in them a heterodox habitus that could inspire enthusiastic dedication to these unusual subjects.

Why, then, did he adopt nationalism for this purpose, rather than simply proposing a new, non-nationalist interpretation of Islam? There are a number of reasons why a purely religious approach would not have been practical. Al-Ṭahṭāwī found practically nothing in the Qurʾān or in Islamic tradition that readily lent itself to the advocacy of industrial production, still less a planned economy under the control of a centralised state. Moreover, industrial production for the military depended on the expansion of the army, which in turn depended on the conscription of

161

peasants on a large scale. But the traditional Islamic concept of submission to the prince, which we encountered above in al-Ṭahṭāwī's political writing, did not include the conscription of free individuals. Worse yet, conscription was particularly difficult to justify when the army was being sent to fight the Caliph. Some additional belief was needed in order to create the kind of loyalty towards the state that would persuade people to embrace conscription.

Any new interpretation of religion would fall directly within the remit of his fellow ʿulamāʾ, who, as we have seen, were extremely conservative. Al-Ṭahṭāwī had, on his return from France, a unique educational background; without like-minded peers, he would not have been able to form a heterodox sect capable of challenging the orthodoxy of al-Azhar. As noted above, he did suggest that modern sciences should be taught at al-Azhar, but this proposal was ignored (Livingston 1996). Perhaps the addition of a department of Islamic law to the School of Languages was a strategy for drawing Azhar scholars into the new educational institution that was taking shape under his direction, and in order to win them over to his views on education. Though some accepted the invitation (perhaps simply in search of higher pay), it seems that this attempt largely failed: ʿDelatre, who visited the school administered by Rifāʿa under Saʿīd, states that his colleagues, the ʿulamāʾ, detested him' (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 297).

For all these reasons, it was safer for al-Ṭahṭāwī to adopt a new system of symbolic power, one in which he would have no rivals. His concept of waṭan, which he connected to Islamic tradition only by the

most tenuous thread (the apocryphal hadith 'Love of *waṭan* is part of faith'), fell almost completely outside the realm of the *'ulamāʾ*'s interests; hence there was little risk that they would see it as heretical or as a threat to their authority. Thus he carved out a safe space for himself in the field of cultural production. In this space, he could be left alone with with his students.

Why not make the case for industrial production merely on the grounds that it benefited the individual human being, *al-insān*, a concept found in the Qurʾān? Here again, he would have found himself on a terrain that fell within the remit of the *'ulamāʾ*. Moreover, if you make claims about individuals' interests, individuals might reply and diagree with you, on the grounds that they know their own interests. The *waṭan*, in contrast, is silent; no matter what you say about it, it will not contradict you.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, al-Ṭahṭāwī's religious habitus no doubt predisposed him to conceive of legitimation itself in terms of the sorts of concepts used in religion. When creating a new belief system, one is more likely to construct it using familiar concepts than to start from scratch. As we have seen, al-Ṭahṭāwī himself correctly viewed religion and nationalism as basically similar. In working with nationalist concepts, he could feel that he was, to an extent, on familiar ground.

Ṣāliḥ Maǧdī's biographical eulogy to al-Ṭahṭāwī is evidence that, in transmitting a nationalist ethos to his students, al-Ṭahṭāwī became a shining example of that ethos in their eyes. Bourdieu observes that a eulogy, '[t]he last judgement that the group makes of one of its members

through a duly mandated spokesperson . . . is always the product of a collective effort' (Bourdieu 1996b, 399n). In such discourses, groups 'sing their own praises in singing the praises of one of their members' (Bourdieu 1996b, 44). In any group, an individual who is recognised as embodying the group's shared ideals thereby possesses symbolic capital. How had al-Ṭahṭāwī gained this capital? Upon his return from France, he possessed a great deal of *cultural* capital: the skills he had gained at al-Azhar and in Paris. This combination of skills was unique in Egypt at the time. Mehmed Ali's creation of new educational institutions had created a gap in the field of cultural production in Egypt: a reason and an opportunity to inculcate a new belief system in a new category of students. Only someone with al-Ṭahṭāwī's skills, who had already mastered a suitable belief system, could fill this gap.

> [T]he structural lacunae of a system of possibles, which is undoubtedly never given *as such* to the subjective experience of agents (contrary to what the *ex post* reconstruction might have us believe), cannot be filled by the magic virtue of a sort of tendency of the system to complete itself. The summons contained in these gaps is only understood by those who, as a result of their position in the field and their habitus, and of the (often discordant) relationship between the two, are free enough from the constraints inscribed in the structure to be able to recognize as applying to them a virtuality which, in a sense, exists only for them (Bourdieu 1996a, 239).

By teaching his students that it was their duty to serve their country by contributing to economic development, and that this in turn required

the importation, translation and transmission of knowledge from France, al-Ṭahṭāwī implicitly taught them to conceptualise him as a particular type of exemplar of nationalism. Only someone who possessed the specific types of competence that he in fact possessed – in particular, the ability to translate technical books from French into Arabic – could have been that type of exemplar. Thus his acquisition of symbolic capital (i.e. the admiration and devotion of the children in his classes) depended not only on nationalism, but also on his initial acquisition of cultural capital. In other words, he *converted* his cultural capital into symbolic capital in the classroom, by means of nationalism. Thus he was the first person in Egypt to employ the strategy of the priesthood, outlined in the introduction to this thesis, using nationalism. He was, in short, the first priest of nationalism in Egypt.

Chapter 3: Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal and the Emergence of a Priesthood of Nationalism

In this chapter, I show that by the beginning of the 20th century, the main producers and consumers of nationalist concepts in Egypt belonged to the *afandiyya*, the new social category of graduates of the state schools, whose role in transmitting nationalist beliefs was introduced in the previous chapter. I suggest that nationalism mainly served the *afandiyya*'s own social interests rather than those of Egyptians in general, and I focus on several ways in which this occurred. First, *afandī* intellectuals used nationalism to justify educational policies that favoured the *afandiyya*'s reproduction as a fraction of the dominant class. Second, they embraced a theory of environmental determinism that tended to naturalise a class hierarchy in which they occupied dominant positions. Third, they used nationalism to legitimise forms of prose fiction that they had imported from Europe, and thus to broaden the market for their writings. Fourth and most importantly for our purposes here, influential *afandī* intellectuals such as Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal promoted the idea that a group of 'great men' should emerge, composed of writers like themselves, whose knowledge and skills made them ideally qualified to guide the nation. Thus they envisaged themselves as what Bourdieu calls a priesthood, a group that seeks a 'monopoly of the legitimate exercise of power to modify, in a deep and lasting fashion, the practice and world-view of lay people' (Bourdieu 1987a, 126), on the grounds that the members of this group possess the requisite knowledge and skills. On this

basis, they began to compete with the Muslim clergy for prestige and influence.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First I outline the appearance of the *afandiyya* as a social category in Egypt in the late 19th century. Turning to struggles over educational policy in the early 20th century, I show how the *afandiyya* used nationalism to promote their own social interests in these struggles, at the expense of the interests of other categories of Egyptians. Next I analyse examples of the nationalist discourse of a leading nationalist thinker, Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, showing that he used nationalism to attack the authority of the clergy, to promote the interests of his social class and to legitimise Egyptian imperial rule of Sudan.

The remainder of the chapter focuses on Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal (1888-1956), one of the most influential Egyptian nationalist thinkers of the early 20th century. First, I examine two of Haykal's influential essays, 'Qāsim Amīn' and 'National Literature'. In the first essay, he formulates a theory of environmental determinism based on the ideas of the 19th-century French literary critic and historian Hippolyte Taine, and uses it to attribute God-like powers to the *waṭan*, which, in his view, creates Egyptians in its own image, giving them a national character marked by tranquility, passivity and submissiveness. He also argues that this national character reshapes religion in its own image; hence, in effect, the *waṭan*'s influence on its children is greater than the influence of God. For Haykal, contact with ideas from Europe seems to be the only way for Egyptians to escape the limitations of their national

character. In the second essay, Haykal adapts the concept of 'great men', popularised by the 19ᵗʰ-century Scottish writer Thomas Carlyle, to articulate a vision of a priesthood-like cadre of 'national writers' whose expertise would make them ideally suited to lead the nation. I then consider how Haykal's nationalist stances are reflected in his celebrated novel *Zaynab* (1913), which has been called the first Arabic novel, as well as in its two film adaptations. Finally, I show how these stances shaped the competition between the Muslim clergy and the priesthood of nationalism in the 1920s and 30s, focusing on some of the key struggles in Haykal's own political career. I suggest that in the 1920s, the priesthood of nationalism promoted Pharaonist nationalism as a belief system that could compete with Islam for Egyptians' loyalty. In the 1930s, the clergy fought back by accusing nationalist intellectuals like Haykal of atheism, as well as by reappropriating nationalism and subordinating it to religion (as al-Ṭahṭāwī had done in the 19ᵗʰ century). I argue that the genre of religious writings by *afandī* nationalist intellectuals, known as the *Islāmiyyāt*, which included Haykal's biography of the Prophet Muḥammad, was a tactical response to this counterattack, designed to delegitimise the *ʿulamāʾ* and enable *afandī* intellectuals to take their place as the legitimate interpreters of religious truth. However, this tactic was unsuccessful, and its failure paved the way for the success of the strategy discussed in the next chapter: the call for a prophet of nationalism.

The Afandiyya

The state schools directed by al-Ṭahṭāwī and his successors[44] developed by fits and starts, and their enrollments soared during the reign (1863-1879) of Ismāʿīl Pasha (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 342-423). The graduates of these schools became recognised as a distinct social category, called *afandī* (often spelled *effendi*). Ryzova (2005, 125-126) notes:

> The usage of the term effendi changes considerably over time. It was first an honorific title, which, in the nineteenth century, came to signify a category of western educated bureaucrats from privileged backgrounds who were sent to khedivial schools or to Europe. Around the turn of the century the effendis assumed the role of the nation's liberators. . . . The concept effendi is not a class situation but a cultural term. . . . Functionally and conceptually, 'effendi' is linked to modernity. The purpose of making effendis is first informed by the state's will to modernize.

What distinguished the *afandiyya* as a group was above all their education, their professional qualifications, i.e. their cultural capital. As Hunter (1984, 113-114) observes:

> During Muḥammad ʿAlī's reign, a cadre of 'new men' — physicians, engineers, geographers, metallurgists, printers — began to emerge. Employed by Muḥammad ʿAlī in various jobs, from translating French law codes to managing medical dispensaries in the countryside, these young men worked their way through the ranks of the bureaucracy until by the 1860s many had become part of

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44 The best-known of these successors was ʿAlī Mubārak (Brugman 1984, 65-68).

Egypt's administrative elite. Although they appear in our tables and elsewhere as 'technicians', they became the cutting edge of a new society.

Thus the *afandiyya* were not a social class in the narrow economic sense; instead, they were a distinct fraction of the dominant class in the Bourdieusian sense. We will now see that, at the beginning of the 20th century, they became the vanguard of nationalism, which they used not only to challenge British imperialism, but also to advance their own interests as a class fraction.

Nationalism and Educational Policy

As the *afandiyya*'s cultural capital increasingly became a requirement for access to the highest positions in the state bureaucracy, there was an increasing demand for *afandī* status within the dominant class as a whole.

> By the late nineteenth century, well-to-do families were abandoning al-Azhar because of contracting career opportunities. The *'ulamā'* had lost their near-monopoly on the legal profession and teaching and had to compete for posts with graduates of the new schools. European-inspired law codes and courts and new state schools demanded judges, lawyers, and teachers with qualifications Azharis did not have (Reid 1990, 14; cf. Costet-Tardieu 2005, 57-58).

In particular, the path to titles of nobility increasingly began with the title of *afandī*:

> Starting with the new century a pattern was gradually established, in which the road to bey and pasha – and thus to the social and

170

increasingly also the political elite – led through the effendi, through graduation from one of the governmental higher institutes (Ryzova 2005, 129).

At the same time, the *afandiyya* were increasingly coming to dominate the nationalist field. By the beginning of the 20ᵗʰ century, nationalism's main champions were no longer religious scholars with some non-religious training, such as al-Ṭahṭāwī; most were now state-school graduates whose cultural capital was mainly non-religious[45] (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 91-92). It is not difficult to see how this happened: the state-school graduates who had learned nationalism from al-Ṭahṭāwī, and had gone on to become teachers themselves, had naturally taken up teaching positions in the state schools rather than at al-Azhar. In these positions, they in turn had transmitted the same nationalist habitus to their own students, for the same reasons. Hence the state schools had become a means for reproducing nationalist habitus, while al-Azhar had not.

The increasing demand for *afandī* status within the dominant class created a demand for the expansion of the state educational system (Hafez 1993, 66). However, when the British occupied Egypt, they reduced the educational budget. Lord Cromer, the British representative in Egypt, was opposed to the expansion of European-style education because his 'Indian experience had convinced him that Westernized schools manufactured

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45 In the state schools in the first decade of the 20th century, there were elementary courses on Islam (covering the basics of the Qurʾān, Islamic worship, and so on) in the early years of the primary curriculum, but they took up a very small proportion of the overall class time, whereas Islamic subjects took up almost all of students' time in religious schools (Kalmbach 2011).

nationalist malcontents, particularly among those who failed to obtain the government posts to which they aspired' (Reid 1990, 18-19).

> After the lion's share of the budget had been spent on education for decades, the amount spent on education during Cromer's time [1883 to 1907] did not exceed 1 per cent of gross revenue. . . . [The British authorities] transformed the well-developed machinery of indigenous education into a mere training system which was intended to produce only clerical automata and subservient civil servants to meet the demands of the 'British heads and Egyptian hands' theory of government put forward by the colonizers (Hafez 1993, 66-67).

Hafez argues that this policy had the effect of 'stimulating the Egyptians to challenge the occupation'; the 'Egyptian reaction to Cromer's policy of education was strong', he says, and 'the Egyptians' countered this policy by establishing private schools (Hafez 1993, 66-67). Here, as is common in nationalist historiography, Hafez designates a particular category of Egyptians – the *afandiyya* – as 'the Egyptians'. Which Egyptians, precisely, reacted in this way to Cromer's educational policy? Not Azharites or peasants. Nor did their desire to extend what Hafez refers to simply as 'education' lead them to expand al-Azhar, or to found a new Islamic university. On the contrary, those who led the project to create the Egyptian University, which was based on European models, were *afandiyya* such as the lawyer Qāsim Amīn (to whom we will return in a moment), and they 'intended it to be a secular institution' (Reid 1990, 31).

Mitchell (1988, 116-117) contends that the main concern of the dominant class in Egypt, immediately after the British occupation,

> was not so much the colonial occupation, from which as landowners, merchants and government officials their families were beginning to benefit even as they resented the fact of European control, but the crowd that threatened in the streets and cafés outside.

For example, Saʿd Zaġlūl (c. 1857 – 1927), who was to become the hero of the nationalist uprising of 1919, was considered, at the beginning of the 20th century, to be 'a friend of the British', and only 'gradually changed his political attitude towards British rule in Egypt' during World War I (Schulze 2009). We have already seen that nationalism, in Egypt as elsewhere, could be fully compatible with support for imperialism. It seems possible – but further research would be needed to verify this – that the *afandiyya*'s nationalism became anti-imperialist as they realised that imperialism threatened the expansion of the state educational system, on which their reproduction as a dominant class fraction depended[46]. In any case, as we will see, their nationalism tended to favour their own interests above those of other Egyptians. Their nationalist discourse

> established a strong bond between the intellectual project and the national one, and demonstrated beyond doubt that education had

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46 Though it is outside the scope of this thesis, the reader may well wonder when the masses of Egyptian peasants began to embrace nationalism. Unfortunately, there is hardly any research on this question. The only relevant study that I am aware of is Reinhard Schulze's (1981) analysis of rural rebellion at the time of the 1919 nationalist uprising in Cairo. In this book, which has yet to be translated from German into English, Schulze 'concluded that the main thrust of peasant activism was directed toward local autonomy or was even anti-statist in nature' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 48), and that while Saʿd Zaġlūl, the leader of the nationalist Wafd party, was a national hero in the eyes of the *afandiyya*, peasants probably saw him instead as a *mahdī*.

become a national aim and a means of resisting the occupation. It . . . created a unity of purpose that made intellectual activities analogous to nationalistic ones (Hafez 1993, 67).

In practice, they successfully pushed for the establishment of a two-track educational system, in which nearly all of the educational budget was devoted to a 'Europeanized . . . primary-secondary-university ladder', which was accessible mainly to the children of the wealthy, while the 'elementary schools', which were accessible to the children of the poor and did not lead to higher education, were neglected. It is important to note that this policy was not imposed by the colonial administration; on the contrary, the *afandiyya* implemented it against the wishes of the British authorities, who expressed a clear preference for spending most of the educational budget on elementary schools, for the equally self-interested reasons mentioned above. The inequalities of the Egyptian educational system increased throughout the first half of the 20th century, as well as during the Nasser years. 'The top of the pyramid grew faster than its base. . . . One consequence of concentrating resources on the elite ladder was persistent high illiteracy. . . .' This policy suited 'big landowners, who wanted to keep labor down on the farm while educating their own children as the "natural leaders" of the future' (Reid 1990, 109-114, 176-180).

Nor did the *afandiyya* expand al-Azhar; on the contrary, they created two institutions, Dār al-ʿUlūm (a teacher training college) and the School for Judges, which competed with it for students and teachers while offering a curriculum less focused on religion (Reid 1990, 12, 34-35, 146-

174

148; Costet-Tardieu 2005, 57). In 1928, Muḥammad al-Marāġī, Shaykh of al-Azhar (who we will encounter again below), would complain of this competition in a memorandum to King Fuʾād and to the government, and demanded the reinstatement of al-Azhar's former prerogatives in the training of judges, lawyers and Arabic professors (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 72-73).

The Egyptian University, which took shape in the first two decades of the twentieth century, avoided hiring Azharis as professors (Reid 1990, 34). When planning to transform the private university into a state university in 1917, ʿas usual the ministry of education by-passed al-Azhar and ignored its interests' (Reid 1990, 76). Clearly the purpose of the university was to enable families in the dominant class to produce *afandiyya*; yet the *afandiyya* perceived it and presented it as a project in the *national* interest. Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid (1872-1963), who became the first rector of the Egyptian University and was a prominent exponent of Egyptian nationalism, wrote on 25 March 1907: 'We repeat that the college is what the country unquestionably wants, and that its purpose is to raise the intellectual level of the nation[47]' (Wendell 1972, 258).

The *afandiyya*, who were 'known as the *muṭarbašūn*, "tarboosh-wearers"', increasingly found themselves in a struggle with the 'mu*ʿammamūn*, "turban-wearers" (*ʿimma*: turban), usually Azhari curricula graduates, over issues of career' (Ryzova 2005, 129).

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47 The use of 'we' to implicitly claim authority to speak for a group, and particularly the shift from 'I' to 'we' to disguise individual interests as collective ones, merits more attention than I have been able to give it in this study. 'When an apparatchik wants to make a symbolic takeover by force, he shifts from saying "I" to saying "we"' (Bourdieu 1991, 213). Billig (1995, 93-127) offers an insightful discussion of nationalist uses of 'we', and suggests a number of avenues for further research.

Egyptians keenly felt the shaykh-effendi distinction, which dress as well as title proclaimed. . . . [S]haykhs . . . had had no chance to learn Western languages. . . . The effendis at the state schools and the university were generally from wealthier and more urban families than the Azharis and had far better career prospects (Reid 1990, 46-51).

Both material interests (job opportunities and access to state resources) and symbolic interests (prestige and influence) were at stake in this struggle. It was 'a clash of two knowledge hierarchies, one religious and one secular, over the question of inclusion and exclusion, which developed around what would be perceived as the interests of the new society' (Ryzova 2005, 129-130). More precisely, it was a conflict over the relative value of religious and non-religious types of cultural capital in a number of different social spheres. As we will see in this chapter and the next, the *afandiyya* used nationalism to claim, implicitly or explicitly, that their knowledge and expertise made them more qualified than their religiously-trained rivals to give moral, political, intellectual and even religious guidance to Egyptian society. In this competition between two kinds of knowledge producers, the clergy were a formidable opponent. As Mondal (2003, 147) observes:

Unsurprisingly, if in pre-modern Egypt political power was exercised and sought after by a warrior-aristocracy in control of the state, on the one hand, and a wider society controlled by the religious authorities based in the Azhar, on the other, then this remained the case in modern Egypt. . . . [I]n so far as parliamentary

democracy had at least instituted some channels of representation between the political field and wider society, those channels were weak compared with those controlled by the *'ulamā'* who possessed the greater mobilizational power based on their symbolic authority among the masses. It became, therefore, impossible to engage in political activity, and in so doing to establish new principles of authority and legitimacy, without consideration of the power of the *'ulamā'* in society at large.

The struggle to determine *who* was most qualified to guide Egyptian society was inevitably a struggle to *define Egyptian society*. Was Egypt basically a distinct nation, including followers of different religions, or was it basically just one part of the wider Muslim community? Was it better to conceptualise the victims of imperialism in Egypt as members of the Egyptian nation, or as Muslims? As De Leon, Desai and Tuğal (2009) have argued, grievances (e.g. those directed against British rule) are not given; they are always constructed by political discourses:

> Politics (re)defines what the grievance is and who the sufferers (and thus the people who should be mobilizing) are. Most important, competing parties can interpellate the same person (or group of people) as an oppressed Muslim, an unemployed individual, or as (sub-)proletarian, which would all produce very different results.

A struggle to determine the legitimate way of categorising human beings, which Bourdieu calls a 'conflict over definitions' (1998, 365), is inherently a struggle for symbolic power (Bourdieu 2001, 281-286). By defining a group, one implicitly defines the characteristics that its leaders

should have; different principles of division (nationalist, religious, class-based, etc.) imply the need for different sorts of representatives. Anticolonial nationalism enabled the *afandiyya* to define British rule as domination *of Egyptians* rather than *of Muslims*, and to implicitly define *themselves*, rather than the clergy, as the sort of people who knew best how to combat this domination.

Nationalist Shaykhs and Street Protests

In their struggle to increase the value of their cultural capital, the *afandiyya* were, in the short term, successful at increasing the exchange rate at which it could be converted into economic capital. The career of Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, discussed below, reflects this process. Yet the rate of conversion from non-religious cultural capital into *symbolic* capital was still low, compared to the rate of conversion of religious cultural capital into symbolic capital. Religious habitus, which was predominant among most of the population of Egypt, favoured the symbolic power of the shaykhs. Hence we will see, in this chapter and the next, that the *afandiyya* were vulnerable to attacks on religious grounds, and that they struggled, initially without much success, to gain symbolic power over broader segments of Egyptian society.

For this very reason, it was perhaps still easier to be influential as a nationalist thinker if one was also, like al-Ṭahṭāwī, a shaykh. During the ʿUrābī revolt of 1881-82, in which Arabic-speaking army officers rebelled against their Turkish-speaking superiors (Cole 1993), two such shaykhs gained recognition for helping express the rebellion's demands to a wider urban audience: ʿAbd Allāh al-Nadīm (on whom see Appendix 3), and

Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849-1905), who went on to have an illustrious career as a religious reformer, and became Mufti of Egypt in 1899 (Hourani 1983, 130–160).

In particular, al-Nadīm 'emerged as the leading journalist and orator of the revolution' (Reid 1998, 227). Cole (1993, 164–212) argues that urban guilds supported the ʿUrābī revolt partly because the officers' 'Egyptian nativism' resonated with Egyptian workers' and artisans' recent experience of competition with Europeans, whose numbers had been increasing in Egypt in the 1860s and 70s, and whose privileged position in the labour and financial markets, and immunity from Egyptian law and taxation, caused resentment among Egyptians, sometimes leading to street protests and violent conflicts. At the same time, Egyptian protesters 'often adopted a rhetoric of defending Muslim honor against Christian encroachments', and native Christians were sometimes encompassed in hostility towards European Christians (Cole 1993, 194–195), reproducing the pattern noted in Chapter 1 in the context of the French occupation. To the extent that protesters' grievances were expressed in specifically nationalist terms, rather than religious or other terms, I would argue that this was probably the result of the efforts of nationalist cultural producers like al-Nadīm, who was himself from an artisanal family (Cole 1993, 148). Moreover, students in state schools, who were likely to have absorbed nationalist concepts from their teachers and parents, also participated in urban protests against Europeans. As Cole (1993, 206) notes:

> The students' anti-imperialist fervor undoubtedly reflected the sentiments of at least some of their teachers, and very possibly their

parents as well. This literate new middle class often felt most strongly against the hiring of large numbers of foreigners as engineers or bureaucrats, since they felt themselves undervalued in contrast.

This 'new literate middle class' was, of course, the *afandiyya*; here again, it seems that they were using nationalism to strengthen their position in the competition for state employment.

While neither Muḥammad ʿAbduh nor his main disciple, Rašīd Riḍā (1865-1935), were among the most influential nationalist thinkers of the early 20th century – Gershoni and Jankowski's (1986) survey of these thinkers mentions ʿAbduh and Riḍā only in passing and does not discuss their views on nationalism – some of ʿAbduh's *afandī* disciples, including Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, became very influential nationalists. The work of ʿAbduh and Riḍā, which attempted to reconcile Islam with concepts of reason and science that were dear to the *afandiyya*, 'was intended to convince Muslims with a modern education that they could still be Muslims' (Hourani 1963, 128). As we have seen, this 'modern education' included nationalism, and was viewed by the *afandiyya* as a nationalist project in itself. It is therefore not surprising to find ʿAbduh and Riḍā presenting nationalism and Islam as compatible.

Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, ʿAbduh was trained first as a religious scholar. 'At some time in the second half of his life he learnt to read French, and read widely in the European thought of his age' (Hourani 1983, 135); he also lived in France for a few years. In an article called 'Nationality and the Religion of Islam', published in Paris in 1884 after the defeat of the ʿUrābī

revolt, he rejected the idea of nationalism (*waṭaniyya*), and warned that it was a source of disunity among Muslims (Vatikiotis 1957, 62–64). In his later writings, he espouses an Egyptian nationalism very similar to al-Ṭahṭāwī's. In his definition of the term *waṭan* (Haim 1955, 132–133), he wrote that 'both right and duty' are 'the motto of all the *waṭan*s to which lives and possessions are sacrificed', adding that

> to belong to a certain *waṭan* means that a connexion links the *waṭan* to the person who dwells in it, a connexion based on personal honour; so that he will be jealous for it and will defend it as he defends his father after whom he is called, even if he is a bad-tempered and strict father.

Here again, the country-as-parent blend that we encountered in Chapter 2 generates an inference about duty to one's country. Although in the 1880s 'Abduh vehemently opposed British rule, he later became almost as indifferent to issues of sovereignty as al-Ṭahṭāwī had been; he argued that, as Hourani (1983, 157–158) puts it:

> What Egypt needed was a period of genuine national education; every political and social problem should be seen in the light of this need. If constitutional government hindered the process it was bad or at least premature; if autocratic rule, or even foreign rule, helped it, it was to be tolerated.

Since he saw himself primarily as 'a scholar, a teacher, and an organizer of schools', and was indeed deeply involved in educational projects that can be considered a continuation of al-Ṭahṭāwī's project (Hourani 1983, 132–135), this amounted, in effect, to saying that national

education should be entrusted to people like himself (i.e. religious scholars who also had some non-religious cultural capital), and that he would support any political system that would achieve this.

Riḍā, ''Abduh's liege man' and editor of the periodical *Al-Manār* from 1898 until his death (Hourani 1983, 226), makes an interesting contrast with ʿAbduh. He, too, was trained as a religious scholar (in his home town of Tripoli, in Syria), and he studied 'the natural sciences of modern Europe' at a 'National Islamic School', but only in Arabic (Hourani 1983, 223–224; Tauber 1989, 102); he learned no European language well enough to read books in it (Hourani 1983, 235). The works he read by European intellectuals were only those available in Arabic translation (Shahin 1989, 113–114). While he sought to convince traditional religious scholars of the need for natural science, he also sharply criticised European-style schooling in Egypt, on the grounds that it gave students an insufficient grounding in their own cultural traditions (Haddad 1997, 254; Shahin 1989, 118). In other words, his educational ideals would have tended to increase the value of the mainly religious education that he himself had received, as well as the value of schooling in Arabic. It is thus not surprising that he advocated an Arab renaissance. Nor is it surprising that he saw this renaissance not as an end in itself, but merely as a prerequisite for a renaissance of Islam. He rejected Egyptian nationalism; in 1911, he wrote in his periodical, *al-Manār*, that *waṭaniyya* 'weakened the Islamic brotherhood . . . and this mistaken and false *waṭaniyya* even stood against religion itself' (Tauber 1989, 103–104). His was thus an 'Arab religious nationalism', restricted to the religious and

cultural sphere, and indeed committed to Turkish political and military dominance within the Ottoman Empire; what unified the Arabs, in his view, was Islam (Haddad 1997, 257–273). These views favoured 'the political independence of Islam' (Haddad 1997, 277), but they could also serve to convert his particular mixture of religious and non-religious cultural capital into symbolic capital for the readers of *al-Manār*.

Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid

The career of Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid reflects the social changes discussed thus far. Luṭfi's father, the wealthy mayor of a village in the Nile Delta, initially planned to send him to al-Azhar, but was persuaded by a family friend that the state schools offered better job prospects. He switched Luṭfi to the primary-secondary-university track, and Luṭfi went on to law school, where his colleagues 'included future nationalist leader Muṣṭafā Kāmil . . . and three future prime ministers . . .' (Reid 1990, 15). Luṭfi later became the editor-in-chief of *al-Ǧarīda* (The Newspaper), the official paper of the Umma party, from 1907-1914 (Wendell 1972, 215-216). As editor, he carried on

> a seldom interrupted campaign of propaganda to . . . instill the idea of nationhood in a mass of 'dwellers in Egypt' who could still regard themselves in many different lights, none necessarily conforming to the ideology of the Umma party. The very name was as much a hope as a rallying cry. Luṭfi never doubted the real existence of an Egyptian *umma*: he viewed its present and future

with optimism, but recognized the dire need for an unspecifiable period of tutelage (Wendell 1972, 222).

Here again we find the same paradox that we encountered in French revolutionary nationalism and in al-Ṭahṭāwī's *Taḫlīṣ*. The nation is presumed to exist, but at the same time it must be created:

[E]ven he had to confess that the 'common people' (*ʿāmma*) were still more attracted to the medieval ideal of the Umma Muhammadiyya than they were to that of their own 'nation', if indeed they were aware that such a thing existed. Circumstances placed Lutfi in the curious position of a liberal nationalist who had to defend the idea of Egyptian nationhood, not merely against Western critics, but also against fellow-Egyptians who rejected the concept in favor of other loyalties. Therefore his less obvious mission in journalism was to assist in the creation of the nation that he was simultaneously addressing (Wendell 1972, 231).

In Luṭfī's articles, he strove to define his audience in nationalist terms as opposed to religious ones. On 23 August 1908, he wrote:

Those who set out to arouse the religious sensibilities of either the Copts or the Muslims by way of speeches or articles, however praiseworthy their purpose or however honorable their aim, reap from the whirlwind they stir up only the destruction of the [existing] solidarity among the individuals of the nation, and widen the distance between the two brothers. The Muslims and the Copts are far enough apart as it is – considering that they comprise the

body of a single nation [*wa-hum ǧism umma wāḥida*] – neither praying together nor intermarrying (Wendell 1972, 239-240).

This suggests strong disapproval of the authority of religious figures, who surely cannot play any role as religious leaders without making 'speeches or articles' to 'arouse the religious sensibilities' of their coreligionists. Moreover, the reference to intermarriage invites the reader to envisage a social transformation that would undermine the very categories of 'Muslim' and 'Christian'. Endogamy is one of the main ways in which social divisions are maintained (Bourdieu and Lamaison 1985; Bourdieu 1996b, 275); when previously distinct groups intermarry, the distinctions between them begin to disappear (cf. Reinkowski and Saadeh 2006). The metaphor of the 'body of a single nation' implies that the category of Egyptian nationality is more fundamental and more valid than religious categories. Similarly, on 8 December 1912, Luṭfī referred to the Egyptian nation as 'an undivided and indivisible whole' (Wendell 1972, 237). On 4 May 1913, he rejected the idea that there is such a thing as a community of Muslims; he wrote: 'We are not among the partisans of this impossible [Pan-Islamic] community insofar as it is a religious one, since we are convinced that the basis for political activity is patriotism [*waṭaniyya*] and the bonds of [common] interest [*al-manfaʿa*], and nothing more' (Wendell 1972, 229). On 2 March 1913, he ridiculed both Pan-Islamism (*al-Bān Islāmiyya*) and Pan-Arabism (*al-Ittiḥād al-ʿArabī*) as 'delusions' (Wendell 1972, 230).

In 1907 and 1908, Luṭfī used the adjective *ummī* to mean 'national' or 'nationalist' in several articles, e.g. 'nationalist demonstrations [*al-*

muẓāharāt al-ummiyya]' (5 July 1908), 'national life [*ḥayāh ummiyya*]' (23 March 1907) and 'national existence [*al-wuǧūd al-ummī*]' (18 May 1907) (Wendell 1972, 277-278n). This was highly unconventional, and undoubtedly awkward, because this adjective already had the well-established sense of 'illiterate'. A few years later, Luṭfī had abandoned *ummī* and was instead using a new adjective, *qawmī*, and the corresponding noun, *qawmiyya* ('nationalism', 'nationhood'). On 2 September 1911, he referred to Egypt as having an 'ancient nationhood [*qawmiyya ʿatīqa*]' (Wendell 1972, 236). On 1 September 1912, he again referred to 'Egyptian nationhood [*al-qawmiyya al-Miṣriyya*], or Egyptian nationality [*al-ǧinsiyya al-Miṣriyya*]' (Wendell 1972, 232). This change in his vocabulary probably gives a good indication of the time period in which *qawmī* appeared in Arabic in this sense. Further research would be needed to determine who coined this term.

Luṭfī's nationalism, like several of the other nationalisms we have considered thus far (starting with Napoleon Bonaparte's), was imperialist. On 24 July 1910, he wrote:

> The Sudan belongs to Egypt by right of conquest. It is a part [of Egypt] which cannot be severed from her and which is necessary to her existence. . . . the colonization of the Sudan is the exclusive right of the Egyptians. . . . For all the Egyptians regard the Sudanese as brothers and as a part of their people, and so it is their duty to work for their happiness (Wendell 1972, 261).

Naturally, this meant that he could not consider the Mahdist revolt to be a legitimate expression of Sudanese opposition to Egyptian rule. He continues:

What happened was that some Sudanese [*ba'ḍ al-Sūdāniyyīn*] rose against the Egyptian community [*al-ǧāmi'a al-Miṣriyya*]. So the rebels were chastised and the rebellion ended [*uddiba al-ṯāʾirūn wa-ntahat al-fitna*]. After that, things should have reverted to their former condition before the Mahdī's revolt (Wendell 1972, 262-263).

Denying that Egyptian rule of Sudan is imperialist, he justifies it in terms that are strikingly reminiscent of French colonial rhetoric about Algeria:

It would be a mistake to think that the Sudan is an Egyptian colony. Rather the Sudan is a part of Egypt's [territorial] being, and the finishing touch to it [*mutmim lahā*]. Egypt is, as it were, the northern section, and the Sudan, the southern. Every Sudanese has substantially the same patriotic duties to Egypt [*al-wāǧibāt al-waṭaniyya al-Miṣriyya*] that all Egyptians have (Wendell 1972, 262-263).

In Luṭfī's nationalism, we find once again the conceptual blend of nation-as-family. On 2 January 1913, he wrote:

The family [*al-'āʾila*] is the [basic] unit in the composition of the nation. And the family does not maintain itself without group solidarity [*al-'aṣabiyya*]. The group solidarity within the family corresponds to national identity [*al-ǧinsiyya*] within the nation. One's closest brother is one's brother-german, and after him, one's

brother in nationality [*al-aḫ fi-l-qawmiyya*]. Therefore this family pattern must be the model for the national pattern (Wendell 1972, 269-270).

Luṭfī argued that literature played an important role in in creating national unity. On 4 March 1912, he wote:

Literature is not, as superficial thinkers imagine, merely an instrument to amuse littérateurs. Nor are its tales merely a beautiful way of killing precious time. The fact is that literature and a literary history are among the strongest identifying marks of an *umma*; serving to link its past generations with the present one, defining its particular character, and rendering it distinct from all others. And so its personality is perpetuated through time, the area of similarities among its individual members becomes broader, and the bonds of solidarity among them grow stronger (Wendell 1972, 275).

More generally, he argued that the members of the dominant class are the nation's natural leaders. On 18 May 1907, he described the elites (*al-ḫawāṣṣ*) in the following terms:

To be sure, in Egypt there is an enlightened class [*ṭabaqa mustanīra*] composed of government officials, members of the liberal professions an the gentry [*al-aʿyān*], who are conscious of the country's need for a public opinion made up of sound ideas (Wendell 1972, 283).

On 3 October 1909, he defined 'public opinion' as the opinion of these same elites:

Speaking of the evening gatherings of intellectuals during the month of Ramadan, Luṭfī says of them that they are 'those gatherings which occur spontaneously, comprising the class of men of sound judgment who come from [the ranks of] the thinkers, the educated and the representatives of long-established wealth and position. They [i.e., the meetings] may on these grounds be said to represent public opinion' (Wendell 1972, 284-285).

In the work of Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal, one of Luṭfī's most influential disciples, we will find these ideas used as the basis for a more clearly articulated view of the wealthy literati as the category of 'great men' who should guide the nation.

Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal

Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal came from a family of wealthy landowners in the Delta. He 'attended secular schools in Cairo from the age of seven' (CD Smith 1979), studied law, and received a doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris in 1912. He worked as a lawyer in Egypt, had a successful political career, and was a prominent journalist and writer (Selim 2004, 79-80). His writings during World War I

were especially important in relation to the development of the Egyptian territorial nationalist perspective. In 1916, Haykal published a series of articles on the Egyptian modernist Qāsim Amīn[48] in *al-Sufūr*. Formally a biographical tribute to Amīn, at a deeper level the articles offered a powerful new interpretation of the

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48 On Amīn (1865-1908), see Hourani (1983, 164-170).

basis and nature of the Egyptian collective. Using the life of Amīn as his starting point, Haykal developed a theory of the relationship between the environment of Egypt and the Egyptian nation which profoundly influenced later Egyptian territorial nationalism (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 34).

These essays will therefore be worth our careful consideration here.

Qāsim Amīn

In Part I of the series (25 February 1916), Haykal begins by observing that there is more to the life of a nation (*ḥayāt umma*) than the deeds of its kings; indeed, these deeds are simply a manifestation of the nation's life, especially once democracy has taken over the business of 'forbidding and commanding [*al-nahy wa-l-amr*]' (Haykal 1968, 91). In this context, the use of this phrase, which has strong religious connotations and inevitably recalls a number of verses in the Qur'ān on 'ordering what is right and forbidding what is wrong' (3:104, 3:110, 3:114, 7:157, 9:71, 9:112, 22:41), suggests that religious authority is to be replaced by the authority of elections, in which voters are free to make their choices according to non-religious criteria.

The life of nations, says Haykal, is based on their morals, customs, beliefs and hopes, which are the basis of governments, kings and wars. Hence European historians study all manifestations of a nation's life in order to understand the links between its past and present, and the paths to the best possible future. Among these manifestations are books written by thinkers (*mufakkirīn*) and the literati (*kuttāb al-ādāb*); these are a lantern (*nibrās*) that guides historians to a nation's customs, morals, ways

of thinking and way of life. Historians consider these works 'social artefacts [*āṯār iǧtimāʿiyya*]' and not simply forms of individual expression (Haykal 1968, 91-92).

Here Haykal cites a work called *History of English Literature*, by the French literary critic and historian Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893) (on Haykal's use of Taine, see also Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 35-36; Mondal 2003, 156-158). In that work, Taine had argued that the mental and social life of human beings is fully determined by three natural forces, which he called *race, milieu* and *moment* (Taine 1866, 1:xxiii-xxxiv). Race, for Taine, meant a set of hereditary dispositions and physical characteristics, and he specifically refers to Egyptians as a race. *Milieu* refers to the physical and social environment found in a particular region; it shapes the character and social order of the race that lives there. This theory is clearly a descendant of Montesquieu's environmental determinism, which we considered in the previous chapter. We will shortly see precisely how Haykal uses Taine's theory.

Haykal asserts that when a historian has a complete grasp of the traces (*āṯār*) left by a nation (*umma*), then he can form a clear picture of the people (*šaʿb*) that he is studying. (Note that Haykal uses the words *umma* and *šaʿb* interchangeably.) Such a picture, he says, makes it easy to see the reforms that are needed to bring about a better future; without it, different individuals formulate incompatible proposals, each one based on a limited view of the present. This makes progress (*taqaddum*) impossible, and any living creature (*ḥayy*) must progress in order to survive (Haykal 1968, 93).

His argument here has logical implications for the role of the literati. We will see below how he explicitly articulates these implications, but for now it is clear that he personifies the nation, and sees books by thinkers and the literati as direct manifestations of its character rather than expressions of the limited point of view of an individual author. It follows that, in order to produce such works, writers must possess some sort of privileged insight into 'the life of the nation'.

Unfortunately, he adds, such a study of 'our life' has not yet been carried out. 'We' are ignorant of the life of 'this valley' in which 'we' live (i.e. the Nile valley)[49]. No Egyptian has written such a study on 'our national life [*ḥayātinā al-qawmiyya*]', and in particular, no Egyptian has written an interpretation of one of 'our authors', tracing his ideas back to their sources[50] (Haykal 1968, 94). After mentioning some recently published biographies of Egyptians and finding them wanting, he emphasises that writers such as Qāsim Amīn merit this sort of attention, because they have had a considerable effect on the life of the nation (*umma*), and are also among the manifestations of its life (Haykal 1968, 94-95). Such studies are necessary for an understanding of the nation's past, without which it cannot reform its future. Hence he has decided to analyse the link between Qāsim Amīn's intellectual output and 'the life of the nation' as a whole (Haykal 1968, 96-97).

In Part II (3 March, 14 April and 19 May 1916), Haykal begins by saying that to understand a philosopher, writer or poet, one must understand the *milieu* in which he lived. Haykal translates Taine's term

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49 Note again the use of 'we'.
50 I assume that *kitāb min kuttābinā* is a printer's error for *kātib min kuttābinā*.

milieu as *wasaṭ* (pl. *awsāṭ*). He notes that Amīn spent his life in Egypt, except for a few years in France. Turning first to the Egyptian *wasaṭ*, Haykal proposes to consider it from two angles: the natural environment and the social environment. The natural *wasaṭ*, he says, has a major effect on people's character (*ḫulq*), while the social *wasaṭ* shapes their thoughts (Haykal 1968, 97-98).

First he discusses the natural *wasaṭ* in Egypt. He asserts that 'Egypt is clearly the partition [*barzaḫ*] that connects [*yaṣil*] the East with the West', and that its geographical nature isolates it from the rest of the world. It is surrounded by desert on three sides, and the Mediterranean Sea separates it (*yaḥǧubuhā*) from countries further north (Haykal 1968, 99). Haykal's argument here seems arbitrary and self-contradictory; as the word 'connects' implies, the Mediterranean can be seen as a *link* between Egypt and Europe, one that has facilitated trade and the exchange of ideas for millennia. But he wants to present Egypt as a naturally distinct national territory capable of shaping a distinct national character; hence he represents the Mediterranean as a *barrier*.

In the Nile Valley, he says, the sky is always clear and the weather is always mild and tranquil. You can walk from one end of the valley to the other without encountering any major obstacles, strong winds, storms or rain. The landscape is monotonous. In the fields, you rarely see any animals other than tranquil oxen and donkeys. The few wild animals are small, submissive (*mustaslima*) and harmless. Everything exudes tranquility (*had'at al-sukūn*). The changing seasons bring no major differences in temperature to disturb the creatures that live there. There

are no natural barriers that might arouse curiosity or require efforts to surmount them. Nor is this the desolate tranquility of the desert; the Nile Valley is a perpetually verdant, fertile garden, thanks to the generous Nile floods. Indeed, in times of old, people said that the source of the Nile is in Paradise (Haykal 1968, 99-101). (Recall that in Chapter 1, we found this assertion in Ibn Ẓahīra's text.)

At the same time, he says, this unchanging, tranquil natural environment is cruel. Its villagers live in abject poverty in dark, tawdry, filthy, windowless huts that resemble the dens of small, submissive animals. Those who are a bit better off might have windows, but they do not seek luxuries of the sort that would 'rebel [*yaṯūr*] against the contented, submissive natural environment [*al-ṭabīʿa al-qāniʿa al-mustaslima*]' (Haykal 1968, 102). Here Haykal *naturalises* the peasants' poverty by attributing it to the natural environment, rather than to the feudal economic order. Thus he implies that any hypothetical attempts by peasants to rise out of poverty would be a rebellion against *nature* rather than against a class hierarchy established and maintained by human efforts.

All anyone asks of the Nile Valley, he adds, is that it should not be excessively harmful and not disturb the tranquillity of its inhabitants. The crocodile in the Nile is content to live on what comes to it in the water, and does not disturb boats or venture onto the shore to attack people or animals. 'The gods, of which Nature is the greatest [*al-āliha wa akbaruha al-ṭabīʿa*]', protect the Nile Valley's inhabitants from anything that might disturb this tranquillity (Haykal 1968, 102-103). This sentence implicitly

contradicts the Islamic affirmation that 'God is greatest [*Allāhu akbar*]'; a pious Muslim would surely reject it as a profession of polytheism (*širk*). Moreover, Haykal adds that this *wasaṭ* is what 'created [*ḫalaqa*] all the living things and the people that have lived in it' (Haykal 1968, 104). In this description of an eternal, tranquil physical environment that has created eternally tranquil people, there is an echo of the Biblical account of creation, in which God creates human beings in his own image (Gen 1:27)[51]. Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, Haykal thus likens the national territory to a god.

Turning to the social *wasaṭ* in Egypt, he asserts that the inhabitants of the Nile Valley have had certain physical, moral and mental characteristics since time immemorial, and that all these characteristics are the creation (*ḫalq*) of the natural *wasaṭ* in which they live. Just as the weather in their country is perpetually calm and tranquil, their faces express the same calm tranquillity, and their morals are characterised by submissiveness (*istislām*). The past continues eternally for them and they feel no inclination towards change (Haykal 1968, 104); hence they never think of rebelling against their rulers. He adds that they have always been content to be ruled by foreigners such as the dynasties of the Pharaohs; in his view, none of these dynasties included any of the 'genuine inhabitants of the valley' (Haykal 1968, 105). This assertion seems to be an essential component of his argument. He has to assume that the Pharaohs were foreign; otherwise, he would have to explain why the 'submissive' Egyptian natural environment, which supposedly makes all its inhabitants

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51 This idea is not found in the Qurʾān, but it is attested in the hadith: '*fa-inn Allāh ḫalaqa Ādam ʿalā ṣūratihi* [God created Adam in his own image]' (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2612 <http://hadith.al-islam.com/Page.aspx?pageid=192&BookID=25&PID=4803>). Of course, nothing would have prevented Haykal from taking the idea from a Christian source.

submissive, did not have the same effect on its rulers, and thus prevent them from overthrowing one another and seizing power by force, as he acknowledges they did.

Thus, he says, the 'force [*quwwa*] of the natural *wasaṭ*' subjects those who live in it to its power (*sulṭa*) (Haykal 1968, 105). Here again, Haykal naturalises the class hierarchy by attributing it to natural phenomena. As in his novel *Zaynab*, he ignores 'the peasant protests and uprisings which dotted the nineteenth-century landscape' (Shalan 2006, 225), and expresses the type of stance that Bourdieu (1991, 132) describes as

> the admiration that all conservatisms display for 'decent people' (most often personified by the peasant), whose essential property is designated clearly by the euphemisms ('simple folk', 'working people') which feature in orthodox discourse: their submission to the established order.

These factors, says Haykal, have increased the 'natural submissiveness [*istislām*]' of the 'Egyptian soul [*nafs*]'. Thus all morals and beliefs that have entered the Egyptian soul have taken on the same character, and all the religions that have passed through Egypt have come to be based on 'fatalism [*ǧabriyya*]' and 'trust in fate [*al-sukūn ilā ḥukm al-qaḍāʾ*]'. As it has not been in the interest of Egypt's rulers to change this state of affairs, it has become deeply rooted, and reached the point of 'rigidity [*ǧumūd*]' (Haykal 1968, 106). Haykal does not mention Islam at all in his account of the social *wasaṭ* in Egypt; it is merely included implicitly in this reference to the various religions that have passed

196

through. Moreover, in his account, it is as if Islam had no effect on Egyptians, since the Egyptian national character simply remade Islam into yet another expression of itself. Considering the conceptualisation of Egypt as a god, it is not difficult to interpret this as an account of a struggle between two gods, Egypt and Allāh, with Egypt emerging triumphant. It is as if, for Haykal, Egypt created its inhabitants single-handedly, and when Allāh sent them Islam, Egypt transformed Islam into an instrument of Egypt's own 'power', thus effectively neutralising it.

Therefore, adds Haykal, the 'duty [*wāǧib*] of the reformers' has been extremely difficult. In particular, the reform movement has been unable to reach 'the heart of the country [*ǧawf al-bilād*]', and has remained concentrated in the capital. Hence, all its aims have been responses to conditions in the capital. Reform movements in capital cities tend to blame everything on the government, and to focus on politics. But the characteristics of the Egyptian people (*ša'b*) as he has just described them, combined with the impossibility of overthrowing the political system under conditions of foreign domination since 1882, led reformers to think about starting with social reform rather than political reform (Haykal 1968, 106-108). These social reformers faced resistance from political reformers[52] who supported 'the rigid principles that the nation [*umma*] has passed down from generation to generation and that it approves of', while the social reform movement aimed to shake the nation (*umma*) out of its rigidity and introduce free thinking (*al-tafkīr al-ḥurr*) into its soul (*nafs*). In particular, they were opposed to the nation's

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52 Haykal is perhaps thinking of Muṣṭafā Kāmil; we will return to his opinion of Kāmil below.

adherence to 'old interpretations' of religion, which they saw as unsuited to the 'spirit of the age' as well as unnecessary in religious terms. Foremost among these social reformers was Muḥammad ʿAbduh (Haykal 1968, 108-109).

This type of social reform, in Haykal's opinion, was the foundation on which all later reform was built, since at that time, 'religious thinking alone exercised absolute power over people's beliefs and morals, over their behaviour and the order of their lives' (Haykal 1968, 109-110). We could rephrase this in the terms of our theoretical framework by saying that the symbolic power of the clergy was immense. Haykal's remark suggests that, in his view, nationalism had won few converts in Egypt by the end of the 19th century. Like Luther and Calvin, he says, ʿAbduh 'made reason the measure of religion', and viewed beliefs and practices that were not in accord with reason as 'alien to faith in the gods [*daḫīl ʿalā al-īmān bi-l-āliha*]' (Haykal 1968, 110). Note again that Haykal uses 'gods' in the plural, suggesting a polytheism that is considered heretical in Islam and that ʿAbduh would have condemned. Here Haykal has subtly enlisted ʿAbduh's authority to consecrate his own rather different views on religion, to which we will return below.

Nevertheless, says Haykal, only a few Egyptians supported social reform; most were 'partisans of the old', of 'trusting in the past, surrendering to the present and not inclining towards the new'; even among the minority that supported ʿAbduh, many did so hypocritically, for personal gain rather than because they agreed with his ideas. Wider acceptance of these ideas by the nation (*umma*) only came 'much later

198

[*ba'd zaman ṭawīl*]'[53], 'in circumstances other than those in which Qāsim Amīn had lived', after a renaissance (*nahḍa*) that was not based on religion; Amīn preceded this renaissance and did not benefit from it. Had it not been for his experience in France, his ideas would simply have taken on the character of the social *wasaṭ* in which he lived (Haykal 1968, 111-112).

The 'young Eastern man' who visits the French *wasaṭ*, which had a profound effect on Amīn, is bewitched by all sorts of striking beauty and variety not found in Egypt, in its natural landscapes, gardens, architecture, museums, theatres and concerts, as well as in the elegance and manners of its inhabitants. He hears music that is completely different from 'our plaintive, submissive music [*mūsīqānā al-mustaslima al-šākiya*]'; it expresses 'the movement of modern civilisation [*ḥarakat al-madaniyya al-ḥāḍira*]'. He sees the bustling activity of commerce and industry. Instead of being submissive and tranquil, everyone seems to love life and strive to make the most of it (Haykal 1968, 112-115).

If the Eastern visitor delves more deeply into the affairs of the French, their ways of life and their thought, says Haykal, what he finds is even more impressive. The family is not simply 'this human herd that is held together by no more than the natural bonds of fatherhood and brotherhood, under the father's authority'; it is a 'human partnership' based on pure feelings, aimed at increasing individual happiness and producing free men and women. The visitor finds powerful, subtle emotions that are the source of the vibrant, free music, amazing art and

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53 Writing only eight years after Amīn's death, Haykal seems to exaggerate the amount of time that had passed.

profound, poetic literature that the French produce. He finds precise, polished thought, which is the source of a long, extensive philosophical tradition that has meticulously analysed all morals, beliefs and religions. This is not a philosophy of 'submission and indifference [*istislām wa-tawākul*]'. It is a humanistic philosophy that 'does not sanctify or submit to the past'; instead, it critically analyses and evaluates the past and discards anything that does not accord with reason. Hence it has criticised religions and their foundations, and to a large extent destroyed them. Thus, by the time Qāsim Amīn arrived in France, 'the matter of non-religiosity [*masʾalat ʿadam al-tadayyun*]' was already 'a foregone conclusion [*mafrūġ minhā*]'. 'This atheistic philosophy [*hāḏihi al-falsafa al-lā dīniyya*]' had inspired in people a new understanding of ethics and a new way of looking at things. France had set about 'building its social prosperity' on the basis of reason and science, and seeking happiness 'in this life'. They promoted these principles just as forcefully as their predecessors in earlier times had promoted religion, as if purely scientific ideas had become 'a new faith [*īmān ğadīd*]' that took the place of the old one'. But this faith had not yet reached the French people (*šaʿb*); it was not yet widespread enough to become 'a new religion [*dīnan ğadīdan*]' that could take the place of the religion that Voltaire, Renan, Taine and their contemporaries had destroyed' (Haykal 1968, 115-118).

All this – natural environment, art and enthusiasm for science – is 'the basis of Western civilisation [*madaniyyat al-ġarb*]'. This *wasaṭ* had a profound effect on Qāsim Amīn, to the point of blotting out some of the effects of the 'calm, submissive Egyptian *wasaṭ*' (Haykal 1968, 118).

Haykal describes Amīn's personality as energetic and irritable (in contrast to the allegedly submissive Egyptian national character outlined above), and inspired by intense nationalism. At the funeral of the nationalist leader Muṣṭafā Kāmil[54], Amīn took the sight of large crowds as an expression of a feeling of national unity, 'the new feeling' that had emerged like a newborn baby from 'the bowels of the nation [*umma*]': a sign of hope for the future. Amīn wrote of seeing a ten-year-old boy in the street in Paris take off his hat in a long salute to the French flag as a regiment of soldiers passed by; Amīn was full of admiration for the boy's upbringing, which had taught him to love his *waṭan.* Amīn was not one of those who seek merely to get through life in the least unpleasant way possible; he believed in striving for happiness (Haykal 1968, 118-126).

Haykal's view of the physical and social environment is somewhat different from Taine's. While Taine had viewed social environment as partly independent of physical environment, and thus specifically mentions Christianity as one aspect of *milieu* that had a major effect on society around the Mediterranean (Taine 1866, 1:xxviii), Haykal seems to consider the social environment a mere product of national character, which is fully determined by the physical environment. His opinion of this national character seems deeply paradoxical. On one hand, the characteristics he assigns it appear to be, in his view, entirely negative: passivity, submissiveness, backwardness, stasis. He contrasts it with what he sees as the energetic, bold, ambitious, imaginative national character of the French, which produced an atheism that he clearly admires. Thus,

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54 Haykal does not refer to him by name, and instead calls him 'ṣāḥib al-liwā᾽ (Kāmil's newspaper was called *al-Liwā᾽*).

within his theoretical framework, all the qualities he admires in Qāsim Amīn can only be effects of the French *wasaṭ* rather than the Egyptian one.

> The dilemma confronting Egyptian intellectuals like Haykal was an almost insoluble one. *In fine*, the same Egyptian national character that Haykal was excited to discover and analyze in order to prove its uniqueness was blocking the path to the revival and the modernization of Egyptian society (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 39).

On the other hand, the class hierarchy in which Haykal occupied a privileged position depended on peasants' (socially maintained and never guaranteed) submission to the dominant class; any rebellion would threaten this hierarchy. We will return below to the relationship between his nationalism and his view of peasants.

Haykal's conception of a national character determined by Egypt's natural environment would become immensely influential in the 1920s (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 39, 131). Nationalist historiography, which Haykal did much to promote, took Egypt's presumed eternal, unchanging essence to be the main cause of all historical events in Egypt (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 143-163). Haykal's theory exercised a major influence in 'nationalism education' classes (*al-tarbiyya al-waṭaniyya*) in Egyptian schools. The textbooks used in these classes in the second half of the 1920s presented an 'environmentally grounded concept of nationalism' in which 'the Arabic language and Islam . . . are assigned no role whatsoever in the formation of the Egyptian nation and the definition of its national

personality. They are simply omitted as possible elements creating either nations in general or Egypt in particular' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 136-138).

National Literature

For a clearer understanding of Haykal's view of the role of writers as leaders of the nation, we must turn to his influential essay, 'National Literature [*Al-Adab al-Qawmī*]'. It was published on 18 March 1925 in *al-Siyāsa*, the newspaper of the Liberal Constitutionalist party, which Haykal edited, and 'proved to be a milestone in the development of the theory of an Egyptian national literature' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 193).

Haykal begins his essay by noting that there have been fierce debates between partisans of 'the old' and 'the new' in literary language. He attributes the intensity of this debate in part to an unfortunate tendency for writers to be concerned more with form than with content; in his view, the latter is far more important. Only the 'mighty souls [*al-nufūs al-quwiyya*]' that represent a particular era or environment (*bī'a*), and whose works are immortalised, can be said to have produced 'national literature [*al-adab al-qawmī*]'. Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Voltaire and Goethe have been immortalised, despite the progress of civilisation, because their souls represented a particular nation (*umma*) and era, having been stamped with the 'eternal characteristics of their nations [*umam*]'. They were signposts (*aʿlām*) in history, guiding the people (*ahl*) of their eras (Haykal 1968, 344-347).

Such writers, who produce national literature, are 'the masters of literature and the rulers of language [*sādat al-adab wa-l-ḥākimūn ʿalā al-luġa*]'. It is they who breathe life into words and give them their force. Dictionaries submit to their rule (*taḫḍaʿ li-ḥukmihim*) and linguists acknowledge their authority (*sulṭān*). When one is in doubt about the meaning of a word, the works of poets and writers are the ultimate authority. When two words are roughly synonymous but differ in connotation, this difference is always due to the work of a 'national writer [*kātiban qawmiyyan*]', who established a precedent. Art and literature are the flower (*zahra*) of every civilisation (*ḥaḍāra*), and the literary luminaries (*aʿlām*) of a civilisation must have authority (*ḥukm*) over literary language[55] (Haykal 1968, 348-349).

Hence, says Haykal, research must be focused on national literature. Does it currently exist 'in the nations (*umam*) that speak Arabic'? Is it something they share, or does each of them have its own national literature? In Haykal's opinion, although 'the Arab East' has good writers, they unfortunately 'do not represent any particular civilisation [*ḥaḍāra*]'; instead they combine very different and even contradictory civilisations. Hence none of them has produced national literature, 'which stamps its character on an era because it is the flower of that era, and the image and voice of all its perfection and vigour'. Some are admired, but none are regarded with 'veneration [*taqdīs*]', and their works are not immortalised. This is not because 'the Arab East lacks a civilisation [*ḥaḍāra*]', but because the features of its civilisation have been erased under the

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55 Similarly, Haykal wrote elsewhere that 'literature and its course constitute the most authentic hallmark of a nation's civilization' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 88).

domination of the nations (*umam*) that have ruled over it; they have deliberately made it forget its past and submit to the civilisation of the victors. When this happens, people's national identity (*qawmiyya*) is weakened, and they cease to have a national literature with a distinct personality (*ḏātiyya*) (Haykal 1968, 350-352).

What is strange, says Haykal, is that those who have been involved in the renaissances of the East have not given any thought to this problem and have not sought to remedy it. It is astonishing that 'our Egyptian University' offers courses on ancient and modern literature, both European and Arab, but not a single course on ancient or modern Egyptian literature or on the development of thought in Egypt, on how this development reflects the Eastern and Western civilisations that it has absorbed, and on whether it has clothed these civilisations in Egyptian nationality (*al-qawmiyya al-miṣriyya*), with 'its ancient history, its harmonious nature, its clear skies, and the gracious character, elegance and civility in which its people [*ahl*] excel', or whether each of these civilisations has remained 'undigested' until it moved on and was replaced by its successor (Haykal 1968, 352). Haykal's argument might seem illogical at first sight. He has just posited the existence of a single original civilisation encompassing the Arab East, whose features have been erased by the nations that have ruled over it – nations that would seem to include Egypt – and he has lamented the lack of a national literature reflecting this civilisation. Yet the remedy he proposes is a study of *Egyptian* literature, to determine whether *Egyptian* nationality has assimilated Eastern civilisations as well as Western ones. As we will see

below, it seems that what Haykal has in mind is a single Arab, Eastern civilisation composed of different nations, each with its own distinct character. Thus Egypt has its own nationality (*qawmiyya*) but not its own civilisation (*ḥaḍāra*).

Continuing, Haykal presents American nationalism as an ideal example that Egyptians should follow:

> For such a study is considered in all civilized nations [*umam*] as one of the foundations of nationalism [*usus al-qawmiyya*], which should fill the souls of the country's children [*abnāʾ al-waṭan*], so that their bonds of loyalty to their country will increase. The Americans, although they have known civilised life for only a short time, and although they are a people [*qawm*] whose history has acquired none of the sacredness [*qadāsa*] that surrounds the history of all the ancient nations [*umam*], have used nationalist education [*al-taʿlīm al-qawmī*] as a powerful means to create American nationalism [*al-qawmiyya al-Amrikiyya*]. They have been so successful that they have made immigrants feel more attached to America than to the countries [*awṭān*] that produced them (Haykal 1968, 352).

How, precisely, have Americans done this? Haykal makes it clear that they have done it by producing *literature* and teaching it to their children:

> At first, they were dependent on Europe, and particularly on English literature, but thanks to this national genesis [*hāḏihi al-našʾa al-qawmiyya*], they soon had writers and poets like

Longfellow and Emerson, who embodied American national life [*al-ḥayāh al-qawmiyya al-Amrīkiyya*] ... The Americans take a keen interest in this nationalist [*qawmī*] aspect, and in implanting it in the souls of their youth, although they have acquired it only belatedly, after all other nations [*umam*][56]. Thus they have created it from scratch and made Americans proud of it. As for us in Egypt, we have neglected it, judging by what I have seen in the Egyptian University, in government schools, at al-Azhar and in the other religious institutes (Haykal 1968, 352-353).

As we have seen, for Egyptian nationalists as for French and American ones, the problem was indeed how to persuade the masses to accept this new belief system. Haykal's argument suggests that this was still a challenge for Egyptian nationalists in 1925. Hence he advocates the solution that had already been universally adopted in Europe and in the US: indoctrination in schools. More specifically, he wants children to be taught to venerate Egyptian national literature.

But first, Egyptian national literature has to be written. Few writers, he says, take their inspiration from Egyptian literature or anything in Egypt. When on occasion a writer does so,

> what he writes does not give one the feeling that it should give. One does not sense that his whole soul, heart and mind, and all his energies and feelings, have been concentrated in his pen, in an abundant spiritual torrent that represents a whole nation [*umma*] in a particular era (Haykal 1968, 353).

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56 In reality, American nationalism, which became a prominent part of public life in the United States in the late 18th century (Waldstreicher 1997), predated Egyptian nationalism by a few decades.

Clearly Haykal believes that a writer can represent 'a whole nation'; so far, this seems to be purely a matter of intuition and feeling. But we will see in a moment that the writer must have other qualifications in order to accomplish this task.

Clarifying to some extent his view of the relationship between Egypt and the other 'nations of the Arab East', Haykal says that these other nations (*umam*) are no better off than Egypt in terms of national literature. Among the writers of 'our neighbours and sisters' in Syria (*al-Šām*), Iraq, Tunisia, Algeria and Marrakesh, one rarely finds a 'national [*qawmī*] writer or poet' who is to his nation (*umma*) what Homer was to Greece, Goethe to Germany, or al-Farazdaq (on whom see Blachère 2011a), Abū Nuwās (on whom see Wagner 2011) and al-Mutanabbī 'in the lands [*bilād*] of the Arabs' (on whom see Blachère 2011b). Haykal repeats that he attributes this lack to the rule of other civilisations (*madaniyyāt*), which oppressed these nations (*umam*) and strove to erase their civilisation (*ḥaḍāra*). Thus the civilisation (*ḥaḍāra*) of the Ottomans tried to Turkify the Arab realms (*mamālik*) that submitted to its rule; the British and French have been even worse in this respect. The civilisation (*ḥaḍāra*) of the vanquished nations (*umam*) remained hidden, finding no outlet, nor any writer who embodied what the past had stored up in it. Yet, he says, these Arab nations (*umam*), which are linked by geographical proximity, have an old, deep-rooted civilisation, which they share in many respects. At the same time, each one has its own distinctive character (*ṭābiʿ*), which is due to its natural environment and to 'the types of activity found in it' (Haykal 1968, 354).

It is true, he adds, that in these nations (*umam*), there are commoners (*ʿāmmat al-nās*) who produce colloquial literature (*al-adab al-ʿāmmī*) that reflects the character of the lands in which they live, but this literature is uncouth and does not deserve to survive, though it may be of use to historians and writers who are interested in the past of these nations (*umam*), during which oppression erased the sublime aspects of their civilisation (Haykal 1968, 354-355). This makes it clear that for Haykal, a writer needs more than intuition and feeling to represent his nation: he also needs to master literary language. Colloquial language will not do. Moreover, we will now see that the national writer must possess another type of cultural capital as well.

Haykal asks: is it possible for a sublime national (*qawmī*) literature to return, one that distinguishes each of these nations and distinguishes them collectively as well? Can they have their own civilisation, whose flower would be art and literature, and 'some of whose great men [*kubarāʾ*]' would be considered 'the ideal expression [*al-maṯal al-nāṭiq*] of its meanings'[57]? Yes, says Haykal, but only if each nation (*umma*) undertakes the full assimilation (*tamaṯṯul*) of the civilizations that have come to it, so that they 'become part of its life, and people feel that these civilisations belong to them and are not something foreign'. Then 'the national [*qawmī*] artist and the national writer' would surely appear. 'The Arab East in general, and each nation (*umma*) within it in particular', would have a literature that was distinct from ancient literature as well as

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57 Because of a syntactic ambiguity, it is not clear whether this sentence is referring to the great men of the civilisation or the great men of art and literature. Considering Haykal's argument as a whole, though, it seems that these two categories were identical in his view.

from 'that modern literature that is indebted, for the most part, to Western civilisation [*madaniyya*], whose power dominates the East and its nations' (Haykal 1968, 355-356). What does Haykal mean by assimilating the civilisations that have come to Egypt? As we will see below, he does not mean writing novels about the Alexander the Great, the Roman Empire, the Arab conquests or the Ottoman sultans, or writing in Ottoman Turkish instead of Arabic, though such projects would follow logically from his argument. Instead, this seemingly vague prescription serves to legitimate a very specific literary project: the assimilation of the European literary models that Haykal himself had studied in France.

Concluding his essay, Haykal says that when all this happens, the national writer will be in control of language, will dictate to language academies what they should put in their dictionaries, and will determine the style that second-rate writers will imitate. Sterile debates about 'the old' and 'the new' will disappear, and the language will be rejuvenated. The writers who are currently struggling to unite the Arab East's hidden civilisation with the civilisations that have dominated it will be seen as heroes whose steadfastness and strength saved their country (*awṭān*), and the national writer will bestow on them the greatest glory (Haykal 1968, 356). No doubt Haykal hoped that he himself would later be seen as one of these heroes. His essay on national literature was a manifesto for writers to follow; it is only logical that he would aim to follow his own proposal and become an exemplar of the kind of writer he was calling for, thus indirectly consecrating himself.

From 'Great Men' to the Priesthood of National Writers

What did Haykal mean by 'great men'? In order to clarify this, we must briefly consider the history of this concept as well as the particular way in which Haykal developed it.

In reformist intellectual circles, people were very interested in what were called either 'great men' (*al-riǧāl al-aʿẓam*, *aʿẓam al-riǧāl*) or 'illustrious men' (*al-mašāhīr*). . . . Illustrious men and great men, of all times, nationalities and types, had pride of place in Arabic publications at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. . . . The theme of the great man in the Arabic press and in Arabic historical literature was a Western import. . . . Drenched in the various sources of Enlightenment thought, romanticism, English liberalism and racial anthropology, Arab intellectuals thus maintained the idea that the strength of nations depended both on their great men and on the worship of those great men, a worship that made it possible to shape the character of the middle strata by encouraging their activity and creative intelligence (Dupont 2002, 49, 53, 57).

In particular, Haykal seems to have derived his concept of 'great men' from the ideas of the influential Scottish writer and essayist Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), whose book *Heroes and Hero Worship* (1869) was translated into Arabic as *Al-Abṭāl wa-ʿIbādat al-Buṭūla* in 1911 (CD Smith 1983, 17, 38, 41-42, 129, 205n). Carlyle argued that in the ideal social order, 'heroes' or 'great men' with an innate capacity for leadership would wield absolute power:

Great men were the prime movers in all great historical events; hence the biographies of great men constituted the history of mankind. . . . [Carlyle's] hero was a sort of god who led a life apart from the people, whom he ruled as master. . . . When a hero appeared, the masses instinctively recognized his superiority and said to him: 'We do not quite understand thee; we perceive thee to be nobler and wiser and bigger than we, and will loyally follow thee.' . . . Whatever he said and whatever he did, the hero was always right because he alone saw the real and true causes of events. Wise, brave, virtuous, and strong, the hero demanded and received unflinching obedience. He could rule only arbitrarily and would rule only justly. . . . The great event in the life of a nation was the appearance of the hero (Schapiro 1945, 100-101).

In the terms of our theoretical framework, this seems to be a description of charisma, the strategy of the prophets. As we will see below, Haykal placed the Prophet Muḥammad in this category. Yet he also extended the idea of 'great men' to encompass not only the charismatic individual (who is seen by his followers as unique), but also the enlightened group:

Haykal wrote in his diary that in every age and society, 'a group superior to the rest in intelligence and love of humanity' would 'leave the living world for the inspiration of the spirit [where] they regained their normal state and rediscovered the realities of life, displayed in such an imaginative manner . . . that they denied it was their own discovery and said it was inspired by God. . . . Inspiration

is the attainment of greatness by the soul in its being freed from the material so that it can reach the truths residing in the interior of the world. ...' These were the men who 'have achieved reality as opposed to the masses who remain concerned with material matters and goals' (CD Smith 1983, 41-42; cf. Selim 2004, 9-10).

This description of the activity of great men is remarkably similar to the description of the activity of the national writer that we saw above in Haykal's essay 'National Literature', except that the national writer claims not that his work was inspired by God, but that it was inspired by the nation. Yet as we have seen, for Haykal, the national writer's work requires not only inspiration, but also a mastery of Arabic literary language, as well as a knowledge of one or more of the civilisations that have dominated Egypt. In terms of our theoretical framework, Haykal's concept of the 'group' of great men, who in his view are in fact 'national writers', is thus a prescription for the strategy of priesthood: thanks to their cultural capital, they are to be recognised as having special insight into the 'life of the nation'.

Zaynab

Haykal's first and best-known novel, *Zaynab*, has been called the first Arabic novel, and is certainly one of the earliest ones (Allen 1995, 32-33). Haykal wrote it while in Europe, and published it in Egypt in 1913, under the pen name Miṣrī Fallāḥ (A Peasant Egyptian). There is much in the novel that is not directly relevant to our purposes here, but if we consider it as an expression of a literary stance – what Bourdieu (1998,

378-384) called a *prise de position* – it is not difficult to see how it reflects the programme Haykal outlined in the essays considered above.

First, it puts into practice Haykal's call to assimilate the civilisations that have dominated Egypt, by imitating the conventions of the 19th-century European Romantic novel. Its plot revolves around the unhappy love lives of its mainly young characters[58], its heroine, Zaynab, dies of a broken heart, and it is full of florid descriptions of natural landscapes. In one of the first reviews of the novel, the Egyptian critic Zakī Kūhīn (1913) quipped that Zaynab's interior monologue sounds as if she, an illiterate peasant girl, must have read the 19th-century French Romantic poet Alphonse de Lamartine.

Second, the novelist presents himself as the voice of the authentic Egyptian national character, embodied by Egyptian peasants[59]. He does this in two ways: by claiming to speak as an Egyptian peasant, on behalf of all Egyptian peasants, and by portraying the Egyptian natural environment, which, as we saw above, he regarded as the source of the Egyptian national character.

Haykal dedicated the novel 'to Egypt . . . the cradle of the revelation [*mahbaṭ waḥy*] of poetry and wisdom at the beginning of time'. The phrase *mahbaṭ al-waḥy* is significant for our purposes. Literally 'the place where revelation descended', it normally means 'the cradle of Islam' (i.e.

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58 These are Ḥāmid, a Haykal-like upper-class character; Zaynab, a peasant girl; and Ibrāhīm, Zaynab's true love. Ḥāmid has a brief flirtation with Zaynab but does not pursue it, since she is not of his class. Instead he falls in love with an upper-class girl, ʿAzīza, but her parents marry her to someone else. Zaynab's parents, too, marry her to a man she does not love. As for Ibrāhīm, he is conscripted into the Egyptian army to serve in Sudan.

59 The notion of an authentic Egyptian character represented by peasants has been very durable; cf. Winegar (2006, 95-98).

Mecca); Haykal has transposed this religious concept into a nationalist frame. He describes himself as tormented son of Egypt (Haykal 1913/1983, 5), using the country-as-parent blend that we have encountered already. In the introduction to the third edition of the novel, he says that he chose the pseudonym Miṣrī Fallāḥ because he felt,

> as other Egyptians felt, and particularly other peasants, that the sons of notables [’abnā’ al-ḏawāt], among others, who claimed the right to rule Egypt, viewed us Egyptians, and us peasants, with less respect than we[60] deserved. So I wanted to display, on the cover of the novel that I presented to the public at that time . . . that the peasant Egyptian has a deep feeling of prestige [makāna], and of the respect he merits, and that he does not hesitate to make Egyptianness and peasanthood a slogan with which to introduce himself to the public, demanding that others venerate [iǧlāl] and respect it (Haykal 1913/1983, 8).

In reality, Haykal was one of the 'sons of notables'. By identifying himself as a peasant, i.e. as a member of a much lower social class, and claiming that peasants have prestige and should be venerated, he prompts for a conceptual blend, which generates the inference that he himself has prestige and should be venerated. It will be worth keeping in mind, as well, this passage's tone of wounded pride, which we will encounter again when discussing Gamal Abdel Nasser in Chapter 5.

The novel's subtitle is *Manāẓir wa-Aḫlāq Rīfiyya* (Rural Landscapes and Morals). Emphasising the importance of its descriptions of Egyptian

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60 Note again the passage from 'I' to 'we'.

natural landscapes, Haykal says in the introduction that he wrote it mainly out of homesickness (which he refers to as *al-ḥanīn li-l-waṭan*, the name of the literary genre that we considered in Chapter 1), while he was in Europe, and also stresses that he was passionate about French literature at the time (Haykal 1913/1983, 9-11). He describes the stunning beauty of the Swiss countryside, only to assert that whenever he felt dazzled by it, he would reach for the notebook in which he was writing *Zaynab*, forget about Switzerland, and write descriptions of the Egyptian countryside, which was no less beautiful to him (Haykal 1913/1983, 11). If we keep in mind his theory of environmental determinism, this argument prompts for the inference that since the Egyptian natural environment is no less beautiful than the Swiss natural environment, the Egyptian national character is also no less beautiful than the Swiss national character. This argument may also be aimed at forestalling any suspicions that Haykal had become too Europeanised to be qualified to speak for his nation. In 1881, ‘Abd Allāh al-Nadīm had published, in his newspaper *Al-Tankīt wa-l-Tabkīt*, a withering satirical account of a Europeanised Egyptian who returns home from studies in France, having forgotten how to speak Arabic and acquired a distaste for Egyptian customs (Awad 1986, 84-86), i.e. having lost the ‘Egyptianness’ for which Haykal demands respect. Finally, Haykal’s nationalist justification of his descriptions of Egyptian natural landscapes may be, in part, a response to critics, who reproached him for stuffing long, repetitive descriptions of nature into the narrative,

as if these passages were ends in themselves, with no relation to the plot[61] (Kūhīn 1913; ʿAllām 1982, 66).

A nationalist justification of Haykal's literary stance could also serve another important purpose. In 1913, novels were widely considered morally suspect in Egypt (Brugman 1984, 205; Shalan 2006). Haykal notes that he initially hesitated to publish the novel, for fear that it would harm his reputation as a lawyer, and acknowledges that this is why he initially used a pseudonym (Haykal 1913/1983, 7). By presenting a certain type of prose fiction as an essential part of nationalism, Haykal legitimised it, and thus removed an obstacle that would have stood in the way of the sale of his books.

Finally, Haykal's environmental determinism served specific class interests. As Siddiq (2007, 91) observes, Haykal's peasants are contented:

> Social relations, especially class stratification, appear as immutable as the natural order they mirror. This fundamental structural correspondence precludes politics from the equation, and with it the idea of significant change. Moreover, in the process of consecrating the status quo and the class division inscribed therein it occludes class conflict altogether. No matter how dire their condition, or how arduous their work, the peasants in Haykal's novel are always content with their lot. They are said to derive ample recompense from the serene beauty of the landscape, which, it so happens, they cultivate for the benefit of avaricious landowners.

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61 Yaḥyā Ḥaqqī (1975/2008, 48) argued that nature is actually the main character in the story.

In short, if the character of the physical environment determines the character of the social order, and if the physical environment is beautiful, it follows that the social order is beautiful. Thus Haykal naturalised his own dominant position in that social order. Bourdieu argues that this is one of the functions of religion: to provide the dominant classes with '*justifications of their existence* in its specific form, that is, their existence as *occupants of a determinate social position*' (1987a, 124). Here nationalism serves the same purpose. While the novel critiques injustices inflicted on the peasants, as Jeff Shalan observes, Haykal's 'persistent desire to romanticize peasant culture' keeps this critique within narrow limits:

> Haykal is by no means advocating a fundamental change in the relationship between the peasant and land-owning classes, but only a more humane maintenance of it through higher wages and better working conditions. Indeed, a more radical argument for change, such as substantial land reform, peasant collectives, or a redistribution of income, could represent a potentially serious disruption of that relationship and thus strike at the very core of the territorialist's image of the Egyptian nation as embodied in the eternally unchanging ways of the peasant (Shalan 2006, 223-224; cf. CD Smith 1983, 50, 56).

The Film Adaptations of Zaynab

Zaynab was the first novel to be made into an Egyptian film (Qāsim 1996, 5). Muḥammad Karīm (1896-1972) adapted it twice for the cinema, once in 1930 and a second time in 1952, just before the Free Officers'

military coup. The 1930 version has been lost (Qāsim 1996, 6), and the 1952 version is not available for viewing, but Karīm's published recollections of the making of these films provide valuable insights into the reception of the novel.

Karīm first read *Zaynab* when he was seventeen years old and was captivated by it, convinced that it 'expressed the nature of our nation and country [*šaʿbina wa bilādina*]', although he had never actually seen the Egyptian countryside, and had no knowledge of it other than what he had read in *Zaynab* (Karīm 1969, 42, 46). Before shooting the silent version of the film, he visited Haykal's family in the Delta, and thus saw the Egyptian countryside for the first time. Karīm felt that the most important thing in the film would be the landscapes, which should show a positive image of the Egyptian countryside. Yet he did not film in Haykal's village, because it lacked suitably 'poetic' landscapes. Moreover, he visited many other villages without finding anything he deemed worth filming. Finally, he constructed an imaginary village landscape, by combining shots filmed in many different parts of Egypt, in order to obtain the desired effect. Similarly, when he saw how peasants really lived (in dirty, smoky houses, sharing rooms with farm animals), he was appalled, and decided that if he filmed peasant life as it really was, it would be 'negative propaganda' about Egypt. Instead, he would have to film it 'as it should be, not as it is now'. Thus, for example, before filming a street scene, he paid children to clean the street thoroughly (Karīm 1969, 50-54). In 1951, when Karīm suggested to a producer the idea of a remake of the film, the producer, who had not seen the original version, was concerned at first that

Egyptian film audiences would not appreciate the 'atmosphere' of the Egyptian countryside. Karīm reassured him that he would again film the countryside 'as it should be, not as it is' ('Ālī 1969, 28). Haykal praised both films; after seeing the second version, he told Karīm: 'We[62] want a countryside in Egypt like the one you created for us in the film' (Karīm 1969, 59; 'Ālī 1969, 31). In this type of nationalist discourse, '[p]easants and the urban poor can be tolerated only if patronized or romanticized' (Saad 1998). Thus nationalist intellectuals do not merely invent a past populated with invented traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992); they also invent the present.

During the shooting of the second film, Karīm hired peasant women for a scene in which they were to harvest cotton; when they arrived for the shooting, they were wearing silk dresses and polished black shoes. They were disappointed when he told them to wear their ordinary clothes ('as long as they were clean') ('Ālī 1969, 28). The peasant women, who had probably never seen a film, but understood that they were going to meet important people from Cairo, seem to have judged that it would be appropriate to wear formal attire. This is not so different from what Karīm himself was doing by portraying the countryside 'as it should be', except that his vision of how the countryside 'should be' did not include peasant women in silk dresses. Like Haykal, he sought to portray an idealised version of the countryside, but with its class hierarchy intact.

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62 Note again the use of 'we'.

Competition Between Two Priesthoods

Haykal's nationalism, which involved reverence for a godlike *waṭan* which allegedly created Egyptians in its own image, as well as glorification of a priesthood of 'national writers' who were uniquely qualified to be the *umma*'s true leaders, lent itself to competition between 'national writers' and the clergy for symbolic power. This competition manifested itself in a variety of ways in Haykal's writings as well as in his career.

According to Charles Smith (1983, 41), Haykal had reached the conclusion, while studying in Europe, 'that religions were not inspired by a divine being'; instead they were 'social phenomena reflecting historical circumstances', and 'prophets such as Muḥammad were products of their time, self-inspired men despite their sincere beliefs that they had been chosen by God'. Thus in *Zaynab*, there seems to be no God above Ḥāmid's head; there is only sky:

> Ḥāmid knelt before the sky and gazed up at it, as if he saw in it a refuge from despair. . . . He knelt with a humble heart . . . then raised his hands, wishing . . . to turn to God in repentance. . . . But the sky remained blue, oblivious to his prayer, unmoved by his distress (Haykal 1913/1983, 240).

Throughout his career, Haykal consistently argued that the clergy's influence in society should be nullified (CD Smith 1983, 39-40, 42-43, 53-55, 95, 98-99, 103-106, 115, 136, 139). Charles Smith (1983, 43) summarises Haykal's view of Islam in the following way:

Egypt should cast off Islam and its culture in order to discover its Egyptianness which was pre-Islamic. A great deal of Haykal's thought in the 1920s would be devoted to this issue, particularly in his support of the Pharaonic movement in literature. Discovery of Egypt's true, unIslamic nature went hand in hand with the inculcation of rationalistic values which would undermine Islam as a religious and social force.

In keeping with this view, *Zaynab* contains a scathing portrait of a man of religion. Towards the end the novel, Shaykh Masʿūd, the eminent leader of a Sufi order, visits the village, and a banquet is prepared for him. Haykal's description of the shaykh is worth quoting at length:

Had there been a soul inside him, or a conscience capable of feeling, he would have been deeply ashamed to see himself – he who called people to God, to the blessings of the next life and to the renunciation of the pleasures of this ephemeral world – sitting on a comfortable chair eating delicious food, while those good-hearted workers sat on a hard mat eating vile kitchen scraps. He would have been even more ashamed to know that he was idle, with no work other than roaming about the land, for the sole purpose of eating, drinking and pronouncing worthless words, while the workers exerted themselves day and night in order to feed people by means of their labour. But what conscience inhabited the heart of a lowly, ill-mannered charlatan who lived by deception? Was Shaykh Masʿūd not that man who spent ten years between the walls of al-Azhar without learning anything, and who, when he despaired of

succeeding, and his father could no longer afford to support him, left learning to those who understood it, and went wandering aimlessly, wearing what looked like a monk's frock, long-haired and alone? But that occupation brought him no reward, so he cleaned himself up a bit, put on a headband, and went about claiming to be a shaykh, making pacts with poor wretches who believed that 'He who has no shaykh, his shaykh is the devil' (Haykal 1913/1983, 242).

In the 1920s, Haykal and his fellow nationalists shaped their nationalism into a particular form that may have seemed, to them, as if it could win the kind of mass loyalty that Islam had won: Pharaonism, the nationalist revival of ancient Egypt.

Its passionate tenor, the Utopian visions embodied in it, and the messianic expectation that it could and would be realized in post-1919 Egypt made Pharaonicism the heart and soul of Egyptian territorial nationalism. ... Pharaonicist intellectuals were not content with mere formulation of theoretical views about Egypt's Pharaonic nature or with the confinement of their ideas to intellectual circles. Rather, they constantly strove to realize and actualize the Pharaonic truths they were rediscovering. They gave a great deal of attention to disseminating the truths of Pharaonicism to the Egyptian public (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 164).

Like other prominent nationalists such as Salāmā Mūsā and Aḥmad Ḥusayn, Haykal argued that Pharaonism had a racial basis, that 'a blood relationship linked ancient and modern Egyptians, creating both physical and mental similarities between them'; thus 'biology made modern

Egyptians "Pharaonic"' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 165-166). Haykal exhorted Egyptians 'to realize the inherent Pharaonicism of Egypt by reconstructing their links with their Pharaonic forefathers' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 167). The discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 lent itself to this effort. Prominent nationalists including Haykal, Aḥmad Ḥusayn and ʿAbbās Maḥmūd al-ʿAqqād made pilgrimages to Pharaonic monuments during the 1920s, and Haykal demanded 'that every Egyptian make a similar pilgrimage in order to experience their majesty for himself' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 168-171). These pilgrimages were indeed called *ḥaǧǧ*, the same word used to refer to the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. Aḥmad Ḥusayn describes his pilgrimage to the Karnak temple in Luxor as if it were a religious conversion and a call to prophethood:

> Everything that surrounded us filled our souls with enchantment. . . . Suddenly, powerful feelings overcame me and I launched into some songs from *The Glory of Ramses*[63]. I began to shout from the depths of my soul, while some of my companions who knew the words joined me: 'Carry on in the face of passing time, O Egypt, O beautiful homeland! Destroy your enemy on Judgment Day! Heed the call and sacrifice yourselves! . . . We stood next to these columns, when suddenly the place engulfed us and we almost lost consciousness of our own existence (quoted in Colla 2007, 157-158).

