

Ḥubb al-Waṭan min al-Īmān: The Greater Syrian, Christian, Protonationalist Bourgeoisie and Ecumenical Ideas of a Greater Syria, 1850-1884

by

Nicholas Xavier Kolenda

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
(Middle Eastern & North African Studies)
in the University of Michigan
2021

Thesis Advisors:

Professor Juan Cole, Advisor
Professor Anton Shammas, Second Reader

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Chapter I	1
Chapter II	24
Chapter III	58

Abstract

The 19th century was a time of rapid political, economic, and social change within the Ottoman Empire, and its residents began to formulate new ideas of community and belonging. In the Greater Syrian context, there existed a cadre of Christian, bourgeois, intellectuals who advocated for a new vision of their surroundings, the *watan* of Syria: a country defined by its storied ethnic and religious past where enlightened people of all faiths would come together through individual exertion to resurrect a land of Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and Arabs. The first chapter of this piece investigates the status of nationalism within Greater Syria in the latter half of the 19th century. Drawing from the likes of Anderson, Hobsbawm, and Hroch (among others), I posit that Greater Syrian nationalism at this juncture could be viewed as a liberal capitalist proto-nationalist ideology. After discovering that most of the early private journals, periodicals, and newspapers that espoused these views were owned by Christians in Beirut in the previous chapter, the second chapter attempts to answer why Christian Arabs in Syria dominated these discursive spaces and provides a history of these groups and their development as an economic class. Becoming heavily entwined in the silk trade as an emerging monoculture, negotiating with foreign consulates and Ottoman courts, and being the benefactors of administrative changes, many of these Christians were a part of a modern capitalist bourgeoisie, particularly concentrated in what was becoming the Christian haven of Beirut. Experience with printing presses among many intellectuals from working with missionaries, a surplus of capital, and a broader interest in the wider world for the purposes of trade and curiosity led to the establishment of many private printing presses which expressed these experiences of largely class-driven sectarianism from 1840-1860 and their general worldviews in the decades that followed. The final chapter intends to show that these Christians' ideas of an ecumenical Syria

was not entirely novel due to pre-existing precedents for religious co-existence and investigates the ways in which four writers (Buṭrus al-Bustānī, Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq, Khalīl al-Khūrī, and Salīm al-Bustānī) combined ideas of anti-sectarianism with a capitalist, nationalist, and liberal ethos to develop the concept of a Syrian nation or subnation, and also highlights that this nationalism was not a western import. This idea of anti-sectarianism was often expressed by creating an equivalence between religions, the liberal borrowing of Islamic cultural artifacts such as scripture, writing styles, history, and the hijra dating system, and by emphasizing that one's individual character mattered more than their sect. This thesis concludes that these writers were native agents of capitalist modernity who attempted to reformulate identity away from the confessional towards the national, which not only dealt with an emerging form of sectarian violence fueled by rapidly changing class relations, but also made sense of an epistemological shift while reconciling new class formations resulting from capitalist development.

Chapter One: Ideas of Nation and Nationalism, Proto-Nationalism, Communal Consciousness, and the Rise of the Printing Press in Arab Lands

“For the first time the nation surveys the hideous spectacle of its ignorance and trembles in measuring with the eye the distance separating it from its ancestors’ glory. The painful *discovery*, however, does not precipitate the Greeks into despair: We are the descendants of Greeks, they implicitly told themselves, we must either try to become again worthy of this name, or we must not bear it.” -Adamantios Koraes, to a French audience in 1803¹

“Although we consider the Arabs today as the progeny of the ancient Arabs, we do not see in them the same resolution and effort in the acquisition of knowledge that we see in those ancient innovators. We refuse to accept that this progeny have become corrupted...Our sincere hope is that knowledge will spread among the Arabs to fill their homes and restore them to their previous splendor.” - Buṭrus al-Bustānī, lecturing among intellectuals, 1859.²

In 1768 the Ottoman Empire declared war on the Russian Empire, unleashing on southeastern Europe a devastating war that would cost half a million lives and later destroy Ottoman grip over these lands by way of the empire making use of unscrupulous nobles and officers to levy the means of warfare.³ In 1787 the Ottomans once again went to war, this time with the Austrian-Hungarian and Russian Empires, leading to another devastating loss; in response the Sultan attempted a series of military reforms in 1792 that sought to adopt some of the martial styles of Christian European empires, which proved alienating, leading to open rebellion and in some cases (such as with the janissaries and Christians of Belgrade) the fraying of religious co-existence in the Ottoman Balkans.⁴

¹ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2016. 72.

² El-Ariss, Tarek, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī. “The Culture of the Arabs Today.” In *The Arab Renaissance: a Bilingual Anthology of the Nahda*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2018. 4, 6, 13.

³ Anscombe, Frederick F. “The Balkan Revolutionary Age.” *The Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 3 (2012): 576. Accessed January 25, 2021. doi:10.1086/666053.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 577-578.

The Ottoman government was not the only one toying with ideas of change; in 1797 Rigas Velestinlis was arrested in Trieste and interrogated by the Austrian authorities for a revolutionary plot against the Ottomans after having the 1793 French revolutionary constitution translated into Greek in Vienna.⁵ The document went beyond the scope of the original with plans for a Panhellenic Republic that included all Ottoman holdings and desired to grant rights to all citizens regardless of language or religion.⁶ The republican ideal was not only being translated linguistically, but also to fit the conditions of the Ottoman Empire. He and his associates were handed over to the Ottomans and executed in Belgrade on June 24th, 1798.⁷ The idea of a Greek nation was also supported by Adamantios Korais who similarly grappled with the concept in an essay he read to a French society in 1803; separated from his homeland in Paris, he would spend the following two decades attempting to construct what he called a Hellenic Library to educate and agitate who he saw as his countrymen to cast off Ottoman rule.⁸ The modern idea of nation had thus begun to penetrate the Ottoman Empire among intellectuals and would soon spread and be transformed beyond European shores.

The term *al-waṭan*, perhaps most closely likened to the Latin *patria*, would feature heavily in the earlier proto-nationalist and nationalist discourses in Greater Syria, hence the prominence of the ḥadīth which relates that Muḥammad said “*Ḥubb al-waṭan min al-īmān*”, that is, “Love of the homeland is [a part] of faith.”⁹ Sufi mystics even toyed with the term in

⁵ Beaton, Roderick. “Imagining a Hellenic Republic, 1797–1824: Rigas, Korais, Byron.” *Comparative Critical Studies* 15, no. 2 (2018): 170-171. <https://doi.org/10.3366/ccs.2018.0287>.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, 173-174.

⁹ Haarmann, U. ‘Waṭan’. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs, P.J. Bearman (Volumes X, XI, XII), Th. Bianquis (Volumes X, XI, XII), et al. Accessed April 6, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_7891.

medieval times, such as Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī, who used the term *waṭanāt* to denote unimpeachable and solid foundations in juxtaposition to the casual and unreliable; its modern nationalist connotations were hardly exclusive- in older times it was related more specifically to a place of birth or where one stayed, and in “...Prophetic tradition...” connoted something much more local like *al-dār* (home).¹⁰ Among the first usages of *al-waṭan* as a national construct in Arabic comes from the writings of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī in 1834 when he rendered the French *patrie* as *waṭan*, which to him meant Egypt.¹¹ *Al-waṭan* is something that is much more bound by territory or lands, and just as it can be likened to the Latin *patria*, so too can similar meanings be derived with the proper affixes: *waṭaniyya* can be likened to “patriotism”, “*waṭanī*” to “patriotic”, “*muwāṭin*” to “citizen.”¹² In addition to *al-waṭan*, the word *al-qawm* can also be translated as “nation” but in the sense of a people not always bound by borders; as such, it has often been used to connote the ethnic-based Arab nationalism.¹³ If *waṭan* is most readily comparable to *patria* then *al-qawm* could be most readily likened to the German concept of *Volk* due to the latter’s more direct racial/ethnic connotations.¹⁴ Even then, in some cases (such as in early 20th century Egypt), *al-qawm* can also be geographically bounded depending on the usage.¹⁵ Given that the very definition of nation is contentious and prone to change, it should come as no shock that the

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Khalidi, Rashid, and C. Ernest Dawn. “The Origins of Arab Nationalism.” Essay. In *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, New York: Columbia University, 1991. 4-5.

¹² Brand, Laurie A. *Official Stories : Politics and National Narratives in Egypt and Algeria*. Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Societies and Cultures. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2014. Xi. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=806821&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Hare, J. Laurence, and Fabian Link. "The Idea of *Volk* and the Origins of *Völkisch* Research, 1800–1930s." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 80, no. 4 (2019): 575. [doi:10.1353/jhi.2019.0032](https://doi.org/10.1353/jhi.2019.0032).

¹⁵ Brand, Laurie A. *Official Stories : Politics and National Narratives in Egypt and Algeria*. Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Societies and Cultures. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2014. Xi. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=806821&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

character or understanding of a political movement that is directed in support of the concept of nation has proved malleable over time as well. Since the period of study of this thesis is 1850-1884, it would be best to take a short dive into contemporary nationalisms.

Hobsbawm provides a salient history of these differing movements of thought which held sway in Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Within the ideological formulations of 19th century European liberalism (more especially from about 1830 to 1880, though dates don't seem precise), the nation constituted a natural phase within human history, a transition from the micro to the macro community and from the local to the increasingly global.¹⁶ The ethos underlying the development of nations in intellectual bourgeois liberal thought was that it would eventually result in an increasingly globalized community and the breaking down of borders and difference; G Lowes Dickinson posited that the eschaton of the nation was a predestined dissolution: "...the barriers of nationality which belong to the infancy of the race will melt and dissolve in the sunshine of science and art."¹⁷ Since the prevailing view of the nation and its progress was focused on continuous unification, what made a nation viable and legitimate in the eyes of these intellectuals was whether it was of certain size so as to be a viable unit of development- a Sicilian, Breton, Welsh, etc. nation was not taken seriously: neither language nor ethnicity, in the view of these liberal theorists, were a requirement for the successful building of a nation.¹⁸ Indeed, Mill posited that smaller linguistic/ethnic groups would benefit from being a part of a larger nation: it was better for the Basque of Navarre to integrate with France rather than "...to sulk on his own rocks, the half savage relic of past times..."¹⁹ What were the attributes that these

¹⁶ Hobsbawm, E. J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1992. 38. <https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb.01299>. EPUB.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30-31, 34.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

theorists saw as important to justify the building of a nation, then? Since smaller nations had indeed come into existence such as the Netherlands or Switzerland, other criteria could be applied as well.²⁰ Nations that were viewed as possessing a long and storied past, an established cultural elite with a national literary and administrative vernacular, and a capacity for conquest were more easily viewed as legitimate in the eyes of these intellectuals.²¹ This summary provides a glimpse into the 19th century liberal view of the nation, but these ideas of the nation as constituting a stage of human development were also possessed by Marx and Engels too.²²

The latter end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century saw the emergence of a nationalism that would perhaps be a bit more familiar to readers: that of the ethnic/linguistic variety. The rise of the ethno-linguistic form of nationalism that occurred in Europe from circa 1870 until the breakout of the First World War saw the abandonment of the threshold principle that defined the concept of nation in decades previous; now anyone who claimed to be a people unified by an ethnicity or language could constitute a potential nation, and the tone of nationalist politics in Europe took a decidedly sharp turn towards the political right.²³ Romantic cultural movements led by academics and scholars since the late 18th century possessed a certain obsession with the notion of ancient cultures, peoples, and vernaculars previously, but this was largely confined to the milieu of intellectuals and enthusiasts.²⁴ Only in retrospect could these be viewed as the beginnings of a nationalism *after* movements of agitators and then mass support used them as their basis, if one follows Hroch's model of A-B-C phases of nationalism.²⁵ As such, this variety of latent nationalism is something that truly did not emerge until the last

²⁰ Ibid., 37.

²¹ Ibid., 37-38.

²² Ibid., 41.

²³ Ibid., 102.

²⁴ Ibid., 103-104.

²⁵ Ibid., 104.

decades of the 19th century and first decades of the 20th century.²⁶ The emergence of ethnic nationalism in terms of dividing people into an “us” versus “them” category is a new development as racial and ethnic notions previously had also existed as class lines of separation *within* a society as well, such as colorism within some historical Indian societies, or the retrofitting of ethnicity along class lines in Andean countries.²⁷

Ethnic nationalism appears to be a retrospective construct after an otherization of differing peoples: the people of several foreign countries are lumped together whereas the homogeneity of the people in nationalist discourse is taken for granted despite obvious differences among members of a nation.²⁸ Similarly arbitrary and artificial are languages that are used to define a community, which in the European context were only “standardized” with the emergence of print culture in the late 18th to early twentieth centuries, depending on location.²⁹ Perhaps it would be best to exemplify the later emergence of ethno-linguistic nationalism through Massimo d’Azeglio, who remarked at the first parliament of the Italian kingdom that “We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians,” for at the time of unification, only 2.5% of Italians used the language on an everyday basis.³⁰

What this indicates is that ethnic and linguistic varieties of nationalism (and nationalisms generally) often depend on the material conditions of a land if such an ideology is to be appealing. One would have a very difficult time conveying to others that they are a common people united by a single language if the person they said this to could not understand them. The need for print language and formalized education/standards within said language is almost a

²⁶ Ibid., 105-106.

²⁷ Ibid., 65-66.

²⁸ Ibid., 66.

²⁹ Ibid., 61-62.

³⁰ Ibid. 44, 60.

prerequisite for a mass linguistic nationalism to exist; the correlation between nationalism and the rise of institutions such as universities (and all that running such a place entails) ought to be mentioned.³¹ The desacralization and vernacularization of language, such as France making a rapid shift to French from Latin, is essential to creating a less religious linguistic communal ethos.³² Arabic, being the sacred language of Islam while also possessing dialects that are the spoken tongues of most Arabs, makes clear that the newspaper and projects such as Buṭrus al-Bustānī's *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ* among other works provided a tool for desacralization, the creation of a standard and more secular vernacular as opposed to the conventions of higher Qur'ānic Arabic.³³ It is difficult to establish an ethnic theory of *nation* without an understanding of what constitutes the outsider, which is much harder to convey and furthermore provoke the interest of someone who is simply tilling the land and trying to ensure that the harvest is bountiful enough to feed their families and hopefully run a profit after harvest. These developments take time.

This detour into the history of European nationalism via Hobsbawm may seem unnecessary but it helps demonstrate similar developments within the Arab world as well. It points to commonalities regarding the development of nationalism, though of course with modified timeframes and peculiarities. It is not as though the intelligentsia that constituted the *Nahḍa* were completely detached and cut off from the rest of the world, after all; Greater Syria in this time frame had developed a veritable community of discourse which wrote on a wide variety of topics in many genres.³⁴ The fact that Syrian writers such as Yāqūt Ṣarūf wrote to her readers

³¹ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2016. 71.

³² *Ibid.*, 18.

³³ El-Ariss, Tarek, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī. "The Culture of the Arabs Today." In *The Arab Renaissance: a Bilingual Anthology of the Nahḍa*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2018. 3.

³⁴ Zachs, Fruma, and Sharon Halevi. *Gendering Culture in Greater Syria: Intellectuals and Ideology in the Late Ottoman Period*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015. 11-12, 19.

about her experience speaking at the International Council of Women in 1899 and that debates on women's suffrage were being held in editorial sections of papers is a poignant example that these *littérateur(e)s* were aware of the political discourses occurring globally, and making their own discourses.³⁵ Past Greek and French revolutionaries were known considering Salīm al-Bustānī wrote on the French Revolution and its importance.³⁶ While European ethnic and linguistic nationalisms are given a veneer that portrays them as earlier than they actually were, so too does any analysis in the context of the Arab world and more specifically Arab nationalism, which was a minority movement up until about 1918, going by the analysis of C. Ernest Dawn.³⁷

As such, it would be useful to write on the different stages of nationalism, but first it is necessary to elaborate on the state of education and literacy in Greater Syria. While sometimes very cutting edge political ideas were being discussed in periodicals and salons, it should be noted that the vast majority of Ottoman subjects were still illiterate by 1900; some studies suggest that the literacy rate was somewhere between 5-10% by the end of the 19th century.³⁸ The situation in most Arabic-speaking lands more specifically was quite similar, with literacy likely only lying in the single digits, with the notable exception of Lebanon and Egypt, where it was slightly higher.³⁹ There exists some anecdotal evidence in the press that those who were illiterate would discuss the current issues (such as the status of women's rights) with those who could read journals, but this seems limited and somewhat apocryphal in nature and unrelated to

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 35, 40, 176.

³⁶ Zolondek, Leon. "Socio-Political Views of Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." *Middle Eastern Studies* 2, no. 2 (1966): 149-151. Accessed March 3, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4282151>.

³⁷ Khalidi, Rashid, and C. Ernest Dawn. "The Origins of Arab Nationalism." Essay. In *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, New York: Columbia University, 1991. 23.

³⁸ Fortna, Benjamin C. "Education and Autobiography at the End of the Ottoman Empire." *Die Welt Des Islams*, New Series, 41, no. 1 (2001): 12. Accessed January 9, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1571375>.

³⁹ Ayalon, Ami. *The Press in the Arab Middle East : A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1995. 140. Accessed January 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.

the issue of nations specifically.⁴⁰ It was in and around Mount Lebanon itself that literacy was truly exceptional, with some estimates putting the literacy rate around 50% by the advent of World War I.⁴¹

In most Ottoman lands formal, non-parochial/non-religious and public education was often out of reach or hard to obtain: it was only in 1845 that the *tanzīmāt* reform project turned towards education, and it took another twenty-four years for the comprehensive Regulation of Public Education edict to be issued in 1869; it was only in 1876 that movement towards compulsory primary education would be made, and even then schools for respective millets dominated the scene.⁴² Education in Greater Syria then, would come from the non-governmental sphere, and largely from religious sources, such as the Christian schools set up by American and British missionaries starting in the 1830s and the Muslim *al-maqāṣid al-khayriyya* schools starting in the 1870s.⁴³ The first explicitly ecumenical school within the Ottoman Empire was created in 1863 Beirut when Buṭrus al-Bustānī opened his *al-madrasa al-waṭaniyya* (The National School), however, it was limited to 115 boarders in its first year.⁴⁴ Though Greater Syrians had developed a community of discourse on a wide gamut of social and political issues by the latter half of the 19th century, it was still often limited to the realms of a literate elite intelligentsia: despite the changes that domestic reforms and intellectuals, foreign actors, and

⁴⁰ Zachs, Fruma, and Sharon Halevi. *Gendering Culture in Greater Syria: Intellectuals and Ideology in the Late Ottoman Period*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015. 35.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁴² Kamer, Selman Tunay. "Evaluation of Public Education and Teacher Training on the Basis of 1869 Regulation in the Ottoman Era." *Journal of History Culture and Art Research* 9, no. 2 (2020): 16. <https://doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v9i2.2221>.

⁴³ Zachs, Fruma. "Cross-Glocalization: Syrian Women Immigrants and the Founding of Women's Magazines in Egypt." *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 3 (2014): 355-356.

⁴⁴ Makdisi, Ussama Samir. *Age of Coexistence: the Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World*. De Gruyter, University of California Press. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 70. <https://www-degruyter-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/california/view/title/571647>.

technological developments would bring, it would not result in an explicit majoritarian Arab Nationalism until the end of the second decade of the 20th century: the rapid growth in literacy from the single digits to upwards of 50% of the population in some parts of Greater Syria sheds light on the timing of a specifically ethnic-linguistic nationalism that was similar to the nationalisms of Europe that had arisen previous to this.

So, where does that leave the period of 1850-1884 in Greater Syria regarding the development of nationalist thought? The use of Miroslav Hroch's phases of nationalism is useful once more, and considering how widely known it is in academic literature of nationalism, it makes for an easily and mutually understood terminology as Alexander Maxwell compellingly made the case.⁴⁵ Essentially, Hroch's framework consists of three distinct phases for labeling nationalist movements: as explained by Maxwell, the first is the phase that consists largely of the interests of scholars, the second phase consists of a period of patriotic agitation, and the third and final development is the rise of a mass national movement.⁴⁶ In order for a mass nationalist movement to be successful, Hroch believes that it must also rely on the support of a wide number of social classes.⁴⁷ This final phase in the context of Syria is best exemplified in the last couple of years of the 1910s at the end of WWI in which the displacement and chaos of the period for a very large number of urban Syrians made a reorganization of relationships "...of power along horizontal, associational, and national lines practicable."⁴⁸ According to those such as

⁴⁵ Maxwell, Alexander. "Typologies and Phases in Nationalism Studies: Hroch's A-B-C Schema as a Basis for Comparative Terminology." *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 6 (November 2010): 865–66. doi:10.1080/00905992.2010.515970.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 868.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 869.

⁴⁸ James L. Gelvin. *Divided Loyalties : Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998. 54. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e00xna&AN=21188&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

Muhammad ‘Izzat Darwaza, phase B would likely constitute the several years before WWI, or from about 1908-1915 (he himself places the equivalent of phase C, mass politics, from 1915-1920) as it was in this time period that many of the politically-minded Arab youth focused their attention towards asserting more independence from the Turkish state by demanding the repeal of the mandated use of Turkish in Arab lands and “...the expansion of bureaucratic positions available to Syrians...”⁴⁹ It was the failure of appeals made by public associations more dominated by a cohort of older nationalists (Darwaza claims) that caused the balance of power in the Arab nationalist movement to shift much towards its younger and more impatient adherents, which the writer assumes marked the beginnings of a latent, phase C nationalism.⁵⁰ As such, this leaves the period before this time in Arab lands somewhere in phase A, or, as Gelvin partially quoting Hroch writes, “...a period of cultural revival that is ‘marked by a passionate concern on the part of a group of individuals, usually intellectuals, for the study of the language, the culture, the history of the oppressed nationality.’”⁵¹ As a result, the period of study in this thesis constitutes a Phase A or *protonationalist* concept of Greater Syria as exemplified at first by this milieu of Arab Christians.

Perhaps a couple of examples from some of the individuals that will later be more specifically analyzed for their ecumenical ideas of nation would prove compelling. Among one of the first instances of an intellectual circle discussing matters of nations within Greater Syria would be *Al-Jam‘iyya al-Sūriyya li-Iktisāb al-‘Ulūm wa al-Funūn* (“The Syrian Society for the Promotion of the Sciences and the Arts”).⁵² Interestingly, this society is also among the first in

⁴⁹ Ibid., 54.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 54.

⁵¹ Ibid., 53.

⁵² Zachs, Fruma. “Toward A Proto-Nationalist Concept Of Syria? Revisiting The American Presbyterian Missionaries In The Nineteenth-Century Levant.” *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 2 (2001): 160. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1570060011201268>.

the region which had the term “Syria” in its title, the society met between 1847-1852; one of the main goals within this group was the gathering of books and texts written in Arabic and English.⁵³ This society is incredibly important in understanding Greater Syrian proto-nationalism as its membership consisted of people who would later go on to constitute part of the Arab Christian intelligentsia in and around Beirut in the latter half of the 19th century: among some of its prominent members included “...Khalīl Mishāqa, Nakhla al-Mudawwar, John (Yohanna) Wortabet, Nāṣif al-Yāzījī and Buṭrus al-Bustānī.”⁵⁴ The society also included several of the American Christian missionaries such as Eli Smith, among the more effective communicators in the American missionary project, being the first among them to have a clear interest in Arabic language, having a rather fluent grasp of both its literary and spoken form.⁵⁵

It was in this society in 1852 that Smith gave a fascinating lecture, one that for the first time made an implied continuity between the ancient past of the land, the glory of which could be revived through the language and race of the native inhabitants.⁵⁶ This lecture was preserved along with seventeen others by Buṭrus al-Bustānī in *A ‘māl al-Jam ‘iyya al-Sūriyya (The Works of the Syrian Society)*, and along with this concept of an Arab race appearing in Smith’s and al-Yāzījī’s work, both al-Bustānī and al-Mudawwar discussed the land’s Phoenician past as well, speaking to the ancient triumphs of Beirut, Tyre, and Sidon.⁵⁷ Other Christians associated with the mission (such as Khayyāt and Wortabet) had previously spoken of the Phoenician past of the land and made a gradual shift in their works towards the use of *Sūriyya* as opposed to *Shām*, but with this society and these selected papers from it, one can see the creation of a more solidified

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 161.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 161-162.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 163-164.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 161, 166-167.

national myth, creating a continuity that linked a territorially defined people to a past that existed thousands of years ago, and imagining a nation that could be revived through the uncovering of a glorified past.⁵⁸ That the Arabs and the Phoenicians were two separate people separated by centuries did not seem to be bothersome to the likes of neither the Protestant missionaries nor al-Bustānī or al-Mudawwar; this multiplicity of identities was far from odd.⁵⁹ As C. Ernest Dawn notes: “Bustani, and to a lesser extent, Ishaq did call themselves Arab and take pride in their Arab heritage...None expressed disloyalty to the Ottoman Empire...all talked about fatherland and patriotism...but one person could have more than one *waṭan* and more than one nation.”⁶⁰ The notion of being Arab was not necessarily exclusive of being an Ottoman subject, just as having and being informed by a Phoenician past was not exclusive towards being Arab either, but it is also often important in creating a national identity itself. Gellner remarks,

“It uses some of the pre-existent cultures, generally transforming them in the process, but it cannot use all of them...nations as a natural God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent though long-delayed destiny, are a myth; nationalism, which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: *that* is a reality.”⁶¹

That one could still be a loyal Ottoman subject and an Arab Christian, linked to a Phoenician past is not contradictory, though it may seem so to the modern reader; in the writings of these thinkers, one can spot the inklings of Arab, Syrian, and Phoenician nationalism if separated or read for each exclusively, which is why so many nationalists may attempt to claim the likes of Buṭrus al-Bustānī. However, what nationalisms and nationalities succeed, which ones

⁵⁸ Ibid., 158-159,

⁵⁹ Ibid., 167.

⁶⁰ Khalidi, Rashid, and C. Ernest Dawn. “The Origins of Arab Nationalism.” Essay. In *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, 7-8. New York: Columbia University, 1991.

⁶¹ Gellner, Ernest. “Nations and Nationalism.” Book. *New Perspectives on the Past* (Basil Blackwell Publisher). Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.

“awake” from that fictitious slumber is hardly predestined or determined and impacted by historical contingencies and peculiarities.⁶² It is the very existence of this mixed identity, a lack of one holding exclusive dominance over the other and yet a rising conscientiousness regarding a need for revival of a people and country, that makes this milieu proto-nationalist. This theme of an amalgamated past would not cease to exist with this cultural and literary society and would come to dominate the proto-national discourse of the final decades of the 19th century in Greater Syrian writing. Khalīl al-Khūrī would give a talk in 1859 titled *Kharābāt Sūriyya (Ruins of Syria)* which definitely shows the influence of the missionaries and this society, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī would, after all, establish *al-madrasa al-waṭaniyya (the national school)* in 1866, to name just a few examples.⁶³ This idea of Syria, which was a geographically bound entity with a people and past was becoming increasingly bound to the concept of *waṭan* and *waṭaniyya*, though it was not yet reaching Hroch’s Phase B of active agitators for a nation just yet, and was still indeed quite limited to a smaller cadre of interested intellectuals.

Something to take note of with the Syrian proto-nationalist discourse is that it still appears to follow the general historical pattern that was discussed earlier in this paper and by Hobsbawm. At first, it may seem as though these intellectuals were advocating for an ethnic or linguistic based nationalism, especially when one sees that they appeared to be heavily influenced by the discourse that existed within the community that they shared with Eli Smith who made mention repeatedly of their language and race. Such topics were also the focus of lectures given by Buṭrus al-Bustānī, such as in his “The Culture of Arabs Today” in 1859, in which he decries what he

⁶² Ibid., 47-48.

⁶³ Zachs, Fruma. “Toward A Proto-Nationalist Concept Of Syria? Revisiting The American Presbyterian Missionaries In The Nineteenth-Century Levant.” *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 2 (2001): 165. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1570060011201268>.

perceives to be the fallen situation of self-proclaimed Arab intellectuals of his day, denouncing what he saw as a fall in standards towards what constituted an intellectual and going so far as to complain about common conventions in spoken dialect.⁶⁴ This harkening back to a grand past of the Arabs both in terms of learning and prestige may seem reminiscent of an ethnic or linguistic nationalism only when one ignores the that al-Bustānī also (as previously shown) played with the notions of the land of Syria also having its Phoenician past as well and that he was a very loyal Ottoman subject. In his writings and in the writings of most if not all of these other intellectuals then it is still very much in line with Hobsbawm's thesis that before circa 1870, most concepts of nations were still bound by the liberal notions of it as discussed, and it seemed to stay this way a bit longer in the Syrian cadre. The protonationalism of al-Bustānī and his colleagues had the inklings of ethnic-linguistic nationalisms that were to come to Europe and the Arab world in later decades, but it was still mainly following an additive frame of mind as to what composed the nation. If one takes the lectures about the Phoenician past, the discussions of Arab language and race, and just how inclusive (rather than exclusive) their notion of Syrian history was in combination, it paints the picture of an imagined nation that buys into the liberal ethos of larger nation building. Though it is even less explicit in these regards than the liberal thinkers Hobsbawm discusses, the character of the protonationalism of these thinkers still very much falls into the liberal camp that existed in this era regarding what a nation ought to be. Perhaps then, it would be best for the rest of this chapter to consider *how* these intellectuals communicated their ideas with one another by taking a dive into the history of the press and intellectual communities

⁶⁴ El-Ariss, Tarek, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī. "The Culture of the Arabs Today." In *The Arab Renaissance: a Bilingual Anthology of the Nahda*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2018. 5, 6, 14, 15.

in the Arab world, but especially regarding Greater Syria and the city of Beirut in order to understand why these ideas began to form when they did.

Imagined Communities and The Arab Press

As demonstrated previously, it was in the literary and cultural society that was shared between the Protestant Americans and Arab Christians that one can see the first more concrete and written articulations of a broader Syrian proto-national identity develop, but this would hardly constitute the only literary societies or publications in the 19th century Arab world. The rise of these societies in Greater Syria were very much associated with and the culmination of the commercial and educational rise in and around Beirut.⁶⁵ These societies would proliferate much more in the latter half of the 19th century rather than in the first half as this is something that is materially attached to a given place; after all, it would be difficult to read and hold intellectual discourses in editorials if no such periodicals existed. Benedict Anderson makes quite clear the case of rising communal consciousness that comes with the advent of print capitalism: the proliferation of mediums such as newspapers, periodicals, journals, etc. allow for the formation of ideas of simultaneity and other questions involving the collective human experience, such as the existence of other communities across time and space and a wider world in the minds of an increasingly large audience, with active interactions with these other communities.⁶⁶

Within the context of the Arab world, the use of the printing press was largely scant until at least the beginning of the 19th century in the lives of the vast majority of the population, and

⁶⁵ Zachs, Fruma, and Sharon Halevi. *Gendering Culture in Greater Syria: Intellectuals and Ideology in the Late Ottoman Period*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015. 9.

⁶⁶ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2016. 34-36, 68-70

illiteracy would remain fairly high into the early 20th century, with some exceptions.⁶⁷ Anderson has explained the driving force that print culture has on creating “...mass monoglot reading publics.”⁶⁸ The main form of communication among most within Arab lands was oral, like in most societies before the advent of high literacy rates.⁶⁹ The Ottoman government would have various methods at its disposal to communicate with its subjects and to other governments and states: major events would often be proclaimed through the minting of coins, creation of stone inscriptions on public buildings, city gates, etc., and news of imperial combat victories could reach the general populace by way of a *fathnāmeḥ* (*victory declaration*) that would be dispersed to local officials.⁷⁰ At the risk of stating the obvious (which is perhaps why Ayalon doesn’t explain this), it seems as though this method of conveying public messages involved materials that would be visible to many so that the literate would be able to convey the message to non-literate people who could then communicate it to others. At the very least, if a peasant were to receive a coin with a new and unfamiliar face on it but the other usual emblems, they could likely deduce that something had happened. If the Ottoman state wished to give its subjects messages more indirectly, it was also quite common to employ the use of Imams or preachers who would then tell their congregants the required piece of news when they would gather for their respective religious services.⁷¹ If someone managed to avoid hearing an important message during religious services, they would almost certainly hear it from public criers or announcers who were employed in every town during the Ottoman period.⁷² These officials could often be

⁶⁷ Ayalon, Ami. *The Press in the Arab Middle East : A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1995. Accessed January 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central. 5.

⁶⁸ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2016. 43,

⁶⁹ Ayalon, Ami. *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1995. Accessed January 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central. 5.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

found positioning themselves on highways or in markets and public buildings, proclaiming their announcement and telling the rest of the locals to spread the news throughout the locality.⁷³

For communications that were not dispersed by the Ottoman state, information would typically spread through typical social circles and sites: for Muslims daily prayer and Friday gatherings at the mosque served as a useful conduit for the spread of ideas and rumors; it's likely this was also the case for other religious peoples on traditional days of gathering as well.⁷⁴ Otherwise, markets, cafes, barbershops, and other communal spaces served as means of socialization and the spread of information.⁷⁵ International news could make its way to the masses through the caravansary or those who have returned from Ḥajj, and were therefore more likely to come into contact with different people.⁷⁶ Whether the message was short or long, whether it was news or the recitation of stories or poetry, just like most largely illiterate societies, these were the modes of communication, and it met the needs of rulers and ruled.⁷⁷

Prior to the nineteenth century, European newspapers seemed generally of little interest within Arab lands, though there were exceptions: in 1690 a Moroccan emissary remarked on Spanish journals as being packed with exaggerations and lies.⁷⁸ In the Ottoman capital of Istanbul, newspapers began to be of interest to the empire by the latter half of the eighteenth century due to growing curiosity of events occurring abroad, and members of the ruling class thus began to monitor some of the European press.⁷⁹ However, it should not be inferred that this translated to interest on these curious journals, newspapers, and periodicals in the other lands,

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 5.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 7.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

classes, and peoples that the empire ruled over: even the usually curious al-Ṭaḥṭāwī initially saw the gazettes he encountered in France as novelties, and like the previously mentioned Moroccan emissary, quite untruthful; al-Ṭaḥṭāwī would later change his opinion and become involved in publishing periodicals in the 1840s.⁸⁰ Ayalon perhaps exaggerates by calling the environment a “*tabula rasa*,” but either way awareness of these things in most people’s lives was limited.⁸¹

To see the true beginnings of the press and print culture within Arab lands, one must first go to Egypt. The first two of any newspapers to appear in Arabic speaking lands is associated with the invasion of Napoleon in 1798: *Le Courier de l’Egypte*, published in August, and *La Décade Egyptienne*, published two months later.⁸² Obviously, both were in French; scholars have tried to pinpoint the first newspaper written in Arabic at behest of the French to *al-Ḥawādith al-Yawmiyya* and *al-Tanbīh*, which are said to have made their appearance during the invasion and occupation as well, and some claim that Iraq in 1816 was the site of the first newspaper in Arabic, but documents remain vague, and evidence is weak.⁸³ What can be ascertained is that while the French would leave with their printing press in 1801, the use and novelty of such a device was not lost on Muḥammad ‘Alī, who would come to power in 1805.⁸⁴ In 1809, he sent one of his aides to Europe to purchase and bring back books on every conceivable subject, and in 1815 sent another to learn the craft of printing in Milan who would return four years later.⁸⁵

Upon the return of this aide from Milan, construction began for the first printing press in the Būlāq neighborhood of Cairo, and other presses would proliferate in and around the city.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 7, 168.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 12.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

Looking to effectively communicate within his own growing state apparatus, ‘Alī would order changes to an older variation of a journal that he had been producing possibly as early as 1813, and began to have it printed under the name *Jūrnāl al-Khidīw* in 1821 or 1822; its circulation was small and mostly included reports to keep notables within the government informed of ongoing affairs.⁸⁷ This paper would be replaced by *al-Waqā‘i al-Miṣriyya* in 1828 which was intended for the same purposes: bland and utilitarian, it had significant delays on news not immediately relevant to the Egyptian government, it was solely meant for those within the government or members of the intelligentsia who were regarded as important in future state-building projects.⁸⁸ Being among the first periodicals, it was hampered by many issues, sometimes dropping from publication for as long as twenty-two months, and rife with typographical errors with a mix of jargon borrowed from various languages which made for awkward reading.⁸⁹ In the center of the Ottoman Empire, the first official Turkish-language newspaper, *Taqvīm-i Veqāyi*, would begin publishing in 1831 by order of the sultan and had the same intent and class of audience as *al-Waqā‘i al-Miṣriyya* back in Egypt.⁹⁰

If there was a place where the private press would dominate in the Arab world, it would be in modern day Lebanon. While Rizqallāh Ḥasun (a Christian from Aleppo) founded the first private Arabic newspaper (*Mir‘āt al-Aḥwāl*) in Istanbul in 1855, the first journalistic undertaking and private paper in Lebanon itself was produced by Khalīl al-Khūrī under the name *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* in 1858 after others assisted him in procuring a permit and in purchasing a defunct printing press which had previously belonged to the Greek Orthodox metropolitan.⁹¹ The paper

⁸⁷ Ibid., 14.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 15-16.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 16-17.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 22.

⁹¹ Ibid., 30, 32.

experienced grand success for fifty years, and from the beginning covered a wide array of topics and international events, and even offered commercial reports on currency fluctuations, the state of European markets, and the arrival of ships in Beirut: it cost 120 qurūsh for those who subscribed to it in Beirut and around Mount Lebanon.⁹² The paper also featured editorials that sparked debate among Beirut intellectuals, excerpts from foreign literature, and original works written by al-Khūrī himself; the newspaper gave the intelligentsia in and around Beirut a periodical similar in quality to European publications.⁹³ It is with the advent of these private papers that one can see the beginnings of an audience that would be exposed to a greater sense of simultaneity and what was occurring around the world. Something that was happening in Italy could feature on the same page as an Ottoman edict or the introduction of a new policy in Egypt. Eli Smith would attempt to publish a paper in Arabic in 1851, but this effort failed after only four issues, it was *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* and *Mir'āt al-Aḥwāl* that would dominate the Syrian-Lebanese journalistic scene through the 1860s.⁹⁴ The Protestants would make several attempts at producing a paper, but only found success in 1871 with *al-Nashrat al-Uṣbū'īyya*, the local Jesuit Catholics had begun publishing *al-Bashīr* in September of the previous year.⁹⁵ It was in the 1870s that the private press in the area saw impressive growth. Between 1870 and 1871, the Bustānī family would come to publish three separate recurring periodicals alone, and by the end of the decade, Beirut would come to be the birthplace of twenty-five newspapers and journals.⁹⁶ Of note is the fact that it was the Christians in and around Beirut who would dominate the journalistic scene for these first few decades, though the city's Muslim population would respond with a group from

⁹² Ibid., 32.

⁹³ Ibid., 32-33.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 34.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 35-36.

the *jam 'iyyat al-funūn* beginning to publish the paper *Thamarāt al-Funūn* in April of 1875 under 'Abd al-Qādir al-Qabbānī.⁹⁷ The explosion of papers and periodicals that marked the first several years of the 1870s would come to a screeching halt under 'Abd al-Hamīd II after the Ottoman defeat to the Russians in 1878, which resulted in a noticeable crackdown by the sultan, who enforced a strict policy of censorship and slowed the issuing of publishing permissions.⁹⁸ This push factor, along with the pull of economic opportunity and greater press freedom in Egypt, pulled many of these Syrian-Lebanese Christian intellectuals to Cairo and Alexandria, where they would continue to play a prominent role in the Arab press.⁹⁹ For example, it was Hind Nawfal who published the first periodical dedicated to women in the Arab world, *al-Fitat*, who along with a cadre of other Syrian-Lebanese women, saw in their new surroundings an opportunity for a wider reading public and consciously held onto their identity as Syrians to transmit ideas to Egyptian culture.¹⁰⁰ If anything, the act of being abroad perhaps accentuated a feeling of Syrian-ness among some of these journalists, just as al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's experience in France and encountering a concept of *patrie* led to him identifying his own homeland as his *waṭan*.

The dominance of the various Christian sects over the press in Greater Syria with Beirut as its journalistic center may seem odd. Why this city nestled among the mountains which only had a population of around 6,000 in 1823?¹⁰¹ There were several factors behind this development of an intelligentsia constituting an over-representation of Christians within Greater Syria but most especially Beirut. This will be among the larger focuses of the second chapter of this thesis.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 36.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 38-39.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 39.

¹⁰⁰ Zachs, Fruma. "Cross-Glocalization: Syrian Women Immigrants and the Founding of Women's Magazines in Egypt." *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 3 (2014): 354, 357-358.

¹⁰¹ Fawwāz Layla Tarazī. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 31.

To conclude this chapter, nationalism is a rather new human construct, and incredibly malleable across time and place: the proto-nationalism of 1852 Syria is distinctly different from Spanish, German, English, etc. nationalism of the time, and the Syrian nationalism of 1920 is a wide contrast to the proto-nationalism of 1852 Syria; allegiance to a nation where state = nation = people is hardly a natural or guaranteed development.¹⁰² Despite this, there are some useful descriptive frameworks that allow scholars to classify different nationalist movements and their development, such as Miroslav Hroch's phases of nationalism. The first inklings of nationalist sentiments are usually found in smaller cadres of thinkers, especially when literacy is low. The advent of the capitalist printing press culture is incredibly conducive to creating a sense of communal identity, literacy, and belonging as it develops a sense of simultaneity and connection between members of the community, and the history of the press in Arab lands as an indigenous project began in the early 19th century in Egypt. The first Arab newspapers and periodicals were government products and had a limited audience; the first private newspapers that were in Arabic were predominantly produced by a cadre of Christian Arab intellectuals in Greater Syria, largely centered in Beirut, a previously tiny port city that saw dramatic expansion and growth in the 19th century, which will be the topic of the following chapter along with the general situation of Christians in Greater Syria in the 19th century to provide context for this development which will in turn provide further context for the development of an ecumenical frame and use of Islamic cultural signifiers among these thinkers in their formulation of an ecumenical Syria in the final chapter of this thesis.

¹⁰² Hobsbawm, E. J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1992. 22. <https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb.01299>. EPUB.

Chapter II: A Road to Damascus: A History of Christians in Greater Syria With an Emphasis on the Rise of the Beirut Bourgeoisie and Trade

“And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight....And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that though mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy ghost. And immediately there from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.”¹⁰³

As noted in the previous chapter, it was in the 1870s in Beirut that Christians dominated the private Arabic press in Greater Syria.¹⁰⁴ After the success of papers such as Rizqallāh Ḥasun’s *Mir’at al-Aḥwāl* (Istanbul, 1855) and Khalīl al-Khūrī’s *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* (Beirut, 1858) there was a demonstrable market for private papers, and many other Christian families and missionary groups similarly tried their hands at such a craft, with some twenty five papers, periodicals, and journals from this particular milieu having emerged by the end of the 1870s.¹⁰⁵ At first glance, this development may seem strange or surprising. Why was it this religious minority within the Ottoman Empire that became the initial pioneers of the private press in Arab lands, and why the city of Beirut, whose population exploded from 6,000 in 1823 to upwards of 100,000 by the beginning of the 20th century?¹⁰⁶ Interestingly, the subscription price of 120 qurūsh of *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* (well outside the affordable price for 19th and 20th century typical workers and laborers in the Arab Middle East), gives a hint as to the auspicious development of Beirut Christian publishers.¹⁰⁷ This chapter posits that the Christian Arabs of Greater Syria (and

¹⁰³ Acts 9:11-12, 17-18 KJV

¹⁰⁴ Ayalon, Ami. *The Press in the Arab Middle East : A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1995. Accessed January 22, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central. 36.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 30-31.

¹⁰⁷ Ayalon, Ami. *The Press in the Arab Middle East : A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1995. Accessed January 22, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central. 36, 193.

Beirut more specifically) dominated the early private press and proto-nationalist discourses due to a number of factors mainly relating to a sequence of events involving the silk trade, the happenstance of administrative shifts and reforms further promoting the growth of Beirut as an economic hub, and advantages granted to Christian coastal traders, leading to the rise of a prominent local Arab Christian bourgeoisie who produced and purchased papers that reflected the sentiments of their economic class. As will be demonstrated, these Christians were advantaged by an emerging economic system, concentrated in Beirut after sectarian uprisings throughout Greater Syria, and many possessed tangible experience with the printing press which led to their dominance and social views. To start, it would be prudent to discuss the history of Christians in Greater Syria and in and around Beirut more specifically.

Christians in Greater Syria and Beirut and Historical Relationships With Other Communities

When the American Protestant missionaries of the ABCFM arrived on the shores of the Levant in 1820, they were far from the first Christians to step foot in the land- in fact they were the newest sect to arrive there.¹⁰⁸ After all, it was in Damascus that the street called Straight existed and the conversion of Paul occurred in the book of Acts, and it was outside of Aleppo that bishop Theodoret of Cyrus recounted that his teacher, St. Symeon Stylites (390-459CE), taught and preached atop a pillar and converted all manner of peoples who would encounter

¹⁰⁸ Makdisi, Ussama. "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible: Missionaries, Secularism, Evangelical Modernity." *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 3 (July 1997): 683-684.

him.¹⁰⁹ Christianity in Greater Syria has a long and vibrant history. Who were these Christians, then?

In and around Lebanon and Beirut there were a few sects that developed in the early centuries of Christianity, namely the Melchites, Monophysites, and the Nestorians.¹¹⁰ The Melchites (an epithet meaning ‘royalist’) accepted the agreement at the Council of Chalcedon in 451CE which concluded that in Christ there were two natures, human and divine, whereas the Monophysites and Nestorians rejected such notions.¹¹¹ In 1054CE with the papal schism between Constantinople and Rome, the Melchites largely sided with Constantinople, and in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, some united with the church of Rome.¹¹² Those who reunited with Rome came to be known as the Greek Catholics whereas those whose affinity stayed with Constantinople would be termed the Greek Orthodox.¹¹³ Greek in these instances means that these Christians used the Byzantine rite in their liturgy; ethnically and linguistically they were and still are Arab and Arabic.¹¹⁴ Many of the Monophysites would end up becoming a part of the Jacobite, Armenian, or Gregorian churches in Greater Syria, excepting those who would adopt the Monothelete doctrine of two natures of Christ and one divine will; named after their patron saint Maron, they would recognize papal supremacy in the twelfth century and be known as the Maronites.¹¹⁵ More churches would come into prominence in Syria in the coming centuries, many of which were uniate with Rome such as the Syrian, Armenian, and Chaldean

¹⁰⁹ Sahner, Christian. *Among the Ruins: Syria Past and Present*, Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, 46-47. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/lib/umichigan/detail.action?docID=1920735>.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Catholics; Protestant sects such as Presbyterians in Syria and the Anglicans in Palestine would mainly by way of missionaries in the 19th century.¹¹⁶

Both Beirut and Damascus would come under control by Muslim Arabs in 635 until 1110, and Beirut would benefit under the Ummayyads who had Damascus as their capital, and the city itself gradually became more Arabized, attracting and taking in a significant Sunni population, while Christians (some of who did still stay in the city and kept a presence along with some Jews) began to move towards Mount Lebanon.¹¹⁷ Frankish crusaders took the city in May 1110.¹¹⁸ In this time, the city saw some commercial success but never on a level compared to Tyre or Acre, but it is likely that the Venetians held trading privileges while it was under Frankish control.¹¹⁹ The city would not remain within such control for long as it returned to Muslim hands in 1197 and then the Egyptian Mamlūks would seize it in July of 1291, where it would remain under a sort of protectorate of Druze military chieftains known as the Būḥturids (*Būḥturīn*), who were allowed to rule despite their theological disputes with the Sunnī Mamlūks due to their fighting the Crusaders.¹²⁰ Given that the Druze play an important role in Lebanese and Beirut history, some background would be useful. The Druze are a branch of Shī'ī Islam who viewed the Fāṭimī Caliph al-Hākīm as a messiah, and like many Shī'ī branches employ a sort of secrecy and hierarchy in their practices, and in times of persecution employ use of *taqiyya*.¹²¹ They were heavily persecuted in eleventh century Syria and Egypt for their perceived heterodoxy.¹²² The Druze found a home in Southern Lebanon due to the relative seclusion of the

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* 18, 19.

¹²¹ Salibi, Kamal S. "The Buḥturids of the Garb. Mediaeval Lords of Beirut and of Southern Lebanon." *Arabica* 8, no. 1 (1961): 78. Accessed January 23, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4054971>.

¹²² *Ibid.*

mountainous terrain.¹²³ In this time, Beirut was in decline and at the mercy of waves and lulls of trade on the Mediterranean, as Syria ceased to be the center of Islamic empire; the city was still viewed as an essential port settlement by the ruling clans, but by virtue of their living in the district of Shūf, the center of this small quasi-imperial holding shifted towards serving their needs, something that changed decidedly in the centuries to come.¹²⁴

The advent of the sixteenth century brought changes in the power dynamics of the lands in and around Beirut, as the Turkic Ottomans came to incorporate Syria into its empire in 1516.¹²⁵ Syria was initially broken into three provinces or states known as *iyālet* (plural *iyālāt*): Aleppo, Damascus, and Tripoli, with a fourth *iyālet* being incorporated in 1640 under Sidon, which would be enlarged to incorporate Beirut in 1840, after which the latter became its capital city.¹²⁶ It was starting in the Ottoman era that one can see the economic forces that culminated a couple centuries later into the emergence of the cadre of 19th century bourgeois Christian proto-nationalists.

Silk as Commodity and Its Associations With the Maronites

With the new Ottoman administration, the population dynamics of the lands in and around the mountains began to change. The Ottomans and their partisans killed most Mamlūk partisans in Syria, and groups such as the Druze no longer enjoyed certain immunities as they did before, such as against having to quarter troops.¹²⁷ Those appointed by the Ottomans were nervous about the relative power of Shī'īs in districts such as Kisrawān and began to court the

¹²³ Ibid., 77-78.

¹²⁴ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 19-20.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 21.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Salibi, Kamal S. *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*. London: I.B. Taurus, 1988. 102-103. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015013497667&view=1up&seq=5>.

Maronites such as the Ḥubaysh family (who additionally coaxed other members of the Maronite church) further and further into southern districts of Lebanon.¹²⁸ Despite the interests of the Ottomans, the region still possessed a good deal of autonomy, with the Maʿn dynasty of Fakhar al-Dīn having relationships with European powers and connecting the region of the mountain to Beirut, even though they were technically separate districts.¹²⁹ There was silk production in the region during Mamlūk times, but it was largely for the sake of local interests rather than international trade; Venice had been the only European power that Syria was open to trade to, and the Venetians were not particularly interested in silk, instead trying to get access to spices that made their way to Syrian ports that were previously from locales in the Indian Ocean.¹³⁰ Thusly, the fall of the Mamlūks and their control over Syria changed the domestic power dynamics of the mountain but also brought with it implications for trade.¹³¹ With the Mamlūks deposed and with it Venetian dominance of European trade with Syria, many French, Dutch, and English merchant/trading companies took an interest in the commodities produced in Syria, and silk became a product that they would vie for by the end of the 16th century, though it was initially mostly exported from the port city of Sidon.¹³²

Amidst the heightened demand for silk and the persecution that caused many of the Druze to abandon lands where they had previously resided (in fact, it seems possible that whole villages were deserted), there was a labor shortage.¹³³ There was the potential for good money to be made with the enhanced and growing silk trade, but someone needed to tend to the fields. The

¹²⁸ Ibid., 103-104.

¹²⁹ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 22.

¹³⁰ Salibi, Kamal S. *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*. London: I.B. Taurus, 1988. 104. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015013497667&view=1up&seq=5>.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., 104-105.

Maronites, already previously immigrating and coming in from the north, seemed to be the natural candidates to fill such a labor shortage, and the Druze would soon begin to court this population as a source of labor.¹³⁴ The Druze leadership, as such, began to invite them into their villages, making donations of their own lands to the Maronite Church and donating to Maronite monastic foundations, which would take an active role in silk production itself.¹³⁵ The relationship was as such mutually beneficial in nature. In the meantime, different sects of Christians also began to settle among the Maronites in these formerly Druze lands, and Greek Catholics were also granted special treatment by the Druze community.¹³⁶ What would occur before long was that the Christians came to dominate the silk industry: they would be the farmers, money-lenders advancing funds, intermediaries, brokers who brought the product to the markets, and then the merchants who traded it off to the Europeans.¹³⁷ Though those producing the silk were sharecroppers primarily on Druze lands, it was de facto a Christian-dominated enterprise, and only became further dominated once Fakhar al-Dīn entrusted management of the lands of Kisrawān to the Maronite Khāzin family, which remained a potent force and the most prominent Maronite family even after the fall of the Maʿn dynasty and rise of the Shihāb family.¹³⁸

An important element to consider about trade is that it often results in the building of networks and relationships. The Maronites unified with the Catholic church and recognized the primacy of Rome sometime in the twelfth century. It was in the seventeenth and eighteenth century that France under Louis XIV became the primary Catholic power in Europe over all the

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

others.¹³⁹ This was because he revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685, a document that was initially issued by Henry IV of France which had granted civil and religious liberties to its Protestant subjects, such as the Huguenots; about 400,000 of these Huguenots would flee within a few years following its revocation.¹⁴⁰ What emerged from this confluence of events was that the prominent Maronite Khāzin family became French vice-consuls, resulting in a long-held and notable relationship between France and the Maronites, and the Khāzins were more than happy to oblige as it granted them a great amount of prestige in Beirut.¹⁴¹ The Khāzins, with the encouragement of the Maʿn and subsequently Shihāb emirs, further consolidated Maronite dominance within the silk industry by purchasing the lands in the Kisrawān region, villages were bought up or taken from the Druze, leading to increasing conflicts between the two parties.¹⁴²

It is in these conditions that one can start to see the development of further Christian and Maronite dominance in and around Mount Lebanon, with the Maronites alone coming to comprise about 60% of the population by 1860, and with Shīʿī groups (which Akarli appears to designate the Druze as being a part of) only comprising 6% of the mountain's population.¹⁴³ When the Druze would move to avoid religious persecution and have the Maronites tend to the fields and growing industry, they were also ceding among the more fertile lands in the Lebanon area, and the northern areas that the Maronites had previously lived on were much less suitable

¹³⁹ Ibid., 106.

¹⁴⁰ *Britannica Academic*, s.v. "Edict of Nantes," accessed January 24, 2021, <https://academic-eb-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/levels/collegiate/article/Edict-of-Nantes/54792>.

¹⁴¹ Salibi, Kamal S. *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*. London: I.B. Taurus, 1988. 106. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015013497667&view=1up&seq=5>.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Engin Akarli. *The Long Peace : Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. 9. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=19137&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

for farming and cultivation.¹⁴⁴ Understandably, access to better lands on which to grow cash crops such as silk also tend to be better for food cultivation too, which in turn is more conducive to population growth even before the internationalization of the silk trade took place and allowed for capital accumulation; the climate is very humid and much more consistently rainy due to the barrier that the mountains produce as opposed to other Mediterranean environments.¹⁴⁵ It was with the Egyptian administration and European demands for silk that the conscious recultivation of mulberry trees began around 1832.¹⁴⁶ Starting in 1840 there began to be a general increase in the amount of silk that was being exported to European markets and more especially France- in 1840, about 25% of silk grown in Syria went to France or European markets, by 1900, it was upwards of 90%.¹⁴⁷ This sort of development was happening around the Middle East as cotton was the becoming the main cash crop for Northern Syria, Egypt, and Anatolia, opium was cultivated in central and southern Persia, with other crops including tobacco, rice, dates, citrus fruits, etc. being grown for export as well.¹⁴⁸ Silk in Mount Lebanon was perhaps more pronounced as a monoculture industry more than any other cash crop in the region, and so with a move away from subsistence farming and further specialization, food needs were usually addressed through the import of grains from other regions such as Hawran, Homs, Hama, and the Beqā' .¹⁴⁹ These developments allowed the demographic changes in the mountain to snowball so that the Christian population in the region boomed and led to the moving of this community

¹⁴⁴ Chevallier, Dominique. "Aspects Sociaux De La Question D'Orient: Aux Origines Des Troubles Agraires Libanais En 1858." *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 14, no. 1 (1959): 37. Accessed February 8, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27580000>.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁴⁶ Firro, Kais. "Silk and Agrarian Changes in Lebanon, 1860-1914." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 2 (1990): 154. Accessed February 8, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/163737>.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 152.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

further south as well, which would lead to conflict down the line.¹⁵⁰ In any case, the Christian communities around Mount Lebanon experienced demographic saturation by the 1830s or 1840s, the Druze experiencing less population growth.¹⁵¹ The Christian population, due to being the main benefactors from seizing the silk industry were outpacing the Druze population. Other factors that account for the relative lack of Druze growth may be attributed to their historical religious persecution which caused dispersal and conversions.¹⁵² In addition to this, the esoteric nature of Druze beliefs and their beliefs against proselytization and the marrying of Druze and non-Druze also played a role in their small demographic weight in the mountain as time went on.¹⁵³ It was these developments that led to what was once referred to as the “Druze Mountain” to being dominated by Christians, more specifically the Maronites.¹⁵⁴ Over the course of several centuries, a series of shrewd political maneuvers (both in and out of the Maronite community) and an auspicious turn of events would lead to the Maronite community increasing its holdings in Lebanon, moving south into previously Druze lands and coming to have a great amount of control over a burgeoning industry in the area from beginning to end; moreover, this particular group was beginning to develop a sense of confidence marked by its rise in prestige, with the

¹⁵⁰ Chevallier, Dominique. "Aspects Sociaux De La Question D'Orient: Aux Origines Des Troubles Agraires Libanais En 1858." *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 14, no. 1 (1959): 38. Accessed February 8, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27580000>.

¹⁵¹ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 39.

¹⁵² Engin Akarli. *The Long Peace : Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. 10. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=19137&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

¹⁵³ Marshall, Scarlett, Ranajit Das, Mehdi Pirooznia, and Eran Elhaik. "Reconstructing Druze Population History." *Nature News*. Nature Publishing Group, November 16, 2016. <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep35837>.

¹⁵⁴ Engin Akarli. *The Long Peace : Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. 15. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=19137&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

help of French backing and protection while still managing to avoid persecution by the Ottoman Empire or other religious groups with a few notable exceptions.¹⁵⁵

As such, by the last decades of the 19th century, it was a well-known fact that the Christians had come to be the main and nearly exclusive agents in the cultivation of silk. An article from 1876 in the *Journal of the Society of Arts* manages to detail the demographics of who was working in the industry at the time.¹⁵⁶ The article states: “The native workman is found to be generally very intelligent and to take readily to spinning... They are almost exclusively members of the various Christian communities of the Lebanon. Few or no Moslems [sic] are employed. The Druzes are found useful as labourers, messengers, and for out-door work generally...”¹⁵⁷ While one can see the possible beginnings of a bourgeois class begin to emerge among these Maronites and more broadly Christians in the area, it would be the events of the 19th century that secured such economic developments and that would make Beirut in particular a center for this bourgeoisie.

The Nineteenth Century and the Rise of Beirut and Its Particularly Christian Bourgeoisie and Its Press

Beirut is an old city, and its name attests to it: like many cities it was a particularly hospitable environment that encouraged people to first settle there, as its name is likely derived from a common Semitic word for “well” or “pit”, as this was how most potable water was likely

¹⁵⁵Salibi, Kamal S. *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*. London: I.B. Taurus, 1988. 106-107. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015013497667&view=1up&seq=5>.

¹⁵⁶ "Lebanon Silk." *Journal of the Society of Arts* 24, (July 14, 1876): 841-842. <https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/scholarly-journals/lebanon-silk/docview/1307229642/se-2?accountid=14667>.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 842.

procured when the area was first settled.¹⁵⁸ The city is thought to have existed at least since before the 14th century BCE as evidenced by an Ancient Egyptian tablet that suggested correspondence with the city which was considered on “equal footing with other powerful city-states of the period in Syria and Palestine.”¹⁵⁹ However, it was not until after the first decades of the 19th century that its population would exceed more than several thousand people. Before then a good amount of trade in silk had been steered more in the direction of Sidon for export rather than Beirut itself. What caused these changes at this time in particular?

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the late 18th century and early nineteenth century was a time of crisis for the Ottoman Empire; of the six foreign wars that they fought between 1768 and 1829, all but two were disastrous defeats for the Ottomans, the other two perhaps being seen as stalemates or underwhelming victories¹⁶⁰ Any attempt at alleviating and reforming the military was ineffective at best and disastrous at the worst of times until 1839, with the 1792 New Order resulting in an officers’ rebellion along the Danube and also sparked other issues, including the governor of Vidin defying Ottoman authority, janissaries attacking and terrorizing the population of Belgrade, and mountain bandit gangs taking up base in the highlands of Bulgaria and Macedonia.¹⁶¹ The Greeks would revolt in Morea in 1821, the Ottomans would cede independence for Greece and autonomy for Serbia in 1829 with the peace of Adrianople.¹⁶² Bosnia would ignite in rebellion soon after, experiencing sporadic revolts, many of the Muslims in the country having experienced a great sense of betrayal from the Sultan through his abolition

¹⁵⁸ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 14.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Anscombe, Frederick F. "The Balkan Revolutionary Age." *The Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 3 (2012): 577. Accessed January 25, 2021. doi:10.1086/666053.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid., 578.

of the Janissaries in 1826 that came with brutal crackdowns and his ceding of Bosnian lands to a new Serbia.¹⁶³ Muḥammad ‘Alī Pāshā would encroach on the Ottoman capital in 1832, seizing Syria, made easier by Balkan Muslim refusals to assist the empire they felt had betrayed them.¹⁶⁴

It was in this series of events that Beirut would thereafter begin to grow, as it is around this time that the censuses begin to see a significant climb in the population and there was a notably high demand for building materials.¹⁶⁵ The result of Syria changing hands from 1831-1840 brought with it a new view of which cities would be of use for administrative purposes, and Beirut was its primary beneficiary in the region as Muḥammad ‘Alī made it the provincial capital.¹⁶⁶ Sidon had lost a great deal of prestige during the reign of al-Jazzār and Acre was not deemed appropriate as a capital either.¹⁶⁷ The consulates of the other nations would then soon follow suit; the French made Beirut the permanent location of their consulate in 1833, the Americans upgraded from having a mere representative (which they only had as of 1832) to a full consulate in 1836, and by the middle of the 19th century, France, England, Russia, and Austria would have consulates general there as well with Prussia, Sardinia, Tuscany, Spain, Naples, Holland, and Greece soon following.¹⁶⁸ After reestablishing control the Ottomans moved the capital of the Sidon province over to Beirut in 1840 as well. By the 1840s a French consular report concluded that Tripoli had lost out to Beirut as the latter began to monopolize the trade of coastal Syria.¹⁶⁹ What had occurred then, was a sort of administrative snowball effect that had established the city as a political capital to the detriment of the other coastal cities, creating a

¹⁶³ Ibid., 596

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 597.

¹⁶⁵ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 31, 32-33.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 26.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

relationship between economic development which fed political development and vice versa in a feedback loop. This could explain its growth, but why did the bourgeoisie end up so Christian? With opportunities, of course, usually comes those who seek to make a better life for themselves, especially if under some sort of crisis that compels them to move from their previous homes.

Beirut is a city that had a significant Christian population throughout much of its history with a Christian majority by the mid-4th century; Syria stayed majority Christian for several centuries after the advent of Islam, though Beirut itself would see larger Sunni populations periodically, while retaining sizable Christian numbers.¹⁷⁰ At the very least reports from travelers suggest that the city had a majority Christian population in the 17th century.¹⁷¹ It is thought that one of the few times where Christians did not constitute a majority from the post-mid-4th century onwards was during the Mamlūk dynasty after it was retaken from Crusaders and then again during al-Jazzār's reign, after which the Christian population likely began to return as full-time residents.¹⁷² The fall in the relative Christian population of the city under al-Jazzār seems to be related to a very heavy regime of taxes that he put upon the population, and was also perhaps related to his well-known status as a tyrant: he turned against the prominent Shihāb family (with which the Maronites had a friendly relationship) and was known to use violence or extortion to get what he wanted, and even went as far as killing notable scholars in the region of Damascus.¹⁷³ As such, it would not be too much of a jump to assume that Christians simply felt unsafe residing in Beirut at the time; it seemed as though many feared Ottoman retaliation for the actions of Napoleon and that the French were also too fearful of the prospect of trying to trade in

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 15, 17.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁷³ Safi, Khaled. 'Al-Jazzār, Aḥmad Pāshā'. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson. Accessed January 25, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_32807.

Beirut for some time thereafter.¹⁷⁴ With less income, high taxes, and fear for their safety, the Christian population was as such smaller in proportion to what it had been by the beginning of the 19th century, but would soon rise back up to the point where Ibrāhīm Pāshā put an equal amount of Muslim and Christian representatives on his advisory council in the 1830s.¹⁷⁵

It is not too off base an assumption that the Christians who did leave Beirut would go and seek refuge in the mountains, as this has a history of occurring with the Christian community in the area well into the mid-19th century in times of danger in the city, such as when there were outbreaks of sickness (such as during the plague and cholera outbreak of 1831 and 1848 respectively) and of times of political persecution.¹⁷⁶ While the evidence shows that there was indeed a network of Christians (largely Maronites) before this time setting up a system of silk trade from cultivation to export, these sort of excursions by the urban Christians to the mountain (and likely Kisrawān) ensured that the rural and urban communities were not only well aware of each other, but maintained a connection that would impact the city's direction of growth further.

Outside of these bonds and networks within the Christian community, relationships *external* to the community were still developing, and so too was technology that would only increase the potential of silk as a commodity of trade with European merchants: the steam engine. The advent of steam travel meant that goods and commodities could be more easily transported between the coastal cities of empires and countries, which with the administrative changes that favored Beirut among the Syrian coastal cities all but certainly made it an economic hub.¹⁷⁷ Gone were the days where one would have to rely on the winds for quick passage across

¹⁷⁴ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 40.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 36, 41.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

the seas for a return to France or Britain, and it is certainly less troublesome than attempting to carry goods over lands in an empire where one's homeland had a shaky relationship with Istanbul at best, let alone having to face the prospect of bandits or brigands where the state could not guarantee safety. The shipping statistics make clear the importance of the steam engine and administrative changes in developing trade within Beirut: "Total shipping entering the port grew from less than 50,000 tons a year in the 1830s to over 600,000 tons a year in 1886."¹⁷⁸ The steam engine is also one of the reasons that the British had the power to bombard the cities of Acre, Sidon, and Beirut under the command of Sir Charles Napier to assist the Ottomans in taking Syria from the Egyptians as well.¹⁷⁹ The development of steamships with screw propellers in the 1840s and 1850s further sped up the trade process and mail as well; the ability to correspond with the outside world, with people in other nations or communities, thus increased.¹⁸⁰ The Syrian hinterlands also relied on Beirut to import European goods and for the export of their own commodities, making it a port of interest for both European powers and Syrian merchants.¹⁸¹

Along with this increasingly advanced and complex network of trade came with it the relationships that made trade more expedient and conducive. As mentioned previously, among the first families to have developed a relationship with the European powers was that of the Khāzin family with the French; this created an affinity between the French government and the Maronite community. However, the Khāzins would not be the only family or individuals to have such a relationship for long, and trade treaties between the Ottomans and European powers in

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 61.

¹⁷⁹ Headrick, Daniel R. *Power Over Peoples: Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism, 1400 to the Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. 196-197. <https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb.31051>. EPUB.

¹⁸⁰ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 61.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 62.

1838 afforded additional protections and assurances that made the latter frequently more interested in local affairs.¹⁸² Soon after there were consular dealings that would greatly benefit the Beirut Christian community over others as European co-religionists gave locals protections and greatly lowered financial burdens such as tax liabilities.¹⁸³ While religion had proven to be the first way of establishing affinities between Europeans and Arab Christians in the centuries previous, it seemed that sharp and adaptive local merchants more than willingly took advantage of economic benefits of consular positions and protections rather than being driven by piety; it was not at all uncommon that a merchant would choose to switch to the protection of a different consular if it brought with it better advantages: there were even instances of some of these merchants choosing to abandon such protections all together and claim the primacy of their identities as Ottoman subjects if it was advantageous in the court system.¹⁸⁴ This was not a completely new development of Christians within Ottoman lands taking full advantage of different systems either, as many Christians and Jews within the Ottoman Empire would often seek out Muslim courts if they believed that having justice meted out there would have better results than elsewhere.¹⁸⁵ The prospect of a better trade deal or outcome in finances often incentivizes the blurring of religious lines, and with the European powers in particular it was hardly as though these nations were endowed with any sort of religious authority: the Maronites and Greek Catholics, recognized the primacy of Rome in religious matters, but were they simply not trading with different Catholics if they switched consular protections from France to Austria-Hungary? Or even then, were they simply not rendering unto their own Caesar when

¹⁸² Ibid., 74.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 61, 85-86.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 86.

¹⁸⁵ Al-Qattan, Najwa. "Litigants and Neighbors: The Communal Topography of Ottoman Damascus." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 3 (2002): 515. Accessed January 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3879378>.

they switched over to Ottoman jurisdiction? If the merchants were secular-minded then these things mattered less, but even if they were pious, there existed ways to justify such expedencies.

This was also not just a matter of some sort of trading noblesse oblige along religious lines with these European traders and merchants however, and the fact that these Beirut merchants felt secure enough to switch between consulates for better benefits speaks to the fact that these European merchants needed this emerging bourgeoisie to further their own goals. As Fawaz writes on these merchants becoming protégés of the various consulates: “And they often were indispensable. In the consulates, their services as interpreters, their easy understanding of how the local bureaucracy worked, and how to get things done at customs, at court, and with the local government were essential to inexperienced and impatient European officials and businessmen.”¹⁸⁶ Additionally, Ottoman economic regulations up until 1856 had restrictions against foreigners owning lands; the way for these European traders to get around this was by using the locals as middlemen and entering into partnerships with them.¹⁸⁷ If there is profit to be made and one is indispensable in its generation, then it stands to reason that one would be among the greater benefactors of such exchanges, or at least possess the leverage to do so. Often when one realizes their utility in such transactions with other parties being non-essential or even in some ways detrimental to the bottom line, it becomes more efficient and profitable to go from being middlemen or intermediaries to trying to own the business or means of production themselves. Since the native businessmen knew the customs, language, and ins-and-outs of the community it was easier for them to find ways to extract profit more efficiently, they faced less barriers than their European counterparts, and the initial protection of consulates rendered these

¹⁸⁶ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 86.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

local merchants immune from certain laws and taxes: the size and number of these advantages is among the explanatory factors of growing local control over the silk industry despite changes in custom that would prove less restrictive towards European traders.¹⁸⁸ What should be noted from the way in which the Christians of Beirut constituted a large part of its bourgeoisie that dominated the press of the 1870s is that in order to become more effective intermediaries and to conduct trade between peoples and navigate laws, it is useful and profitable to pursue educational opportunities and literacy, something which is of course essential for the broad success of any periodical. As Benedict Anderson notes that the fall of Latin and the vernacularization of administrative languages (and thus, likely for more effective administrators, literacy in said language) was more of a pragmatic and haphazard development, there is another thing to take into consideration as well in the situation of such a bourgeoisie.¹⁸⁹ Hobsbawm also takes good note of the rise of literacy as a way of implementing state bureaucracy, at least among agents of the state.¹⁹⁰ In order to be effective intermediaries and then later more independent bourgeoisies in the export trade, it helps to know not only the languages with which the people one is trading but also of administration (whether Ottoman or perhaps in some cases Arabic, written) in order to most effectively navigate the law to its fullest benefit. Literacy is thus incentivized. The bureaucracy of a group of literate agents of the state is thus in turn subverted by those who would find a way to navigate it to their own benefit, at least when the bourgeoisie is the rising and non-hegemonic state force; finding loopholes or provisions gives its finder a competitive edge, and with it perhaps riches and comforts, as exemplified by the use of the

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2016. 42.

¹⁹⁰ Hobsbawm, E. J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1992. 82. <https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb.01299>. EPUB.

native middlemen who served as the de jure owners of properties backed by European merchants. Times of new administration, bureaucracy, and reform can also in turn create an anti-bureaucracy, especially concerning interests of capital. With all these ways of skirting the law, avoiding taxes, making use of the best of both worlds in terms of consulate or Ottoman protection, literacy is a useful tool if not a necessity. While these explanations help one identify economic incentives for literacy in Beirut and the rise of a good part of its native bourgeoisie, it still does not explain the rise of the newspaper or why the city rose so dramatically in population.

Events in and after 1840 explain the latter. It was starting in this year in Greater Syria that conflicts between religious communities increased dramatically. For example, in Damascus the Christian community leveled accusations of blood libel against the city's Jews after a Capuchin monk and his Muslim servant had gone missing: their bodies were said to have shown up in the Jewish quarter of the city; it was the first instance of such accusations within the city.¹⁹¹ The main causes behind these accusations appear to be the Capuchin monks fanning the flames of such a theory, claiming that the blood of the monk was used for Passover.¹⁹² Members of Damascus' Jewish community were kidnapped, tortured, and imprisoned.¹⁹³ In the end, those who survived the torture and imprisonment were released after several months and the sultan released a *fīrmān* (decree) which stated that blood libels were fallacious and prohibited putting these Jews to trial.¹⁹⁴ In and around Mount Lebanon, sectarian strife was brewing as well. The

¹⁹¹ Al-Qattan, Najwa. "Litigants and Neighbors: The Communal Topography of Ottoman Damascus." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 3 (2002): 511, 527. Accessed January 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3879378>.

¹⁹² Brawer, Abraham J., and Jonathan Frankel. "Damascus Affair." In *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., edited by Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 399. Vol. 5. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007. *Gale eBooks* (accessed January 28, 2021). <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX2587504831/GVRL?u=umuser&sid=GVRL&xid=d170dcdd>.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 399-400.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 400.

Druze hardly benefitted from the newly increasing cultivation of the cash crops in and around the mountain and Ibrāhīm Pāshā was wary of the Druze, who were agitating against him locally.¹⁹⁵ Retribution was decisive and swift, and many of the Druze were dispersed, their property was seized, those who remained were disarmed and others still yet were conscripted into the army.¹⁹⁶ All of this was accomplished between 1837-1838 when Ibrāhīm used volunteer Maronites forces who he assumed would be more successful at guerilla and mountainous warfare than his own Egyptian troops; and what resulted was a deepening sense of distrust between the Maronites and Druze.¹⁹⁷ After these events, the Maronites refused to disarm and assisted in the overthrow of Ibrāhīm's rule in Syria, and the Church became ascendant as a source of legitimacy around the mountain, insisting on the rule of the Maronite branch of the Shihāb family in the area, which further enflamed tensions between Druze and Maronites.¹⁹⁸ Meanwhile, the British and Ottomans had promised to assist and reward the Druze who had worked against Ibrāhīm and to return confiscated estates and properties to them, but ideas of land ownership and proprietorship were rapidly evolving and changing, and those who had come to reside on the previously Druze lands refused to see themselves as renters: what that entailed lead to land disputes that were beginning to fall more along sectarian lines.¹⁹⁹ Both communities were "...armed to the teeth..." and a civil war broke out in 1841, which would lead to sectarian grudges, each case of revenge only deepening the grudge, creating a vicious cycle if left unaddressed.²⁰⁰ The sultan, having just recently reestablished control over the area, and European powers, having economic interests and

¹⁹⁵ Engin Akarlı. *The Long Peace : Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=19137&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 24-26.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

wishing to protect the communities they claimed to represent, felt compelled to act.²⁰¹ Over the next several years there would be several attempts at finding an effective administrative change that would please all, or at least enough, parties: the first attempt at this was a district for the Druze and Maronites, the administration of which would be modified each time conflict broke out between communities in the mountains in 1845 and 1850.²⁰²

Understandably, the prospect of constant conflict and instability is not satisfying to most, and people would begin to move elsewhere. For Christians in and around the mountain, Beirut was a compelling choice. Having become a center of administration, the location of where European consulates who professed their desire to protect them, a city with an increasing economic relationship with the mountain, and one of the few places where Christians appeared to make up about half of the population, it was the safest bet to Christians wishing to leave the ongoing mountain conflicts. Such a migration indeed occurred, as Fawaz notes: “The deterioration of the political situation in Mount Lebanon in the 1840s had a more direct and significant impact, causing a wave of Christian migration to Beirut.”²⁰³ For a couple of examples, the evacuation of these Christians from villages such as Dayr al-Qamar was so drastic that the son of its joint governor asked for their immediate return, and the Christians of ‘Abay came to the city under guard of the Ottomans to protect against the Druze in 1845.²⁰⁴ Important to note is that a great deal of these migrants were not the working poor or subsistence farmers, but merchants and artisans: a report from a migrant relates that it was in between twenty or thirty

²⁰¹ Ibid., 27-28.

²⁰² Ibid., 28.

²⁰³ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 52-53.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 53.

of the principle merchants of Dayr al-Qamar that ended up seeking refuge in Beirut.²⁰⁵ It would be in 1850 that sectarian troubles would flare up once again in Greater Syria: this time in Aleppo.

On the evening of October 17th, the second night of the feast of ‘īd al-Aḏḥā, violence broke out in the city in what would later euphemistically come to be called *al-ḥawādith* (the events/occurrences) and by the end, eighteen would be murdered, and three hundred injured; some reports suggest that another seventy eventually died of their wounds.²⁰⁶ The targets of this riot were the Catholic Uniates of the Judayda and Ṣalība neighborhoods and the riots were largely contained to this part of the city, which was a wealthy suburb, and churches and Christian shops.²⁰⁷ Those who perpetrated the violence largely came from the eastern quarters, whose population consisted of Bedouins, Turkmen, and Kurds who were also previously a large janissary faction within the city, a group of soldiers that had previously held a great deal of sway in Ottoman politics until their dissolution in 1826.²⁰⁸ Also notably, some records assert that those who participated in the uprising also stole government property in the form of muskets, and were expressing grievances about conscriptions and the prospect of a direct head tax, but in the end few of those who had participated would end up being charged.²⁰⁹ There had been riots within the city in the past, but this was the first time in its history that the targets would be the Christian community specifically: a peculiar and new development.²¹⁰ Aleppo had previously been a very economically successful city but had declined in previous decades, especially in comparison to Beirut; the city had economic problems partially stemming from being on the frontier between

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Masters, Bruce. "The 1850 Events in Aleppo: An Aftershock of Syria's Incorporation into the Capitalist World System." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 1 (1990): 3, 17. Accessed January 30, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/164379>.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 4, 6.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 5, 14.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 4, 7-8.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 12.

the Ottoman Empire and the Egyptian holdings, and many young men had fled the city previously to avoid conscription.²¹¹ The economic prospects of those who had lived in the eastern quarters were particularly taking the brunt of such a recession as they were typically involved in the caravan and grain trades.²¹² Meanwhile, similarly to what was occurring in Beirut, a system of Christian protégés under Western consulate protection with increased European trade had led to an unprecedented rise in the economic prospects for the city's Christians; the old systems of patronage and trade that had kept the city's various sects in a state of coexistence had broken down, with poorer Muslims losing the most relative prestige and its Christian community gaining the lion's share.²¹³ The stealing of government property and attacking of a newly economically ascendent religious minority that had benefitted greatly under the Tanzīmāt reforms at the hands of those who had lost out from the policies of past decades indicates that, similar to what had been occurring in the Mount Lebanon intermittently for the last nine or ten years before this massacre, an economic and social displacement was at the root of such conflict rather than true doctrinal sectarianism. Thus, issues of resentful, disbanded Janissaries that had occurred during the unrest in the Balkans was also occurring in Syria.

The events shook the Christian community of Aleppo and prompted some to also move to Beirut specifically.²¹⁴ Similar to what had occurred with the Christians who came from Dayr al-Qamar and 'Abay, it is highly likely that these Christians were wealthier and could afford to move, as the Christians of this city were thought to be the wealthiest in Syria.²¹⁵ What had previously been a developing but more dispersed disproportionately Christian bourgeoisie was

²¹¹ Ibid., 12-13.

²¹² Ibid., 13.

²¹³ Ibid., 14-17.

²¹⁴ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 53-54.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

consolidating in Beirut, many among them having experienced displacement by what seemed to be religiously-motivated sectarianism to some sources residing in the city.²¹⁶

The migrations between 1840 and 1850, however, were small in comparison to the mass migrations that occurred in 1860. In the few years before the breakout of a civil war largely between the Druze and Maronites of the mountain, there had been a couple peasant revolts of Maronite peasants against Maronite lords.²¹⁷ These sort of class conflicts eventually moved further south and Maronite peasants began to rise up against Druze lords, bringing things to a head in 1860, eventually turning into an all-out conflict between Maronites and Druze in the mountain, with routed Christians fleeing further and further north only to have the next city fall, with Greek Catholics beginning to take casualties as well; between May and June of that year it is likely that some 11,000 Christians were killed, another 5,000 died from hardships, and as many as 100,000 of them were displaced. The next month, similar events played out in Damascus, starting on the 9th of July.²¹⁸ Over three days it is estimated that about 3,000 Christians were slaughtered, the initial cause of such riot (“...the single largest anti-Christian riot to occur in any Arab city in four centuries of Ottoman rule.”) said to be over the arrest of Muslim boys who were drawing crosses in the city roads.²¹⁹ Similar to everywhere else that there had been uprisings against Christians in Greater Syria, it is speculated that economic factors were involved; in this case there was a pattern of Muslims being in debt to the Christians of the city

²¹⁶ Masters, Bruce. "The 1850 Events in Aleppo: An Aftershock of Syria's Incorporation into the Capitalist World System." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 1 (1990): 9. Accessed February 3, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/164379>.

²¹⁷ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 23-24.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Makdisi, Ussama Samir. *Age of Coexistence: the Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World*. De Gruyter, University of California Press. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 54. <https://www-degruyter-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/california/view/title/571647>.

and the Christian families' ownership of looms had displaced Muslim craftsmen, which may have played a role as evidenced by the destruction of such looms.²²⁰

It is at this time that Beirut saw unparalleled growth as a general Christian exodus from Greater Syria nearly tripled the Christian population of the city: there were at least 20,000 refugees living in the city by the end of August 1860, 7,000 of which received daily help from the Anglo-American Relief Committee.²²¹ The population of the whole city essentially doubled immediately after the events of 1860 to perhaps 60,000 inhabitants with migration being one of the biggest explanatory factors for its growth.²²²

While chaos and intermittent communitarian conflict racked the mountain and sparked occasional but large uprisings in cities such as Aleppo or Damascus, interests in Beirut as a hub of trade among European powers did not cease, and if anything, the security of the city only further concentrated it as a locus of investment. The French would begin to build more and more silk factories in the 1840s and 1850s, with a slow and steady move towards local ownership in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and early decades of the twentieth century.²²³ The silk industry proved to be essential to Beirut's export trades but there was also an ever-growing interest in the purchase and import of European commodities as well, and old means of transporting these goods were beginning to prove inefficient; it would often take three to four days through treacherous and mountainous territory that also had a history of raiders to get to Damascus.²²⁴ The solution to this was simple: a new road to Damascus to lower the risk involved

²²⁰ Ibid., 56.

²²¹ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 54-55.

²²² Ibid., 31.

²²³ Ibid., 65-66.

²²⁴ Ibid., 67.

with transporting goods and to increase the efficiency of the import trade.²²⁵ The project to build the Beirut-Damascus road began in 1857 with Comte Edmond de Perthuis as its main advocate along with a couple of other French companies.²²⁶ The road was completed and ready for use by 1863 and included additional services such as daily stagecoaches that went from Damascus to Beirut or vice versa in thirteen hours and of course allowed for easier transport of imports.²²⁷ Later silk companies also took advantage of this road, building their factories along it: silk production was becoming further streamlined as industry boomed.²²⁸ By the 1890s Beirut's harbor would see drastic improvements too, and in 1894, a Beirut-Damascus railroad line opened, the former largely backed by the French and the latter by French and Belgian capital.²²⁹

Not only was the transport of goods becoming increasingly efficient, but the British also took interest in projects in local and city that were conducive to its further growth. Perhaps the two most important of these projects included the water system that the Beirut Waterworks Company completed in 1875 which piped water from the *Nahar al-Kalb* (the Dog River) to the city as before Beirut's water system had relied on the use of a Roman aqueduct; British backing and assistance in administering the Ottoman Bank was likely also essential for entrepreneurs as a means of procuring capital: the bank opened in 1856 and more came in the following years.²³⁰

The city of Beirut and its Christian community became the place where the Arab private press first came into its own because of its peculiar history. What was previously a small port city with a population of only several thousand grew tremendously, the auspicious benefactor of

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 68-69.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 69.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 70-72.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 78- 79.

administrative changes which enabled the growth of the silk industry. Silk cultivation had come largely under Maronite control after turns of events led to both Ottoman administrators and Druze alike seeking their settlement for their own interests. Communitarian religious affinities created the initial inklings of trade connections between the mountain and city and then the city and European merchants, and the advantages these connections brought snowballed. Reforms and trade agreements throughout Ottoman lands had a similar impact on Christian communities in other Greater Syria cities who similarly took advantage of consulate protections: the motive among these communities was more likely based in profit over religious reasons. Nonetheless these advantages conferred on the Christian community were occurring while many other communities within the empire felt abandoned, losing relative class prestige from reforms such as the removal of the Janissary corps or in the case of the Druze around the mountain, land ownership, resulting in conflict. The foreign consulate protections also rose suspicions against Christians as well in a time when the Ottoman Empire was in decline.²³¹ A previously relatively peaceful coexistence with non-Muslims decidedly in a somewhat lower class became disrupted as old orders of social cohesion broke down. What was already a city with a merchant class and emerging bourgeoisie only became magnified as it came to be seen as a place of protection and refuge for Christian merchants and (if they could afford to move, usually starting in 1860) laborers alike, concentrating a particular milieu of monied Christians further, many also sharing an experience of having to leave their previous places of residence because of what seemed to be sectarian uprisings, and this was not an uncommon sentiment of analysis, even among those usually more astute to class relations as a possible driving force of conflict. Karl Marx, failing to

²³¹ Grehan, James. "Imperial Crisis and Muslim-Christian Relations in Ottoman Syria and Palestine, C. 1770-1830." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 58, no. 4 (2015): 509. Accessed March 22, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43919253>

consider his own usual analyses and the underlying land and labor grievances that had initially set off communitarian tensions, referred to the 1860 conflict as consisting of “...the high pitched antagonism of the barbarous clans of the Lebanon.”²³² Newspapers, magazines, and periodicals cost money to produce and purchase. It would be hard to chalk up the fact that the first locally produced newspaper in Arabic came onto the scene in 1858 and that the press in the area really began to flourish a decade after the events of 1860 and the consolidation of a bourgeoisie that had had several years to get its bearings after being displaced to and coming to Beirut. One of the main reasons for the creation of *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* was because it was backed by Mīkhā ṭl Mudawwar for the purpose of keeping the merchants of Beirut informed on economic and political developments.²³³ The price of subscription to *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* and its long-term success suggests such a mercantile relationship, and the content found in these periodicals that would pop up in and around the city are reflective of a bourgeois ethos that is commonly found elsewhere with the rise of a bourgeois class and private press: it was in the ninth issue of the first year of *al-Jinān* that one ‘Abd al-Qādir Bey penned an essay titled “Time is Gold” which extolled the values of the using one’s time towards what he considered fruitful pursuits, such as discussing with fellow intellectuals what news or articles they had read that day.²³⁴ The use of gold, that precious metal that connotes wealth to the wise spending of time makes clear the sort of milieu these papers appealed to. As if that isn’t striking enough, in the very same issue Ilyās Effendī Habālīn penned an issue titled “The Usefulness of Reading”, which when paired with other articles from this paper that associates usefulness with the acquisition of wealth, indicates a

²³² Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. *Collected Works*. 17. Vol. 17. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1981. 430. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015005982726&view=1up&seq=6>.

²³³ Bawardi, Basiliyus. "First Steps in Writing Arabic Narrative Fiction: The Case of "Ḥadīqat Al-Akḥbār"." *Die Welt Des Islams*, New Series, 48, no. 2 (2008): 174. Accessed February 4, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20140808>.

²³⁴ Holt, Elizabeth M. "Narrative and the Reading Public in 1870s Beirut." *Journal of Arabic Literature* 40, no. 1 (2009): 44. Accessed February 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25597995>.

sort of valor being connected with self-improvement and intellectual pursuits which leads to riches, a sort of ideological production justifying the ascent of this new class.²³⁵ To borrow from Althusser, this sort of ethos and subject matter found in these periodicals and the underlying anxiety by creating a new moral framework shows the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the rise of the press in Beirut, it is in some ways a site of class struggle as this class emerges from and contends with a new stage of material development as opposed to the older ways.²³⁶

There were of course newspapers that would be owned and produced by Muslims in and around Beirut in later years, but it seems as though the centralization and concentration of the Christian bourgeoisie in the city and inner community connections led to the Beirut Christians domination: as Fawaz notes, familial connections were incredibly important in Beirut society and businesses often became family affairs, something to take note of next chapter when the contents of the press are more thoroughly interrogated.²³⁷ Beirut also had at the time of its rising Christian bourgeoisie a great deal of Muslim families who made out almost as well too: there were some twenty incredibly prominent Muslim families who rose to greater prominence, some of them older and well-landed families such as the Beyhums, and others newcomers such as the Yāsīn.²³⁸ What differed the merchants and bourgeoisie of the Muslims in Beirut, however, was that they tended more towards trading with the interior to cities such as Damascus, Baghdad, and sometimes with Egypt.²³⁹ In addition to this, these families did not come to dominate entire industries like that of the Christian merchants/emerging bourgeois, largely trading whatever was

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Althusser, Louis. *On Ideology*. Brooklyn, New York: Verso, 2020. 8, 18, 21.

²³⁷ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 89.

²³⁸ Ibid., 95.

²³⁹ Ibid., 95-96.

being imported to bring it to the hinterland.²⁴⁰ What seems to account for the slightly earlier rise of the private press among these Christian Beirutis appears to be a large surplus of capital, greater community cohesion by way of otherization and communal experience, and perhaps a greater need for such periodicals and outside news, being concerned more with the export trade. When one is creating something that needs to be physically distributed, it is much easier to distribute things in a smaller area; the less concentrated network of Muslim traders seemed to confer upon the Christians a greater advantage when it came to first operating in this market.

In addition to this, Ami Ayalon seems to suggest that a great deal of those who would publish newspapers early on had Christian missionary connections that gave them experience with handling printing presses.²⁴¹ The life of Khalīl Sarkis could perhaps prove illuminating, though most primarily know him as the publisher of the newspaper *Lisān al-Ḥāl*.²⁴² It was at the American missionary school in Beirut that Khalīl first acquired experience with the press, becoming an apprentice and expert printer once he graduated.²⁴³ While in some literature the role of the Christian missionaries has been greatly exaggerated in fostering national consciousness and literature, the one place where they played a significant role in the Nahḍa and private publishing is quite clear and accentuated in the study of these Christian writers from in and around Beirut: they provided training to those who became local printers and also often worked in the publishing of private materials for a price.²⁴⁴ After gaining this valuable experience and assisting in casting letters for printing presses for gained him great renown, Sarkis entered into a

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 96.

²⁴¹ Ayalon, Ami. "Private Publishing in the Nahda." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 4 (2008): 564. Accessed February 4, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40206008>.

²⁴² Ibid., 561.

²⁴³ Ibid., 564-565.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 564.

business deal with Buṭrus al-Bustānī, who would later become his father-in-law as well.²⁴⁵ As exemplified in Stephen Sheehi's piece on him in *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood: Histories, Pioneers and Identity* Buṭrus also similarly had previous experience in the production of literary works, having worked on editing the publications of the proceedings of the Syrian Society for Arts and Sciences and also assisting Eli Smith in the retranslating of the Bible into Arabic until the latter's death until 1856.²⁴⁶ This press would cost 30,000 qurūsh to set up, but together al-Bustānī and Sarkis would publish three magazines and twenty-three titles, with some orders taken from other businesses.²⁴⁷ Their relationship is perhaps indicative of larger trends. With the proliferation of the private press would come the encouragement of reading audiences and an enhanced importance placed on literacy, leading to further economic development within the field of printing: while administration and economic primacy had launched Beirut from a small port city to an economic hub in a feedback loop, another such loop was coming into being between the economic incentives of print and reading.²⁴⁸ By the beginning of the 20th century, it is estimated that there were at least 1,516 works that were printed or produced in Beirut and around Mt. Lebanon, and this only comprises a partial list as it was compiled by Luis Shaykhu, who only listed the works that he knew of in his journal *al-Mashriq* and excluded Protestant religious tracts.²⁴⁹ Periodicals continued to proliferate after the advent of the new century as well, with the arrival of some 197 new titles between 1901-1914.²⁵⁰ Sarkis himself, apparently not contented with only producing his newspaper, claimed to have produced some 650 works that

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Beshara, Adel, ed. *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood : Histories, Pioneers and Identity*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. 58-59. Accessed February 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.

²⁴⁷ Ayalon, Ami. "Private Publishing in the Nahda." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 4 (2008): 565. Accessed February 4, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40206008>.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 563.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 562, 574.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 562.

spanned genres from religious to the agricultural, industrial, literary, and scholarly in an unspecified eighteen-year period, including such Arabic classics as 1,001 Nights and *al-Muqaddama* (the latter written by Ibn Khaldūn, of course) and some more modestly-sized books and pamphlets which were affordable to customers of more modest means.²⁵¹ The fact that many of these presses that published the first periodicals also published advertisements for other works published by their own press also seemed to be an efficient way to reach a reading public (and other presses that did not have a periodical also advertised in them); earlier experience with a press with excess capital seemed essential, or incredibly helpful.²⁵² While Sarkis is just one prominent individual out of many, his output makes clear the advantages conferred upon the Christian community in regards to cornering the publishing market, at least for some time. In some cases, some of the earliest of periodical publishers were actively encouraged by the Ottoman government for the sake of not exacerbating religious tensions: Khalīl al-Khūrī's career was actively promoted by the Ottomans, perhaps because the rising tensions between the Maronites and Druze made them perceive him (a Greek Orthodox) as being a possible neutral voice in the region, unaffiliated with the French-backed Maronites or the English-backed Druze, as explained by Fruma Zachs.²⁵³ She also alleges that Sarkis had also received tutelage from al-Khūrī, again emphasizing the networks of these Christians, as al-Khūrī had also associated himself with the missionaries at one point, being a teacher in their employ.²⁵⁴

As mentioned previously, with the rise of Beirut there was a general trend of Christian merchants dealing with initial trades with Europeans and Muslim merchants trading commodities

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 566.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 571.

²⁵³ Beshara, Adel, ed. *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood : Histories, Pioneers and Identity*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. 93-94. Accessed February 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

inland. This sort of relationship wherein Beirut Christian and Muslim merchants resulted in a relationship where both were reliant on each other for success: quite simply, they needed each other.²⁵⁵ As demonstrated, the phenomenon of Beirut Christian dominance within the private press of Greater Syria in 1870s was the culmination of centuries of events starting somewhere in the 16th century; Maronites with the invitation of the Druze would move further south into Mount Lebanon and slowly dominate an emerging silk industry that would become a monoculture in the 19th century, with fertile lands and capital resulting in explosive population growth. Interested Europeans traded with Christians who happily adapted to a consulate system and became a new regional bourgeoisie. Beirut, a previously small town with a long Christian would become a provincial capitol and by way of community connections and economic opportunity concentrate this bourgeoisie interested in trade and whose intelligentsia possessed previous experience with the printing press. This chapter and the one before it thus allows us to have the base information to properly deal with the topic of the next and final chapter of this thesis: the ways in which the Arab Christian, bourgeois, proto-nationalist milieu used Islamic cultural signifiers and employed an ecumenical frame to create a proto-nationalist idea of Greater Syria.

²⁵⁵ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 96.

Chapter III: Hubb al-Watan min al-Īmān: The Christian, Protonationalist Bourgeoisie and Ecumenical Ideas of a Greater Syria

“Let us hope that in the future our compatriots will not look at themselves through the lens of sect or race but in terms of merit, value, and patriotic brotherhood. Such differences ought not lead to hate, envy, and alienation among our compatriot’s different communities any more than differences in personal appearance, natural inclinations, clothes, and daily ways of living invoke envy and dislike among individuals. May they use this diversity, instead, as a means to awaken feelings of healthy competition, enthusiasm, conscientiousness, and kindness.” -Buṭrus Al-Bustānī, Part/Pamphlet #9 of *Nafīr Sūriyya*, dated January 14, 1861²⁵⁶

Suppose that one is a merchant or member of the intelligentsia in mid-19th century Beirut. As demonstrated, had one inhabited the city from 1840 on, they would have seen immense and rapid population growth, much of which was attributable to an influx of migrants and refugees, coming from the mountain and cities across Greater Syria. The previous chapter also clarifies that the Christian community was disproportionately favored in economic development through consulate patronages as the Ottoman empire transformed into a modern capitalist system that disrupted older class relations which had previously kept a peaceable coexistence. However, to those viewing the violence it seemed as though Greater Syria was amidst a wave of explicitly religious sectarian violence that would rip the land apart if left unaddressed. After all, they likely wondered, why did this keep occurring along religious lines? For those who lived through this experience of waves of migrants coming into town, each reporting travesties and the horrors, these were not just numbers- it was likely something that they could witness daily. Each refugee brought with them stories, such as Dmītrī Debbās, who would later recount his tale of leaving Damascus for Beirut some decades later; these events would reverberate throughout the region

²⁵⁶ Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 105, 109.

and the city of Beirut for many years, a good proportion of its population having similar tales of displacement and sorrow.²⁵⁷ Even for those safe in Beirut, they also often had family in harm's way, like the prominent Bustānīs who had relatives in the mountains fleeing in waves.²⁵⁸

If one were concerned about the common good and in possession of a press, the obvious thing to do would be to write on what seemed to be the problem of the age. The third and final chapter of this thesis posits that the Christian-dominated, Syrian proto-nationalist, and bourgeois press of Beirut and Greater Syria was part of the development of a new and developing system of allegiance along the idea of being Syrian rather than religious identity. Many of these Christian writers used Islamic cultural signifiers among other appeals to nation and ecumenism in their works in the latter half of the 19th century to bridge a sectarian divide in Greater Syria by creating a sense of equivalence and shared heritage among religions. The way forward was a reconfiguration of ethical values that were bourgeois but that made room for all religions and various peoples in their imagined Syria. This chapter will talk about precursors to such ecumenism and then analyze the works of several Syrian Christian authors to capture these ecumenical, bourgeois, and proto-nationalist sentiments.

Ecumenism's National Framework and Precedent in Coexistence

As Stephen Sheehi posits in his article "Towards a Critical Theory of al-Nahḍah: Epistemology, Ideology and Capital" the Nahḍa's authors "...associated social order and progress with nationalism, which, along with other subjectivities (gender, confessional, ethnic),

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 56-59.

²⁵⁸ Georgescu, Constantin Iuliu. "A Forgotten Pioneer of the Lebanese 'Nahdah': Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." Order No. 7912272, New York University, 1978, 46. <https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/dissertations-theses/forgotten-pioneer-lebanese-nahdah-salim-al/docview/302884803/se-2?accountid=14667> (accessed March 2, 2021).

provided ideological *coherence* to the contradictions incumbent with the creation of new classes of wealth, the dispossession of others, the reformation of political alliances and organizations, and the domination of the Great Powers.”²⁵⁹ He goes on to explain that these thinkers were not only engaging in an act of interpellation and introjection: they were also producing literature that contained within it the markings of the epistemological shifts of the era.²⁶⁰ This was exemplified in the last chapter by the ways in which many articles and editorials in these papers contained bourgeois conceptions of time being best used towards profit, self-improvement, and gain. With the advent of capitalism as an ideology often comes the justification of profit and capital accumulation, and conceptions of state and society that come with it that provide scaffolding for emerging modes of production; in the case of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois classes among the writers/publishers of the Nahḍa, it is useful to view their writings and their conception of an ideal society therein as state and nation serving as a means for the reconciliation of classes.²⁶¹

The proto-national concept that many of these writers held goes hand in hand with an ideal of ecumenism and anti-sectarianism, and despite the fact that the press was a private enterprise in the case of these (mostly) Beirutis, it represents a site of ideological contestation which legitimizes a new system of production and class relations.²⁶² As Sheehi explains in his essay on Buṭrus al-Bustānī (“Butrus al-Bustani Syria’s Ideologue of the Age”), many of these intellectuals were also operating within the framework of the Ottoman Tanzīmāt/reforms which granted more rights to its non-Muslim subjects, making sense of the new class formations but also capturing the zeitgeist of notions of progress and modernity, a negotiation that was not

²⁵⁹ Sheehi, Stephen. "Towards a Critical Theory of Al-Nahḍah: Epistemology, Ideology and Capital." *Journal of Arabic Literature* 43, no. 2/3 (2012): 286. Accessed February 9, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41725602>.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 286-287.

²⁶¹ Lenin, Vladimir Il’ich. *The State and Revolution : Marxist Teaching on the State and the Task of the Proletariat in the Revolution*. Book. London etc: British Socialist Party, 1919. 11-12.

²⁶² Althusser, Louis. *On Ideology*. Brooklyn, New York: Verso, 2020. 8, 18, 21.

unique to the lands of Syria but occurring in Greek, Turkish, and Armenian parts of the empire as well, pointing to these constructions as being systemic in nature.²⁶³ These movements still possessed the peculiarities of local developments, and in the case of Greater Syria, it often took the form of denouncing sectarianism within a protonationalist framework, as was the case of al-Bustānī, who juxtaposed it along with ignorance to knowledge.²⁶⁴ This idea of a Syria that is opposed to sectarianism when material shifts by a series of events had favored a religious community reconciles the newly formed economic classes. Despite the fact that these mass communal sectarian conflicts were rare in Greater Syria up until the middle of the 19th century, it was painted as something that was primordial, even when it was more tied to the various peculiarities of capitalist development that had transformed rural society in and around Mount Lebanon and had similar economic roots elsewhere in the region.²⁶⁵ These discourses were also a way in which this middle class contended with other recently ascendent institutions in Greater Syria, such as that of the Maronite church whose fortunes were tied with foreign trade and the rise of silk just as much as this emerging bourgeoisie in the area.²⁶⁶

However, what these dichotomous discourses of national anti-sectarianism/ecumenism versus sectarianism do is paint the idea of nationalism as progression, something befitting of the age of reform, while casting sectarianism as ancient and defunct.²⁶⁷ Just as protonationalist ideas of nation are a projection back to an imagined and constructed past with continuity rather than a matter of historical record, so too are other social concepts, in this case sectarianism, which

²⁶³ Beshara, Adel, ed. *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood : Histories, Pioneers and Identity*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. 60-61. Accessed February 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 59.

²⁶⁵ Sheehi, Stephen. "Towards a Critical Theory of Al-Nahḍah: Epistemology, Ideology and Capital." *Journal of Arabic Literature* 43, no. 2/3 (2012): 275. Accessed February 9, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41725602>.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 288.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

provided a context for what Buṭrus saw as a stagnation of Arab/Arabic-speaking society stemming from a lack of desire of knowledge rather than the shifting material realities that fell along sectarian lines that drove such conflicts.²⁶⁸ To make sense of the rapid epistemological shifts occurring, these thinkers were simultaneously pointing to a glorious past with which to build a national identity, and a dishonorable past which was to be abhorred and moved past. The fact that sectarianism was associated with stagnation from a previously glorious past perhaps speaks not to a real decline but a deeper recognition that these sectarian conflicts were more recent than what these thinkers said. If overt sectarianism was a new development, what did non-sectarian community interactions look like? Though these writers' anti-sectarian and ecumenical ideals were trying to make sense of the epistemological shifts underlying capitalist development, there was also a precedent for the blurring of sectarian lines, especially in trade and governance. While the sectarianism of the mid-19th century Levant resulted in its most famous condemnations, there were pre-existing economic ties that explain why this thinking occurred with these intellectuals; it was not wholly new.

Perhaps the oldest and longest-standing example of religious co-existence in Greater Syria, it should be remarked that while Christians and Jews held an inferior status in the eyes of the law as *dhimmīs*, it was not a new concept with the advent of Ottoman rule: new dynastic rule in cities such as Damascus simply resulted in the shift from the rule of one Muslim dynasty to the next to most Christians and Jews.²⁶⁹ There was little incentive to rebel, and great disincentives in doing so. There were laws and tax collections (such as the *jizya*) which legally

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 275, 288.

²⁶⁹ Makdisi, Ussama Samir. *Age of Coexistence: the Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World*. De Gruyter, University of California Press. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 30-32. <https://www-degruyter-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/california/view/title/571647>.

codified the inferior status of the non-Muslim communities in the Empire, but with it came protections, and in the case of the churches that had congregations, these institutions were granted some autonomy over their community as long as they acquiesced to the sultan and were perceived to not pose a threat.²⁷⁰ There are obvious advantages to this for both local leaders and the Ottomans; by acquiescing to the empire and paying these taxes, local leaders still kept a great deal of power to themselves, and in rural areas before the advent of capitalism and specialization such as with the silk industry as mentioned in chapter two, these local religious leaders likely constituted the educated elite, ruling over subsistence-farming peasants perhaps less concerned about the affairs of the world outside of their community. The granting of autonomy (such as over education, marriages, funerals) likely served as a convenient way for the empire to allow for some form of governance where the arm of a weaker state did not yet have the means to have absolute control outside of urban areas.²⁷¹ It was a cooperation between two ruling classes. The Ottoman Empire was by no means an ecumenical utopia as it was very much a place wherein (Makdisi borrowing from Karen Barkey) religious difference was dealt with in a way that was “*separate, unequal, protected*”, but it was by virtue of its deeply rooted, codified, and omnipresent inequalities, a system that kept the peace by evidence of the continued coexistence of mosques, synagogues, and churches in the urban centers of the Empire.²⁷²

Sometimes there would be brutal reprisals against religious communities, as was the case of those designated as Qizlbāsh which held associations with the Safavid Empire, even when the term did not properly apply, such as when the sultan told the governor of Tripoli to fight back and punish Ibn Maʿn (a Druze) if he dared to rebel; underlying this labelling (notably this ire was

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 30.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid., 32-33.

not aimed nearly as much at Christians or Jews) was an imperial ideology that grouped those that posed a threat to the state as heretics rather than their systems of belief itself.²⁷³ One's status as an infidel who needed active suppression seemed more a measure of whether it was conducive to affairs of state rather than due to theological differences, as evidenced by the fact that the Ottomans integrated Shī'īs into Ottoman rule in and around Mount Lebanon until the 18th century, and by the high praise that the Ottoman governor gave to Bashīr Shihāb for how he diligently collected taxes for the Ottomans, conveniently overlooking the fact that many in his family apostatized from Islam to the Catholic Church.²⁷⁴ The attitude that existed between Ottoman officials and those who they ruled over constituted a sort of what (Makdisi borrowing from Barkey) could be called “deal making” or “consensual politics” within the empire, or as Makdisi himself puts it “Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Ottoman Style”, which also explains Ottoman ambivalence to intra-Christian conversions.²⁷⁵

Even when the state did step in there were still examples of a mutually beneficial coexistence between communities by way of economic ties and incentives. As covered previously, when the Ottomans persecuted the Druze, the latter would often abandon whole villages to move to safer lands. At the same time, there was still an incentive to continue the cultivation and growth of silk, and so the Druze would coax/invite Maronites onto their previously occupied lands. Perhaps one of the most crucial steps that would lead to the development of the predominantly Christian Beiruti publishing intelligentsia was caused by these intercommunal interests outside of the purview of the state, despite some of its attempts to undermine a peaceful coexistence between religions. In Mt. Lebanon it was very common for

²⁷³ Ibid., 34-35.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 35-36.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 35-36, 38.

economic and political matters to perforate religious divides; a group of Druze and Christians swore an oath to fight side by side against al-Jazzār in the Church of the Virgin in al-Shawwāfāt.²⁷⁶ Along with these earlier mutually beneficial intercommunal relationships, documents indicate that by the early 19th century that this inter-religious cooperation had been noticed by foreigners: Henri Guys wrote that there was a sort of conviviality between Muslims and Christians in Beirut, and Christians were usually quite eager to engage in business with them.²⁷⁷ Acts that would negatively transgress religious boundaries resulted in swift and decisive punishment, as evidenced by the execution of two men who had plundered a Beiruti monastery.²⁷⁸ Fawaz, taking from Khayyāt's *A Voice From Lebanon*, recounts his happiness to work with a Muslim merchant named Ḥājj 'Abdallāh, who gave him "...a hundred gold pieces and a letter of credit...", instructing him to take it to his correspondent in Damascus and to use the capital to make as much money as possible and then to return half the profits to him.²⁷⁹ With this business between 'Abdallāh and Khayyāt, the latter would travel from "...Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Tripoli..." and it paid off quite well.²⁸⁰ Khayyāt developed quite an affinity for 'Abdallāh and the Muslim traders, referring to him as being "...most respectable..." and remarking that "'There cannot be more honorable men of business than these Muslim merchants.'" ²⁸¹ These merchants continued to co-mingle and integrate among themselves in contrast to previous, more traditional city planning which separated Muslim, Christian, and Jewish neighborhoods as was common elsewhere in the region: in the 1830s and 1840s in the

²⁷⁶ Grehan, James. "Imperial Crisis and Muslim-Christian Relations in Ottoman Syria and Palestine, C. 1770-1830." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 58, no. 4 (2015): 499. Accessed March 22, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43919253>

²⁷⁷ Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. 103-105.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 105, 169.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 105.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 106.

outskirts of the city and in its center, evidence suggests that Beirut Muslims and Christians bought land side-by-side.²⁸² The ways in which the Christians would shift from consulate to consulate and even abandon consulate protections when more amenable toward their goals, and the fact that Jews and Christians regularly made use of Muslim courts in places such as Damascus (both being mentioned last chapter), speaks to a certain amenability toward blurring religious lines, or, at the very least, an ability to overlook differences when it was economically expedient. When sectarian tensions did arise, it was not always along lines that most today would think, as persecution between religious groups could occur just as frequently among those who had converted to another Christian denomination than between Christians and Muslims or Druze; something that would have a sizeable impact on the life of one of the writers analyzed later on.²⁸³ The proliferation of newspapers that were often an arm of various missionary communities as mentioned in the first chapter perhaps casts a light on these sorts of denominational tensions. As Fawaz and other academics cited in this thesis have noted, it seems as though that sectarian tensions were most common among those from the lower classes rather than these cooperating merchants; for some time it was common for Muslim and Christian merchant families alike to focus their attention on the sectarianism that they usually saw as coming from among the poorer in the community, and the well-off of Beirut would often form societies where cooperation and shared intellectual interests were the main focus; this was a general trend among the bourgeoisie that lasted until at least the beginning of the First World War.²⁸⁴

The point of highlighting these relationships is to emphasize that this movement of Arab Christians who espoused a proto-nationalist and multi-religious Syria or *waṭan* is that while

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid., 108.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 109, 118-120.

many of these writers and entrepreneurs were indeed intellectuals, this idea of ecumenism was neither a new invention of great men of history, nor was it a western import: Sheehi probably stated it best when he called al-Bustānī an “organic” intellectual, and other Nahḍawīs I posit, could be viewed in the same light.²⁸⁵ In many ways it was something that had existed in a less developed form for centuries under Ottoman rule and among the emerging and early bourgeoisie of Greater Syria. To quote Sheehi once more, “Indigenous agents actively formed modes of representation to accompany civil and private behavior that demanded a reorganization of society, governance, and culture. In this light, the intellectual production of these agents was in service to new classes, new elites, the state, and new forms of capital accumulation.”²⁸⁶ Not only this, but this cultural production was the manifestation of a long and ongoing trend which would come “...*a posteriori*...” to trends already materially existing.²⁸⁷ Who were some of these intellectuals, then, and how did they reconfigure cultural production to reflect this modernization and capitalist integration, especially along more ecumenical lines?

Butrus al-Bustānī, The Archetypical Nahdawi

If there is one figure that captures the zeitgeist of the Nahḍa more than any other character in production and outlook, it would be Buṭrus al-Bustānī. Born in 1819 in the village of Dubiyyah and educated in the Maronite Seminary of ‘Ayn Warqa (where he studied philosophy, logic, Arabic, Italian, Latin, Syriac, and theology), he came to Beirut sometime around 1840 and began teaching at the Male Seminary in November of that year, becoming associated with the American missionaries and establishing an especially close working and personal relationship

²⁸⁵ Beshara, Adel, ed. *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood : Histories, Pioneers and Identity*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. 57. Accessed February 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.

²⁸⁶ Sheehi, Stephen. "Towards a Critical Theory of Al-Nahḍah: Epistemology, Ideology and Capital." *Journal of Arabic Literature* 43, no. 2/3 (2012): 274. Accessed February 9, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41725602>.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

with Eli Smith; among his earliest literary works were translations of Protestant beliefs into Arabic from English by Eli.²⁸⁸ The two had a very close bond, Smith having sheltered Bustānī when he converted to Protestantism and being his first man at his wedding, and Bustānī in turn assisting Eli in intellectual missionary pursuits such as with the translation of the Bible into Arabic, and helping publish the lectures of the local intelligentsia and missionary group “The Syrian Society for the Promotion of the Sciences and Arts” in 1852.²⁸⁹ Bustānī’s major works with the mission ended soon after Smith’s death, though his time in the mission and earlier career is important as it contains the first inklings of themes found in his later work and explains why he chose the life of a *littérateur*.²⁹⁰ During this period, Buṭrus undertook the writing of a textbook on elementary Arabic grammar, likely adapted from an earlier edition produced by a Maronite prelate.²⁹¹ Despite the fact that this was meant for Christian missionary schools, the preface reads “Praise be to God, the high, the most gracious! Who taught by the Pen; taught Man what he knew not.”²⁹² This likely quotes Sūrat al-‘Alaq, 96: 4-5.²⁹³ It is in 1847 that the Christian missionaries and local Christians would come together to form the “The Syrian Society for the Promotion of the Sciences and Arts”, which held lectures in Arabic but also focused on the collection of texts in both English and Arabic and intended to avoid controversy between different faiths, though for the first two years, the group’s membership remained exclusively

²⁸⁸ Tibawi, Abdul Latif. “The American Missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus Al-Bustānī.” *Middle Eastern Affairs: St. Anthony’s Papers*, no. 16 (1962): 157-158.

²⁸⁹ Zachs, Fruma. “Toward A Proto-Nationalist Concept Of Syria? Revisiting The American Presbyterian Missionaries In The Nineteenth-Century Levant.” *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 2 (2001): 160-161. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1570060011201268>.

²⁹⁰ Tibawi, Abdul Latif. “The American Missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus Al-Bustānī.” *Middle Eastern Affairs: St. Anthony’s Papers*, no. 16 (1962): 163, 166-167.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 160.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 160-161.

²⁹³ Al-Qur’ān 96: 4-5: "الذي عَلَّمَ بالقلم عَلَّمَ الإنسان ما لم يعلم"

Christian.²⁹⁴ It was in the final year that Buṭrus selected eighteen lectures from this group to create the work *A 'māl al-Jami'yya al-Sūriyya* which was subsequently published; most notably the book opens with a lecture given by Eli Smith which talks about the glory of “your country” when lecturing to a largely a Syrian audience, and speaks of a glorious past that transferred Roman and Greek knowledge to Europe and he linked ideas of Arab race and culture to the land.²⁹⁵ The piece creates a continuity and history matched with a people, however, this was not the exclusive way by which these thinkers in these works viewed proto-nationalist Syrian identity; Arab (and Syrian) identity was not viewed as being strictly Islamic or ethnically exclusive.²⁹⁶ Among some of the other lectures included one by Buṭrus which talked about the history of Beirut, which he connected to its Phoenician past along with lectures on flora and the Sabtī river by others.²⁹⁷ Buṭrus also gave a lecture on the status of women’s education whereas John Wortabet spoke on the status of educational improvements generally while invoking the nationalist cliché of the dawn: “We have slept enough, if the dawn arises now, let us awake with it. We have missed much and have much to accomplish before we achieve our goal and I wish I had a trumpet to startle this country, to awake its dwellers...”²⁹⁸ Mikhāʾīl Muddawar, similarly to al-Bustānī, delves into ancient Phoenician history too, writing on the history of Tyre and Sidon, and Naṣīf al-Yazījī speaks about the heights of Arab science since the era of *jāhiliyya*.²⁹⁹ As Zachs explains, this piece emphasizes the fact that by this time there had existed a cadre of intellectuals (along with some missionaries) who were beginning to see Syria as a culturally

²⁹⁴ Zachs, Fruma. “Toward A Proto-Nationalist Concept Of Syria? Revisiting The American Presbyterian Missionaries In The Nineteenth-Century Levant.” *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 2 (2001): 160.

<https://doi.org/10.1163/1570060011201268>.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 162-164.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 164.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 166.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 166-167.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 167.

defined territory with continuity between past and present, but that was also interdenominational by way of the fact that the group rejected sectarianism and that the lectures did not contain a single (direct) reference to Christianity or Islam.³⁰⁰ This collection is insightful as the lectures were selected by Bustānī himself and show a consistent focus on the concept of *al-bilād* (or as Smith said to underline ownership, *bilādukum*), while later texts would come to use the term *al-waṭan*.³⁰¹ Al-Bustānī's editorial choices, the specific lexicon within the text, and the various authors show the reader that there was an imagined Syria underway even before al-Bustānī's later works and that himself and others were creating a vision of a country inclusive to all faiths.

In 1859, Buṭrus gave a lecture titled “The Culture of the Arabs Today”, in which he laments what he sees as the fallen state of Arab culture and provides solutions on how to address it.³⁰² He states that most arrogantly believe that simply knowing a couple Psalms or lines of the Qur’ān is enough for praise, and he finds it hard to believe that these are the progeny of the greats of old, given their lack of command of the language.³⁰³ Salvation from this state comes from striving toward building non-sectarian publishing houses, libraries, non-sectarian schools, and more papers like *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār*, and he compliments the educational efforts of many regardless of religious sect.³⁰⁴ The latter part of this lecture is filled with Islamic references, he likens Muhammad ‘Alī Pāshā to the enlightened Caliph Ma’mūn in his educational efforts, takes quotes from al-Mutannabī and even quotes *Imām* ‘Alī (emphasis mine) to make an appeal to all to support educational effort of his Arab compatriots; for Buṭrus, all sons of the *waṭan* (Greek,

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 165, 168.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 146, 163.

³⁰² El-Ariss, Tarek, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī. “The Culture of the Arabs Today.” In *The Arab Renaissance: a Bilingual Anthology of the Nahda*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2018. 4-5.

³⁰³ Ibid., 6-7.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 7-11.

Syriac, Arab) can achieve greatness if they “reject sectarianism, partisanship, and personal prejudices and outstretch your hand to shake the hand of culture.”³⁰⁵

One can see these trends and thoughts further develop in Buṭrus’ works in 1860. As related previously this was the year when violence wracked Damascus and Mount Lebanon, and it is perhaps among Bustānī’s most productive years too. In 1860 he produced an edition of *Diwān al-Mutannabī*, which was a book of poetry initially authored in the Abbasid age.³⁰⁶ The book opens with the use of the typical Qur’ānic Bismillāh with a date attached, first in the hijra and then anno domini; indicating a sort of independence from the mission that would likely have preferred the use that designates the birth of Christ alone rather than that of the hijra.³⁰⁷ The primacy of the hijra is a noteworthy choice; it could be a coincidence but it could also be a sort of recognition that this poetry was specifically part of Islamicate culture; either way, the pairing is significant: the time of Islam and Christianity are shown together in one work, both times equivalent and true- the treasures of the past belong to both the Christian and Muslim reader alike. Tibawi additionally claims that most books starting around this period by al-Bustānī also contain high praise for the Ottoman Sultan or the Pāshā of Egypt, which he says is an attempt at gaining patronage.³⁰⁸ This not only pays homage to a leader who is viewed as the leader of the Islamic world, but also shows that economic relationships that encouraged congeniality in other trades existed within literary publishing as well. It was in 1860 that Bustānī also released a work which recounted the tale of As‘ad al-Shidyāq.³⁰⁹ Al-Shidyāq was one of the first Arab converts to Protestantism who died after being imprisoned by the Maronite Patriarch for publishing a

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 11-13.

³⁰⁶ Tibawi, Abdul Latif. “The American Missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus Al-Bustānī.” *Middle Eastern Affairs: St. Anthony’s Papers*, no. 16 (1962): 166.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

farewell polemic in Arabic for Jonas King who was retiring from mission work and leaving Syria.³¹⁰ The missionaries published a martyrology on him in response, among the earliest of which was published in Malta in 1833; al-Bustānī's version of the story cast doubt on the claims of the Protestant mission and told his audience to withhold harsh judgment on those who the mission had maligned for almost thirty years.³¹¹ One would think that two projects in a year would suffice but Bustānī did not stop there, also publishing a translation of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, which he claimed to have completed within the span of five months, thinking that it was an essential piece of instruction for the nation.³¹² In the introduction to his translation of the piece, he wrote that "he who is of no use to another has a useless existence altogether."³¹³ As is well known, Robinson Crusoe has long been a piece that has been considered an emblematic of the liberal conception of political economy, a man who starts anew or from a state of nature and must recreate a life for himself after a shipwreck.³¹⁴ However, what can also be noted from the introduction by Buṭrus is that current events were on his mind while translating this work: he says that during the period of five months that this time was full of "...disturbances, worries, and trouble..." which speaks to the fact that this translation was not only a reflection of Buṭrus' liberal economic politics but reflected his idea of a united Syria

³¹⁰Tibawi, Abdul Latif. "The Genesis and Early History of the Syrian Protestant College." *Middle East Journal* 21, no. 1 (1967): 3, 5.

³¹¹Tibawi, Abdul Latif. "The American Missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus Al-Bustānī." *Middle Eastern Affairs: St. Anthony's Papers*, no. 16 (1962): 166

³¹² Ali, Nadia Bou. "Blesseth Him That Gives and Not Him That Takes: Buṭrus al-Bustānī and the Mercy of Debt." *Modern Intellectual History* 16, no. 2 (2019): 443, 458. doi:10.1017/S1479244317000294.

³¹³ Ibid., 458. The original Arabic technically reads "وكل امرء لا نفع فيه لغيره فسيان عندي فقدته وجوده" and I think Ali does a good job in translating this, what is notable is that he splits the line in half, almost as in verse. For more see Defoe, Daniel, and بطرس بن بولس، بستاني. *Al-Tuḥfah al-Bustānīyah Fī al-Asfār al-Kurūzīyah, Aw, Riḥlat Rūbinṣun Kurūzī*. Book. Translated by Bustānī, Buṭrus ibn Būlus. Early Arabic Printed Books from the British Library. Beirut: [publisher not identified], 1861-1863. مقدمة.

³¹⁴ Ali, Nadia Bou. "Blesseth Him That Gives and Not Him That Takes: Buṭrus al-Bustānī and the Mercy of Debt." *Modern Intellectual History* 16, no. 2 (2019): 458. doi:10.1017/S1479244317000294.

against the contemporary events, considering he thought it was essential to publish this piece.³¹⁵

Through the literary he can bridge the divide and cast light on what he saw as ignorance and promote a capitalist conception of communal good.

The former point becomes particularly apparent when paired with al-Bustānī's *Nafīr Sūriyya*. The name of the pamphlets itself is noteworthy as Buṭrus dedicated a whole section to the n-f-r roots in *Muhīt al-Muhīt*, declaring that it has associations with the bolting of mares, fugitives, the conscripting of an army, and is even associated with the horn of Isrāfīl, thought to be the archangel of death in both the Qur'ānic and Biblical literature- it is a word loaded with connotations due to its many declinations and conjugations.³¹⁶ Never missing the opportunity to refer back to his own works as an enterprising individual, Buṭrus also notes that the word had picked up a new connotation from his publishing of *Nafīr Suriyya*, which he described as "meditations on the events of 1860 published in eleven issues that we called *waṭaniyyat*."³¹⁷ However, the two words *together* have possible connotations that were missed: the word *Nafīr* is also meant to connote the two day period following the sacrifice, *al-naḥr*.³¹⁸ At the same time, *Sūriyya* in common usage among Arab litterateurs of the Nahḍa was a relatively new development, with one of the few other major works of this time using this name to denote something like *bilād al-Shām* being used in Khalīl al-Khūrī's *Kharābāt Sūriyya* after in 1861, at least in a sense more detached from sect.³¹⁹ Khūrī's work was based on a lecture given in 1859,

³¹⁵ Defoe, Daniel, and بطرس بن بولس، بستاني. *Al-Tuḥfah al-Bustānīyah Fī al-Asfār al-Kurūzīyah, Aw, Riḥlat Rūbinṣun Kurūzī*. Book. Translated by Bustānī, Buṭrus ibn Būlus. Early Arabic Printed Books from the British Library. Beirut: [publisher not identified], 1861-1863. مقدمة. The specific words he uses would be "...اضطرابات و الهموم و المتاعب..."

³¹⁶ Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 45-46.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 46.

³¹⁸ Ali, Nadia Bou. "Blesseth Him That Gives and Not Him That Takes: Buṭrus al-Bustānī and the Mercy of Debt." *Modern Intellectual History* 16, no. 2 (2019): 467. doi:10.1017/S1479244317000294.

³¹⁹ Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 47.

but the word *Sūriyya* before this was rare, excepting those who were associated with the Protestant mission who wanted to shine a light on the land's pre-Islamic history and who wished to use it for a Christian affect such as Gregory Wortabet or Khayyāt as opposed to *bilād al-Shām*, referring to the fact that these were the lands which were to one's left when they looked to the east from the Hijāz, giving it specifically Muslim connotations.³²⁰ The result of putting these two words together, one with decidedly Muslim etymology, the other with a previously Christian etymology centers the two major religions together, striking equivalence, similar to the including *anno domini* and the *hijra* on the same page.³²¹ This equivalence is seen throughout the work by way of specific religious references from Islam, Christianity, and Judaism being employed. The first of many scriptural references can be found in pamphlet two, which possesses three specific religious references: one is about the general Biblical and Qur'ānic narrative of the people of Israel worshipping the golden calf out of impatience, he tells his compatriots to act with patience and to not act imprudently in reaction to being wronged.³²² Beseeching people to abandon sectarianism, Buṭrus reminds readers soon thereafter that God had punished Syria, but instead of despairing, one must take heart and remember "...that to Him you shall return."³²³ Addressed to a cross-religious audience, salvation is available to all regardless of sect. It is after reminding readers to take responsibility into their own hands that al-Bustānī makes a playful reference to Sūrat al-R'ad 13:10-11, stating "...God will not change the state of the people unless they change themselves."³²⁴ Thus in one pamphlet, one can see references likely known to people of

³²⁰ Zachs, Fruma. "Toward A Proto-Nationalist Concept Of Syria? Revisiting The American Presbyterian Missionaries In The Nineteenth-Century Levant." *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 2 (2001): 154-155, 157-159, 165.

³²¹ P.J. Bearman, Th. Banquis, C.E. Bowworth, E. van Donzel, W. P. Heinrichs Bowworth, and C. Ott, eds. 'Naḥr'. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, Glossary and Index of Terms. Accessed March 7, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei2glos_SIM_gi_03578.

³²² Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 70, 145.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 70.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 70, 145.

any denomination. Midway through pamphlet three, Buṭrus makes a fascinating reference to colonies of ants and bees preparing for the winter and making shelter.³²⁵ The bee is a significant animal to bring up as its industriousness and ability to make homes for themselves (whereas al-Bustānī speaks to the wreckage the fighting has created) is something that is noted in 16:68 of the Qur’ān and was used by Ibn Khaldūn to speak towards the “...royal authority system.”³²⁶ Additionally interesting is that Buṭrus juxtaposes the impoverishment of the people and tells the readers that the Westerners say that “Time is gold,” but that for his countrymen “Time is life.”³²⁷ As Ali astutely points out, these references to such industrious but organized animals speaks to al-Bustānī’s political economic belief in the division of labor, but it merges it with scriptural reference; the ecumenism is merging with liberal capitalist conceptions of a nation-state.³²⁸ Later in the third pamphlet he is quite complimentary to Christianity as it tells its followers to love their enemies and to turn the other cheek.³²⁹ It is in the fourth pamphlet which was published on October 25th, 1860, that one can see an interesting reference to a spurious ḥadīth that had been made famous by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī: “Love of the homeland is an element of faith.”³³⁰ In the sixth pamphlet one can see him grabbing once more from scripture, noting that the Lord said to keep His commandments and that doing so will result in reward, and failing to do results in punishment: a likely reference to the book of Isaiah from the Old Testament.³³¹

³²⁵ Ibid., 73.

³²⁶ Ibid., 73, 145.

³²⁷ Ibid., 73.

³²⁸ Ali, Nadia Bou. "Blesseth Him That Gives and Not Him That Takes: Buṭrus al-Bustānī and the Mercy of Debt." *Modern Intellectual History* 16, no. 2 (2019): 467. doi:10.1017/S1479244317000294. 451.

³²⁹ Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 74.

³³⁰ Ibid., 77, 145.

³³¹ Ibid., 91; Isa. 1: 19-20.

The takeaway from this is that religious references scattered throughout the work of *Nafir Sūriyya* are numerous and come from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions. What this accomplishes is that it creates equivalence between religions; it does not expound on the truth of one over the other. What further clarifies this is the use of the term, “true religion” which can be found several times in the work, including the third, eighth, and eleventh pamphlets.³³² What does true religion mean to al-Bustānī? Ali explains that it is essentially Protestant in spirit but also tied in with the logic of political economy of liberal nationalist capitalism.³³³ Ali further pulls from al-Bustānī in pamphlet seven which explains that religions are supposed to be seen as “...members of one family, its father the nation, its mother the land, and its creator God.”³³⁴ What this does is paint all religions as being “sectarian” versions of each other attempting to arrive at one fundamental, humanistic truth.³³⁵ This assertion seems well supported since al-Bustānī’s explanation of what constitutes true religion comes down to generalities such as that it promotes virtue over vice, is against lying as true religion is sourced from God, and is free from impurities to promote a better civilization; it is against ignorance and stupidity.³³⁶ The citing of various religious texts with this concept of true religion established an idea that religions were (as Makdisi puts it) “...equidistant...” from God where their validity played on whether or not they were able to construct a “...moral, civilized, educated, anti-sectarian community made up of truly pious individuals who collectively transcended religious difference.”³³⁷ The fact that al-

³³² Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 74, 100, 128.

³³³ Ali, Nadia Bou. "Blesseth Him That Gives and Not Him That Takes: Buṭrus al-Bustānī and the Mercy of Debt." *Modern Intellectual History* 16, no. 2 (2019): 467. doi:10.1017/S1479244317000294. 445.

³³⁴ Ibid., 455-456.

³³⁵ Ibid., 456.

³³⁶ Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 74, 100, 128.

³³⁷ Makdisi, Ussama Samir. *Age of Coexistence: the Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World*. De Gruyter, University of California Press. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. <https://www-degruyter-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/california/view/title/571647>. 66.

Bustānī invoked imagery of parenthood when it came to religion should not be seen as coincidence either as one of the most recurring phrases is “*Abnā’ al-waṭan*”, which while Makdisi and others translate it as “countrymen” can be rendered as “Children of the nation” in more literal English.³³⁸ This sort of terminology creates an ideal of the nation and constructs a familial identity based upon residing in the land, with an understanding that this interconnectedness in turn creates a better civilization; it is the beginning of the construction of the triad of “state = nation = people” as formulated by Hobsbawm.³³⁹ In *Nafīr Sūriyya* one can see the culmination of all the trends discussed so far: it is doubtlessly a piece which adopts an ecumenical or anti-sectarian outlook by way of using religious cultural signifiers, and creates the possible beginnings of a secularism down the road (through equivalence) that lends itself towards a proto-nationalist and bourgeois outlook. It contains almost all of the patterns and trends in the Greater Syrian Nahḍa and shows all the ways these thinkers employed literary and editorial choices to construct a proto-nationalist identity and works as a good tool of reference.

Just a couple years after these pamphlets, al-Bustānī sought to enact on his vision of an ecumenical Syria by founding *al-madrasa al-waṭaniyya*, or “the national school” in 1863, which had teachers and students from several faiths and received high praise from the Ottoman government which lacked a modern education system; and as Makdisi further explains, like with *Nafīr Sūriyya*, the project was not to be viewed as strictly secular itself but as a way of educating a new generation of elite with separate religions that fostered national concord, which further

³³⁸ Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 56, 142.

³³⁹ Hobsbawm, E. J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1992. 22. <https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb.01299>. EPUB.

evidences the bourgeois and non-radical but rather reformist politics of these thinkers.³⁴⁰ Al-Bustānī also focused on creating a sort of ecumenical history of what Arabic-speakers needed to know by beginning to work on his project (with family members) of an encyclopedia series titled *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif*, starting in the mid-1870s, and would receive initial help from the Egyptian government under Khedive Ismā'īl.³⁴¹ The work states its intention that it hoped to create a work that avoided factionalism and would be acceptable to all communities.³⁴² Perhaps emphasizing the continued interconnectedness of the Christian printing class, it should be noted that later volumes of this work were printed on the same press as that of *al-Hilāl*.³⁴³ The encyclopedia series holds many very long descriptions of figures prominent in the history of Islam, such as Abū Bakr and al-Hallāj with descriptions that rival and outpace those of orientalist encyclopedias such as earlier editions of *The Encyclopedia of Islam*; as Hourani explains it, the Christians writing this encyclopedia wrote on Islamic subjects in a tone that was similar to any other subject located within the tomes: it marks "...a stage in the process by which they tried to appropriate Muslim history and culture as their own..."³⁴⁴ With just a peek into the oeuvre of Buṭrus al-Bustānī one can then see similar themes of a sort of proto-nationalist or bourgeois anti-sectarianism located in the works of other authors of this era as well.

An Unlikely Entrant: Ahmad Fāris al-Shidyāq

³⁴⁰ Makdisi, Ussama Samir. *Age of Coexistence: the Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World*. De Gruyter, University of California Press. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. <https://www-degruyter-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/california/view/title/571647>. 70-71.

³⁴¹ Hourani, Albert Habib. "Bustani's Encyclopaedia ." Essay. In *Islam in European Thought*, 164, 168-169. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

³⁴² Ibid., 169-170.

³⁴³ Ibid., 164-165.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., 171-173.

The inclusion of Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq may at first seem odd to those with knowledge of his life as they likely know of his conversion to Islam sometime during his ventures in Tunis.³⁴⁵ Some scholars such as Fawwāz Ṭarābulsī and ‘Azīz al-‘Azmah believe his conversion to Islam was an act of asserting affinity and identity rather than one of faith.³⁴⁶ Roper speculates his conversion to Islam was to secure a Tunisian court position, perhaps a more extreme example of religious lines being blurred and/or overlooked like with the Beirut Christians written about last chapter.³⁴⁷ Hourani stated that he converted back to Catholicism sometime near the end of his life.³⁴⁸ Whether these assertions are true or not, there seems to be deep-seated recognition among some to lump him in with the cadre of Christians from which he originated. This may make him an edge case, but his life, origins, and literary productions make him almost as much of a member of the Greater Syrian Christian Nahḍawī proto nationalists as others, and as will be demonstrated, his literary analysis of various texts was rooted in humanism both before and after his conversion to Islam that constructed a sort of protonationalism, though in his case perhaps with more focus on an Arab identity. The ways in which he created an ecumenical frame are surprisingly like that of Buṭrus al-Bustānī, except al-Shidyāq struck equivalence through doubt!

Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq was born Fāris al-Shidyāq, sometime between 1805 or 1806.³⁴⁹ Like many of those from a Christian background in the Syrian Nahḍa, he had earlier contact with

³⁴⁵ Roper, Geoffrey. "Aḥmad Fāris Al-Shidyāq and the Libraries of Europe and the Ottoman Empire." *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 3 (1998): 233. Accessed February 22, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25548637>.

³⁴⁶ Issa, Rana. "Scripture as Literature: The Bible, the Qur’ān, and Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq", *Journal of Arabic Literature* 50, 1 (2019): 32. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/1570064x-12341379>

³⁴⁷ Ismail, Sherif H. "Multiple Encounters: Philology, Exile, and Hospitality, from Fāris al-Shidyāq to Auerbach and Edward Said", *Philological Encounters* 3, 1-2 (2018): 90. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/24519197-12340039>

³⁴⁸ Hourani, Albert. *Arabic Thought In the Liberal Age, 1798-1939*. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Cambridge University Press, 1983. 98. <https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb.00896>. EPUB.

³⁴⁹ Roper, Geoffrey. "Aḥmad Fāris Al-Shidyāq and the Libraries of Europe and the Ottoman Empire." *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 3 (1998): 233. Accessed February 22, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25548637>.

the production of manuscripts, which was a familial occupation.³⁵⁰ He was born in ‘Ashqūt in Kisrawān, one of the centers of silk cultivation and wealth as noted in the previous chapter.³⁵¹ Similar to Buṭrus al-Bustānī, al-Shidyāq received his education at ‘Ayn Warqa.³⁵² One of his more well-known works would include his acerbic and highly satirical work *al-Sāq* ‘*alā al-Sāq*, or, “Leg Over Leg” which also serves as a quasi-autobiography among other literary forms.³⁵³ If one takes his alter-ego al-Fariyāq (a likely portmanteau of his own name) to be reliable, like many of the Nahḍawīs, al-Shidyāq seemed a promising scholar from a young age, taking an interest in literature and most especially that of classical texts, rare words, and poetry.³⁵⁴ Like many Christian Nahḍawīs, al-Shidyāq experienced the fear of tribal and sectarian strife too, though before 1840; the former being exemplified by his father attempting to depose the emir with the support of the emir’s relatives, which resulted in his death in exile in Damascus, which greatly grieved him.³⁵⁵ Sectarianism turned the life of al-Shidyāq upside down when his brother, As‘ad, was imprisoned by the Maronites, whereafter he died, which pushed Fāris to convert to Protestantism and flee to Cairo.³⁵⁶ He would never return to his homeland alive.³⁵⁷ At first glance, this may preclude him from being considered a Syrian writer, but his exile would come to be a common experience among later Syrian Nahḍawīs, though later iterations of these expats did so to escape the restrictive censorship of the sultan, though in al-Shidyāq’s case, his

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Traboulsi, Fawwaz. “Beirut, Capital of Trade and Culture.” Essay. In *A History of Modern Lebanon*. London: Pluto Press, 2012. 64.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq, and Humphrey Davies. *Leg Over Leg: Volume One*. Leg Over Leg or The Turtle in the Tree. New York: NYU Press, 2013. Xxiv-xxv.
<http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=668552&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 72-73.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 87-91.

³⁵⁶ Traboulsi, Fawwaz. “Beirut, Capital of Trade and Culture.” Essay. In *A History of Modern Lebanon*. London: Pluto Press, 2012. 64.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

experience in the West perhaps and love of language is what led to a more specifically Arab-focused identity.³⁵⁸ In Cairo he taught Arabic to Protestant missionaries and studied under Azharite shaykhs, suggesting an ability to navigate different religious spaces.³⁵⁹ He then resided in Malta from 1834 to 1848, gaining more experience in editing Protestant publications for the American missionaries, serving as a teacher as well; yet another common experience.³⁶⁰

It is after this period wherein he moved to Britain and began working on an Arabic translation of the Bible that one can begin to see the humanist polemics that he would engage in and begin to see his adoption of Islamic cultural signifiers in literary form.³⁶¹ The first invocations Islamic cultural signifiers appear when al-Shidyāq collaborated with Lee on the Arabic translation of the Bible with one of the main points of tension being Lee taking what al-Shidyāq saw as strange translation choices: substituting words unnecessarily, attempting to adopt Hebraic sentence structures into Arabic, possessing limited knowledge on the nuances of certain verbs, and avoiding rhyme at all cost.³⁶² One of al-Shidyāq's most relevant critiques is that Lee often rejected possible translations that he made if Lee saw them as being too Qur'ānic in tone: a common concern among missionaries, but revealing nonetheless.³⁶³ The fact that this was a recurring problem between Lee and al-Shidyāq, paired with the latter's early and self-professed obsession with erudite and classical Arabic, speaks to this milieu of Arab Christians trying to

³⁵⁸ Zachs, Fruma. "Cross-Glocalization: Syrian Women Immigrants and the Founding of Women's Magazines in Egypt." *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 3 (2014): 355. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2013.863757>.

³⁵⁹ Traboulsi, Fawwaz. "Beirut, Capital of Trade and Culture." Essay. In *A History of Modern Lebanon*. London: Pluto Press, 2012. 64.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Roper, Geoffrey. "Aḥmad Fāris Al-Shidyāq and the Libraries of Europe and the Ottoman Empire." *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 3 (1998): 233. Accessed February 22, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25548637>.

³⁶² Ismail, Sherif H. "Multiple Encounters: Philology, Exile, and Hospitality, from Fāris al-Shidyāq to Auerbach and Edward Said", *Philological Encounters* 3, 1-2 (2018): 88-89. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/24519197-12340039>

³⁶³ Ibid., 89-90.

refine the language as a sign of identity due to the Qur'ān and classical poetry's reputation as Arabic's linguistic pinnacle, and thus, also a form al-Shidyāq found fitting for all holy matters.³⁶⁴ In opposition to not only the likes of the Western orientalists but also some contemporary Muslim critics of the Christian Nahḍawī, al-Shidyāq, by invoking Qur'ānic Arabic in Biblical translation, renders it from being Islamic to something that is common among what is holy, Christian and Islamic alike; the high Arabic is, in some ways, what signifies holiness rather than revelation itself.³⁶⁵ This creates an equivalence which universalizes the holy into an aesthetic: as Anderson notes, the rise of philology lead to a realization that all languages lay on even ontological footing; Lee's insistence on the Hebraic structures compared to al-Shidyāq's focus on Qur'ānic Arabic lays bare that the latter recreates the holy by adopting the language and reconfigures the holy into a stylistic element rather than one specific to one religious language.³⁶⁶ This was not a sign of al-Shidyāq converting at an earlier time, as Ismail believes that there is no desire by him to embrace Islam in his life at that point.³⁶⁷

This humanistic approach of creating equivalence is not only found in the Biblical translation however, but also in other texts written by al-Shidyāq, both as a Christian commentating on the Bible, and as a Muslim commentating on Islam: as Rana Issa notes, he subverted both the Bible and Qur'ān, treating them as literary texts.³⁶⁸ After finishing his work on translating the Bible with Lee and before it was published, al-Shidyāq published a piece titled

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 89.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 90.

³⁶⁶ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2016. 70-71.

³⁶⁷ Ismail, Sherif H. " Multiple Encounters: Philology, Exile, and Hospitality, from Fāris al-Shidyāq to Auerbach and Edward Said", *Philological Encounters* 3, 1-2 (2018): 90. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/24519197-12340039>

³⁶⁸ Issa, Rana. " Scripture as Literature: The Bible, the Qur'ān, and Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq", *Journal of Arabic Literature* 50, 1 (2019): 29. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/1570064x-12341379>

Mumāḥakāt al-ta'wīl fī munāqadāt al-injīl (*Disputing the Interpretation of the Bible*) in 1851 which was a radical questioning of the Bible as divine and revealed word, which he also notably took the agency and ownership of by keeping in manuscript and private distribution.³⁶⁹ In this manuscript, al-Shidyāq departs from tradition by pointing out that the Bible was not written by eyewitness accounts and uses *iqtibās*, a methodology of quotation that is usually employed in Qur'ānic studies.³⁷⁰ In the work he lists the contradictions found in the four gospels in bullet format, asserts that the writer of the Gospel of Matthew was not an eyewitness, and humorously questions the order of events listed in the Gospel of John and whether the taking off of Jesus' clothes and the tying of a towel around his waist indicates that Christ was drunk.³⁷¹ The use of an Islamic exegetical method is doubly subversive, similar to his attempted use of Qur'ānic Arabic in the translation of the Bible. Even after his conversion to Islam, his interpretation on the origins of language in works such as "...*Sirr al-layāl fī al-qalb wa-l-ibdāl* (*The Secrets of Morphology and Metathesis*, 1868) and *al-Jāsūs 'alā al-qāmūs* (*Spying on the Lexicon*, 1882)..." when carried to their natural conclusion "...would have emphasized the need for a historical entextualization of the Islamic holy book in ways similar to his reading of the Bible."³⁷² In *Sirr*, al-Shidyāq ties language to man's material environment/needs, words of the spiritual or immaterial are subsequently derived from material existence, and he posits that this is something true of all languages; meaning is generated by human actors, but he does not take these thoughts to their natural conclusion regarding the implications of this and Arabic as a holy language.³⁷³ In *al-Jāsūs* al-Shidyāq similarly goes after the idea that Arabic is divine, noting its development

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 30, 37-39.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 35, 38.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 36.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 49-51.

and room for error that required human intervention to ensure people properly understood its written form, such as the inclusion of diacritical markings, which al-Shidyāq exemplifies by demonstrating possible interpretations of text without diacritical markings, slyly leading one to admit that its writing system needed revision to avoid humorous or rather horrid error.³⁷⁴ To sum up what had occurred in both al-Shidyāq's interpretation of the holy texts, Rana Issa tells us that "...he underscored the human hands that produced literary heritage."³⁷⁵ Perhaps aware of the trouble that such a humanistic understanding of language which decoupled Arabic and the Qur'ān as divine text could bring, he treated both the Bible and Qur'ān as literary texts; his previous navigation of censorship through privately publishing the manuscript about the Bible and his more subtle but implicit treatment of Arabic in the latter suggests that he was aware of what the logic of his works did when brought to their conclusion, but being privileged to work the Sultan's press in Istanbul with a successful career as publisher of *al-Jawā'ib*, and finally getting his bearings with a stable career (he had repeatedly and unsuccessfully applied for teaching positions in England and struggled financially in Europe) may have led him to choosing such subtle editorial discretions.³⁷⁶ This functions as a deft inter-religious navigation.

Skipping a couple decades between his critiques of the Bible and Qur'ān allows for one to identify how he similarly dealt with the two texts, but one would be remiss to not mention al-Shidyāq's masterpiece: *Leg Over Leg*. It is an incredibly subversive text which manages to lampoon just about all people that the semi-autographical protagonist encounters. The title itself is perhaps a bawdy play on words as it replaces the particle used in the Qur'ānic text of 75:29

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 51-53.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 55.

³⁷⁶ Ismail, Sherif H. " Multiple Encounters: Philology, Exile, and Hospitality, from Fāris al-Shidyāq to Auerbach and Edward Said", *Philological Encounters* 3, 1-2 (2018): 72, 79. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/24519197-12340039>

with *'alā* rather than *bi*, which could either be seen as a reference to a scrap of paper that was found on an Egyptian soldier who died in battle in Syria which caused quite a stir for its erotic undertones, or simply al-Shidyāq distorting the text for his own entertainment, as he includes the phrase in book 4, chapter 20 followed by “و يقال الى ربك يومئذ المساق”³⁷⁷ He kept 75:30 correct and intact, indicating that his messing with 75:29 was a conscious decision rather than error.³⁷⁸ This is not the only place wherein he plays with the Qur'ān specifically, as he references it several other times throughout the text.³⁷⁹ He does not refrain from parodying others either, including taking from the Bible to condemn the “Emir of the Mountain” from his homeland for his acts of violence against the Druze, wondering aloud whether after slaying and murdering whether he would take a virgin girl to warm him like David or pass the virgin Druze women among his soldiers as Moses did with the Midians.³⁸⁰ Even after his initial encounter with sectarian strife, his concerns for his homeland and the problems of sectarian violence in general remained, it was something he saw as plaguing the place from which he fled. His critiques towards the Maronites are especially withering: when speaking to the childhood of Fariyāq and his education, he relates that the parochial schools were taught by non-intellectuals who only read the Psalms yet failed to understand the scripture because of poor translations and because they did not want to truly educate the local people; if they did, they would set up a printing press, and the Patriarch would allow people to learn Syriac and Arabic for the sake of something useful like greater people of

³⁷⁷ Issa, Rana. " Scripture as Literature: The Bible, the Qur'ān, and Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq", *Journal of Arabic Literature* 50, 1 (2019): 47-49. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/1570064x-12341379>

³⁷⁸ Al-Qur'ān 75: 29-30.

³⁷⁹ Ismail, Sherif H. " Multiple Encounters: Philology, Exile, and Hospitality, from Fāris al-Shidyāq to Auerbach and Edward Said", *Philological Encounters* 3, 1-2 (2018): 91. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/24519197-12340039>

³⁸⁰ Issa, Rana. " Scripture as Literature: The Bible, the Qur'ān, and Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq", *Journal of Arabic Literature* 50, 1 (2019): 43-44. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/1570064x-12341379>

old.³⁸¹ This is a triply interesting and revealing passage. It makes use of the sense of decline and past glory that is common in protonationalist discourses, but also uses a critique that the Protestant missionaries landed against the Christians of Greater Syria as being stagnant, though for al-Shidyāq the critique is less specifically sectarian.³⁸² Like the other Nahḍawīs, this passage ties the improvement/regeneration of a geographically defined people and recreation of a glorious past with the printing press, moreover one outside of state hands. It also echoes bourgeois notions of reading and education as a utility for the individual within a greater society. In regards to this perceived lack of education among the Patriarchs, al-Shidyāq also attacked the knowledge of Orientalist scholars who he said learned from these poorly informed clergy when they should have learned from the *shaykhs* to achieve true knowledge (this was likely before his conversion); he was far from a Europhile and proclaimed that the East still provided man with the most happiness, and the best morals and culture.³⁸³ Al-Shidyāq's idea of a successful people and nation were not that far off from his contemporary al-Bustānī upon closer inspection. Both elaborated a vague and inclusive notion of a nation with a greater past and both clearly denounced sectarianism in and around Beirut. They also received extensive training from the missionaries with the printing press and were prolific publishers, and both were Protestant converts who at one point had to seek refuge. While Al-Shidyāq is usually set apart from all other Nahḍawīs because of his acerbic tone and iconoclasm, his assaults on religious traditions and norms creates an equivalency by way of skepticism and doubt. While al-Bustānī affirms the

³⁸¹ Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq, and Humphrey Davies. *Leg Over Leg : Volume One*. Leg Over Leg or The Turtle in the Tree. New York: NYU Press, 2013. 55-57.
<http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=668552&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

³⁸² Makdisi, Ussama. "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible: Missionaries, Secularism, and Evangelical Modernity." *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 3 (1997): 686-689. Accessed February 27, 2021. doi:10.2307/2171506.

³⁸³ Dawn, C. Ernest. "From Ottomanism to Arabism: The Origin of an Ideology." *The Review of Politics* 23, no. 3 (1961): 385, 396. Accessed February 27, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1405441>.

good aspects of all religions if they are conducive to society, al-Shidyāq creates equivalence and equidistance from the truth by lampooning what he believed to be wrong with each religion.

Khalil al-Khuri, Newspaper Pioneer

Born in Shawwāfāt in 1836, one might first imagine Khalil al-Khūrī to be a part of a later generation of Syrian proto-nationalist litterateurs, but the works for which he is renown came to fruition around the same time as Buṭrus al-Bustānī and al-Shidyāq with the premier of his newspaper *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* (*The Garden of News*) in 1858, a project that he believed was essential for modernizing Arabic as the project drew on, but also was to provide the general public and merchant class with important and essential developments in the area and abroad.³⁸⁴ Al-Khūrī was quite young when the first edition of his paper (which would last until four years after his death in 1907) was circulated, likely only the age of twenty-one given that the paper premiered on January 1st of 1858.³⁸⁵ What led to al-Khūrī’s success at such a young age? The origins of *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* and its contents demonstrate all the trends that have been shown thus far regarding the ecumenism of the Syrian Christian bourgeois proto-nationalists.

Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār was an endeavor that was the result of around a decade of attempts by the merchant class intellectuals of Beirut to establish a more secularly-minded paper as opposed to the periodicals that the Protestant mission had distributed such as *Majmū‘at al-Fawayid* (which sometimes appears to be titled *Miscellany* in English) from 1851 to 1856, the idea of said Protestant periodical being discussed since as early as 1845.³⁸⁶ It seems likely that a half dozen

³⁸⁴ Bawardī, Basiliyus. "First Steps in Writing Arabic Narrative Fiction: The Case of "Ḥadīqat Al-Akḥbār"." *Die Welt Des Islams*, New Series, 48, no. 2 (2008): 173-174. Accessed March 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20140808>.

³⁸⁵ Edwards, Anthony. "Serializing Protestantism: the Missionary Miscellany and the Arabic Press in 1850s Beirut." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2020.1765141>.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 3, 15.

or so Syrians received training in operating a printing press from this venture.³⁸⁷ The idea of a less Christian-oriented newspaper was perhaps first mentioned by George Ameen, though since he was unable to convince the missionaries at first, he thereafter focused on the establishment of the *Syrian Society of Arts and Sciences*, which appears to be an alternative title for the group that Buṭrus al-Bustānī published the works of in his *A'māl*.³⁸⁸ Ameen went on to become a Chair of Arabic Language and Literature at King's College from 1862, and Professor of Arabic Language and Literature from 1865-1881 and was an intellectual giant himself, contributing to knowledge on Syrian Flora, an advocate for Arabic education in England, and helped contribute to an Arabic translation of *Pilgrim's Progress*.³⁸⁹ Calls for a business-oriented periodical did not cease, with Salīm Nawfal advocating for a paper which focused on trade, culture, politics, and a literary section to benefit "Arab sons" in Arabic and French in 1851, and it seems that from 1853 on Eli Smith was aware that a group of native intellectuals had begun an attempt at acquiring pieces of printing equipment.³⁹⁰ Al-Khūrī like those before him asked whether the mission would allow him to use their press to publish a paper, but the records seem to suggest this request was denied or did not even receive a response.³⁹¹ Why was someone who so young requesting this?

Al-Khūrī had been in this group of intellectuals from a very young age. He learned poetry and prose from Nāsīf al-Yazījī, and additionally learned French and Turkish later on, and largely spent his childhood in Beirut.³⁹² His father, Jabbur, was a member of the *Syrian Society* like

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 6.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 14-15.

³⁸⁹ "Ameen, