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THREE REFORMERS

A Study in Modern Arab Political Thought

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"The great object in trying to understand history, political, religious, literary, or scientific, is to get behind men and to grasp ideas. Ideas have a radiation and development, an ancestry and posterity of their own, in which men play the part of godfathers and godmothers more than that of legitimate parents."

Lord Acton

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PREFACE

In the following pages we shall attempt to study modern Arab political thought, through an investigation of the political ideas of three Moslem Arab thinkers of the nineteenth century: Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, and 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakebi. The choice of these thinkers for the purpose of surveying modern Arab political thought is neither an arbitrary nor an artificial intellectual act. Their ideas admirably represent — as we shall see — modern Arab political thought. We also hope to show that these thinkers reacted in a similar manner to similar stimuli, and came out with similar patterns of thought and solutions.

Further: in the realm of space, by including the Syrian Kawakebi of Aleppo, the Egyptian Rifa'a of Tahta, and Khayr al-Din of Tunis, this study of modern Arab political thought covers the Mashriq and the Maghrib of the Arab world, as well as Egypt, that most important link between the Asian and the African parts of this world.

In the realm of time we have concentrated mainly, but not exclusively, on the nineteenth century, because this century is the great seedbed of almost all the political ideas that dominate the Arab mind of today, from Arab nationalism to socialism. Indeed, most of these ideas whose operation in the Arab world today often makes the headlines of international news, are already to be found almost fully grown and developed in the nineteenth century. The subsequent growth of literacy and the increasing use of all modern media of mass communication have merely transmitted these ideas to ever growing numbers of Arabs, giving them the mass appeal and the potency they have

today. The lives of the three men chosen for this study overlap and span the nineteenth century, but their thought contains what T. S. Eliot called, "the present moment in the past"; and it is this which concerns us most.

Finally, this study has some self-imposed limits, which we trust will not be regarded as serious limitations. The Arab thinkers selected were Moslems. This selection is deliberate, as any investigation of modern Arab political thought must deal primarily with the problems of adaptation and reconciliation of Islamic thought and institutions with the thought of the Christian West. Christian Arab thinkers do not have to face these problems. So they can, and indeed should, be omitted from a study of this nature. The thinkers chosen, we believe, are the most seminal and representative of the Moslem Arab thinkers of the nineteenth century. Mohamed 'Abduh and Afghani are the exceptions, and they have been deliberately omitted. Their ideas have been thoroughly investigated in Charles C. Adams' *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, and more recently in Albert Hourani's *Arabic thought in the Liberal Age.* Kawakebi can also be substituted for 'Abduh and Afghani, as we shall see.

This study also attempts no textual examination of the original manuscripts of the thinkers it deals with. Such an examination would be helpful in the case of Kawakebi, who seems to have edited and re-edited his writings. But this study confines itself to the survey of the published ideas of these thinkers, as revealed to their reading public.

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND

I

Arab political thought of the nineteenth century was born out of the impact of Western culture upon the Arab world of that century.[1] But before examining the nature of this impact, and the political ideas it produced, we must examine very briefly the Arab world and what might be called *la condition Arabe* in the 18th century.

The Ottoman Turks conquered almost the entire Arab world, by this is understood the lands inhabited by Arabic-speaking people, between 1516 and 1556. The Ottoman Turks, who were brave soldiers, administrators and law-makers, were the Romans of Islamic civilization, but never, at any time, its Greeks. When Brockelmann describes "The Civilization of the Osmanlis at the Zenith of the Empire", he tells us: "The scholastic life of the Osmanlis was almost entirely devoid of originality and moved in the fixed channels of tradition... Not boldness or depth of thought but a retentive memory and patient industriousness are the virtues of the Osmanli scholars".[2] Ottoman scholars, as we know, and as Brockelmann tells us "used Arabic as a general rule".[3] Scholars whose mother-tongue was Arabic

[1] The word "culture" as used here and throughout this study, denotes material culture (such as tools and buildings), as well as non-material culture (such as religion and manners). W. F. Ogburn and M. F. Nimkoff, *A Handbook of Sociology*, (London, 1953) pp. 4, 24-25.

[2] Carl Brockelmann, *History of the Islamic Peoples*, (New York, 1960), p. 312.

[3] Thus the Turk Haj Khalifa, known to the Turks as Khatib Chelebi, wrote the famous *Kashf al-Zunun 'an Asami al-Kutub wa al-Funun* in Arabic, as the title itself indicates, and not in his native Turkish.

were, as any short survey of their works shows, no exception to this general Islamic intellectual decline and stagnation. It can, of course, be easily argued with Hitti that "the Islamic creative spark had faded away centuries before the advent of the Turks" with "the complete victory of scholastic theology beginning with the thirteenth century".[4] Others have signalled as the cause of Arab decline Vasco da Gama's discovery in 1498 of the sea-route to the Far East around the Cape of Good Hope, and the deadly economic blow this dealt to the prosperity of the Arab lands.[5] Most Arab nationalists pick the year 1258, in which Hulago captured Baghdad and abolished the Abbasid caliphate, as the beginning of Arab decline.[6]

Whatever the date or origin of Arab decadence, there is no doubt that under the Ottoman Turks the Arabs had reached a very low political and cultural level. In the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire "the keystone of Ottoman administration was conservation, and all the institutions of government were directed to the maintenance of the status quo".[7] And this administration "lacking any real consideration for the welfare of the subjects, losing little by little any moral ideas which might have inspired them in the early stages, the officers of the administration were, by their very virtues, led insensibly to adopt a cynical view of their functions and responsibilities".[8] This corrupt system "quite apart from the personal suffering and economic loss resulting from its repeated violation by members of the governing and military class... perpetuated the gulf which separated the people from their government, producing at best an apathetic acquiescence in

4 Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, (London, 1960), p. 742.

5 G. W. F. Stripling: *The Ottoman Turks and the Arabs*, (Illinois, 1942).

6 See Iraqi history textbooks, or Mohammed Hassan Zayat in *Islam in the Modern World*, ed. D. S. Frank, (Washington, 1951).

7 H. A. R. Gibb, and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, (London, 1951), Vol. I, Part I, p. 200.

8 *ibid.*, p. 207.

it on their part as a necessary evil".[9] And "if we may judge by the analogous situation in intellectual life, originality was not wholly non-existent, but it was suppressed in the supposed interests of the group, or if it could not be suppressed was ignored, and its achievements suffered to disappear. We shall never know, in any probability, whether some Arab Jacquard devised an improved loom or some Turkish Watt discovered the power of steam, but we can confidently assert that, if any such invention had occurred it would have been entirely without result. The whole social organism, in fact, was one characteristic of, and only possible in, a stationary or retrograde civilization, and herein lay its essential weakness. It is no exaggeration to say that after so many centuries of immobility the process of agriculture, industry, exchange, and learning had become little more than automatic, and had resulted in a species of atrophy that rendered those engaged in them all but incapable of changing their methods or outlook in the slightest degree".[10]

On the other hand, Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries was to reach the zenith of its political, material, and intellectual power. But until the latter part of the eighteenth century "even the leaders of the governing class (in the Ottoman Empire) were conscious of no inferiority in comparison with Europe".[11]

This consciousness of inferiority *vis-à-vis* the West, and the desire to catch up with it, and thereby free themselves from it, ignited the whole process of Arab political thinking in the 19th century. The pain of this consciousness cannot be over-emphasized, nor the urgency of the desire to be free from it. This was particularly true in the case of the Moslems who confronted the West at the zenith of its power in the 19th century.

9 *ibid.*, p. 215.
10 *ibid.*, pp. 215-216.
11 *ibid.*, p. 19.

All orthodox adherents of religion believe their religion to be the right one (otherwise why subscribe to it, or have ancestors who did ?). From this, easily and indeed inevitably, follows their belief that they are God's Chosen People, or at least, the wisest of His children (else why missionaries ?).

Now, an Ogden Nash can make fun of this :

The Chosen People

How odd,
Of God,
To choose,
The Jews.

But this belief, in one form or another, seems to be very real and essential to all religious minds.

It is especially real to the mind of the orthodox Moslem. The Moslem's Prophet is the Last of the Apostles, *khatim al-anbiyya'*. Islam concludes, completes, and perfects all previous religions. The Quran explicitly tells the Moslems: "You are the best nation raised up for men; you enjoin good and forbid evil and you believe in Allah. And if the People of the Book had believed, it would have been better for them." (*al-'Imran*, 110). Further, the Moslem lives in the superior *Dar al-Islam*, Abode of Islam, and it is his duty to war on, and convert the inferior *Dar al-Harb*, Abode of War, in which non-Moslems live.

Furthermore, as Wilfred Cantwell Smith aptly observes, there is the social, practical, and dynamic character of the faith of Islam, and its association with power and success. The first year of Islamic history "1 A. H. (622 A. D.) — is not the year of Muhammed's birth (as would parallel the Christian case), or even that in which the revelations began to come to him, but the year when the nascent Muslim community came to political power. Muhammed and his small body of followers, having shifted from Makkah to Madinah, established themselves as an autonomous com-

munity".[12] Eventually this community's "armies won battles, its decrees were obeyed, its letters of credit were honoured, its architecture was magnificent, its poetry charming, its scholarship imposing, its mathematics bold, its technology effective."[13]

The realization that their once-glorious world was dead, and the awareness of their present decadence and weakness was revealed to the Arabs by their contact with the West. This contact may be dated from the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798.

II

The choice of the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798, as marking the beginning of the period of Western contact with the modern Arab world, is made with some hesitation. Dating whole historical epochs and phenomena from a single year or a single event, is, at best, somewhat superficial, and, at its worst, entirely false. There is, moreover, a tendency among some writers to claim for the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt a host of almost magical, directly beneficial effects on modern Egyptian and Arab revival that historical evidence does not support.[14] But, above all, the arrival of Napoleon's squadrons at Abu Qir Bay in July 1798 may in no way be likened to the arrival of Commodore Perry's squadron at Yedo Bay in July 1853. Unlike Japan, Egypt had always maintained contact with the West. It was part of the Ottoman Empire, and the Ottoman Empire was never wholly isolated from Europe. Even in the eighteenth century, when Egypt maintained only a feeble contact with the Ottoman Empire, we find the British and the French concluding with the Mamluk beys commercial agreements that ensured them trade-routes through Egypt.[15] Many

12 W. C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, (London, 1957), pp. 15-16.

13 *ibid.*, p. 28.

14 For a critique of this tendency, see Sati' al-Husry, *Ara' wa Ahadith fi al-Tarikh wa al-Ijtima'*, (Beirut, 1960), pp. 68-128.

15 H. Dodwell, *The Founder of Modern Egypt, A Study of Muhammed Ali*, (London, 1931), pp. 4-6.

European merchants lived in Cairo and Alexandria. Jabarti calls these resident foreigners "the native *franj*" (Franks), and he clearly distinguishes them from "the native Christians, the Copts, the Syrians, and the Greeks ".[16] Indeed, Napoleon, in his celebrated first proclamation to the Egyptians, cited the oppressive and vexatious conduct of the Mamluk beys towards French citizens and French traders, as a cause of the Egyptian invasion which he was undertaking.[17]

Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, the Napoleonic invasion can, and indeed should, be regarded as the beginning of modern Arab contact with Western culture. There is no doubt that this invasion initiated the process of direct and sustained Western intervention in the Arab world. But more important, this contact was to be in the nature of a pure Toynbeean "encounter between civilizations" and a "war of the worlds". Since the Crusades, Arab contact with the West was chiefly of an economic and commercial nature. After 1798, this acquired the form of Western armed inroads into the Arab world. In this new form of encounter, the Arab mind was to be deeply and painfully impressed by the cultural superiority of the West.

II

For a delineation of the earliest impressions and effects made by this Western impact on the Arab mind, we must turn to the Egyptian historian 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti (d. 1882). Jabarti's classic *'Aja'b al-Athar fi al-Tarajim wa al-Akhbar* contains a most detailed and faithful account of the Napoleonic invasion and occupation of Egypt. Although an old-fashioned chronicler, and a pre-Splenger-Toynbee historian, Jabarti, like most historians before and after him, could not resist expressing his personal views on the events

16 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *'Aja'b al-Athar fi al-Tarajim wa al-Akhbar*, (Cairo, 1904), Vol. III, pp. 7. 15. 80. 142.

17 *ibid.*, p. 4.

he was recording. His views were, assuredly, those of an educated Moslem Arab of his day. So he should be regarded as the earliest member of the Arab intelligentsia that was later to evolve the political thought of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, his views merit examination.

When this is done we are struck, above all, by Jabarti's deep hostility to the French. The French, as we know, had made every attempt to win over the Egyptians, and to make common cause with them against the Mamluks who were unpopular in Egypt. In his chronicle Jabarti incorporates the full texts of their proclamations to the Egyptians. In his first proclamation Napoleon attacks the rapacity and the oppression of the Mamluks, and tells the Egyptians that he "had come only to rescue your rights from the hands of the oppressors". He tells them that: "All men are equal before God. Only wisdom, talents, and virtues create differences between them".[18] But all this did not impress Jabarti. He was not won over. He steadfastly regarded the French occupation as an act of aggression and the French as infidel foreigners. The Moroccans and the Maltese who cooperated with them he called spies.[19] And an Egyptian who is executed by the French is a *shahid*, a martyr.[20]

Jabarti was bewildered by the scientific and technical achievements of the French, and somewhat sarcastic about them. He describes with amazement some scientific experiments that he watched at the Institut d'Egypte, and ends his account by telling us that "minds like ours cannot comprehend" their results.[21]

The French wished to impress and strike the imagination of the Egyptians, and so they had built a *Montgolfière*, a fire balloon, and tried to launch it before the inhabitants of

18 *ibid.*, p. 4.
19 *ibid.*
20 *ibid.*, p. 64.
21 *ibid.*, p. 37.

Cairo.[22] Two ascension attempts were complete failures. Jabarti witnessed both of these. He records their failure with sarcasm and some relish, reminiscent of the latter-day glee of some Arab intellectuals over the failure of American space missiles. The failure of the first attempt demonstrated to Jabarti that the French balloon was similar to the local kites, and he tells us that this attempt disproved the truth of what the French claimed their balloon to be: something like a ship that flies in the air, and on which human beings could travel to far away countries, to uncover the news and to deliver messages.[23] Jabarti remarks that had the second balloon been carried away by the wind and thus disappeared from the spectators' view the French would have accomplished their trick, and declared that it had journeyed to far away lands.[24]

However, Jabarti was definitely impressed by two achievements of the French: their military might and their justice. He tells us that the Mamluk beys were not disturbed by the news of the arrival of the *franj*, relying on Mamluk might and claiming that all the *franj* could not stand up to them, and that they could tread on them with their horses.[25] But the French had an abundance of war materials, superiority of arms, and a special way of fighting.[26] The French won the war, and in two insurrections of Cairo the supremacy of French arms and the French art of war were once again demonstrated.[27]

Jabarti was even more impressed by French justice. When General Kléber, Napoleon's successor in command of the French army in Egypt, was assassinated by Sulaiman al-Halabi, he notes that Sulaiman al-Halabi and his

22 F. Charles-Roux, *Bonaparte: Governor of Egypt*, (London, 1937), p. 171.

23 Jabarti, Vol, III, p. 33.

24 *ibid.*, p. 42.

25 *ibid.*, p. 2.

26 *ibid.*, pp. 3, 8, 27.

27 *ibid.*, pp. 27, 106.

associates were not immediately put to death but were all given a trial, even though the killer confessed to his crime. He incorporated in his chronicle the complete minutes of this trial, as published by the French authorities. He states that he is incorporating these minutes to satisfy the curiosity of people concerning the incident and the process of trial, and because he found that these minutes contain an example of how judgment was carried out and regulated "by those people who are governed by reason, and have no religion (sic)". This exemplary conduct he contrasts with the murders and evil actions of "ruffian soldiers, who profess Islam and pretend to be *mujahids* (fighters in holy Islamic wars").[28]

Thus, at the very first contact with the West, the Arab mind was to recognize some material and moral Western superiority. This fact, first demonstrated in the Battle of the Pyramids, the uprisings of Cairo against a foreign army of occupation, and the trial of a young political terrorist from Aleppo, was to set the modern Arab mind on its course of political thinking.

[28] *ibid.*, p. 122.

al-Tahtawi

CHAPTER II

RIFA'A al-TAHTAWI

The Man[1]

Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi was born in 1801 — the year the French evacuated Egypt. His parents were poor but of noble descent, *sayyids*, descendants of the Prophet. Tahtawi's education was traditional and orthodox: as a child he learned the Quran, entered the Azhar in 1817 when he was only 16, left it 7 years later, and was appointed an *imam*, a preacher and leader of prayer, in the Egyptian army. In 1825 he was appointed an *imam* to the first educational mission that Mohammed 'Ali sent to Europe. Previously, Tahtawi had never met a foreigner, knew not a word of any foreign language, and had never been as far away as Alexandria. As the *imam* of the mission he was neither required to study nor to learn French. His duties were restricted purely to the leadership of the forty members of the mission in prayer and to the administration of their religious needs and duties. Mohammed 'Ali did not want his students to lose their religion in Europe.

Tahtawi and the mission left Alexandria for France in 1826. They arrived at Marseilles in 33 days. Tahtawi taught himself the French alphabet abroad ship, and shortly after his arrival in Paris begged the authorities in Cairo to allow him to study with the other members of the mission. His request was granted. Thus began the education (the re-education, as it were) of Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi in his 25th year.

[1] The data in this biographical sketch are almost exclusively drawn from *Hilyat al-Zaman bi Manaqib Khadim al-Watan*, (Cairo 1958), a short biography of Tahtawi by Salih Majdi, a pupil, associative, and admirer of Tahtawi.

His book *Takhlis al Ibriz fi Talkhis Paris*, "The Extraction of Gold from a Review of Paris", is the account of that education. It could be given the title of "The Education of Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi". But, as we shall see, the conseqquences of that education were far more radical and revolutionary, than anything a Henry Adams could visualize. Tahtawi remained five years in Paris — two years less than his stay at the Azhar. However, these five years were rich in intellectual adventure. In Paris he read, besides French newspapers, Racine, Rousseau, Voltaire, Chesterfield's letters, and Montesquieu.

These years were also rich in social adventures. He was the first Arab innocent abroad to leave us a record of his observations. And innocent he was, indeed! In the *Talkhis* he describes how he learned table manners — he had never eaten at a table before. He also observed that Frenchmen rose when their women entered a room; he described western mixed dancing — on that subject he was indeed more advanced than some of his successors. He attended the opera, the theatre, strolled in parks and public gardens. He also described the revolution of 1830, which he witnessed, and which left a deep imprint on him. After the revolution the trial of Polignac and some of his ministers left him profoundly impressed by French justice.

Upon his return to Egypt in 1831, he was appointed headmaster of the Medical School at Abu Za'bal. After that he became a translator at the Artillery School at Tura. In 1835 he was appointed Dirctor of the School for foreign languages established in Cairo by Mohammed 'Ali. It was Tahtawi himself who suggested the school to Mohammed 'Ali. This institution subsequently played an important role in the history of Arab intellectual renaissance. Tahtawi and the students of this school were to translate 2,000 books from foreign languages.[2] These translations deal with a wide

[2] Mohammed Qardi Pasha, *Ma'lumat Jughrafiyya*, cited by 'Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi'i, *'Asr Mohammed 'Ali*, (Cairo, 1947), p. 414.

variety of subjects.

In 1849 'Abbas I closed this school and sent Tahtawi to act as the headmaster of a high school of 250 boys in Khartum, Sudan. It was an exile that lasted four years. On the death of 'Abbas I Tahtawi returned to Cairo. In 1825 he was appointed the Director of Military School. When this school ultimately closed Tahtawi found himself unemployed. However, Isma'il Pasha recalled him to service. And as a member of the Educational Commission founded by Isma'il he took part in directing the educational policy of Egypt. He also supervised the translations of foreign books carried out in Egypt, and acted as the editor-in-chief of the *Journal Officiel.* He died in 1873 at the age of 75.

Like his ideas, his life was a good example, indeed a prototype, of the lives of many subsequent Arab intellectuals — study in Europe at government expense, government service, bureaucratic intrigues and quarrels, fall from power, return to power, government service, and finally death.

In spite of his active public life, Tahtawi found time for a great deal of translation and writing. From the French he translated works of geography, history, military manuals, *Le Code Civil, Le Code de Commerce,* Fénélon's novel *Les Aventures de Télémaque,* even some poetry. He wrote a biography of the Prophet, the first volume of a history of Egypt, a book on education, patriotic poetry, and many articles for the *Journal Officiel.* For our purposes the most important works are his first book *Takhlis al-Ibriz* and *Manahij al-Albab al-Misriyya* which he wrote towards the end of his life.

Attitude Towards the West

In all his works, from the *Takhlis* down to *Manahij,* Tahtawi expressed his deep admiration for Western civilization and culture. He readily admitted that this civilization was superior to his own. He exhorted his people to follow and adopt this superior Western civilization to rid themselves of their weaknesses and their backwardness. Thus at the very

beginning of *Takhlis*, he states that his purpose is to exhort Islamic lands to look for arts, sciences, and crafts in the West, "since their perfection in the European countries is a known and an established fact, and it is right that the right be followed".[3] He goes on to relate how throughout his stay abroad he grieved that Europe enjoyed the arts, sciences, and crafts, while Moslem countries lacked them.[4]

But Tahtawi does not limit his observation of Western superiority to the material side alone. He also extends this Western superiority to the abstract moral and spiritual spheres. In the *Manahij* he tells us that civilization has two origins: a material one, and an abstract, non-material one.[5] In the *Takhlis* he admitted to the superiority of the French and the Christians in both spheres. Throughout this book he praises them for their energy, truthfulness, justice, equity, and strength of character. He tells us that America is a land of *kufr* (unbelieving, infidels), to which Islam did not extend. Why has this happened? Because the *franj* (Franks, Westerners) moved there, and sent missionaries who converted its inhabitants to Christianity. This they were able to accomplish because of their mastery of the science of navigation, knowledge of astronomy and geography, and their inclination to business and commerce and a love of travel.[6] "Look at al-Andalus (Spain)" he tells us in another place, "it has been in the hands of Spanish Christians for nearly 350 years." Why? Because the *franj* have become strong "by their ingenuity and management, nay their justice, and their knowledge of warfare and their inventions in it. And if Islam was not supported by the power of God Almighty, it would have been as nothing, in comparison with their (the *franj*) strength, population, wealth, proficiency, and other matters".[7]

3 *Takhlis*, (Cairo, 1834), p. 4.

4 *ibid.*

5 *ibid.*, p. 9.

6 *ibid.*, p. 16.

7 *ibid.*, p. 8.

The traditional orthodox Moslem believer could conceivably rationalize, with comparative ease, Western Christian superiority in the material sphere. But the moral sphere was another matter. Here, as we know, his Prophet is the Last of Prophets, and his religion completes and concludes all earlier religions. The Quran tells him: "You are the best nation raised up for men". Now, however, he finds himself a member of a backward, if not inferior, people. Spain is lost because of a lack of justice. There are no Moslems in America because the spirit of adventure and desire to travel is lacking in a people, to whom *jihad* (holy war) for the spread of Islam, is a religious duty.

How is the orthodox Moslem to reconcile his traditional inherited beliefs about himself and his religion with his present undeniable and admitted weakness *vis-à-vis* the Christian West? This is the greatest and most painful dilemma that the orthodox Moslem must face. Also, how is he to reconcile some aspects of Western civilization, Western institutions, and Western conduct (which he admits are superior to his own, and therefore yearns to adopt) with his traditional institutions and the teachings of his religion?

To resolve these two dilemmas the modern Arab thinker chooses a rationalism which ends in secularism; or stays within the traditional inherited fold and attempts to reconcile, in some way, Western institutions and ways of conduct that he wants to adopt, with his traditional institutions and with the principles of Islam. Both these attitudes are to be found in Tahtawi's thought.

Rationalism and Secularism

Tahtawi was a good Moslem — that is, good in the sense that he was an orthodox Moslem. For example, he observed all Islamic regulations while living in Paris. For him France is "the land of *al kufr wa al-'inad*": "the land of infidels, unbelief, pigheaded stubbornness".[8] and it is here, in infidel

[8] *ibid.*, p. 5.

France and the West, that he faced the above mentioned dilemma. He tells us, for example, of the cleanliness of the French, how they kept the ship he travelled on scrubbed, how they cleaned and aired his bed..... etc. And then he hastens to add: "although cleanliness is of the Faith, *'iman*, and they (the French) have not so much as a particle of it".[9] Here he is manifestly referring to the saying of the Prophet: "Cleanliness is of the faith."

However, Tahtawi does not ascribe this particular Western superiority, or any other superiority for that matter, to Christianity. Thus, it is the *franj* Christians who are clean, while the Copts of Egypt are filthy.[10] It is the rationalism of the French, and not their religion, that wins his admiration. And here again he contrasts their intelligence and rationalism with the stupidity and weakmindedness of the Egyptian Copts.[11] The French, according to Tahtawi "have nothing of the Christian religion but the name".[12] And he tells us that it is reported that the majority of the *franj* countries are like the French in the matter of religion.[13] He tells us that French people approve or disapprove by their reason.[14] And he praises Parisians for not being the slaves of tradition and authority, and for always searching for the origin of all matters.[15]

In describing the events he observed in France, and particularly the revolution of 1830, Tahtawi exhibits strong anti-clerical sentiments. He tells us of the occupation of Algeria by the French while he was in Paris and how the Archbishop congratulated Charles X on this, and thanked Almighty God for a great victory of Christians over Moslems,

9 *ibid.*, p. 26.
10 *ibid.*, pp. 25, 82.
11 *ibid.*, p. 49.
12 *ibid.*, p. 119.
13 *ibid.*
14 *ibid.*, p. 53.
15 *ibid.*, p. 49.

"whereas," he tells us, "the war between the French and the people of Algeria is but a mere political affair, commercial and business quarrels, and altercations and disputes resulting from pride and arrogance."[16]

At the very beginning of the *Takhlis*, Tahtawi states that he will record his observations of things he appreciated and admired in France, he then adds: "and it is known that I only appreciate that which is not different or contrary to the text of the Mohammedan *shari'a*".[17] However, further in book, Tahtawi translates the Charter, the constitution of Louis XVIII, which he admires. He introduces his translation thus: "It (the charter) contains points that no reasonable being would deny as pertaining to justice... we will bring it to your attention, *although most of it is not in the Quran of Allah and the Tradition of His Messenger*, so that you will know their (the French) reason had come to the conclusion that justice and equity are among the causes of civilization and the well-being of people, and how the rulers and the citizens have submitted (to these principles), with the result that their country developed, their knowledge increased, their riches accumulated and their hearts dwelt in peace. So you never hear anyone complaining of injustice, and justice is the foundation of civilization."[18]

Tahtawi was, of course, painting a very rosy and idealistic picture of the state of affairs in France. Let us bear in mind that in less than forty years the Paris in which no one complained of injustice was due for the Paris Commune, which was to inspire Marx to write "The Civil War in France", But leaving aside the accuracy of Tahtawi's image, let us note that this perfect state of affairs, which has ensured the satisfaction and happiness of mankind, is obtained outside of, if not in contradiction to, the Islamic *shari'a* by the use

16 *ibid.*, p. 173.

17 *ibid.*, p. 4.

18 *ibid.*, p. 66. Italics mine.

of mere reason. Here, plainly, is the beginning of modern secularism and rationalism in Arab thought.

To the traditional Moslem mind happiness for mankind in this world and in the next is secured only through Islam and obedience to the *shari'a*. The concept of "The Happiness of the Two Abodes" is most clear and explicit. According to it, happiness in this life, *al-Hayat al-Ula, al-Duniyya* (the nearer abode or dwelling place), and in the afterlife, *al-Hayat al-Ukhra*, the *al-Dar al-Akhira* (the last dwelling or abode), is gained through Islam and obedience to its teachings.

But Tahtawi finds happiness in this world outside the bounds of Islam. Tahtawi, in effect, finds happiness obtainable in this world, outside the bound of all religions. He sees the French and the Parisians, whom he believes so blissfully satisfied, not observing the commands of their own religion and having "nothing of the Christian religion but the name". The laws of the French are their *shari'a*,[19] and these laws of the French "are not derived from holy books, but are taken from other laws, most of which are political, and these are totally different from the *shari'a* (religious laws)".[20]

Thus the dichotomy of the religious and the political spheres is clear in Tahtawi's mind. Even more radical in an orthodox Moslem, Tahtawi's mind establishes for itself the possibility of obtaining good government, justice, and general welfare and happiness through recourse to the purely political sphere.

Reconciliation

Tahtawi also takes the second attitude we have referred to. He tries to stay within the inherited traditional bounds, and attempts to reconcile Western institutions and modes

19 *ibid.*, p. 158.
20 *ibid.*, p. 77.

of life and thought with the teachings of Islam. Here he anticipates the modern reformer who tries to carry out his modernization inside, and not outside, the framework of Islam. So Tahtawi, like the modern reformer, interprets this framework freely, pragmatically, bending it, shaping it, and some might say even twisting it out of recognition, to permit the introduction of the innovations he longs to borrow from the West.

With Tahtawi this process of pragmatic adaptation and reconciliation was not an unconscious one. In both *Takhlis* and *Manahij* he is explicit in expressing his desire to adopt the things he admires in the West, the things which make the West strong and content. At the beginning of *Takhlis* he tells the reader that he will report on all the wonders he saw on his trip and during his stay in a Paris that was prosperous with sciences, arts, wonderful justice, and a remarkable equity "that should have rather been in the lands of Islam and countries of the *shari'a* of the Prophet."[21]

Thus, to adopt those aspects of Western civilization which he finds useful and attractive, he must prove that they are in no way contradictory to Islam; indeed, that they are in reality Islamic institutions and practices. Thus, in advocating a more modern business and commercial life, he writes that books of Islamic *fiqh* organize this life, and that regulations of European business, such as the Bill of Exchange, have been derived from them.[22] He advocates the teaching of modern sciences in the Azhar, and tells us that these sciences which might appear to be foreign are actually Islamic sciences from Arabic books that foreigners have conveyed to their language.[23]

In all this, Tahtawi seems to be quite aware of what he is doing. Thus he tells us that the *shari'a* system prevailing in

21 *ibid.*, p. 20.

22 *Manahij.*, (Cairo, 1912), p. 162.

23 *ibid.*, p. 373.

a country might be different from the political good "except by interpretation of this political good that will make it tally with the *shari'a.*"[24]

The differences in the readings of the *shari'a,* and those that exist between its different schools or rites, *al-madhahib,* supply Tahtawi with the interpretations he needs. After telling us that present conditions necessitate that cases *(qadayya)* and judgments be dealt with in accordance with the practices of the age and the exchanges between the nations of the world, he finds the *shari'a* no hindrance to that "as the disagreement of schools of the *imams* is a blessing, and the permissibility of *taqlid* of any one of them, and to have recourse to the *ijtihad* of the other schools is a boon."[25] Tahtawi then goes on to support his attitude on this subject by the inclusion of the full text of a *fatwa* by a Shafi'i *'alim.* This *fatwa* allows a person to transfer a case to the judgment of a school of law he does not belong to, and to follow its interpretation; and also permits *taqlid* (adoption of the utterances or actions of the authority of predecessors capable of *ijtihad*) of authorities other than the four Imams, the founders of the four orthodox schools of law (i.e. of Awzai'i, for example).[26]

Tahtawi had, in fact, practised what he advocates here, upon his first contact with the West. One of the things he admired in France was the taxation system. Commenting on the article of the Louis XVIII Constitution which deals with it, he informs us that this article is "purely political" (as opposite to religious), and then tells us that if taxes were organized in Islamic countries in the same manner, people would be happy. He then hastens to add: "and this (system of taxation) might have an origin in the *shari'a,* according to some sayings of Imam Abu Hanifa".[27] Thus, Tahtawi,

24 *ibid.,* p. 24.
25 *ibid.,* p. 388.
26 *ibid.,* pp. 388-389.
27 *Takhlis,* p. 73.

who is a Shafi'i, recommends a justification of the adoption of a non-religious Western system of taxation, on the basis of the Hanafi doctrine.

Political Ideas

Here we should examine the political ideas of Tahtawi. In *Takhlis* he describes and comments on the political life and institutions he observed in France. In *Manahij* he gives us, in a more or less systematic manner, his political ideas and ideals.

Let us start with the earlier book. Here one is struck by the scope and acuteness of his observations and description of all facets of Western political life. Almost nothing escapes his attention: from the freedom of the French press,[28] to the doctrine of the balance of power in Europe.[29]

But what impresses him most in French political life is the existence of justice and equity.[30] He declares that what the French call "liberty" is the very same thing "that we call justice and equity, because rule by liberty (liberal rule) is the establishment of equality before law, whereby no ruler oppresses any man, and it is laws which govern and are considered."[31]

All through his book we see that liberty, justice and equity, are closely related to the rule of law. He stresses, that it is law which governs France. What are his observations on French law? First, that this law is secular and man-made. He tells us: "Laws are the *shari'a* of the French."[32] Second, that laws are not made except by the agreement of three opinions: the king and the two Chambers of Parliament, *Chambre des Pairs* and *Chambre des Deputés*.[33] The King of France has full powers, on condition of obtaining

28 *ibid.*, p. 135.
29 *ibid.*, p. 176.
30 *ibid.*, p. 66.
31 *ibid.*, p. 73.
32 *ibid.*, p. 158.
33 *ibid.*, p. 159.

the consent of these two chambers[34]. He is not absolute, "and French politics are a form of a restricting law, so that the ruler is the king, on condition that he acts in accordance with what is contained in the laws, to which the members of the (two) chambers consent."[35]

He comments on the first article of *La Charte*, (the Constitution of Louis XVIII). He tells us that this article which states that all Frenchmen are equal before the law, means that there are no differences among Frenchmen, high or low, in the execution of the regulations contained in the law. "Even legal action is brought against the king, and the sentence is carried out on him, as it is on others; so consider this first article which has great power in establishing justice, coming to the aid of the oppressed, and conciliating the poor in that they are as the mighty,in view of the execution of the laws."[36]

Tahtawi exhibits an extraordinary grasp of the functions and nature of the two chambers of Parliament. Members of the *Chambre des Deputés*, he informs us, are "the delegates of subjects (of the state), and their protectors and speak for the subjects, it is as if the subjects were governing themselves, and preventing by themselves an oppression of themselves."[37] This chamber's duty is to examine the laws, policies, ordinances, to discuss the budget of state, to argue it, and to defend the subjects in matters of taxes and custom duties, thereby eliminating injustice and oppression.[38] Membership in the *Chambre des Pairs*, on the other hand, is hereditary, and this chamber sides with the king and protects the prerogatives of the Crown.[39]

And finally, we must note that Tahtawi, in describing French parliamentary life and process, has recourse in

34 *ibid.*, p. 64.
35 *ibid.*, p. 66.
36 *ibid.*, pp. 72-73.
37 *ibid.*, p. 75.
38 *ibid.*, p. 65.
39 *ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

Takhlis to the classical Arabic word *mashura*,[40] from *al-shura* (consultation), an Islamic concept, later to be made the basis for the justification for adopting the parliamentary form of government.

Manahij

In *Manahij al-Albab al-Misriyya fi Mabahij al-Adab al-'Asriyya*, which can be loosely translated as "The Programmes or Paths for Egyptian Minds into the Joys of Modern Arts"; written thirty-five years after *Takhlis*, Tahtawi works out the observations of his first book into something akin to a political theory. This book, written after a whole life-time of practical experience, is intended, as its very title indicates, to be a programme for the modernization of Egypt. He wrote it "because it is the duty of every member to assist his community, and do whatever he is capable of for the furtherance of his country's interests", and he has therefore, as he says, "attempted my best and given what I have to give."[41]

Hardly an aspect of Egyptian life escapes his analysis. But here we are concerned with his political ideas. Tahtawi's interest in politics had deepened since his first book. "Politics," he tells us, "is all that relates to the state, its authority and regulations, and its relations and connections."[42] The regulations by which a kingdom is administered "are called the art of civil politics, or the art of administration, or the science of administering a kingdom".[43] And he recommends that the principles of politics and administration be taught to young men in Egypt "after (they have) completed the learning of the Quran, the (religious) beliefs, and the principles of the Arabic language."[44] Teaching youth the principles

40 *e.g.*, pp. 64, 76, 77, 157, 166.
41 *Manahij*, p. 4.
42 *ibid.*, p. 350.
43 *ibid.*
44 *ibid.*

of politics will make them better men and better citizens.[45] In the past, politics were not taught because the heads of states claimed that politics were a secret of the state, and because the word "politics" had the connotation of trickery, falsehood, and cunning, suitable only for tyrannical states.[46] This deep interest of Tahtawi in politics was indeed novel. The more so because only one book on politics was mentioned by Jabarti as having been written in the eighteenth century.[47]

Central to Tahtawi's political theory is his doctrine of the General or Public Good. What is this Public Good? In the beginning of his book he states that there are two means by which progress and the perfection of civilization are attained: Religion and Public Good.[48] These he equates with the two origins of civilization: the non-material, ethical, behavioral "meaning civilization in religion and the *shari'a*;[49] and the material origin of civilization, which means progress in the Public Good, such as agriculture, commerce, and industry.[50]

Throughout his book he discusses agriculture, commerce, industry and the economic life under the heading of Public Good. However, he does not always maintain the dichotomy he had established between the material Public Good, and the non-material realms. Thus, he speaks of wordly *and* religious Public Good.[51] The Public Good can be *shari'a* Good, when it entails the giving of alms and *waqfs* for the welfare of a town or the comfort of the people of a country.[52] It can also be political when it entails the acquisition

45 *ibid.*, pp. 350-351.

46 *ibid.*, pp. 351-352.

47 J. Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*, (London, 1938), p. 83.

48 *Manahij*, pp. 7-8.

49 *ibid.*, p. 9.

50 *ibid.*

51 *ibid.*, p. 234.

52 *ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

and spending of money for good works, and the lessening of hardships for human beings.[53] Tahtawi supports the legality of cooperation for the achievement of the Public Good by Quranic verses and quotations from the Prophet.[54]

An orderly, civilized society is in need of two great forces: the force of the rulers or of the government, which procures *al-masalih* (the public interest or welfare) and wards off evils; and the force of the ruled or of the governed, which possesses liberty and enjoys the Public Good. From the governing or ruling force, which is also called "the government" and "the monarchy", there emanate three rays, which are called the corner-stones of government and its three powers: the legislative, the judiciary, and the executive. These three powers revert and belong to one single power: "the monarchical power bound by laws."[55] Thus the judicial power belongs to the King, because the judges are his delegates and appointees.[56] However, for Tahtawi, the King is not an absolute ruler. He employs all the traditional Islamic terms when he writes about him: he is a *wali al-amr*, he is the Caliph of God on earth, he is chosen by God to shepherd his *ra'aya* (the flock, i.e. the subjects). But he is chosen by God to be the *malik* (king) of his subjects, and not their *maalik* (possessor).[57] The King rules his subjects "in accordance with laws",[58] which are public and known.[59] Kings "have rights which are called privileges, and they have duties towards their subjects."[60] Khedive Isma'il is highly praised by Tahtawi for convening a Chamber of Deputies. It is by this Chamber that the

53 *ibid.*, p. 24.
54 *ibid.*, pp. 24-31.
55 *ibid.*, p. 349.
56 *ibid.*
57 *ibid.*, p. 356.
58 *ibid.*, p. 353.
59 *ibid.*, p. 352.
60 *ibid.*, p. 354.

Khedive will administer his duties towards his subjects.[61]

The subjects, on the other hand, have their duties towards society and the state, as well as their rights. They should be hard-working active citizens,[62] who place the welfare of the community and society above their personal interest.[63] They should also serve their country by doing military service and paying taxes.[64] They must learn that their private and personal interests are not achieved "except by realizing *al-Maslaha al-'Umumiyya* (the common or public interest), which is the interest of the government (or state), which in turn is the interest of *al-watan (la patrie).*"[65] Indeed the strength and the prosperity of a society result from common justice and equity.[66]

Economic Ideas

Because the economic ideas of Tahtawi were closely linked with his political ideas and his doctrine of Public Good; they therefore merit consideration. According to Tahtawi, the material Public Good, whose attainment was essential for the modernization of Egypt, consisted of agricultural, commercial, and industrial activities.[67] These corresponded to the three sources of wealth: agriculture, commerce, and industry.[68] However, the primary source of all wealth is labor. When Tahtawi writes of agricultural land, he tells us there is a difference of opinion as to whether the source of wealth and riches and the basis of livelihood is the land, with labor merely a tool and means; or whether labor is the basis of wealth, riches, and happiness. Tahtawi emphatically supports the latter theory. "Merit belongs to

61 *ibid.*, p. 323.
62 *ibid.*, chapter 4.
63 *ibid.*, p. 130.
64 *ibid.*, p. 350.
65 *ibid.*, p. 351.
66 *ibid.*, p. 130.
67 *ibid.*, p. 9, 129.
68 *ibid.*, p. 80.

labor" he writes, "the merit of land is secondary and consequential".[69] "Labor gives value to all things".[70] Thus, even air and water, which are free, neither sold nor bought, will have a value when labor is exerted to bring them to whoever is in need of them. When thirsty, the French troops who occupied Egypt had to pay for the water brought to them from the river. Man will also pay for the labor of a servant who opens the windows of his home to let in the needed air. Real-estate which gets the benefit of air and water is thereby made more valuable. Fire and herbage (pasture) are like air and water, writes Tahtawi and supports this view by a tradition of the Prophet: "All men share in three things: water, herbage, (pasture), and fire." "It is therefore" he comments, "not permissible for anyone to interdict them, nor for the *imam* to grant them."[71]

This Marxist analysis of the nature of wealth and labor leads Tahtawi to evolve something akin to the Marxist theory of Surplus Value and Labor, and then to a criticism of Egyptian landowners. He tells us that the landowners group (*al-Mulak, Tai'fat al-Mulak*) reaps the fruits of agriculture and monopolizes its products. This group, to the exclusion of everybody else engaged in agriculture, enjoys the greatest privileges, benefits from its general produce, leaving almost nothing to others. Whilst this group enjoys the products of labor, it pays laborers only what it deems to be an appropriate wage — which is excessively low. But landowners justified their conduct by the right of ownership and appropriation of land. They believe that "they are more deserving of the riches and the happiness produced by labor in agriculture, while all other citizens of the state deserve nothing of what the land produces, except as a return of their services and usefulness to (the owners') lands." The underpaying of hired labor, writes Tahtawi, cannot be

69 *ibid.*, p. 84.

70 *ibid.*

71 *ibid.*, p. 85.

justified — as landowners do — by the reasoning that it is the landowners who spend their capital, *ra's al-mal*, on land, and that it is this capital, and not the labor of the fellah, which produces profits.[72]

Tahtawi applies this concept of capital and labor to the industrial sector of economic activity as well. He tells us that the value of manufactured industrial goods is increased by the worker who is largely responsible for the owners' profits. The wages of hired labor, he writes, cost the factory owner nothing, "as they are mostly taken from surplus profits that have resulted from the labor of the worker". Then he goes on to explain how profit and capital are accumulated by the labor of industrial workers.[73]

It is likely that Tahtawi, like Marx, derived his concept of labor from Adam Smith and Ricardo's doctrine of labor value. However, his evolution of a crude Marxist concept of surplus value and labor is more difficult to explain, and therefore more noteworthy. Marx's *Capital* was first published in German, a language he did not know, in the year 1867, and Tahtawi's *Manahij* in 1869.[74]

Tahtawi is naturally more concerned with agriculture, and the political consequences of underpaying agricultural labor. Agricultural laborers, he writes, are forced to work for whatever they are paid by landowners, even when the wages they receive are infinitesimal and unequal to the value of their labor. This is particularly true in districts that are over-populated by laborers who, as a result, compete with each other and lower wages in the interests of landowners.[75] This underpayment of labor, based on the ownership of land and the landowner's expenditure from his capital on agriculture, does not induce any love of the hired labourer to the landowner. "He who plants thorns does not reap

72 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, pp. 93-96.

73 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

74 A French translation of Das Kapital was published in 1875.

75 *Manahij*, p. 94.

grapes". All this leads to the rise of envy, abuse, fraud, and hatred, and the destruction of Islamic brotherhood among the citizens of the county (*al-watan*), who are duty-bound to cooperate with each other for the welfare of their country, because of the "brotherhood of country" as well as the "brotherhood of religion".[76] To support this view, Tahtawi quotes and interprets several Quranic verses and *hadiths*.

Patriotism

Patriotism is a dominant motif in all of Tahtawi's writings, whether prose or poetry. The words *watan* and *hub al-watan* (country and love of country) occur frequently. According to him, the very desire for progress and modernization which is the motive-force behind his thinking, arises solely from the love of one's country.[77] His call for the emergence and strengthening of patriotism in the hearts of his contemporaries is almost always supported by a *hadith* of the Prophet: "Love of one's country is part of the Faith" ("*hub al-watan min al-'imam*"). However, both the term *watan* and Tahtawi's conception of it are novel.

In classical Arabic the word *watan* means the place of birth and/or residence; and Arabic dictionaries published as late as 1867, and even later, retain this definition, quoting the hadith "*hub al-watan min al-'iman*" in this context. The word *wataniyya* does not exist in them.[78] And in Tahtawi's writings the word *watan* sometimes occurs in its classical sense. Thus he speaks of Corsica as the *watan* of Napoleon,[79] and of Tahta as his own *watan*.[80] But the *watan* Tahtawi urges his contemporaries to love and to work for, is more

76 *ibid.*, pp. 96-99.

77 *ibid.*, p. 10.

78 Butrus al-Bustani's *Muhit al-Muhit* (1867). See also Louis Ma'louf, *Al-Munjid* (1908).

79 *Takhlis*, p. 30.

80 A passage quoted in 'Abd al-Latif Hamza, *Adab al-Maqala al-Sahafiyya fi Misr*, (Cairo, 1950), Vol, I, pp. 140-141.

than their birthplace. It is the Western *patrie*. And according to the Egyptian historian 'Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi'i Tahtawi is the first person to use the word *watan* and its derivations in this particular sense.[81] *Watan* came to mean for Tahtawi a territorial nation - state inhabited by a socio-ethnic group. The sons of a fatherland, *abna' al-watan*, are united in speaking one language, having the same customs and characteristics, and obeying one state and one law.[82] He does not deny the bond of Islam and the existence of an Islamic community; he even goes so far as to say that any Islamic kingdom is the *watan* of all Moslems who reside in it.[83] But within this Islamic community, Egyptians have a corporate identity of their own, and their *watan* is Egypt[84]. The citizens of Egypt have duties towards it, as well as their rights in it[85]. For Tahtawi "Egypt is a noble country, if not the noblest."[86] "Every land in the world has a planet which shines in its horizon. Our Egypt is the planet of Africa, its highest minaret, and the shining sun of its horizon".[87] Tahtawi wrote what perhaps was the first patriotic poetry in the Arabic language. In poems that he calls *qasayid wataniyya* (patriotic poems) he sings of the glories of Egypt and Egyptians, the victories of Egyptian armies in the days of Mohammed 'Ali and his sons, and their destruction of their enemies with cannon "manufactured by our factories".[88] In his poetry, as well as in his prose, Tahtawi's patriotic pride extended to the ancient, pre-Islamic, Egypt and Egyptians.

81 *'Asr Mohammed 'Ali*, p. 410.

82 *al-Murshid al-Amin*, (Cairo, 1875), pp. 93, 95.

83 *ibid.*, p. 125.

84 e.g., *Takhlis*, p. 2; *Manahij*, pp. 243, 244, Preface and Introduction; *al-Murshid*, pp. 91-94.

85 e.g., *Manahij*, Epilogue; *al-Murshid*, pp. 93-95.

86 *al-Murshid*, p. 91.

87 *Manahij*, p. 342.

88 For long quotations from his patriotic poetry, see 'Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi'i, *'Asr Mohammed 'Ali*, pp. 405-400, and Ahmed Ahmed Badawi, *Rifa'a al-Tahtawi Beg*, (Cairo, 1950), pp. 226-234.

Tahtawi derived his concept of "country" and "patriotism" from the West. He was naturally affected, from the beginning, by a primitive patriotism reminiscent of that of Jabarti. Thus he tells us that Sulaiman al-Halabi, whose remains are kept by the French in Paris, was "martyred" because he had "assassinated the French general Kléber and was killed by the French during their subjugation of Egypt".[89] But his patriotism, as we have just seen, was far more complex and sophisticated than the simple, basically religious patriotism of Jabarti. It is logical to assume that Western ideas and concepts were responsible for this transformation. He writes, for example, that the love of Moslems for their religion is equivalent to "love of country" in the West, "although" he adds, "love of country for us Moslems is one of the branches of the Faith".[90] Tahtawi translated the Marseillaise into Arabic.[91] He states that the French are prepared to risk all dangers for the sake of their country.[92] For Tahtawi, patriotism was a major element in the strength of Western people and states. Thus even the fall of the Roman Empire and its split into an Eastern and a Western empire, Tahtawi explained by the decline of patriotism among the Romans.[93]

89 *Takhlis*, p. 127.
90 *al-Murshid*, p. 125.
91 'Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi'i, *'Asr Mohammed 'Ali*, p. 409.
92 *Takhlis*, p. 50.
93 *al-Murshid*, p. 95.

al - Tunisi

CHAPTER III

KHAYR AL-DIN AL-TUNISI

Career

"*Bien que je sache pertinemment que je suis Circassien, je n'ai conservé aucun souvenir de mon pays et de mes parents. J'ai dû à la suite de quelque guerre ou de quelque émigration, être enlevé en très bas âge à ma famille dont j'ai perdu à jamais la trace.*" Thus Khayr al-Din begins his autobiography.[1] From the humble status of a slave, Khayr al-Din's remarkable abilities and energies were to raise him, before his death in 1889, at the age of nearly seventy, to the highest offices of the Tunisian Baylic and the Ottoman Empire itself.[2] Khayr al-Din was first sold in Constantinople to Tahsin Bey, *Naqib al-Ashraf*, who in turn sold him to the Bay of Tunis. In 1255 (1839/1840) Khayr al-Din arrived in Tunis which was to give him his surname. In the Bay's palace and in the Bardo Military School, newly opened in 1840, Khayr al-Din studied Arabic, and Islamic *'ulum* (sciences, or knowledge in its broadest sense), and the modern military sciences of his day. He had learned French

1 "A mes Enfants: Memoires de ma Vie Privée et Politique," *Revue Tunisienne*, (1934), pp. 177-225; 347-396. According to the information gathered from Khayr al-Din's family by S.M. Mzali and J. Pingnon, who edited his autobiography, Khayr al-Din came from the Abaze family that originally inhabited the western part of the Caucasian mountains, and his investigations seem to have convinced him that a high Egyptian official was his brother. *ibid.*, p. 183. The Abazes are an old and a well-known Egyptian family of Circassian origin.

2 Slavery, however, in many periods of Islamic history "carried with it scarcely any social inferiority" and "to the Ottomans there seemed nothing outrageous in the system they created wherein half the highest positions in the state were held by slaves." Gibb and Bowen, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 43. Khayr al-Din's rise, if not entirely unique, is nonetheless quite remarkable.

in Turkey. For a time he was trained by the French military mission in Tunis, under Commandant Campenon, who later became Gambetta's minister of war. Khayr al-Din rose quickly to the highest rank in the Tunisian army, becoming a *fariq (général de division)* in 1844. He soon abandoned his military career for one in the civil service. In 1853, the Bay sent him to Paris to secure the extradition of a protegé of the corrupt Tunisian prime minister Mustapha al-Khazandar, a certain Mahmoud ben 'Ayad, who had absconded to France with a fortune. And upon his return to Tunis, in 1856, Khayr al-Din was made the minister of the marine.

The sequence of liberal measures that distinguished the reigns of the reformer Bay Ahmad (1837-1855), a Tunisian Mohammed 'Ali, Bay Mohammed (1855-1859), and Bay Mohammed al-Sadik (1859-1882), are credited by some to Khayr al-Din's influence. In 1857, *'Ahd al-Aman*, a kind of a "fundamental agreement", was proclaimed in Tunis. This document declared that all inhabitants of Tunis were equal before the law "because this is man's natural right, whatever his condition. Justice on earth is a balance which serves to guarantee right against wrong, and protect the weak from the attacks of the strong."[3] In 1860, the Bay promulgated a Constitution. This constitution kept executive power in the hands of the hereditary but responsible Bay, assisted by ministers of his choice. The Bay was to have only a civil list, and the practice of the farming out of taxes was to be discontinued. The legislative power was divided between the Bay and a Grand Council of sixty nominated members. The judicial power was independent, and the courts were to follow a civil and penal Tunisian code.[4] This was the first constitution to be promulgated in any Moslem country — the famous Ottoman Constitution of 1876 follow-

3 See Narcisse Faucon, *La Tunisie: Avant et Depuis l'Occupation Française: Histoire et Colonisation*, (Paris, 1893). Tome I, p. 201.

4 See "Tunisia" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st. ed.

ed sixteen years later. Khayr al-Din became the President of the Grand Council that resulted from the Tunisian Constitution. In 1863, however, he resigned from the presidency and withdrew from public life when his efforts to reform Tunis through the Council failed, due to the opposition of the autocratic Bay and his corrupt prime minister. In 1864, both the Constitution and the Council were suspended.

Khayr al-Din's retirement from public office lasted for nine years. During these years he travelled throughout Europe: France, Germany, England, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, and Belgium. "My prolonged stay in France and these long trips" he tells us, "enabled me to study the bases and conditions of European civilization, and also the institutions of the great states of Europe; and taking advantage of my leisure that my retirement gave me, I wrote my politico-administrative book, entitled: *Aqwam al-Masalik fi Ma'rifat Ahwal al-Mamalik*".[5]

Meanwhile, conditions in Tunis grew worse, largely because of the disastrous financial policy of Mustapha al-Khazandar, who was finally dismissed by the Bay, in 1873. Khayr al-Din was appointed in his place. In the four years of his ministry term, he carried out a number of important reforms. He lightened the burden of taxation and encouraged agriculture by distributing state lands to the peasants. By the time he left office the area of cultivated land jumped from 60,000 hectares to over a million. He raised taxes on imports and lowered those on exports. He attempted to reform the Tunisian judiciary and bureaucracy. He founded *al-Madrassa al-Sadiqiyya*, the first modern educational institution in Tunis, in which European languages and modern subjects were taught, along with Arabic and the traditional Islamic subjects. He also reformed the educational programme of Jami' al-Zaituna,

5 *Revue Tunisienne*, (1934), p. 187.

the Azhar of Tunis. He founded the first public library in Tunis and donated 1,100 books to the same institution. He finally obtained for the reigning family a *firman* that secured for it the right of succession to the Baylic. But even this last achievement did not gain him the cooperation of the autocratic Bay. In 1877 he resigned and left for France. That same year he was summoned by Sultan Abdul Hamid to Istanbul. Upon arrival he was given a seat on the financial reform commission then sitting at Tophane. Early in 1879 the Sultan appointed him the Sadriazam, prime minister, of the Empire. However, after only eight months in office, he was dismissed by the reactionary and autocratic Sultan.[6] He died in Istanbul, in 1899 "practically a prisoner in his own home".[7]

Works

All the political ideas of Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi are expressed in his one published book: *Aqwam al-Masalik fi Ma'rifat Ahwal al-Mamalik*, "The Soundest Means for Knowing the Conditions of States", first published in Tunis, in 1867. More specifically, Khayr al-Din's political thought is contained in this book's short Prolegomena, of some 100 pages.

The book itself is purely descriptive; and can easily be catalogued by a modern librarian under the classification "Works on Comparative Government", in spite of the fact that it contains some historical, geographical, and economic information, not usually found in books of this nature.[8] The book gives a fairly accurate description of the constitutions, forms of government, and workings of the political

6 Sami's *Qamus al-'Alam*, (Istanbul, 1890), and Thurayya's *Sijili Othmani*, (Istanbul, 1890), state that Khayr al-Din resigned. But Othman Nuri's *Abdul Hamid Thani Devri Sultanati* (Istanbul, 1909), which probably is the most accurate Turkish work on this period, states that Khayr al-Din was dismissed, Vol. II, p. 598.

7 "Khaireddin" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th. ed.

8 It can be justifiably argued, however, that the inclusion of similar information can only benefit many modern works on comparative government.

institutions of the Ottoman Empire and nineteen European states of Khayr al-Din's day.

The short introduction can be, and was in fact, separated from the main body of the book, and read by itself. As a separate work, reprinted in various Moslem countries,[9] it made a profound impression on the intellectuals of the nineteenth century. Noteworthy is the fact that Tahtawi quoted it and praised Khayr al-Din highly,[10] Kawakibi included the name of Khayr al-Din among the few Arab contemporary writers in politics whom he deemed worthy of mention.[11] We shall therefore deal almost exclusively with this shorter work.

In the 1940's, the private papers of Khayr al-Din were published in the *Revue Tunisienne*, which is put out by the *Institut de Carthage* in Tunis. Although of considerable historical importance, these papers add nothing new to Khayr al-Din's political ideas. The most interesting of the papers, for our purpose, are an autobiography "*A Mes Enfants: Memoires de ma Vie Privée et Politique*",[12] which Khayr al-Din wrote in French, between 1885 and 1886; and "*Mon Programme*",[13] which is the French version of a memorandum that Khayr al-Din presented to Sultan Abdul Hamid on November 30, 1832. The editors of this work call it "some kind of a political testament of this (Khayr al-Din) statesman", but admit that the majority of the ideas it contains are to be found in *Aqwam al-Masalik*.[14]

Arguments for the Adoption of Western Culture

For the sophisticated and travelled General Khayr al-

9 See, for instance, an Arabic edition, printed in Istanbul, in 1876; another, printed in Cairo, in 1881; and a third — this time a Turkish translation — printed again in Istanbul, in 1878.

10 *al-Murshid al-Amin*, p. 98 ff; *Manahij*, pp. 392, 443.

11 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (Aleppo, 1957), p. 13.

12 *Revue Tunisienne*, (1934), pp. 177-225; 347-396.

13 *Revue Tunisienne*, (1935), pp. 51-80.

14 *ibid.*, p. 51.

Din, the superiority of the West to the Moslem world was not a puzzling phenomenon that demanded demonstration, as it was to the simpler Shaikh Tahtawi. It was an established fact that needed no proof. But this did not make it the less painful. And, like Tahtawi, he believed that this fact must, and could be changed. His book, in fact, is dedicated solely to this end.

Moslems must regain their lost strength and prosperity. And according to Khayr al-Din, this could be done only by adopting the Western institutions and practices, which enabled European states to rise to their present eminence. But such an adoption met the opposition of many Moslems. Among these were some of the *'ulama'* and statesmen. The *'ulama'* must be enlightened, and those asleep among the statesmen, the elite, and the common people, must be awakened. Thus Khayr al-Din begins his work by setting forth his arguments for the adoption of Western culture. He tells us that his remarks on the subject will be both *naqli* (transcendent, religious), and *'aqli* (rational, non-religious).[15]

Khayr al-Din states that the inattentive among Moslems had shunned European institutions and practices, even when they were not contrary to *shari'a*, because of an *idée fixe* they had developed — that all practices and institutions engaged in by non-Moslems were to be avoided. This, according to him, is an entirely wrong attitude to assume, particularly when the institutions and practices for adoption were not incompatible with *shari'a*, but instead were originally practised by the Moslems themselves. He continues to point out that Westerners have followed the example of other people, whenever they found them right and beneficial. What is right must be followed, and "what is right is not known by the men who practise it, but men are known by the right they practise". In the Battle of

15 *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik fi Ma'rifat Ahwal al-Mamalik*, (Istanbul, 1876), pp. 3-5, 64, 105.

al-Ahzab, the Prophet followed the council of Salman al-Farisi, who advised him to dig a trench around Medina, as was the practice of Persians when surrounded by their enemies. If our good predecessors, *salaf*, were allowed to take logic from the Greeks because they found it useful, what was to prevent us today from borrowing some of the knowledge which we need.[16]

Khayr al-Din sees a contradiction in the attitude of his coreligionists towards the material and non-material aspects of Western culture. He tells us that people who refuse to adopt Western institutions and practices that are useful to them, are not averse to borrowing from the West that which is harmful to them. Thus, we see them competitively buying dresses and household furniture. These are all Western products, and by acquiring them the community is disgraced and weakened, both economically and politically. A community is judged backward and disgraced when it relies on others to supply it with the majority of its needs. A society is enfeebled and impoverished when it does not produce its needs, because production is one of the prime sources of wealth. The shepherd, for example, the silk-producer, and the cottongrower, toil for a whole year, and sell, for a low price, what they produce to the *franji*, Westerner. Soon thereafter they buy it back from him in the form of finished goods, paying more than double the price they received. A state with an unfavorable balance of payments can only expect ruin. Politically a country's dependence on others, especially in the matter of armaments, is a cause of its weakness and a drawback to its independence.[17]

Khayr al-Din then goes on to say that some European writers on military matters have observed that states should match their neighbours' weapons, so as not to become their victims. And this, according to Khayr al-Din, is true of

16 For the paragraph above, see *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

17 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

non-military matters as well. Furthermore, military strength and preparedness cannot be fulfilled without prosperity and progress in knowledge, and this progress, in turn, cannot be achieved without the appropriate political organizations.[18]

But, above all, Khayr al-Din justifies the adoption of Western political institutions and practices, on the grounds that this would be, in fact, a return to ancient Islamic theory and practice. He states that in past ages the Moslem community was powerful, prosperous, and advanced, while Europe languished in backward darkness. The Crusades—as attested to by fair-minded European historians — changed this state of affairs. Europeans copied Moslems; and European civilization, in fact, started with Europe's contact with the more advanced Moslem community. And it is because of this that Khayr al-Din exhorts his coreligionists "to retrieve what has been taken from our hands".[19]

The Sources of European Supremacy

Khayr al-Din holds that the present power and prosperity of Europe was not due to any natural advantages it possessed, for other regions of the world might be as, or even more, temperate and fertile. Neither are they caused by Christianity, for Christianity does not concern itself with temporal and political matters.[20] The sources of Western power, prosperity, and progress, lie in the political systems, *al-tanzimat al-siyasiyya*, of European states.[21] These systems are based on justice and liberty.[22] Out of this justice and

18 *Muqadimat...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

19 *ibid.*, pp. 5, 6, 12, 28, 66-67.

20 *ibid.*, p. 10.

21 *ibid.*, pp. 10, 11, 105. We must note here that for "system", Khayr al-Din employs the term *tanzimat*, which was commonly used by people in those days, as well as by Khayr al-Din as is seen elsewhere in his work, to denote the reforming legislation with which the Ottoman Empire was reorganizing itself.

22 *ibid.*, pp. 9, 10.

liberty sound government was born in Europe; and out of such government security was born, and out of security hope, and out of hope personal endeavor. Without justice and liberty, there can be no progress in the arts and the sciences, no exploitation of the earth's treasures, no economic activity, and neither banks nor investment companies.[23]

What, asked Khayr al-Din, are the distinguishing features of European political systems, besides justice and liberty? Khayr al-Din discerns in these systems an absence of despotic and arbitrary rule, responsible government, and the sovereignty of law. He justifies the adoption of these particular features by arguing that they can be paralleled in the Islamic past.

Liberty

For Khayr al-Din, the main secret of Europe's power and prosperity seemed to lie in liberty. "Liberty" he writes, "is the source of knowledge and civilization in European states",[24] and tells us that "states which have risen to the highest degrees of civilization, are those in which liberty has taken roots."[25]

Liberty and justice, for Khayr al-Din, are two of the principles, *usul*, of Islamic *shari'a*.[26] However, "liberty" for Khayr al-Din, as any examination of his book will show, means "political and civic liberty". Therefore, it can hardly be identified with the traditional concept of liberty in Islam.

Here we shall briefly examine this concept. The Arabic word *hurriyya*, which Khayr al-Din uses for "liberty", is an abstract noun, formed from *hurr*, free. In classical Arabic the word *hurriyya*, is primarily a legal term, denoting the opposite of "slavery".[27] And prior to the nineteenth

23 *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 11, 98-99.

24 *ibid.*, p. 95.

25 *ibid.*, p. 98.

26 *ibid.*, p. 10.

27 See, for instance, Ibn Durayd, Ibn Manzur, Lane, and Freytagh.

century "historians and political theorists had no use for the word *hurriyya* which, it seems, practically never occurs in their works".[28] And because of this, it was only natural that Tahtawi would write that what the French call "liberty" is the very same thing "that we call justice and equity". Obviously, a concept of individual liberty *vis-à-vis* the state could not develop in traditional Arab political theory; for the power of the state, according to this theory, is absolute and cannot be limited. All rights belong to the state, and the limits within which the individual is protected in society are God's: "These are the limits, *hudud*, of God, so exceed them not". (The Quran, 2:229).

But, in the course of the nineteenth century, *hurriyya* was to shed its legal meaning and to acquire a political connotation. Here again, the first instance of this transformation, from the traditional meaning to the new usage, can be traced to Western contact with the Arab world. Thus, the first Napoleonic proclamation in Egypt is addressed to Egyptians from the "French (republic) built on *hurriyya* and equality".[29] And "in Ruphey's Arabic word list, prepared for the French expedition in Egypt at the beginning of the nineteenth century, *hurriyya* is given as equivalent to *liberté*, but with the restriction 'opposé à l'esclavage' ".[30]

In Khayr al-Din's book, the term *hurriyya* has come to stand explicitly for civil and political liberty, and the Western origins of its untraditional usage are clear and distinct. Thus, it is while discussing European civilization that Khayr al-Din embarks on an explanation of the concept of

[28] Franz Rosenthal, *The Muslim Concept of Freedom Prior to the Nineteenth Century*, (Leiden, 1960), p. 55. This work discusses, at some length, the problem of liberty in Islam, and comes to the conclusion that "freedom" as a political force in Islam lacked "a central position within the political organism and system of thought", p. 122.

[29] Jabarti, *Ajaib al-Athar*, Vol. III, p. 4.

[30] Cited by Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, (London, 1961), n. 2, p. 126.

liberty. Here he states that he finds it "necessary to elucidate the customary meaning of *hurriyya*, so as to repel any confusion that might arise concerning it."[31] Then he goes on to say that "the term *hurriyya* in their (European states) custom is used in two senses: the first is called personal liberty... the second political liberty".[32] Personal liberty entails the setting of man at liberty to act and to earn, and the security of his life, property, and honor. It also entails his equality with others before the law.[33] Political liberty, on the other hand, requires the sharing of citizens in the conduct of polities and their discussion of the state's welfare.[34] Liberty in France began with the French Revolution,[35] and liberty in Europe was born out of it.[36] And finally, it is liberty which guarantees the rights of the individual, the citizens, and the community.[37]

It need scarcely be noted in this connection that the *hurriyya* Khayr al-Din writes about is the European liberty of the nineteenth century, and as such, it cannot be easily made to harmonize with traditional Arab political theory, nor to be considered one of the principles of *shari'a*.

Law

For Khayr al-Din, justice and liberty are established and safeguarded in the state, by the sovereignty of law. The state, furthermore, must be organized by laws. He tells us that nations which have reached the heights of righteousness are those that respect the laws they possess, whereas disrespect for these laws has been the cause of their retrogression.[38] He informs us that in Europe the respect

31 *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, p. 95.
32 *ibid.*
33 *ibid.*
34 *ibid.*
35 *ibid.*, p. 91.
36 *Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, p. 122.
37 *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, pp. 95, 105, 111.
38 *ibid.*, p. 111.

and continued application of laws protects the rights and the liberty of subjects, and secures the weak against the attacks and the injustices of the strong.[39]

Laws bind the rulers as well as the subjects, declares Khayr al-Din.[40] The success and failure of states that are not administered by laws depend entirely on the person of the king, his abilities, and his uprightness.[41]

But to Khayr al-Din, laws — by themselves — are incapable of ensuring liberty in a state. They must be complimented by other institutions and practices. Thus, he states that the Russian and Papal States are despotic and devoid of liberty, in spite of the fact that they possess recognized laws; for these laws are not sufficient to safeguard the rights of the people, as they are dependent for their execution on the will of the monarch.[42] Both these states have no parliaments.[43] When he later describes their political systems in detail, we are informed that the Kingdom of the Pope is "despotic";[44] whereas Russia possesses laws and parliaments like other European states, but the Russian emperor is absolute, for he appoints the members of these assemblies, and their decisions do not bind him. And after telling us that this emperor does not allow his subjects to interfere in political matters, he refers to his earlier explanation of liberty in his Prolegomena.[45] Therefore, it would appear that Constitution, for Khayr al-Din, is synonymous with the political organization he so admires.[46]

Finally we must note that Khayr al-Din makes a clear distinction between religions, *shari'a*, law, and secular *'aqli*

39 *ibid.*
40 *ibid.*, p. 95.
41 *ibid.*, p. 18.
42 *ibid.*, p. 95.
43 *ibid.*, p. 96.
44 *Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, p. 440.
45 *ibid.*, pp. 282-283.
46 *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, p. 98.

(rational) law.[47] The first deals with the affairs of this world and the next, and is a religious restraint.[48] The Moslem community, however, is bound, in both its religious and worldly conduct, by the divine *shari'a*.[50]

The Counter Restraint

Khayr al-Din believes that because of human nature, giving a free hand to kings produces injustices of all kinds. This, he informs us, is taking place in some Moslem states of his day, and has occurred in European states in the past. And injustices, as proven by Ibn Khaldun, destroy civilization.[51]

Then Khayr al-Din goes on to adopt from Ibn Khaldun the concept of a restraining force, *wazi'*, and to construct upon it what we might call a doctrine of counter-restraint. Ibn Khaldun had elaborated the theory that if there were not a commonly recognized and obeyed restraining force in society men would injure and destroy each other, because, "aggressiveness and oppression are in the animal nature of man". This restraining force he called simply *wazi'*, restraint, or *hukum wazi'*, a restraining rule or government. "This *wazi'*" he wrote, "must therefore be the person... who dominates them (men) and has power and authority over them, so that no one of them will be able to attack another. This is the meaning of royal authority, *mulk*".[52]

Now Khayr al-Din adopts this theory. He quotes Ibn Khaldun and states that "restraint is essential for the survival of the human race". But, from there, he goes on to argue that this restraint would lose its *raison d'être* "if it were left to do what it pleased and to rule as it willed" for

47 *Muqadimat*, pp. 12, 40-41.

48 *ibid.*

49 *ibid.*, p. 41.

50 *ibid.*, p. 51.

51 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, p. 12.

52 *Muqadimat Ibn Khaldun*, (Beirut - Cairo edition), pp. 43, 139, 187.

the needs of the community would still be neglected. "It is essential therefore that this restraint have a counter-restraint that checks it".[53]

This counter-restraint of Khayr al-Din, like the restraint of Ibn Khaldun, is either a divine *shari'a* or a rational law (or policy),[54] a worldly or a religious *wazi'*.[55]

Thus, by basing his counter-restraint on *shari'a*, Khayr al-Din was able to maintain his political ideas within the framework of traditional Islamic political theory. The ruler's authority in this theory is absolute. He cannot be restrained. But this ruler rules under the divine *shari'a*, and the individual's obedience to him is, therefore, conditioned by his obedience to the rules of *shari'a*. The classic tradition on this point states that: "Hearing and obeying is binding on a Moslem, whether he likes or dislikes the order — so long as he is not ordered to commit a sin; but if he is ordered to commit a sin, there is no hearing and no obeying".

Let us now examine the particular institutions and practices that go to make up Khayr al-Din's counter-restraint.

Ihtisab and Ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd

The state, the rulers, the ministers, and government officials, must all be, according to Khayr al-Din, subject to *ihtisab*, to accountability (to account for their conduct, *tasaruf*).[56] This *ihtisab* is derived from the formula of "ordering the good and forbidding the evil";[57] and is one of the principles of *shari'a*.[58] It is the object of counter-restraint, and its purpose is to ensure the righteous conduct of the state.[59]

53 For the paragraph above, see *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, p.14.
54 *ibid.*
55 *ibid.*, pp. 41, 112.
56 *ibid.*, pp. 14, 41, 107, 109.
57 *ibid.*, pp. 14, 15.
58 *ibid.*, pp. 13, 40.
59 *ibid.*, p. 14.

Now, *ihtisab*, better known as *hisba*, is, in fact, one of the doctrines of Islam. It is based on the Quranic injunction to "order the good and forbid the evil", *al-amr bi-l-ma'ruf wa-n-nahy 'an al-munkar*. This injunction was later to be institutionalized in the office of the *muhtasib*. The *muhtasib* was appointed by the caliph or his minister, and his functions were similar to those of the *agoranomos* of the Greek cities: to censor and enforce public morals and order. Today the *muhtasib* would be something of a municipal inspector, a policeman, and a minor magistrate, all in one.[60] In Khayr al-Din's day the office had generally fallen into disuse, therefore it is not mentioned in his section on Ottoman governmental institutions. However, the term *muhtasib* appears in the section on France. Here it stands for the public prosecutor.[61]

The power of *ihtisab*, holding to account, based on "ordering the good and forbidding the bad", Khayr al-Din assigns to "the people who loosen and bind". These people must share in the king's powers, they must be consulted, ministers of the state must be responsible to them, and laws must be kept in their charge.[62] The people who loosen and bind, *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*, to whom Khayr al-Din assigns all these powers, are, in Islamic political theory, the people who elect and depose the caliph.

All these Islamic concepts Khayr al-Din identifies with European political institutions and practices. To forbid evil, Europeans have established parliaments and freedom of the press, both of which create public opinion. Their object is to hold the state to *ihtisab*.[63] *Ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd* are the delegates in the lower chambers.[64]

60 For the theory of *hisba* and the functions of *muhtasib*, see Mawardi's *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya*.

61 *Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, pp. 159, 161-162.

62 *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, pp. 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22.

63 *ibid.*, p. 14.

64 *ibid.*, pp. 41, 46.

This identification enables Khayr al-Din to give, in purely Islamic terms, an account of the evolution of the parliamentary system of government. He states that political liberty for Europeans calls for the people's participation in, and discussion of, state affairs. This reminds him of Caliph 'Omar telling the people at a prayer: "If I go astray, believers, redress me", and being answered by one of the Moslems: "By God 'Omar we will redress you with the edges of our swords." But, as granting liberty to the people in this form would only result in disorder and dispersal of opinions, it was abandoned to make the people elect from among themselves a group of enlightened and virtuous men. "These people are called by Europeans (the delegates to) the chamber of deputies, and by us *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*, although they *(áhl al-hall wa-l-a'qd)* are not elected by the people, because the forbidding of evil in our *shari'a* is a *fard kifaya* (an obligation that only a sufficient number of Moslems should fulfil)"[65].

It is clear that to identify traditional Islamic concepts with the European form of parliamentary government, Khayr al-Din has reinterpreted Arab political theory and practice. This reinterpretation is free to the extreme: he has not only rearranged traditional concepts and institutions to make such an identification possible, but he has also read new functions and purposes into them. In theory the sole function of *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd* is to elect and to depose the ruler of the Islamic community. In practice, as we shall see, they neither elected nor deposed this ruler. The ruler, once "elected" was, in theory and practice, absolute; he could not share his power with any man or group of men. In theory, *hisba* can hardly be said to be applicable to the ruler[66]. In practice, the doctrine of *hisba* came to be insti-

65 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

66 al-Ghazali, who called *hisba*, *al-qutb al-'azam fi al-din*, "the supreme pivot of religion", applies the mildest degrees, *darajat*, of *hisba* to rulers: *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, (Cairo, 1884), Vol. II, p. 265. Only the *Mu'tazila* seem to extend *hisba* to the fighting of rulers, *qital al-aimma*, Ibn Taimiyya, *al-Hisba fi al-Islam*, (Cairo, 1900), p. 55.

tutionalized in the minor office of *muhtasib*. The injunction, or ordering the good and forbidding the evil, is generally held to be a *fard 'ain*, a personal obligation, and not a *fard kifaya*, as Khayr al-Din states it to be.[67] And finally, the separation of powers that Khayr al-Din describes can in no way be compatible with traditional political theory and practice. This is revealed further as we examine in some detail the political system that Khayr al-Din advocated.

Shura

Khayr al-Din draws his chief justification for the limitation of the monarch's powers from the Islamic concept of *shura*, which is based on the Quranic injunctions to the Prophet to take counsel with his followers.[68] Khayr al-Din considers that *mashwara*, the taking of counsel, is one of the most important principles of religion.[69] And he supports his belief in the necessity of counsel for monarchs by religious and rational arguments. God, he argues, has ordered His infallible Prophet to take counsel, in spite of the fact that the Prophet could dispense with it, because of Divine Inspiration and the perfections that God had deposited in his person. God had ordered *mashwara*, consultation, to make it a *sunna*, a Prophetic custom, binding the rulers who followed the Prophet.[70] Khayr al-Din then goes on to support this view by quotations from the mystic Ibn al-'Arabi, 'Ali, the cousin of the Prophet and the fourth of the orthodox caliphs; the theologian al-Ghazali; 'Omar, the second of the orthodox caliphs, and Mu'awiya, the first of the Umayyad caliphs.[71]

In the system that Khayr al-Din advocates, the monarch consults with *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*, and *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*

67 See, for instance, Mawardi and Ghazali.

68 Quran, 3:158; 42:38.

69 *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, p.13.

70 *ibid.*, p. 13.

71 *ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

share with him the conduct of general policies. Ministers are responsible for the administration of the monarchy, according to precise laws.[72]

Khayr al-Din states that it is possible to find some monarchs who could rule by the aid of a wise and understanding minister, without consulting *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*. But this, he asserts, is rare. Monarchs, because of human nature, are of three types. They are either possessed of perfect understanding and love of the country's welfare, or they possess this understanding but at the same time hold selfish designs and passions, or they are deficient in understanding and weak in administration.

These three types are also true of ministers. Now, in the first case, the obligation to consult and the responsibility of ministers will not hinder the person possessed of perfect understanding from doing that which is in the general interest, but would rather aid him, as all would be cooperating to attain the public good. The monarch would also be able to maintain the rule in his family, even when his descendants are of the two other types. In the second case, consultation and responsibility are necessary for opposition, and in the third for aiding the monarch. By such aid, a monarchy is put right, even though the monarch is a slave to passions or weak-willed. This he supports by referring to a translator of a John Stuart Mill book who stated that the English nation had reached the zenith of glory in the reign of George III who was mad, because *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd* shared his power and ministers were responsible to them (sic).[73]

Khayr al-Din asserts that the sharing of *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd* in the conduct of general policies, in no way narrows the authority of the *imam*, the ruler. To support this view he quotes Mawardi on the *wazir al-tafwid*, the minister with unrestricted powers. Mawardi had quoted the Quranic

72 *Muqadimat...*, p. 15.

73 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

verses that spoke of Moses designating Aaron as his *wazir*, helper or minister: "And give to me an aider from my family: Aaron, my brother. Add to my strength by him, and make him share in my task." Mawardi had concluded that if this was permissible in prophecy, it would be more so in the *imamate*. On this Khayr al-Din remarks that if the *imam* could thus share (his understanding) with *wazir al-tafwid*, without thereby diminishing his authority, it would be even more appropriate to share it with *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*, "because a plurality of opinions is closer to the seat of verity".[74]

It is clear from the foregoing that Khayr al-Din's main preoccupation was to find in traditional political theory and practice precedents for those Western political institutions and practices that he admired and hoped his coreligionists would adopt. He himself admits, unwittingly but clearly, the final failure of his attempt, when at the very end of his book he apologizes to the reader for using foreign terms for which he can find no equivalent in Arabic.[75] Among the terms are: "constitution",[76] "dictator",[77] "jury",[78] and "camera (in a parliament)".[79]

Patriotism and Limits of Liberty

Behind Khayr al-Din's gallant, but foredoomed, attempt to justify the adoption of nineteenth century European political institutions and practices, in terms of traditional Islamic political theory and practice, lies his admitted desire to rid the Islamic community of its humiliating weakness and backwardness. This desire is expressed in a strong feeling of patriotism. His book, as do those of Tahtawi's, abounds with the expressions *watan*, country, *maslahat*

74 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, p. 19.
75 *ibid.*, p. 116.
76 *ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
77 *ibid.*, p. 112.
78 *Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, p. 159.
79 *ibid.*, p. 137.

al-watan, the country's interest, and *mahabat al-watan*, love of country.[80] In this Khayr al-Din is, of course, a true son of his time.

The contemporaneousness of Khayr al-Din's ideas are also evident in his enthusiasm for the Ottoman *Tanzimat*. Like other intellectuals who have been exposed to Western culture, Khayr al-Din firmly believes that the regeneration of Islamic community will come through the *Tanzimat*. About one fifth of his book is devoted, almost exclusively, to a defence of these *Tanzimat* against Moslem and foreign criticism.[81] Sultan Mahmoud, Sultan 'Abd al-Majid, and Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz are highly praised for the introduction and application of these *Tanzimat*. Throughout the book, the word *Tanzimat* is synonymous with political system or organization. And the security of life, honor, and property that he advocates are clearly those that *Khatti Sherif* of Gülkhana had proclaimed in 1839.

It is when discussing the practical problem of *Tanzimat*, that Khayr al-Din sets some limits to what otherwise would have been his demand for almost limitless political liberty in a parliamentary form. A group of Moslem and non-Moslem subjects of the Ottoman Empire, he informs us, have been dissatisfied with the *Tanzimat*, and have lately been demanding absolute liberty from the state, in accordance with laws enacted and protected by an elected parliament. After granting this group that full liberty and an elected parliament are among the greatest means of making states strong, prosperous, and civilized, Khayr al-Din goes on to ask the Moslems of the group if they are certain that the object of their non-Moslem colleagues is really the reformation of the Ottoman state and its subjects. He believes that this is not the case. He suspects that the majority of the non-Moslems in this group

80 *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, pp. 18, 46, 55, 64.

81 *ibid.*, pp. 42-64.

are stirred up by the foreigners and aim at secession from the Empire. European states, he declares, withhold liberty from their subjects when they find that the opposition aims at changing the form of government: from a monarchy to a republic, or from one royal family to another. If the withholding of liberty is permissible in European states, where transfers of power would take place within the same race, it would be only more so in the Ottoman state. The subjects of this state are divided by race, religion, customs, and language. The majority of these groups do not speak Turkish, the official language of the state, and are even ignorant of each other's languages. In a parliament they could scarcely communicate with one another. And to grant liberty to some of these groups, while withholding it from others, would only cause dissatisfaction and disturbance. However, Khayr al-Din hoped that the state would attempt to overcome all these difficulties that blocked the path of full liberty.[82]

[82] For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, pp. 44-46, 97.

al-Kawakibi

CHAPTER IV

'ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-KAWAKEBI

Life[1]

'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakebi was born in 1854 in Aleppo, to a prominent Arab family. He was educated in Aleppo in the traditional manner of his day. He studied no European languages, but mastered, beside his native tongue, the Turkish language. He appears to have been well read in both languages and to have carefully followed the banned anti-Hamidian liberal press of his day, published in Egypt and in Europe.

In 1875 he embarked on a career in journalism, translating from Turkish and writing for the official paper in Aleppo. Soon he started two newspapers of his own, but both were quickly suppressed by the Turkish *wali*, governor, of Aleppo. He then tried to nominate himself for the first Ottoman Parliament of 1877. After this attempt, he entered public service in Aleppo, rising eventually to become the head of its municipality in 1892. His government career appears to have been a checkered and a stormy one. He seems to have bitterly opposed corrupt Turkish governors and dishonest native officials. In 1886 he was accused of taking part in a conspiracy to assassinate the *wali*, thrown into prison, and then released after being tried in Aleppo and Beirut. He resigned from his government post and

[1] This brief biographical sketch is based on articles written by his son, As'ad al-Kawakebi, "'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakebi", *al-Hadith*, (1952), pp. 542-584; and his friend, Rashid Rida, "Musab 'Azim bi-Wafat 'Alim Hakim", *al-Manar*, pp. 237-240, 276-280. See also Mohammed Ragheb al-Tabakh, *'Alam al-Nubala' bi Tarikh Halab al Shaba'*, (Aleppo, 1926), Vol. VII, pp. 507-524.

entered a form of law practice. His championing of the cause of the poor of Aleppo and his constant struggle against injustice cost him his personal fortune, but earned him the affection of the poor and the nickname *Abu al-Dʿufaʿ*, the Father of the Weak. In 1899, like so many other Arab and Turkish liberals of the day, Kawakebi emigrated to Egypt. There he became an outstanding figure in intellectual circles, and participated in the lively discussions that took place daily in the Yildiz and Splendid Bar cafés. In 1901 he seems to have been sent by Khedive ʿAbbas on what appears to be a somewhat mysterious trip to Yemen and Arabia. In 1902, shortly after his return, he suddenly died in Cairo.

Works

Kawakebi published only two books: *Taba'iʿ al-Istibdad*, "The Nature of Despotism", and *Umm al-Qura*, "The Mother of Cities: Mecca". Both were published anonymously in Cairo, in 1900. *Umm al-Qura*, however, seems to have been written in Aleppo.[2]

At his death, Sultan Abdul Hamid's agents appear to have appropriated Kawakebi's private papers. Among them were two unpublished manuscripts. One was called *Saha'if Quraysh*, "The Pages of Quraysh", a work that he had earlier promised the readers of *Umm al-Qura* to publish. The other was called *al-ʿAzma lil-Allah*, "Greatness is God's". Mohammed Kurd ʿAli, who had been one of Kawakebi's friends, informs us in his memoirs that this work concerned politics and that Kawakebi read him its introduction.[3] After the fall of Abdul Hamid, one of Kawakebi's sons searched in Istanbul for his father's papers and manuscripts, but unfortunately none were found.[4] This could be a serious loss to modern Arab political thought,

2 Shaikh Kamel al-Ghazi, "Tarikh ma Ahmalah al-Tarikh min Sirat ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Kawakebi," *al-Hadith*, (1929), p. 448.

3 Mohammed Kurd ʿAli, *al-Muthakarat*, (Damascus, 1948), Vol. II, p. 611.

4 Asʿad al-Kawakebi, "ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Kawakebi," *al-Hadith*, (1952), p. 549.

for we shall in all likelihood never know how much, and in what direction, the political ideas of Kawakebi were developing.

However, an annotated copy of *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, which includes some additions to it on separate papers, was saved. This new material, which expands the original book by about one third, was included in the 1957 edition of *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*. It shows an intensification of the earlier edition's anti-Sufism and some additional elaboration of its socialist ideas. This supplementary material was, of course, unknown to the readers of Kawakebi's day, but as it is of interest, I have reviewed it in the present study, taking care to distinguish it from the contents of the earlier edition, whenever I quote, or refer to, it.

Kawakebi's two books can be regarded as a single work. Both contain the same ideas and arguments, and indeed, even the same sentences and expressions. There are, however, some notable differences in the subject matter of the two books. *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* is primarily a bitter attack on despotism and autocratic rule, while *Umm al-Qura* is essentially an inquiry into the causes of Moslem decadence and the means of regeneration. We can also say that *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* is anti-Hamidian, while *Umm al-Qura* is anti-Turk.

Before looking into Kawakebi's ideas, we must note here the originality of the form in which they were presented in *Umm al-Qura*. *Umm al-Qura* purports to be the verbatim record of the proceedings of a congress of Moslem leaders in 1989. Twenty-two fictitious characters, belonging to different nationalities (a Kurd, a Persian, a Tunisian, and an Englishman who has been converted to Islam, etc.) gather in Mecca to discuss the conditions of the Moslems of their day and the causes of their decline. They agree to found a society for the revitalization of Islam as a result of discussions extending over twelve formal meetings. The statutes of the new society are agreed upon, and the congress dissolves,

after deciding to hold its second general meeting three years hence.

Kawakebi's symposium has much charm. His method, however, is not the Socratic dialectic. Kawakebi is more of a Dr. Johnson, expressing his views through the mouths of twenty-two fictitious characters. But this in no way makes the book a dull one, for Kawakebi writes with great skill and cleverness. An atmosphere of political cloak-and-dagger like that of a modern thriller hangs over the proceedings of the congress. Meetings are held in secret, in an inconspicuous quarter of Mecca. The house is rented, for additional security, in the name of a Russian Daghistani gateman. Secret ciphers and codes are used. A member of the congress states that Islamic youth must try to win its elders over to its views. This, however, must not be done by violence; a trick might be more effective than the might of a whole tribe. Then five lines of code numbers follow to explain the proposed trick. A proclamation of the congress concerning the future is also given in cipher. And finally, to avoid the celebrated Hamidian censorship of the mail, the members of the society are given a complicated cipher table, with full instructions for its use. This table appears in a large separate sheet, folded, and attached to the back of the book. The dozen meetings are held with great dignity and courtesy, and they are far from boring. The speeches of the members are punctuated, from time to time, with shouts of *marha*, which Kawakebi makes into the equivalent of the French *bravo*, and the "Hear! Hear!" of the British Parliament. Two of the meetings adjourn for noon prayers, and at the end of a third one, members are served non-alcoholic refreshments. There is no doubt that *Umm al-Qura* is one of the most delightful political treatises to be written in any language.

Religious Ideas

Let us start by looking briefly into Kawakebi's religious

ideas. Religion is of cardinal importance in Kawakebi's thought. He finds that the backwardness of the Moslem world is due mainly to religious, political, and moral causes.[5] But religious defects are probably the main cause. [6] His imaginary congress decides that the germ of Moslem disease is ignorance, and that the most harmful form of ignorance is religious ignorance.[7] The reform of religion is the easiest, most effective, and shortest way to political reform.[8] He criticizes Moslems who do not perform their religious duties.[9]

Some sociologists in the West, he states, believe that religion has a crippling effect on individual and social progress, like that of opium on the senses, or a cloud obscuring the sunlight. Kawakebi finds that this is true only of religions that are not based on reason, and Islam is not among them. Islam is based on pure reason. However, this purely rational Islam is not the Islam of the majority of Moslems of Kawakebi's day but that of the Quran.[10]

Kawakebi embraces explicitly and unmistakably the Salafiya movement. His fictitious congress in Mecca, attended by Moslems belonging to all Islamic sects, adopts the Salafiya movement, and the statute it decides upon declares that the society which will be formed will model its religious conduct on a moderate Salafiya path.[11]

The Salafiya movement was an offshoot of the Afghani-'Abduh school. It advocated, like Afghani and 'Abduh, going back to the Quran, the *Sunna*, and the practice of

5 *Umm al-Qura*, (Aleppo, 1959), pp. 158-161.

6 *ibid.*, p. 225.

7 *ibid.*, p. 192.

8 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (Cairo, Mohammed 'Attia al-Kutubi, n.d.), p. 15. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* are to this edition, and not to the 1957 expanded edition,

9 *Umm al-Qura*, pp. 182-185.

10 For the paragraph above, see *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (Aleppo, 1957), pp. 135-136.

11 *Umm al-Qura*, p. 199.

al-Salaf al-Salih, the Pious Ancestors, of the early Moslem community, to regain original and uncorrupted Islam. It attacked medieval schools, and established the Quran and the *Sunna* as almost the sole authorities for truth in religion. It bitterly attacked Sufism, Islamic mysticism, and all the cults of prophets, saints, and tombs. All these it considered *bid'a*, innovations, that are foreign to Islam. It attacked resignation and demanded that Moslems lead active and vigorously constructive lives. It advocated rationalism and the reopening of the Gate of Ijtihad, individual interpretation, closed in the third century.[12]

All these views are expressed by Kawakebi.[13] Similarly, the defects, as well as the merits, of the Afghani-'Abduh Rida thought, which has come to be known as the Modernist School that tried to effect an Islamic Reformation, are also apparent in Kawakebi's writings. He shares, for instance, with this school, its understandable anti-Catholic attitude, and its admiration for, and identification with, Protestantism.[14] But like this school, this is done with ignorance or disregard of some of the basic tenets of Christianity and Protestantism. There are, for Kawakebi, Christian *bid'a*, innovations, as well as Moslem. Among these innovations that are not part of original Christianity are the doctrines of Trinity, and the Sonship.[15] For Kawakebi, the Western world is a totally materialist world threatened with destruction through loss of religion. Only the East can safeguard religion for it. "What" he asks the West, "have you prepared for anarchists if they become a legion? Explosives, of which

12 There are, of course, differences in degrees of emphasis and detail between Afghani, 'Abduh, and Rashid Rida, the founder of the Salafiya School, but for our purpose the paragraph above suffices as a summary of their collective ideas.

13 See for instance *Umm al-Qura*, pp. 13-15, 19, 26-28, 39-40, 43-44, 77, 86-87, 89-94, 107-110.

14 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 16-17, 21-22; *Umm al-Qura*, pp, 106-107.

15 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 16-17, 22.

there are now more than a thousand kinds? Or have you arranged for them poison gas that children can now prepare (sic)".[16] He also reads into the Quran prefigurings of modern inventions and discoveries. Thus the verse that reads: "And certainly We create man of an extract of clay" stands for Darwin's theory of evolution; and when the Quran states, after speaking of ships: "and We have created for them the like thereof, whereon they ride" this refers, according to Kawakebi, to vehicles run by steam or electricity;[17] and the verse: "Then he directed Himself to the heaven and it was vapour" stands for ether that is the origin of all beings, and photography which he calls "the capture of shadow" is seen in: "Seest thou not how thy Lord extends the shade? And if He pleased, He would have made it stationary. Then We have made the sun an indication of it."[18] However, Kawakebi later takes a more rational attitude in the interpretation of the Quran. He comments on the Quranic *sura:* "We have not neglected anything in the Book" by stating that the Quran has not neglected anything concerning religion, but has not encompassed all that exists in God's knowledge as many people seem to think.[19]

Kawakebi's Salafi leanings do not lead him into any rigidity and fundamentalism. He advocates, like the modernist school at its best, a reconciliation between *shari'a* and the conditions of modern life. The differences of opinion among the founders of Islamic rites, he states, will not be

16 *ibid.*, p. 111.

17 The Pakistani modernist Maulana Muhammad 'Ali adds aeroplanes to Kawakebi's steamships: *"the like thereof:* these are the ships that bear man in the air, the airships and the aeroplanes of to-day. They are spoken of as being created by God, because it is through the knowledge and means that God has given man that he is able to acquire the mastery of the air and make these ships", n. 2085 a, p. 847, *The Holy Qur'an,* (Lahore, 1951).

18 *Umm al-Qura,* pp. 24-26; *Taba'i' al-Istibdad,* pp. 54-55.

19 *ibid.*, p. 141.

an act of divine mercy,[20] if they become a cause of religious dissension and hatred. These differences must be used well so as to relate *shari'a* to changing conditions. For this purpose he recommends that the adoption of the controversial method of *talfiq* be considered.[21] *Talfiq* is an eclectic legal method by which precedents are derived from two or more schools of law. As the Islamic schools of law are rites, or *madhahib* (ways), and not sects in the Christian sense of the word, a Moslem can pass from one *madhab* to another without committing a sin. Some jurists allow a Moslem to follow the rules of one *madhab* in a case or a particular point, and the rules of another *madhab* in another case or particular point, if his conscience permits him. But *talfiq* is the individual's right. A *mufti* or a *qadi*, a religious judge, cannot employ it. He must follow the rules of the school of law to which he belongs.

The corruption of Islam is caused by "making it difficult", and by polytheism. The ignorant official theologians, "the turbaned who are more harmful to religion than the devils", have rendered Islam rigid and difficult, while the Quran itself declares that God "has not laid upon you any hardship in religion".[22]

Moslems have come to practice *al-shirk al-khafi*, secret idolatry, the worship of others beside God. Kawakebi strongly attacks Sufism, the cult of prophets, the belief that soothsayers and astrologers have supernatural knowledge, the regarding of saints as intermediaries between man and God, and the reverence of tombs and holy places.[23] All these beliefs and practices constitute *shirk*, the association of partners, *shuraka*, with God, and this Kawakebi condemns as bitterly as the Wahhabis. It is significant that he makes

20 This is a reference to the Prophetic saying: "The difference of opinion among the learned of my community is an act of divine mercy".

21 *Umm al-Qura*, pp. 149-156.

22 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, pp. 71-72, 96.

23 *ibid.*, pp. 79-93.

the president of the Islamic congress assign the task of explaining what is real Islam to the Wahhabi *'alim* from Nejd. Kawakebi advocates very strongly the professing of the oneness of God, *tawhid*. His imaginary society is called the Society for the Education of the Muwahhidin.[24] Its slogan is "We Worship None but God".[25] This strict theological monotheism was to have, as we shall soon see, political significance in Kawakebi's thought.

Political Despotism

Despots, according to Kawakebi, fear nothing more than a knowledge of the meaning of: "There is no god but God" — a principle on which Islam and all other religions are based. When the tyrant's subjects come to understand that only God must be worshipped, and that He alone deserves absolute obedience, they will act accordingly and will cease to be subservient. Political despotism entails *shirk*, the sharing of the despot in God's powers and attributes, and its remedy is real *tawhid*, the belief in God's oneness. Whenever the light of *tawhid* prevails in a nation, its chains of slavery are broken. Despots, assisted by the clergy, take on for the common people the powers, attributes, and the very names of God. Political despotism is inseparably tied to religious despotism. Where one exists in a nation the other is inevitably brought in.[26]

However, polytheism has been a means of political reform. To make their kings agree to share their powers with others, the wise men of Greece resorted to the duplicity of reviving the doctrine of polytheism, which they borrowed from the Assyrians and ancient Egyptians. By this doctrine powers in heaven were divided among different gods — there was a god of justice, a god of war, a god of the seas, and a god of the rain... etc. When this doctrine had captured the minds

24 *ibid.*, p. 191.

25 *ibid.*, p. 200.

26 For this paragraph, see *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 6, 32-33, 14-15.

of people, they demanded that their despots give up autocracy and administer the earth as the gods administered heaven, and the despots gave in. This, according to Kawakebi, is the device by which the Greeks established the republics of Athens and Sparta. It was also employed by the Romans. And this is also the origin of the separation of powers in all governments, whether monarchical or republican. But Kawakebi does not advocate the adoption of polytheism as a means of combating despotism, for polytheism is in itself a falsehood, and opens the door to charlatans of all kinds who will claim for themselves some of the attributes and powers of the Deity, and eventually become the supporters of despots.[27]

Kawakebi defines political despotism as an "attribute of the absolute government that conducts the affairs of its subjects wilfully and arbitrarily, with no fear of accountability or punishment".[28] A despotic government is the opposite of a just, responsible, limited, and constitutional government.[29] However, an elected and a constitutional government can also be a despotic one: "The forms of despotic governments are varied, but this is not the place to discuss them in detail. It suffices to state here that the quality of despotism applies not only to the government of the single despot who has seized power by force and usurpation, but includes also the government of a limited and legitimate ruler by hereditary succession or by election, in cases where such a ruler is not held accountable. The term despotism applies also to the government of the group even though that group was elected to office, because the mere fact of deliberation preceding a decision does not make a decision any the less despotic. It may modify it somewhat, but it may also be more tyrannical and more injurious than

27 For this paragraph, see *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 15-16.

28 *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

29 *ibid.*, p. 7.

the tyranny of a lone despot".[30] A constitutional government can also be a despotic government when the executive power is not accountable to the legislature, and when the legislature is not in turn accountable to the people.[31] All governments may be despotic unless they are subject to strict and uncompromising supervision, as was the case in early Islam with the Caliph 'Uthman, and as is the case in the present French Republic (the third) with the affairs of the medals (1887), Panama, and Dreyfus.[32]

Despotism demoralizes the whole of society. A despotic government's members are all tyrannical — from the great despot himself down to the policeman and the streetsweeper.[33] A general corruption of morals spreads from the despot, his attendants, and the higher classes, down to the lower classes of society.[34] The people come to practice lying, deceit, hypocrisy, and self-abasement.[35] Progress in society comes to a stop, and the nation goes on declining until it perishes.[36] The despot is as unhappy as his subjects, for he lives in constant fear of them, tormented by his forebodings and his imagination. The lives of many despots end in madness.[37] Although Kawakebi tells us in the preface to his book that he refers to no particular despot or government, it is clear that he has modelled his psychopathic despot on Abdul Hamid. This fact did not escape the attention of his contemporaries.[38]

There is a perpetual war between despotism and learning.

30 *ibid.*, p. 8. Translation by Hazem Zaki Nuseibeh, *The Ideas of Arab Nationalism*, (New York, 1956), p. 130.

31 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, p. 8.

32 *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

33 *ibid.*, p. 44.

34 *ibid.*, p. 77.

35 *ibid.*, p. 89.

36 *ibid.*, p. 113.

37 *ibid.*, p. 30.

38 Philip de Tarazi, *Tarikh al-Sahafa al-'Arabiyya*, (Beirut, 1913), Vol. II, p. 202.

The despot is the enemy of knowledge. However, the knowledge he fears is not that of religion in its otherworldly aspects nor that of philology. He dreads the sciences of life: theoretical speculation, rationalist philosophy, international law, politics, the foundations of civilizations, rhetoric and history. These sciences broaden the human mind, and teach man what he is, what his rights are, whether he is oppressed, how to demand his rights, how to attain and safeguard them. The despot feeds on the common people, *'awam*, who "commit suicide because they are afraid. This fear is the result of their ignorance."[39]

Despotism is dehumanizing. Animals are distinguished from plants by their wills. The prisoner of despotism is devoid of will power, and is therefore robbed not only of the characteristic of man, but of the beast as well.[40] Man and society, on the other hand, reach an almost ideal state of perfection under just governments. Under such governments man is secure in his life and the enjoyment of his physical and mental capabilities, in his personal, religious, and intellectual freedoms, in his possessions, equal to all others and assured of justice. Under such governments man enjoys a life similar in some respects to the life of paradise promised him by religion.[41] This free man is a complete master of himself and is completely owned by his nation. When a nation reaches such a degree of progress that every individual is willing to sacrifice his life and possessions for it, then that nation will be able to dispense with the individual's life and possessions.[42] Few states have reached this almost ideal stage of progress. Among these are the Second Roman Republic and the Rashidin (orthodox) Caliphate.[43]

Like Khayr al-Din before him, Kawakebi finds that order

39 For this paragraph, see *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 27-29.

40 *ibid.*, p. 70.

41 *ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

42 *ibid.*, p. 116.

43 *ibid.*, pp. 113-114.

and justice in society are based on the Islamic principle of "commanding the good and forbidding the evil", and that this principle is put into practice in civilized nations by means of parliament.[44] But unlike Khayr al-Din, he finds that the execution of this principle is a duty that is obligatory for all Moslems, a *fard al-'ain*, and not a *fard al-kifaya*, an obligation that only a sufficient number of Moslems are required to fulfil. According to him it is only men of religion who support despotism, that have made it a *fard al-kifaya*.[45]

The Removal of Despotism

At the end of *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, Kawakebi sets out to discuss the ways and means of eradicating despotism. On this subject he adopts a gradualist and somewhat conservative attitude, although earlier, especially in the rhetorical passages of his book, he had been revolutionary.

Kawakebi maintains that the removal of despotism must be governed by these three principles: "1. The nation of which all the members, or the majority of whom do not feel the pains of despotism, does not deserve liberty. 2. Despotism must not be fought with violence. It must be fought gradually and with gentleness. 3. Before fighting despotism, its replacement must be ready".[46] Then he goes on to elaborate these three principles: "A people that has been abased for so long that it has become like animals or worse, will absolutely not demand liberty. It might avenge itself on the despot, but this will only be with the purpose of taking revenge on his person, and not in order to get rid of despotism. This will not benefit such a people, for it will be exchanging one disease for another, like substituting a headache for stomach-ache." Such a people might also fight one despot with another. And

44 *ibid.*, pp. 20, 72.

45 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (1957), p. 37.

46 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 127-128.

this again will not benefit it; for should it succeed, the new leader will become its new despot. And finally such a people might attain liberty by chance, but again it will not benefit from it, for this liberty will soon turn into some sort of perturbed despotism.[47] And consequently, the wise have decided that a people who have not been prepared for liberty will not benefit from it when they attain it. Liberty which is won as the result of a senseless revolution is rarely useful, for revolution most often cuts down the tree of despotism, without uprooting it; and the tree soon flourishes again, stronger than ever.[48]

Despotism also must be fought not with violence, but with wisdom and gradualism. It can only be eliminated by education. Despotism is surrounded and supported by forces of all kinds: terror, the army, especially when it is a foreign army; the power of wealth and the wealthy; foreign support; men of religion, and the inertia of the common people. "These forces make of despotism a sword that cannot be opposed by the mere stick of public opinion." And fickleness is also in the nature of public opinion, which might rise this year to fall the next, or boil up today to subside tomorrow. It is therefore necessary to evolve a steady and a firm counterforce to despotism. Despotism, finally, must not be resisted by force, for a senseless rebellion merely brings destruction and bloodshed. However, a people sometimes rebels spontaneously. This happens when despotism becomes unbearable, when the despot commits a cruel act in public, loses a war, insults religion and mocks the people, or when an acute economic crisis occurs.[49]

It is also necessary to find a substitute for the despotic government before attempting to overthrow it. In taking any step, its purpose must be known beforehand in a general way. A general knowledge of aims, however, will not suffice

47 *ibid.*, p. 128.

48 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (1957), p. 176.

49 For this paragraph, see *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 129-130.

in combating despotism. The aims of rebellion must be clear, and they must be agreed upon by everybody, or by a majority, that is two-thirds of the people or of the force possessed by the adversary. Otherwise confusion and a destructive civil war will result, and the victory will go to the despot. The objects of resistance, therefore, must be made public, and the people must be won over to them. The revolt of Imam 'Ali and his supporters failed because they could not win over the people to their aims. Perhaps this was due to the limitations of public communications in those days. When the people are eventually won over, and a sincere yearning for liberty and an awareness of the pains of despotism has appeared among them, the despot is left no choice — he either renounces his despotism, or is removed.[50]

Kawakebi's ideas of revolution are both classical and in tune with his day. When he stresses evolution and education, rather than revolution, he reflects some of the ideas current in Egypt after the failure of 'Arabi's revolt. In this he is closer to Mohammed 'Abduh than to Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. But unlike the 'Abduh of the post-'Arabi period, he does not rule out completely the advisability of revolution and of revolutionary action. Here he is in direct line with non-Sunni approaches to revolution in classical Arab political thought. The Sunni approach, illustrated best in Ghazali's writings, does not counsel rebellion against authority, no matter how tyrannical, so as to avoid bloodshed, destruction, and misery in society.

The non-Sunni approach, to be found in the thought of the Mu'tazila, the Kharijites, and the Zaydis, permits the rising of the people against their unjust rulers. But there are differences among these groups as to the probabilities of success and the conditions under which a rebellion must be undertaken. According to some, rebellion against an unjust ruler is the duty of any number of men who can

50 For the paragraph above, see *ibid.*, pp. 130-132.

come together. According to others, rebellion becomes obligatory only when the rebels are half the number of their opponents. The Mu'tazila would undertake rebellion when they felt themselves sufficiently strong to beat the unjust ruler and his supporters. The Zaydis, on the other hand, would have a number of men equal to the Moslems who fought in the Battle of Badr before rising against their ruler. Rebellion for all these groups, however, is preceded by the election of the new *imam*, ruler.[51] When Kawakebi stipulates that a substitute for the despotic government be found first, before undertaking a rebellion and that those who would fight despotism be equal to two thirds of the number or the strength of their opponents, his ideas are clearly and unmistakably based on these classical, but unorthodox, views concerning revolution in Arab political thought.

Anti-Militarism

Kawakebi holds very strong anti-militarist views. "It is an established fact" he writes, "that no just government, finding itself free from accountability and responsibility because of the nation's ignorance or negligence, would fail to rapidly become despotic. Then it would not forego despotism, so long as it has at its service these two terrible forces: the ignorance of the people, and the organized soldiery".[52] And then Kawakebi maintains that Queen Victoria herself would not forgo the chance of becoming a despot, even if it were only for ten days of the remainder of her life, if she could only get control of her army.[53] Civilized nations have freed themselves from ignorance, but they have been afflicted by compulsory military service, which has made them more unhappy than ignorant nations. The inventor of compulsory military service can be said to

51 For these views, see al-Ash'ari, *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*, (Istanbul, 1930), Vol. II, p. 466.

52 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, p. 9.

53 *ibid.*

be the devil himself, who has thus avenged himself on the sons of Adam. Militarism corrupts the character of a nation, kills all initiative in it, and costs it unnecessary expenditure.[54] One of the general causes of Moslem lethargy lies in their preference for earning their living in military and bureaucratic careers.[55]

There are no precedents in classical Arab political thought for Kawakebi's anti-militarist views, therefore it is difficult to determine their sources. There is, however, some internal evidence in his writings which suggests that Kawakebi might have been influenced by the anti-militarist views of Edmond Demolins' *A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?*, an Arabic translation of which had recently been published. This translation by Fathi Zaghlul made a deep impression on the Arab intelligentsia of his day. There is also internal evidence which suggests that Kawakebi might have been influenced by the anti-militarist views of the European socialist and liberal press during *l'affaire Dreyfus*. And there is finally the possibility that Kawakebi had been influenced by the anti-militarist ideas of the Italian writer, Vittorio Alfieri.

Here we should touch briefly on the question of Kawakebi's indebtedness to Alfieri. It has been asserted for some time that Kawakebi borrowed some of the ideas of *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* from Vittorio Alfieri's book *Della Tirannide*. This assertion has been recently carried to the point of referring to "al-Kawakebi's plagiarism from Alfieri".[56] Its origin seems to lie in a passing remark of Ahmed Amin's to the effect that Kawakebi had derived many of *Taba'i' al-Istibdad's* ideas from Alfieri.[57] This remark was taken by Sylvia G. Haim and elaborated into the hypothesis that large parts of

54 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (1957), pp. 19-20.

55 *Umm al-Qura*, p. 161.

56 Peter Partner, *A Short Political Guide to the Arab World*, (London, 1960), p. 107.

57 Ahmed Amin, *Zu'ma' al-Islah fi al-'Asr al-Hadith*, (Cairo, 1949), p. 254.

Taba'i' al-Istibdad are a faithful reproduction of Alfieri's *Della Tirannide.*[58] Her hypothesis gains weight from the fact that *Della Tirannide* seems to have been translated from French into Turkish by Abdulah Jevdat, and published in Geneva, in 1898, under the title *Istibdad.*[59] Kawakebi knew no European languages, but spoke, read, and wrote Turkish so it is possible that he may have read Abdulah Jevdat's translation. However, Sylvia G. Haim's interesting, and on the surface convincing, hypothesis cannot yet be established as a fact. A final judgment on this question can be passed only after *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* has been compared with Abdulah Jevdat's translation of *Della Tirannide,* and not with the original Italian work, as Sylvia G. Haim has done. Nineteenth-century translations into Turkish were rather free, and it is therefore necessary to ascertain to what extent and in what form Alfieri's ideas were transferred from the French translation to the Turkish of Abdulah Jevdat. It is also necessary to examine the articles that Kawakebi wrote for 'Ali Yusif's paper *al-Mu'ayyad. Taba'i' al-Istibdad,* as we know from its foreword, is an expanded collection of these articles. Were Alfieri's ideas borrowed to pad the original articles and extend them to book length? If so, what were Kawakebi's original ideas, and how similar were they to Alfieri's?

Sylvia G. Haim also asserts that Kawakebi derived the ideas of *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* from Charles Fourier and from Rousseau's *Contrat Social;* while Norbert Tapiero, on the other hand, claims that Kawakebi derived the ideas of *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* from Montesquieu's *l'Esprit des Lois.*[60] Kawakebi thus appears to have been influenced by different

58 Sylvia G. Haim, "Alfieri and al-Kawakebi", *Oriente Moderno,* (1954), pp. 321-334.

59 Ettore Rossi, "Una tradizione turca dell' opera 'Della Tirannide' di V. Alfieri probabilemente conosciuta da al-Kawakebi," *Oriente Moderno,* (1954), pp. 335-337.

60 Norbert Tapiero, *Les Idées Reformistes d'Al-Kawakebi,* (Paris, 1956), p. 13.

sources, according to different people. The soundest explanation of this paradox might be also the simplest. Kawakebi, like other members of the intelligentsia of his day, quite obviously adopted the political ideas of 18th-century European thinkers that were so fashionable in the Moslem world of the 19th century. He himself tells us in the foreword to *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* that it is based on what he studied and observed, in addition to what he had borrowed. Kawakebi's contemporaries were to think that his religious and political ideas were very similar to those held by the Afghani-'Abduh school and its disciples. In fact, they thought them so similar as to be identical. When Kawakebi's works first appeared anonymously in newspapers (later in book form), many thought that their author was Mohammed 'Abduh,[61] while some thought that he was Rashid Rida.[62] And long after Kawakebi's identity was known, Louis Cheikho was to write that *Umm al-Qura* had been previewed by Mohammed 'Abduh.[63] However, Kawakebi was to explore two new concepts that were, as far as we know, unexplored by any of his contemporaries. They were the concept of socialism, and that of Arab Nationalism.

Socialism

Only man and the female spider, writes Kawakebi, devour their own kind. Under despotism man practises a new and a more cruel form of cannibalism, in which he sucks his victim's lifeblood by exploiting him economically and by robbing him of the fruits of his labor. Half the human race, which numbers approximately 1,500 million people, are a burden to the other half. The majority of this burdensome half consists of idle and unproductive womankind. However,

61 Ibrahim Salim al-Najar, "Min Thikriat al-Madhi: 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakebi", *al-Hadith*, (1940), p. 6.

62 Rashid Rida, "Musab 'Azim bi-Wafat 'Alim Hakim", *al-Manar*, (1902), p. 279.

63 Louis Cheikho, *Tarikh al-Adab al-'Arabiyya fi al-Rubu' al-Awal min al-Qirn al-'Ishrin* (Beirut, 1926), p. 18.

"men have also divided up among themselves the hardships of life in an unjust manner. Men of politics, government, and religion, and their dependents, whose total number does not exceed 1% of the human race, enjoy half or more of what human labor produces, and spend it all in luxury and extravagance. For instance, they decorate the streets with millions of lamps for the sake of their passage there once in a while, without thinking of the millions of the poor living in darkness in their homes. Then there are the specialized craftsmen, the dealers in luxuries, the greedy and monopolistic merchants and their like. They too are about 1%, but each one of them lives on what tens of hundreds or thousands of workers and peasants have to subsist on. This unequal division between the sons of Adam and Eve is the outcome of political despotism."[64]

Under just governments, unless the morals of people have been corrupted, both the desire and the opportunity for the accumulation of wealth are lessened, for corruption of morals increases man's desire for extravagance. Despotism, on the other hand, facilitates the accumulation of wealth by immoral, illicit, and criminal methods, and the wealthy are the supporters of the despot and his allies.[65] Only the lower and weaker kinds of animals, like bees and ants, know hoarding. Man alone among the higher type of animals practises it by his accumulation of wealth.[66]

Man's accumulation of wealth must be subject to three conditions if it is not to be harmful. First, money must be acquired only by legal methods, that is as a reward for actual work. Second, the individual's accumulation of wealth must in no way entail injury to others, such as the monopolization of necessities, the exploitation of workers and the poor, or the possession of what is free and common, like land. Land was given by its Creator to all men; it is

64 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 50-53.

65 *ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

66 *ibid.*, p. 55.

their mother, who feeds, nourishes, and embraces them. Early despots, however, have enacted laws by means of which they denied it to its children. The land of Ireland, for instance, is owned now by a thousand English economic despots, who enjoy two-thirds or three-quarters of the fruits of ten million Irishmen's labor. The conditions prevailing in Egypt, and in some other countries, are almost like those of Ireland, and will be even worse in the future. Many people in civilized Europe have nowhere to sleep. China, on the other hand, considered by civilized people a disorganized country, does not permit a person to own more than a specified amount of land not exceeding 20 square kilometers, less than 5 Egyptian feddans. Russia, thought to be despotic and cruel by most Europeans, has lately a law like that of China for its Western and Polish provinces which also provides that peasants may not incur debts exceeding 500 francs nor be prosecuted for an unregistered debt. Unless Eastern governments remedy matters by enacting a law similar to the Russian one, the conditions of agricultural land in 50 years or a century at most, will be no different from those of Ireland. Third, the money an individual makes should not greatly exceed his needs; for an excess of wealth is a destroyer of man's morals. The Quran refers to this when it says: "Man is indeed outrageous at seeing himself grow rich." All religious laws, political, moral, and social wisdom ban interest, to maintain economic equality among men. Interest increases private fortunes, thus disturbing this equality. It is also a kind of robbery, for it entails profits without the expenditure of effort, and therefore it encourages idleness that demoralizes man.[67] All of Kawakebi's sympathies are with the poor and the meek, whom he designates, along with youth, as the soldiers of his fictitious society.[68]

Kawakebi's hostility to economic injustice and to the rich

67 *ibid.*, pp. 56-58.

68 *Umm al-Qura*, p. 210.

cannot be considered very original. Tahtawi had earlier attacked, as we have seen, economic injustice and the exploitation of individuals, particularly of peasants. Similarly, Shaikh Hussain al-Marsafi had strongly attacked Egyptian landowners, in his book *Risalat al-Kalim al-Thaman* (Essay on Eight Words), published in 1881. What distinguishes Kawakebi from his predecessors and contemporaries alike is his explicit adoption of the Western doctrine of socialism.

Kawakebi held that society attains the perfect order under socialism. The socialist way of life was the most ideal that the mind could imagine, and it was the life that the majority of the civilized Western world desired, but has so far found no way of attaining, although this world pursues it with organized societies composed of millions of people. These are called *al-Common*, the Fabians, the Nihilists, and the Socialists.[69]

Kawakebi also believed that the Islamic system is a socialist one. "Socialism at the origin of Christianity and Islam" is one of the headings of his chapter on "Despotism and Wealth" in *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*. Socialism has, in fact, originated with Christianity and Islam, according to Kawakebi, but the socialist life in Christianity has not left the realm of the potential to that of the actual. Not so with Islam, which has founded the most perfect socialist way of life.[70] The Rashidun Caliphs, who established the most ideal state that human beings ever knew, understood the real meaning of the Quran and carried out its teachings, and therefore

[69] *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (1957), p. 81; *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, p. 55; *Umm al-Qura*, p. 60, *al-Common* stood generally for the Communists in the usage of the day. See, for instance, "Ayuhal Ghani Tahathar," *Al-Muqtataf*, (1888), pp. 78-83, which clearly distinguishes *al-Common* as those who aim at dividing wealth among people not in accordance with their work but in accordance with their needs, from the Socialists who would transfer business and economic activity from the hands of the individuals to those of the state, organizing them in such a manner as to prevent the monopolization of wealth by the few and the doing of injustice to the poor.

[70] *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, p. 55; *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (1957), p. 81.

they founded a socialist way of life and a government that equalized even their own persons with the poor of the nation.[71] Islam has established for mankind a law based on the principle that wealth is a value of labor and does not accumulate in the hands of the rich except by all manner of oppression and duplicity.[72]

The principles of Islam and the particulars of its economic system are identical with those of Western socialism, according to Kawakebi. *Al-Common*, the Fabians, the Nihilists, and the Socialists aim at establishing full or partial equality of standards of living among mankind; and they all struggle against economic despotism by demanding that the land, immovable property, and large industrial factories be commonly owned by the people, that labor and its fruits be evenly divided amongst all; and that the government enact and apply laws that embrace the whole economic activity, including its minute details. Islam has guaranteed the application of all these principles by: First, imposing the *zakat* (the alms tax), and the *'ushur* (the 10% tithe levied for public assistance), and organizing the distribution of their yield on public expenditure and on all categories of the needy, including the debtors. By levying one-fortieth of capital, Islam makes the rich contribute half of their wealth to the poor, for one-fortieth of reasonable profit made, that is, 5% a year, will halve the income of the rich; and thus the poor of the nation will catch up with its rich, and the accumulation of excessive fortunes that produce despotism and corruption of individual morals will be avoided. Second, Islam has prescribed work to the individual and has clearly prohibited the leading of parasitic lives. Third, Islam has made agricultural land the common property of all people, earnings from it to be enjoyed only by the individuals who work on it, subject only to the payment of the *'ushur* or the *kharaj* (tax on landed property), to the public treasury.

71 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 17-18.

72 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (1957), p. 81.

Fourth, Islam has laid down *shari'a* rules that are total and embrace all matters, down to those pertaining to personal details, and has charged the government with their execution, as the majority of socialist groups demand now.[73]

The novelty and the nonconformity of Kawakebi's approach to socialism can be illustrated by contrasting it with the views of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. In his widely read *al-Radd 'ala al-Dahriyyin* (Reply to the Materialists), first published in 1886, Afghani had considered the Socialists, Nihilists, and communists, hypocritical, materialist atheists, whose victory would only lead to the destruction of mankind.[74] For Kawakebi the Socialists, Nihilists, and communists are Western political groups struggling to attain the superior kind of life that had found its most perfect expression in Islam. Indeed, one of the causes of Islamic lethargy is the fact that the Islamic polity was originally "a parliamentary socialist one, meaning fully democratic, and had become, after the Rashidun Caliphs, because of internal strife, a monarchy bound by the basic rules of *shari'a*, and eventually had become more like an absolute monarchy".[75] Islam had founded, as we have seen, the most perfect socialism, but the Arabs among all Moslems and all people are the best guided to the principles of socialist life.[76]

Arabism

Kawakebi is the first Arab thinker to evolve in his writings the modern concept of Arab nationalism. To understand the nature and the process of the evolution of this concept in his thought, we must start out by a brief examination of

73 For the paragraph above, see *Umm al-Qura*, p. 60; *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, pp. 55-56; *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (1957), pp. 81-83.

74 Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, *al Radd 'ala al-Dahriyyin*, (Cairo, 1935), pp. 57-58.

75 *Umm al-Qura*, p. 29.

76 *ibid.*, p. 221

some of the ideological and historical determinants of Arab nationalism. We must begin here with religion. Islam is initially a profoundly national religion. There exists between it and the Arabs a very close, almost organic, relationship. Allah had declared: "An Arabic Quran have We sent down, that ye might understand it", and "Verily, from the Lord of the worlds hath this Book come down... In the clear Arabic tongue", and "Had We made it a Quran in a foreign tongue, they had surely said 'Unless its signs be made clear'... What! in a foreign tongue and the people Arabian". The Prophet was a pure Arab, and he had said: "Love the Arabs, because I am Arab, and the Quran is Arabic, and the language of the people of Paradise is Arabic"; and he had also declared: "If you hate the Arabs, you hate me", and "If Arabs are humiliated, Islam is humiliated". Religion had thus given the Arabs a strong sense of racial and linguistic distinctness and a powerful sense of historical importance — two of the most potent factors in the formation of modern nationalism. Dostoevsky said that every people must consider itself the "God bearing people" in order to have any faith in its future. There is no doubt that the Arabs believed themselves to be a people that bore God's Prophet, who conveyed to man God's final and most perfect Revelation, in his and their own language. Classical Arab political thought, both Sunni and Shi'i, drawing authority from such Prophetic traditions as: "The Imams are from Quraysh" and "As long as there remains one man of the Quraysh, so long shall that man be my successor", has reflected and enshrined Arab preeminence in Islam by insisting that the Caliph, head of the entire Moslem community, belong to Qùraysh, that most pure and noble Arab tribe of the Prophet.

According to many serious students of Islam, the Prophet addressed the message of Islam to Arabia and to the Arabs alone. Sir William Muir writes: "His (the Prophet's) world was Arabia: and for it Islam was sent. From first to last the

call was made primarily to Arabs and to them alone".[77] Islam was, however, to acquire a universal character. This had earlier happened to Christianity too. "His (Jesus') preaching referred only to Israel... This universalism (of Christianity) was not yet to be found in the teaching of Jesus; it became manifest in the epistles of Paul, and even then hesitantly... So, finally, "there is no distinction between Jew and Greek".[78] In Islam, the universalistic attitude, justified by interpretations of such Quranic verses as: "The believers are but brothers" and "O Men, We have created you of a male and a female and have made you into peoples and tribes, that ye may know one another. Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most pious of you", were to be stressed more and more as the Arabs poured out of Arabia and started to convert non-Arabs to Islam. These non-Arab Moslems, called *mawali*, clients of the Arabs, and treated as inferiors, seeking to improve their lot, were later to invent Prophetic *hadiths* in support of Islamic universalism and equality. Thus the passage : "(All) men are equal in Islam. Men are but the outer margins of the ground that Adam and Eve cultivated. The Arab has no superiority over the foreigner, *'ajami*, nor the foreigner over the Arab save in the fear of God... Bring me not your genealogies, but your (good) deeds" was inserted into the Prophet's famous oration on his "farewell pilgrimage", in the history of Ya'qubi, written in the ninth century. This passage is not contained in the versions of the speech given by the Prophet's biographers, Ibn Hisham and Waqidi, who preceded

[77] Sir William Muir, *Annals of the Early Caliphate*, (London, 1883), p. 61. See also C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism*, (New York, 1916), pp. 49-51. A. Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, (London, 1882): "The Arabic nationality was not the cradle but the boundary-wall of Islam", p. 53. J. Wellhausen finds Islam replete with pre-Islamic Arab elements: "Islam was in existence before the Koran," *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, (Calcutta, 1927), p. 9.

[78] Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism; a Study in its Origins and Background*, (New York, 1944), pp. 48-49.

Ya'qubi by more than half a century.[79] Eventually Islam was to assume as universal, and as supra-national a character as Christianity.

However, the struggle between the Arab and the non-Arab peoples for supremacy within Islam continued, naked and bitter.[80] In the course of this struggle the *mawali* were to develop the *Shu'ubiya* (belonging to the peoples, the non-Arabs) movement, which claimed the equality or superiority of the non-Arabs. In the heated and prolonged literary and intellectual controversy between the Arabs and the *Shu'ubis*, men like al-Jahiz, Ibn-Durayd, Ibn-Qutaybah, al-Tawhidi, al-Baladhuri and al-Asma'i, wrote of the unique and distinctive characteristics of the Arabs and of the superiority of the Arab race and culture. They, in effect, produced in their works a highly developed concept of an Arab *Volksgeist*. Their pride in, and their exalting of the Arab people extended to pre-Islamic Arabs.[81] Historically, the *Shu'ubiya* movement was to triumph, for the Arabs first lost their political hegemony in *Dar al Islam* to the Persians, in the eighth century, and then to the Turks, in the ninth century. But nominal Arab hegemony was always kept, in the form of an Arab Caliph, who reigned but often did not rule. With the Ottoman conquest of the Arab World in the 16th century, and the transfer of the Caliphate from the Arabs to the Ottoman Turks, the Arabs ceased to reign, as well as to rule. Because of their special position in Islam, they were treated at the beginning with a certain deference

79 Reuben Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, (Cambridge, 1957), p. 61.

80 For an account of this struggle, in the Eastern Caliphate, see Mohammed Badi' Sharif, *al-Sira' Bayn al-Mawali wa-l-'Arab*, (Cairo, 1954).

81 See for instance Abu Hayan al-Tawhidi (d. 1023), *Kitab al-Imta' wa al-Mu'anasa*, (Cairo, 1939), Vol. I, pp. 70-96. Ibn Qutaybah (d. 889) boasts of the fact that Islam incorporated into its ordinances many pre-Islamic Arab customs and practices, and also says that God told the Moslems: "You are the best nation raised up for men" when they were all Arabs and had not been joined yet by the non-Arabs, Kitab al 'Arab, in *Rasai'l al-Bulagha'*, (Cairo, 1913), edited by Mohammed Kurd 'Ali, p. 291.

by the Turkish ruling class.[82] The Arabs, on the other hand, weak, exhausted, and poorer than the Turks, for the discovery of the route round the Cape of Good Hope had economically affected them much more than the Turks,[83] submitted to Ottoman Turkish rule. Islam was to become for them the foundation of polity and of individual and collective loyalty; and their allegiance was given to the Turkish Sultan as the Imam of the Moslems and the Protector of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, the *Khadim al-Haramain al-Sharaifain*, the Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries. Even for the Christian subjects, the Turkish Sultan seems to have acquired the attributes of their legitimate "basileus".[84] But the tension between the Arabs and the Turks does not seem to have died out completely.[85] For an illustration of the nature of relations between Arabs and Turks at the beginning of the nineteenth century, we must again go to 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti. Jabarti recounts how, in 1798, the British fleet landed ten Englishmen in Alexandria who were to warn the Egyptians of a French attack on Egypt and offer them British aid in repelling it. But the Egyptian notables who met them refused this aid, telling the Englishmen: "This country belongs to the Sultan, and neither the French nor any other foreigners have any business here. So be good enough to leave us".[86] And when, after the rebellion of Cairo against the French in 1800, General Kléber admonished the Egyptian leaders for siding with the Ottomans, we find them telling him that they did so because the Ottoman "is our old Sultan and the Sultan

82 H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 160.

83 G. W. F. Stripling, *The Ottoman Turks and the Arabs*, p. 38.

84 "Turks" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. IV, p. 964.

85 For this tension in the 18th century, see Albert Hourani, *A Vision of History*, (Beirut, 1961), pp. 35-70.

86 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *'Ajaib al-Athar fi al-Tarajim wa al-Akhbar*, Vol. III, p. 2.

of the Moslems".[87] However, within this universal, supranational, Islamic Sultanate, sharp social and national tensions existed between the Arabs and the Turks. Thus the official minutes of the trial of Sulaiman al-Halabi, who had assassinated the very same General Kléber, record that when Sulaiman al-Halabi is asked to what *millet*, religion, he belongs, his answer is: "*millet* Mohammed (Islam)". But when, on the other hand, he is asked whether he knows the Turkish grand vizier and if he had met him, he answers: "I am *ibn al-'Arab*, son of the Arabs, and the likes of me do not know the grand vizier."[88]

It is clear that by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Turkish ruling class in the Ottoman Empire had developed the inevitable sense of superiority that all ruling classes eventually develop towards their alien subjects. No assimilation of the Turks by the Arabs, or the Arabs by the Turks had ever taken place. The two people had remained absolutely separate under Ottoman rule. "The Mamelukes, after all, had practically been brought up in Syria and Egypt, and consequently they had some interest in the appearance and reputation of their home. The Turks, however, were sent for a term, none too long to familiarize themselves with the conditions of their charges and very frequently, after a brief sojourn amongst the Arabs, they returned to Turkey for the rest of their lives, or were assigned to some other posts remote from the Arabs, or at best in other parts of the Arab lands where conditions were quite different from those with which they were familiar ... Assimilation could not take place under such conditions."[89] And in the course of the nineteenth century the Turkish

87 *ibid.*, p. 112.

88 *ibid.*, p. 124. The term *Abna' al-'Arab* applied then "to the Arabic-speaking towns-people and peasantry on the one hand and the nomads or Arabs proper on the other" — Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, (London, 1960), p. 15.

89 G. W. F. Stripling, *The Ottoman Turks and the Arabs*, p. 59.

ruling class, fighting one separatist movement after another, was to develop a deep suspicion and fear of the Arabs, who constituted the largest non-Turkish element in the multinational Ottoman Empire. The Arabs, on the other hand, had given the Turks grounds for suspicion and fear by the Mohammed 'Ali and the Wahhabi movements. And there was, besides these two separatist movements, the ever rebellious Yemen. So the Turks were to accuse 'Arabi Pasha of trying to establish an Arab State,[90] and rumours charged Khayr al-Din Pasha al-Tunisi with the intention of founding a Grand Arab Kingdom, comprising Tunis, Tripolitania, and Egypt.[91] Such suspicions were, of course, bound to put ideas into some Arab minds, even if they were originally devoid of them.

The Turkish claim for the Caliphate and the leadership of all Moslems was to be revived by Sultan Abdul Hamid for his political ends. The claim of a Turkish sultan to the Caliphate rested on weak theoretical and historical foundations, for the Caliphate theoretically had to belong to the Arab tribe of Quraysh, and historically there was no evidence that it was ever actually transferred from the last Arab Caliph Mutawakkil to the Turkish Sultan Selim in the 16th century. Perceiving the weakness of his claim and suspicions of Arab separatist tendencies, Abdul Hamid set out, in his characteristic manner, to tighten his grip on the Arabs and to win them over at the same time. About 1890 he removed from the mosques of Istanbul the extracts from the Sacred Books that contained a reference to the qualifications required in the Caliph.[92] The appointment of Khayr al-Din Pasha al-Tunisi to the premiership of the Empire, in 1878, on the other hand, might have been one of

90 Jurji Zaydan, *Tarajim Mashahir al-Sharq*, (Cairo, 1910). Vol. I, p. 279.

91 Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, "A Mes Enfants," *Revue Tunisienne*, (1934), p. 359.

92 Zeine N. Zeine, *Arab-Turkish Relations and the Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, (Beirut, 1958), p. 66, n. 3.

Abdul Hamid's measures for winning Arab sympathy.[93] But all of Abdul Hamid's attempts to win Arab sympathy came to nothing, for under his despotic and corrupt rule suspicion between Arabs and Turks increased.[94]

To understand the emergence of the idea of Arab nationalism in the mind of Kawakebi, this concept must be placed against the proper ideological and historical background: the Arabs, given a profound sense of racial and cultural distinctness and distinction by Islam, possessors of a highly developed *Volksgeist*, but subjects of a universal, supra-national, Islamic state, that had revived its feeble claim to the Caliphate, at its most weak, corrupt, and despotic period of history. To this one must add the fact that the Arab intelligentsia of the nineteenth century, as typified and illustrated in this study by Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, were highly impressed by the secular nationalism of the West in the 19th century, and ascribed to this nationalism the strength and prosperity of European states. The strength of nationalism in the West was also noted by Kawakebi who found in this fact a cause of the cohesion and progress of contemporary Western nations.[95] He was also aware of the fact that loyalty is given to nationalism in the West, as against religion in the East.[96]

The heart of the Islamic community, according to Kawakebi, is the Arabian Peninsula; because it contains the Ka'bah and the Prophet's Tomb.[97] The Peninsula is also inhabited by the Arabs, who, together with the Arabs of Iraq and North Africa, constitute the core of Islamic unity.[98] Islam originated with the Arabs, and in their own

93 Mohammed Jamil Beyhum, *Qawafil al-'Uruba wa Mawakibiha Khilal al-'Usur*, (Beirut, 1950), Vol. II, p. 17.

94 Zeine N. Zeine, *Arab-Turkish Relations and the Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, p. 54.

95 *Umm al-Qura*, pp. 63, 185.

96 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, p. 34.

97 *Umm al-Qura*, pp. 10, 218.

98 *ibid.*, p. 219.

language. Therefore they are its kith and kin, its carriers, its keepers, and its protectors.[99] In Kawakebi's world of Islam, the Arabs and the Arab element are clearly its center of gravity. Mohammed is a Qurayshite Arab.[100] Arabic is the language of the Quran, and is made immortal by it. Arabic is also the religious language of 300 million Moslem people.[101] The Arabs, of all Moslems, have the greatest knowledge of the laws of Islam, because they were the first people to embrace it. Many Prophetic *hadiths* testify to the soundness of their religious faith. Their Islam is still *salafi*, pure, flexible, and free from confusion.[102] Non-Arabs have corrupted the early Islam of the *Salaf al-Salih* and made it rigid. They have introduced innovations and superstitions into it, and not knowing Arabic, they could not understand the Quran and the *sunna*, so they confused religion and complicated it.[103]

Islam, in effect, has come to mean Arabism for Kawakebi. He thus interprets the historical fact that in the spread of early Islam, Arab non-Moslems, unlike the non-Arabs, were given no freedom of choice, and were forced to accept Islam and become Moslems, by the argument that this does not indicate that Islam spread by the sword, as its critics imagine, but that the sword was used for the conversion of Arabs alone, so as to effect "political unity (in Arabia) through racial unity."[104] He goes so far as to express his wish that non-Arabs had never embraced Islam — a sentiment that can hardly be reconciled with the Moslem's traditional duty to extend the Domain of Islam,

99 *ibid.*, p. 14.

100 *ibid.*, p. 77.

101 *ibid.*, pp. 82, 220.

102 *ibid.*, p. 219.

103 *ibid.*, pp. 36, 37, 43, 89, 101.

104 *ibid.*, p. 112. Two years after Kawakebi, Wellhausen was to give the same interpretation of this historical fact: J. Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, p. 24. The original *Das Arabische Reich und sein Sturz*, was first published in Berlin, in 1902.

Dar al-Islam, as far as possible.[105]

Kawakebi also finds that the Arabs, of all Moslems, possess the strongest sense of *'asabiya*, *esprit de corps*, and pride, because they retain their bedouin characteristics and qualities. They are the purest in race, for they do not mix with others, and their princes have the noblest ancestry. They are the most jealous guardians of their freedom and independence.[106] The Arabs, since pre-Islamic days, have rarely tolerated despotism.[107] Of all Moslems, they are the best able to bear hardships and the most adaptable to difficult conditions, for they have not been debased and corrupted by luxury. They are the most ancient of civilized people, as proven by the magnificence of their literature. Also, the Arabs, of all nations, are the most respectful of their pledges, the most philanthropic towards humanity, and the most generous towards their neighbours. The latter is proved by the preference of Jews to emigrate to Arab countries, and the fact that Arabs took no part in the massacre of Armenians.[108] The qualities for which Kawakebi praises the Arabs are the familiar virtues that classical Arabic literature attributes to Arabs and to bedouins: purity of descent, richness of language, courage, pride, loyalty and fidelity, magnanimity, generosity, love of freedom, and the ability to bear hardship. These qualities make up the Arab *Volksgeist* as seen by the Arabs. To them, Kawakebi has added two new virtues that are obviously inspired by his political ideas. He states, as we have seen, that the Arabs, of all Moslems and of all nations, are the best guided to the principles of the socialist way of life. He also declares that the Arabs are the most ancient people to practice *shura*, consultation, between the rulers

105 *Umm al-Qura*, p. 29.
106 *ibid.*, pp. 219-220.
107 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, p. 10.
108 *ibid.*, pp. 220-221.

and the ruled.[109] We have noted the Western origin of the idea of "the socialist way of life". Let us now take the virtue of "consultation" that Kawakebi sees in Arab bedouin life. An examination of the Arabic proclamations of the French expedition to Egypt shows us that the French used the term *mashyakha* for *république. Mashyakha* is an Arabic noun, derived from the word *shaikh,* which means "elder" or "senior" of a tribe, its chief, and thus communicates the sense of rule by shaikhs. Professor Bernard Lewis rightly observes that "the use of this bedouin term *(mashyakha)* was no doubt intended to suggest the relative freedom and equality of the Arab tribe, as against the autocratic type of governmental authority connoted by the more familiar terms of *dawla* and *hukuma.*"[110] How does Kawakebi conceive of this liberal type of rule, rule by consultation, as existing in bedouin society? Like Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi before him, he equates *ahl ah-hall wa'l-'aqd* in Islam with the members of parliament in the West. These people, writes Kawakebi, elect the *imam* by *bay'a,* and had in fact ruled in Umayyad and the early Abbasid states. *Ahl al-hall wa'l-'aqd,* and the members of Western parliaments Kawakebi goes on to equate with the chiefs of clans in the bedouin tribe, who, according to him, decide policies for the *shaikh* of the tribe, whose only function is the execution of these policies.[111] Thus the two main currents in Kawakebi's political thought — his hostility to despotism, personified in the non-Arab Sultan Abdul Hamid, and his Arabism and his anti-Turkish feelings (soon to be examined) meet in the quality he attributes to the Arabs: their non-despotic form of government. This intermingling of the two currents in Kawakebi's thought can be further illustrated by his assertion that the non-

109 *ibid.,* p. 221.

110 Bernard Lewis, "The Concept of Islamic Republic," *Die Welt des Islams,* (1956), p. 2.

111 *Umm al-Qura,* pp. 66-67.

Arab Moslem would not hesitate to abandon Islam but for the use they make of the Quranic verse that declares: "Obey God and obey those in authority from among you". However, these foreign rulers, according to Kawakebi, ignore the requirements placed on the ruler by the conditions embodied in the words "*those* in authority", that is plural and pertaining to more than one, and the words "from among *you*" (i.e. from among the Arabs).[112] These two currents — hostility to autocratic rule and the consciousness of Arabism — were later to meet and reinforce each other in the pre-World War Arab nationalist movement.

Kawakebi regrets that non-Arabs ever embraced Islam, for two reasons: they have corrupted Islam, and deprived the Arabs of their most important right in Islam, i.e. the right to the Caliphate.[113] Amongst the non-Arab Moslems he limits his hostility to the Turks. The Turkish delegate to his fictitious Moslem Congress he calls *al-Mawla al-Rumi*, thus relegating the Turk to the inferior status of the non-Arab *mawali* in early Islam, and by the employment of the term *Rumi* casting doubts on the sincerity of the Turk's Islam. As against *al-Mawla al-Rumi*, the delegate from Afghanistan is called *al-Faqih al-Afghani* and the Persian *al-Mujtahid al-Tabrizi*. The Turks, he maintains, have given Islam nothing but a few mosques to have the names of their sultans proclaimed from their pulpits. They have introduced into Islam blind obedience and superstition.[114] The Ottomans harmed Islam in the flower of its youth by destroying the Abbasid Caliphate and all that the Arabs had built.[115] The respect paid by most Ottoman sultans to the rites of religion is absolutely superficial.[116] These sultans

112 *ibid.*, pp. 36-37.
113 *ibid.*, p. 29.
114 *ibid.*, pp. 170-171.
115 *ibid.*, p. 238.
116 *ibid.*, p. 288.

in reality put the interests of the state before those of religion.[117] The following are some examples of their anti-religious conduct — Mohammed the Conqueror, who was the best of the Ottoman House, was to put the interests of the state above those of religion, and to conclude a secret treaty with Ferdinand of Aragon and his wife Isabella, to support them against Bani al-Ahmar, the last Arab state in Spain, consenting thereby to the killing and the apostasy of 15 million Moslems. Sultan Selim destroyed the Abbasid House by treachery, and while he was killing Arabs in the East, the Spaniards were killing them in the West. The Ottomans worked for the destruction of 15 Moslem states and governments. They repeatedly attacked the Yemen and respected neither religion there, nor brotherhood, nor humanity; the Ottoman soldiers even surprised and killed the Moslems in Sana'a and Zubaid while they were praying. Sultan Mahmoud copied from the Franks their dress and forced it on his court and on the men of the state, while Sultan Abdul Majid permitted the drinking of alcohol and usury.[118]

From this most bitter attack on the Ottoman Turks, Kawakebi launches on an indictment of Ottoman rule, in the course of which he offers a remarkably incisive analysis of the weakness and decay of the Ottoman Empire in its last days. He maintains that most of the weakness came out in the last 60 years, when the Empire started to reorganize itself, divesting itself of its old traditions on the one hand, but unsuccessful in acquiring or originating new institutions that could take their place, on the other hand. He finds that after the Tanzimat, the centralization of administration and the unification of legislation increased in the multi-national Empire, and that the restraint placed on the bureaucracy by its traditional responsibility to the

117 *ibid.*, p. 231.
118 *ibid.*, pp. 228-231.

sultan disappeared.[119] Kawakebi finds that the process of decay and weakness in the Empire has particularly accelerated in the preceding twenty years, in which the Empire lost two thirds of its possessions, and is threatened by the loss of the remaining third because of the depletion in manpower and the sultan's autocratic policies.[120] Kawakebi also points to the confusions and inefficiency that are caused in the Empire by its stubborn attempt to apply to its multi-national and -racial population unified codes of law, by means of a superficially inflated multi-national and -racial administrative apparatus. He complains, further, of the lack of homogeneity between the governors of the provinces and the local populations. He refers to the bad conditions that prevail in Hejaz, because of the disputes and lack of coordination between the three authorities, and the military. The Empire also suffers from uncontrolled, inefficient, and extravagant financial policies, that have burdened it with foreign debts. There is suppression of freedom of thought and the subjects of the Empire are never consulted. The Empire's weak foreign policy results from all this internal corruption and inefficiency.[121]

Kawakebi finds that the Ottoman Empire follows a highly discriminating policy towards the different nationalities that compose it. The Arabs, who are distinguished by constituting two thirds of the subjects of this Empire, are deprived of their rights to government posts and to financial rewards.[122] Kawakebi writes that the non-Arabs who founded Islamic states, such as the Buwayhids, the Ayyubis, the Saljuks, and the House of Mohammed 'Ali, all soon

119 *ibid.*, pp. 162-163. It is interesting to note in this connection that Professor Bernard Lewis, in a recent and a most serious study of Turkish history, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, also finds that the tendencies for an unrestrained and centralized despotism in the Empire increased with the removal of traditional checks after the Tanzimat.

120 *Umm al-Qura*, p. 162.

121 *ibid.*, pp. 163-166.

122 *ibid.*, p. 164.

became Arabised, acquired Arab characteristics, mixed with them, and became part of them. Only the Ottoman Turks prided themselves on keeping apart, and have not tried to Turkify their subjects nor to accept to Arabize themselves. They are willing, however, to imitate others, and Germanify and Frenchify themselves. There can be no reason for this, save their strong hatred of the Arabs, which can be inferred from the expressions they use about them. Then he goes on to give us these expressions in the original Turkish with their Arabic translations, for instance "Dirty Arab", and "Gipsy Arabs", the Arabs of Hejaz they call "Arab Beggars", and those of Egypt "Blind Fellahs."[123] The Arabs reciprocate by only two expressions. They say that the Turks, together with lice and locusts, have been created to oppress and to destroy. They also call them *Rum*, thus showing their suspicion of the sincerity of their Islam.[124] As we have seen, Kawakebi himself had called the Turkish delegate to his fictitious congress by this last derogatory name.

Kawakebi concludes by asking the Ottoman Sultan not to be deceived or led astray by hyprocrites who want him to assume the Caliphate on the grounds of descent from Quraysh, its transfer from the last Abbasid Caliph; his actual possession of it, election, or the guardianship of the Prophetic relics.[125] He calls on the Turks to repair all the harm done by them in past centuries by giving up the Caliphate to the Arabs who are fit for it, and by handing them back the care of religion whose protectors they are.[126]

An Arab Caliph from Quraysh must be installed in Mecca. Kawakebi requires that this Caliph possess all the classical qualifications for the post; obviously, only thus can

123 *ibid.*, pp. 169-170. "Kör Fellah" is the "Blind Fellah" and not the "Boorish Fellah" as translated by Kawakebi.

124 *Umm al-Qura*, p. 170.

125 *ibid.*, p. 232.

126 *ibid.*, p. 239.

he demand that the Caliph be an Arab. But otherwise, the Arab Caliphate he proposes to establish resembles neither the classical Sunni Caliphate of theory, nor that of practice. It is, in reality, an Islamic Papacy, divested of all temporal authority, with the Caliph a mere president of a republic, enjoying very limited powers. Kawakebi's Caliph cannot interfere in the political or the administrative affairs of Moslem sultanates and emirates. He only gives his approval to the appointment of sultans and emirs. His name will be mentioned before their names in the *khutba* (the sermon given on Friday services and some other special occasions), but will not figure on coins. The Caliph's political authority will extend only over Hejaz, but even this authority is greatly limited, for he has to exercise it with the concurrence of a special Hejazi Council of Consultation, *shura*. Besides this Council, there will be a General Islamic Council. The Caliph only proclaims the decisions of this Council and supervises their execution. Kawakebi further deprives the Caliph, who in classical theory and practice is the commander of the armies, *amir al-mu'minin*, (commander of the faithful), from all military authority. His proposed Caliph is to have absolutely no army under his command. A force of two to three thousand soldiers will be intrusted with keeping security in the Hejaz. The soldiers of this force will be drawn from all Moslem sultanates and emirates. The commander in chief will belong to one of the small emirates, and will receive his orders from the General Islamic Council. The Caliph will be elected by the *bay'a* of this General Islamic Council for a period of 3 years. His election must conform to special conditions which do not conflict with *shari'a*. The Caliph's election is invalidated if he violates one of these conditions.[127] It is clear that Kawakebi's Caliph has ceased to be *khalifat rasul Allah*, the viceregent of the Apostle of God, *amir al-mu'minin*, commander of armies, *imam al-muslemin*,

127 *ibid.*, pp. 234-236.

the leader of all Moslems, and has come to be a mere *Monsieur le Président* of the Third French Republic that Kawakebi so admires.

The General Islamic Council will consist of about one hundred members elected by the Moslem sultanates and emirates. It will meet every year for two months, either in Mecca or Taif, just before the season of pilgrimage. At the beginning of each season, the Council will elect the Vice-President, who will act on behalf of the Caliph. The General Council's functions will be limited to religious matters, and will not extend beyond the examination of vital religious questions that affect the policies of the *umma*, such as the opening of "the gates of *ijtihad*," the rendering of obedience to just governments even if they are non-Moslem, and the discontinuing of blind obedience to a person as just as 'Omar ibn al-Khatab.[128]

Kawakebi and Blunt

We have examined Kawakebi's ideas on Arabism and the ideological and historical background from which they evolved. We must now digress a little, and take up the question of these ideas' connection with those of the English poet and publicist Wilfred Scawen Blunt (1840-1922). Miss Sylvia Haim, who had advanced the hypothesis that the ideas of *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* were borrowed from the Italian writer Vittorio Alfieri, was later to claim that Kawakebi's ideas in *Umm al-Qura* "are not his own, but are a foreign importation" from Blunt's *The Future of Islam* which was first published in 1882.[129] "Al-Kawakebi's relation to this European source *(The Future of Islam)* is, in this case", she writes, "less direct than the earlier one *(Della Tirannide)*". However, a thorough consideration of the question she raises and a comparison between the two books fails to establish even an indirect connection between them. Miss

128 *ibid.*, pp. 234-237.

129 "Blunt and Kawakebi," *Oriente Moderno*, (1955), pp. 132-143.

Haim suggests, for instance, that Kawakebi's ideas on bedouins are derived from Blunt. "These views," she writes, "are extremely new. Before al-Kawakebi bedouins, instead of being idealized, were looked upon as wild, pagan, faithless destroyers of God-fearing men." Now, any acquaintance with the *anti-mawali* and *anti-shu'ubi* writings in Arabic will easily reveal that bedouins are not so regarded in them. The non-Arab Moslems, were, inevitably and understandably, to pick on the bedouin origin of the Arabs to prove their superiority over them. *Shu'ubi* literature is replete with attacks on bedouins, the poverty of their life, the boorishness and primitiveness of their customs, food, and dress. A *shu'ubi* poet was to say in the tenth century: The Arabs boast of being masters of the world and the lords of the people. Why don't they rather boast of being shepherds and camel drivers?

Another *shu'ubi* poet, al-Motawakeli, tells the Arabs to abdicate from the throne of Persia and go back to their original Hejaz, to eat lizards and herd camels. Now, Arabs, just as inevitably as non-Arab Moslems, were to praise the bedouin and to idealize his life and his qualities. Thus Abu Hayan al-Tawhidi enumerates the charges levelled at the bedouins, and sets out to refute them one by one. In doing so, he praises them for their ability to stand hardship, their loyalty, and the purity of their life — all qualities for which they are praised by Kawakebi.[130] Jahiz praises the Turks by calling them "the bedouins of the non-Arabs."[131] Thus Kawakebi's idealization of the bedouins cannot be considered "extremely new".

Miss Haim further alleges that Kawakebi's anti-Ottoman sentiments and his ideas on the Caliphate and its transfer to the Arabs were also derived from Blunt's *The Future of Islam.* An examination of *The Future of Islam* itself will

130 Abu Hayan al-Tawhidi, *Kitab al-Imta' wa al-Mu'anasa,* Vol. I, pp. 78-88. See also Ibn Qutaybah, *Kitab al-'Arab.*

131 Abu Othman al-Jahiz, *Thalath Rasa'il,* (Leiden, 1903), p. 45.

reveal how groundless this allegation is. Wilfred Scawen Blunt was a widely travelled man in the Islamic world, from North Africa to India, and in 1881 he had spent some months in Jedda, Syria, and Egypt. In *The Future of Islam*, written upon his return from this last trip, he constantly reports on the impressions he gathered, the conversations he had, the opinions he heard. He writes, for instance, that in Jedda he "neglected no opportunity which offered itself for listening and asking questions."[132] Among the things he listened to in the countries he visited, were: "I found the opinion (among the *ulema*) last year to be nearly universal that Abd el-Hamid was destined to be the last Caliph of the House of Othman."[133] And: "Is there then in Islam, east, or west, or south, a man of sufficient eminence and courage to proclaim himself Caliph, in the event of Abd el-Hamid's political collapse or death? What would be his line of action to secure Mohammedan acceptance? Where should he fix his capital, and on what arms should he rely? Whose flag should he display? . . . These questions, . . . are being cautiously asked of each other by thoughtful Mussulmans in every corner of the east... Mussulmans are profoundly convinced that on its present basis it (the Ottoman Empire) will not long survive."[134] And: "in the opinion of some a likely candidate for the Caliphate succession may be looked for in the Viceregal family of Egypt."[135] But "there is, therefore, a conviction that the removal of the seat of supreme authority (the Caliphate) when made, will be towards the centre, not to any new extremity of Islam ... and to the majority of far-sighted Mussulmans it is rapidly becoming apparent ... that the only true resting-place for theocracy is in Arabia, its birthplace and the

132 Wilfred Scawen Blunt, *The Future of Islam*, (London, 1882), p. 6.

133 *ibid.*, p. 93.

134 *ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

135 *ibid.*, p. 114.

fountainhead of its inspiration."[136] And "Indeed, 'Mecca, the seat of the Caliphate' is, as far as I have had an opportunity of judging, the cry of the day with Mussulmans."[137] Blunt also informs us that "in the year following the disastrous Russian war, when Constantinople seemed on the point of dissolution, the Arabs began to talk openly of making El Husseyn ibn Aoun Caliph in the Sultan's place."[138] And finally, he lets us know that when Sherif Hussein ibn Aoun was murdered in 1880 by an Afghani dervish "all (in Jedda) point to the Stamboul Camarilla and even the Sultan himself as its (the murder's) author."[139] Miss Haim also attempts to prove the derivative nature of Kawakebi's ideas by pointing out that Kawakebi finds that the change of the seat of the Caliphate will result in the uniting of all Islamic sects, including the Shias and the Wahhabis, an idea first put out by Blunt. This is how Blunt puts the idea: "I have even heard it that a Caliphate of Koraysh at Mecca would go far towards reconciling the Schismatics, Abadhites, and Shias with Orthodoxy; and I have reason to believe that it would so affect the liberal quarters of Wahhabism."[140] It is clear from this instance, as well as from the others, that Blunt is reporting the climate of opinion among some Arabs in the eighties and nineties of the nineteenth century. He is, in fact, corroborated by some foreign observers of the same period. Thus in 1882 the British Political agent at Jedda reports that: "It is within my knowledge, however, that the idea of freedom does at present agitate some minds even in Mecca."[141] A Frenchman who travelled extensively in the Arab countries of North Africa, the shores of the Red Sea,

136 *ibid.*, pp. 99, 100.
137 *ibid.*, p. 129.
138 *ibid.*, pp. 122-123.
139 *ibid.*, p. 126.
140 *ibid.*, p. 130.
141 Quoted by George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, (Beirut, n.d.), p. 90.

and Iraq in 1883, writes: "Everywhere I came upon the same abiding and universal sentiment: hatred of the Turks ... The notion of concerted action to throw off this detested yoke is gradually shaping itself."[142] And the British Consul-General in Beirut sends his government the text of a revolutionary placard that had been posted up in Beirut in 1880, which contains an indictment of Turkish rule and describes "the Sultan's tenure of the caliphate as a usurpation of Arab rights" and accuses the Turks of "habitually transgressing the laws of Islam."[143]

Obviously the revival of the Turkish claim to the Caliphate, at a time in which the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire was becoming clear to its Moslem subjects, was bound to raise all kinds of questions concerning the nature, functions, and the ultimate destiny of the Caliphate; hence all the ideas and discussions that Blunt reports. In such a climate of opinion, Kawakebi was voicing ideas that were germinating in the Arab mind. Given the intense Arabism of Islam, the Arabs' right to the Caliphate that all orthodox schools of jurisprudence insist on, the mounting tension between the Arabs and the Turks, it was only natural that Kawakebi would demand the transfer of the Caliphate from the Turks to the Arabs. Given his hatred of despotism, and his admiration for the secular Western parliamentary form of government — which he shares with Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din, and indeed with all the Arab intelligentsia of the nineteenth century — it was only natural that he would conceive of his proposed Arab Caliphate as a kind of a Papacy, and his Caliph as an elected president of a republic, possessing limited powers, and responsible to an elected council.

To the best of the author's knowledge there are no references to Blunt's ideas in the Arabic literature of the day, with the exception of a few critical remarks of Mustapha

142 *ibid.*

143 *ibid.*, p. 83.

Kamel.[144] *The Future of Islam* was not translated into any language that Kawakebi could read. Miss Haim is aware of this fact, but she still maintains that somehow Kawakebi might have acquainted himself with Blunt's ideas, perhaps by meeting him personally in Cairo. There is no evidence of such a meeting. And more to the point: Kawakebi wrote *Umm al-Qura* in Aleppo, not in Cairo.[145] His son copied *Umm al-Qura* for him in Aleppo,[146] and he published it in Cairo soon after his arrival there.[147] His very good friend in Aleppo, Shaikh Sai'd al-Ghazi, states that he read *Umm al-Qura* "many times in Aleppo." He also says that he thought that Kawakebi intended to print *Umm al-Qura* in Egypt, because he could publish it nowhere else; and he warned him against going to Egypt, because the authorities would regard him as one of the *Jeunes Turcs* who opposed Abdul Hamid, and thus make his return to Aleppo extremely difficult.[148]

Tahtawi's Arabism

To further see how innate to the Arab mind were the ideas out of which Kawakebi evolved his concept of Arab Nationalism, and the form in which these ideas were expressed in the nineteenth century, we must go back to Rifa'a al-Tahtawi. Tahtawi developed, as we have seen, the idea of an Egyptian *watan*, fatherland, within the Islamic community, but clearly distinct from it. We shall now note in his thought, first a profound consciousness of, and pride in, the Arabs and their culture, and second his identification of the Egyptians with the Arabs.

The starting point for Tahtawi's ideas on this subject is

144 Mustapha Kamel, *al-Mas'ala al-Sharqiyya*, (Cairo, 1898), pp. 21-22.

145 *Umm al-Qura*, Foreword. See also *al-Hadith*, (1952), pp. 545, 548.

146 As'ad al-Kawakebi, "'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakebi", *al-Hadith*, (1952), p. 550.

147 Rashid Rida, *al-Manar*, (1902), p. 279.

148 Kamel al-Ghazi, "Tarikh . . . 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakebi", *al-Hadith*, (1929), pp. 448, 449.

again to be found in the classical, ever-present dichotomy in the Arab mind between the Arab and the non-Arab Moslems. He prays to God in the foreword of *Takhlis* to rouse all the Islamic peoples, *Arabs and non-Arabs*, from the slumber of ignorance.[149] And it is clear, from the *Takhlis* and his other writings, that he regards the Arabs as superior to all the non-Arab Moslems, as well as being distinct from them; the Arabs, indeed, are superior to all other peoples. Thus Asia is the noblest of all five continents, for it contains the holiest of all places, Mecca, Medina, the Prophet's Tomb, and it further contains "the Arabs, who are the noblest of all tribes, and whose tongue is the most eloquent of all tongues, and to whom belong Banu Hashim (the Prophet's family), who are the salt of the earth, the substance of glory, and the shield of honour."[150] But the Arabs are not merely a tribe, they are also a race;[151] and as such they are superior to all other races. Thus, towards the end of *Takhlis*, Tahtawi, who is, as we have seen, a great admirer of the French and their institutions, writes: "And now nothing is left me except to give the summary of this voyage and of what I have scrutinized closely and considered carefully, so I say, after reflecting on the customs of the French and their political conditions, that I have found that the French are more similar to the Arabs than to the Turks and other races."[152] He writes that the freedom that the Westerners constantly seek is one of the characteristics of the Arabs in ancient times. This is proved by a debate that took place between the pre-Islamic Ghassanid Arab King Nu'man ibn-Munthir and the Persian King Chosroes in the presence of Byzantine, Indian, Chinese, Persian, and Turkish delegates. The Arab king had declared the Arabs superior to all other peoples. The Persian king pointed

149 *Takhlis al-Ibriz*, p. 5.
150 *ibid.*, pp. 115-116.
151 *Manahij*, pp. 294, 405.
152 *Takhlis*, pp. 199-200.

out to him the primitiveness, poverty and chaos of the Arabs' life. The Arab king, in the course of rebutting the Persian, enumerated the virtues of the Arabs: their ability to stand hardship, the purity of their ancestry, their courage and generosity, their loyalty, the magnificence of their language, and their love of freedom and hatred of personal rule.[153] Tahtawi also finds the French similar to the Arabs in their pride and in their lack of meanness of soul. These two characteristics have ceased to exist among most Arabs: but this is only because of the disasters that have befallen them and the oppression they have been subjected to.[154] Finally Tahtawi writes that it has been proven by both *'aql* (reason) and *naql* (revelation, religion), that the Arabs are the most courageous, intelligent, and gallant of all nations, and that their tongue is the most perfect of all tongues in expressiveness. Reason judges the Arabs to have been so, though they did not practice, prior to Islam, some of the rational sciences, like medicine, mathematics, and logic. But when Islam came and lifted the darkness from their hearts and souls and revived their powers, it completed their perfection. The Prophet had said: "If Arabs are humiliated, Islam is humiliated." This was borne out by the fact that it was the Arabs who conquered countries, strengthened and exalted by Islam, and civilized them with knowledge. Others have expanded this knowledge, but this does not matter, for Arabs can now borrow the knowledge of modern times, and in their turn add to it. The achievements of the Arabs are immortal in the history of the world, as can be clearly seen in the pre-Islamic civilization of Yemen.[155]

Tahtawi had given the Egyptians, as we have seen, a separate existence, based on the *watan* of Egypt, but

[153] *ibid.*, pp. 202-205. For this debate in classical Arabic literature, see ibn 'Abd-Rabbihi (d. 940), *al-'Iqd al-Farid*, (Cairo, 1884), Vol. I, pp. 124-126.

[154] *Takhlis*, p. 202.

[155] *Manahij*, pp. 150-151.

nevertheless he regards them as Arabs. He cites, for instance, the remarks of a traveller who wrote about Egypt and maintained that most of the reforms needed by Egypt would have been carried out by the French had Egypt remained under their rule. The belief that France or any country is entitled to annex Egypt with the purpose of reforming it, Tahtawi finds misleading. The motive or cause, *'illa*, of the amalgamation of people is race, *jinsiyya*, and in reality Mohammed 'Ali and his successors carried out the majority of the reforms mentioned by the traveller. After praising Mohammed 'Ali's reigning grandson in two lines of verse, Tahtawi goes on to write: "And here we repeat again that the cause of the amalgamation (of people) is race, and the House of Mohammed 'Ali has been Arabised. Only the ignorant will fail to see this. God is Great, all virtues belong to the Arabs."[156] He also writes that at first only Turks and Mamluks were allowed to enrol in the Staff School of Egypt, and that later the sons of Arabs joined them, but were not allowed promotion in the army beyond a certain rank. However, Ibrahim Pasha later abolished this practice regarding the sons of Arabs, and gave them equality with the others.[157]

Kawakebi, the Forerunner of Arab Nationalism

Kawakebi's Arabism goes beyond Tahtawi's traditional consciousness of the Arab people's distinctness and distinction. By secularizing his concept of Arabism, and by making it, rather than Islam, the basis of polity and loyalty, he transforms Arabism into Arab Nationalism, and with this transformation he establishes himself clearly as the forerunner of the doctrine of modern Arab nationalism.

The Ottoman Empire, in which Kawakebi lived, was a multi-national Islamic theocracy. It organized its subjects

156 *ibid.*, pp. 247-248.
157 *ibid.*

according to their religions and not their nationalities. The dominant element in the Empire was the Moslem community, composed largely of Turks and Arabs. The non-Moslem element in the Empire was in turn organized, according to religious denominations, into religious communities that were called *millets.* These included more than one nationality; thus the Greek-Orthodox Christian *millet* in the Ottoman Empire was composed of Greeks, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Serbs, and Arabs. For the Ottoman Empire, in theory as well as in practice, religion was the differentiating and dividing factor between one Ottoman community and the other. For Kawakebi this is not so, for he has replaced religion by nationality, and thus cut across the traditional boundary lines of the Ottoman communities, and regrouped them around the new criterion of differentiation he has adopted, namely nationality. He thus does not explain the refusal of the Yemenites to submit to Ottoman rule, as somebody else might have done, by the fact that the people of Yemen are Zaidi Shi'is while the Ottoman Turks are Sunnis, but by the Arabs' desire for freedom and independence and their unwillingness to submit to oppression.[158] He finds, on the other hand, that the civil disturbances of the 'sixties between the Christian and Moslem Arabs of Lebanon and Syria were not born out of any national or religious fanaticism, but out of the British incitement of a group of Druzes and Napoleon III's incitement of the Christians.[159]

For Kawakebi the bond of nationality transcends that of religion, and on its basis he gives the Arabs, Christians as well as Moslems, a corporate identity of their own, and demands that this identity find political expression. He addresses the Christian Arabs thus: "O people, and I mean you the non-Moslems who use the letter *dad* (who speak the

158 *Umm al-Qura,* p. 220.

159 *ibid.,* p. 221.

Arabic language and are Arabs)[160] I appeal to you to forget past wrongs and rancour, and what has been committed by fathers and grandfathers. Enough has been suffered at the hands of trouble makers. I do not consider it beyond you, you who had the priority of enlightenment, to find the means for union. Witness the nations of Austro-Hungary and the United States of America who have found, through enlightenment, several effective ways and means of achieving patriotic rather than religious union, national rather than sectarian accord, and political rather than administrative conjointment. So why should we not then think of following one of these, or a similar way? Let the wise men among us tell the non-Arabs and the foreigners who instigate ill-will among us: allow us to manage our own affairs, understanding each other with the Arabic language, having for each other the compassion of brotherhood, consoling each other in adversity, and sharing alike in prosperity. Permit us to manage our affairs in this world, and make religions rule only the next. Let us come together around the same declarations: Long live the nation! Long live the *watan*, the fatherland! Let us live free and strong!"[161] In this passage, quoted in full, Kawakebi expresses his belief in the existence of an Arab *watan*, fatherland, inhabited by an Arab nation, whose members are united by the possession of a common language and the common feelings and emotions that are bound up with it, and who must form a political entity of their own. This is unmistakably the doctrine of modern Arab nationalism; and Kawakebi has become its forerunner by making the passage from the Arabs' classical intense consciousness of themselves and of their Arabism, as expressed in a distinct *Volksgeist* of their own, to a modern restatement of this consciousness,

160 The letter *dad* is the thirteenth letter in the Arabic alphabet, and according to Arabs is found only in their alphabet and its correct pronunciation is the test of a true Arab.

161 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, p. 107.

whereby the Arabs acquire the identity of a nation in the modern sense of the word, and then to a demand that this nation form a nation-state.

In arguing for the establishment of a secular bond between the Arabs, Kawakebi appeals to non-Moslem Arabs not to be led astray by Western machinations. The West's claim to religious brotherhood with some Arabs, he writes, is a falsehood and a deception, for the Westerner has become a pure materialist, and his only religion is that of making material gain. The French persecute their own clericals, so when they claim to champion religion in the East, they are like the hunter who whistles behind his trap to catch his prey.[162] Had religion had any influence on the Westerner there would have been no hatred between the Germans and the French, or between the Saxons and the Latins, nay, between the Italians and the French.[163] It is clear that Kawakebi has learned well the lessons of Western nationalism and secularism. Finally, Kawakebi's Arabs are the people of the Arabian Peninsula, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, and North Africa.[164] Here again, Kawakebi unmistakably anticipates the modern Arab nationalist, for whom the Arab nation is comprised of these people.

In a sense, Kawakebi is aware of a cleavage in orientation that was forming between the Eastern and the Western parts of the Arab world. He complains that the majority of Indian, Egyptian, and Tunisian Moslem masses show no sympathy for the plight of Moslems outside their own countries. Indeed, they look with hostility at those who criticize their rulers, and may even consider them renegades from religion, as though a ruler's being Moslem makes obedience to him a duty incumbent on all Moslems, even though he be unjust and a destroyer of their countries and

162 *ibid.*, p. 108.

163 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad*, (1957), p. 194.

164 *Umm al-Qura*, pp. 169, 219, 221.

their children.[165]

The strength of the Pan-Islamic movement among the Moslems of India and their sympathy with the Ottoman Empire is a well-known fact that lies outside the scope of this study. However, Kawakebi's reference to Egypt and Tunis is interesting and germane to this study, for it points to the divergences that were developing in the orientation of the nationalist movements in the Asian and the African parts of the Arab world. With the French occupation of Algeria in 1830 and Tunis in 1881, and the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, Western imperialism became the target of nationalist agitation in these countries, and indeed in all North Africa which was subjected to mounting Western pressure. To resist Western domination, North African nationalist movements embraced the Pan-Islamism of Abdul Hamid and rallied round the Ottoman Empire. For the Egyptian and the North African people this was easy to do; for they, unlike Eastern Arabs, had in most cases known only nominal Ottoman rule. Egypt had developed a kind of local Egyptian patriotism, under the rule of Mohammed 'Ali and his successors, and in isolation from the rest of the Arab provinces. We have seen this patriotism exist alongside the consciousness of Arabism in Tahtawi's thought. But Tahtawi's Arabism did not develop into Kawakebi's Arab nationalism, for it was submerged in Pan-Islamism. In fighting British domination, Egyptian patriots embraced Pan-Islamism, and pinned their hopes on the Ottoman Empire. Thus, when Kawakebi was bitterly attacking Abdul Hamid and Ottoman rule and advocating the replacing of religious bonds by those of nationality, the famous Egyptian patriot Mustapha Kamel was proclaiming Abdul Hamid the greatest sultan ever in the House of Othman, and was declaring that the continuance of the Ottoman Empire was a necessity for mankind, and that it

165 *ibid.*, p. 34.

was the duty of all Moslems to rally round the sacred Islamic Caliphate, that Egyptians had to hold fast to the bonds that tied them to the Ottoman Sultanate, and finally that politics and religion were inseparable.[166] This extreme Egyptian Pan-Islamism not only isolated the Egyptians ideologically from the Eastern Arabs, but also from the Turks of the Ottoman Empire itself. Thus when an attempt to assassinate Abdul Hamid in 1905 failed, the great Turkish poet Tevfik Fikrat lamented its failure in his poetry while Ahmed Showqi, the celebrated Egyptian poet, in a long poem congratulated Abdul Hamid and saw in his escape the escape of true religion, *al-din al-hanif*.[167] And when the Egyptians called the Istanbul of Abdul Hamid *Dar al-Khilafa*, the Abode of the Caliphate, Tevfik Fikrat called it in his famous ode *Sis*, the Mist, "whore of the world." Egyptians indeed became *plus caliphiste que le caliph*. Thus in 1904, when the Arab Sharif of Mecca led one of the frequent internal disturbances in Hejaz, Ahmed Showqi appealed to Abdul Hamid "the Caliph of God" not to spare the sword against the Sharif and to disregard the Sharif's relationship to the Prophet.[168] And finally, when Abdul Hamid was overthrown by the *coup* of 1908, that caused ecstatic joy in Turkey and the Arab world, Hafiz Ibrahim, another celebrated Egyptian poet of the period, wrote an ode in which he lamented his abdication, reiterated his admiration for the Sultan, and expressed his distress that the Moslem subjects of Abdul Hamid should rejoice over his plight, even before the Christians, the Druzes, and the Jews.[169] Other North African countries also accorded their sympathy to the Ottoman Empire up until the First World War.[170] In

166 Mustapha Kamel, *al-Mas'ala al-Sharqiyya*, pp. 11, 13, 23, 259, 279.

167 Sati' al-Husry, *Safahat Min al-Mahdi al-Qarib*, (Beirut, 1948), pp. 82-87.

168 Ahmed Showqi, *al-Showqiyat*, (Cairo, 1953), Vol. I, pp. 252-255.

169 Hafiz Ibrahim, *Diwan Hafiz*, (Cairo, 1922), Vol. III, pp. 30-37.

170 See 'Allal al-Fasi, *al-Harakat al-Istiqlaliyya fi al-Maghrib al-'Arabi*, (Cairo, 1948).

his early awareness of the developing ideological cleavage between the national movements in the Eastern and the Western parts of the Arab world and in his complaint against it, Kawakebi anticipated the modern Arab nationalists who were later to attempt to bridge this cleavage.

In view of the later development of the doctrine of Arab nationalism, so far we have stressed the secularist nature of the idea of Arab nationalism in Kawakebi's thought. The over-emphasis of this point at the expense of accuracy is to be avoided by the student of Kawakebi. Like all forerunners of new ideas and concepts, Kawakebi retained many of the old. A Kepler keeps his belief in astrology; and *Vindiciae contra tyrannos,* in some ways the *Taba'i' al-Istibdad* of the Christian West in the 16th century, urges resistance to kings but still maintains that their powers come from God. Old ideas are stubborn, and they very often die hard, even in the minds of men evolving new ones; and so it was with Kawakebi. Thus he still called the town he lived in "my *watan*".[171] He does not seem to have achieved the complete and absolute secularism of the modern Arab nationalist, so he is still able to define *umma* as "the sum of individuals with a common ancestry or *watan,* language, or religion, just as a building is a collection of stones."[172] This, of course, is a definition that is not acceptable to a Sati' al-Husry; but Kawakebi's ideas must not be juxtaposed with those of a Sati' al-Husry. Kawakebi had distinguished, as we have seen, between the Arabs and all the other Moslem peoples, and had demanded that Arabs, non-Moslems as well as Moslems, have a corporate political existence of their own. This view must be compared with the ideas current in Kawakebi's time, such as those of Mustapha Kamel. Kawakebi's friend Rashid Rida was writing in 1899 that Moslems had no nationality other than their religion, and was maintaining that Britain's conversion to

171 *Umm al-Qura,* p. 4.

172 *Taba'i' al-Istibdad,* pp. 95-96.

Islam and its upholding of the *shari'a* would entitle it to rule all of the East and Africa,[173] and when in 1902 he reprinted *Umm al-Qura* in his journal *al-Manar* he pointed out his disapproval of Kawakebi's separation of religious and temporal powers and attempted to edit *Umm al-Qura* by deleting Kawakebi's attack on the Ottoman Empire.[174] Kawakebi's concern with the Caliphate and its fate is another point not shared by the secularist modern Arab nationalist, but is again understandable when viewed against the background of his times. It was inevitable that the Caliphate would become a bone of contention between the early Arab nationalist and his Turkish overlord; and thus even the early Christian Arab nationalist, Nejib 'Azouri, picked on it in 1905 and wrote: "the spawn of Ertogrul (the semi-legendary founder of the Ottoman Empire) usurped the Caliphate of Islam."[175]

Kawakebi was also not completely free from the Pan-Islamic ideas that were so forcefully advocated by Afghani. For example, he conceives of a Moslem Union, to which all Moslem people make their contributions. Thus he assigns in this union, the organization of military forces to the Afghans and their neighbours in the East, and Morocco and the other North African emirates in the West. He entrusts Persia, Central Asia, and India with cultural and economic matters. Diplomacy he assigns to the Turks, adding in a malicious footnote that this is because they are the masters of dissimulation and fickleness.[176] The Arabs, however, are the only instrument which can effect Islamic union, and not only this union but indeed Eastern union.[177] Thus Kawakebi tries to work out some synthesis between

173 *Al-Manar*, (1899), p. 324.

174 *ibid.*, (1902), pp. 279, 910.

175 Quoted by Lothrop Stoddard, *The New World of Islam*, (New York, 1922), p. 172.

176 *Umm al-Qura*, pp. 217-218.

177 *ibid.*, p. 222.

his Pan-Arabism and the Pan-Islamism of his day that prevents him from severing all relations with the Moslem Turks and the Ottoman Empire. He demands that the nationalities that compose the Empire have their own administrative autonomies, like that of the United States and the German federation.[178] Further, he repudiates any partiality for the Arabs, and maintains that his programme for the Caliphate and its transfer to the Arabs is in the interests of the Ottomans themselves, and that it is the only means by which they can renovate their political life.[179] But Kawakebi remains, in spite of these views, the unmistakable forerunner of modern Arab nationalism; for the majority of the pre-World War I Arab societies and the Arab Conference of 1913 that voiced the aspirations of the early Arab nationalists asked only for Arab administrative autonomy within the Ottoman Empire.[180]

It is more significant to examine the four proclamations issued by the Sharif of Mecca who led the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman rule. These four proclamations (issued between June 1916 and March 1917) contain the official ideology of the Arab Revolt. They duplicate, in an extraordinary manner, Kawakebi's ideas and indictment of Ottoman rule a decade and a half after the publication of *Umm al-Qura*. They repudiate, for instance, all prejudice against the Turks and all intentions of harming the Islamic cause. They maintain that the Revolt is in the interests of the Ottoman Turks themselves, as well as in the interests of all Moslem people. They charge the Unionist rulers of the Empire with having caused the loss of Ottoman territory to foreigners. The Turks have ceased to execute the Islamic *shari'a* and no longer take religion seriously.

178 *ibid.*, p. 163.

179 *ibid.*, pp. 238-239.

180 George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, pp. 109, 110, 112. Al-Lujnat al-'Ulya li-Hizb al-Lamarkazia, *Al-Mu'tamar al-'Arabi al-Awal*, (Cairo, 1913), p. 113.

They bombed the Ka'bah and showed no respect for religion and humanity in Hejaz. The Arabs occupy a special position in Islam, and the Prophet has said: "If Arabs are humiliated, Islam is humiliated." They, however, nowhere demand, like Kawakebi, the transfer of the Caliphate from the Turks to the Arabs and they add to Kawakebi's charges the accusation of Turks fighting the Arabic language.[181] Otherwise, these proclamations are such an exact duplicate of Kawakebi's indictment of Turkish rule that one is tempted to read them as the "Proclamation that Time will Unveil", that Kawakebi wrote entirely in cipher, and with which he concluded *Umm al-Qura.*

The secret Arab nationalist societies that prepared for the Arab Revolt against Ottoman rule resembled in many ways Kawakebi's fictitious society. This fact, together with the Nostradamist nature of Kawakebi's ideas, such as his remark that his society must maintain a secret branch in Mecca[182] (from which in fact the Arab Revolt later erupted) has indeed made some writers assert that the society he so realistically describes in *Umm al-Qura* did in fact exist.[183] However, this assertion is completely unfounded and there is no historical evidence to support it. But politics, like nature, often imitates art; and this seems to have taken place in the case of Kawakebi.

There is, however, evidence that Kawakebi actually attempted to bring about what he preached, by working for the establishment of an Arab State with Khedive 'Abbas II as its Caliph. Kawakebi had been, as we learn from those who knew him, a friend of 'Abbas II, whom he praised in *Umm al-Qura* for his "religious fervour and Arab

181 Amin Sa'd, *al-Thawra al-'Arabiyya al-Kubra*, (Cairo, n.d.), Vol. I, pp. 149-165, 287-290. *al-Qibla*, Nos. 11, 31, 58.

182 *Umm al-Qura*, p. 197.

183 K.T. Khairallah, *Le Problème du Levant : Les Régions Arabes Libérées*, (Paris, 1919), p. 26.

zeal" and had hoped for his support.[184] It is likely that Kawakebi had actually won this support, for Khedive 'Abbas II, according to some sources, is supposed to have encouraged the Pan-Arab movement and to have aimed at becoming the Caliph of an Arab State.[185] 'Abbas II was accused by the British government of supplying the anti-Turkish rebellion of Yemen in 1901 with arms and money, and indeed leaflets calling for his proclamation as Caliph had actually been distributed in Yemen and other Ottoman provinces.[186] 'Abbas II's chief of the Khedivial cabinet understandably denies these charges in his memoirs, but records on another occasion that in 1902 'Abbas II had actually financed an attempt to overthrow Abdul Hamid.[187] In 1901 and 1902 Kawakebi took long trips to Arabia and Yemen, and even reached India, with no apparent purpose for these trips. All of Kawakebi's friends, acquaintances, and contemporaries agree that he was sent on these trips by 'Abbas II to advocate the establishment of an Arab State with Khedive 'Abbas II as its Caliph.[188] Kawakebi's close friend, Ibrahim Salim al-Najjar, informs us that Kawakebi was paid a monthly salary of 50 Egyptian pounds by 'Abbas II.[189] As an historian of ideas, the full investigation of this question does not concern us. But it seems reasonable to presume, in the absence of contradictory evidence, that Kawakebi was a forerunner of Arab nationalism in action, as well as in thought.

184 *Umm al-Qura*, pp. 213-214.

185 See Lothrop Stoddard, *The New World of Islam*, pp. 201-202, and Ahmed Shafiq, *Mudhakarati fi Nisf Qarn*, (Cairo, 1936), Vol. II, Part II, pp. 269-270.

186 Ahmed Shafiq, *Mudhakarati fi Nisf Qarn*, Vol. II, Part II, p. 367.

187 *ibid.*, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 8-9, 269.

188 See Ibrahim Salim al-Najjar, *al-Hadith*, (1940), p. 7; Mohammed Kurd 'Ali, *Mudhakarati*, Vol. II, p. 610; 'Abbas Mahmoud al-'Aqad, *al-Rahala Kaf: 'Abdul al-Rahman al-Kawakebi*, (Cairo, 1959), pp. 177-178.

189 *al-Hadith*, (1951), p. 120.

CHAPTER V

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

The political ideas in the preceding chapters evolved from a concrete historical situation. This historical situation, and the challenges and responses produced by it, have been magnificently described by Professor Arnold Toynbee.[1] In an encounter between two contemporary civilizations the weaker, as demonstrated by Professor Toynbee, often attempts to fight the stronger by mastering its secrets and turning its own weapons against it; Peter the Great of Russia is the archetype of the man of action who adopts this attitude. In the encounter between the exhausted Islamic world of the nineteenth century and the civilization of the West, Islam produced its own men of action of this type: Sultan Mahmud II in Turkey, Mohammed 'Ali the Great in Egypt, and Bay Ahmed in Tunis. These men of action were understandably most impressed by the military superiority of the West. Consequently they tried to adopt Western military arms and techniques, but "one thing leads to another" as Professor Toynbee points out, and the adoption of the purely material and military elements of a culture are followed by the absorption of the other non-military elements of that culture. Nowhere is this historical phenomenon of fighting a superior civilization by adopting its own weapons, and the progression from borrowing the military and material elements of the culture

[1] See Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Vol. VIII, (London, 1954). For shorter explanations of this particular historical phenomenon, see Toynbee's *Civilization on Trial*, (London, 1953), pp. 184-212, and *The World and the West*, (London, 1953).

to the appropriation of the non-military and non-material elements, illustrated as clearly as in the writing of Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, himself a military man of action. It is perhaps not without significance that Professor Toynbee, the discoverer and elaborator of this phenomenon, takes the trouble to inform us that he possesses two copies of *Muqadamat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik fi Ma'rifat Ahwal al-Mamalik*, one in Arabic and the other in French.[2] Only eight, out of the forty-four young men who were sent to France by Mohammed 'Ali in 1826, were assigned to study social and non-military sciences. One of those eight young men was Tahtawi.[3]

The political thought of the nineteenth century was mainly written by young men who came in contact with Western culture abroad or in Western-style schools in their own countries. As a result of their contact with the West, and the emergence of this Arab intelligentsia, the Arab world experienced a Renaissance and a religious Reformation.

The Renaissance

In many ways Tahtawi is a typical man of the Renaissance — all knowledge is his domain, and all knowledge is new to him. He writes prose and poetry; he writes about politics, history, geography, education, grammar, religion, law, geometry, and mineralogy. In the manuscript of *Takhlis* he introduces his readers to Western music and transcribes for their benefit the first three notes of the Western scale of music.[4] In the same manuscript he also tells his readers some Western scientific notions that contradict the teachings of divine books but are difficult to

[2] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Vol. VIII, n. 2, p. 692.

[3] For a list of the names of the students and the subjects they were assigned to study, see J. Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*, pp. 159-163.

[4] *Takhlis al-Ibriz* (Cairo, 1958), pp. 33, 34.

refute "such as saying that the earth revolves," but in the published copy, fearing perhaps the fate of a Galileo, he deletes the reference to the revolution of the earth.[5] He writes of the transplanted palm trees he saw in Paris and of those found in America when it was discovered; thus they could not have been transplanted from somewhere else, and this phenomenon illustrates to him the error of the 13th-century cosmographer al-Qazwini who had written that palm trees grow only in the lands of Islam.[6] And in the same chapter in the *Takhlis* he describes with admiration the wagons that water the streets of Paris. But Tahtawi, in spite of the almost universal range of his knowledge and interests, is no Da Vinci. A Leonardo would not have described a street-watering wagon that he had seen in a foreign town; he would have designed one. And therein lies the great difference between the Arab Renaissance of the 19th century, and the Western Renaissance of the 15th and 16th centuries.

The Arab Renaissance is a second-hand one, a ready-made one. No Arab Columbus discovers America, no Arab Gutenberg invents the printing press, and Tahtawi's writings are largely translations and derivative. It is obvious that this Renaissance did not originate in the Arab mind, but was rather rubbed off on it in its contact with the West; hence the superficiality of this Arab Renaissance. Nonetheless an Arab Renaissance, of sorts, has taken place: America has been discovered and the printing press has come to the Arab world. The Arab mind in the nineteenth century found new ideas, new concepts, new worlds, and new possibilities. And this explains the childlike exuberance of Tahtawi. Not for him the majestic brooding of an Ibn Khaldun contemplating the death of an old civilization, but the *joie de vivre* and the excitement of a man attending the birth of a new one. Tahtawi's attitude is more akin to

5 *Takhlis* (Cairo, 1958), pp. 37-38; *Takhlis* (Cairo, 1834), p. 122.

6 *Takhlis* (Cairo, 1834), p. 43.

that of Ulrich von Hutten's "It is a joy to live". It is this Renaissance exuberance, coupled with the optimism of the nineteenth century and its belief in the possibility of unlimited progress, that enables the Arab mind in the nineteenth century to overcome its initial feelings of inadequacy and inferiority *vis-à-vis* Western supremacy, and to produce the political ideas with which it hopes to reform Arab society. In a sense, the comparative poverty of contemporary political theory can be traced to the loss of this original optimism, or was it innocence?

The Religious Reformation

Arab intellectual stagnation prior to the nineteenth century had been caused mainly by Islamic Scholasticism. The triumph of the Ash'arite orthodox theology, *Kalam*, over the Mu'tazila in the third Islamic century was, in effect, the victory of the most rigid Scholasticism over Rationalism in the Arab mind, for Ash'arite theology demanded that the Moslem accept *bila kayf*, "without asking why". By closing the "Gate of Ijtihad", the Moslem was denied the right of "the exercise of judgment"; and thus he and Islam were condemned to immobility, for *ijtihad*, as Mohammed Iqbal said, is the "principle of movement" in Islam. However, the encounter between the Arab world and the West in the nineteenth century, instigated political, sociological, and intellectual movements in the Arab world, and the Arabs began to ask why. Tahtawi praises the French for always wanting to know the origin of things. But even before him, Jabarti, with whom this study starts, was impressed by the fair trial given the killer of General Kléber "by those people who are governed by reason and have no religion (i.e. Islam)", and he contrasts this with the conduct of some "who profess Islam". The "why" in a sense has been asked in this instance, and with this observation Jabarti has started the process of Islamic Reformation, which in the course of the nineteenth century

was to lead, on the one hand, to secularism and the belief that society can have justice without religion, and on the other hand to the attempt to restore reason back to religion. At present, we are concerned with this second current.

The Islamic Reformation of the nineteenth century was an attempt to set Islam in ideological motion again and to answer the "whys" that Moslems asked. The theological answers of this Reformation do not concern us here. They have been brilliantly presented and discussed by Professor H. A. R. Gibb in his *Modern Trends in Islam*, and Dr. Charles C. Adams in his *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*. We have dealt with some of its most pertinent points in the previous chapter. This Reformation, however, was to have political implications too, for it led, as pointed out, into secularism. Furthermore, it furnished the political thinkers dealt with in this study with the theological framework within which they evolved their political theories. Their Islam was the Islam of this Reformation. So much so that readers of the day suspected Mohammed 'Abduh, the greatest of all the reformers, of writing Kawakebi's books.

There are, in addition, some striking similarities between the political ideas examined here and some of those that were evolved by this Reformation. Two of these warrant closer examination here.

Islamic religious reformers are as aware of Western superiority as the political thinkers. Afghani is obsessed with the physical and military weakness of Moslems *vis-à-vis* the West; this obsession is clear in *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* and in his eloquent appeal to Pan-Islamism. But this is true also of a man as mild as Mohammed 'Abduh, during the post-'Arabi period in which he had become almost completely apolitical. In his *al-Islam wa al-Nasraniyya ma' al-'Ilm wa al-Madaniyya*, published in 1901, he expresses his amazement that Christianity, an other-worldly and a peaceful religion that commands Christians "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other

also" had conquered the world by its military sciences. Islam, on the other hand, a religion of strength, which commands its followers to "make ready for them whatever force you can" (Quran 8:60), had been surpassed in military strength and inventiveness, and consequently many Moslems had fallen under foreign domination. He wonders that the machine-gun, the Krupp gun, and the Martin rifle were invented by Christians and not Moslems.[7] For 'Abduh the solution of this dilemma is clear; he urges Moslems to follow the advice given by the first Caliph to his general, Khalid ibn al-Walid: Fight them with what they fight you, the sword with the sword, and the lance with the lance.[8] Earlier Khayr al-Din urged the Moslems to adopt the same attitude and he even quoted the same advice of the first Caliph.[9] But 'Abduh, like Khayr al-Din, does not refer to mere material weapons. According to 'Abduh all that is used in a violent or a peaceful competition are weapons — such as science, commerce, industry, justice, and religion.[10]

The second similarity between the political ideas examined and those that were evolved by the religious Reformation concerns Arabism. For 'Abduh, the Islam of his day was not true Islam.[11] It had been corrupted by the non-Arab Persian and Byzantine *mawali* who introduced religious controversies into it, while Persians and Indians introduced Sufism into it.[12] "Islam was an Arab religion" writes 'Abduh, but an Abbasid Caliph committed the mistake of enlisting for political reasons Turks and other people in his army, and thus "Islam was de-Arabised", and those foreign soldiers who "put on Islam like a dress, without its penetrating into their conscience" ended by ruling the

7 Mohammed 'Abduh, *al-Islam wa al-Nasraniyya ma' al-'Ilm wa al-Madaniyya* (Cairo, 1960), pp. 21-23.

8 *ibid.*, p. 91.

9 *Muqadimat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, pp. 5-6.

10 *al-Islam wa al-Nasraniyya ma' al-'Ilm wa al-Madaniyya*, pp. 91-92.

11 *ibid.*, p. 169.

12 *ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

Caliph himself.[13] The religious Reformation, by repudiating the Islam of its day and going back to early Islam was in effect returning to Islam at its most Arab. Thus Mohammed 'Abduh, who in no way was an Arab nationalist, was unconsciously building up the consciousness of Arabism.

Here one final point bears emphasis. Many have observed that the Islamic Reformation was a mild one. Lord Cromer went as far as writing: "Islam cannot be reformed; that is to say, reformed Islam is Islam no longer; it is something else."[14] This, of course, is refutable. Is not reformed Christianity "something else," according to the Holy See? But the fact remains that Islam knew no real Reformation. Erasmus refused the office of Cardinal that was offered him, Mohammed 'Abduh became the Grand Mufti of Egypt, in 1900. Mohammed 'Abduh was in fact more a Loyola than a Martin Luther. He carried out his Reformation within the established "church". This was partly because of the mildness of his temperament; but in all fairness to him the question must still be asked: could a new "church", or a new *madhab*, have come into being in the Islam of the nineteenth century?

All religion, Christian as well as Moslem, had lost its great medieval hold on modern man, and Islam's eleventh hour attempt to reform and rejuvenate itself was in some ways similar to whipping a dead horse. But in spite of all this, a mild Reformation, with its own characteristics, as well as a not very profound Renaissance, did take place, and these were to be followed in the Arab world, as in the West, by the emergence of the secular state.

The Secular State

Historically the secular state came to Islam when the successor states of the Ottoman Empire — the Republic of Turkey, and the Kingdoms of Syria, Iraq, and Egypt —

[13] *ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

[14] The Earl of Cromer, *Modern Egypt* (London, 1908), Vol. II, p. 299.

declared in their constitutions that the people were the source of sovereignty and legislation. "Since God is Himself the sole legislator, there can be no room in Islamic political theory for legislation or legislative powers, whether enjoyed by a temporal ruler or by any kind of assembly. There can be no 'sovereign state', in the sense that the state has the right of enacting its own law."[15]

The first and the most forceful theoretical apologia for the secular state in modern Arab political thought was 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq's book *al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm,* (Islam and the Principles of Government), published in 1925. In it 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq argued that "there is nothing in religion to prevent Moslems . . . from tearing down that ancient order under which they have been humiliated, and from building up the rules of their state and the order of the government upon the most recent conclusions of the human mind and the most secure results which the experiments of nations have shown to be the best principles of government."[16] 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq was first to tear down the Caliphate. He argued that neither the Quran nor the *sunna* demanded that Moslems be ruled by a Caliphate. Movements of rebellion in Islamic history, from that of the fourth Caliph 'Ali down to that of the Committee of Union and Progress in Turkey, proved that the third source of Islamic law, *ijma'*, the consensus of Moslem public opinion, has not supported the institution of the Caliphate. There was a need for government to regulate the civil and the religious affairs of Moslems, but this government, he argued, could be an absolute or a limited one, a democratic, socialist, or a bolshevik government.[17] "We have" he declared, "no need of the Caliphate, neither for the affairs

15 H. A. R. Gibb, "Constitutional Organization", in *Law in the Middle East,* ed. by Majid Khadduri and Herbert J. Libesney (Washington, 1955), Vol. I, p. 3.

16 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq, *al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm,* (Cairo, 1925), p. 103.

17 *ibid.,* p. 35.

of our religion, nor those of civil life. The Caliphate has always been and continues to be a disaster to Islam and to the Moslems, and the source of evil and corruption."[18]

'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq's views on the Caliphate were contrary to the general body of classical political theory. There were, however, some precedents for his ideas among some Kharijites who maintained that Moslems had no need of setting up the imamate. But these views, as the verdict of the Azhar court that tried 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq and dismissed him from among the *'ulama* and his *shari'a* judiciary office correctly observed, were held only by a minority and considered an innovation by the majority of Moslems.[19] The idea that the Caliphate had humiliated Moslems was new, but that it had been a source of strife and violence was recognized earlier. Thus al-Shahrastani (d. 1153) wrote: "Never was there an Islamic issue which brought about more bloodshed than the Caliphate." Worth noting here is that when Kawakebi, the forerunner of the Arab Revolt against the Turks, made the transfer of the Caliphate to the Arabs a starting point of his doctrine of Arab nationalism, he was not only establishing the validity of Shahrastani's observation, but also linking, in a way, modern Arab history and political theory with their classical antecedents.

But 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq not only pulled down the classical institution of the Caliphate, he also challenged the whole concept of Islamic *shari'a*, divine law. In the final analysis the novelty and the boldness of his thought lies in this challenge. The Prophet's message, according to 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq, was spiritual and not secular. The political changes that were effected in the Prophet's society were only an incidental outcome of this spiritual message. "All that Islam laid down," he writes, "as legislation, and all that the Prophet imposed upon Moslems, as regulations,

[18] *ibid.*, p. 36.

[19] *Hukum Hay'at Kibar al-'Ulama' fi Kitab al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukum* (Cairo, 1925), p. 29.

rules, and moral principles, had nothing at all to do with methods of political rule, nor with the regulations of a civil state . . . all that Islam brought forth . . . is a religious code, dedicated entirely to the service of God Almighty, and concerned with the religious welfare of mankind, nothing else."[20] Thus 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq's views on the nature of Islam and *shari'a* were in effect a justification of the modern secular state in which religion is a purely private matter, regulating man's relations with God, but not with his fellow men and with the state. From the theoretical point of view, 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq was justified in asserting that Islam does not prescribe categorically the form of political organization that the Moslem community must assume — it can be a caliphate, a monarchy, or a republic; but whatever its political form, the Islamic state is duty-bound to obey and enforce the Islamic *shari'a*, which embraces man's secular as well as religious affairs. In fact the Islamic state exists, as Professor Gibb observes, "for the sole purpose of maintaining and enforcing the Law".

We now turn to the secularization of the law itself. Islamic law, in theory, is all-embracing, and because of its divine origin, is absolutely immutable. In practice, it had, like any other law, to respond to the ever changing patterns of social, political, and economic life. This was done in the domain of public and administrative law by the issuing of independent legal regulations, called *qanun* and sometimes also called *siyasa*, and by establishing administrative courts of law, like *Diwan al-Mazalim*, the Court of Complaints. In the domain of personal relations some of the rules of *shari'a* were qualified or evaded by means of the so-called *hiyal*, fictitious legal expediencies. But until the coming of the nineteenth century, the formal all-embracing supremacy of *shari'a* was not challenged, and it remained, on the whole, a static and moribund system of law.

20 *al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukum*, pp. 84-85.

The Islamic reformist movement in the nineteenth century adopted two attitudes towards law, both of which are clearly illustrated in Tahtawi's writings. At his first contact with the West, Tahtawi noted, as we have seen, that the laws of the French are their *shari'a*, and that these laws are not of divine origin. Furthermore, he had admired some of these laws and could thus praise the constitution of Louis XVIII "although most of it is not in the Quran of Allah and the Tradition of His Messenger." To meet the exigencies of modern life and to cover areas of activity concerning which there is little or no guidance in the *shari'a*, the Ottoman sultans began the promulgation of secular laws derived from Western models, and entrusted their application to secular courts. The same process took place in Egypt.[21] However, the state maintained that the secular laws it enacted were in no way contrary to *shari'a*. Similarly, the state maintained the secular courts, charged with the application of these laws, alongside the *shari'a* courts. The *shari'a* remained supreme in matters of personal and family law, and was applied by the *shari'a* courts.

But the reformist movement also carried out modernization inside the *shari'a* itself, with the purpose of harmonizing its regulations concerning personal status with the new social patterns that had arisen in the Moslem world. Here again, the attitude it adopted and the method of modernization it employed can be seen in Tahtawi's writings. Tahtawi had admired the French system of taxation, and had advocated its adoption by Moslems, and although himself a follower of the Shafi'i school of law, he had observed that a justification of this system could be found in the Hanafi school of law.[22] In *Manahij* Tahtawi expli-

[21] For an excellent account of the process of modernization of law in different Islamic countries see J. N. D. Anderson, *Islamic Law in the Modern World* (New York, 1959).

[22] It is interesting to note in this connection that Tahtawi's pupil, the celebrated Egyptian jurist Mohammed Qadri Pasha (d. 1888) carried out a modern codification of family, property, inheritance, and *waqf* law, on the basis of the Hanafi doctrine.

citly advocated the modernization of Islamic legislation by basing it on all the four orthodox schools of law and on some unorthodox authorities, such as Imam al-Awza'i. Kawakebi advocated the same eclectic method for the modernization of Islamic law. Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi argued forcefully for the adaptation of *shari'a* to the changing patterns of life, and appealed to the *'ulama* not to obstruct the efforts of statesmen to carry out this adaptation. Mohammed 'Abduh, the greatest *'alim* of his day, was in fact to aid this movement of modernization by some of his *fetwas*, legal opinions, and more particularly with his famous "Report on the Reform of Shari'a Courts" (1900), in which he advocated that the *shari'a* courts of Egypt apply the rules of all orthodox schools of law, without restricting themselves to those of the official Hanafi school. It would not be incorrect to assume that the eclectic method of the application of Islamic *shari'a* went beyond what 'Abduh envisaged, because from 1920 onwards the modernist movement in Islamic legislation in Egypt and other Arab countries adopted the method of unrestricted eclecticism, in which the legislator found juristic justification not only in the four Sunni schools of law, but often in extinct schools, or opinions attributed to early jurists or held in past times.

Also, from 1920 onwards the scope of *shari'a* jurisdiction narrowed progressively, until it became restricted, in its modernized form, to personal and family law alone. In 1926 the Turkish Republic substituted the Swiss Code even in the domain of family law, and in 1956 the Egyptian Republic abolished the *shari'a* courts and centralized the administration of all law in the hands of the national courts. In 1958 the Tunisian Republic followed suit.

Let us now trace roughly and briefly the ideological process by which the secularization of the Islamic state came into existence. Tahtawi discovered the Western secular state and greatly admired its secular laws and

institutions. Kawakebi, in effect, divorced politics from religion, for he stripped his Caliph of all temporal power and left him only religious authority. In asserting the individual's freedom in matters of faith, Mohammed 'Abduh challenged and took from the Caliph this religious authority. 'Abduh categorically declared: "Islam has not given to the Caliph or to the *qadi* or to the *mufti* or to the Shaikh al-Islam the slightest religious authority in the matter of doctrines and the formulation of rules. Whatever authority is held by any one of these is a civil authority defined by the Islamic *shari'a*, and it is inadmissible that any one of them should claim the right of control over the faith or worship of the individual or should dispute his way of thought."[23]

The Caliphate that 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq dealt with had already ideologically lost all temporal and religious authority, so he could easily declare: "We have no need of the Caliphate, neither for the affairs of our religion, nor those of our civil life", and thus carry Kawakebi's and 'Abduh's views to their logical end. In some ways he duplicated 'Abduh's views. He wrote, for instance: "The Caliphate is not a religious office, neither are the offices of the *qadi* and other posts of the state. All these are merely administrative offices with which religion is not connected."[24] Thus both 'Abduh and 'Abd al-Raziq made the whole religious institution exist on sufferance by the state. What the state gives, the state may take away; and actually the state finally did just that. When the Egyptian Republic abolished the *shari'a* courts and all communal courts in Egypt, it declared in an explanatory memorandum: "The government cannot suffer the existence on the national territory of judiciary autonomies which impose their will upon it, oppose its policy of reform, or finally choose their own way

[23] Mohammed 'Abduh, *al-Islam wa al-Nasraniyya ma' al-'Ilm wa al-Madaniyya*, p. 126.

[24] 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq, *al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm*, p. 103.

of reform."[25] It is true that the national courts of the United Arab Republic today still apply the *shari'a* in matters of personal and family relations; but as J.N.D. Anderson correctly observes: "Such courts . . . will approach its application from an increasingly secular standpoint."[26] A committee is at present engaged in a new codification of personal law in the U.A.R. in accordance with "the spirit of the Islamic religion, and with observance of the traditions and the customs of the nation, and its modern social evolution."[27] The modern nation-state can no more accept the existence of two codes of law on its national territory, than it can suffer the existence of two systems of courts for the administration of justice.

Historically, the transition from Islamic theocracy to the modern secular state was effected without resistance from the masses of people in the Arab world. The most obvious explanation of this phenomenon is that the Islamic Renaissance and Reformation, such as they were, had shaken, like their counterparts in the West, the Arab's whole *weltanschauung* and the hold of religion and religious institutions on his mind. The sudden onslaught of Western ideas and Western science caused a clearly observable religious dislocation in the minds of people. Jabarti watched with great bewilderment the scientific experiments performed in front of him at the Institut d'Egypte. He freely admitted that "minds like ours cannot comprehend" their results. But later, generations of Western educated Arabs took part in such scientific experiments, and the result was the loss or weakening of religious faith in their minds.

Some tried to reconcile modern science and technology with religion. We have seen Kawakebi's attempt to read into the Quran Darwin's theory of evolution, the steam engine, and photography. In this Kawakebi was not alone.

25 *al-Ahram*, 22nd September, 1956.

26 J. N. D. Anderson, *Islamic Law in the Modern World*, p. 95.

27 *al-Akhbar*, 23rd April, 1962.

Mohammed 'Abduh claimed in his famous *tafsir*, interpretation, of the Quran that the *jinn* mentioned in the Quran are microbes. These attempts to reconcile religion with modern science were no more successful in the Arab world than similar attempts in the West. In many ways, the religious dislocation in the Arab mind was much greater than that in the Western mind, for modern science did not come gradually to it, neither did it grow from within. The centuries of scholastic hold had petrified the whole process of religious thinking. The Arab mind took the Quranic *sura* literally "We have not neglected anything in the Book," hence its great shock when it suddenly discovered all the things that were not in the Book. Jabarti could not believe in the airship, but airships were later to force themselves increasingly into the Arab world, causing profound ideological upheavals in the Arab mind. It is reported that when a tribe of the lower Euphrates in Iraq rose against the central government, the government sent planes to bomb them. A few bombs forced the tribesmen to abandon the rebellion, and break into a *hossa*, a collective chant, in which they addressed God thus: "O You who are pleased to have created the camel, come and have a look at the aeroplane" — their reference was to the Quranic *sura* that runs: "See they not the camels, how they are created?"

Historically, this story, like Marie Antoinette's "let them eat cake," might be apocryphal;[28] but to the historian of

[28] It could also have some foundation on fact. For the *hossa*, see Shaikh Jalal al-Hanafi, *al-Amthal al-Baghdadiyya* (Baghdad, 1964), Vol. II, p. 59; and British authorities in Iraq reported in 1924: "During the whole period under review, a main factor in the pacification of the country has been the Royal Air Force. By prompt demonstrations on the first sign of trouble carried out over any area affected, however distant, tribal insubordination has been calmed before it could grow dangerous... now, almost before the would-be rebel has formulated his plans, the droning of the aeroplanes is heard overhead, and in the majority of cases their mere appearance is enough." — *Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government of Iraq*, for the period April, 1923-December, 1924, (London, 1925), p. 27.

ideas, apocryphal stories are as significant as authenticated historical facts, for they show a state of mind and reveal the climate of opinion that exists in a certain period of time. The airship, whose existence Jabarti first doubted, has destroyed, as this story illustrates, the people's traditional beliefs. The airship has also established the modern state in the Arab world. It is an historical fact that when the uprisings of the lower Euphrates occurred in the 1930's it was the last time the authority of the central government of Iraq was challenged by the tribes. Henceforth, the state reigned supreme within its national territory. However, Iraqi legislation did not recognize this fact, for until 1958 it applied to the tribes a special code of law, different from that of the settled population. The July Revolution of 1958 abolished the tribal code and unified the national law, which today follows the *shari'a* only in personal matters. The abolition of the tribal law by the revolutionary regime in Iraq is, in effect, another step in the direction of establishing the modern nation-state, sovereign, supreme, brooking no autonomous organization or law besides its own on its national territory.

However, there is still some need in the Arab world for religious justification of the phenomena of modern life. Thus, after Gagarin's successful ascent into space, the Shaikh of the Azhar declared that the conquest of outer space is in no way contrary to the teachings of Islam and the Islamic *shari'a*.[29] In the realm of politics, the persistence of this religious demand explains the success that some religio-political movements, such as the Moslem Brotherhood, have had, and the fact that some of the tracts put out in different Arab countries still discuss politics in religious terms. But one may safely suppose that the divorce of politics from religion has come to stay in the Arab world. And indeed, it is likely to gain strength with the spread of secular education in Arab countries.

[29] *Akhbar al-Yom*, 15th April, 1961.

The government of the United Arab Republic enacted in 1961 Law No. 103 for the reorganization of al-Azhar. Henceforth, al-Azhar University will contain colleges of medicine, engineering and industry, public administration and agriculture. The College of Public Administration has already been opened, and the others will start teaching within the coming three years.[30] The teaching of modern sciences and secular subjects in the Azhar has been one of the demands of almost all reformers in the nineteenth century, from Tahtawi down to Mohammed 'Abduh. The realization of their wish means, in effect, that secular education has come to invade even the greatest bastion of purely religious teaching in the Arab world.

Nationalism and Western Impact

The entry of modern political concepts into the Arab world as a result of the impact of the West was not as simple and as direct a process as it is sometimes made out to be. The picture of Napoleon's gallant troops marching down the streets of Cairo, joyfully singing the *Marseillaise*, and preaching nationalism and the other doctrines of the French Revolution to the grateful local population may be dear to the hearts of romantic believers in France's *mission civilisatrice*, but it does not correspond to historical reality. Western culture was initially received in the Arab world with incomprehension, suspicion, and hostility. This attitude has been generally retained by the Arab mind, and has influenced modern Arab political thought. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the nature of Arab reactions to Western culture; and here again we must refer to Jabarti.

On September 22nd, 1798, the French celebrated in Cairo, with the greatest pomp and pageantry, the seventh anniversary of the foundation of the French Republic. Their aim was to impress the Egyptians and to involve

30 *al-Ahram*, 11th and 13th November, 1961.

them in their revolutionary rejoicings, consequently a triumphal arch was erected on one side of Ezbekiah Square in Cairo and a portico on the other side with the Arabic inscription: "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet." In the middle of the square a great obelisk was erected on which was inscribed in French and Arabic: "To the French Republic, year VII" and "To the expulsion of the Mamluks, year VI." The obelisk also stood for the famous symbolic Liberty Tree of the Revolution. Napoleon, his generals, and the local dignitaries all attended a spectacular military parade, and a proclamation of Napoleon to his troops was read out by General Boyer. Jabarti watched the proceedings with curiosity and indifference. It is also significant that he mistook General Boyer for a priest and the Napoleonic proclamation for a religious sermon.[31] French contemporary accounts also support the impassiveness of the crowds that attended the grandiose festivities of that day.[32] The same celebration in Ezbekiah Square was attended by a certain Nakoula el-Turk, a Christian Lebanese, of French leanings. He reports in his memoirs that: "The French used to say that this column (the obelisk) is the tree of liberty, but the Egyptians said that this is the stake, *khazooq*, on which they impaled us and the symbol of the conquest of our country. They left this column for some ten months and when they took it down the Egyptians were full of joy."[33] Trees of liberty cannot be transplanted by force into alien soil; they immediately become symbols of humiliation, and, therefore, of hatred and resistance. In fact the French had to post soldiers to protect their tree of liberty from being defiled by the Egyptians, and only a month after its erection the

31 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *'Aja'b al-Athar fi al-Tarajim wa al-Akhbar*, Vol. III, pp. 18-19; 'Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi'i, *Tarikh al-Haraka al-Qawmiyya*, (Cairo, 1948), pp. 223, 365.

32 F. Charles-Roux, *Bonaparte, Governor of Egypt*, p. 86.

33 Nakoula el-Turk, *Histoire de l'Expedition des Français en Egypte* (Paris, 1839), p. 52; p. 45 of the original Arabic printed in the same volume.

population of Cairo rose against the French.

Professor Toynbee and some sociologists have pointed out that in any encounter between two different cultures, the material and technological elements of one culture are more easily transferred to the other, than its non-material, ideological elements. Here it should be noted that the encounter between the Arab world and Western culture was not a peaceful, but a violent one; one in which the Arabs were subjected to foreign rule and greatly humiliated; and as a consequence of the nature of this encounter, the adoption of the simplest material elements of Western culture were generally resisted by the majority of Arabs. Upon their occupation of Egypt, the French, fired with revolutionary enthusiasm, decreed that the Egyptian population was to wear the revolutionary tricolour cockade on their breasts. Jabarti describes carefully the unfamiliar cockade: "Consisting of three round bits of cloth of silk, like a coin; one is blue, one red, and the third white, cut in such a way that all three colours are seen," he then informs us of the distress that this measure caused the people.[34] The French also devised a tricolour sash to be conferred on distinguished persons. By its possession they were entitled to full military honours from French troops.[35] But the cockade and the tricolour sash met with great disapproval and resistance on the part of the Egyptians. Napoleon placed with his own hands a sash on Shaikh Sharqawi, the president of the Diwan established by the French. However, Shaikh Sharqawi, according to Jabarti's account, tore off the sash and threw it on the ground in the presence of Napoleon, who was highly displeased with this act. Another shaikh, who seems to have been more diplomatic, wore his sash in the presence of Napoleon, but took it off upon leaving his presence. The majority of the people refused to

[34] 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *'Aja'b al-Athar fi al-Tarajim wa al-Akhbar*, Vol. III, p. 3.

[35] F. Charles-Roux, *Bonaparte : Governor of Egypt*, p. 30.

wear the cockade, while some notables wore it when they called on the French authorities in official matters, but took it off upon departing.[36] Finally Napoleon wisely decided to disregard the application of the decree.[37] In 1900, Mohammed 'Abduh issued a *fetwa* that allowed the Moslems to wear Western headdress, but in the 1920's and 1930's Egyptians were still debating whether or not to adopt the hat. In the course of this debate the hat became "the symbol of civilization" to a minority,[38] but the majority never came to adopt it. The explanation for popular resistance to the adoption of this very simple material element of Western culture is not hard to find. The cockade and the tricolour sash, as we know from Jabarti, offended the people's religious feelings; the hat, later on, was obviously offending the people's religio-political feelings. It had become a symbol of hated foreign domination. In a popular Egyptian patriotic song of today, called *Dhikrayat*, Memories, the singer recalls modern Egyptian history. In it are these lines:

I saw the British flag —
A sight that humiliated me and made me cry.

The British flag had, as a matter of fact, flown from the Citadel of Cairo and the Barracks of Qasr al-Nil — the target of countless nationalist demonstrations for three-quarters of a century — and it had humiliated and enraged successive generations of Egyptians. It was the alien army of occupation, wearing Western caps, and Lord Cromer and his successors, in their top-hats, who had kept the hated flag flying in the very heart of Cairo for all this period. For the Egyptian the hat was naturally the mark of the beast. An Ataturk could force the Western cap on the Anatolian peasant *after* he had driven the aliens who wore it from Anatolia and humiliated them thoroughly; one

36 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *'Aja'b al-Athar fi al-Tarajim wa al-Akhbar*, Vol. III, p. 17.

37 F. Charles-Roux, *Bonaparte : Governor of Egypt*, p. 66.

38 Salama Mussa, *al-Yom wa al-Ghad* (Cairo, 1927), pp. 254-255.

wonders if he could have forced the hat on the Turks *before*. In the Arab world the adoption of the most superficial features of Western material culture was to be resisted.

The resistance to the introduction of Western political ideas was also sizable. There was some outright rejection of Western political concepts *in toto*. This is best illustrated in the writings of the Moslem Brotherhood, whose leader wrote: "The teachings and injunctions of Islam are comprehensive, governing the affairs of men in this world and in the next, and that those who think that these teachings deal only with spiritual and ritualistic aspects are mistaken in this assumption, for Islam is: doctrine, worship, homeland, nationality, religion, spirituality, the Quran, and the sword."[39] Such a doctrine, obviously, rejects all modern Western concepts: the separation of church and state, the secularization of the law, nationalism, and the nation-state. But the views of the Moslem Brotherhood have never been representative of the general body of modern Arab political thought. This thought, from the nineteenth century to the present, has been hostile to all forms of Western political domination, but has generally accepted the political ideas of modern Western culture.

The relationship between Western political concepts and the emergence of modern Arab nationalism is neither simple nor direct. Some feeling of nationality, of belonging to the same race, of having the same religion or language, of pride in and love of one's natural habitude, of suspicion and hostility felt towards strangers, have existed long before modern nationalism.[40] These emotions have always been deeply embedded in the Arab mind — a fact which is borne out in nearly all Arabic literature. Professor Giorgio Levi Della Vida observes: "the feeling of belonging to a com-

[39] Quoted by Ishaq Musa Husaini, *The Moslem Brethren*, (Beirut, n.d.), pp. 25-26.

[40] These feelings go into the making of nationalism — Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, pp. 4-6.

mon stock was very strong among (pre-Islamic) Arabians. To call it nationalism would be an illegitimate intrusion of a foreign concept; still this term would define a feeling which was not unknown to Arabia."[41] Professor Grunebaum aptly warns: "the misconception that the Arab national self-consciousness is an outgrowth of the nineteenth century must be guarded against with great care. The nineteenth century saw its revival, its quickening into a political force, and, of course, a substantial enlargement of scope and territory, but the sentiment dates back *mutatis mutandis* to the days of paganism."[42] Islam, as has been illustrated, strengthened and sharpened the nationalism of the Arabs. So the intrusion of the West into the Arab world in the nineteenth century in effect aroused emotions that had deep roots in the Arab mind. Aristotle writes in his *Politics*, long before the appearance of modern nationalism: "Another cause of revolution is the difference of races . . . the reception of strangers in colonies, either at the time of their foundation or afterwards, has generally produced revolutions." It was obviously the French strangers in their midst, and not the ideas of the French Revolution, that made the people of Cairo rise against Napoleon's army of occupation.

The more direct influences of Western political concepts are found in the ideas of modern Arab political thought concerning the state, its organization, and the social and political values that it is supposed to uphold and safeguard. It is to these we now turn.

The Political Reformation

The Arab intelligentsia that came in contact with the West in the nineteenth century was profoundly impressed

[41] Giorgio Levi Della Vida, "Pre-Islamic Arabia", in *The Arab Heritage*, ed. Nabih Amin Faris (New Jersey, 1944), p. 50.

[42] G. E. Von Grunebaum, *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition* (London, 1961), p. 64.

by the power, prosperity, and progress of the West, and compared them with the weakness, poverty, and backwardness of its own society. The weakness of the Arab world *vis-à-vis* the West was the most recognizable defect of their society, and the most painful to bear, for power is one of the basic values of the whole Islamic *weltanschauung*. The motive-force behind all Arab political thought, from that moment of painful recognition until the present, has been the quest to regain power; or, to borrow the sub-title of a popular American biography of President Nasser, "the search for dignity." This, of course, is not true of the Arab intelligentsia alone, but of all Moslem intelligentsias since the nineteenth century, and of the intelligentsias of the presently emerging Afro-Asian nations; as well as of the pre-revolutionary Russian intelligentsia of the past.

Because of Islam, and the Arabs' special relationship to it, we might presume that the Arabs' urgency to find the "secret" of Western supremacy was greater than that of other peoples'. The three reformers with whom this study deals found this "secret" of Western power, and its attendant prosperity and progress, in both Western sciences and Western rationalism, and not in the religio-philosophic system of the West. All three reformers, who are, as pointed out earlier, representative of the whole of modern Arab political thought, exhort their people to pursue modern knowledge, and each tries to reconcile this modern knowledge, and the rationalism which they correctly recognize to be its mainspring, with Islam, their religion. They are all great believers in progress and enlightenment through education, hence their enormous interest in it. All three devoted long pages to the discussion of education. Indeed, Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din took active part in the educational activities of their societies.

Further, all three reformers are impressed by the patriotism of the West. Tahtawi found that this patriotism is a major factor in the strength of Western people and of

Western states. He was also aware that, besides being a means for strength, patriotism is also a value around which group cohesion is built. The love of Moslems for their religion, he remarks, is equivalent to the love of *watan*, the *patrie*, in the West. By means of patriotism and a just government, these three reformers attempted to bridge the great gap of indifference, mistrust, and hostility that existed in the Arab world, under Ottoman rule, between the ruled and their rulers, the subjects and the state.[43] Under just governments, free man, according to Kawakebi, is the complete master of himself and is entirely owned by his nation, and when a nation reaches such a degree of progress that every individual will be ready to sacrifice his life and possessions for it, then that nation will be able to dispense with the individual's life and possessions. The subjects and the state have mutual rights and duties towards each other, according to Tahtawi, and the subjects must learn that their private interests cannot be achieved except by realizing the public interest, which is the interest of the state, and which in turn is the interest of the *watan, la patrie.*

The ideas of our three reformers, concerning the state, are highly derivative. They can easily be traced back to the writings of Western political thinkers of the 18th century, particularly Montesquieu. They all stress, like Montesquieu, the liberty of the individual in the state, and they all believe, again like Montesquieu, that this can be realized by the correct organization of the state, through the separation of powers. The actual organization of the European states in the nineteenth century, which generally adhered to Montesquieu's ideas, was obviously another source for their ideas.

The individuality of the three reformers and the distinctive character of their thought is reflected in the way they each attempt to reconcile their borrowed ideas with tradi-

[43] For this gap, see H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part I.

tional Arab political theory and practice, and with the circumstances of their times. An idea such as the rule of law in society they reconcile without difficulty with the traditional theory according to which supreme authority in Islamic society resides in the Islamic law, the *shari'a*. They contend, on this point, that the *shari'a*, correctly interpreted and applied in the light of the changed circumstances of their times, can meet the exigencies of these times; not one of them rejects the rule of *shari'a* in the state. However, to reconcile traditional thought with modern Western political practice and such ideas as the separation of powers and the system of checks and balances, they are forced to carry out a radical reinterpretation of traditional political theory and practice. Thus, to justify the idea of government by consultation and representation, they reinterpret the traditional theory of the Caliphate. They contend that the Caliph, in accordance with the Quranic injunction to the Prophet on consultation, is obliged to consult his subjects. From the purely theoretical point of view the following wording of the *sura* "and consult them in matters, but when thou hast determined, put thy trust in God", supports their contention of the obligation of the ruler to take counsel, but it obviously then leaves him free to determine whatever course of action he sees fit.

In practice, the ruler's obligation to consult, such as it is, was never institutionalized. However, Khayr al-Din and Kawakebi hold that the Caliph had carried out his consultation with *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd;* Kawakebi going as far as to claim that *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd* dominated both the Umayyad and early Abbasid states. *Ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*, in traditional theory, were an ill-defined and impermanent body of men, whose sole function was to elect and depose the Caliph. The traditional principle of the election of the Caliph, through *bay'a*, is identified by Khayr al-Din and Kawakebi with the Western process of election. In making this identification, Khayr al-Din and Kawakebi disregard

traditional theory and practice, for although orthodox theory insists that the Caliph must be elected, it never fixes the number of electors required to validate his election, and the appointment of a Caliph by one elector or by his predecessor is also acceptable to this theory. *Bay'a*, in effect, was the proclamation and the formal recognition of this "election". Only in the case of the first and third Caliph in Islam can it be said that an election of sorts took place among different candidates to the office; for the rest, the pre-Islamic principle of election by seniority and the possession of actual power decided the issue.

Although the ruler is subject, according to traditional theory, like the ruled, to divine law, *shari'a*, and his powers are therefore limited, the absence of any apparatus or social body to check and counterbalance him renders him, in effect, absolute. Khayr al-Din and Kawakebi were aware of this dilemma, and they tried to solve it by recourse to the traditional doctrine of *hisba*, based on the Quranic injunction to Moslems to order their fellowmen to do good and deter them from reprehensible and wrong action. Notwithstanding the fact that the religio-ethical aspect of this doctrine was emphasized in traditional theory, rather than its political implications, and that the doctrine itself came to be institutionalized in the minor office of the *muhtasib*, both Khayr al-Din and Kawakebi make *hisba* a major concept in their thought, shifting their emphasis to its political implications, and setting it up as a check on the executive power. Otherwise, Khayr al-Din and Kawakebi differ in their reinterpretation, thus demonstrating how the reformers reinterpreted traditional doctrines to suit the reformist views of the day.

Khayr al-Din does not find that every Moslem is bound by the obligation of *hisba*. To him, the bidding to good and the forbidding of evil is a *fard al-kifaya*, a duty that only a sufficient number of Moslems should fulfil, and as such, he entrusts it to *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*. To Kawakebi,

on the other hand, *hisba* is a *fard al-'ain*, an obligation which must be discharged by each individual Moslem. According to him, *hisba* was made into a *fard al-kifaya* by men of religion who support despotism — a view which is difficult to reconcile with the respect he pays to Khayr al-Din as one of the few modern Arab thinkers who contributed to political thought. Neither Khayr al-Din nor Kawakebi is truly interested in what the real theory and practice of *hisba* was. Neither one offers his readers a study of the actual history of *hisba*; nor goes back to the original sources of the Quran and the *sunna* in a serious attempt to evolve from them a fresh, individual theory of *hisba*.

The difference between Khayr al-Din's and Kawakebi's ideas on the obligation to *hisba*, stems from a change in the prevalent political ideas between the middle of the nineteenth century and its end. Coming from a society that suffered from extortion, administrative oppression, corruption of justice, conflicting and overlapping jurisdictions, and the arbitrary action of the state's agents,[44] the early Arab intelligentsia of the nineteenth century was impressed most of all by justice and equity in Western political life. The fact that the confessed killer of General Kléber is tried before being punished arouses the admiration of Jabarti, while Tahtawi is greatly impressed by the trial given to Polignac and three of his fellow-ministers. Justice and equity for Tahtawi are the cardinal values of a happy and a civilized society; Khayr al-Din finds that justice and liberty are the key to Western political organization; Kawakebi believes that the ideal life can be lived only under just governments. For Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din, justice and liberty mean equality before the law and the obligation of the ruler to rule benevolently and according to law. What the French call "liberty", remarks Tahtawi, is the very same thing "that we call justice and equity,

[44] See H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part II (London, 1962).

because rule by liberty is the establishment of equality before the law". He admires the Constitution of Louis XVIII for establishing justice by "coming to the aid of the oppressed, and conciliating the poor in that they are as the mighty, in view of the execution of the laws". Justice and liberty, for Tahtawi, as well as for Khayr al-Din, mean the subject's equality before the law and his security in the state, rather than any right of his to direct participation in the political process. Khayr al-Din distinguishes between individual and political liberty; the first entailing the individual's security and equality before the law, the second his sharing in the discussion and conduct of politics. However, he does not demand for the subject the second kind of liberty, nor does he support the call for an elected parliament in the period of the *Tanzimat*. Thus the obligation to command his fellowmen to do good and forbid them doing evil is not entrusted by Khayr al-Din to every member of society, but to the special body of *ahl al-hall wa-l-'aqd*, to whom the executive must be responsible. Nowhere does he state, or imply, that this body should be formed by general elections in the Western sense of the word. For Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din, liberty entails the securing of justice and equity to the individual by the government, rather than obtaining for him the privilege of sharing in it. Here we might observe that in this they are representative of Arab political thought as a whole until the second half of the nineteenth century.[45] It was at the turn of the twentieth century and a bit later, that the liberty of the individual came to be definitely correlated and identified with universal suffrage and the parliamentary form of government, as in the writings of Mustapha Kamel and Lutfi al-Sayyid, for example.

Thus, for Kawakebi, writing around 1900, the obligation to *hisba* was binding on all members of society; and he

[45] This seems to be also true of Turkish political thought of the period, see Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, p. 130.

defined the despotic government as the opposite of a just, responsible, limited, and constitutional government. Even a constitutional government could be despotic, according to him, when the executive power was not accountable to the legislature, and when the legislature was not in turn accountable to the people. With the failure of the parliamentary form of government in the Arab world, between the two World Wars and the rise of the revolutionary regimes after World War II, general emphasis has shifted back to the original idea of securing justice and equity for the individual in society rather than the vote. The *rationale* of this shift is to be found in Kawakebi's demand for economic justice and socialism in society.

It is clear, from the above, that our reformers' reinterpretation of Arab political theory and practice was arbitrary and free. They have clearly twisted traditional theory and practice with the purpose of accomodating their ideas to them. They are not concerned with describing traditional theory and practice as they really were, nor in evolving theories of their own by means of a fresh speculation on the original sources of traditional theory, as the Khawarij and the Shi'a had done. They are not political philosophers, and their work lacks the formality and consistency of philosophic systems. They are also not builders of Utopias; not one of them is a Farabi. In many ways, they are not thinkers at all, in the strictest sense of the word, but men of action, who are concerned, above all, with the reformation of their society; and hence their work is presented to their readers explicitly in the form of a programme for reform. Tahtawi's most important work is called *Manahij al-Albab al-Misriyya*, Programmes for Egyptian Minds, and it contains, besides his political ideas, his technical recommendations for the reform of Egyptian agriculture and irrigation. The French translation of *Muqadamat Kitab Aqwam al-Masalik*, that was supervised and carried out under Khayr al-Din's personal direction, is entitled: *Refor-*

mes Nécessaires aux Etats Musulmans. Our reformers have also the man of action's disregard for strict intellectual consistency; and thus Kawakebi, the anti-militarist, tells his friend Ibrahim Salim al-Najjar that he would have overthrown 'Abdul Hamid's government in 24 hours had he controlled an army,[46] and Khayr al-Din, the great advocate of government by consultation, does not recall the suppressed Grand Tunisian Assembly when he becomes prime minister, pragmatically justifying his action.[47]

These three reformers had to overcome, above all, the intense traditionalism and conservatism of the Arab mind. The nature of this traditionalism and conservatism has been penetratingly analyzed by Professor Joseph Schacht in the following passage: "At an early period the ancient Arabian idea of *sunna,* of precedent or tradition, reasserted itself in Islam. The Arabs were, and are, bound by tradition and precedent. Whatever was customary was right and proper; whatever the forefathers had done deserved to be imitated. This was the golden rule of the Arabs whose existence in a narrow unpropitious environment did not leave them much room for experiments and innovations which might upset the balance of their lives. In this idea of precedent or *sunna* the whole conservatism of the Arabs found expression. The idea of *sunna* presented a formidable obstacle to every innovation, and in order to discredit anything it was, and still is, enough to call it an innovation. Islam, the greatest innovation that Arabia saw, had to overcome this opposition, and a hard fight it was. But once Islam prevailed, even among one single group of Arabs, the old conservatism reasserted itself; what had been an innovation now became the thing to do, a thing hallowed by precedent and tradition, a *sunna.* This ancient Arab concept of *sunna* became

[46] *al-Hadith* (1951), p. 118.

[47] Ahmed Amin, *Zu'ma' al-Islah fi al-'Asr al-Hadith,* p. 176.

one of the central concepts of Islamic law."[48]

It is because of this traditionalism, with which Islam had to contend, that the theme of a people refusing to change its ways and adopt a new faith because it was unknown to their fathers is one of the most recurrent themes in the Quran. And perhaps in no literature has the traditionalists' attitude of resistance to change been depicted so forcefully and so economically, as in the following *suras* from the Quran: —

> "Nay, they say: We found our fathers on a course, and surely we are guided by their footsteps.
>
> And thus, We sent not before thee a warner in a town, but those of it who lived in comfort said: Surely we found our fathers following a faith, and we follow in their footsteps.
>
> (The warner) said: And even if I bring you a better guide than that you found your fathers following? They said: We surely disbelieve in that with which you are sent."
>
> *al-Zukhruf*

To understand the thought of our reformers we must place it against such a background of conservative resistance to all innovation, and against such well-known *hadiths* attributed to the Prophet as: "He who imitates a people, becomes one of them" and "The worst things are those that are novelties, every novelty is an innovation, every innovation is an error, and every error leads to hell-fire." Our reformers are convinced of the superiority of Western political institutions and practices and have come to believe that their society can be reformed and reju-

[48] Joseph Schacht, "Pre-Islamic Background and Early Development of Jurisprudence", in *Law in the Middle East*, edited by Majid Khadduri and Herbert J. Libesney (Washington, 1955), Vol. I, pp. 34-35.

venated only by adopting them. "It is right that the right be followed" remarks Tahtawi, while Khayr al-Din observes that "what is right is not known by the men who practise it, but men are known by the right they practise".

However, like the warner in the Quran, they are faced with a people whose resistance to that which was not known to their fathers they cannot overcome by simply telling them that what they advocate is better than that which their fathers knew. They are therefore forced to take the only road left open to them and try to convince the people that the institutions and practices they advocate have been known to their fathers, that they indeed originated with their fathers and were then taken on by others. Khayr al-Din appeals to his co-religionists "to retrieve what has been taken from our hands". The attempt to read back into traditional theory and practice of such Western doctrines as the separation of powers and socialism can be best understood in this light.

However, we must not do our reformers the injustice of regarding them as mere men of action, whose sole concern was to make the reforms they advocated palatable to their society; they were also, particularly Tahtawi and Kawakebi, devout Moslems, who must have tried in all sincerity to reconcile, to themselves as well as to their society, their inherited traditional beliefs with Western political concepts and practices that they came to admire.

The wilful reinterpretation of traditional theory, so as to serve the particular demands of their time is, thus, the most outstanding feature of the thought of our modern reformers; and paradoxically it is that which links their thought intimately with the whole of traditional Arab political theory. Professor Gibb, who analyzed in two brief and brilliant articles Mawardi's *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya*, which indeed is "the most authoritative exposition of the Sunni Islamic theory", and the theory itself as a whole, has shown us that the main concern of the traditional theorists has

not been the elucidation of the theory itself as much as its reinterpretation to serve their ends.[49] Of Mawardi's *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyyà*, Professor Gibb writes: "So far from being an objective exposition of an established theory, it is in reality an apologia or adaptation inspired and shaped by the circumstances of his times"; and he observes that the Sunni political theory as a whole demonstrates that "Between the real content of Muslim thought and its juristic expression there is a certain dislocation, so that it is seldom possible to infer reality from the outer form. Only when both are known can the relation between them be discerned; and the formula is then seen to be an attempt, not so much to express the inner principle as it is, as to compress it within a rigid mould in order to serve a legal argument and a partial end". All this clearly is true of the works of our three reformers. Mawardi's objective had been, as Professor Gibb shows us, to serve the cause of the Abbasid Caliphate against the Buwahid emirs; our reformers' objective was to serve the cause of reform, as they conceived it, against the conservatism and rigidity of their society; otherwise they used the same formula that had been used by Mawardi and other traditional theorists. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

There are two more remarks to make. We have used the term "traditional Arab political thought" for what is usually called "Islamic political thought". This is because of our contention that the civilization of what is generally known as the Islamic Caliphate had been basically and primarily Arab, a contention that is supported by such authorities as Professor Bernard Lewis who writes: "The rich and diverse civilization of the Caliphate, produced by men of many nations and faiths, was Arabic in language and to large extent also in tone. The use of the adjective

[49] H. A. R. Gibb, "Al-Mawardi's Theory of the Khilafa", *Islamic Culture* (1937), pp. 291-302, and "Some Considerations of the Sunnii Theory of the Caliphate", *Archives d'Histoire du Droit Oriental* (1947), pp. 401-410.

Arab to describe the various facets of this civilization has often been challenged on the grounds that the contribution to 'Arab medicine', 'Arab philosophy', etc. of those who were of Arab descent was relatively small.... The authentically Arab characteristics of the civilization of the Caliphate are, however, greater than the mere examination of the racial origins of its individual creators would suggest, and the use of the term is justified provided a clear distinction is drawn between its cultural and ethnic connotation."[50] And furthermore, there is probably no facet of the civilization of the Caliphate which is as Arab as its political theory. The Caliphate is the focal point, the center of gravity, and the root of this theory; there is indeed no political theory without the Caliphate, which is the common point of reference for all traditional writing on politics and constitutional law. As we know, the institution of the Caliphate, or the leadership of the Islamic community, was based on pre-Islamic Arab practice. To this practice the concept of a hereditary kingship, such as that of the Persians or the Byzantines, was foreign and unacceptable. Succession to the Arab chiefdom or shaikhdom was not based on the principle of primogeniture, but on choice and election determined largely by the principle of seniority of age and personal qualifications. Islam adopted this pre-Islamic Arab practice of election to the leadership of the community *in toto*, down to its formalistic rituals and terminology, and Sunni political theory stubbornly insisted on it, even when actual practice was at variance with it. The Arab idea of succession was in fact so deeply rooted in the traditions of the people that it overcame again and again the natural zeal of a father to hand down

50 Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, p. 14. G. E. Von Grunebaum writes: "Nor does the heavy debt owed by Islam to non-Arab adherents displace the Arabs from their leading position, particularly since the non-Arabs — for the most part Persians and Turks — made their contribution in Arabic and only rarely stressed their national background". *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*, p. 59.

rule to the son, and prevented the establishment of hereditary monarchy, thus keeping historical practice in conformity to political theory that refused to recognize the principle of hereditary succession. Of the fourteen Umayyad Caliphs, whose reign covers almost a century, only four were immediately succeeded by a son; and of the first twenty-four Abbasid Caliphs, whose reign covers almost two centuries and a half, only six were immediately succeeded by a son. Thus when we contrast the orthodox theory of the Caliphate, as well as its actual historical practice among the Arabs, with the theory and practice of other Islamic people, such as the Persians, we feel more than justified in terming as "Arab political theory" what is usually known as "Islamic political theory". Furthermore, it is possible to distinguish, in tone and orientation, between the Arab literature of politics, and the Persian *genre* such as the "Mirrors for Princes" that were first introduced into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa'; but even these "Mirrors" could not dispense, in their Arabic form, with the adoption and discussion of the Caliphate.[51]

And this final remark: the ideas we have surveyed in this study belong to the modern political thought of the Arabs. Contemporary Arab political thought has little similarity with it, for it rarely reverts to traditional thought. Its terms of reference and expression are mostly Western. This destroys its distinctiveness and decreases its originality, but demonstrates that modern Arab political thought has succeeded, perhaps too well, in achieving what it originally set out to do — the adapting of Arab ideology and institutions to Western models.

The Revolution of July 23rd, 1952

With the spread of education and literacy and the ever increasing use of the modern media of mass communication,

51 For the "Mirror for Princes", see E. I. G. Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, (Cambridge, 1958).

the political ideas we have examined came to be popularized and to form a part of the contemporary Arabs' climate of opinion. As such they acquired tremendous potency and effectiveness in the realm of actual politics. A full examination of the role of these ideas in shaping the modern Arab mind and the course of contemporary Arab history clearly lies beyond the scope of this study. We shall confine ourselves here to Egypt, and in Egypt to the single instance of the Revolution of July 23rd, 1952, which ignited in more ways than one the whole process of revolutionary change which has overtaken the Arab world since the end of World War II. Here again our limited remarks will only sample this vast subject, and obviously in no way exhaust it.

When President Nasser said: "We have given the poor equity as against the rich" in the course of the speech in which he announced his socialization decrees to the people, his audience of about half a million people broke into a storm of gleeful applause.[52] Nasser's reference did not escape them, for they had been intimately acquainted with his words for the past 13 years. These words were part of a popular song known to all of them. Some lines from this song summarize neatly almost all of the political ideas we have examined in this study:

God alone is above all beings,
All people under Him are equal.
Religion is easy, the Caliphate is by a Bay'a,
Affairs are settled by Shura, and Justice is Fulfilled.
Thou (the Prophet Mohammed) art the Imam of the Socialists,
But for their claims and their exaggeration.
. . . . . .

52 *al-Jumhuriyya*, 23rd July, 1961.

Thou hast given the poor equity as against
the rich,
So that all have the same right to life.

These lines were written by the celebrated poet Ahmed Showqi, and first sung in 1948 by the famous Egyptian singer Umm Kalthum.[53] The song is still one of her most popular songs in the Arab world, and is constantly broadcast by all Arab radio stations. The lines quoted are also contained in a collection of Umm Kalthum songs, sold on the streets of Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus, and other Arab cities for the equivalent of a few cents. In subsequent speeches President Nasser directly quoted Showqi's line: "Thou (the Prophet Mohammed) art the Imam of the Socialists" in support of the view that Islam is socialist.[54] He also quoted in support of this view the Prophetic *hadith*, that had been first quoted by Tahtawi: "All men share in three things: water, pastures, and fire."[55]

The ideas we have examined were to dominate, and be developed by, such pre-revolutionary works as Sayid Qutb's *al-'Adala al-Ijtima'yyia fi al-Islam*, (Social Justice in Islam), and Khalid Mohammed Khalid's *Min Huna Nabda'* (From Here We Start), and numerous other books, pamphlets, and articles. They were also directly operative in society. Thus we find, for instance, the weekly *al-Ishtirakiyya*, one of the papers that violently and openly advocated revolution in the last years of Farouk's reign, publishing in 1951 some of Tahtawi's comments on the Constitution of Louis XVIII under the heading: "Charges Are Brought Against the King — So Said Tahtawi a Hundred Years Ago."[56] And today the "Opinion Page" of *al-Ahram*, in which the

53 For Umm Kalthum's popularity and influence in Egypt and the Arab world, see "Mighty Voice of Umm Kalthum", *Life*, June 1, 1962; and Jacques Berque, *The Arabs, their History and Future* (London, 1964), pp. 227-228.

54 *al-Ahram*, 24th December, 1961, and 23rd February, 1962.

55 *al-Ahram*, 23rd July, 1961.

56 Ahmed Hussain, *Qadiyat al-Tahridh 'ala Harq Madinat al-Qahira*, (Cairo, 1957), p. 154.

intelligentsia discuss such topics as positive neutrality and the program for the industrialization of the U.A.R., uses another Tahtawi quotation as its epigraph: "Let the *watan*, the fatherland, be a place for our common happiness, which we build with freedom, intellect, and factories".

In one of his speeches, referring to a poem of the Imam of Yemen attacking Arab socialism and to some other Saudi Arabian press and radio attacks on the socialist policies of the U. A. R., President Nasser spoke sarcastically of "those who fight us by prose and poetry."[57] In a sense, President Nasser's sarcasm was not justified, for his battle had been fought and won for him in the Arab mind by means of prose and poetry, long before he came on to the political stage. But poets have always been, as Shelley once observed "the unacknowledged legislators of the world".

Beirut, 1962

57 *al-Ahram*, 24th December, 1961.

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