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[63] 'The Pharaonic age was often set to music. Two popular productions of the 1920s were *The Glory of Ramses* (1923) and *Tut-Ankh-Amon* (1924), both written by Maḥmūd Murād with music composed by Sayyid Darwīsh' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 183).

Husayn then 'stood on a rock and, in a scene that prefigures his career as a public speaker, used the example of the antiquities to exhort his companions to (re)build the Egyptian nation'. 'I was reborn, a new creature,' wrote Husayn, in the language of religious conversion, adding, 'I stood there as if I were receiving orders and instructions' (Colla 2007, 158), like the Prophet Muḥammad receiving instructions from the Archangel Gabriel in the traditional account of the revelation of Islam.

In 1929, statements such as these appeared in Egyptian newspapers: 'The [Egyptian] nation does not know any religion except the religion of patriotism', and 'the Egyptian national body contains, besides Muslims, the religious groups of the Christians and the Jews, and Egypt does not feel today and will not feel in the future anything except its distinct Egyptian nationalism' (quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 253-254). Such affirmations prompt for a conception in which religion belongs only to individuals within the nation, but not to the nation as a personified entity, which knows only 'the religion of patriotism'. This conception can be understood in light of Haykal's environmental determinism: the nation is loyal only to its creator, the *waṭan.* As we saw above, for Haykal, the national character imposed by the *waṭan* on its inhabitants nullified the differences between religions. In effect, the discourse we are considering here affirms that, while the religious beliefs of individuals are tolerated, nationalism should be the nation's official belief system and thus should take precedence over religion.

This view was not widely accepted in Egypt. 'Quite simply, secular-liberal nationalism was not a language which the majority of Egyptians

could understand' (Mondal 2003, 155). The short story 'Ḥadīṯ al-Qarya'
(Village Small Talk)[64] (Lāšīn 1999, 231-240), by Maḥmūd Ṭāhir Lāšīn
(1894-1954), published in 1929, vividly and plausibly portrays the stark
contrast between the habitus of a Cairene *afandī* and that of of the
peasants in village he visits, suggesting that the clergy's symbolic power
among peasants remained unassailable. Sitting with a group of peasants
in the evening, the *afandī* tries to lecture them about progress and
modernisation, but they understand nothing of what he says, and pay no
attention to him. Then the shaykh that they revere arrives, and delivers a
sermon full of Islamic formulas and references to the Qurʾān; its moral is
that people should not try to rise above their social class. The peasants
listen approvingly with rapt attention.

As we will see in the next chapter, nationalist intellectuals would
soon find a solution to this dilemma: to call for the appearance of a
prophet of nationalism, who would rouse the masses and convert them to
the *afandiyya*'s nationalist creed. As for Haykal, he was not prepared to
accept such a scenario. This stance is reflected in his opposition to the
most charismatic nationalist political leaders of his time, Muṣṭafā Kāmil
and Saʿd Zaġlūl. While studying law in Cairo from 1905 to 1908, he
expressed his criticism of Kāmil 'in elitist terms . . . declaring that he
"began to feel that the following of the masses was the easy way" which
would usually lead to error' (CD Smith 1983, 37). After the First World
War, he and his party, the Liberal Constitutionalists, fiercely opposed
Zaġlūl, on the same grounds (CD Smith 1983, 61-73; Reid 1990, 33):

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64 For an analysis and English translation of the story, see Hafez (1993, 233-268).

The intense antagonism which arose between Saʿd Zaġlūl's Wafd and the Liberal Constitutionalist party to which Haykal belonged went beyond disagreement over nationalist priorities; it ultimately was founded, in Haykal's view, on disagreement over the legitimate source of power, popular acclaim as opposed to intellectual qualifications . . . (CD Smith 1983, 61).

In terms of our theoretical framework, this was a conflict between the strategy of the prophets and the strategy of the priests. While it is not obvious why Haykal in particular should have taken this uncompromising stance, the existence of such a stance is not surprising in itself; as Bourdieu (1971a, 6) explains, the strategies of priests and prophets put them in competition with each other for lay followers.

In the short term, however, the nationalist priesthood's main competitors remained the Muslim clergy, who had considerable political support. After Turkey's abolition of the Caliphate in 1924, Egypt's King Fuʾād attempted to promote the idea that a restored Caliphate should be established in Egypt, clearly intending to become Caliph and thus to increase his symbolic power (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 55-74). In 1925, in the midst of this controversy, ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq (1888-1966) published a book called *Al-Islām wa-Uṣūl al-Ḥukm* (Islam and the Principles of Government), which argued that the Caliphate was not a legitimate Islamic institution, that the Prophet Muḥammad's mission had been spiritual rather than political, and that Islam did not specify any particular type of political system; hence Muslims were free to choose a political system on non-religious grounds. This stance was a reasonable

one for ʿAbd al-Rāziq to take. His family 'was prominent in the leadership of the Liberal Party' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 61; cf. Mondal 2003, 164-165) and was 'a main backer of *al-Siyāsa*' (CD Smith 1983, 78), the party's newspaper. ʿAbd al-Rāziq had graduated from al-Azhar, then studied at Oxford (Hourani 1983, 183). Though formally a member of the *ʿulamāʾ*, in reality ʿAbd al-Rāziq, like al-Ṭahṭāwī, occupied an intermediate social position closer to the *afandiyya.* He was therefore well-positioned to launch a heterodox attack on the dominant positions in the religious field. Moreover, he could reasonably have expected support from those who, like the Liberal Party, opposed the King's bid to become Caliph. Many in Egypt perceived ʿAbd al-Rāziq's book 'as a political attack on the King and his Caliphal aspirations'; 'with its attacks on individual and arbitrary rule,' the book 'was indeed part and parcel of the Liberal political outlook' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 62). However, ʿAbd al-Rāziq's challenge to religious orthodoxy was unsuccessful. The Shaykh of al-Azhar 'arraigned ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq before the Grand Council of *'ʿUlamāʾ* on charges that can be most cogently characterized as the divergence of ʿAbd al-Rāziq's views from the traditional understandings adhered to by his peers'. He was 'found guilty of holding the impermissible views ascribed to him in the indictment and accordingly was dismissed from membership in the corps of *ʿulamāʾ*'; this also resulted in his dismissal from his post in the state sharia courts (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 62-63). The clergy's formidable symbolic power to excommunicate Muslims arguably explains why '[t]here seems to have been practically no one in Egypt in 1925 who cared to agree in

public with the Shaykh's radical interpretation of Islam', and why those who came to his defence did so almost exclusively on grounds of freedom of expression, rather than to defend the views expressed in the book (Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 68). ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq then became a political liability for those who had supported him.

> *al-Siyāsa* had been ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq's chief defender. . . . It now bore the brunt of attacks initiated by Azhari *ʿulamāʾ* but taken up by Unionists and, finally, the Wafd. The paper's argument that the constitution guaranteed freedom of opinion and religious abstention from state matters was ignored. The *ʿulamāʾ* accused *al-Siyāsa* and the Liberals of atheism and were hardly mollified by the paper's response. It depicted the Azhar committee of *ʿulamāʾ* as a 'social committee' which resembled 'religious courts in the Middle Ages'. . . . The Liberals and *al-Siyāsa* found themselves isolated from many sectors of Egyptian opinion (CD Smith 1983, 79).

Haykal's opponent in the 1926 parliamentary election campaign 'accused Haykal of atheism and of working to destroy Islam, defeating him by 1,899 votes to 697. . . . Wafd and Azhar accusations of atheism continued following the appearance in 1926 of Ṭāhā Ḥusayn's *Fī al-Šiʿr al-Ǧāhilī* (On Pre-Islamic Poetry)'[65] (CD Smith 1983, 80).

The idea that nationalism should take precedence over religion faced even more serious challenges in the 1930s. Gershoni and Jankowski (1995, xiii) argue that urbanisation and the expansion of literacy broadened the *afandiyya* category to include larger numbers of people

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65 On the controversy surrounding Ṭāhā Ḥusayn's book, see Berque (1966).

from less privileged classes, who were 'more deeply rooted in Arab-Islamic modes of expression than the smaller and more Westernized elite of the previous generation'. The appearance of a new type of clientèle for cultural products transformed the market: 'this growing body of consumers soon generated its own producers of ideas', and 'the growth of this population had a feedback effect, influencing the older generation' to adapt their production to the demands of this new category of consumers (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 13-14). These 'new *afandiyya*' had no interest in Pharaonism, and were far more attached to 'Arab-Islamic symbols and referents' than their predecessors had been (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 14). Thus '[t]he new conditions of the 1930s and 1940s created a suitable environment for the return of Islamic sentiments and concepts to the center of Egyptian thought' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 54).

One reflection of this changed environment was the appearance of the Muslim Brotherhood. Founded in 1928 by its charismatic leader, Ḥasan al-Bannā, it quickly became one of the largest and most active nationalist organisations. Al-Bannā was in many ways a highly representative example of the new *afandiyya.* He was the son of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Bannā, a village *maʾḏūn* (marriage notary), *imām* (prayer leader) and mosque teacher who was 'widely respected for his religious learning and piety, though he had had only a limited formal education in Islamic sciences', and who 'edited and wrote several books on Islamic traditions in cooperation with other Islamic scholars' (Lia 1998, 22–23). The family 'owned some landed property' and 'belonged to the upper

echelons of the merchant-artisan class', but they were not wealthy; Shaykh Aḥmad 'owned a shop where he repaired watches and sold gramophones to supplement his income', and the family 'faced acute financial problems' in the 1920s (Lia 1998, 23–24). In addition to absorbing Islamic learning from his father, and taking advantage of his father's 'extensive library of Islamic literature', Ḥasan al-Bannā studied at the mosque school of Shaykh Muḥammad Zahrān, 'an Islamic scholar of considerable learning' and editor of an Islamic journal (Lia 1998, 24–25). Shaykh Aḥmad wanted his son to pursue his studies at al-Azhar, but Ḥasan al-Bannā refused, and instead studied at a state middle school, then at the Primary Teachers' Training School in the town of Damanhūr, and finally in Cairo at Dār al-ʿUlūm, the teacher training school discussed above. Photographs invariably show him wearing a fez and a European-style suit and tie, the uniform of the *afandī*. The nationalist uprising of 1919 occurred when he was thirteen years old, and in his memoirs he recalled 'his role as one of the student activists leading demonstrations in Damanhūr, composing nationalistic poetry and even negotiating with the police who tried to disperse the crowd of demonstrators' (Lia 1998, 27). With a habitus durably formed in a social class 'among whom the virtues of religious piety and Islamic learning were highly cherished' (Lia 1998, 24), and a combination of religious and non-religious cultural capital, al-Bannā was well-placed to straddle the categories of shaykh and *afandī*, and thus to found a movement that would appeal to the 'new *afandiyya*'. It is therefore not suprising to find that his nationalism, like that of Rašīd Riḍā, was clearly subordinated to religion.

Al-Bannā's account of the statement of a group of workers who asked him to become their leader, thus encouraging him to found the Muslim Brotherhood, corresponds closely to Carlyle's description of the masses' attitude towards 'great men', and includes the concept of service to the *waṭan* alongside the concept of service to God:

> We are unable to perceive the road to action as you perceive it, or to know the path to the service of the *patria* [*waṭan*], the religion, and the nation [*umma*] as you know it. As that we desire now is to present you with all that we possess, to be acquitted by God of the responsibility, and for you to be responsible before Him for us and for what we must do (quoted in RP Mitchell 1993, 8).

Al-Bannā rejected Pharaonism, and argued that Egypt deserved loyalty simply because it was a Muslim country.

> He writes, 'Egyptianism [*Miṣriyya*] . . . has its place in our mission, and its status and right in the struggle. . . . Egypt is a country of faith that has generously embraced Islam. How could we not strive for Egypt and for Egypt's welfare? . . . We[66] are proud that we are true to this beloved country [*waṭan*]. . . . But we resist with all our strength . . . the program that seeks to recreate [ancient] Egypt after God gave Egypt the teachings of Islam . . . and provided her with honor and glory beyond that of [the ancient past], and rescued her from the filth of paganism, the rubbish of polytheism, and the habits of the *Ǧāhiliyya.* . . .' In another essay on nationalism in Egypt, Banna writes, 'If what is meant by nationalism is: the revival

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66 Note again use of 'we' instead of 'I'.

of the customs of a pagan age [ǧāhiliyya] that have been swept away; or the reconstitution of extinct mores that have disappeared; or the erasure of a benevolent civilization that has been established; or the dissolution of the bonds of Islam under the banner of nationalism and racial pride (as some regimes have done, going so far as to destroy the traits of Islam and Arabism in names, script and expressions), so as to resurrect long-forgotten pagan customs; if this is the kind of nationalism that is meant, then it is despicable and harmful in its effects' (Colla 2007, 247-248).

Clearly al-Bannā would never have gone on a pilgrimage to Karnak Temple. For him, religion must take precedence over nationalism, rather than the reverse. His views found a very broad audience. Under his leadership, the Muslim Brotherhood grew to have three hundred branches throughout Egypt in 1938, and two thousand by 1948; he claimed that the organisation had half a million active members in 1945, and some estimates put its membership at two million in 1948-1949 (Carré and Michaud 1983, 21).

In response to these challenges, a number of afandī nationalist intellectuals, including Haykal, 'turned to writing about Muḥammad, early Islamic history, or Islamic civilization after 1930. This included writers who had not addressed Islamic subjects in the past or who had previously treated Islam in a critical way' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 55). These writings are known as the Islāmiyyāt. Haykal's Ḥayāt Muḥammad (The Life of Muḥammad, 1935) was an immensely successful example of this genre (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 56-57). Haykal

claimed to have written the book as a response to Christian missionary activity in Egypt, in order to defend the Muslim faith (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 92). However, far from contradicting his efforts to decrease the influence of the clergy in Egypt, *Ḥayāt Muḥammad* was in reality a continuation of those efforts.

Haykal makes every effort to explain all the events in Muḥammad's life in terms that are compatible with modern science, allowing only the least possible divine intervention, the bare minimum that cannot possibly be denied without rejecting Islam altogether. Thus he acknowledges no miracles other than the revelation of the Qurʾān (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 57). For example, he argues that in *al-isrāʾ wa-l-miʿrāǧ*, which Islamic tradition describes as Muḥammad's night journey to Jerusalem on a winged horse followed by his ascension to heaven, it was Muḥammad's soul that travelled, not his body. Modern science, Haykal says, has discovered forces such as radio waves that can transmit images through space; such forces might explain Muḥammad's impression of having made the night journey (Haykal 1935/2005, 162-167).

In the preface to the second edition, Haykal repeatedly emphasises that he has based the book on 'the modern scientific method', and written it in 'the style of the age', because 'in the eyes of our contemporaries, this is the proper way to write history' (Haykal 1935/2005, 53). He views the classical biographies of Muḥammad and the collections of hadith as unreliable sources containing fabricated material; therefore, he says, he has relied mainly on the Qurʾān, which he considers to be the best source of information about the Prophet's life (Haykal 1935/2005, 53-65). In

reality, Haykal modelled *Ḥayāt Muḥammad* on *La Vie de Mahomet* (1929) by the French Orientalist Emile Dermenghem. In his memoirs, 'he describes how he first heard of *La Vie de Mahomet* at a party when he asked for a European account of Muḥammad's life which he could use in defending the Prophet against missionary attacks'; he then published a review of Dermenghem's study as a series of articles in his party's newspaper, *al-Siyāsa.*

> It was only when *Ḥayāt Muḥammad* was published as a nearly verbatim replica of the *al-Siyāsa* articles that references to Muslim sources appeared; they often corroborated Dermenghem's arguments, with his name removed, by referring to Muslim texts which supported them. Haykal could not have admitted being inspired by Western sources at the time he wrote *Ḥayāt Muḥammad*, when he was supposedly defending the Prophet against Western denigrations of his reputation (CD Smith 1983, 113-114).

Haykal 'attributed to Muḥammad and the Qurʾān support of the idea of detached scientific examination of all materials' (CD Smith 1983, 115), arguing that 'Muḥammad's own methods of preaching and analysis were thoroughly rationalist' and 'resembled the scientific method of the modern era based on the unbiased and objective investigation of worldly phenomena' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 57). Thus he invoked the Prophet's authority to imply, in effect, that all of the *ʿulamāʾ*'s expertise was worthless except for knowledge of the Qurʾān, and that only a scholar who was well-versed in modern scientific methods, as Haykal

himself implicitly claimed to be, was qualified to write a biography of Muḥammad. By arguing that the Qurʾān 'gave an accurate picture of God's and Muḥammad's intentions, later subverted by the *ʿulamāʾ*, Haykal 'could then extrapolate from it principles similar to the liberal secularism he had advocated previously. Now they would be sanctioned by God in order to invalidate the power of religious officials in the modern day' (CD Smith 1983, 115).

Haykal includes Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship* in the book's bibliography (Haykal 1935/2005, 9); in keeping with Carlyle's theory, he presents Muḥammad as a 'great man' who, 'like all great men, was above obedience to the laws of society [*sumuww min al-ḥuḍūʿ li-qānūn al-muǧtamaʿ yusmaḥ bihi li-kull ʿaẓīm*]' (Haykal 1935/2005, 258-259). God, he writes, has given some people 'talents for science and logic in order for them to be the heirs of the prophets [*waraṯat al-anbiyāʾ*], guiding us in doing what we should do and avoiding what we should not do' (Haykal 1935/2005, 444). This argument, which amounted to saying that '[h]istory had now evolved to the stage where scientists replaced prophets', was consistent with Haykal's stance of twenty years earlier, and was 'still intended to neutralize the influence of the *ʿulamāʾ* (CD Smith 1983, 123). 'Faith was now dependent on knowledge, with the type of knowledge necessary for faith being the scientific productivity of the West' (CD Smith 1983, 128).

Simply by writing the book, Haykal implied that intellectuals with non-religious training, like himself, were better qualified than the *ʿulamāʾ* to write about Islam. Moreover, he 'made no mention of the sharia in

Ḥayāt Muḥammad' (CD Smith 1983, 187), thus implying that it, like the hadith, was a superfluous invention of the *'ulamā'*. With Islamic law eliminated and Islamic doctrine reduced to the contents of the Qur'ān, which was to be studied by means of modern scientific methods rather than those of the *'ulamā'*, no role remained for the clergy in Haykal's version of Islam. Indeed, in his party's newspaper, *al-Siyāsa*, Haykal 'denied the *'ulamā'* the right to play a role in society, advising them to devote themselves entirely to the service of God, in renunciation and asceticism' (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 63).

Haykal took the same stance, though not entirely consistently, in his political career as well. His relationship with Muṣṭafā al-Marāġī (1881-1945), who was appointed Shaykh of al-Azhar by King Fu'ād in 1928, is a case in point. Al-Marāġī's appointment took place in an atmosphere of intense conflict between al-Azhar and the Parliament. At stake was the outcome of a prolonged struggle between nationalist intellectuals and the *'ulamā'* for control over educational institutions that granted access to jobs in the civil service. In 1926, a royal decree had transferred control of Dār al-'Ulūm (the teacher training college) and the School for Judges from the Ministry of Education to al-Azhar; in 1927, the parliamentary majority of Sa'd Zaġlūl's nationalist Wafd party had reversed this decision, provoking demonstrations of Azhar students who chanted 'Down with Sa'd and the Parliament! Long live the King!' (Temimi 2008, 151). Clearly the Azhar students' commitment to their *religious* interests as future members of the *'ulamā'* took precedence over any *nationalist* allegiance

they may have felt towards Saʿd Zaġlūl, the most venerated of Egypt's nationalist leaders at the time.

In this struggle, both Haykal and al-Marāġī played ambiguous roles, mediating to some extent between the two sides. The *ʿulamāʾ* were hostile to al-Marāġī's appointment; they considered him more a politician than a religious scholar, and disapproved of his views on the reform of al-Azhar. The reforms he advocated, which aimed to increase al-Azhar's influence in society and to improve the job opportunities of its graduates, would have involved the reintegration of Dār al-ʿUlūm and the School for Judges into al-Azhar. On the other hand, al-Azhar would have had to offer the same non-religious subjects that were taught in the state schools, and it would have added a programme to train judges in positive law to serve in the magistrature. Al-Marāġī even required the *ʿulamāʾ* to take science classes themselves. These initiatives recall al-Ṭahṭāwī's attempt to introduce a wider variety of non-religious subjects into the Azhar curriculum. The *ʿulamāʾ*'s fierce opposition to these proposals led the King to withhold his approval, and al-Marāġī resigned from his post in 1929 (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 66-79). His successor proved to be equally unpopular, and al-Marāġī was reappointed Shaykh of al-Azhar in 1935. It was at this time that he wrote the preface of *Ḥayāt Muḥammad*, praising the book highly. Bourdieu (1996a, 230) argues that prefaces are a means by which 'consecrated authors consecrate the younger ones, who consecrate them in return as masters or heads of schools'. Perhaps al-Marāġī hoped to use the book's arguments about the compatibility of Islam with modern science to strengthen his position at al-Azhar and

persuade the *'ulamā'* to support his reform proposals, but if so, he was not successful; this time, he did very little to introduce non-religious subjects into the curriculum (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 96-116).

At the same time, al-Marāġī was gaining considerable political influence as an ally of King Fārūq against the Wafd party (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 121-125). The Wafd was also an adversary of the Liberal Constitutionalist party, in which Haykal played a prominent role. Throughout his career, al-Marāġī was a staunch supporter of projects to restore the Islamic Caliphate in Egypt, and to appoint successive Egyptian kings as Caliph (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 27-35, 42-52). When this issue surfaced once again in the late 1930s, the Wafdist newspapers opposed the restoration of the Caliphate on the grounds that (in the words of the report of France's minister in Egypt, M. de Witasse) it would be 'harmful to the country's nationalism' and would 'foment discord between Muslims and Christians' (quoted in Costet-Tardieu 2005, 127). Paradoxically, during the 1938 parliamentary election campaign, the Liberal Constitutionalist party expressed support for the restoration of the Caliphate in its newspaper, *al-Siyāsa*, which Haykal edited (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 127-128). Meanwhile, al-Marāġī embarked on a fierce polemic against the Wafd, which he accused of aiming 'to separate religion and social life' in Egypt, calling them 'the enemies of Islam' (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 129-130). He also argued strenuously for the unity of Islam and politics and for the application of Islamic law. Al-Marāġī's statements provoked consternation among Christians in Egypt, and the Wafd condemned the idea of mixing religion and politics. At this point,

Liberal Constitutionalists sought to reassure Christians. Reaffirming the view that nationalism must take precedence over religion, the Liberal politician Muḥammad Maḥmūd stated: 'There are no Muslims or Copts in Egypt. All are Egyptians, all are brothers united by the bond of the country'. Haykal also distanced himself from al-Marāġī's views (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 130-134). He had 'used al-Marāġī for propaganda purposes to gain Muslim support against the Wafd' (CD Smith 1973, 408), despite the gap between their views in reality, and he 'privately assured alarmed foreign journalists and representatives of Christian religious institutions that "nothing further would be heard from the shaykh after the elections"' (CD Smith 1983, 149). The Wafd were indeed defeated in the elections, and the Liberals formed a cabinet. Later that same year, al-Marāġī sought the support of Haykal, who was now Minister of Education, for a renewed attempt to incorporate Dār al-ʿUlūm into al-Azhar. Haykal

> joined Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, then dean of the Faculty of Arts at the Egyptian University, in opposing al-Marāġī's request. Both feared Azhar encroachment into the area of state education. . . . Haykal stood fast in refusing to appoint Azhar graduates to teaching positions in state schools unless they passed tests supervised by his ministry. . . . Azhar students took to the streets against Haykal. Clashes ensued between them and students from Dār al-ʿUlūm who staged counter demonstrations. Matters reached a peak at the end of 1938 when Azhari protests were so intense that police drove them from the streets into the confines of Azhar mosque where they fired on them. Confronted with Haykal's obstinacy, al-Marāġī could only

declare that 'Haykal Pasha has deceived me' (CD Smith 1983, 149-151; cf. Costet-Tardieu 2005, 118-120).

Perhaps al-Marāġī had not fully understood the implications of *Ḥayāt Muḥammad* when writing its preface. In reality, his view of Islam was incompatible with Haykal's. Nor does he seem to have displayed, at any time during his career, anything approaching Haykal's commitment to nationalism, although he indicated a moderate degree of support for it from time to time (e.g. Costet-Tardieu 2005, 36-37). He seems to have viewed Egypt primarily as the rightful centre of the Islamic world (Costet-Tardieu 2005, 141, 147); hence his advocacy of the restoration of a Caliphate in Egypt. He probably hoped, as the British ambassador put it, that 'he himself . . . would be the power behind the throne of an Egyptian Caliph-King' (quoted in Costet-Tardieu 2005, 131).

By writing the preface to *Ḥayāt Muḥammad*, al-Marāġī seems to have unwittingly consecrated a project that he would not have agreed with. In sum, *Ḥayāt Muḥammad* can be characterised as one of those strategies that, as Bourdieu (1996b, 271) puts it,

> function as *double plays*, which, while neither expressly conceived as such nor inspired by any kind of *duplicity*, operate in several fields at once – in such a way that they are invested with all the subjective and objective attributes of sincerity, which can greatly enhance their symbolic efficacy. . . . The structural ambiguity evident in the polysemy of a discourse endowed with as many registers as there are current or potential fields of reception – a discourse we might call spontaneously polyphonic – sometimes gets

separated out and exposed retrospectively. This occurs particularly in the critical situations when a choice must be made between hierarchized loyalties. . . .

Such a critical situation seems to have occurred in Haykal's conflict with al-Marāġī over the value of Azhar diplomas on the job market. *Ḥayāt Muḥammad* was fashioned in such a way as to serve a double purpose. On one hand, it deflected the accusations of atheism that had been damaging Haykal's political career, and attracted an audience whose respect for religious authority was as great as, or greater than, its respect for nationalist authority. On the other hand, '[t]he composition of modernist biographies of the Prophet and his Companions by non-*ʿulamāʾ* intellectuals was an implicit challenge to the dominant position of the *ʿulamāʾ* as the authoritative interpreters of the Islamic heritage' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 75). Thus Haykal implicitly claimed the symbolic power to determine who is qualified to make authoritative statements about Islam. *Ḥayāt Muḥammad* presented Islam as a religion with no need for its own specialists, a religion that could best be interpreted by intellectuals such as Haykal rather than by members of the *ʿulamāʾ* such as al-Marāġī.

This strategy does not seem to have been successful. The very polysemy of Haykal's book no doubt enabled many of its tens of thousands of readers to remain unaware of these implications, and to read it instead as an act of penitence. Authors of newspaper articles, including Ḥasan al-Bannā and one of his supporters, rejoiced in astonishment that 'the Dr. Haykal who had once submitted to French and Pharaonicist

influence', who had promoted a secularism that was 'far from the spirit of Islam', based on 'the thought and philosophy of the West', had done the unimaginable and written a biography of the Prophet Muḥammad; surely, they said, this was 'a clear triumph for Islam' (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 72-75).

Conclusion

I have argued in this chapter that the *afandiyya* were at the forefront of nationalism in Egypt in the early 20th century, because nationalism lent itself to the social ambitions of this new category of readers and writers with non-religious training based on European models. In order to transform their new forms of cultural capital into greater influence in society, they needed a strategy for breaking the clergy's monopoly of symbolic power, and nationalism served this purpose as well. Nationalist intellectuals such as Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal advocated the concept of an all-powerful *waṭan* that could become an object of worship in addition to the God of monotheistic religion, promoted nationalist devotional practices based on the evocation of ancient Egypt, and assigned nationalism precedence over religion. Above all, they portrayed themselves, the 'great men', as the ultimate authorities on this *waṭan*, and thus began to act collectively as a nationalist priesthood.

In this they were only partly successful. Haykal and other like-minded intellectuals used nationalism to legitimise a type of cultural production – the writing of novels – that had previously been considered

morally suspect. They also introduced lessons in 'nationalist education' in schools. No doubt these lessons, by durably shaping the habitus of young people, helped produce a receptive market for these intellectuals' writings.

However, the priesthood of nationalism faced grave challenges. They were unable to curtail the influence of their main rivals, the Muslim clergy. Most Egyptians had tremendous respect for the clergy and no interest in Pharaonism. While nationalists such as Haykal attempted to subordinate religion to nationalism, the 'new *afandiyya*', such as the Muslim Brotherhood, subordinated nationalism to religion. Haykal and others like him responded by producing the *Islāmiyyāt* genre, but this could be no more than a tactical manoeuvre, suitable for fending off accusations of atheism. It could not pose an effective challenge to the symbolic power of the clergy, nor could it broaden public acceptance of nationalism as the dominant system of symbolic power. Nationalist intellectuals did, however, find a strategy for swaying the dominated classes, and it is to this strategy that we now turn in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm, the Priest Who Called for a Prophet

In the previous chapter, I argued that the central problem in Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal's nationalism was the inability of the nationalist to persuade most Egyptians to embrace nationalism and to give it priority over religion, and their resulting inability to gain symbolic power outside the confines of the dominant fraction of the *afandiyya*. In this chapter, I show that Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's celebrated novel *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* (The Return of the Spirit, 1933) made a case for what would become the most successful solution to this problem. This proposal was based on al-Ḥakīm's interpretation of the 1919 uprisings against British rule in Egypt. In his view, these uprisings had been a response to the Egyptian nation's worship of Saʿd Zaġlūl. Thus he inferred that the majority of Egyptians will spontaneously engage in nationalist activism whenever such an 'object of worship' appears. I demonstrate that this inference was enthusiastically embraced by critics of the novel, and that it was most probably a major influence on Gamal Abdel Nasser's use of the strategy of prophethood to become a charismatic autocrat.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First I interpret al-Ḥakīm's literary vocation in relation to his interrupted social trajectory. Next I examine the source of some of the key concepts in *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*: a work of Christian mysticism by Dmitry Merezhkovsky, a Russian writer and literary critic, who advocated an unorthodox synthesis of Christianity and ancient pagan religion. I then proceed to an analysis of *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*. I characterise the novel's hero, Muḥsin, who would serve as a model for the

young Nasser, as a young man with the requisite cultural capital and habitus to become either a nationalist priest or a nationalist prophet. I show that the novel gives priority to nationalism over Islam as an object of allegiance, and that it embraces Haykal's environmental determinism and his view of peasants. I point out some of the logical inconsistencies in al-Ḥakīm's nationalism. Then I turn to the core of the novel's argument, which hinges on the idea of a nationalist 'object of worship', and is based on a blend of Pharaonism and Merezhkovsky's ideas. Next I survey critics' embrace of the novel's nationalist message, and their formulation of a nationalist concept of Sufism detached from Islam. I consider the novel's influence on Nasser and its consecration of his rule, as well as Nasser's consecration of Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm. I draw on al-Ḥakīm's self-critical essay, *ʿAwdat al-Waʿy* (The Return of Awareness, 1974), to argue that this mutual consecration severely restricted al-Ḥakīm's ability to criticise Nasser. Finally, I bring together the key elements of nationalist habitus that I have analysed thus far in this thesis, and show how they fit together in a single conceptual blend.

An Interrupted Trajectory

Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm (1898-1987) was born in Alexandria into an educated family. His father, a successful lawyer with an interest in literature, came from a family of landowners with a dwindling inheritance; he had studied at the School of Languages founded by al-Ṭahṭāwī, then at the School of Law, where his classmates had included Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid and the future prime minister Ismāʿīl Ṣidqī, and

the three of them had founded a magazine together. Tawfīq's mother's family had moved from Turkey to Egypt, and her father had taken part in the ʿUrābī revolt of 1881-82. A strong-willed woman, she had taken the unusual step of insisting on being taught how to read and write, and seems to have been highly assertive in her relationship with Tawfīq's father. Disappointed to find that her husband had no income other than his salary as an assistant attorney, she managed to augment the family's economic capital by securing a loan to buy land (Brugman 1984, 277; Starkey 1987, 17-18).

Tawfīq's family's frequent moves disrupted his primary education; he largely taught himself to read literature, did poorly in other subjects, and failed exams. His parents sent him to Cairo to attend secondary school there while living with his paternal uncles, but he was more interested in literature, cinema and theatre than in his studies. He obtained his law degree, but without the high marks needed for a government job. Hence his father, on Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid's advice, paid to send him to France to get a PhD in law. Tawfīq stayed in Paris for three years (1925-1928), but devoted himself mainly to literature and theatre, and once again failed his exams. He returned to Egypt a disappointment to his family, and found an unglamorous position in the judiciary, the first of a series of civil service jobs. (We will consider his later career below.) By then he had developed a vocation for writing, and in particular for the theatre; in Paris he had written a play (*Ahl al-Kahf*) and a novel (*ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*), both of which were published in Egypt to critical acclaim in 1933 (Brugman 1984, 277-279; Starkey 1987, 18-20, 23-

29; El-Enany 2000, 165). Al-Ḥakīm's literary vocation thus corresponds to what Bourdieu describes as

> a relation to culture . . . which stems from an interrupted trajectory and the effort to extend or re-establish it. Thus, the new occupations are the natural refuge of all those who have not obtained from the educational system the qualifications that would have enabled them to claim the established positions their original social position promised them. . . . It can immediately be seen that, precisely by virtue of their actual and potential indeterminacy, positions which offer no guarantees but, in return, ask for no guarantees, which impose no specific condition of entry, especially as regards certificates, but hold out the promise of the highest profits for non-certified cultural capital, which guarantee no career prospects (of the type offered by the well-established occupations) but exclude none, not even the most ambitious, are adjusted in advance to the dispositions typical of individuals in decline endowed with a strong cultural capital imperfectly converted into educational capital. . . . Furthermore, these positions, which are ultimately less risky and, at least in the long run, more profitable, the more capital one brings into them, present a further advantage for people seeking an honourable refuge to avoid social decline, perhaps the most important advantage in the short term and in the practical shaping of a 'vocation' (Bourdieu 1984, 357-358, cf. Bourdieu 1989, 171-172).

Les Mystères de l'Orient

According to Hutchins (2003, 23-24), Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm borrowed some of the core ideas in *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* from a book called *Les mystères de l'Orient*, by the Russian writer and literary critic Dmitry Merezhkovsky (1865-1941). Merezhkovsky's book was published in Russian in 1925, and a French translation (which I use here) appeared the same year in Paris, where its author was then living, as was al-Ḥakīm. Its main argument is that all the gods of all religions are real, that all ancient religions were manifestations of Christianity, and that the gods of pre-Christian antiquity (such as the ancient Egyptian god Osiris) were precursors of Jesus (Bedford 1963, 151-153). Here it will be worth noting a few details of this argument, to which we will return in our discussion of al-Ḥakīm's novel.

Merezhkovsky presents his text as a paean to Christianity, and particularly to the Trinity, against the forces of atheism and Communism (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 7-15). He argues that a true understanding of Christianity must incorporate the truths of ancient pagan religion. Pre-Christian religion was not just a belief in false gods; if Christianity is truth, so is paganism. 'There are no false gods; all are real' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 16-22). All religions express the same truth, 'that of the God who dies and rises from the dead', e.g. Osiris (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 23-24).

One of the book's two main parts deals with Egypt, while the other is on Babylonia; the part on Egypt is the more relevant one for our purposes here. Merezhkovsky writes: 'Christianity began with the flight

into Egypt, and if Christ has not died forever in men's hearts, if He is to be reborn there, He will flee to Egypt again' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 59). He dwells at length on the importance of resurrection in ancient Egyptian religion, asserting that 'Holy Egypt is the fatherland (*patrie*) of God' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 60-62). 'In general, [ancient] Egyptians seem to be no more than savages and children to us. . . . But the amazing thing is that three thousand years before Christ, these children and savages knew more about Christianity than we do' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 125).

He invokes the environmental determinism that we have encountered already, describing the Nile floods as 'regular, slow and calm, like the respiration of a sleeping child. The mind of men bears the stamp of this calm and of this eternity of nature. . . . Eternal Egypt is eternal truth' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 65). Referring to the mystery of the Trinity, he asserts: "One day, if Christ is not dead in our hearts, we will understand that Egypt is the only way towards this mystery. That is the meaning of our flight into Egypt' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 73). Calling on Christians to embrace ancient Egyptian religion, he writes that while 'the Renaissance of Greco-Roman antiquity' was 'atheist', 'the Renaissance of Egyptian antiquity' would be 'religious', 'triumphant over death' and 'resurrecting' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 83). He rejects Herotodus's claim that the pharaohs were tyrants who forced people to build tombs out of vanity:

> No, these kings were not cruel tyrants, but liberators who freed humanity from the most shameful kind of slavery – the slavery of death – and led it victoriously towards Resurrection. . . . A hundred

thousand men toiled to build the pyramid of Cheops, not in servile sadness, but in intoxicating joy, in a wise madness, in a perpetual extasy of faith and prayer (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 89-90).

Discussing animal worship in ancient Egypt, he asserts:

Such is the Egyptian adoration of animals. They adore their holy innocence, their eyes from which the scales have not yet fallen. In the face of the animal, like that of the child, there is the same radiance of "transcendent holiness, the dew of Paradise"' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 95).

Merezhkovsky devotes two chapters to the ancient Egyptian god Osiris. In his view, Osiris is 'the principal, the only god of Egypt' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 100). He equates the dismemberment of Osiris with the crucifixion of Jesus (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 103-104). In this fusion of paganism and Christianity, God dies and is reborn repeatedly: 'Osiris is an eternal mummy, a dead man forever rising from the dead, but never resurrected, for there is no final resurrection, but simply an unending effort to reach it' (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 167). Thus:

In each cosmic cycle the body of a dead man is preserved. When a new cycle arrives, this body is ressurected, and this man becomes God. Then he dies, is resurrected, and so on through the centuries. He is in all ages, in all eternities, as the sun is in all drops of dew (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 238).

Clearly there are many complex conceptual blends in Merezhkovsky's text, but for our purposes in interpreting Tawfīq al-
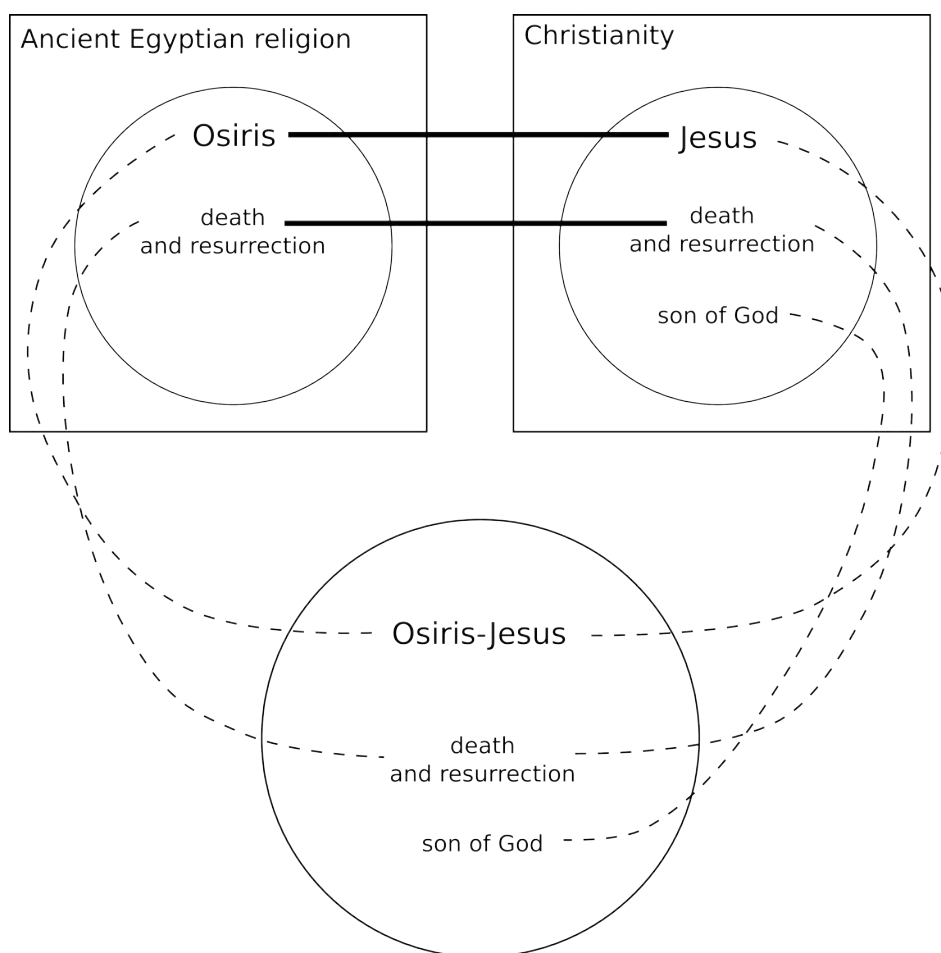
Figure 9: Merezhkovsky's blend of Osiris and Jesus

Ḥakīm's novel, the key blend is between Osiris and Jesus, illustrated in Figure 9.

In all this, it is clear that Egypt means only ancient Egypt, which for Merezhkovsky is a timeless, personified, disembodied essence. He does not seem to be at all interested in modern Egypt. His call for a 'flight into Egypt' does not mean physically visiting Egypt or getting to know contemporary Egyptians; it means embracing the religion of ancient Egypt as part of Christianity. As far as he is concerned, Egypt was destroyed long ago, and has become a wasteland where Bedouin desecrate the ancient ruins (Mérejkovsky 1925/2010, 161-162). We will see in a

252

moment how an Egyptian reader, Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm, interpreted this view of Egypt in a way that Merezhkovsky never envisaged.

ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ

The hero of ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ is an adolescent called Muḥsin; like the young al-Ḥakīm, he is enrolled in school in Cairo, he lives with his uncles, he is devoted to literature, his parents have an estate in the countryside, and his father (the village mayor) appears to be dominated by his mother, who is of Turkish descent. The narrator refers to Muḥsin's household in Cairo as the šaʿb ('the people'), thus suggesting that they represent the Egyptian nation in miniature. One by one, all the men of the household, especially Muḥsin, fall in love with Saniyya, the neighbours' daughter, who is a bit older than Muḥsin and considers him little more than a child.

Saniyya is portrayed as the ideal woman for the novel's soon-to-be-afandī protagonist. In some respects, she is resolutely modern. The narrative associates her beauty with her Europeanised education and tastes; she wears fashionable dresses, plays the piano, and seasons her conversation with French expressions such as parole d'honneur (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 75). When Muḥsin first visits Saniyya's family's flat, she invites him to sing for her while she accompanies him on the piano. Her very traditional mother refuses to come out into the living room to meet him, considering it an impropriety to entertain a male visitor, and scolds Saniyya in religious terms: 'Rabbina yihdīkī [May the Lord guide you]!' Saniyya holds her ground, and scolds her mother in non-religious terms: 'Don't make people laugh at us!' (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 77) At the same

time, Saniyya is marked with signs of Egyptian authenticity. The songs she plays with Muḥsin are from the Egyptian canon of classical Arabic music (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 72-74, 81-83), and the narrator's description of her beauty echoes the conventions of classical Arabic poetry: 'her black eyes, like those of a gazelle, with long, black lashes' (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 71) and 'her regular teeth, like inlaid precious stones' (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 74). Saniyya's father is a doctor who served in the Egyptian army in Sudan, who participated in the campaign that suppressed the Mahdist rebellion there in 1898, and whose flat is full of Sudanese artefacts that recall the Egyptian nationalist claim of legitimate domination of Sudan (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 75, 211-222). Thus Saniyya is an exemplar of the Egyptian nationalist 'image of modernity' of the 1930s, which was characterised by 'confident possession of such European customs as were deemed desirable, coupled with a fine discrimination of how far one could go in such behaviour and remain truly Egyptian' (Armbrust 1996, 84). Moreover, in the character of Saniyya, these qualities are blended with the concept of the rebirth of the eternal spirit of the Egyptian nation. Contemplating Saniyya's face, Muḥsin sees her as the ancient Egyptian goddess Isis (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 120), who was believed to have gathered together the scattered pieces of the god Osiris's body after his murder, so that he could be resurrected. We will consider possible implications of this Saniyya-Isis blend below.

Although Muḥsin completely lacks the sort of charisma that would enable him to win Saniyya's heart, he possesses another kind of charisma that could qualify him to become a prophet of nationalism, in addition to

the cultural capital that would enable him to join the nationalist priesthood. When he tries to persuade one of his friends to join him in enrolling in the Faculty of Literature at university, his classmates ask him what future there is in that. In his reply, he articulates the basic creed of both priests and prophets of nationalism:

> Tomorrow it's us who will be the voice of the nation [*lisān il-umma il-nāṭiq*]. . . . Tomorrow our job will be to express what's in the nation's heart. . . . If only you knew the value of the ability to express what's in . . . people's hearts! . . . The nation [*umma*] . . . has a heart that guides [*yihdī*], and a voice [*lisān*] that directs its material forces (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 108).

Here the self-interest of the priestly role, which is implied by the words 'job' and 'value', is misrecognised as disinterestedness, thanks to the personification of the nation, which makes the role of the 'voice' (literally 'tongue') appear disinterested by naturalising it. Called upon to make a speech in class, Muḥsin realises that he 'sees and feels great things' that his teacher, a Muslim shaykh, cannot see (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 111). He then demonstrates his charisma by giving a speech about love; his classmates are enthralled as he embodies his earlier argument and 'expresses what's in their hearts' (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 112). It is worth comparing this scene, in which an audience of young intellectuals is spellbound by the charisma of Muḥsin's nationalist habitus, with Maḥmūd Ṭāhir Lāšīn's short story 'Ḥadīṯ al-Qarya', which we considered in Chapter 3 and was written at nearly the same time, in which an audience of peasants is spellbound by the very different

charisma of a shaykh. As the comparison illustrates, different individuals are charismatic for different audiences; or to be more precise, charisma is a type of *relation* between the habitus of a speaker and the habitus of a particular sociological category of listeners. I will return to this point in Chapter 5.

The novel's stance regarding Islam is consistent with the views of Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal. One chapter of the novel focuses on a conversation among strangers on a train. A passenger is looking for a place to sit in a crowded compartment, and the other passengers squeeze together to make room for him. One says, 'Please sit down, sir. We're all Muslims who should help each other.' An *afandī* describes this as an example of 'the feelings of connectedness and solidarity between the people of Egypt [*ahl Miṣr*]' and mentions that, when traveling in Europe, he found that Europeans lacked this quality. A shaykh opines that it's because there's no Islam in Europe. There is an awkward silence, and some of the passengers notice that the *afandī* has a tattoo of the cross on his wrist, meaning that he is a Christian. One of them attempts to defuse the tension by reinterpreting the shaykh's statement to mean that Europeans don't have 'hearts'. An 'enlightened man [*mutanawwir*]' (i.e. an *afandī* intellectual) then argues that the word 'Islam', as commonly used in Egypt, has nothing to do with religion; instead, it simply refers to compassion, good-heartedness and 'the linking of hearts', qualities that are found in Egypt but not in Europe. This view elicits the agreement and admiration of all those present, 'both the fez-wearers and the turban-wearers' (i.e. the *afandiyya* and the clergymen), who feel as if he has

revealed to them 'the truth that had been hidden within this word' (i.e. 'Islam'). Thus the *afandī* intellectual trumps the man of religion; under cover of the apparently disinterested principle of religious tolerance, he imposes a non-religious definition of Islam, and consecrates the view that nationalist bonds are more fundamental, indeed more real, than religious ones. (Recall the sentence quoted in the previous chapter, from a newspaper article written at about the same time: 'The [Egyptian] nation does not know any religion except the religion of patriotism.') The first *afandī* adds that Egyptians are an ancient people (*ša'b*), have lived in the Nile Valley for eight thousand years, and were civilised when Europeans weren't even barbarians yet. The 'enlightened man' agrees, stating that the Egyptian nation is social by nature (*bi-l-fiṭra*) (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 232-236). In other words, it is national character, rather than religion, that should be credited for Egyptians' moral behaviour towards each other.

The novel embraces Haykal's idea that this national character is the result of environmental determinism, as well as Haykal's conception of peasants. When Muḥsin visits his parents at their country estate, his mother is portrayed as haughty and domineering, and convinced of her cultural superiority to her husband, thanks to her Turkish origins. She has nothing but scorn for peasants, including those who work on her estate, and disparagingly calls Muḥsin's father a '*fallāḥ* mayor'*;* the latter then uses the epithet *fallāḥ* to scold his son (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 240). Muḥsin feels estranged from his parents, and comes to wear the word *fallāḥ* as a badge of honour (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 242-243). (Thus he symbolically renounces his biological family in favour of the national family, a concept

we will encounter again.) He converses with a Bedouin, who sees the lineage (*maḥtid*) of Bedouin as superior to that of peasants; the latter are 'slaves descended from slaves [*ʿabd ibn ʿabd*]'. Muhsin remembers his history teacher telling him that Egyptian peasants had been tilling the same soil since before the Bedouin were Bedouin. Ages had come and gone, nations (*umam*) had come and gone, but the peasant had stayed the same, because he lived in villages, far from the cities where political change occurred and races (*ʾaǧnās*) mixed together. Is it fair to accuse the peasant of having no lineage, when he is the origin of origins (*aṣl al-uṣūl*)? But this accusation is the peasant's own fault, because he is ignorant of his lineage, while the Bedouin remembers his own. Surely the peasant's good-heartedness reflects a noble lineage, whereas the Bedouin are clearly barbaric (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 249-252). Environmental determinism, as Mondal (2003, 171) observes,

> is apparent in the words of the 'history teacher' which Muḥsin recalls after his encounter with the bedouin tribesman, 'his [the Egyptian peasant's] goodness and love of peace were a consequence of his deeply rooted agricultural heritage'.

Indeed, in an article published in 1933, the same year as *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*, al-Ḥakīm argued for environmental determinism as Haykal had articulated it:

> There are in Egypt enduring world views which have barely changed from the era of ancient myths until the present. This is because they are tied to the innermost essence of this earth, deriving their inspiration from the soul of the clay of this fertile valley and

from the spirit of this eternal Nile. For man's world views, his beliefs, his religions and his superstitions are generated by the forms of life which surround him (quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski 1986, 135).

In a scene that echoes Merezhkovsky's statements about the ancient Egyptians' closeness to animals, Muḥsin comes across a small child and a calf who are both suckling at a cow, and is awed by a feeling of the unity of with all creatures; he realises that contempt for those who are different from oneself destroys this feeling of the oneness of the universe, which is the feeling of God (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 255-256).

These scenes seem to pose some logical problems for al-Ḥakīm's nationalism. People do not necessarily see themselves as part of a nation, since as the example of the Bedouin shows, they may classify themselves in other ways instead. If the author sees Bedouin as inferior, and devoid of the national character that he finds in the peasants, he cannot logically include them in the Egyptian nation, but it is not clear how he means to classify these residents of Egypt, or how he can explain that the same environment has not given them the same character. The idea of the unity of all being is incompatible with al-Ḥakīm's nationalism, which, as we saw above in the conversation among the train passengers, posits a greater solidarity with the members of one's own nation than with other human beings.

It would be a mistake, I think, to try to resolve these inconsistencies. Nationalism is the product of what Bourdieu calls 'practical logic', the lax logic of everyday practices, 'which is only ever coherent roughly, up to a

point' (Bourdieu 1990, 10). There are practical reasons why 'the procedures of practical logic are rarely entirely coherent and rarely entirely incoherent' (Bourdieu 1990, 12):

> [S]ymbolic systems owe their practical coherence – that is, on the one hand, their unity and their regularities, and on the other hand, their 'fuzziness' and their irregularities and even incoherences, which are both equally necessary . . . – to the fact that they are the product of practices that can fulfil their practical functions only in so far as they implement, in the practical state, principles that are not only coherent . . . but also practical, in the sense of convenient, that is, easy to master and use, and because they obey a 'poor' and economical logic (Bourdieu 1990, 86).

Nationalism's vagueness and lack of logical rigour are convenient, because they make it possible, for example, first to reject Bedouin as barbarians, and later to embrace them as part of the Arab nation, as expediency demands.

The narrator's use of the word 'God' can be interpreted as a concession to the symbolic power of the Muslim clergy, who might otherwise have accused him of atheism, or perhaps polytheism. But it is a half-hearted concession – 'God' is simply equated with 'the unity of the universe' – and remains incongruous, considering the novel's glorification of ancient Egyptian religion. Muḥsin is filled with admiration for the Egyptian peasant, and with 'luminous joy . . . like life returning after death'; he feels as if 'eternity is nothing more than the extension of a moment like this'. The narrator agrees, and approvingly mentions the

ancient Egyptian belief that is no heaven other than Egypt, and no eternal life other than rebirth in Egypt. When Muḥsin hears the peasants singing in the fields, he supposes that they are singing 'the morning hymn [*našīd*] to celebrate the birth of the sun, as their ancestors did in the temples', or perhaps a hymn to the harvest, 'their object of worship [*maʿbūd*]', to which they have given their toil, their hunger and their cold 'as an offering [*qurbān*]' all year long. (Both Muḥsin and the narrator seem oblivious to the feudal economy.) Muḥsin then realises that he worships Saniyya, and asks himself whether he, too, would be able to sacrifice himself, and endure pain and suffering for the sake of his object of worship – for is he not of the same blood as those peasants (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 259-261)? The significance of these statements will become clear in a moment.

An English irrigation inspector and a French archaeologist are guests at Muḥsin's family's estate, and we overhear a conversation between them (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 272-282). As Hutchins (2003, 23-24) observes, the Frenchman's views are partly based on Merezhkovsky's book. The Englishman considers Egyptian peasants ignorant, and scoffs at them for sleeping in the same rooms as their livestock; the Frenchman replies that 'they know more than us', adding: 'This people [*šaʿb*] that you consider ignorant knows many things, but it knows them with its heart, not with its mind'[67]. He asserts that if one removed the heart of one of these peasants, one would find in it the sediment (*rawāsib*) of 'ten thousand years of experience and knowledge, which has collected there

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67 Al-Ḥakīm has transformed Merezhkovsky's statement about ancient Egyptians and Christianity ('these children and savages knew more about Christianity than we do') into a statement about modern Egyptians and nationalism.

without his realising it'. Egypt's millennia of experience, he says, are genetically transmitted thanks to 'the law of inheritance [*qānūn al-wirāṯa*]', and come to its aid in critical moments. Europe's success is based only on superficial knowledge, which 'we stole from these ancient nations [*šuʿūb*]', not on knowledge of the essence of things; if you open a European's heart, you will find it empty. Any moral corruption in Egypt is 'not from Egypt', but rather from 'other nations [*umam*], such as the Bedouin or the Turks'. The Frenchman warns the Englishman to 'watch out for this nation [*šaʿb*]'.

European language, says the Frenchman, deals with the senses; Europeans therefore cannot understand the feelings that once made the Egyptian nation act as a single individual. The Pyramids emerged from the heart of the Egyptians; those who carried the stones to build them did so joyfully, not because they were forced to. They were happy to suffer and bleed, out of 'faith in the object of worship [*al-īmān bi-l-maʿbūd*]', the Pharaoh Khufu (Cheops), just like their descendants who work in the fields today. The peasants do backbreaking work, but they are obviously happy, since they sing while working[68]. This is part of Egypt's eternal essence (*ǧawhar*).

The novel opens with a quote from the ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead on the resurrection of the individual in the afterlife, 'where all

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68 In the 19th century in the United States, 'John Little, a former slave, wrote: "They say slaves are happy because they laugh, and are merry. I myself and three or four others, have received two hundred lashes in the day, and had our feet in fetters; yet, at night, we would sing and dance, and make others laugh at the rattling of our chains. Happy men we must have been! We did it to keep down trouble, and to keep our hearts from being completely broken: that is as true as the gospel! Just look at it, – must not we have been very happy? Yet I done it myself – I have cut capers in chains"' (Zinn 1980, 168).

are in one' (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 7). The French archaeologist, in his conversation with the Englishman, cites the same quote, arguing that this idea remains deeply rooted in the heart of the Egyptian peasant, who has maintained 'the spirit of the temple [*rūḥ al-maʿbad*]' to this day. The only thing the Egyptian nation lacks now is 'the object of worship [*maʿbūd*] . . . that man who comes from it [the nation], who represents all its feelings and hopes, who is the symbol of its goal'. When such a man appears, the Egyptian nation will be able to achieve 'other miracles like the Pyramids' (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 280-282).

Rather than a simple transposition of Merezhkovsky's ideas, this is a complex blend of Merezhkovsky's concepts with Egyptian nationalist concepts. While Merezhkovsky envisaged a renaissance of Christianity through the embrace of the truth of ancient Egyptian religion, leading to the future resurrection of Osiris-Christ, al-Ḥakīm envisages a renaissance of *modern Egypt* through the revival of the 'spirit' of ancient Egyptian religion and the reappearance of an Osiris-like object of worship. It is not surprising that al-Ḥakīm formulated this blend, given the difference between what the word 'Egypt' meant to Merezhkovsky and what it meant to him. For Merezhkovsky, it was a metonymy for the timeless essence of an ancient, vanished civilisation, but for al-Ḥakīm, it referred to the country where he had grown up. While al-Ḥakīm undoubtedly understood the limitations of Merezhkovsky's conception of Egypt, he seems to have chosen to interpret Merezhkovsky's book in a way that its author could not have imagined, by reading 'Egypt' as referring to modern Egypt as well as to ancient Egypt. The resulting blend could then

generate inferences that are not in Merezhkovsky's text. We will see below how al-Ḥakīm developed this blend further at the end of the novel.

While at the estate, Muḥsin receives a letter that he believes to have been written by Saniyya on behalf of his aunt Zannūba; in reality, Zannūba had it written by a public letter-writer. Driven by wishful thinking, Muḥsin interprets the letter's banalities as cleverly disguised expressions of the love that he hopes Saniyya feels for him (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 283-288), unaware that she has in fact fallen in love with a factory owner's son, Muṣṭafā. Upon his return to Cairo, he learns the truth about the letter and about Saniyya's courtship with Muṣṭafā (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 304-309). He is humiliated, but consoles himself by recalling that he was always the 'object of worship [*maʿbūd*]' of his classmates (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 312). His heartbreak makes his uncles realise that 'they are beneath him, and that his rare heart makes him superior to them' (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 329). He recalls the peasants toiling in the fields and singing 'for the sake of the harvest, their object of worship [*maʿbūd*]', and how he asked himself whether he, too, would be able to sacrifice himself for his object of worship. Even though he knows that the letter was not really from Saniyya, he deludes himself into believing that it was; as the narrator observes, 'sometimes imagination is stronger than truth'. Thus Muḥsin continues to cherish the letter, to 'recite it [*yatlūhu*]' (the same verb is used to designate recitation of the Qurʾān) and interpret it, finding meanings in it that are not really there, 'as if illusion had become doctrine [*ʿaqīda*]' (the same word is used for religious doctrine); 'and how could truth defeat doctrine, unless the mind

264

could defeat the heart?' (al-Ḥakīm 1933/2008, 383) This passage can be read as an allegory for religion in general: sacred texts have ordinary human authors, but people's emotional need for religious belief makes them imagine that these texts are messages from divine beings.

Muḥsin is forced to share his precious letter with the other men in the house. They play along with his fantasy, and send him as their emissary to visit Saniyya. He is 'moved by the transformation of "I" into "we"', and realises that he is responsible for the happiness of his household – which is designated, as usual, as 'the people [šaʿb]'. It is as if Muḥsin is a sort of proto-prophet, chosen to speak for his people because they perceive him as a superior being, but his prophethood has not yet fulfilled its potential, not only because he is too young, but also because he worships a false god.

All that remains is for Muḥsin to convert to the creed of Egyptian nationalism, his spirit awakened by the arrival of Saʿd Zaġlūl, the nationalist prophet whose exile by the British sparked the 1919 uprising. Egypt has become pregnant, the narrator says, and it has given birth to 'a prodigious newborn', i.e. Zaġlūl. After sleeping for centuries, it is rising up:

> It was waiting, as the Frenchman said, for its its son, the object of worship [maʿbūd], the symbol of its suffering and its buried hopes, to be reborn. And this object of worship was reborn of peasant stock! (al-Ḥakīm 1933/2008, 423)

(Although Zaġlūl was in reality a wealthy lawyer, the concept of the peasant hero was a standard part of the Zaġlūl myth.) We can make
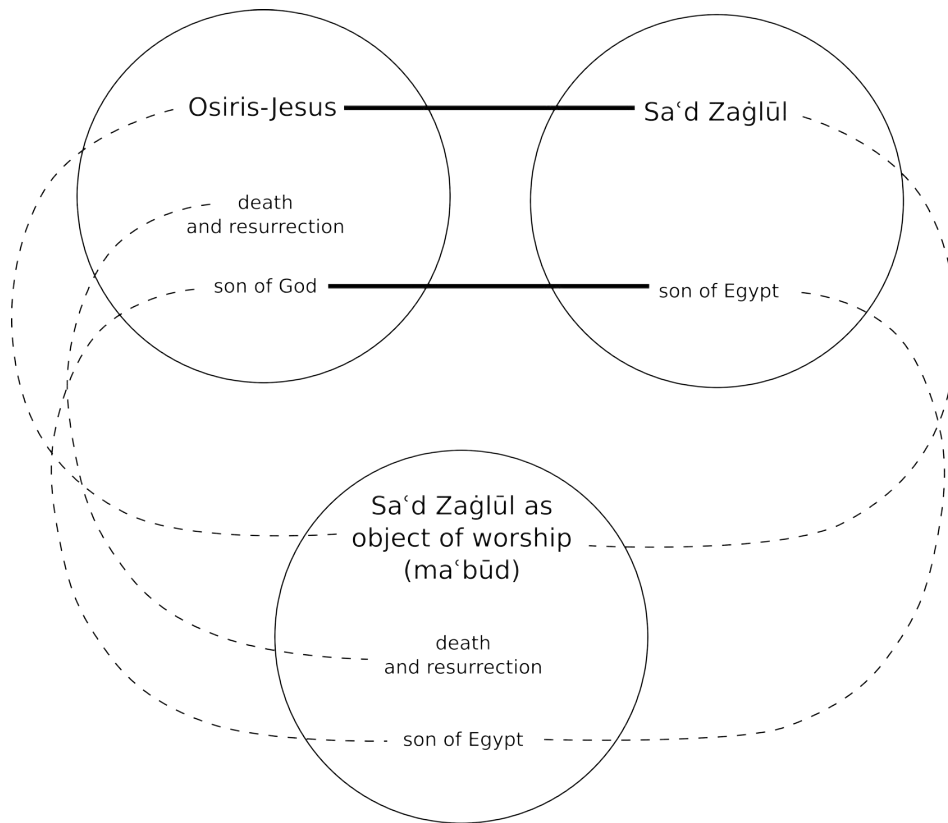
Figure 10: Saʿd Zaġlūl as object of worship (*maʿbūd*)

sense of the Frenchman's statements if we postulate that al-Ḥakīm has taken Merezhkovsky's Osiris-Jesus blend and used it as the input for a further blend with Saʿd Zaġlūl, represented in Figure 10. We have already seen, in our discussion of al-Ṭahṭāwī and Haykal, evidence for a *waṭan*-as-god blend. Arguably this *waṭan*-as-god blend helped to motivate this new blend involving Saʿd Zaġlūl. In the first input space, Osiris-Jesus is conceptualised as the son of God. In the second input space, Egypt is conceptualised as a god. Since, as the text says, Zaġlūl is Egypt's son, he, too, is the son of a god. This makes it easy to connect the two deity-child relations. Moreover, like Osiris-Jesus, Zaġlūl is described as 'reborn': the resurrection of Osiris-Jesus has been projected into the blend.

266

When news of the uprising is announced at Muḥsin's school, the students spontaneously assemble outside, 'as if it is Judgement Day' (another religious concept appropriated for nationalism). Everyone is talking about Zaġlūl; Muḥsin has never heard of him, but immediately decides that he must devote his life to him. The uprising is described as something utterly spontaneous that has suddenly occurred to everyone at the same time, simply because they are all 'children of Egypt [abnāʾ Miṣr] who share a single heart'. All fourteen million Egyptians, says the narrator, are thinking only of Zaġlūl, who has expressed what they feel, and who has been exiled and imprisoned in the sea, like Osiris (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 424-425). All the members of Muḥsin's household throw themselves into the 'revolution'. Muḥsin, like his uncles, has transferred his worship from Saniyya to the waṭan (cf. Ḥaqqī 1975/2008, 126):

> All the cruelly disappointed love in his heart had been transformed into warm nationalist [waṭaniyya] feelings, and all his feelings of self-sacrifice for his heart's object of worship had been transformed into daring feelings of self-sacrifice for his waṭan's object of worship (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 427).

Note that this sentence prompts for a conceptual blend that connects 'heart' with waṭan, suggesting a conception in which all Egyptians have a single, shared waṭan in place of a heart; this can generate the inference that the waṭan, like a god, is responsible for people's feelings.

The revolution, says the narrator, was necessary in order to let flow the feelings of these heartbroken men (al-Hakīm 1933/2008, 427). No

267

doubt frustration or rejection in love was something that many of al-Ḥakīm's readers could relate to. The novel offers them nationalism as a cure for their suffering: in effect, a promise of salvation if they transfer their love to the *waṭan*.

The Saniyya-Isis blend noted earlier seems as if it ought to be connected somehow with the Zaġlūl-Osiris blend, but it is not clear how this is possible, since the novel does not link Saniyya with Zaġlūl in any other way, and could hardly do so without giving up its premise of compatibility with historical fact. It seems that the relationship between Isis and Osiris is not actually projected into either of these two blends. One might look for a Merezhkovskian trinity consisting of *waṭan*, Zaġlūl and Saniyya, but there does not seem to be sufficient evidence for this in the text. Since Egypt has often been represented as a woman in nationalist discourse (cf. Baron 2005), it is tempting to ask whether Saniyya represents Egypt, but it seems difficult to support this reading. However, we can infer that since Saniyya-Isis is a goddess, and the male *šaʿb* transfers its love from her to the *waṭan*, the *waṭan* is also conceptualised as a goddess.

What are the social consequences of the promise of salvation as a reward for love of the *waṭan*? When we turn to nationalist martyrdom in the next chapter, we will consider in depth the concept of self-sacrifice, which facilitates the military uses of nationalism that we have already considered. Let us focus here on the symbolic power of the nationalist prophet (the 'object of worship'), and the effect of this power on the

nationalist priesthood. In order to do so, we must briefly consider Egyptian critics' reception of the novel.

Critical Enthusiasm and Nationalist Sufism

When *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* was published in 1933, Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm was already famous in literary circles, thanks to his play *Ahl al-Kahf*, which had been published earlier the same year (Ḥammād 1933a). In his letters, al-Ḥakīm noted that the publication of *Ahl al-Kahf* coincided with the founding of the literary magazine *al-Risāla*, and that he was immediately celebrated at the magazine as a great writer. Distinguished writers treated him as a peer, and Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid said to him: 'You are the shaykh of a Sufi order [*Anta šayḫ ṭarīqa*]' (ʿAṭiyya 1984).

Critics from the 1930s to the 1980s have agreed that the French archeologist is a mouthpiece for al-Ḥakīm's own views, and that his statements are the main idea that the author sought to express in the novel (Ḥammād 1933b, 41, Ḥammād 1934b, 479; Ḥaqqī 1975/2008, 127; al-Rāʿī 1958; Dawwāra 1960; Mūsā 1987). The critic Muḥammad ʿAlī Ḥammād published several articles celebrating *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* in major literary magazines shortly after the novel's publication. For Ḥammād, ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ is the first Egyptian story in Egyptian literature, and is genuinely Egyptian in every way; when you read it, 'you' feel that a bond of Egyptianness connects you to the characters. Indeed, he says, the main characteristic of the novel is its Egyptianness (Ḥammād 1933b). 'Pure Egyptian blood runs in its veins'. Its dialogue is written in 'the Egyptian language [*al-luġa al-miṣriyya*]'. Egyptians prefer this language above all others, even above the Arabic language, which 'we' use from time to time

in certain situations, for 'we' are Egyptians above all else, 'in spirit, body and language' (Ḥammād 1934a, 326). (Interestingly, this paean to Egyptian Arabic is written in extremely formal Modern Standard Arabic.)

Ḥammād praises the novel for glorifying the peasant, who is 'the authentic [ṣamīm] Egyptian' (Ḥammād 1933b). He quotes an open letter that al-Ḥakīm addressed to Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, in which al-Ḥakīm claimed that the peasants are meek not because they are enslaved, but because of their 'noble origins [karam al-aṣl]' and because their stable agricultural life requires them to be so. (Here again is environmental determinism.) Ḥammād notes that various characters denigrate Turks and Arabs in the novel, and sees this as al-Ḥakīm's revenge, on behalf of the peasant, 'i.e. the Egyptian', against these 'elements that entered his waṭan and considered themselves the masters of the house, though they were the intruders [daḫīla]'. In Ḥammād's view, al-Ḥakīm gives the Egyptian countryside 'an air of sacredness [qadāsa], as if it were a priest's prayer niche [miḥrāb kāhin]', and drives us forcefully back to Pharaonic Egypt. A 'Sufi image' emerges from the countryside and its inhabitants, in their cameraderie, their toil and their enthusiasm for the sake of the object of worship, who has had different 'names, shapes and symbols' throughout Egypt's history: Khufu in Pharaonic times, when Egypt's spirit produced the miracle of the Pyramids, and Sa'd Zaġlūl in modern times, when it produced the miracle of the 1919 'revolution', Egypt's second 'miracle' after the pyramids. Thus the 'spirit of the temple' has returned after having been 'hidden in the sand' (Ḥammād 1934b, 478-480). Ḥammād

describes wanting to 'kiss' the 'sacred pages [*al-ṣafaḥāt al-muqaddasa*]' that describe the uprising in the novel (Ḥammād 1933b).

Ḥammād's reference to Sufism acknowledges the Sufi practice of Islam that was and is widespread in Egypt. But while Sufism is emphatically Islamic, and places great emphasis on devotion to the Prophet Muḥammad and his family (Schielke 2007; Hoffman-Ladd 1992), Ḥammād seems to evoke a notion of Sufism as mysticism in the most general sense, detached from Islam. Indeed, like Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal's account of religion in Egypt as the product of environmental determinism, Ḥammād's abbreviated reference to the history of worship in Egypt elides the very existence of Islam (as well as Christianity). Like the French archeologist in *'Awdat al-Rūḥ*, Ḥammād's account of the 'spirit of Egypt' skips directly from Khufu to Saʿd Zaġlūl, with no Islam (or Christianity) in between. The inference to be drawn seems to be that Egypt's spirit was 'hidden in the sand' during the Christian and Islamic periods of Egyptian history, until Saʿd Zaġlūl's arrival.

Yaḥyā Ḥaqqī, writing in 1934, uses the word 'Sufism' in a similarly un-Islamic sense when discussing *Ahl al-Kahf* and *'Awdat al-Rūḥ* (Ḥaqqī 1975/2008, 123-125). He describes Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's doctrine (*maḏhab*) as 'a mixture of Sufism [*al-taṣawwuf*] and Einstein's theory'. He then asks whether 'Sufi tendencies have any place in Egypt', a country that is engaged in a material struggle for its independence. Sufism, he says, 'may be understandable in England, Belgium, or France', since those countries have 'armies and fleets to protect their dignity [*karāma*], but it is incomprehensible in Egypt, in its present state of weakness; perhaps

Gandhi's doctrine [*maḏhab*] is the only Sufism [*taṣawwuf*] that is not harmful to Egypt'.

These unrealistic uses of the word 'Sufism' arguably serve a nationalist function. They enable *afandī* intellectuals to grudgingly acknowledge the existence of a very widespread form of religious practice in Egypt (so grudgingly, in fact, that Ḥaqqī associates it with European countries rather than with Egypt), while at the same time denying its Islamic character, in order to implicitly deny the legitimacy of the *afandī* intellectuals' main rivals for symbolic power, the Muslim clergy (including the leaders of the Sufi orders). By detaching Sufism from Islam, an *afandī* intellectual can imagine that Egyptian peasants' religious beliefs have hardly changed since Pharaonic times, and present nationalism as the latest manifestation of those beliefs. This is possible only because of nationalism's social and cognitive similarity to religion. Thus the novel depicts the countryside as 'a beacon of the power of pure doctrine [*ʿaqīda*] and pure faith [*īmān*]' (Ḥammād 1934b, 479), i.e. free-floating doctrine and faith detached from any particular religion, and implies that Osiris, the pharaohs, the harvest and Saʿd Zaġlūl are all 'objects of worship' that the peasants can worship interchangeably. This view would be sheer sacrilege from the point of view of the Muslim clergy in Egypt, not least because of the polytheism of Pharaonic religion[69].

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69 In an apparent concession to the symbolic power of the Muslim clergy, Egyptian nationalist historiography of ancient Egypt has tended to deny pharaonic polytheism, by claiming that the pharaoh Akhenaten's exceptional monotheism was the religious orthodoxy of the entire Pharaonic period; in reality, Akhenaten's heresy was abolished after his brief reign (Colla 2007, 145-148). For a history of similar historiographical misuses of Akhenaten, see Montserrat (2000).

Later interpretations of *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* reiterated this view of Sufism, continuing to enlist it in the service of nationalism. Fuʾād Dawwāra (1960) argued that al-Ḥakīm's portrait of peasant life overflows with 'Sufi love', and sees beauty in everything ugly. The peasants do not mind sharing a dwelling with animals, because they have inherited from the ancient Egyptians 'their awareness of the oneness of the universe and the unity of the great chain of being'. While *afandī* intellectuals lavished praise on peasants for sharing rooms with animals, it seems likely that they, the intellectuals, would never have dreamed of doing the same thing. The idea of the unity of the great chain of being serves to legitimise the social order: the dominated should be content with their position, since all are united in theory.

Indeed, the Prophet Muḥammad is not only completely absent from these nationalist evocations of Sufism; he is replaced by the charismatic nationalist leader. Writing at the height of Nasser's power, ʿAlī al-Rāʿī (1958) replied to critics who had objected that the 1919 uprising breaks out too suddenly in *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*. Elaborating the argument of the French archaeologist in the novel, al-Rāʿī explains that the eternal Egyptian spirit portrayed in the novel is eternally revolutionary:

> Egyptians are in a state of permanent readiness for great acts. Their spirit is in a state of volcanic eruption/revolution [*ṯawra*], which sleeps as long as it Egypt lacks its symbol, its leader [*zaʿīm*], its commander [*qāʾid*], and awakens when it finds this leader. What happens in *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* is that the leader appears suddenly, so people's spirits rally round him and are inflamed, and the

revolution breaks out, not thanks to particular efforts exerted by a group of people, but because the propitious moment has come unexpectedly, just as the moment of communication with God comes unexpectedly to the Sufi. . . . Those efforts would not have been useful if they had been exerted before the appearance of the leader lit the magic spark that ignited fire in people's spirits.

This aspect of the novel had undoubtedly not been lost on one particularly enthusiastic reader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, who was fifteen years old (approximately Muḥsin's age) when it was first published. According to ʿAlāʾ al-Dīb (1978), it was well-known that *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* was Nasser's favourite novel. ʿAlī Šalaš states that it was the literary work that had the strongest influence on Nasser, 'the great leader [*zaʿīm*]'; Nasser liked the novel so much that he named his protagonist Muḥsin in a story he wrote during his youth, but never finished, called *Fī Sabīl al-Ḥurriyya* (In the Way of Freedom) (Šalaš 1970). Perhaps Nasser initially envisaged becoming a 'national writer', but was unable to do so because he had insufficient cultural capital, while his habitus made him better qualified to employ the strategy of prophethood. As Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm put it, 'circumstances transformed him from the author of a Muḥsin on paper into Muḥsin himself in flesh and blood' (al-Hakīm 1974/1988, 55).

Aḥmad Muḥammad ʿAṭiyya (1971) recalls the well-known story of US president Abraham Lincoln meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, during the American Civil War, and saying, 'So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war.' ʿAṭiyya cites this as an example of the importance of novels in 'the

nationalist [*waṭanī*] struggle', and contends that the importance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, in this respect, is equalled only by *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*. He asserts that, just as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sparked 'a nationalist [*waṭaniyya*] war' in the US, *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* 'helped form the thought and spirit' of Nasser, 'leader [*qāʾid*]' of the revolution of 1952, and gave a great impetus to the Egyptian resistance movement and the spread of the spirit of national unity, with its famous call, 'All in one'.

According to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Abū ʿAwf (1986), Nasser himself claimed that he had 'emerged from [*ḫaraǧ min*] *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*'. This is, of course, an exaggeration. Nasser's habitus was the product of a social trajectory; a variety of experiences contributed to his ability to implement the strategy of the prophets within a nationalist framework. We will consider a few aspects of this trajectory in the next chapter. For now, let us simply note that it is plausible that *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* suggested to the young Nasser an idea, that of the nationalist 'object of worship', which he later became able to put into practice thanks to his habitus, his cultural and social capital, and his social position in the military.

Al-Ḥakīm's Heteronomy

Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm enjoyed a prolific and successful literary career in the 1930s and 40s. He also held a series of increasingly high-ranking civil service posts; everything seems to indicate that he successfully converted his symbolic capital as an *afandī* nationalist intellectual into prestigious government sinecures[70]. Unlike Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal, al-Ḥakīm

70 'In 1934 he was appointed director of the Inquiries Department (*taḥqīqāt*) of the Ministry of Education and in 1939 director of the Information Service of the Ministry of Social Affairs which had been established in that same year. The latter two

consistently refused to identify himself with any political party, arguing that a writer must maintain his independence in order to preserve his moral authority; his articles attacked all parties indiscriminately, accusing them of having abandoned the spirit of the 1919 revolution (Starkey 1987, 30).

Thus his very claim to autonomy was based on nationalism. This, in itself, limited his autonomy. On 28 May 1954, two years into Nasser's military dictatorship, Nasser sent al-Ḥakīm a signed copy of the book *Falsafat al-Ṯawra* (Philosophy of the Revolution), which had been ghost written for Nasser by a close associate, the journalist Muḥammad Ḥasanayn Haykal (Jankowski 2002, 25). The book bore a dedication 'to Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm, who has resurrected literature, asking him for another *Return of the Spirit* after the revolution' ('Awaḍ 1970). 'What Nasser probably wanted was a novel glorifying his coup d'État as the fulfillment of the dream and prophecy the novel contained' (Selaiha 2008). Although no such novel was forthcoming, this dedication was part of a cycle of mutual consecration between the writer and the military ruler. Al-Ḥakīm had consecrated Nasser in advance, by disseminating the idea that the nation's revival depended on the appearance of a nationalist 'object of worship'. Nasser would soon become that object of worship; over the next few years, he would appropriate the symbolic power of *'Awdat al-Rūḥ*'s nationalist ideals, representing his own rule as the fulfilment of those

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positions may have been sinecures upon his suddenly becoming rather famous after the publication of his play *Ahl al-Kahf*. . . . [I]n 1951 he became director of the National Library, *Dār al-kutub al-miṣriyya*, in all likelihood another sinecure' (Brugman 1984, 279). The creation of the Ministry of Social Affairs 'had itself been his own proposal' (Starkey 1987, 29), and his appointment as director of the National Library was 'made by his friend and colleague Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, at that time Minister of Education in the last Wafdist government' (Starkey 1987, 32).

ideals (on this type of political strategy, see Bourdieu 1980a, 187-188).

Thus his régime proceeded to shower al-Ḥakīm with official honours[71].

Moreover, in 1963, *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* was made into a radio drama and

broadcast on Ṣawt al-ʿArab (Voice of the Arabs) (ʿĀbidīn 1963), an official

state radio station and one of the régime's major propaganda instruments

(Jankowski 2002, 54-55). In 1965, it was made into a play and performed

by the Theatre of the Republic (Masraḥ al-Ǧumhūriyya), to critical

acclaim (al-ʿĀlim 1965).

I will explore Nasser's relationship to the nationalist priesthood in

greater depth in the next chapter; here I focus on that relationship's

effects on Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm, who occupied a dominant position in that

priesthood. In 1974, al-Ḥakīm himself provided a lucid insight into these

effects, in an essay called *ʿAwdat al-Waʿy* (The Return of Awareness). A

few years earlier, Egypt's defeat in the June 1967 war with Israel had

caused a 'crisis of hegemony' (Shukrallah 1989, 53); it had called into

question the validity of nationalist doctrine, and thus the symbolic capital

of Nasser and of the nationalist priesthood. After Nasser's death in 1970,

intellectuals began to write about the injustices and atrocities that the

dictatorship had committed during the previous two decades, including

the imprisonment without trial of thousands (perhaps tens of thousands)

of suspected political opponents, in prison camps where torture was

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71 'In 1954 he was – somewhat reluctantly – elected a member of the Arabic Language
Academy in Cairo. Two years later he became a member of the Supreme Council for
Literature and the Arts. . . . In 1958 he was awarded the Order of the Republic for his
services to literature. In 1959 he was appointed Egyptian delegate to UNESCO in
Paris, but relinquished this position after only one year to return to his former post.
In 1961 he received the First State literature prize. Two years later his contribution to
the Egyptian stage was officially recognised with the founding of the "Al-Ḥakīm
Theatre" in Cairo, the theatre opening with a production of his own *Pygmalion*'
(Starkey 1987, 33). The Order of the Republic (Qilādat al-Ǧumhūriyya) was the state's
second-highest decoration (ʿAwaḍ 1970).

commonplace. Many nationalist intellectuals searched desperately for ways to avoid the question of Nasser's responsibility for this oppression, and their own complicity in it, having consecrated Nasser and been consecrated by him (Geer 2009). *ʿAwdat al-Waʿy* is al-Ḥakīm's tentative *mea culpa* for this complicity.

He recalls that he once received a visit from a journalist close to Nasser, who came to convey an invitation to meet the president in his house for tea, just the two of them. When al-Ḥakīm protested that he lacked the necessary rank to meet the president, the journalist laughed and said,

> 'He is not inviting you in your capacity as a government employee but as the author of *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*, which he has read and which he says has influenced the formation of his nationalism.' 'Even so,' I replied, 'please keep me away from men in power.' . . . I heard that Nasser was astonished at my keeping my distance from him, and said, 'Have we not done that about which he thought, felt, and wrote? The revolution is really his revolution.' The fact is that his view was reasonable and logical. What kept me away was the well-known principle about which I have often written: a ruler does not want a thinker's free thought; he wants his loyal thought. He wants to hear support from him, not opposition. But the essence of the thinker's mission is honesty and freedom. He may make mistakes, be misled or lose awareness, but he will never consciously betray his mission (al-Hakīm 1974/1988, 48-50).

It seems that, in writing those lines, al-Ḥakīm was still attached to the belief that an intellectual could protect his autonomy simply by avoiding meetings with men in power. But in subsequent pages, the flaws in this position start to become apparent:

> Nasser became the first man in the country [*al-bilād*]. . . . The country got used to the rule of an individual they trusted and loved. And when the masses love, they do not debate. Little by little, the voices of those who were accustomed to debate died down, and the beloved ruler himself began to become accustomed to rule without debate. . . . It is not surprising is that the people [*šaʿb*], in the enthusiasm of their feeling, received these speeches with jubliation and glorification [*al-tahlīl wa-l-takbīr*][72]. What *is* surprising is that someone like me, an intellectual, accountable to the country [*balad*], whom the revolution overtook when he was middle-aged, could also be led behind this enthusiastic feeling. It did not occur to me to think about the truth of the picture which was being manufactured for us. . . . Trust had apparently paralysed thought (al-Ḥakīm 1974/1988, 50-52).

What has not occurred to al-Ḥakīm is that his thought was paralysed and he became unable to criticise Nasser – i.e. he lost his autonomy – precisely because he saw himself as 'accountable to the country', i.e. precisely because he was a *nationalist* intellectual. Nasser was recognised as the 'voice of the nation'; it would therefore have been logically inconsistent to criticise Nasser in the name of the nation. This is

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72 These two Arabic words literally mean: exclaiming 'There is no god but God' and 'God is great'. The religious metaphor is undoubtedly intentional here.

a consequence of the nationalist programme that al-Ḥakīm had outlined in ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ: just as al-Ḥakīm had imagined the pyramid builders happy to bleed and suffer for their object of worship (Khufu), he could have imagined his contemporaries gladly enduring arbitrary imprisonment and torture for their object of worship (Nasser). Al-Ḥakīm is well aware that Nasser fulfilled this programme to the letter:

> He became the people's object of worship [maʿbūd al-šaʿb]. . . . Once I had become certain of the manifestations of the worship of his person over a period of time, I began to wonder what he had liked about my book ʿAwdat al-Ruh. Could it have been the paragraph that says that Egypt always needs one of its own as an object of worship? When he read that as a young man, did he dream that one day he would be the object of worship? There is nothing wrong with that. Everyone has the right to dream that he will be the object of worship of the masses. What is wrong, even dangerous, is for a human object of worship to become so sacred that people see him as infallible [maʿṣūm] and his power paralyses their minds, so that they see nothing except what he sees and are permitted no opinion contrary to his opinion. But this is what in fact happened. . . . This was perhaps the first time in the modern history of Egypt that an object of worship had appeared who wanted his will to have, throughout the Arab countries, a sacredness, greatness and power that not even the prophets had possessed. The prophets who were sent from heaven found people

who debated with thim and opposed them (al-Hakīm 1974/1988, 58-59).

Here al-Ḥakīm has used the word 'infallible [*maʿṣūm*]', the same word that is traditionally used by the Muslim *ʿulamāʾ* to refer to the Prophet Muḥammad's infallibility (Brown 1996, 60-80). This is an implicit acknowledgement that the religious prophets have indeed been considered infallible, just like Nasser, and thus undercuts his argument. Moreover, the idea of an infallible object of worship is precisely what al-Ḥakīm had called for in *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*. Indeed, heteronomous fields such as religion and nationalism, in which strategies of power depend on attracting the largest possible number of lay followers, lend themselves to precisely this phenomenon.

Suppose we grant al-Ḥakīm, however, that Nasser was even more successful as a prophet – at least before 1967 – than the religious prophets of the past. Why might this be the case? Perhaps because, while those religious prophets had to rely on the human voice and on word of mouth, Nasser and his priesthood could use the technology and resources of the modern state – including a centralised school system and the media – to standardise the reproduction of nationalist habitus throughout a much larger population. (I will return to this point in the next chapter.) Al-Ḥakīm was at least dimly aware of this; he recalls his surprise at learning that a friend of his was employed by the Arab Socialist Union (Nasser's mass political organisation) to lead carefully scripted cheers praising Nasser at mass rallies. He then wonders:

how could a person like me have seen and heard all that and not been greatly affected by what he had seen and heard, and still have good feelings towards Nasser? Had he lost awareness? Was it a strange case of anaesthesia? ... The strange thing is that I was content to smile tolerantly. Why? Perhaps it was because of the hope I had placed in Nasser, a hope that was the product of my imagination, and because of an image of the leader, for whom I had waited for thirty years (al-Ḥakīm 1974/1988, 67-68).

This is the closest al-Ḥakīm comes to an admission that he, too, fell under the spell of Nasser's charisma and was thus dominated by his symbolic power. This would have been difficult for him to avoid, since that power was the product of the same nationalist concepts and beliefs that al-Ḥakīm had internalised and expressed in *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*. Like any priest, al-Ḥakīm was also a believer. It was thus highly likely that, once a successful prophet appeared, he would fall under that prophet's domination and lose his autonomy as an intellectual.

A premise of nationalism is that the country's demands are necessarily legitimate. Because the nation seemed to have chosen Nasser (cf. Younis 2005, 38), fulfilling its duty to the country, it would have been difficult for the nationalist priesthood to consider him a tyrant or to persuade the laity of such an idea, just as it would be difficult for a religious believer to accept that God might subject the faithful to the rule of a tyrannical prophet.

In the introduction to the second edition of *ʿAwdat al-Waʿy*, al-Ḥakīm noted that the first edition had aroused the fury of Nasserists, 'as

though Nasserism was a sacred religion [*dīnan muqaddasan*] which should not be touched, or as though Nasser was a superhuman being who could not be held accountable by mortals for his errors' (al-Hakīm 1974/1988, 11). We are now in a position to see just how accurate this assessment was.

Nationalist Habitus as a Blend with a Religious Input

If we combine the key nationalist concepts that we have examined thus far in this thesis, we can represent them schematically as the conceptual blend in Figure 11. The input space on the left contains religious concepts: God, priests, prophets and the laity. The input space on the right contains a geographical region (such as Egypt), the two main types of nationalist cultural producers that we have encountered thus far (intellectuals and charismatic politicians), and their target audience (the inhabitants of the region). This blend produces inferences about the relationships between the elements in the second input space: intellectuals, politicians and citizens are to the country as priests, prophets and laypeople are to God. Moreover, this blended conceptual space is in effect a partial, miscrecognised model of the nationalist field, whose structure is similar to that of the religious field as analysed by Bourdieu (1971a). It follows that one cannot understand nationalism except *relationally*, that the meanings of nationalist concepts depend partly on their relations to religious concepts (on this type of relational understanding, see Bourdieu 1980a, 17).
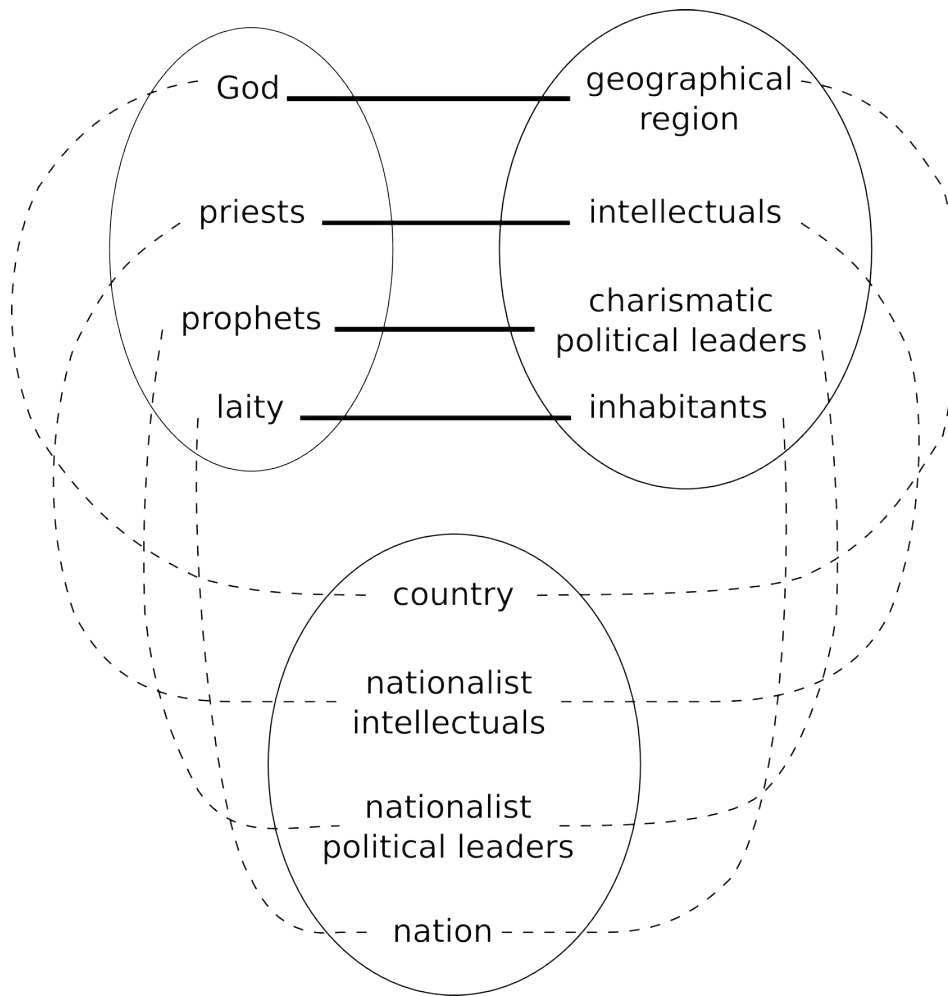
Figure 11: Nationalist habitus as a blend with a religious input

In the nationalist field as in the religious field, the prophets and priests provide services of legitimation to the dominant class of the laity, in exchange for symbolic power. For example, as we have seen, both Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal's *Zaynab* and Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ* used nationalism to legitimise a social order in which landowners dominated peasants.

We can find this conceptual blend reflected in a wide variety of nationalist cultural products and social practices, e.g. pilgrimages to Karnak Temple, the bestowing of honours on Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm, and the

adoration of Nasser[73]. As part of a habitus, this blend has generally functioned unconsciously, shaping perceptions and decisions by making them seem intuitively reasonable[74]. However, as we have seen, aspects of it occasionally rise to the level of consciousness. For example, Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm consciously used the word 'object of worship [*maʿbūd*]' to refer to a charismatic nationalist leader in *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*. Similarly, as we saw in our chapter on al-Ṭahṭāwī, members of the French Legislative Assembly declared in 1792 that 'the image of the *patrie* is the sole divinity it is permissible to worship'.

When a habitus spectacularly fails to produce the expected results, a crisis of faith may occur, leading to greater conscious awareness and examination of the conceptual blend itself. We can see an example of this after Egypt's defeat in the 1967 war, in *ʿAwdat al-Waʿy*, when al-Ḥakīm consciously realised that the nationalism he had believed in was akin to a religion[75]. The book's title, *The Return of Awareness*, is thus appropriate.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued in *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*, Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm correctly identified a strategy capable of converting the majority of Egyptians to nationalism: the strategy of prophethood, based on the habitus of a charismatic leader. Al-Ḥakīm's impassioned case for this strategy found a keen pupil in Gamal Abdel Nasser, who succeeded in putting it into practice in order to become an adored autocrat. Al-Ḥakīm

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73 On the relationship between habitus and practices, see Bourdieu (1979, 190, 512-513, 1980a, 88-99, 159).

74 On the unconscious functioning of habitus, see Bourdieu (1979, 543-546, 1980a, 113-114) and cf. Fauconnier and Turner (2002, 56-57).

75 See Geer (2009) for other examples.

had not invented this strategy, but he articulated it in a particularly effective manner. To the extent that his own fortunes as a writer depended on his recognition as a *nationalist* writer, i.e. on his nationalist symbolic capital, his call for a prophet led logically to a relationship of mutual consecration between prophet and priest. But the success of this strategy came at the price of the autonomy of intellectuals such as himself.

In his study of the literary field in 19th-century France, Bourdieu (1998) argues that writers such as Flaubert and Baudelaire were engaged in a struggle for autonomy from political and economic power. This was a struggle to create a mode of cultural production that can disregard the judgements of anyone except the writers' own peers. In contrast, religion and nationalism aim for the approval of large segments of the laity. As I suggested in the introduction to this thesis, this effort on the part of cultural producers to meet the demands of the laity is essential to the success of both religion and nationalism. The struggle to be recognised as a nationalist intellectual, or a nationalist political leader, is thus a struggle for *heteronomy* rather than for autonomy. Hence it is incompatible with the very freedom that Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm argued was an essential characteristic of the intellectual, the freedom to criticise those in power and, more importantly, the mechanisms of power itself. This freedom is restricted not only by the symbolic power of charismatic leaders, which makes them appear infallible and therefore difficult to criticise. It is also restricted by the nationalist habitus itself, which, as we have seen, imposes a set of mythical categories (foremost among them 'nation' and

'country'), based on misrecognised social interests and forms of domination, on the perception and cognition of intellectuals (and other believers)[76], thus preventing them from perceiving important aspects of social reality. Other things being equal, the more effectively these myths serve intellectuals' interests, the less likely they are to take an interest in reasons to doubt them:

> The basis of the pertinence principle which is implemented in perceiving the social world and which defines all the characteristics of persons or things which can be perceived . . . is nothing other than the interest the individuals or groups in question have in recognizing a feature. . . . [I]nterest in the aspect observed is never completely independent of the advantage of observing it (Bourdieu 1984, 475).

In other words, it is in intellectuals' interest not to perceive their own interests, and to believe instead that they are disinterested and autonomous from political and economic power. As Bourdieu argued, real autonomy can be achieved, by means of a collective, global struggle (Bourdieu 1998, 543-558). But as I have tried to show here, that struggle is incompatible with nationalism.

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76 On misrecognition, see Bourdieu (1979, 549, 1980a, 219, 267-268, 384-385, 1989, 12).

Chapter 5: Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs, Nasser and Nationalist Martyrdom

This chapter focuses on Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs (1919-1990), a widely-read and influential journalist, newspaper editor and writer of prose fiction; 'a poll conducted in 1954 for the American University in Cairo found him to be the most popular living Arab writer' (Starkey 1998). In particular, I will concentrate on his novel *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* (A Man in Our House, 1956), and its film adaptation (1961).

ʿAbd al-Quddūs wrote many successful novels and stories about women's problems in Egyptian society (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 50-51). In this chapter, I will be focusing not on this aspect of his work, but rather on his nationalism, his role as a political journalist, and his relationship with Gamal Abdel Nasser. I suggest that although ʿAbd al-Quddūs displayed at least some inclination towards political liberalism, his nationalism legitimised the establishment of autocracy and motivated his transformation into an instrument of Nasser's propaganda machine. *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* expresses ʿAbd al-Quddūs's longstanding nationalist beliefs, including the belief that the nation should be ruled by a charismatic hero. I argue that the novel legitimised Nasser's rule, and indirectly helped promote military conscription, by glorifying a concept of nationalist martyrdom based on the concept of religious martyrdom.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First I note some key elements of traditions concerning martyrdom in Islam. Then I recount ʿAbd al-Quddūs's social trajectory, his rise to stardom as a priest of nationalism by means of journalism, his political views, his relations with the Free

Officers before and after the 1952 military coup, his imprisonment in 1954 and his subsequent integration into Nasser's propaganda machine. I then turn to the origin and development of Nasser's charisma, focusing on the importance of the concept of martyrdom in the construction of this charisma, which enabled him to exercise symbolic domination over intellectuals like ʿAbd al-Quddūs. Finally, I analyse *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* and its film adaptation, tracing the links between its nationalist concepts, their religious models and their social functions in Nasser's Egypt.

Islamic Sources of ʿAbd al-Quddūs's Concept of Martyrdom

It will not be possible to give a complete picture of the complex history of martyrdom in Islam here; for such a treatment, I refer the reader to David Cook's (2007) comprehensive study, to which my discussion is indebted. Instead, I will mention only the specific aspects of Islamic martyrdom that are directly relevant to the concepts of nationalist martyrdom examined later in this chapter. As Cook observes, 'martyrdom means witness'. In missionary religions, it serves as an advertisement, promoting one belief system and expressing opposition to another belief system. Moreover, it sets an example of proper conduct, by which the martyr's fellow believers can be judged. Thus it delineates a boundary that separates the true believers from the unbelievers or the insufficiently committed believers. In order to carry out this function successfully, it must have 'communicative force'; there must be an audience and a 'communicative agent', typically a hagiographer. Martyrology ideally

portrays the martyr's adversaries as utterly evil; often, it also condemns those who profess neutrality, attempting to make them feel guilty for their passivity in order to mobilise them as converts (Cook 2007, 1-3). The martyr's last words are often reported as a stirring speech, typically a prayer emphasising that the martyr is dying for God's sake, and calling for God's vengeance (Cook 2007, 10, 22, 30, 68).

Though the Prophet Muḥammad was not martyred, the idea of martyrdom was present in early Islam. One paradigmatic early Muslim martyr is Bilāl ibn Rabāḥ, an Ethiopian slave who was tormented, though not killed, for his adherence to the group of the first Muslims in Mecca. The persecution faced by the community of the early Muslims led to their migration (*hiǧra*) to the more hospitable environment of Medina in the year 622 (Cook 2007, 13-14; Berkey 2003, 61). The Arabic word for martyr, *šahīd* (pl. *šuhadāʾ*) appears in the Qurʾān mainly in its more general sense of 'witness' (Raven 2010), but there are several verses in which Muslim exigetes agree that it refers specifically to martyrdom. One such passage is Q 3:138-143, which is believed to have been revealed after the Battle of Uḥud in 625, a military defeat for the early Muslims (Cook 2007, 16-17): 'We deal out such days among people in turn, for God to find out who truly believes, for Him to choose martyrs [*šuhadāʾ*] from among you'. The same *sūra* contains what are probably the most commonly cited verses on martyrdom, Q 3:169-70, which are also associated with the Battle of Uḥud:

> [Prophet], do not think of those who have been killed in God's way [*fī sabīl Allāh*] as dead. They are alive with their Lord, well provided for, happy with what God has given them of His favour;

rejoicing that for those they have left behind who have yet to join them there is no fear, nor will they grieve.

The formula 'in God's way' (*fī sabīl Allāh*) came to mean jihad in the sense of 'warfare against infidels' (Landau-Tasseron 2010), and we will encounter it below in a modified form in a nationalist context. The key aspects of the Qur'ān's statements on jihad, for our purposes, are that it is a type of warfare that 'is seen as divinely sanctioned, with the promise of either victory or death with the rank of martyr as the inducement to fight', and that many of the Qur'ānic verses on the subject are aimed at countering the early Muslims' reluctance to fight (Cook 2007, 18-19).

Thus with the concept of jihad comes the concept of the fighting martyr. One well-known example that will be relevant to our discussion of 'Abd al-Quddūs's novel below is that of Ǧaʿfar al-Ṭayyār, who was killed while attacking the town of Mu'ta (now in southern Jordan) in 629.

His martyrdom is described, as him fighting from horseback until his horse was hamstrung, then he continued fighting on foot, until both of his arms were cut off. Initially he took the banner in his right hand, until it was cut off, then in his left until it was cut off and he bled to death while uttering a war poem (Cook 2007, 26).

Classical treatises on jihad cite hadith specifying that jihad must be carried out only 'to raise the Word of God to the highest', and insisting that 'someone who fights for this world . . . merely gains what he was fighting for' (Cook 2007, 36); as we will see, this point can be readily used as a means of distinguishing religious jihad from nationalist jihad.

291

It will also be significant, for our purposes here, to take note of the sexual inducements to martyrdom offered in classical jihad and martyrdom literature. Among the delights of paradise mentioned in the Qurʾān, and frequently cited in jihad literature, are the 'beautiful companions [ḥūr]' (e.g. Q 56:22), who are referred to in European languages as houris. Classical Muslim exegetes unanimously identify these as 'women whose purpose was to provide sexual pleasure for the blessed in heaven' (Cook 2007, 32-33; cf. JI Smith and Haddad 1975). Jihad and martyrdom literature abounds in 'frequent and graphic descriptions of the sexual delights of paradise . . . especially descriptions of women', and early historical accounts of Muslim martyrs refer to 'battlefield marriages to houris'. Chroniclers report that houris descended from heaven during the early Muslim conquests to encourage the soldiers on the battlefield, and to offer themselves to those who had just died in battle (Cook 2007, 37-38).

Finally, Islamic martyrdom narratives are sometimes set within the genre of apocalypse. A description of this complex genre would take us too far afield here, but it will be relevant to note that one of the signs of the end of the world in this type of narrative is the appearance of a messianic figure – the Mahdī or Jesus – who appears 'to lead the Muslim community into ultimate victory and establishes the messianic state' (Cook 2007, 125-126).

ʿAbd al-Quddūs and Nationalist Journalism

ʿAbd al-Quddūs's mother was Fāṭima al-Yūsuf, a.k.a. Rūz (Rose) al-Yūsuf, a Lebanese immigrant who had a successful career in Egypt, first as a stage actress, then as the owner of the magazine *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, which she named after herself[77]. In 1925, she abandoned her theatrical career and founded a weekly magazine, *Rūz al-Yūsuf* (Temimi 2008, 16, 112). It was one of a number of publications that responded to an increasing demand for a nationalist press. She insisted on classifying herself as Egyptian, although this self-classification did not always convince others. During a libel lawsuit against her, the plaintiff's lawyer called her an 'intruder' (*daḫīla*); she replied that if all the intruders in Egypt were like her, the country would have long since achieved its independence. Yet her self-classification was accepted for the most part (Temimi 2008, 55, 65-66, 117-118).

The magazine's readers, like its editors and journalists, were urban *afandiyya* 'more or less endowed with cultural capital' (Temimi 2008, 473-474); they were represented visually in its comics by the popular character *al-Miṣrī afandī*, which the magazine described as 'the emblem of the public' (Temimi 2008, 344-345). In keeping with the *afandī* stances we considered in Chapter 3, *Rūz al-Yūsuf* incessantly mocked the *ʿulamāʾ* of al-Azhar, accusing them of misusing religion, and portraying them as opposed to all reform, innovation and progress in Egypt (Temimi 2008, 147-152). During the Wafd's conflict with al-Azhar in the late 1920s, the magazine naturally took the side of the Wafd. In 1926, its editor argued

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77 The most comprehensive study of the magazine *Rūz al-Yūsuf* and its founder is Temimi (2008), on whose superb research I have relied here.

that the position of Shaykh of al-Azhar should be abolished, and that the institution should instead be run by a mere manager (*wakīl*) employed by the state; as Temimi (2008, 150) notes, this 'would of course enable the Wafd to win its battle against the religious institution'. The magazine likewise followed the Wafdist party line according to which '"there are no longer Christians and Muslims . . . there are Egyptian citizens above all"' who follow "the national religion of Saʿd [Zaġlūl]"' (Temimi 2008, 153).

During the authoritarian rule of the Liberal Constitutionalist party (1928-30), which Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal defended by praising Mussolini's fascism (CD Smith 1983, 81-83), Rūz al-Yūsuf established its reputation as a magazine of liberal activism that fought to defend democracy and freedom of the press (Temimi 2008, 208). It praised journalists of the past who had paid with ther blood for 'their honesty towards the country and their loyalty to the national question'; by means of their struggle, it said, they had accumulated 'the journalist's capital' (Temimi 2008, 224-225), i.e. nationalist symbolic capital. The magazine's editors regularly claimed to speak on behalf of the nation (Temimi 2008, 223-224, 502, 506), and its comics frequently satirised the government and its supporters (including Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid and Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal) by accusing them of betraying Egypt (Temimi 2008, 209-225, 279-285).

In 1936, *Rūz al-Yūsuf* broke with the Wafd party and switched its allegiance to the King of Egypt, becoming a 'palace newspaper'; one of its cartoons, for example, explicitly identified the crown as 'the will of the nation [*umma*]'. This formula proved to be a commercial failure. This

period 'signalled the failure of the newspaper's political project', which had relied on its alignment with the Wafd. This sequence of events is probably what convinced Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs to abstain, throughout his career, from affiliation with any political party (Temimi 2008, 510-535).

Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs's father was Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Quddūs, a civil engineer involved in theatre; he married Fāṭima al-Yūsuf in 1917. Muḥammad's father, Aḥmad Riḍwān, an Azhar graduate and court employee, who was very conservative in religious matters, was opposed to his marriage with an actress, and responded by disowning Muḥammad. The latter then quit his civil service job and devoted himself to the theatre. Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs was born in Cairo in 1919; by then, Muḥammad and Fāṭima were divorced. Aḥmad Riḍwān took Iḥsān from Fāṭima and raised him in his own house, while trying with little success to keep him away from his father. Iḥsān would live at his grandfather's house until he was 18 years old, during which time he was allowed to visit his mother once a week; he then moved back in with her (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 11-17; al-Niqāš 1991, 17-18; Temimi 2008, 56).

During Iḥsān's childhood, the division between religious and non-religious cultural capital, and between the shaykhs and the *afandiyya*, was mirrored in the split between his grandfather's house and his mother's house. He listened to the religious seminars that his grandfather held at home in the company of other Azharites. He also attended the cultural and political seminars that his mother held at her home in the company of prominent *afandī* writers, politicians and artists. Later, he

recalled that moving back and forth between 'these two contradictory environments [*hāḏayn al-manāḫayn al-mutanāqiḍayn*]' was disorienting at first. The contradiction between them caused him to have nervous breakdowns during adolescence, but he grew accustomed to it. He loved both of these 'clashing poles [*al-quṭbayn al-mutanāfirayn*]' in his life, and would defend each one against the criticisms of the other (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 11-13, 27, 38). In the long run, however, his parents' influence was decisive. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Quddūs never remarried, and remained actively involved in his son's schooling, moving him from one state school to another, always in search of a better education for him (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 18). 'Abd al-Quddūs also learned a great deal from his mother, and described himself as 'her pupil' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 20).

'Abd al-Quddūs graduated from law school in 1942, and began working as a trainee lawyer and as a journalist for *Rūz al-Yūsuf*. His earnings were low, and he later described himself as 'a failed lawyer' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 22-27). He thus had a strong incentive to take bold, risky stances as a journalist. In 1945, while working as secretary to the editor of *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, he wrote an article calling for the removal of Lord Killearn, the British ambassador to Egypt. The Wafdist Prime Minister Nuqrāšī immediately had 'Abd al-Quddūs arrested, thus furnishing him with impeccable nationalist credentials. His mother saluted him for upholding 'the honour of jihad for the cause of Egypt', and turned over the magazine to him upon his release from prison (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 70-74).

In recalling this episode, he refers to Fārūq, then king of Egypt, as 'a foreign [*ağnabī*] king from an intruder [*daḫīla*] family' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 70). Yet Fārūq was in fact widely considered an 'Egyptian' king during his reign, in contrast to the previous rulers of his dynasty, and indeed was seen as 'the first Egyptian to govern the country since the Pharaohs', partly because his mother was Egyptian (de Gayffier-Bonneville 2002, 77-78). Ironically, as we have seen, 'Abd al-Quddūs's mother was an immigrant, she herself had been labelled an 'intruder' in Egypt, and her magazine had been staunchly royalist in the late 1930s, even before Fārūq became king. This is an example of the arbitrariness of the boundaries of nations, and the practice of drawing those boundaries in such a way as to include oneself and exclude – or rather, excommunicate – one's adversaries (cf. Bourdieu 1987b, 171; Younis 2005, 29).

During the 1940s, 'Abd al-Quddūs explored Marxism and Islamism, but was dissatisfied with both (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 67-82). He never joined any political party or organisation; in justifying this choice, he said that he saw himself as expressing the opinions of 'the political street [*al-šāriʿ al-siyāsī*]' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 65-66). His 'bias towards the man in the street', he explained, is 'the only bias I have permitted myself to have all my life'; he considered himself 'a faithful son of the political street' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 78). This concept of 'the street' seems well-suited to obscuring class differences. However, 'Abd al-Quddūs's lack of political affiliation also enabled him to maximise his social capital. During this period, most newspapers and magazines in Egypt

were aimed much more at propaganda and agitation than the dissemination of news and information. Each editorial office became a sort of meeting place where activists, supporters and sympathisers of the political current or party of the publication in question would meet, in the absence of political clubs (Makarius 1960, 33).

By not allying the magazine with a particular political group, ʿAbd al-Quddūs was able to hire, for example, both Communists and Muslim Brothers (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 83-84). Under his direction, *Rūz al-Yūsuf* became the most prominent political and literary magazine of its time (Abū ʿAwf 2007, 12), no doubt partly because of his prestige as a nationalist activist.

One event that seems to have enhanced that prestige was his assistance to the assassin of the former cabinet minister Amīn ʿUṯmān; this incident would later serve as part of the basis of his novel *Fī Baytinā Raǧul*. A small nationalist militia, armed and trained by Anwar Sadat, assassinated ʿUṯmān as punishment for his pro-British statements (Reid 1982, 633-634). After the assassination, the radio began broadcasting, every half hour, the police's offer of a 5,000 EGP reward for information leading to the assasssin's arrest, and the threat of a death sentence for anyone who helped him. ʿAbd al-Quddūs was asked for assistance in hiding the fugitive. Later, he recalled that he had seen this as a test: if he accepted, he would prove to the revolutionaries that he was really one of them. If not, he would be seen as a mere 'merchant' selling empty words on 'the revolution market'. He therefore hid the assassin in his flat for

four days (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 89-92). In reality, the alternative between the 'merchant' and the 'revolutionary' is illusory; intellectuals are simultaneously merchants of cultural goods and sincere supporters of causes. Since they have 'an interest in disinterestedness' (Bourdieu 1993, 40, Bourdieu 1994b, 200), they can become more successful merchants by demonstrating a willingness to risk their lives for their principles. This is arguably what ʿAbd al-Quddūs did in this case.

He was then in a position to upbraid others for not displaying the same courage. In an article in 1948, he faulted Egyptians for not being willing to sacrifice their lives for Egypt, lamenting that 'the living person does not want to be a dead person or a martyr [*šahīd*]'. 'Put your heads in the nooses and chant "Down with injustice"', he urged his readers (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 78). During this period, he says, he was looking for hidden revolutionaries. His goal as editor of the magazine was to reveal the sins (*ḫaṭāyā*) of the 'treacherous regime [*al-sulṭa al-ḫāʾina*]' to the people (*šaʿb*), believing that this would increase the number of revolutionaries and thus hasten 'the explosion that would eliminate the enemies of the nation [*aʿdāʾ al-šaʿb*]' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 79).

In 1949, he published what was probably the biggest scoop of his career, accusing the Egyptian government of supplying its troops with defective weapons in the 1948-49 Arab-Israeli war (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 97-102; Muṣṭafā 1991). This scandal was 'incontestably the most important affair of this period because of the damage it did to the monarchy' (Temimi 2008, 38). ʿAbd al-Quddūs's contacts with young, disaffected army officers – including Nasser, who had fought in that war – date from

this period. The stories of defective weapons were later disproved (Gordon 2006, 24-25), but in publishing them, ʿAbd al-Quddūs arguably succeeded – at least in his readers' eyes – in living up to the standard of dissident journalism that the magazine had set in the 1930s, and thus gained more of the 'journalist's capital' mentioned above.

In 1951, when prime minister Muṣṭafā al-Naḥḥās abrogated Egypt's 1936 treaty with Britain, ʿAbd al-Quddūs praised him in an editorial, writing that the Egyptian government was 'the government of the revolution' and that 'we are all on its side, united in sacrifice and jihad'[78]; this decision must be 'baptized with blood and vouched for with money and sons; it is a call to every Egyptian to prepare for the great sacrifice'. Recalling this episode, he asserts that the government's decision represented 'the will of the nation [šaʿb]', and that while there should therefore have been huge demonstrations in support of this decision, in reality only small demonstrations happened. There were attempts to form an 'unofficial popular front' of nationalist organisations, but these attempts all failed due to 'differences' between the participants (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 129-132). Here one could ask: if only small demonstrations took place, how did he know that the decision reflected 'the will of the nation'? It is as if he just knew intuitively, thanks to his privileged insight as priest of the nation. Yet according to his own account, instead of a single 'will of the nation', we find opposing wills even among nationalists, who were unable to agree and cooperate.

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78 Note again the use of 'we'.

In 1951, he joined an armed nationalist group and became its treasurer; he was responsible for furnishing its members with money, food, weapons and ammunition. The offices of the magazine were 'transformed into an arms depot' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 138-139). In an article published on 4 December 1951, he asked: 'Where is the armed revolution that encompasses all of Egypt. . . ? Where is the leader [*zaʿīm*] of the revolution, the preacher [*ḫaṭīb*] to the masses, the organiser of groups, the planner of attacks?' On 11 December 1951, in an article entitled 'The Missing Man', he wrote: 'The battle is now being led by fedayeen who have given themselves to death; it is they who have blown up water stations and sewers, and carried out these attacks on English camps'. Where, he asked, is 'the man responsible'? On 25 December 1951, he wrote: 'Go to battle, Egyptians, and commit suicide [*intaḥirū*] facing the Englishmen's bullets', adding that there are no social classes in times of revolution (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 133-135). On 11 February 1952, he wrote: 'Egypt is in temporary need of a dictator . . . who will act for the people, not against them, for and not against freedom, a dictator who will push Egypt forward, not hold her back' (Gordon 1989, 229). On 24 March 1952, he 'wrote . . . of the need for a "popular hero" to lead the nation' (Gordon 1989, 232). A few days before the June 1952 coup, he wrote: 'The only thing that can drive the nation forward is a man who believes in the nation, whom the nation trusts and around whom it unites' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 142).

Thus in 'Abd al-Quddūs's political writings before the 1952 coup, we find the concepts of 'jihad' and 'martyr' used in nationalist senses,

rather than religious ones, as well as repeated calls for Egyptians to sacrifice their lives for the nationalist cause. There is an emphasis on drawing the boundary between the nation on one hand, and the 'traitors' or 'enemies of the nation' on the other hand. Moreover, there is a clear call for a prophet-like national leader. ʿAbd al-Quddūs was not alone in issuing this call. At the end of the 1940s, Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm published an article calling for the closure of Parliament for three years and the establishment of a 'just tyrannical government [*ḥukūma mustabidda ʿādila*]'; he suggested that it should be led by veteran politician ʿAlī Māhir, who had been one of the foremost proponents of the idea of the 'just tyrant' (*al-mustabidd al-ʿādil*) since the 1930s (Abū ʿAwf 2007, 22-23; cf. Gordon 1992, 65). Joel Gordon observes:

> The notion of appointing a popular strong man who stood above and apart from party squabbles, who could institute sweeping reform legislation and restore order to a political process gone awry had gained a growing number of proponents. . . . Popular discontent with 'party politics' had reached a fever pitch by early 1952 (Gordon 1989, 224; cf. Younis 2005, 207).

Gordon is referring to the Arabic term *ḥizbiyya* (literally 'partyism'), which had become a pejorative term by the 1930s (Gershoni and Jankowski 1995, 4; Aclimandos 2002, 49). In the summer of 1952, even 'for those who remained loyal to the liberal ethos, a myth of the savior prevailed' (Gordon 1989, 236, Gordon 1992, 37). As we saw in Chapter 4, this myth was not simply a pragmatic response to the failure of parliamentary politics; it had long since become part of the belief system

of nationalism, having been blended from a religious frame into a nationalist one.

As Tewfik Aclimandos (2002, 15-16) observes, the 1930s and 40s, 'broad sectors of the Egyptian population', including the Free Officers and many experienced politicians, were attracted to certain aspects of the European far right, including 'a fascination with the image of an "awakened" nation, united by a strong leader'. Sadat had been involved in contacts with the Axis powers during World War II and 'made preliminary efforts to join Marshal Rommel and the Nazi war campaign'; ʿAlī Māhir, too, was known for his 'acknowledged fascist sympathies' (Abū ʿAwf 2007, 20-23; Botman 1998, 298-299). Scholars are not in agreement about the extent of admiration for German or Italian fascism in Egypt during this period. Gershoni and Jankowski (2009) give evidence of both positive and negative attitudes towards fascism in Egypt during the 1930s. On the other hand, the reformist intellectual H̱ālid Muḥyī al-Dīn recalls Egyptians' admiration for Hitler during the 1930s and 40s:

> Our admiration for him was immense. Many people called him Muḥammad Hitler, seeing him as a Muslim sent by God to punish and educate the colonialists. Conversations dealt with dreams sent by God, in which Egyptians dreamed of Hitler. I have not forgotten that during this period, I saw him in a dream, as the muezzin of al-Azhar, performing the call to prayer in dazzling Arabic. . . . One of my friends believed that Hitler was the Mahdī, that he would soon announce his conversion to Islam, and that he would bring victory

303

to Islam and to Muslims everywhere (quoted in Aclimandos 2002, 15-16).

The notion of a Muslim Hitler aside, this was not an entirely fanciful impression of the Nazi belief system. Without equating Egyptian nationalism with Nazism, we can usefully observe that Nazism had drawn from the same intellectual sources as Egyptian nationalism (e.g. from Thomas Carlyle) in its glorification of 'great men' (Ball 1942; Schapiro 1945, 115; McCollum 2007), and that 'on several occasions [Hitler] presented himself as a "prophet"' (Burrin 1997, 336).

ʿAbd al-Quddūs and the Free Officers

Thanks to his contacts with disaffected army officers, ʿAbd al-Quddūs became friends with Nasser in 1949 or 1950 (Abū ʿAwf 2007, 35, 180). Nasser was an enthusiastic reader of *Rūz al-Yūsuf* (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 196), and Sadat wrote articles anonymously for the magazine before the coup (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 142-143). ʿAbd al-Quddūs noticed that in discussions, Nasser and Sadat were among the officers that talked least and listened most, then uttered the right words to settle the matter at hand; for him, these are among the most important qualities in a revolutionary leader. From this he concluded that if there was a revolutionary organisation in the army, Nasser and Sadat must be among its most prominent members (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 143-144).

On the morning of 23 July 1952, immediately after the Free Officers seized power, Nasser called ʿAbd al-Quddūs to invite him to a meeting of the Council of the Revolution. The coup leaders had no political programme and did not know what to do. ʿAbd al-Quddūs suggested that

they appoint ʿAlī Māhir as prime minister, and this suggestion was adopted. The officers sent ʿAbd al-Quddūs with Sadat and another officer to meet ʿAlī Māhir and convince him to accept the appointment. ʿAbd al-Quddūs dominated the meeting, silencing Sadat when he tried to speak up (Abū ʿAwf 2007, 16-18; Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 146-147).

In the autumn of 1952, when ʿAlī Māhir opposed the officers' land reform law, ʿAbd al-Quddūs wrote an article calling for his dismissal. Nasser told ʿAbd al-Quddūs that while he had complete confidence in Iḥsān's loyalty (*iḫlāṣ*) and agreed with the content of the article, he had personally censored it, because he did not want the people (*šaʿb*) to get used to the idea 'that people can make suggestions to the revolution and that the revolution will implement their suggestions, even if they're good suggestions'. He added: 'If we implemented your suggestion – you, a journalist – what would there be left for us to do?' The article was finally published, but ʿAbd al-Quddūs was left with a bitter feeling about this episode (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 156-158), which suggests that Nasser feared the competition of the nationalist priesthood at that time.

ʿAlī Māhir was dismissed on 6 September 1952 and replaced by Muḥammad Naǧīb, the Free Officers' figurehead (Gordon 1992, 4, 66-67). ʿAbd al-Quddūs and Nasser continued to disagree frequently; ʿAbd al-Quddūs 'looked for excuses' for Nasser in order to explain these disagreements. He was, he recalls, 'unable to give up the cause of the revolution, which I had faith in' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 158-159). On 8 September 1952, he published an article referring to the army officers as 'angels' that had deposed the king, then ascended to heaven before

finishing their job; he called on them to 'destroy the ranks of evil' in Egypt, i.e. the powerful politicians of the pre-coup era. He believed that the officers were the only ones who could offer protection from this evil, since they represented 'a vast popular [*ša'bbiyya*] force' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 167-168). In a series of articles published in *Rūz al-Yūsuf* starting on 11 October 1952, under the title 'How We Want Egypt to Be Governed[79]', he wrote:

> Before the army movement, we were looking for a new leader [*za'īm*] for the people [*ša'b*]. The reactionaries didn't believe that this man could exist or appear from the ranks of the people. But Muḥammad Naǧīb and Gamal Abdel Nasser and others have appeared (Abū 'Awf 2007, 31).

On 17 November 1952, he published an article revealing that Nasser was the real leader of the Free Officers, and praising Nasser highly (Abū 'Awf 2007, 31-32, 36). At the same time, he had embarked on the ill-fated campaign for liberal democracy that would lead to his imprisonment in 1954. He argued that Egypt should become a democratic republic; for this, he was accused on the radio of being an enemy of the revolution (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 160-162). Nevertheless, the Council of the Revolution proclaimed Egypt a republic (if only in name) in June 1953 (Gordon 1992, 83-84). In 'Abd al-Quddūs's opinion, opposition to the idea of a republic arose because 'thousands of years of monarchy had drawn a dark curtain over people's minds, or some people's minds, so that their political imagination could not encompass any other system of government' (Abū

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79 Note once again the use of 'we' instead of 'I'.

al-Futūḥ 1982, 160). Yet this assertion is incompatible with the idea of the 'will of the nation' and with 'Abd al-Quddūs's view of his role as a vehicle for the expression of 'the political street'.

In another article in the same series, he warned that a republic requires a nation to be 'strong and aware and to keep its eyes open, otherwise the first president will become a dictator with the powers of a king'. In an article entitled 'There Is No Just Tyrant, Nor Any Tyrannical Person of Justice', published on 9 February 1953, he attacked the idea of a just tyrant, arguing that it is a contradiction in terms (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 162-163). Yet on 12 January 1953, he wrote an article declaring that 'we believe [*nu'min*]' in the leaders of the army coup, on the grounds that the officers had taken part in nationalist movements before the coup, 'because they are Egyptian, nationalist [*waṭaniyyūn*] and of the nation [*min al-ša'b*]'. The army movement might be military in its means, he said, but it is not military in its principles or goals; though its leaders wear military uniforms, they have put 'popular [*ša'biyya*] principles' in their hearts, 'the principles of democracy, freedom and the constitution'. This, he added, is why he had wanted the officers to take over ministerial posts themselves after the coup. It was not because he wanted a military dictatorship; the officers were incapable of becoming dictators (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 163-164).

In private discussions, 'Abd al-Quddūs advised the officers to leave the army and become the leaders of a new political party, which would compete with other parties in elections. Shortly afterwards, on 16 January 1953, all political parties were outlawed and a single party was founded,

the Liberation Rally (*Hay'at al-Taḥrīr*); all its leaders were officers (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 181-182; Gordon 1992, 80-81). Disappointed, ʿAbd al-Quddūs wrote on 9 February 1953: 'There will be no victory without a battle, and the battle will not be fought if there are none to struggle with' (Gordon 1992, 82).

Judging by ʿAbd al-Quddūs's own recollections of his political stances, democracy was not one of his primary concerns before the 1952 coup; he was mainly preoccupied with promoting armed nationalist resistance to the British occupation and attacks on 'traitors', and did not hesitate to advocate dictatorship, or to support an advocate of dictatorship such as ʿAlī Māhir. Perhaps the military coup prompted him to reassess the value of democracy. In any case, the events of 1954 would demonstrate that this change of heart was too little, too late.

The Struggle Between Nasser and Nağīb

By 1953, there was still little sign of widespread enthusiasm for the junta, and the officers, including Nasser, were repeatedly heckled in public (Gordon 1992, 82). Still, Muḥammad Nağīb, the figurehead, who was widely seen as a 'father figure' (Gordon 1992, 121, 125), had demonstrated that he possessed charisma for a broad audience. 'The army is the nation and every Egyptian a soldier', he had told enthusiastic crowds in September 1952. (This is a conceptual blend, from which it can be inferred that the leaders of the army are the leaders of the nation.) He also likened the junta to a god that was creating a new world: '"Patience, patience", he beseeched his audience. "It took God six days to create the world", he told them, and asked for six months' (Gordon 1992, 73-74).

In March 1954, a bitter power struggle between Nasser and Naǧīb reached its conclusion: Naǧīb was permanently sidelined, and Nasser and his supporters consolidated military rule (Gordon 1992, 120-142). During this confrontation, those who advocated a return to parliamentary rule rallied around Naǧīb (Gordon 1992, 125), while Nasser used the Liberation Rally to organise demonstrations at which crowds chanted: 'No political parties and no democracy' and 'Don't leave us, Gamal' (Gordon 1992, 135).

'Abd al-Quddūs took a stand in favour of parliamentary rule during the March crisis. This, he recalls, meant reluctantly giving up his friendship with Nasser. In articles published in *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, the most famous of which was entitled 'The Secret Organisation that Rules Egypt' (22 March 1954), he called for a democratic republic. He called on Nasser 'to set a new example of jihad by leaving his organisation and joining the ranks of the nation, to struggle as one of the nation's leaders' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 180-182; Abū 'Awf 2007, 15). Nasser retaliated by having 'Abd al-Quddūs arrested and imprisoned from 28 April to 31 July 1954, on the charge of attempting to overthrow the government. He was tortured, and kept in solitary confinement for 45 days, but recalls that what was even more painful for him was the accusation of treason, since his 'faith' in the revolution had inspired him to devote his life to hastening 'the day of salvation [ḫalāṣ]' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 188-194; Abū 'Awf 2007, 24). Arguably, his own insistence on drawing a boundary between 'the nation' and 'the traitors' had come back to haunt him.

Submission to Nasser

While ʿAbd al-Quddūs was in prison, his mother took over the magazine, and responded to her son's imprisonment by refusing to print a single word about the military coup or the regime (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 195-196). At the same time, she printed eye-catching headlines that implied criticism of the officers without attacking them directly, e.g. 'The Mahdī appears in Egypt'. Nasser then sent representatives to negotiate with her, but she refused to negotiate (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 200). This suggests that Nasser was still unable to exercise total symbolic domination over nationalist intellectuals.

Immediately after ʿAbd al-Quddūs's release, he accepted a number of invitations to Nasser's house. Nasser explained these invitations as a kind of psychological treatment for ʿAbd al-Quddūs (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 202-204); in reality, the military ruler was probably trying to enlist the journalist in the régime's propaganda machine. 'A battle began between me and my pen,' ʿAbd al-Quddūs recalls (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 204). A few months later, he was arrested again, accused of conspiracy against the revolution and incitement to overthrow the regime, taken to a cell, and released the same day after a phone call from Nasser (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 209-215). ʿAbd al-Quddūs then realised that something had gone seriously wrong with the 'revolution', but blamed the 'perversion of the revolution' on 'centres of power' (i.e. Nasser's colleagues), rather than on Nasser himself. He says that he decided to give his unconditional support to 'the revolution as a theory', and ignore the 'centres of power' (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 216-217).

From then on, however, his newspaper articles expressed fervent support for Nasser; by 1956, he had become a leading figure within the regime (Gordon 1992, 196). In 1960, he wrote: 'Gamal Abdel Nasser . . . represents a truth, the truth of these throngs. When we rally around Gamal Abdel Nasser, we experience ourselves as a nation [šaʿb]. The truth springs from us, from the nation, but Gamal Abdel Nasser embodies it' (Younis 2005, 155). In the same year, he wrote that Nasser's 'standard in every word he says is his principles' (Younis 2005, 134). In 1961, he wrote that it is Nasser who sets out the philosophy of 'our principles and political orientations, and explains and analyses them' (Younis 2005, 135). In 1962, he wrote that Nasser's personality was 'the personality of the hero', and 'could therefore encompass everyone, and give of itself to everyone. It has come to pass that all of us live in Gamal Abdel Nasser. He is love, a great love' (Younis 2005, 159). In 1964, he wrote that the purpose of the Socialist Union (the name of the single party at the time) was to link everyone in the country so that when a low-level member of the party spoke in any remote village, he would express the opinion of the supreme leadership of the revolution, i.e. Nasser (Younis 2005, 142). After Nasser's resignation speech following Egypt's defeat in the June 1967 war with Israel, ʿAbd al-Quddūs wrote that Nasser could not resign, 'because he is the will of the nation. . . . Abdel Nasser is our weapon, our strength and our will' (Younis 2005, 196).

It is now time to consider the question of how Nasser attained such a high degree of symbolic domination over intellectuals such as ʿAbd al-Quddūs and over Egyptians in general.

Martyrdom, Habitus and Nasser's Charisma

Nasser's popularity in Egypt and elsewhere has often been attributed instrumentally to particular policies that he adopted, especially in the domain of international relations. Moreover, the changes in his nationalist stances – such as shift from Egyptian nationalism to an Egypt-centric Arab nationalism – are often explained instrumentally as well, in relation to changing political necessities. This type of explanation is certainly valid to an extent, but it leaves many questions unanswered. Adeed Dawisha argues that Nasser's Egyptian supporters in the 1950s were particularly keen to resist European and American domination of Egypt. During the Cold War, the US and Britain sought to form anti-Soviet military alliances with several countries in the region. In order to safeguard Egypt's independence, Nasser needed to prevent his neighbours from entering such alliances, and therefore 'had to tap the most readily acceptable bond that drew Egyptians and the other Arabs together, that of Arab nationalism' (Dawisha 2003, 140–142; cf. Vatikiotis 1978, 225–234). Yet this analysis is based on a tautology. Why was it necessary to draw 'the Arabs' together, rather than, say, the Muslims? This would have had the advantage of including non-Arab Muslims such as those in Turkey and Iran. More important, Islamic religious faith had been deeply entrenched in the habitus of most of the region's inhabitants for over a thousand years, while Arab nationalism was less than a century old and had not yet gained wide acceptance, particularly in Egypt (Dawisha 2003, 98–106, 135–138). Indeed, Nasser's own 'conversion' to Arab nationalism does not seem to have occurred before 1954 (Dawisha 2003, 147).

Similarly, Mahmoud Hussein argues that the Nasser regime embraced a watered-down 'socialism' in the early 1960s for instrumental reasons: faced with the increasing popularity of communists in the Arab world, and its own faltering popularity in Egypt as economic inequalities deepened, it fiercely suppressed Egyptian communist movements, then embarked on a programme of nationalisations and obtained assistance from the Soviet Union, proclaiming an 'Arab socialism' without class struggle, intended to benefit the regime without benefiting Egyptian communists (Hussein 1971, 163–169). This analysis does not explain, however, why Nasser did not simply embrace communism. Yet another option, instead of 'Arab socialism', would have been 'Islamic socialism' (cf. Teitelbaum 2011). This would have had the advantage of forestalling attacks by rival states on religious grounds; the Saudi monarchy, for example, attempted to win the region's Muslims away from nationalism by denouncing it as 'based on atheistic doctrine', and offering an alternative, Islamic path to political unity (Dawisha 2003, 233, 247–248).

Other instrumental explanations raise similar questions. One of Nasser's popular stances was his participation in the 'non-aligned' movement of states that refused to ally themselves with the US or the Soviet Union (Dawisha 2003, 166); since this won him considerable acclaim as a leader in the struggle against imperialism (de Gayffier-Bonneville 2002, 92–93), why did he not choose to rely mainly on 'third-worldism' rather than Arab nationalism? In 1956, he nationalised the Suez canal, defying the European powers; Britain, France and Israel then invaded Egypt, but withdrew at the insistence of the US. This political

victory 'made Nasser into the Arab legend' (Younis 2005, 131; cf. Gordon 2006, 48–49). Why not the Muslim legend? 'To restless and frustrated Arab nationalists he indeed seemed a second Saladin' (Dawisha 2003, 181); yet Saladin was Muslim but not Arab. Alternatively, why was Nasser not simply an Egyptian, third-world or anticolonial legend? Nasser and his supporters viewed Israel as an instrument of imperialism, and the 1956 invasion only confirmed this (Dawisha 2003, 141, 242–243). But when Nasser sought to unite neighbouring countries, including his Saudi enemies (who were allies of the US), to oppose Israel's attempt to monopolise the water of the Jordan River in 1963, he needed an argument other than anti-imperialism, and he chose 'Arab solidarity' (Dawisha 2003, 243–246). Could Muslim solidarity have been an alternative?

It is beyond the scope of the present study, with its focus on intellectuals, to attempt to answer these questions. However, I would argue that in order to explain why Nasser defined himself and his audience in certain ways, and why those conceptualisations gained widespread acceptance and contributed to his popularity, one would need to analyse Nasser's habitus and that of his audience, using the sociological and cognitive approach that I have been outlining in this thesis. Here I will consider only a few elements that arguably contributed to the development of Nasser's charisma, and that are particularly relevant to our discussion of Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs.

Political scientist ʿAlī al-Dīn Hilāl affirms that Nasser's charisma enabled the regime to draw a large part of its legitimacy from Nasser himself and from 'his direct relationship with the masses in Egypt and in

the other Arab regions'; in Hilāl's view, this charismatic leadership became clear during the Suez crisis of 1956 (Hilāl 1982, 22–23). He observes that the main shortcoming of all political organisations in Egypt during the Nasser years was their inability to have any influence on decision-making, since Nasser held a monopoly of political power, and argues that one of the main reasons for this problem was Nasser's 'charismatic or historic personality', which allowed him 'to converse' (*taḫāṭub*) directly with the masses, without the need for mediating institutions (1982, 31).

Similarly, historian Yūnān Labīb Rizq asserts that Nasser's probity (*istiqāma*) and good reputation made it impossible for even those who opposed his policies to accuse him of anything. The assassination attempt on him in 1954, his support for the Algerian revolution in the same year, his participation in the Bandung conference in 1955, the nationalisation of the Suez canal in 1956 and the following war made people love him passionately, and he became 'the hoped-for hero [*al-baṭal al-murtaǧā*]' in their eyes (Rizq 2008, 76). The outcome of the Suez conflict made it seem 'as if Saladin had risen from his grave'. A diffuse nationalist feeling (*šuʿūr waṭanī*) made people feel that criticising Nasser was forbidden, not by law, but by an overwhelming popular desire (*raġba šaʿbiyya ǧārifa*) (Rizq 2008, 77). Nasser maintained his popularity despite the setbacks of the 1960s; during this period, Egyptians viewed Nasser as a father (*abawiyyat al-raʾīs*), perhaps for the first time since Saʿd Zaġlūl (Rizq 2008, 77). Two events in particular reflect this: the demonstrations of 9-10 June 1967, calling for Nasser to return to power after his resignation in the wake of

Egypt's defeat in the war with Israel, and the 'mass hysteria' that followed his death in 1970, expressing the feeling that Egyptians had become 'orphaned' (Rizq 2008, 77–78).

The most insightful analysis of this issue that I have encountered is historian Sherif Younis's essay *Al-Zaḥf al-Muqaddas* (2005)*,* which focuses on explaining the pro-Nasser demonstrations of 9-10 June 1967. While Younis's postmodern Marxist methodology is quite different from the one used in this thesis, much of his analysis is compatible with the approach proposed here. Younis argues that 'ideology' is not necessarily 'political thought or theory', but rather 'a state of consciousness and political feeling', 'ideas that justify the acceptance or rejection of particular policies, and values that constitute standards of acceptance or rejection' (Younis 2005, 13). This definition is very close to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, and enables Younis to interpret the demonstrations following Nasser's resignation as 'spontaneous' and yet as the product of 'mobilisation' (Younis 2005, 14), because they were the expression of 'a collective political impulse based on constants that had been instilled long before' (Younis 2005, 180), or in the theoretical terms used here, concepts that had become entrenched in the habitus of Egyptians. As examples of how this entrenchment took place, Younis lists Nasser's omnipresence in the media, the prayer-like professions of loyalty to Nasser that young people recited at mass rallies, and the songs about Nasser that were taught to schoolchildren (Younis 2005, 138–139). Younis rejects Max Weber's concept of charisma as too vague (Younis 2005, 121–123), but I think that

Bourdieu's definition of charisma in terms of habitus fits Younis's analysis very well. I will return to this analysis in a moment.

Debates about the meaning, validity and usefulness of Max Weber's concept of charisma (Shils 1958, Shils 1965; Schweitzer 1974; Ouedraogo 1993), and its application to the study of Gamal Abdel Nasser (Bowie 1976; Dekmejian 1976; de Gayffier-Bonneville 2002; Podeh and Winckler 2004, x, 2-26; Binder 2004; Younis 2005, 121-123), have not produced satisfactory results. One common error is the attempt to define charisma in terms of objective characteristics or actions of the charismatic individual, instead of considering it as a *relation* between the charismatic individual and the relevant audience. This error contributes to a second problem: the failure to deal with the problem on a sufficiently high level of abstraction, e.g. by getting lost in the minutiae of differences between different sorts of charismatic figures. These differences cannot be explained without an appreciation of the social functions of charisma, and of the relations of interdependence and competition between charismatic figures and other social actors, all of which are neglected in non-relational approaches. The result has tended to be explanations of charisma in general, and of Nasser's charisma in particular, that amount to little more than lists of apparently arbitrary characteristics or actions, devoid of theoretical coherence.

It is unfortunate that Bourdieu's analysis of charisma (Bourdieu 1971a, Bourdieu 1971b, Bourdieu 1987a) has received little attention in these debates, since it neatly solves all these problems, most importantly

by defining charisma as a particular relationship between the habitus of the prophet and the habitus of the prophet's audience:

> The prophet embodies in exemplary conduct, or gives discursive expression to, representations, feelings and aspirations that existed before his arrival – albeit in an implicit, semi-conscious, or unconscious state. ... It is, therefore, only by conceiving the prophet in his relationship with the laity ... that one may resolve the problem of the *initial accumulation of the capital of symbolic power*. ... The aim in this context is to explain why a particular individual finds himself *socially* predisposed to live out and express with particular cogency and coherence, ethical or political dispositions that are already present in a latent state amongst all the members of his class or group of his addressees. ... Prophecy can play such a role only because it has as its own generative and unifying principle a *habitus* objectively attuned to that of its addressees (Bourdieu 1987a, 130-131).

Historians tend to agree that Nasser only began to acquire charisma for a broad audience in 1954, two years after the coup. Before the coup, he was the 'driving force and uncontested leader' of the Free Officers (Gordon 1992, 55), and it seems clear that he possessed a charisma that was effective within that group (Aclimandos 2002, 91; Gordon 1992, 132-133). But this charisma did not work for a broader audience. In April 1953, when the officers began to appear regularly in public, Nasser was a poor public speaker (Gordon 1992, 119-120). Workers greeted the officers with indifference and catcalls, and university students heckled Nasser (Gordon

1992, 82). He often spent a great deal of time harshly ordering crowds to be quiet during his speeches (Younis 2005, 125).

Several scholars have pointed to the attempt on Nasser's life (known as the Manšiyya incident), during a speech he gave in Alexandria on 26 October 1954, as the first occasion on which he displayed charisma for a broad audience (Gordon 1992, 175, 179; de Gayffier-Bonneville 2002, 91-92; Laurens 2005, 138). The recording of the radio broadcast of the incident is instructive. Nasser began his speech, once again scolding the crowd harshly an attempt to silence its chanting. After a few minutes, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood fired eight shots at Nasser at point-blank range, but missed. Pandemonium ensued. Nasser resumed his speech and spoke for nearly fourteen minutes in the language of martyrdom:

> My blood is a sacrifice [*fidāʾ*] for Egypt. . . . My blood is of you and for you, and I will live until I die struggling in your way [*fī sabīlikum*]. . . . Let them kill me. . . . For I have instilled pride [*ʿizza*] in you. Let them kill me, for I have instilled dignity [*karāma*] in you. . . . Struggle, and if Gamal Abdel Nasser dies, each one of you will be Gamal Abdel Nasser. . . . The Rightly-Guided Caliphs were martyred. They were all martyred in God's way [*fī sabīl Allāh*]. If Gamal Abdel Nasser is killed or martyred, I am prepared for that, by God, in your way, in God's way and in Egypt's way (ʿAbd al-Nāṣir 1954).

The crowd cheered wildly. The use of the phrase 'in God's way' prompts for the conceptual frame of jihad, and is immediately followed

319

by the phrase 'in Egypt's way', clearly prompting for a blend between God and Egypt as the entity for whom jihad is carried out. In Nasser's jihad, martyrdom is primarily nationalist rather than religious.

Sherif Younis notes that before this incident, Nasser's supporters had been trying to promote an image of him as 'a kind ruler', one who loves everyone, even his enemies, despite what Younis characterises as the unprecedented state of authoritarian repression that prevailed in Egypt at the time. But the Manšiyya incident created a different sort of public image for Nasser, that of the hero. Afterwards, Muṣṭafā Amīn, one of Nasser's most ardent supporters, wrote: 'I thank the perpetrator with all my heart', because he 'made people talk about [Nasser] as a legend; they were surprised to find in him a hero'. Younis's analysis is astute:

> This heroism was accompanied by the supremacy of the master who sums up the virtues of pride and dignity in his own person, and teaches them to a nation that is ignorant of them, or that was ignorant of them until Nasser arrived. . . . Moreover, he will accept, as compensation for his murder, nothing less than for all 23 million Egyptians to become copies of him, or rather to become his followers. . . . He himself, not the regime or the revolution, became the maker of pride and dignity (Younis 2005, 126-128).

This was a new type of performance for Nasser. Yet it cannot have sprung out of nowhere. Perhaps it was modelled on the sermons of Ḥasan al-Bannā, founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. Nasser joined the Brotherhood in 1944, and became a member of its secret military branch in 1946 (Aclimandos 2002, 30). He and other Free Officers attended al-

Bannā's sermons every Tuesday (Aclimandos 2002, 32, 39), and thus had ample opportunity to see al-Bannā's charisma in action. Among the main themes of al-Bannā's discourse was 'the spirit of self-sacrifice' (Aclimandos 2002, 49), and the obligation of jihad, in the sense of sacrificing one's life for God (Aclimandos 2002, 57). But there was a crucial difference between al-Bannā's views on armed struggle and those of the officers. For the officers, 'the enemy was at least as much the country's enemy as religion's enemy, and the distinction between the two registers could be blurred' (Aclimandos 2002, 69). Similarly, they gave priority to non-religious knowledge over religious knowledge (Aclimandos 2002, 50-51).

A prophet's 'professional ethic' is based on 'the proclaimed refusal of all temporal interests' (Bourdieu 1971b, 317), which he presents as evidence of his disinterestedness, hence of his sincerity and credibility. For example, the Qur'ān repeatedly stresses that the Prophet Muḥammad, like other prophets before him, asks for no reward in exchange for his message: 'I ask no reward of you, for my only reward is with the Lord of the Worlds: be mindful of God and obey me' (Q 26:109-100); 'Follow them: they are not asking you to reward them and they are rightly guided' (Q 36:21; cf. 6:90, 11:51, 12:104, 25:57, 26:127, 26:145, 26:164, 26:180, 34:47, 38:86, 42:23). Similarly, Nasser's speeches establish 'the altruism of Nasser and his colleagues. Before the revolution they "lived in prosperous conditions", that is, they had a comfortable life which they risked for the people' (Ismail 1992, 180). The willingness to embrace martyrdom is the expression *par excellence* of this refusal of temporal interests. A prophet

can thus gain symbolic capital by facing, with equanimity, a martyr's death for the sake of something that is widely seen as worth the sacrifice. As we saw in the chapter on al-Ṭahṭāwī, the very concept of the *waṭan* includes the idea that it makes moral demands on its 'children', and that it is their duty to sacrifice their lives for its sake. It is therefore not surprising that, as de Gayffier-Bonneville (2002, 92) observes, in Nasser's speech during the Manšiyya incident, one thing that listeners admired was his readiness to sacrifice himself for Egypt.

As Podeh and Winckler (2004, 18) observe, 'Nasser's popularity, legitimacy, and mythology grew dramatically during the second half of the 1950s'. They note that 'charismatic authority rests on heroic performances'. Binder (2004, 45) and de Gayffier-Bonneville (2002, 92-93) enumerate some of the performances that were seen as heroic in Nasser's case, such as his nationalisation of the Suez Canal on 26 July 1956. Similarly, Younis (2005, 131) writes that Nasser's political victory in the Suez crisis made him into 'the Arab legend' (cf. Šaraf al-Dīn 1992, 42-43). Acclaimed by crowds in his visit to Syria in 1957, he was seen as 'a prophet [*nabī*], or a pure Mahdī'. On his return to Egypt, he announced: "The sacred [*muqaddas*] march has begun. . . ." It was difficult to reject the flood of worship [*ʿibāda*]' (Younis 2005, 131-132). Why were these acts seen as heroic? As I have suggested above, the answer should be sought in the relationship between the habitus of the charismatic leader and that of his audience.

Habitus can include familiarity with narrative structures, and Salwa Ismail (1992) provides an analysis of the narrative structures of Nasser's

speeches. She notes that they repeatedly tell a type of story that resembles legendary tales of heroism.

> The 'now' is set in opposition to the 'then', and the present is represented as the antithesis of the past. The writing of the present unfolds as the story of achievement; of conquering obstacles and overcoming villains. The main characters in the story are the revolution and the people set against the colonial powers and the reactionaries. . . . The hero's challenge and test is to acquire object values which he (as the embodiment of his people) was separated from by the opponent: imperialism and reaction. The revolution is the event or test in which the task is accomplished. The discourse tells of the actions taken to repossess the objects of value (Ismail 1992, 172-173).

Sherif Younis likewise observes that Nasser seemed 'to produce miracles after the fashion of the heroes of popular epics' (Younis 2005, 131). Thus it seems as if one of the functions of Nasser's speeches was to prompt for conceptual blends between his own actions and conventional narrative frames that were part of a habitus that he and his listeners shared. These blends enabled the audience to conceptualise certain of his actions as heroic. Moreover, Nasser made thousands of speeches, and each of them was broadcast on the radio; Egyptians often gathered around radios in one another's homes and in cafés to listen to these speeches together (de Gayffier-Bonneville 2002, 98). The effect of any given speech should therefore not be attributed to that speech alone, but also to the

323

cumulative effect of all his previous speeches, and to the habitus that they were based on.

A detailed analysis of the conceptual blends in Nasser's speeches would take us far beyond the scope of the present study. For our purposes here, it is worth emphasising that number of these blends arguably have religious inputs and a nationalist output. In the Manšiyya incident, Nasser's speech seems to prompt for a blend between himself and the concept of a prophet who faces martyrdom with equanimity.

Nasser's notion of the present as the antithesis of the past is perhaps also based on a religious concept. The idea that 'history began' with the revelation of a new religion is common both to Christianity and to Islam, each of which identifies Year 1 with some particular event in the life of its prophet. The concept of 'traitors and reactionaries', who practice deception (Ismail 1992, 173), may likewise be based on the concept of the 'hypocrites' (*munāfiqūn*) described in the Qurʾān (Adang 2010; Brockett 2010). More generally, the concept of 'traitors' lends itself to strategies of 'excommunication', i.e. drawing a field's boundaries in a way that excludes one's opponents (Bourdieu 1987b, 171). In a speech given in 1961, Nasser defined the nation and its enemies as follows:

> The nation [*al-šaʿb*] consists of all the groups that support the socialist revolution . . . and the construction of socialism. Those who do not support the socialist revolution and the construction of socialism are the enemies of the nation (ʿAbd al-Nāṣir 1961).

Since Nasser was the leader of the 'revolution', a logical inference was that anyone who opposed Nasser was an enemy of the nation. As Younis (2005, 29) observes, the Nasserist concept of 'unity'

> is not a general unity of all Egyptians; instead, it is based on a division of the population into a 'nation', represented by the officers, and 'the nation's enemies', whom the officers oppress in the nation's name and for its sake. Thus the concept of 'unity' is revealed to be a policy aimed at isolating particular elites that were opposed to the ruling elite.

At the same time, in Nasser's speeches, the concept of 'nation' (*šaʿb*) involves a religious blend that we have not previously encountered in this study. Sherif Younis points out that the army is the sole legitimate representative of the nation in Nasser's discourse, and that this idea

> is entirely based on the supposition that there is a unified, homogeneous political entity called 'the nation' [*šaʿb*], which is incarnated, or can find expression, in a unified will, and that any dissenters from this will are rebels[80] against the nation. This supposition is, however, a political fantasy, not only because the nation is divided into classes and social groups that differ or clash, and into rural and urban inhabitants, and Azharites and university academics, etc., each group adhering to its view, its culture and its interests, but also because the very idea of the public interest is divided according to the conceptions of these different groups, and therefore cannot be reduced to the concept of the uniform

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80 The Arabic term here is *Ḫawāriǧ*, a religious allusion: it is the name given to an early Muslim sect, the Kharijites, that regarded all non-Kharijites as non-Muslims (Della Vida 2010b).

'nation' . . . i.e. a single bloc with a unified 'correct' expression of its shared interests. More importantly, this conception of the rule of the nation exempts the officers from any commitment to prove the affected nation's consent to their policies, and denies the need to create any concrete, material means of transmitting the will of this hypothetical totality to the channels of power. This is what will represent the basis of the theological conception of power [*al-mafhūm al-lāhūtī li-l-sulṭa*] that prevailed during this period . . . (Younis 2005, 23-24).

What precisely is this 'theological conception of power'? In Younis's analysis, which I find convincing, the 'link between the regime and the 'nation' [*ša'b*] . . . is derived from a particular variety of the ideology of divine right'. 'The nation [*ša'b*] is the original god', 'a hidden, higher source of power, which sends down the revelation [*waḥy*]' to the officers, and in particular to Nasser, who receives, 'in some obscure way, the secrets and hopes of the nation, as the National Charter put it' (Younis 2005, 38-39). Muḥammad al-Tābi'ī, the former editor-in-chief of *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, wrote in 1956: 'You alone, O nation [*ša'b*], hold power, with no partner [*dūna šarīk*]' (Younis 2005, 153). The phrase *dūna šarīk* ('with no partner') recalls the standard formulas used in the Qur'ān to assert that Allāh has no partner, i.e. is the only god (Q 6:163, 17:111, 25:2). Muṣṭafā Amīn wrote in 1957 that Nasser 'receives in his heart and soul unknown signs' from Egyptians (Younis 2005, 153), 'Alī Amīn wrote in 1959 that Nasser 'is fulfilling an obscure dream that was in the heart of every Egyptian and every Arab' (Younis 2005, 155), and Fatḥī Ġānim wrote in

1960 that Nasser 'is aware of what seethes in people's innermost minds, before it reaches their consciousness' (Younis 2005, 157). In a speech given on 16 October 1961, following the dissolution of the union between Egypt and Syria,

> Nasser repeated, in connection with his relationship with the nation [*šaʿb*], the idea of inspiration [*ilstilhām*] . . . : 'I have spent these past days thinking, and in my feelings, I was everywhere with our great nation [*šaʿb*]. . . . My fingers were on the pulse of this nation [*umma*]. . . . My ears were on the beating of its heart. . . . I wanted my choice to be an echo of its choice.' . . . Thus the consultation of the nation [*umma*] takes place inside its leader's heart, by virtue of a special ability, the ability of a prophet [*nabī*] in the exact sense of the term, rather than through mechanisms of representation (Younis 2005, 158).

This belief that there was no need for concrete mechanisms of representation is reflected in an article written by Muḥammad al-Tābiʿī in 1965, shortly before the single-candidate referendum that renewed Nasser's presidency. The regime organised huge demonstrations 'calling' for the Council of the Nation (*Maǧlis al-Umma*) to 'nominate' Nasser, who was in any case the only conceivable candidate. Al-Tābiʿī wrote that there was no need for the Council to meet, since 'the nation [*šaʿb*] has already expressed – not only in Egypt – its opinion, and announced that there is no president except Nasser [*lā raʾīs siwā ʿAbd al-Nāṣir*]' (Younis 2005, 161). (The form of the sentence 'there is no president except Nasser'

327

is reminiscent of the *šahāda*, the standard expression of Muslim faith: 'There is no god but Allāḫ'.)

In short, the basis of 'the worship of Nasser' was the notion that his function was to act personally and directly as an intermediary between the nation and itself (Younis 2005, 152). Faced with this idea, 'one could only choose between belief and unbelief (*kufr*), knowing that there were limits to apostasy (*ridda*) from the regime' (Younis 2005, 38). Citing one of Nasser's speeches, Younis explains that, having received revelation from the nation, Nasser's function was then to make the nation itself aware of this revelation:

> The revolution had arisen based 'on principles . . . that spring from the feelings of this nation [*ša'b*]', and Nasser will continue 'in every word I say, to remind you of them [*afakkirkum bīhā*], to demonstrate them and confirm them, until they are stamped in your minds, souls and hearts' (1956). The nation's feelings are the source of these principles, but the nation will not become aware of its feelings, or of the principles that spring from its feelings, except through his mediation, which reminds them [*yuḏakkiruhum*] of these principles and 'stamps them' in the nation's souls (Younis 2005, 152-153).

This is precisely the strategy of prophethood according to Bourdieu, as we saw at the beginning of our discussion of Nasser's charisma earlier in this chapter. In the term 'remind', there is an echo of the role that the Qur'ān assigns to the Prophet Muḥammad: he is described as a *muḏakkir*, 'one who reminds' or 'warns' (88:21). The Qur'ān instructs him to

'remind' (*ḏakkir*) his listeners of God's teachings (50:45, 51:55, 52:29, 87:9), and refers to itself, as well as to the revelations brought by previous prophets, as a 'reminder' (*ḏikr, taḏkīr, taḏkira* or *ḏikrā*) (7:2, 10:71, 12:104, 20:3, 21:10, 21:48, 23:71, 38:1, 40:54, 43:44, 68:52, 69:48).

If the nation (*šaʿb* or *umma*) is not merely the community of believers but is also a god, what of the country (*waṭan*)? One possible interpretation is that we are dealing here with a polytheistic belief system, in which the country has not only created the nation, but has endowed it with the status of a secondary god, like Zeus creating Athena. Another possibility is that a blend has been introduced between country and nation, producing a hybrid concept that integrates aspects of both, while still preserving each of them as a distinct concept that remains available to produce inferences on its own. Further research would be needed in order to answer this question conclusively, but this would take us beyond the scope of the present study.

Finally, we should not neglect the role of educational institutions and the culture industry in marketing, and thus amplifying, Nasser's charisma. Dozens of newspapers and magazines were closed down in 1954; the few that remained were utterly loyal to the regime (Younis 2005, 46). Until 1961, Nasser regularly visited printing houses, 'personally overseeing the layout of newspapers, correcting texts, choosing titles and fonts' (de Gayffier-Bonneville 2002, 97). In 1960, the press was nationalised (Abū ʿAwf 2007, 7). The objective was 'to exercise complete control over the owners and directors of the institutions of the press' (Younis 2005, 50). Radio and television 'tirelessly reported [Nasser's]

activities'; all his speeches were broadcast in their entirety. His portait was omnipresent in both public and private spaces. Songs by popular singers glorified him (de Gayffier-Bonneville 2002, 98-99; Gordon 2006, 1-2, 9). Schoolchildren were taught to sing songs praising him (Younis 2005, 139).

Naturally, intellectuals were indispensable tools in all this cultural production (Reid 1990, 197, 200–206). Recall that for Bourdieu, the functions of any priesthood include systematising prophetic discourse and adapting it to the demands of different audiences (Bourdieu 1971a, 17-20). Muḥammad Ḥasanayn Haykal, a close confidant of Nasser, editor of the state-run newspaper *al-Ahrām* and one of Nasser's main propagandists (not to be confused with Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal, the subject of Chapter 3), is a clear example; he is credited with ghostwriting Nasser's book *Philosophy of the Revolution* (Jankowski 2002, 25; cf. Younis 2005, 33). As we will see in a moment, Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs's novel *Fī Baytinā Raǧul*, and the film based on it, are also examples of this type of cultural production.

ʿAbd al-Quddūs was typical in this regard. There seem to be very few examples of Egyptian intellectuals who directly criticised Nasser between the consolidation of his power in 1954 and his death in 1970. Indeed, from the second half of the 1950s onward, liberal, socialist and communist intellectuals helped legitimise the regime's authoritarianism. It is true that censorship was strict, and that open disagreement with official doctrine was severely punished. However, many intellectuals went far beyond mere passive compliance and gave the regime their fervent

support, even though this was not required of them (Meijer 2008). Egyptian communists were staunch nationalists, and had believed since the 1940s that a nationalist revolution had to precede the achievement of communism in Egypt. They suffered severe repression throughout the 1950s, were imprisoned by the thousands in 1959, and were not released until 1964, but the vast majority of them supported Nasser, even while they were in prison. In 1965, the main Egyptian communist organisations voluntarily dissolved themselves, on the grounds that Nasser's regime had become 'socialist' (Younis 2008). After the regime's purge of about 60 university professors (mostly Marxists but also some liberals) in 1954, some academics, like the dissident journalism professor Ibrāhīm ʿAbduh, went into exile (Reid 1990, 169–173), while others enthusiastically answered the regime's call for their active support (Gorman 2003, 52–61). Only in the mid-1970s did it become possible to openly criticise the policies of the Nasser years, but even those who voiced these criticisms tended to avoid blaming Nasser himself (Geer 2009). Moreover, it seems that there were no anti-nationalist Egyptian intellectuals during the Nasser years. Nationalism appears to have been an integral part of the *doxa* of the intellectual field, i.e. something that all participants in the field took for granted, regardless of their disagreements.

A scientific account of Nasser's charisma would need to consider all these aspects of the relationship between his own habitus and that of his audience, and no doubt others as well. Having sketched out this vast research programme, we must now turn our attention back to one of those priests, Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs, and consider the contribution of his

331

novel *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* to one aspect of nationalist habitus that was particularly useful to Nasser: the concept of nationalist martyrdom.

A Martyr in Nasser's Image: Fī Baytinā Raǧul*, the Novel*

'Abd al-Quddūs's novel *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* (1956) begins with a quote from the author as an epigraph: 'The hero does not create himself; his nation [*umma*] creates him' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 6). Its first pages draw a link between virility and violence, using guns as a phallic symbols. The protagonist, Ibrāhīm, is in hospital under guard. He takes out the revolver hidden in his mattress, and laughs at it because it is small, like a toy. His first gun, when he was an adolescent, was like this one. 'Then he grew up and became a man, and the gun grew with him. It became a big gun' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 7-8).

Ibrāhīm is amazed that although important things are happening in Egypt, people are still preoccupied with film stars, 'as if all of Egypt was unaware that one of its sons was going to die in its way [*fī sabīlihā*], executed on the gallows' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 8). Note once again the use of the expression *fī sabīl* ('in the way of'), which, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, has traditionally meant 'fighting for' (in jihad) when followed by the word 'God'. Here the concept of Egypt has taken the place of the concept of God, and thus evokes a nationalist jihad rather than a religious one.

The narrator describes Ibrāhīm: His emotions never show in his face, only in his eyes. He always wears the same expression, 'a soothing,

calm expression that attracted you to him, and stole your heart and mind. So you loved him and trusted him, without imagining that he might be a hero' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 8). Thus the reader is invited to imagine herself as responsive to Ibrāhīm's charisma. This description of Ibrāhīm's habitual, charismatic facial expression is repeated several times throughout the novel, in almost exactly the same words.

A long flashback begins. Ibrāhīm reflects that perhaps he never intended to be a hero; he never thought he was more daring than any other young man, or more extreme in his nationalism (*waṭaniyya*). In high school, he participated in the 'nationalist [*waṭaniyya*] revolutions' that his friends were carrying out ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 8-9). Here and in many other places, the narrator uses the word 'revolution' (*thawra*) to refer to any sort of rebellious action, or even an individual's sudden feeling of rage (e.g. 'Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 14). Ibrāhīm would stay in the background of these 'revolutions' and do practical work without making a fuss, such as devising makeshift weapons for students to use in clashes with police. His classmates gradually came to see him as 'a silent leader [*zaʿīm*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 9).

Yet, the narrator tells us, Ibrāhīm did not bother thinking about politics, and 'had not chosen for himself any particular political principle'. His nationalism (*waṭaniyya*) was 'just a powerful feeling' that pushed him along with the group. He hated the English, and felt 'a wound in his pride [*karāma*] every time he saw one; he also hated the king, the political leaders and the ministers. He took stands on nationalist issues without really understanding why, because he had a 'keen feeling' for 'the

333

demands of the nation [*ša'b*]'. When one of his classmates who 'believed in him' gave him his first revolver, he felt powerful, as if he could now 'get rid of all his enemies, all the enemies of his *waṭan*'; he could use this power to play 'a great role' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 10).

Having prompted for a conceptual blend between Ibrāhīm's gun and his penis, and thus between violence and virility, the narrative then blends the gun/penis with a hypothetical desirable woman, and draws the inference that Ibrāhīm's love of nationalist violence leaves no possibility for him to love a real woman. Thus, he 'loved the gun'; he would sleep with it and think about it all day long, as if he was 'in love'. He would 'play with it as if caressing a lover', and 'take it apart as if undressing a lover'. Just as someone in love reads love stories, he read detective stories and watched Westerns. When he went out to the desert for target practice, the sound of the gunshots was like 'the sound of kisses' to his ears. He talked to his gun, and called it 'Azīza, a woman's name meaning 'dear'. There was 'nothing in his heart except his nationalist [*waṭaniyya*] feelings', and he had no hobby in high school except his gun. He then went to law school (like Nasser), and had the same prestige (*makāna*) as always among his classmates, 'the prestige of the silent leader [*za'īm*]'. He stayed away from female students, and seemed to disdain them. This was simply his nature, says the narrator; girls had no effect on his life. As if to forestall any suspicion of homosexuality, the narrator adds that there was, in Ibrāhīm's love for his male friends, 'an intense manliness', as well as 'noble-mindedness and self-sacrifice'; he was ready to sacrifice anything for them, even his life ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 11-14).

Ibrāhīm 'believed in his *waṭan*'s right to be free', and felt that the English had 'raped its freedom'. Therefore he decided to wage an armed struggle against them; this would be 'an honourable war' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 17). The personification of the *waṭan*, and the conceptual blend of colonial occupation and rape, arguably motivate the use of the word 'honourable'. As Beth Baron (2005, 40-56) argues, nationalists in Egypt 'tapped into the regional code of family honor,' which requires men to avenge a sexual offense against one of their female kin, 'appropriated it, and redirected the passion behind it for their own purposes'; hence the idea of avenging 'the "rape of the nation", which by 1919 was depicted as a woman'.

Ibrāhīm decided to create a 'secret organisation [*ğamʿiyya sirriyya*]' to kill English soldiers ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 17). This recalls not only the group that Ḥusayn Tawfīq belonged to, but also the Muslim Brotherhood's secret organisation, to which Nasser had belonged, and perhaps especially the title of 'Abd al-Quddūs's famous article, 'The Secret Organisation that Rules Egypt [*Al-Ğamʿiyya Al-Sirriyya Allatī Taḥkum Miṣr*]' (22 March 1954), on the political role of the Free Officers after the coup (discussed above).

Ibrāhīm looked forward to 'a world full of corpses and blood, the corpses and blood of the English'. He enlisted a friend as his first recruit, by means of a technique that he will use repeatedly in the novel: instead of telling his friend directly about his plan, he brought him round to the idea in such a way that the friend thought it was his own idea, and suggested it on his own initiative ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 18). This is

arguably a side effect of charisma: the correspondences between a prophet's habitus and that of his audience ensure that, with minimal prompting, his audience will be able to construct the same sorts of concepts that he himself has constructed, and draw the same inferences.

Ibrāhīm's secret organisation grew to seven members, and 'the guns got bigger'. He was the unacknowledged leader:

> They all talked a great deal, then turned to him, so that he would have the last word. . . . They had agreed that they would have no leader, but this was his nature: to have the last word ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 20).

The portrait of Ibrāhīm given thus far – the 'silent leader' who has the last word at meetings – thus resembles 'Abd al-Quddūs's assessment of Nasser and Sadat before the military coup, mentioned above and published many years later.

Ibrāhīm then decided that it was useless to kill British soliders, and that they should instead kill the Egyptian 'agents' and 'traitors' who carried out British policies. But how to be sure who was an agent/traitor? One person, Ibrāhīm concluded, was undoubtedly guilty: the 'man' of the British in Egypt. Ibrāhīm once again planted his idea in his friends' minds without their realising it. He carried out the assassination, and everything went according to his plan, 'as if he were a little god [*ilāh*] controlling destiny'. (Since the hero carries out the will of the godlike nation, it is not surprising to find godlike powers attributed to him as well.) But the getaway car broke down, and he fled. Crowds caught him, but when they saw his 'soothing, calm expression that attracts you to him and steals

your heart and mind', they seemed to regret it. The police arrested him and his accomplices. He heard someone whisper that the victim had deserved to die; he felt that the people (*al-nās*) had acquitted him. (Thus he, like Nasser, receives telepathic messages from the nation.) He became famous, and many people sent him fan mail in prison, 'blessing the hand that had fired the shot'. This was how he knew that he had become a hero. By faking an illness, with doctors' complicity, he was transferred from prison to a hospital, at the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 21-25). The officer guarding him fell under the spell of his 'soothing, calm face that attracts you to him and steals your heart and mind'. His charisma likewise won over the doctors and soldiers at the hospital. He planned to escape and hide out for a short time with his classmate Muḥyī, who was shy, apolitical and utterly devoted to his studies at law school; the police would never think to look for him there. Ibrāhīm recalled that whenever Muḥyī looked at him, he would seem as timid 'as if he was standing before God' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 26-27).

Thus ends the flashback. Ibrāhīm escapes to Muḥyī's family's flat and is greeted by Muḥyī's beautiful sixteen-year-old sister, Nawāl. The narrator mentions 'her innocent lips, unsullied by makeup or kisses' and 'her black eyes, in which there was loneliness, mystery, fear, intelligence, vivacity and joy, and in their depths, a light that shows you the way' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 31). A blend is possible here with the concept of the *waṭan* guiding the hero, since as we will see shortly, Nawāl is blended with the *waṭan.* She falls immediately under the spell of his charisma,

'suspended on his glances, as if she was a butterfly that could not keep away from the fire' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 32).

Muḥyī, too, is under the spell of 'the calm, soothing face that attracts you to him and steals your heart and mind' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 36). Faced with the risk of sheltering Ibrāhīm, Muḥyī hesistates but says that he 'believes in' Ibrāhīm; everyone believes in Ibrāhīm and in Ibrāhīm's nationalism (*waṭaniyya*) ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 38). As for Nawāl, she can barely contain her enthusiasm for Ibrāhīm. It is Muḥyī's father, however, who must take the decision; he wavers between what seems to be a semi-conscious nationalism and a perception of Ibrāhīm as a young troublemaker. Overall, Muḥyī's parents are portrayed as naïve, ignorant and indecisive in comparison with Ibrāhīm ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 39-42). Thanks to the conventional concept of the nation as a family (Baron 2005, 4-5), an inference is possible here: the authority of the national family is more reliable than the (parental) authority of the biological family. Finally, Muḥyī's father agrees to hide Ibrāhīm, surrendering 'to something stronger than him, to a force that sprang from his heart and that he could not resist with his mind' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 45); here we have the concept of nationalism as something innate and intuitive, which we encountered in Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's novel *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ.*

Ibrāhīm's charisma pervades his interactions with others. Nawāl and her older sister 'steal glances at him, as if looking at a wondrous being [*maḫlūq ʿaǧīb*] that they did not have the right to look at' (i.e. a being that was sacred and therefore taboo). When he speaks, everyone

pays attention to him 'as if he was a god [*ilāh*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 49-50). Muḥyī feels proud of his friendship with 'this hero that he had looked upon from afar as a god [*ilāh*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 54).

Meanwhile, Ibrāhīm is increasingly aware of Nawāl's charm; the description of her eyes, 'in which there was loneliness, mystery, fear, intelligence, vivacity and joy, and in their depths, a light that shows you the way' is repeated verbatim ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 50). When Nawāl sees his gun, she stares at it with great curiosity 'as if seeing something that she had heard a great deal about but never seen before'; Ibrāhīm feels embarrassed and hastens to put it back in his pocket 'as if hiding something shameful [*ʿār*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 53), i.e. as if it was his penis. Thus the blend between virility and violence introduces a conflict, which will be developed throughout the novel: this blend attracts Nawāl, but as we have seen, it also produces the inference that Ibrāhīm cannot have a sexual interest in a woman. As we will see, nationalist concepts will be used to resolve this conflict.

The radio broadcasts an announcement that Ibrāhīm has escaped from custody, that there is a 5,000 EGP reward for information leading to his arrest (the same amount that was offered in the case of Amīn ʿUt̠mān's assassination), and a three-year prison sentence for anyone who helps him ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 55-56). Reflecting on what he has done, Ibrāhīm says to himself that he 'killed the traitor for the sake of his *waṭan*, for the sake of the people [*al-nās*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 56). Similarly, in Nawāl's opinion, Ibrāhīm 'killed for his *waṭan*, as a soldier kills his enemy in war' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 103). This reflects the idea

of a moral obligation to kill and to risk death for the sake of the *waṭan*, which we first encountered in al-Ṭahṭāwī.

An intuitive, wordless understanding develops between Ibrāhīm and Nawāl, much like the alleged mystical understanding, discussed above, between Nasser and the nation; for example, just when he is longing to read a newspaper, she offers to go buy him one, 'as if she had read his thoughts' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 66). Soon she is madly in love with him ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 127). At the same time, it is clear that he cannot become attached to her:

> He had freed himself from fear, from images of prisons and gallows, and had no fear of them for his future; indeed, he had freed himself from his future. . . . This freedom from fear, and from his personal future, is what endowed him with strength, and drove him to violent acts ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 107).

The ability to renounce any possible future existence is essential for a martyr: not to envisage the future is to embrace death. How can Ibrāhīm reconcile this attitude with his attraction to Nawāl? One option is to blend her with the inhabitants of Egypt, i.e. with the nation. He experiences 'a new feeling'; it is 'focused on a single person', Nawāl; it seems to him that this feeling does not 'encompass all of Egypt', but rather that 'everyone had become one person', that 'in all of Egypt there was no longer more than one person' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 144-145). At the same time, on the basis of the concept of nation as family, a similar blend is developed between Egypt and the house: Ibrāhīm 'felt that all of Egypt was like this house' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 77).

Ibrāhīm's plan for leaving the house unnoticed and returning to the protection of his comrades requires Nawāl to visit one of the latter and collect an 'officer's uniform' from him, which Ibrāhīm wears as a disguise when leaving the house. She gives him the uniform ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 176); later, she imagines him wearing it, thinks he would look very handsome in it, and has a sexual fantasy about him ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 195). The narrator tells us that Ibrāhīm is 'the first one to have broken the seal of her virgin heart' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 190). Shortly before the end of his stay at her house, he feels pity for her because his destiny requires them to lose each other ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 198-199) (i.e. because he will be a martyr). Her father congratulates himself on having protected Ibrāhīm, and concludes that nationalism (*waṭaniyya*) is 'morality, manliness and noble-mindedness' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 204). Nawāl finds that Ibrāhīm is indeed breathtakingly handsome in the officer's uniform ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 208-209). As he is about to leave the house, her sister looks at him 'as if looking at the corpse of a martyr [*šahīd*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 210). They take their leave of him 'as if carrying a coffin [*ka-annahum yušayyiʿūn faqīdan*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 211). The father flatters himself again on his good deed, recalling that he was always nationalist, and felt that nationalist writings expressed his own feelings, though he had never expressed them himself. He always needed someone else to take action instead of him, 'someone to write, someone to revolt, someone to be martyred [*yustašhad*]'; yet he 'was no less a nationalist' than the demonstrators, or the writers, or even the martyrs ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 214).

As Nawāl lies in bed that night, her imagination is full of the image of Ibrāhīm wearing the officer's uniform ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 218). Later she longs for him 'like a mother longing for her son who has gone off to the battlefield' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 251). When Muḥyī is arrested (as we will see in a moment), she believes that Ibrāhīm can save Muḥyī somehow, and expects him to take on this responsibility 'as a hero, as a leader [*zaʿīm*], as a brother, and as a man for whom her heart throbs with love' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 327). (Note that the word *zaʿīm* was often used to refer to Nasser.) She hopes that he will kill all policemen ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 328). On his way to the coast to flee on a boat to France, Ibrāhīm realises that he does not want to leave Egypt; he feels that he will have no value in France, and that a life lived outside his *waṭan* would have no value. He would have no goal, no future, nothing to love. He would not see this land (*arḍ*) on which he was born. He would not see his mother or father or participate in 'jihad' with his friends. He would not see Nawāl. He thinks: 'Egypt... Nawāl...' (The simple juxtaposition of their names prompts for a blend.) Being a fugitive makes him feel weak (i.e. not manly); he wants to be continuously on the attack, shooting his enemies and those of his country (i.e. to fight with honour) ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 348-349). He decides to stay in Egypt. He is full of 'the energy of revolutionary hate' and needs to expend it; he wants to take revenge on those who have deprived him of his freedom and his love. 'Every time he became absorbed in nationalist [*waṭanī*] thoughts, the spectre of Nawāl preoccupied him'; he wants his heart to be 'a sacrificial offering [*qurbān*]' for her ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 355). The word *qurbān* specifically

342

designates a sacrificial offering in a religious context, but since the sacrifice is offered to Nawāl, who has been blended with both the nation and the *waṭan*, it must signify here a nationalist sacrifice, i.e. a blend that transfers the religious concept of sacrifice into a nationalist frame, with the nation/*waṭan*/Nawāl taking the place of God.

The officer's uniform, and the family's reactions to it and to Ibrāhīm's departure from their house, can prompt for a blend between Ibrāhīm and an idealised military officer, one who exemplifies the masculine virtues that Nawāl's father identifies with nationalism. A military officer is someone for whom violence is a profession. On the basis of the earlier violence/virility blend, it can be inferred that the nation/*waṭan*/Nawāl loves Ibrāhīm because he commits acts of violence 'in the way of [*fī sabīl*]' Egypt, i.e. for 'her' sake. Since it is she who gives him the uniform, the Ibrāhīm/officer blend can generate the inference that the nation/*waṭan* perceives him as having the virtues of an idealised army officer. At the time the novel was written, Egypt was ruled by a highly charismatic army officer, Gamal Abdel Nasser. Thus the Ibrāhīm/officer blend can in turn be blended with Nasser; we will see an even clearer motivation for this blend at the end of the novel. This Ibrāhīm/Nasser blend can generate two complementary inferences: first, that Nasser has the same virtues as Ibrāhīm, is inspired by the same nationalism, and would likewise have embraced martyrdom (as Nasser himself demonstrated in the Manšiyya incident), and second, that by embracing martyrdom, a young man like Ibrāhīm can 'be Gamal Abdel Nasser' (as Nasser said in the Manšiyya speech). More specifically, the

blend of Nawāl with a mother whose son has gone to war generates the inference that a young man can accomplish this martyrdom not only by attacking the state, as Ibrāhīm does, but also by fighting as a soldier in the army. At the same time, the father's reflection that he needs someone else to take nationalist action for him, 'someone to write, someone to revolt, someone to be martyred' on his behalf, can be taken as a justification of what Sherif Younis describes as the Nasserist ideology of nationalist political passivity. In the Nasser era, the officers took care of the 'revolution', the single party organised the demonstrations, and the army sent the soldiers off to be martyred. Crucially, Nasser was the only political actor; he

> took the place of the nation [ša'b], which was transferred to spectator seats [maqā'id al-mutafarriǧīn] in political matters for thirteen years. . . . Nasser was . . . a condition of the existence of the nation. In the absence of any mechanisms of political representation, and given the leader's absolute monopoly of power, the nation becomes a nation only when it is listening to Gamal Abdel Nasser talking about it . . . (Younis 2005, 180).

Ibrāhīm 'cannot spend his whole life hiding like a mouse' (because this would be dishonourable). He is furious when he learns of Muḥyī's arrest and torture. Muḥyī, he says to himself, is not an activist; he is 'one of the simple, passive people who sit in the spectator seats [maqā'id al-mutafarriǧīn]' (note that these are exactly the words that Younis uses above, except that here they are used affectionately). Moreover, Muḥyī 'was the nation [ša'b], the whole nation. And the nation had stood beside

344

him. The nation had endured torture for his sake. . . . He must repay the nation' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 360). Here Muḥyī, rather than Nawāl, is blended with the nation, and the difference in gender leads to a different inference: the nation's job is not to love, but to make manly sacrifices (e.g. enduring torture) for the sake of the hero's jihad. Ibrāhīm feels that 'he can compensate everyone by means of his martyrdom [*istišhād*] in the way of the revolution [*fī sabīl al-ṯawra*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 368). (Note that 'the revolution' is deified here.) Thus a martyr can be conceptualised as a sacrificial offering, who dies to repay a debt to the nation.

What of religion as such in the novel, as opposed to nationalism modelled on religion? The few religious symbols in the novel are dwarfed by the abundance of nationalist ones. The characters discuss and think about nationalism a great deal, but hardly ever bring up the subject of religion. Before Ibrāhīm leaves the house, Nawāl has him write the first half of the *šahāda*, the Muslim profession of faith ('There is no god but God'), on a piece of paper; she writes the second half ('Muḥammad is God's messenger'), and tears the paper in half, so that each can keep the part the other has written, as a good-luck charm to ensure that they will meet again ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 198-199). Her mother gives him a small copy of the Qurʾān to take with him, as if for good luck ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 206). It is also noteworthy that, as mentioned above, the story takes place during the sacred month of Ramadan. In general, these religious references seem to be portrayed as touching relics of an older generation. Nawāl proposes writing the *šahāda* as a good-luck charm simply because,

as she says, it is something her parents do; the act is not accompanied by any mention of the *šahāda*'s religious significance. It is Nawāl's mother, and not Nawāl, who gives Ibrāhīm the Qur'ān. In the hospital at the beginning of the novel, he twice mentions that although it is Ramadan, he is not fasting (because he is supposed to be ill) ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 28-29); presumably he could have mentioned (or at least thought to himself) that he would compensate by fasting at a later date, but he does not. He fasts only at the family's home, under the parents' authority. As we saw above, he expects to be a martyr 'in the way of' Egypt, not in the way of God. Indeed, at no point in the novel do his thoughts turn towards God. The novel even explicitly points the way towards scepticism about the existence of God. This occurs as a result of a subplot involving a romance between Nawāl's older sister Sāmia and her amoral cousin, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, who wants to turn Ibrāhīm in to the police in order to collect the reward. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd is, of course, the least nationalistic character in the story; he says to himself that 'it is not a matter of nationalism [*waṭaniyya*], but rather a matter of five thousand pounds' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 161), and acknowledges to himself that he is 'not nationalist [*waṭanī*] ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 265). He goes to the police in a fit of anger, then changes his mind, but as a result of his impulsive action, he and Muḥyī are arrested and tortured. In prison, Muḥyī reflects:

> Does God punish nationalists [*waṭaniyyīn*]? Was this policeman [who arrested him] a messenger [*rasūl*] from God, sent to punish and drive away nationalists? Why did God allow policemen to remain free to torture people? Why did God not save him now,

immediately, before the police began to question him? He was afraid of these thoughts, and his shiver intensified. He felt himself asking God for forgiveness, and recited the Throne Verse, as if he was afraid of losing his only hope: God ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 287-288).

Thus the novel takes the first steps towards philosophical scepticism about God's existence, using 'the argument from evil' (cf. Martin 2007, 166-180), then abruptly retreats, without so much as a theodicy.

Muḥyī nearly dies under torture ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 297-326). Ironically, this episode, which can be interpreted as a condemnation of the lawlessness of the pre-1952 regime, closely resembles accounts of the extrajudicial arrest and torture of dissidents during Nasser's regime (cf. Geer 2009).

Ibrāhīm, confined to the flat in which he is hiding out, protected by his comrades, increasingly takes on the mystical, ascetic appearance of a Sufi shaykh. As he ponders how to overthrow the regime, his eyes shine 'as if trying to penetrate the clouds of the supernatural [*al-ġayb*]'. He thinks that if he could assemble a force of two hundred young fedayeen, he would be able to seize power. Then he decides that this would not be sufficient: 'Two hundred armed revolutionaries do not grow in cold, hard land; they grow in blazing, revolutionary land. The land [*al-arḍ*] must revolt first. The nation [*ša'b*] must flare up'. (Here once again we find al-Ṭahṭāwī's idea that people grow like plants on the land of the *waṭan*.) Everyone must feel 'the spirit of the revolution'. So Ibrāhīm should begin by spreading this spirit. But he could not do so alone; he would need the

help of other groups. He finds out that there are a number of secret revolutionary organisations, including some in the army ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 361-363). By blending Ibrāhīm's hypothetical revolution with the 'revolution' that actually took place in 1952, the reader can draw the inference that the Free Officers' military coup must have had close links with widespread organised revolutionary activity. Historians disagree with this view. Sherif Younis emphasises

> the independence of the officers' movement from all the political forces that existed at the time. ... [A]fter the military coup, the country was faced with a reformist military regime that was independent not only from political forces, but also from the various mass organisations (e.g. the trade unions). ... In these circumstances, the most obvious course of action for these military newcomers to the political scene was, first, to purge political life in general, then to present themselves as the representatives of the nation [*ša'b*] as a whole, since they could not represent any particular part of it, or engage in a political battle to represent a given part, or face any political force in an open arena, and because their ideology was so vague as to prevent them from going beyond broad generalisations (Younis 2005, 19-20; cf. Gordon 1992, 48-49).

Ibrāhīm realises that there is not much he can do as a fugitive, confined to a flat. How can he serve his *waṭan*? He concludes that he is 'finished'; his only option is 'to commit suicide [*yantaḥir*]', to carry out 'a nationalist suicide operation [*'amaliyya waṭaniyya intiḥāriyya*]'. He will show 'how much an individual can sacrifice in the way of his country [*fī*

sabīl waṭanihi]'. This, he thinks, is his role: to be 'the first shot of the revolution', to die 'so that the revolution can live', to be 'a victim for people to cry over, a martyr [*šahīd*] whose blood people can use as a flag for the revolution'. He sits by himself in a dark room (like an ascetic), and his comrades come to him only to receive his instructions. Having decided to carry out a suicide mission, he is now calm, for he knows 'his destiny'. His mustache and beard have grown, making him seem older than he is. As he formulates his plan in his mind, he has 'the mentality of a thorough scientist [*ʿālim*]' performing an experiment on one of his inventions, whose purpose is to spark revolution in Egypt. At the same time, 'he sees light emanating from afar, from the depths of his soul, from the depths of his thought'. Scenes of his life pass before his eyes, and he smiles contentedly ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 363-366). Arguably these are prompts for the blended concept of nationalist Sufism, divorced from Islam, which we saw in Chapter 4; the asceticism and mystical insight of a Sufi are blended with the idea of service to the *waṭan* (rather than to God), and with the mentality of a scientist doing experiments (rather than, say, a religious scholar).

Ibrāhīm recalls that his father had wanted him to be a judge or a government minister. But he will be something better than that: 'he will die a martyr [*šahīd*]'. Thus he will be remembered forever, and his father will be proud of him ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 367). Here any young man reading the novel, before being called up for military service or joining the army, can blend himself with Ibrāhīm, and draw the inference that by dying in battle, he, too, can become something better than whatever his

father hoped he would become. Without an afterlife of its own, nationalism cannot offer its martyrs the paradise promised to religious martyrs; its closest possible approximation is the promise of being remembered forever in this world.

Such a reward is perhaps a less appealing than paradise. And although blending Nawāl with the nation or the *waṭan* enables Ibrāhīm to express his love for her by committing suicide, the sacrifice of their tangible, unblended relationship may seem disappointing to the reader – who is, perhaps, in fact being prompted to blend himself with Ibrāhīm and risk sacrificing just such a relationship, as many conscripts do, by going off to war and dying in battle. These considerations may account for the presence of a few prompts for a blend between the houris of Islamic martyrdom and the virginal Nawāl. Ibrāhīm has given her a regular appointment to meet him in a public square, but each time she goes to the appointment, he fails to appear (ʿAbd al-Quddūs 1997, 328-330). As his comrades drive him to the location of his suicide mission, he asks them to pass through the same square, in order to feel close to her, though he knows that she will not be there at that time (ʿAbd al-Quddūs 1997, 376). Thus she is metonymically present just before his martyrdom, like houris that appeared to soldiers on the battlefield in classical Islamic martyrdom literature. After Ibrāhīm's death, Nawāl marries a man she does not love, because 'this is the function that every girl is made for. . . . Society urges her to get married, not to love'. But she keeps the piece of paper on which he wrote half of the *šahāda*, and hopes to be reunited

350

with him 'in heaven' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 436-437), like the houris designated as wives for martyrs on the battlefield.

The battle that leads to Ibrāhīm's martyrdom roughly follows the pattern exemplified by Ǧaʿfar al-Ṭayyār in 629 AD, discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Under cover of darkness, Ibrāhīm sets off dynamite under tanks and lorries in a British military camp; chaos ensues, and he attempts to flee the camp. He crawls under barbed wire, shredding his back, but 'it does not matter'. Running again, he is shot in the right shoulder, but 'it does not matter'; he keeps running. Unable to throw hand grenades with his right hand because of his injured shoulder, he throws them with his left hand. (Recall Ǧaʿfar al-Ṭayyār switching the flag from his right hand to his left.) He climbs over the wall of the camp; the metal spikes on top of the wall cut his hands, but 'it does not matter' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 382-386).

Like the classical martyrs, he makes a speech (albeit silently, in his mind) just before his death. But while the classical pre-martyrdom speeches were typically prayers, emphasising that the martyr was dying for God's sake, Ibrāhīm invokes Egypt rather than God. In the street outside the camp, Egyptian police chase him. He addresses them in his thoughts: 'Stay away from me, you fools! I have done all this for your sake, for Egypt's sake. I have put fear in the hearts of your enemies. They will leave you. Believe me, they will leave you. All of you will revolt, like me, to expel them.' As an Egyptian policeman approaches him, he thinks: 'Let me be, brother. I am a revolutionary for your sake. If you searched in your heart, you would find my revolution there. It is your revolution.'

351

(This is the idea of the communion of the nation's souls, which we encountered in Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's novel.) Ibrāhīm aims his gun at the policeman, but 'something in him refused to kill an innocent Egyptian, something stronger than him, stronger than his safety, stronger than his life'. The policman shoots him instead, and he dies with a smile on his face ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 386-387).

After learning of Ibrāhīm's death, Muḥyī's father reflects that he would have been willing to 'sacrifice his son', by allowing him to die in prison, if this could have saved the life of the 'martyr [*šahīd*]', Ibrāhīm ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 392-393). Given the Nasser/Ibrāhīm blend that we encountered earlier, the inference can be drawn that Egyptian parents should be willing to sacrifice their sons for Nasser. Perhaps one could even make this inference apply specifically to those parents whose sons were imprisoned without trial by Nasser's secret police, by arguing that (as is sometimes said) the arrest of innocent people was a necessary sacrifice in order to protect the revolution (cf. Geer 2009). Muḥyī's father wants to tell people: 'O people [*nās*], one of your sons has sacrificed himself in your way [*fī sabīlikum*], in the way of your liberation, to expel the English, to expel corruption, and to restore your dignity [*karāma*] and pride [*'izza*]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 393). This sentence cannot fail to recall the theme of 'pride and dignity [*al-'izza wa-l-karāma*]' that was common in Nasser's speeches; as we saw earlier, in our discussion of the Manšiyya incident, Nasser claimed that he had personally instilled pride and dignity in Egyptians. Hence here again, we are prompted for a blend between Ibrāhīm and Nasser.

Muḥyī's father feels that he has played his role in the revolution by sheltering Ibrāhīm, and that he is creating the revolution and its heroes along with millions of other people. All these heroes are 'carrying on the mission of the martyr [šahīd] and leading the ranks of the revolution' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 393-394). Muḥyī and his fellow prisoners see Ibrāhīm as a martyr (šahīd) as well ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 408, 411). Another charismatic, Ibrāhīm-like young man appears among the prisoners, 'a new hero carrying on the mission of a martyred hero [baṭal šahīd]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 412-413). Ṣalāḥ Ǧāhīn, who 'was known as the semiofficial poet of the July 1952 revolution' (Armbrust 1996, 60), composes a 'hymn [našīd]' in Egyptian colloquial Arabic in honour of Ibrāhīm; it says that 'the sun will be red with the blood of every martyr [šahīd]' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 426).

Muḥyī's cousin 'Abd al-Ḥamīd undergoes a conversion from amorality to a mixture of nationalist and religious faith, in which the nationalist aspect predominates by far; he concludes that Ibrāhīm was a hero because he died 'in the way of [fī sabīl]' of a principle and a goal (rather than 'in God's way'), and therefore must have died happy ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 423-425); there is no mention here of Paradise. By the time 'Abd al-Ḥamīd is released from prison, he has become a militant nationalist 'in the way of the principles that he has put his faith in, and in the way of of atoning for his national sin [al-takfīr 'an ḥaṭī'atihi al-waṭaniyya]'. He then marries Sāmia and begins a 'jihad in the way of' becoming a good family man, applying principles that his 'nationalist feeling' has set down for him ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 434-435). Note that

his sin, his jihad and his principles are identified as nationalist rather than religious.

In prison, Muḥyī is transformed into a nationalist intellectual. He reads the complete works of the nationalist historian ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Rāfiʿī[81], and many other books on history and politics, as well as the Qurʾān. He then reads Marx's *Capital* and begins to understand why Ibrāhīm was martyred (*ustušhida*). His head fills with ideas that can 'rouse a whole nation [*umma*]'. When he is finally released, he is filled with nationalism (*waṭaniyya*) (ʿAbd al-Quddūs 1997, 426-427). It is significant that except for the Qurʾān, all his readings are non-religious. There is also no mention of the possibility that the Qurʾān might be incompatible with Marxism. Muḥyī's father reflects: 'His son had proved that he was a man who could handle responsibility: he had carried the responsibility of the whole family when he went to prison, and he and his comrades could handle the responsibility of all of Egypt' (ʿAbd al-Quddūs 1997, 430). Note the blending between the family and the nation. This passage can generate the inference that nationalist intellectuals (like ʿAbd al-Quddūs himself) are fit to rule the country.

Under Nasser's rule, this could only be wishful thinking; moreover, the last pages of the novel thoroughly undermine this idea by legitimising Nasser's rule. One day, Muḥyī wakes up and finds that 'the revolution'

81 Al-Rāfiʿī, a lawyer and self-taught historian who worked outside academia, saw history primarily as (in his own words) 'an instrument for education and for enhancing the national consciousness in the hearts of the people', rather than as a scientific project autonomous from politics. He 'is considered a politically affiliated and biased historian' (Di-Capua 2004), or in Bourdieuian terms, a heteronomous one. After the Free Officers' coup, the new regime showered al-Rāfiʿī with distinctions and official posts, and used his books as high-school textbooks. This is the same process of consecration – specifically, conversion of nationalist symbolic capital into specific capital in other fields, via the prophet's mediation – that we found in the career of Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm.

(i.e. the 1952 military coup) has taken place. When he sees 'the new hero' (undoubtedly Nasser), he feels as if he has known him for a long time. He thinks:

> Heroism is not a single individual who can die; it is a force that is renewed in successive individuals, a force that is created not by an individual, but by a nation [*umma*] which incarnates it in an individual. If this individual is martyred [*ustušhida*] or goes astray, the nation incarnates it in another individual. Heroism never dies or goes astray. Ibrāhīm's heroism had not died or gone astray, nor had the heroism of Saʿd Zaġlūl, Muṣṭafā Kāmil or ʿUrābi, not for a single day. It had always been alive, in the life of this nation [*šaʿb*], incarnated in one leader [*zaʿīm*] after another (ʿAbd al-Quddūs 1997, 438-439).

This passage, which recalls Nasser's speech at Manšiyya, prompts for a blended in which a series of leaders – including Nasser and national heroes of the past – is compressed into the abstract idea of 'heroism', which is reincarnated again and again to lead the nation. This is very similar to the idea of the 'idol' (*maʿbūd*) embodying Egypt's eternal spirit, which we found in Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's novel *ʿAwdat al-Rūḥ*, and indeed to Merezhkovsky's concept of God eternally reborn. Moreover, the appearance of Nasser, who ushers in a new era, can prompt for a blend with the Messiah of apocalyptic Islamic martyrdom literature.

Critical Responses to the Novel

As noted above, the novel *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* (1956) was based partly on the assassination of the former cabinet minister Amīn ʿUṯmān by

Ḥusayn Tawfīq in 1946. At the time of the novel's publication, the story of the assassination was well-known, and much had been written about it (al-Niqāš 1991, 23); readers would therefore have been well aware of the correspondences between the novel and the historical event.

The novel was published in instalments in *Rūz al-Yūsuf*. An indication of its popularity is ʿAbd al-Quddūs's assertion that it caused the magazine's circulation to rise considerably (Abū al-Futūḥ 1982, 43). Another such indication is that, in 1961, it was made into a play at the National Theatre (Mandūr 1961) and, as we will see, into a film. However, it seems to have received little attention from critics. According to the critic Raǧāʾ al-Niqāš (1991, 21-23), this is true of ʿAbd al-Quddūs's literary works in general: they were extremely popular, and he was for many years the most successful writer of his generation among the reading masses, but critics spurned him. Al-Niqāš attributes this disdain mainly to the fact that ʿAbd al-Quddūs aimed for success among the masses rather than among critics; therefore he wrote in a very simple, journalistic style. He did not respond to new developments in world literature, and since his writing was commercially successful, he had no incentive to do so. ʿAbd al-Quddūs thus seems to fit Bourdieu's (1998, 235-236) definition of a heteronomous writer: one whose works satisfy a pre-existing, widespread demand for a certain type of writing and are commercially successful in the short term.

Nevertheless, a few critics have written about *Fī Baytinā Raǧul*, focusing mainly on the idea of heroism that it presents. For Fuʿād Dawāra (1959), it is an excellent novel. One cannot read it, he says, without

remembering "'Abd al-Quddūs's fiery nationalist [*waṭaniyya*] writing' during the British occupation, or recognising real people amongst the characters. Dawāra emphasises the view, clearly expressed in the novel, that millions of Egyptians, like the members of Muḥyī's family and Ibrāhīm's 'jihadi [*muǧāhidīn*] student comrades', play a role in 'creating the hero', a view summed up, as he points out, in the novel's epigraph: 'The hero does not create himself; his nation creates him'. This stance recalls Nasser's statement at Manšiyya: 'My blood is of you and for you, and I will live until I die struggling in your way'.

Raǧā' al-Niqāš (1961) sees *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* as one of the best literary works on the meaning of heroism. He argues that portraying revolution and heroism is among the greatest things literature can do, and cites ancient Greek epic poetry, Nietzsche's concept of the superman and Wagner's operas as examples. The heroism in modern Arab life needs literary expression as well, he says, because such literature can give readers moral examples to follow. Heroes, he adds, established our political traditions, our slogans and principles, all of which have their heroes and their martyrs. (This recalls Thomas Carlyle's theory of the role of 'great men' in history.) Al-Niqāš argues that Ibrāhīm is 'a Sufi who passionately loves his country [*bilād*] and risks his life in its way [*fī sabīlihā*]'. (Here again we have the concept of non-Islamic Sufism that we encountered in our discussion of Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm.) Ibrāhīm, he adds, is 'full of the enthusiasm of the prophets and their belief in their mission'. He is a great symbol of national liberation; protecting him becomes a 'sacred [*muqaddas*] goal' for the family.

Fī Baytinā Raǧul, *the Film*

Fī Baytinā Raǧul was made into a radio series and a play before being adapted for the cinema by director Henri Barakāt in 1961; according to newspaper reports, it 'was a huge success' in all these media (Tawfīq 1961; Abāẓa 1998). It has remained, I think, one of the best-loved films of the black-and-white era of Egyptian cinema, and is still shown on television.

The film's director was Henri Barakāt (1914-1997), one of the most prolific Egyptian filmmakers; he directed 'eighty-five full-length fiction films between 1942 and 1993' (Shafik 2001, 92). Barakāt was an intellectual in the style of Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm. His family owned land in Fayūm, and his father had served as deputy Minister of Health and received the aristocratic title of bey (al-Ḥusaynī 1991, 12-13). Henri was educated in a French Catholic primary school in Cairo, and recalled in an interview that he often spoke French at home, but never mastered Arabic; he was also well-versed in European classical music, and played the piano from an early age (al-Ḥusaynī 1991, 13-16, 21). After secondary school, he taught French literature, history and algebra at the school he had just graduated from, and took evening courses in law at the French law college in Cairo. He got his law degree in 1935 and worked briefly as a lawyer, but found that the legal profession did not live up to his ideals, and decided to pursue a career in cinema instead. He went to Paris and learned as much he could about cinema there, largely by observing filmmakers at work (al-Ḥusaynī 1991, 14-23).

Returning to Egypt shortly before the Second World War, he worked on several films in different capacities. His first film as director, *Al-Šarīd* (The Drifter, 1942) was a commercial failure. When attending screenings of the film, Barakāt was shocked to hear the audience laugh during a scene that was meant to be tragic: the death of an unfaithful wife. This response baffled him, until he learned that the audience was gloating: they felt that the wife had got the punishment she deserved for her infidelity, and were therefore happy to see her die (al-Ḥusaynī 1991, 23-27). This episode illustrates the dissimilarity between the habitus of an aristocrat steeped in European high culture and the habitus of the broader Egyptian film audience. Barakāt resolved to understand his audience better and take it into account from then on, because, in his words,

> a film with no audience is worthless, even if it is a great film, because, in all simplicity, cinema is a mass art, produced like any other artistic commodity that is consumed by the audience and offers it artistic and spiritual enjoyment. The audience that does not find itself on the screen turns away, because the screen is a mirror that reflects the ideas, values and feelings of those who sit in front of it (al-Ḥusaynī 1991, 27).

This is, in effect, an acknowledgement of the relative heteronomy that, for financial reasons, characterised the film industry worldwide throughout the twentieth century (cf. Duval 2006). Barakāt's next film, *Al-Muttahama* (1942), was a huge commercial success, and the audience cried when he wanted them to (al-Ḥusaynī 1991, 28-29).

He made the film version of *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* during what he referred to as the most commercially successful period of his career (al-Naḥḥās 1994, 54), and we can see the same logic of heteronomy at work in it. The plot of the film is, for the most part, an abridged version of the plot of the novel, and its nationalist discourse is very much the same; I will focus on the differences that are significant for our purposes here. Nawāl has a more central role than in the novel, and the romantic attachment between her and Ibrāhīm is more fully developed, while Ibrāhīm's romance with his gun is absent. The film thus conforms more closely to the conventions of romantic drama than the novel does. This was reflected in its advertising posters; Zubayda Ṯarwat, who played Nawāl, was given top billing among the film's stars. Her name is followed by that of Omar Sharif, one of Egyptian cinema's most successful stars, who played Ibrāhīm. Commenting on Sharif's career overall, Viola Shafik notes that '[w]ith his large expressive eyes and an overall handsome appearance he convinced more through his appearance than by his acting, and seemed the perfect manifestation of adolescent girls' dreams' (Shafik 2001, 124). In this film, conformity to the conventions of the popular genre of romantic drama was probably a way of responding to an existing demand, and perhaps especially a demand among young, female cinemagoers who could identify with Nawāl. In a conventional romantic drama, the hero falls in love with the heroine, not with his gun; therefore Ibrāhīm's love for his gun was removed. This seems to be an effect of cinema's greater overall heteronomy in comparison to literature, even though this particular novel was already very heteronomous.

Another sign of the film's greater heteronomy is that it praises the 1952 'revolution' not only at the end of the narrative, but at the beginning as well. It begins with a slide show of drawings of pre-revolutionary life, accompanied by a voice-over narration that says:

> Before the miracle [*muʿǧiza*] of the revolution occurred, Egypt toiled under the yoke of the occupation for more than seventy years. Colonialism put its paid protégés in government, and succeeded in dividing Egyptians into parties that competed for power and fought one another, forgetting the common enemy. Despair might have crept into the hearts of the most faithful nationalists, if had not been for the faith of the children of Egypt in their *waṭan*'s right to freedom and to life. At that time, despite the deepening darkness, dawn was about to break. A spark of freedom flew. Souls, hearts and blood were boiling with rebellion.

The use of drawings to represent the pre-revolutionary era gives the impression that it belongs to the ancient past (the 'period of pagan ignorance' (*ǧāhiliyya*) discussed above), a past so distant that there is no photographic record of it. The text is official Nasserist discourse. In addition to nationalist conceptual blends with religious inputs ('miracle' and 'faith') and al-Ṭahṭāwī's concept of the 'children' of the country, we have Nasser's (and al-Ṭahṭāwī's) rejection of multiparty democracy, on the grounds that it divides the nation. Paradoxically, this text, like ʿAbd al-Quddūs's writings and Nasser's speeches, also 'divides' the nation into good Egyptians and traitors.

The next scene emphasises this division. At a nationalist student rally at Cairo University, the speaker says, 'We will not keep silent about those who sell the *waṭan* to its enemies. We will not keep silent about the traitors.' The crowd chants, 'Down with the traitors!' The speaker says, 'We want our freedom. We want our dignity [*karāma*]. We will not let anyone sell this *waṭan* and this dignity. We will not let anyone restrict and rape this right. The nation's right, and death to the nation's enemies [*aʿdāʾ al-šaʿb*], all the nation's enemies!' The crowd chants: 'Death to the nation's enemies!'

This is followed soon afterwards by a scene adapted from the notorious ʿAbbās Bridge incident of 9 February 1946, when the police chief, Salīm Zakī, allowed hundreds of demonstrators, mostly students, to march onto a moveable bridge over the Nile, then opened the bridge, causing them to fall into the water (Reid 1990, 136). The mechanics of the incident are different in the film, but the result is similar. Ibrāhīm is among the demonstrators. One of his young comrades has jumped into the water, but cannot swim. Ibrāhīm dives in and pulls him out, but the boy dies anyway, a martyr for his country; with his last breath, he makes a simple martrydom speech: 'Ibrāhīm, tell Dad and Mum not to be angry. Long live Egypt.'

The university is closed and parliament dissolved. Ibrāhīm meets with his comrades to discuss what to do. One of them suggests that they should resume their former activity, killing British soldiers, but Ibrāhīm says this is useless, because there are always new ones to take the place of those killed. Another comrade says: 'Who deserves more to be killed: the

British soldier who serves his country [*balad*], or the Egyptian who betrays his country?' This statement implies that the moral obligation to serve one's country should affect judgements about the morality of any particular act, however heinous. Hence colonial military occupation may be immoral, but the severity of this immorality is diminished if it is done to serve one's own country. Similar arguments have often been used to justify all sorts of colonial atrocities.

Thus Ibrāhīm and his comrades decide to assassinate the prime minister[82]. The blending of Ibrāhīm with a military officer, which in the novel relies on the 'officer's uniform', is given an additional prompt in the film: when Ibrāhīm sets off to carry out the assassination, the soundtrack is a military march. The military march theme is repeated throughout the film, nearly every time Ibrāhīm sets off somewhere, or when others go on errands for him. The film also stresses his readiness to sacrifice himself. Before departing on his mission, he writes a letter to his parents, to be delivered if he does not survive. When he takes leave of his comrades to carry out the assassination, he tells them that if they realise he cannot escape, they should not wait for him. When he is arrested, the police chief threatens him with torture, but he refuses to talk, and is beaten.

Ibrāhīm is transferred to hospital; here the plot of the film rejoins that of the novel. During the family's debate about whether they should protect him, Nawāl's support for him is more explicitly nationalist than in the novel. In the novel, Nawāl's mother says, 'But he's not a thief or a

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82 The novel leaves the victim's political title unspecified, and Amīn ʿUṯmān, the victim of the assassin that ʿAbd al-Quddūs sheltered, was only a former cabinet minister. However, two prime ministers were assassinated by nationalist militants during the same period, Aḥmad Māhir in February 1945 and Muḥammad al-Nuqrāšī in December 1948 (Reid 1982).

criminal. It's just that they tricked him with that disgusting thing called politics, and made him do what he did. Still, it's none of our business.' Nawāl replies, 'They didn't trick him, Mum!' Her mother interrupts her, scolding her and telling her to be quiet ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 41). In the film, Nawāl gets to finish her sentence: 'How can we we call ourselves Egyptians and not see it as our business?'

As in the novel, the father asks Ibrāhīm why he killed the victim. In the novel, Ibrāhīm says it was because the victim 'served the English. Everyone knows he was a traitor and an agent for the English. . . . Everyone condemned that man for treason, and I carried out the sentence' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 45). In the film, he says essentially the same thing, adding: 'If I'd had my way... but he who wants to serve his *waṭan* has to disregard personal considerations. I had to forget myself, so I did.' Once again, this emphasises his disinterestedness and his willingness to sacrifice himself.

In the film, when 'Abd al-Ḥamīd says he finds Ibrāhīm's actions perplexing, Ibrāhīm attributes them to 'faith', adding: 'If you had a principle that you believed in, that question wouldn't perplex you.' Note that this is faith in 'a principle', not necessarily faith in God. This scene seems to be loosely inspired by a section of the novel in which 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, in prison, realises that he is a failure because he has never had 'faith' ('Abd al-Quddūs 1997, 423-425). There, as we saw above, the novel alludes to both religious and nationalist faith, with the latter predominating; in the film, the words 'faith' and 'principle' are left ambiguous.

Overall, though, the association of Ibrāhīm's nationalism with religion is stronger in the film than in the novel. Before leaving the house, he tells the family that he has found more 'nationalism [*waṭaniyya*] and noble-mindedness' in this house than anywhere else. The cannon announcing the end of the daily Ramadan fast is then fired, and just this once, as he leaves and rejoins his comrades (wearing the officer's uniform), we hear the call to prayer instead of the usual military march. Recall that the novel seemed to portray him as a Sufi mystic when hiding out at his comrades' flat and giving them orders. In the film, we instead see him giving orders to his devoted followers while still wearing the officer's uniform, but he then appears in religious garb: when the police search the hideout, he escapes, disguised as a shaykh.

When ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd has his change of heart, he says, 'I forgot that the person I was going to inform on sacrificed himself and considered his own life cheap, in the way of [*fī sabīl*] my dignity [*karāma*], your dignity and the dignity of all of us.' Once again, this is Nasserist discourse, and recalls Nasser's Manšiyya speech.

In keeping with Nawāl's increased importance in the film, the romantic drama is heightened by prolonging and intensifying the contact between her and Ibrāhīm. While in the novel, he never keeps his appointments with her in the square, in the film he first sends a comrade to give her a telephone number where she can call him; on the phone, they say how much they miss each other. At the next appointment, he meets her himself, posing as a taxi driver, and drives her around Cairo. He tells her that they will not see each other again. She says she cannot

believe that; things will change, and he will return to his family, to his *waṭan* and to those who love him. He says that he, like millions of others, is living on the hope that things will change; surely Egypt will be free one day, but that could take a year or ten years. She says it makes no difference to her; she will wait for him. He tells her not to do so: 'I'm not the future; I'm the past, the past that you must forget. Promise me you'll forget it.' She promises the opposite: that she will never forget him. This scene can generate the inference that, by proving his disinterestedness through self-sacrifice, the martyr gains the undying love of a woman (or the *waṭan*) as well as immortality as a martyr.

When Muḥyī and ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd are imprisoned, Nawāl prays to God that Ibrāhīm will find out. Meanwhile, at the port in Alexandria, just before he is to leave Egypt, he has second thoughts. He says to one of his colleagues: 'I wonder which is more honourable: for me to live in France, or to die in Egypt?' Memories of Nawāl come back to haunt him, and he repeats to himself the sentence about dying in Egypt. Thus dying in Egypt is blended with being reunited with Nawāl. He then changes his mind and decides to return to Cairo. When he hears that Muḥyī and ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd are in prison, he thanks God for inspiring him to go back to Cairo. We can thus infer that Nawāl's prayer was answered, and hence that she is responsible for his death. The same inference can be drawn from the blend between her and the *waṭan*: he dies in order to fulfil his moral obligation to his country, hence his country (i.e. Nawāl) is responsible for his death. In keeping with the film's closer assocation between religion and nationalism in comparison with the novel, the plot device of the

prayer thus makes God an intermediary between the martyr and his country.

The details of Ibrāhīm's suicide mission are different to those in the novel, but the basic sequence of events still corresponds to the classical martyrdom narrative discussed earlier in this chapter. Ibrāhīm's mission is to blow up a British weapons depot. He shoots a guard, who falls but manages to shoot Ibrāhīm. Badly wounded, Ibrāhīm is on the verge of succumbing to his injuries, but suddenly finds renewed strength; he crawls, with great difficulty, to an air shaft above the weapons depot, and drops a hand grenade into it. He dies with Nawāl's good-luck charm in his hand (hence the houri is metonymically present on the battlefield), and the weapons depot explodes.

The last scene of the film shows Nawāl reading a letter from him. In the letter, he notes that he is writing to her just before the religious festival at the end of the month of Ramadan, and adds: 'The real festival [al-ʿīd al-ḥaqīqī] will be the day that our waṭan is freed from occupation. I have decided to give myself as a sacrifice [fidāʾ] to my waṭan'. This prompts for a blend between the 1952 military coup and a religious festival, and implies that the religious festival is not a 'real' festival; only the nationalist festival will be 'real'. From this it is possible to draw the inference that nationalism is more real than religion. In the letter, he then tells her to teach her children that a person who is martyred 'in the way of his country [fī sabīl bilādihi]' does not die. We see Muḥyī and ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd released from prison, suggesting that the revolution is under way.

367

Instead of 'The End', the final title card says, 'This was the beginning' (i.e. of the revolution).

The film thus appears to take a less autonomous stance than the novel. Not only does it conform more closely to the conventions of romantic drama, it also makes greater use of purely religious concepts to legitimise nationalism. This is probably because of differences between the small audience for novels and the much larger audience for films. Novels require their readers to have a relatively high volume of non-religious cultural capital (e.g. familiarity with the conventions of modern prose fiction), which seems not to be as widespread as religious cultural capital in Egypt[83]. Thus it is not surprising that the film makes greater use of religious concepts than the novel it was based on. At the same time, like the novel, the film also relies heavily on blended nationalist concepts that have religious inputs. In contrast, political concepts with no religious basis are almost completely absent from the film; multiparty democracy, for example, is portrayed solely as a reprehensible division of the nation against itself.

The film shares the novel's heteronomy towards the military regime, referring to the 'revolution' as a 'miracle'. Yet the 'new hero' celebrated at the end of the novel, i.e. Nasser, is not specifically

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83 Sales of a novel in the Arab world 'only in very rare cases exceed five thousand copies' (Mehrez 2008, 44). In one recent survey, book readers in Egypt 'mentioned that they mostly read the Holy Quran. Frequencies of other books mentioned were minor and suggests that no strong preference of books after the Quran resonate among Egyptian readers' (Next Page 2007, 3). In the 1980s, Shaykh Muḥammad Mitwallī al-Šaʿrāwī (1911-1988), one of the most popular Muslim preachers in Egypt, who served as Minister of Religious Endowments and hosted a live television programme on the interpretation of the Qurʾān (Zeidan 1999, 65-66n), stated on television that he had not read any book other than the Qurʾān in the preceding forty years (Ibrāhīm 1992, 306). Much of his audience probably shared his lack of interest in non-religious texts. No empirical data exists on the reading habits of different social classes in Egypt; research is needed on this subject.

mentioned at the end of the film. Durriya Šaraf al-Dīn's (1992) analysis of the effect of the military regime on the film industry can help us understand why. The new regime made it clear from the outset that it desired a didactic cinema that embodied the slogans of the revolution, and filmmakers initially hastened to express their readiness to comply (Šaraf al-Dīn 1992, 13-14). However, in reality, most were inclined 'to give predominance to entertaining films'; this view reflected 'the demands of reality and of the commercial market, and considerations of profit and loss in the world of film production' (Šaraf al-Dīn 1992, 15). Moreover, the regime's ideological stances were vague. In the absence of a clear political programme, filmmakers were concerned that, if they made the sort of films the regime was asking for, they might unwittingly offend the officers. As ʿAbd al-Quddūs's imprisonment in 1954 shows, the risks of producing anything that could be perceived as criticism of the regime were high. Even propaganda films could be risky (Šaraf al-Dīn 1992, 19-20). Faced with a regime that was clearly proceeding by trial and error, and that brutally repressed anything it perceived as dissent, filmmakers chose to play it safe. When they made films that lent some form of support to the regime, they usually did so not by praising 'the new era', but by criticising 'the past', i.e. the period before the 1952 military coup. Šaraf al-Dīn (1992, 35) calls this type of filmmaking 'the cinema of fear'.

> Egyptian cinema of the 1960s took the past as its framework. . . . Filmmakers avoided dealing with the current situation. . . . Fear and the military's iron grip on one hand, and the lack of any real desire to enter into a conflict and to pay the price of confrontation on the

other hand, created a barrier between cinema and the present. The world of the past became a safe haven (Šaraf al-Dīn 1992, 94).

This arguably explains why the film *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* omits the novel's glorification of the 'new hero', the leader of the 1952 'revolution'. Any explicit representation of Nasser would run the risk of offending him somehow. *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* was one of a number of films made in Egypt in the 1960s on the theme of 'self-sacrifice for one's *waṭan*'; nearly all these films held fast to 'the framework of the cinema of the past' in order to justify the present (Šaraf al-Dīn 1992, 99, 100-101, 111).

Critical Responses to the Film

For Saʿd al-Dīn Tawfīq (1961), *Fī Baytinā Raǧul* is 'an excellent film'. In his view, ʿAbd al-Quddūs's novel has been so successful, in book form as well as in its adaptations for the theatre, the radio and the cinema, because it is 'a realistic picture of our life before the revolution'. ʿUṯmān al-ʿAntablī (1961) praised the novel for its portrait of 'that dark period in Egypt's recent history . . . before the revolution'. In his view, the film adaptation, like the theatre and radio adaptations before it, has succeeded in presenting a subject that 'wells up from the depths of our soul [*ṣamīminā*]'. Both the novel and the film present Ibrāhīm not as a hero, but rather as 'an expression of the heroism of the masses'. Al-ʿAntablī praises the film for using a visual language that 'speaks to the masses in a language that they understand, and also pleases the intellectual elite'. He objects to the omission of some elements of the novel, particularly its penultimate chapter, which shows the development of some of the secondary characters, such as Muḥyī and ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd

370

(who, as we saw above, are transformed into nationalist activists); these examples of the intensification of nationalist feelings among the general population 'justified the occurrence of our great white revolution, which emerged from the innermost core of the nation [ṣamīm al-šaʿb]'.

More recently, Muḫtār Nūḥ (1998) argued that the film promotes terrorism, and should be renamed *A Terrorist in Our House*, since Ibrāhīm makes himself into judge, prosecutor and executioner. Ibrāhīm al-Mawǧī (1998) agreed, emphasising that nobody gave Ibrāhīm the right to kill; he gave it to himself. In my view, the focus of these reviewers on 'terrorism' disregards the importance, in the novel and in the film, of the more general – and more salient – concept of martyrdom, which can be applied as easily to wars between states (and hence to army conscription) as it can to guerilla warfare.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen evidence for a blended concept of nationalist martyrdom. Figure 12 sums up what is probably the basic structure of this blend. The first input contains elements of the frame of religious jihad, while the second contains elements from the frame of nationalist armed conflict. The correspondences follow straightforwardly from the discussion in this chapter. This blend is readily motivated by an inference that can be drawn from the pre-existing blended nationalist concept of 'country', shown in Chapter 2, in which God is blended with a geographical territory. This inference can be drawn as follows: if jihad is a duty to God, and if one's country is like God, then jihad is also a duty to
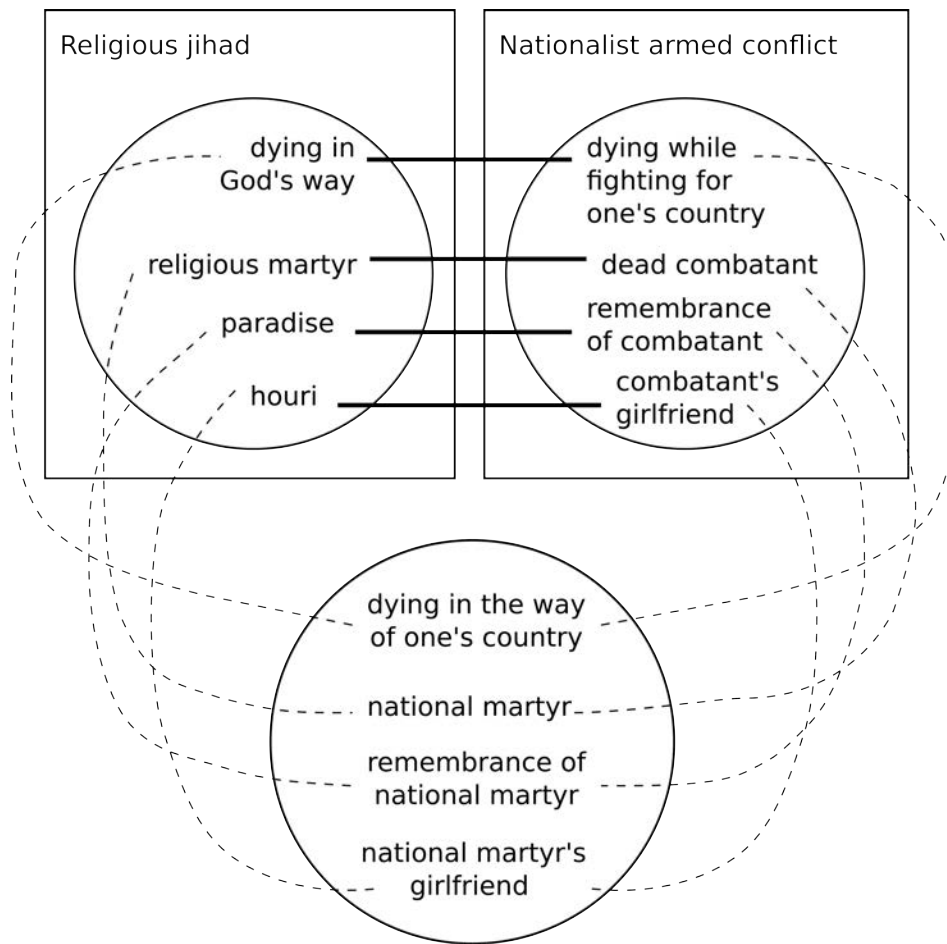
Figure 12: Nationalist martyrdom

one's country. In the chapter on al-Ṭahṭāwī, we saw that he imported the idea of a duty to die for one's country from France, and expressed it in his war poetry and in his political thought. The social function of the blended concept of nationalist martyrdom is to make this idea of self-sacrifice for one's country more persuasive, by linking it with a conventional frame, jihad, in which the concept of a duty to sacrifice one's life plays a prominent role. Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs probably did not invent this blend; further research would be needed to find out who did.

We have also seen how both Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs and Gamal Abdel Nasser made use of the concept of nationalist martyrdom to gain

symbolic capital as priest and prophet of nationalism. In particular, Nasser's demonstration of his willingness to become a martyr for Egypt, in his speech during the Manšiyya incident, seems to have been the decisive performance that, for the first time, earned him symbolic capital outside the army. ʿAbd al-Quddūs's novel *Fī Baytinā Raǧul*, and the film based on it, promoted the idea of martyrdom for one's country, and prompted for the inference that Nasser exemplified the heroism found in martyrs.

I have also proposed avenues for further research aimed at explaining Nasser's charisma, arguing that it must be analysed as a relationship between Nasser's habitus of the speaker and that of his audience. While it was Nasser's political power as military autocrat that enabled him to have ʿAbd al-Quddūs imprisoned in 1954, this is not sufficient to explain ʿAbd al-Quddūs's subsequent transformation from an advocate of liberal democracy into one of Nasser's most enthusiastic apostles. In order to explain this, it seems necessary to take into account both ʿAbd al-Quddūs's symbolic interests in the field of nationalism and Nasser's symbolic power. Arguably, ʿAbd al-Quddūs could simply have avoided conflict with the regime by limiting himself to writing novels and stories about romantic relationships, a genre in which he was already successful. But by doing so, he would have lost the considerable nationalist capital that he had earned as editor of the magazine *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, building on his mother's years of investment in establishing the magazine as a prestigious platform for nationalist discourse; in a word, he would have ceased to be a priest of nationalism. In order to remain a

member of the priesthood, he was obliged to submit to the symbolic domination of the prophet. Thus this domination served his interests, at the expense of his liberal principles and his capacity to critique the regime. Tragically, the nationalist beliefs to which he had devoted his career were the very beliefs that turned him into a propaganda tool of a military autocracy.

Conclusion

This thesis has used a detailed analysis of Arabic primary sources to propose a new account of the history of nationalism in Egypt, and it has used this evidence to support a new sociological and cognitive approach to the study of nationalism. Nationalism is not, as has often been claimed, a political principle; instead, it is basically a moral one. From a cognitive point of view, the abstract concept underlying diverse nationalisms represents a nation as a group of human beings with (normally) hereditary membership and a shared moral duty towards a geographical area (a 'country'). Like all abstract concepts in human cognition, this concept is based on concrete concepts that relate to everyday experiences. Specifically, the concept of duty towards a geographical area is generated, through conceptual blending, from the concept of duty towards a person, such as a parent. By using the theory of conceptual blending, Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis have been able to specify the precise differences between the nationalist concepts that appeared in Arabic in the 19th century, in the work of Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī, and the pre-nationalist concepts that al-Ṭahṭāwī built on. In particular, the notion of selective projection onto a conceptual blend has made it possible to show that pre-nationalist concepts in Arabic also represented land as a parent, but that the concept of filial duty was not projected onto these blends. Al-Ṭahṭāwī seems to have introduced this projection into Arabic after encountering it in French nationalist concepts during his studies in France.

The sociological aspect of this study has shown that nationalist concepts lend themselves to the formation of particular social structures,

which are found in the Egyptian case. Specifically, the lack of objective criteria for determining duties towards national territory lends itself to the formation of a highly heteronomous field in the Bourdieusian sense, in which actors compete for symbolic capital consisting of the ability to successfully claim to make authoritative statements about correct nationalist beliefs. To this end, they employ two main strategies, both of which are also found in religious fields. The first of these, 'the strategy of the prophets', is based on charisma, defined by Bourdieu as a relation between the habitus of a speaker and the habitus of an audience: the speaker's habitus generates words and actions that, for an audience with a certain habitus, appear to be manifestations of ideals. The second strategy, which this thesis has focused on, is 'the strategy of the priests', and is based on the conversion of cultural capital into symbolic capital. To use this strategy, cultural producers must successfully claim that the particular types of knowledge and skills that they possess qualify them to define and describe the nation and the country.

This analysis helps explain the many similarities – often noted by scholars but not well understood – between religion and nationalism. The concept of national territory is similar to the concept of God: both posit the existence of a personified entity that makes legitimate demands on human beings, but that cannot be observed objectively. Like belief in God, belief in a national territory can only be an act of faith. Since gods and national territories cannot be studied scientifically, human beings are free to make up ideas about them as they please, and convince others of the validity of those ideas using any available social strategies. The most

376

effective strategies for this type of persuasion are the strategies of prophethood and priesthood; hence these strategies are commonly used in nationalism as in religion. A key difference between nationalism and religion is that while God is conceptualised as being in Heaven, national territory is conceptualised as being on Earth. Many practical consequences follow from this. Above all, one can 'fight for one's country' through the conquest and control of territory. Thus one of the main uses of nationalism has been to justify war and militarisation. Moreover, the French and Egyptian nationalist concepts analysed in this thesis are conceptual blends in which one of the inputs is drawn from the frame of religious belief. The abstract similarities between nationalist concepts and familiar religious concepts, and the use of religious concepts as inputs in nationalist conceptual blends, can help explain why nationalist concepts, even when new, could appear plausible to their audiences.

This thesis has shown how a priesthood of nationalism can use nationalist concepts to advance their own interests in a variety of ways. In Chapter 2, we saw how military and economic projects in Egypt in the 19th century led to the establishment of a state-run system of European-style education, headed by al-Ṭahṭāwī and his successors. That chapter argued that al-Ṭahṭāwī used nationalist concepts to persuade his young students to devote themselves to the acquisition of non-religious cultural capital, and that his success in doing so enabled him to gain symbolic capital for a generation of students and graduates of this new educational system; thus he became the first priest of nationalism in Egypt. These

graduates constituted a new social category, the *afandiyya*, who were distinguished by their possession of non-religious cultural capital, and who were the main advocates of nationalism by the end of the 19th century. Those who became teachers in the expanding state school system inculcated their own nationalist habitus in their students, turning these schools into a powerful means for reproducing and spreading nationalist beliefs.

Chapter 3 showed how *afandī* cultural producers, such as Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal, used the priestly strategy to gain symbolic capital in the nationalist field; they then used this capital to advance a wide range of class and professional interests. For example, Haykal used nationalism to make a successful, unorthodox claim for the novel as a legitimate literary genre in Arabic. More important, he and other *afandī* nationalists engaged in a political struggle to improve job opportunities for the *afandiyya* in the competition for state employment. In this struggle, their main competitors were the Muslim clergy, who had a considerable advantage thanks to the widspread and long-standing entrenchment of Islamic religious faith in the habitus of most Egyptians. Moreover, by the 1930s, the expansion of public education had led to the emergence of a 'new *afandiyya*', composed of individuals from less privileged backgrounds who embraced nationalism, but whose habitus was more strongly shaped by Islamic concepts. *Afandī* nationalists now found themselves on the defensive, accused of atheism or of reviving ancient Egyptian polytheism. Some, like Haykal, responded by attempting

to use Islamic concepts to challenge the authority of the Muslim clergy, but this attempt failed.

At the same time, some nationalist intellectuals envisaged that nationalism could gain greater legitimacy in the eyes of a wide audience in a different way: they posited that the nation needed, in effect, a prophet-like nationalist leader who could inspire the masses as they could not. This idea is an example of a conceptual blend with an input space drawn from the frame of religious belief. It ultimately succeeded in promoting nationalism, but backfired on the intellectuals who championed it by severely restricting their autonomy. Chapter 4 analysed this idea in the work of Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm, and showed how it was adopted by Gamal Abdel Nasser, a reader of al-Ḥakīm who went on to become a successful nationalist prophet. Nasser's charisma enabled him to dominate the nationalist field and to give considerable institutional support to nationalist cultural producers such as al-Ḥakīm; it also helped him become an absolute dictator. Once Nasser was widely accepted as the voice of the nation, nationalist intellectuals were left with no grounds on which to challenge any of Nasser's policies. Most, like al-Ḥakīm, submitted willingly to his symbolic domination.

Chapter 5 considered the career of Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Quddūs, an intellectual who used nationalism to become a successful journalist, and who then abandoned his advocacy for democracy in order to give his unconditional support to Nasser. That chapter focused on one concept that figures prominently in ʿAbd al-Quddūs's work, and also played a crucial role in the development of Nasser's charisma: the concept of

nationalist martyrdom, or dying for one's country, which is particularly useful for motivating sacrifices of life and limb at war. This, too, was a conceptual blend with a religious input.

In sum, nationalism was useful for Egyptian intellectuals in the short term; it helped them to acquire a measure of symbolic capital and to advance their careers in various fields. At the same time, it often led them to misrecognise the pursuit of own interests as the disinterested pursuit of the common good. In the long term, it severely restricted their autonomy, making it almost impossible for them to challenge social orthodoxy and state policies.

Besides solving the vexed problem of the similarity between nationalism and religion, the analysis proposed here makes it possible to study, in a unified, comparative manner, two sets of closely related phenomena that have mostly been studied in isolation from one another, namely prophets, priests, temples, pilgrimages, hymns, martyrs, etc., in religion and their counterparts in nationalism. It also suggests ways to analyse the different sorts of interactions that take place between religion and nationalism. For example, one could hypothesise that religious and nationalist commitments are represented as harmonious when the same individuals occupy dominant positions in both the nationalist field and the religious field, as seems to have occurred in Iran after the 1979 revolution (cf. Ram 2000). Conversely, the potential for competition between religious and nationalist discourses arises when the corresponding positions in the two fields are not occupied by the same individuals, as in Egypt in the 20th century.

The theoretical framework proposed here is quite likely in need of refinement, and its ability to explain a wider variety of nationalisms needs to be tested. In the first section of Chapter 2, and elsewhere in passing, I have tried to suggest that it can be applied to French and German nationalisms. In the French case, Napoleon and de Gaulle are examples of the strategy of prophethood, and in the German case there is of course Hitler. American nationalism, which I grew up with, also strikes me as a good fit, and one can readily see the strategy of prophethood at work in the careers of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. American nationalists, like French ones, have been particularly diligent at imitating religious practices within a nationalist framework. There are clearly prayers (the Pledge of Allegiance that children say to the American flag every morning in school), temples (the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, to which Americans go on pilgrimages), hymns (the national anthem), sacred texts (the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution), catechisms (civics lessons) and martyrs (who are sometimes even referred to as such). And there are of course legions of politicians, media personalities, writers and scholars who, with greater or lesser amounts of charisma or cultural capital, advance their careers by successfully claiming the authority to make statements about 'America' and 'America's interests'.

Zionism is another nationalism that I think this approach could be applied to. Zionist strategies of prophethood are not hard to find:

Ben Gurion . . . thought of himself (and was considered by others) as the ideal hero-leader. . . . [H]is followers described him as the

ideal leader and the successor to the great leaders of the biblical period, possessed of their qualities. Moshe Dayan, for example, compared him to Moses. There is evidence that in the early years of statehood Ben Gurion was turning into the object of national cult. . . . In more extreme instances, particularly in the presence of new immigrants, adulation of Ben Gurion took on the overtones of Messianic ceremony. Immigrants kissed the soles of his feet, touched his clothing, brought sick children forward so that he might heal them with his touch, and called him the Messiah. . . . [Theodor] Hertzl's remains were transferred to Israel in 1949 amid an elaborate state ceremony and reinterred on a mountain in Jerusalem named for him. . . . Mount Hertzl became a sacred site. . . . Speaker of the Knesset Joseph Sprinzak . . . called Hertzl 'the prophet of Israel's freedom'. . . . Incredible spiritual and physical qualities were attributed to Herzl, all contributing to his transformation into a mythic hero of almost superhuman proportions (Liebman and Don-Yiḥya 1983, 94-96).

Nor is it difficult to identify priestly strategies in the work of the many knowledge producers, 'in the media, think tanks, and academia', in Israel but also in the US and elsewhere, whose credibility depends partly on their ability to successfully claim knowledge of, or knowledge that is useful for, Israel and the Jewish nation (cf. Mearsheimer and Walt 2007, 168-196). The complex relationship between religion and nationalism in this case is very interesting and merits careful study (cf. Dieckhoff 2006).

Turkish nationalism seems to be another good example:

According to Kemalist historiography, the project of creating a modern nation-state was developed in the mind of the great leader, Kemal Ataturk himself. . . . Indeed, early revolutionary literature during the time of Kemal Ataturk usually described him as a prophet of the modern times. . . . Similarly, just as every religion has a sacred book, so does Kemalism. . . . Michael Meeker compares the parallel and rival shrines of Islam and Kemalism in Ankara, that is, the Kocatepe Mosque and Kemal Ataturk's Mausoleum [Anıtkabir]. . . . Likewise, the anthropologist Carol Delaney observes: Anıtkabir 'is referred to even by taxi drivers as "our kabe". . . Like its Meccan counterpart, Anıtkabir is also a place of pilgrimage. . . .' Perhaps the most striking similarity between Kemalism and the religious mode of thinking, however, can be found in the repressive atmosphere around which the 'belief in' or the 'love for' Kemal Ataturk and his ideology are cultivated – just like Islam and other monotheistic religions, where love of God and fear of Him are inseparable (Gülalp 2005, 363-364).

The most important conclusion of this thesis is that nationalism restricts the autonomy of cultural producers, and not only when a nationalist prophet takes power. The autonomy of the nationalist field is limited by the fact that nationalist concepts do not represent any objective reality. Because the inherent heteronomy of the nationalist field subordinates intellectuals to demands emanating from outside their specialised fields of competence, it undermines their ability to challenge social hierarchies, political authority and economic inequality, and has

been more readily used to legitimise new forms of domination in competition with old ones. The practical consequence of this analysis is clear: in order to act as an autonomous force capable of critiquing social norms and political and economic power, intellectuals must abandon nationalism and base their credibility on a mastery of scientific concepts. This conclusion may be disturbing for some readers who perceive their own nationalism (which they may prefer to call 'patriotism') as devotion to the common good. Since intellectuals have 'an interest in disinterestedness' (Bourdieu 1993, 40, Bourdieu 1994b, 200), it is often particularly difficult for them to acknowledge their own self-interest. Yet paradoxically, it is only by doing so, and by engaging in a global, collective struggle to create the social conditions of their own autonomy, that they can truly work for the common good (Bourdieu 1996a, 337-348). This can and should be done without nationalism[84].

This leads us to another important direction for future research: the investigation of *cosmopolitan* strategies that enable knowledge producers to increase their own autonomy and that of the fields they work in. What sorts of *global* institutional arrangements and networks do these strategies require? Once knowledge producers have established credibility through integration into relatively autonomous global fields, how can they best use this credibility to participate in projects of political mobilisation? These are questions that can be studied empirically.

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84 No doubt some will object that although nationalism may be an illusion, to abandon it is to lose a powerful means of political mobilisation. Bourdieu's remark is pertinent: 'Do you really think that one can mobilise only on the basis of illusions?' (Bourdieu 1980b, 47).

The prevalence of what has been called 'methodological nationalism' in the social sciences (Wimmer and Schiller 2003; Beck 2006) is a sign that these fields are still not autonomous enough. In order to increase the autonomy of social science, researchers must require – of themselves and of their peers – mastery of powerful theories that break decisively with everyday, commonsense concepts (Bourdieu et al. 1991, 13-31). By combining theoretical tools that have emerged from what I see as the most autonomous poles of the fields of sociology and linguistics, I have tried to contribute to this effort.

Appendix 1: *Patrie* translated as *Awṭān* in a French Proclamation

On 23 October 1798, during the French occupation of Egypt, a proclamation was issued in the name of the council of shaykhs that the French had assembled to act as their intermediaries in Cairo; Egyptians were told that they should abstain from rebellion 'in order to protect your homes [*li-aǧl an taḥfaẓū awṭānakum*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 151-152, al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:143) or (in a variant) 'your property and your homes [*amwālakum wa-awṭānakum*]' (al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 66). The French version of this proclamation appeared in the French newspaper in Egypt, *Courrier de l'Égypte*, in the issue dated 31 October 1798 (10 Brumaire VII in the French republican calendar); the word *awṭān* in the Arabic text corresponds to the word *foyers* ('homes') in the French text[85] (Anon. 1798a).

In November, another proclamation, also issued in the name of the shaykhs on behalf of the French, criticised the Mamluk beys, Ibrāhīm and Murād, who had fled Cairo, for 'leaving their dependents and their *awṭān* [*yatrukūn ʿiyālahum wa-awṭānahum*]'. It also exhorted Egyptians to abstain from rebellion and pay their taxes, 'in order to be safe in your ʾ*awṭān* [*li-takūnū fī awṭānikum sālimīn*]' (al-Ǧabartī 1798/1999, 153-155; al-Ǧabartī and al-ʿAṭṭār 1801/1998, 67-68; al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:146-147). In the French version, the French word *patrie* corresponds to the Arabic word *awṭān* in both places[86] (Anon. 1798b). Does this mean that the

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85 'Gardez-vous bien donc d'exciter le désordre afin que vous jouissiez dans vos foyers de la tranquillité et de la sécurité.'

86 The proclamation accuses Ibrāhīm and Murād of disseminating forged messages from the Ottoman Sultan, then says: 'Si vous cherchez la raison de ces mensonges politiques, vous la trouverez dans leur dépit et leur rage contre les *Ulemas* et les

shaykhs understood *awṭān* to express the same meaning as *patrie*? There are ample reasons to doubt this.

First, we do not know how these texts were composed, but considering the power relation between the French government and the shaykhs, it seems likely that the Arabic version was translated from the French. The shaykhs did not know French. Little is known about the translators employed by the French government in Egypt. We saw in Chapter 1 that Napoleon's initial proclamation to the Egyptians was translated into Arabic by the French Orientalist Jean Michel de Venture de Paradis, perhaps with Maltese assistants. On a few occasions, when al-Ǧabartī mentions translators who worked for the French, he refers to them as Syrian Christians (al-Ǧabartī 1806/1997, 4:118, 526). It is possible that they did not fully understand the meaning of *patrie*. What is clear is that their Arabic was not very good; many of the proclamations are written very badly. Others are in a highly polished style, no doubt improved by the shaykhs, but since the shaykhs could not read French, they would not have been able to correct mistranslated words. If they read the word *awṭān* in a draft translation of the proclamation, they may well have interpreted it to mean 'homes' (as in the previous proclamation) and accepted it as such, without suspecting that the original French text contained a different meaning.

However, there is a deeper problem here. Even if we postulate a translator who fully understood the meaning of the French word *patrie*

sujets qui n'ont pas voulu les suivre et qui n'ont pas abandonné leur patrie et leurs familles. . . . N'oubliez pas aussi qu'il est de votre devoir de payer les droits et les impositions que vous devez au gouvernement et aux propriétaires des terres, afin que vous jouissiez au milieu de votre famille et dans le sein de votre patrie du repos et de la securité.'

and whose Arabic was excellent, the question remains: if no Arabic equivalent of *patrie* existed, what would the translator have done? No doubt he would have used an Arabic word whose meaning was at least similar in some ways, and that would be intelligible in the context. In the introduction to this thesis, I have suggested that concepts of 'national territory', such as *patrie*, are linked to the concept of 'nation' by the concept of a collective moral duty. Before the 19ᵗʰ century, as we have seen, *waṭan* could have the sense of a place to which an *individual* was emotionally attached, but without, it seems, the concept of a moral duty. Hence both *patrie* and *waṭan* represent places to which one or more human beings are attached in some way. This abstract similarity could have motivated the choice of *awṭān* in the translation[87].

In short, a translation such as this gives us little evidence of what *waṭan* actually meant to Egyptians at the time, or how they viewed Egypt or the French. Much more instructive are examples of non-translated discourse, such as those considered in Chapter 1.

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87 It is perhaps worth noting that if the author of the French text conceptualised Ibrāhīm's and Murād's *patrie* as Egypt, the text contains a factual inconsistency: although Ibrāhīm Bey was in Syria at the time, Murād Bey had fled to Upper Egypt, where he remained until he died of plague a year or two later (Cole 2007, 69, 92, 112, 157, 167, 230, 236, 239-242).

Appendix 2: Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār

While a student at al-Azhar, Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī was the favourite disciple of Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār (1766-1835), an exceptional scholar in several respects[88]. Al-ʿAṭṭār does not seem to have written about political issues, but he was convinced of the need for a revival of intellectual culture (Delanoue 1982, 344). He seems to have made unusual efforts to seek out types of knowledge that ʿdid not have a direct relationship with the Arabic language or religious law'. He gave Arabic lessons to some of the French scientists who accompanied Napoleon's occupation of Egypt (1798-1801), and it appears that his contacts with them convinced him of the need for a scientific renaissance in Egypt. He travelled widely outside Egypt, probably from 1802-1815; few details of these trips are known, but he does not seem to have ventured outside the Ottoman Empire (Delanoue 1982, 345; Gran 1979, 77-78). Peter Gran notes that al-ʿAṭṭār worked on a text on ʿ*ʿilm al-handasa* (geometry, including topics in astronomy and engineering)' upon his arrival in Istanbul in 1802, and that he studied medicine there, probably between 1808 and 1810, having indicated that ʿhe had sought to study medicine in his youth, but this was not possible for him in Egypt' (1979, 103-104).

Though he was the son of a humble perfume and spice merchant, al-ʿAṭṭār enjoyed a rising social trajectory, no doubt especially thanks to his good relations with Egypt's ruler Mehmed Ali; signs of this success are al-ʿAṭṭār's appointment as editor of the official bureaucratic bulletin *Al-*

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88 The available information about al-ʿAṭṭār's life is scanty, vague and based on uncertain sources. Most of what is known about him comes from the three-page biographical note in ʿAlī Mubārak's *Al-Ḫiṭaṭ al-Ǧadīda* (1888); this note was apparently written by an anonymous contemporary of al-ʿAṭṭār (Delanoue 1982, 344).

Waqāʾiʿ al-Miṣriyya (then Egypt's only newspaper) in 1828, and as director of al-Azhar in 1831 (Delanoue 1982, 345-347; Gran 1979, 78, 126; Newman 2004, 37). However, he remained 'in a situation of relative intellectual isolation' (Gran 1979, 127). In 1833, a French diplomat, the Baron de Boislecompte, met al-ʿAṭṭār in Cairo, and wrote that the latter had told him: 'I enjoy having Europeans as guests, but I invite them over at times when no one else is likely to visit; otherwise, I would acquire a bad reputation among the *ʿulamāʾ*' (Delanoue 1982, 347).

> It pained him to observe the sterility of the cultural milieu that he lived in, and his own isolation. His judgements reflect a harsh lucidity, in their irony towards the *ʿulamāʾ* of his day, as can be seen in the following lines, which are a digression in his commentary on the *Ǧamʿ al-Ǧawāmi*[89]. After relating the biography of a famous Šāfiʿī jurist, Ibn Surayǧ (d. 306 AH / 918 AD), whose intellectual curiosity and literary talent he praises, he writes: 'Such men, who were well-versed in the sciences of divine law and the commandments of religion, also had extensive knowledge of other sciences. . . . What is even more admirable is that they went so far as to study the works of non-Muslims. . . . But if we look at how we have ended up, in the present day, it is clear that in comparison with those men, we are like the common people of their time. At best, we are able to transmit what they said, without inventing anything of our own. . . . Our present situation is analogous to that which Ibn al-Ǧawzī referred to, in one of his

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89 A 14th-century compendium of Islamic jurisprudence.

sermons in Baghdad, in these lines: "Not a single lovestruck man, in this country, with whom we could speak of great things; not a single close friend who could be our travelling companion."' (Delanoue 1982, 353-355)

Peter Gran's discussion and annotated bibliography of al-ʿAṭṭār's writings (Gran 1979, passim) seems to confirm that this unconventional scholar's work on natural science, technology and medicine was composed almost entirely of commentaries and marginal notes on earlier works[90]. In any case, it seems clear that his interest in these topics was highly unorthodox, and frowned upon by mainstream *ʿulamā*ʾ.

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90 There may be exceptions, perhaps among al-ʿAṭṭār's writings on medicine. A more complete study of the manuscripts themselves, many of which have not been found, would be necessary in order to say for sure.

Appendix 3: ʿAbd Allāh al-Nadīm

The writer, orator and journalist ʿAbd Allāh al-Nadīm (1843-96) (Sadgrove 2011) was, in some ways, an *afandī manqué.* His formal education took place mainly at an Azhar-like *madrasa* in Alexandria (Hafez 1993, 114-115). He did not attend a state school, 'knew no European languages and never traveled to Europe' (Selim 2004, 28). Nevertheless, he was a formidable autodidact. Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, he 'was thoroughly familiar with classical Arabic culture and acquainted himself with European thought and literature', albeit by means of translations and through contact with Alexandria's large European community. In Cairo, he also attended the informal lessons of the Muslim reformer Ǧamāl al-Dīn al-Afǧānī (Hafez 1993, 114-115), whose advocacy of modern science was similar to al-Ṭahṭāwī's (Hourani 1983, 121-129). He worked as a telegraph operator in the civil service, a post that must have brought him into close contact with the *afandiyya.* Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, he directed an innovative school; it was 'dedicated to disseminating the teachings of al-Afghani' (Selim 2004, 28). He 'clearly identified with an emergent middle class, distinct and qualitatively different from both the acculturated, aristocratic upper classes and the vulgar, teeming masses of the poor, both urban and rural' (Selim 2004, 6), and this 'new middle class' was his main audience (Hafez 1993, 116). In short, while he was not qualified to be a doctor or engineer, he was nevertheless qualified to be a journalist who wrote for an audience of doctors and engineers.

'Nadim started his literary career in the early 1870s' (Hafez 1993, 115), just at the moment when a significant market for newspapers

develoed in Egypt. The number of 'new literates' produced by the state schools 'increased at a far higher rate than the Azharites until they outnumbered their predecessors' (Hafez 1993, 65). This created a new market for printed materials. A state-run printing press had been established in 1821, but over the next twenty years it had published only about 250 titles; these were mostly technical works intended for the army (Hafez 1993, 55-56), and were 'unsuitable for general reading' (Heyworth-Dunne 1939, 228). However, starting in the 1870s, book production increased rapidly (Hafez 1993, 56).

Newspapers were a new phenomenon in Egypt. The official bulletin that al-Ṭahṭāwī had edited, *Al-Waqāʾiʿ al-Miṣriyya* (Egyptian Events), had published little more than administrative announcements and panegyrics to the viceroy, apart from a brief, ill-fated attempt by al-Ṭahṭāwī to include essays on political philosophy (Delanoue 1982, 402-403). The newspaper industry was still only barely beginning to develop in the late 1860s (Brugman 1984, 63), at the end of al-Ṭahṭāwī's career. No more than six Arabic newspapers were published in Egypt before Ismāʿīl's reign; twenty-seven were published during it (Hafez 1993, 49). Between the end of his reign in 1879 and the end of the century, this number increased to 310. Because of the low literacy rate and the high price of printed materials, 'the circulation of newspapers and periodicals in the nineteenth century was extremely low'. In 1882, the total number of subscribers to Egyptian newspapers was no more than 5,000; fifteen years later, it was perhaps 20,000 (Hafez 1993, 83-84). But since newspapers' main audience (and, no doubt, their main source of writers and journalists) was the

category of *afandiyya*, they provide valuable evidence of the concepts that appealed to this audience. Not surprisingly, as soon as newspapers became a significant form of cultural production in Egypt, they expressed the nationalist beliefs that, as we saw in Chapter 2, already formed part of the ethos of this audience. Examples are Yaʿqūb Ṣannūʿ's *Abū al-Naẓẓāra al-Zarqāʾ* (The Man with the Blue Glasses, 1877) and ʿAbd Allāh al-Nadīm's *Al-Tankīt wa-l-Tabkīt* (Jesting and Censure, 1881) and *Al-Ustāḏ* (The Teacher, 1892–3), which were essentially vehicles for the editors' satirical essays and stories rather than for the publication of news (Selim 2004, 25-30, 50-59).

Al-Nadīm seems to have found a considerable audience as public intellectual, particularly from the late 1870s until the early 1890s (Selim 2004, 28-29). Here I will consider two of his essays, which indicate a nationalism that is basically similar to that of al-Ṭahṭāwī.

The essay *Tarbiyat al-Abnāʾ* (The Education of Children) (al-Nadīm 1901, 2:104-109) begins by boasting about the good education that was formerly dispensed in 'the East'. Al-Nadīm claims that there were two separate kinds of instruction: shaykhs dispensed religious education, and professors (*asātiḏa*) dispensed the non-religious (*madrasī*) kind. (He is perhaps thinking of the situation in Egypt in the mid-19th century, not realising that this situation was new at the time and already reflected ideas imported from Europe.) But now, he says, Europeans have become the measure of all things, 'we' have stopped inquiring into the teaching methods of 'the Easterners', and civilisation (*tamaddun*) has come to mean imitating Europeans. 'We Easterners' must imitate 'the civilised

nations [*al-umam al-mutamaddina*]' in order to rise up out of 'the barbarity that is attributed to us', and this means imitating their teaching methods, in which religious and non-religious education is mixed together, and every school contains a church. Every teacher, even the ones who teach mathematics, is a priest, and all the schoolbooks are full of religious examples. (Al-Nadim is no doubt overgeneralising from Christian missionary schools in Egypt.) Everyone is required to display outward signs of piety, even the atheists, who keep their atheism to themselves. This, he thinks, is the reason for the basic unity of Europe, despite its diversity in secondary matters.

European schoolbooks, he says, are written in the language of each *waṭan*. This is necessary in order to preserve nationality (*ǧinsiyya*). No state dispenses education in the language of another state. Thus each nation (*umma*) maintains its distinctiveness. Those who live abroad and whose children are educated in a foreign language lose their *ǧinsiyya* and give up their true selves (*taslīm al-ḏāt*). European schools teach 'the bonds of nationality [*ǧinsiyya*] and the need to protect them'; thus each pupil 'loves his race [*abnāʾ ǧinsihi*]' and safeguards 'the history of his people [*qawmihi*]' and 'the unity of his nationality [*ǧinsiyyatihi*]'. Thus the members of each race (*ǧins*) in Europe are bound together like the members of a household (*ahl bayt wāḥid*). Europeans also teach national history (*al-tārīḫ al-waṭanī*), so that every pupil knows the origins of his forefathers and those who live in his *waṭan*, and what has happened to it through history, including the nations (*umam*) that have attacked it and the men who have served it, including politicians, warriors and writers.

395

Thus the nation (*umma*) follows first-class men (*riǧāl al-ṭabaqa al-ūlā*). If a great man (*ʿaẓīm*) embarks on a project that is useful for the *waṭan*, he finds the nation (*umma*) before him, calling with his voice. Great men serve their *awṭān* and nations (*umam*) for no purpose other than to be remembered by the nation that they serve. Foremost among these men are kings and their ministers. Thus each pupil sees the pictures of the kings of his *waṭan*, and studies their deeds; thus he knows their stature and the honour of protecting the king's household and their exalted position. For the nation (*umma*) that has no king has no honour. Hence Europeans are very protective of their kings. One of their principles is to warn each pupil against revolution (*ṯawra*) and against causing strife (*fitna*) among his people (*qawm*). They teach him examples of past revolutions and the damage they caused. Thus the pupil is attached to the good of his *waṭan* and its inhabitants.

This, he says, is the kind of education that has enabled the European nations (*umam*) to attain the height of perfection. Thus the clergy (*riǧāl al-dīn*) in Europe are the professors of politics, and politicians are the guardians of religion. This is the opposite of the situation in the East, where the *ʿulamāʾ* stay away from politics and are ignorant of it. Thus princes do not bother to involve them in political matters. But the *ʿulamāʾ* are the most deserving of involvement in politics. So why, asks al-Nadīm, are we failing to imitate European education, and persisting in ways that cause us Easterners to lose our national bonds (*rawābiṭ al-ǧins*), our language, our *waṭan* and our religion? Why do we give our children to European teachers, who return them to us assimilated to their

nationalities (*mutaǧannisīn bi-ǧinsiyyātihim*)? The Egyptian, the Syrian, the Turk or the Iraqi who has studied with the teachers of the Frères, the Protestants or the Jesuits have become a 'third category [*qisman ṯāliṯan*]' between the Easterners and the Westerners. Wealthy Easterners should create charitable organisations, under the protection of the state, to create national schools (*al-madāris al-waṭaniyya*) based on the principles of European education.

We can see from this text that, like al-Ṭahṭāwī, al-Nadīm uses the terms *ǧins* ('race'), *ǧinsiyya* ('nationality') and *umma* ('nation') interchangeably. This is the earliest of the texts considered in this thesis in which *qawm* appears as another word for this concept. As Wendell (1972, 149-150) observes,

> Al-Nadim employs the term *ǧins* (race, species, *Volk*) in a way reminiscent of the terminology of the jingoist nationalists of nineteenth-century Europe. . . . Evidently *ǧins* and *umma* were virtually equivalent notions for al-Nadim, as they were for the extreme European nationalists of that era.

How can we explain al-Nadīm's nationalist call to increase the involvement of the clergy in education and in politics? He was a journalist, not a clergyman, and his interests were not tied to those of the clergy per se. A plausible explanation for his stance is his investment in written Arabic, an important component of his cultural capital. If more and more people were educated mainly in foreign languages and therefore did not read Arabic well, the audience for his journalism could decrease. If the clergy were more involved in education, they could be

expected to strive to make sure that all students mastered Arabic. Hence al-Nadīm stance is actually similar to al-Ṭahṭāwī's employment of Azharites in his School of Languages, and his call for modern sciences to be taught at al-Azhar. Aside from al-Nadīm's use of the Orientalist notion of 'the East', which he seems to conceptualise as a sort of family of nations[91], his nationalism in this essay is thus basically that of al-Ṭahṭāwī. This indicates that, by this time, al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalist concepts were widely accepted; thus al-Nadīm could use them to legitimise his stance on education.

In another essay, *Aštāt al-Šarq wa-ʿAṣabiyyāt Ūrūbbā* (The Dispersion of the East and the Solidarities of Europe) (al-Nadīm 1901, 2:120-126), al-Nadīm expresses political views that are similar to al-Ṭahṭāwī's. The East in 'the first eras [*al-aʿṣur al-uwal*]' was powerful and advanced, but has regressed and fragmented in the past four centuries, splitting into 'races and tribes' (*šuʿūban wa-qabāʾil*). Each group (*farīq*) has isolated itself on a piece of land that it has taken as a national territory (*waṭan*) and defends. In this passage, the phrase *šuʿūban wa-qabāʾil* is from Q 49:13 ('People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another'). Since al-Nadīm asserts that each of these 'races' (*šuʿūb*, pl. of *šaʿb*) now has a *waṭan*, this essay seems to be an early example of the use of *šaʿb* to mean 'nation'. Al-Nadīm might have picked up this usage from Ǧamāl al-Dīn al-Afġānī; Wendell (1972, 179) notes: 'Within the Umma Muḥammadiyya, al-Afġānī refers to its political

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91 On the history of this concept, see Lockman (2004).

subdivisions, corresponding to the Oriental 'nations' of the Europeans, as 'peoples', *šuʿūb.*'

In al-Nadīm's view, because of the East's diversity – in terms of race, language, religions and *waṭan* – Easterners have have abandoned the unity that linked the Arab race (*ǧins*) which once ruled many parts of Europe. He claims that in this Arab empire, all religious communities (*ʿaṣabiyyāt*) enjoyed complete equality, and that Christian and Jewish communities fought alongside the Muslim to defend their *waṭan* and king. (We saw in Chapter 1 how far from the truth this claim is.) Al-Nadīm's use of the term *ʿaṣabiyya* perhaps reflects familiarity with Ibn Ḫaldūn, who used it to mean 'group solidarity' (Gabrieli 2011), but here al-Nadīm uses it in a somewhat different sense. Europeans, he says, learned this type of political system from Easterners during the Crusades, and thus different political factions (*aḥzāb*) flourished in Europe. Each faction (*ʿaṣabiyya*) had its own means of safeguarding the life of the nation (*umma*) and protecting the *waṭan*. These ideas developed until they led to the election of ministers by members of political parties. This system increased people's confidence in government, and the king's confidence in his ministers; hence the European states are strong.

Meanwhile, says al-Nadīm, the East has been regressing: each minister follows only his own personal opinions, and is surrounded by a coterie of favourites from among the rabble; ministers are ignorant, predatory and unaccountable. This has harmed the national interest (*al-maṣlaḥa al-waṭaniyya*). Foreigners and intruders have gained influence with rulers who were afraid of the intelligent men of their own people

(*qawm*). The increasing reliance of Eastern rulers on foreigners has been a grave error.

Clearly al-Nadīm's view of the effects of foreigners in Egypt is very different from al-Ṭahṭāwī's. Nevertheless, he argues for the adoption of the British parliamentary system (using both *ḥizb* and *ʿaṣabiyya* to mean 'party'). 'Much sobered by the crushing of the rebels' of the ʿUrābī revolt in 1881-82, 'the quick and total defeat, and the occupation of Egypt by England', al-Nadīm wrote this text as a 'tribute to the great power which, after all, exemplified to the *n*th degree the kind of *umma* he would have desired for his own country' (Wendell 1972, 154), echoing al-Ṭahṭāwī's admiration for the British Empire. In al-Nadīm's view, competition between two political parties has enabled the British to spread throughout the world.

Egypt and and the East are not, in his view, ready for elections and freedom of thought, but if the nation (*umma*) agreed on submission to the monarchy as a nationalist principle (*mabdaʾ waṭanī*), a multi-party system could be established[92]. If the prime minister knew he was responsible to his party, and that other parties were observing his work, he would be filled with enthusiasm for serving his country (*ḫidmat al-waṭaniyya*). Such parties could only be formed by nationalists (*waṭaniyyīn*) whose ancestors were buried in the country, because they would fear the tread of foreign hooves on their ancestors' graves and on the monarchy's honour. They would resolve, first of all, to 'sanctify [*taqdīs*]' the rank of king or

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92 As with al-Ṭahṭāwī, there is no limitation on royal power here; the king remains unaccountable.

prince, then seek leaders who would strive to protect the king or the prince from any violation of his 'sacred rights [*ḥuqūqihi al-muqaddasa*]'.

The word *ʿaṣabiyya*, he adds, should not be taken to imply any call for rebellion. Rebellion against Europe would be futile and doomed to failure. Instead, Egyptians should imitate Europe in the ways of civilisation (*madaniyya*). He also reminds his readers that they under the supervision of a 'great state' (i.e. the Ottoman Empire) that strives to advance their civilisation, to lead them to understand 'our national rights [*ḥuqūqinā al-waṭaniyya*]', and to spread European learning throughout Egypt. Therefore, he says, Egyptians should follow its guidance and increase its pride in Egypt's national development (*naš'atinā al-waṭaniyya*) and in its parties (*ʿaṣabiyyāt*); otherwise, they will be a disgrace among nations (*umam*). Each party should have its own newspapers, which should advise it according to its principles; newspapers are the schools of ideas. This statement no doubt reflects al-Nadīm's own interests; his newspaper al-Ṭā'if had been 'the mouthpiece of the 'Urābists' (Selim 2004, 28).

Thus, in his conception of civilisation and service to the *waṭan*, as well as in his defence of absolute monarchy and his loyalty to the Ottoman Empire, al-Nadīm is in agreement with al-Ṭahṭāwī. Though he is less sanguine about the wisdom of relying on foreign advisers, he is by no means opposed to the importation of ideas from Europe, and echoes al-Ṭahṭāwī's view that Egyptians must imitate Europeans in order to become a more civilised nation. Even his argument for greater involvement of the clergy in education is justified on the grounds that it would make

Egyptian schools more like European ones. These ideas seem to have found a receptive audience among an *afandī* readership that had been raised on al-Ṭahṭāwī's nationalism and whose professional qualifications depended on ideas imported from Europe.

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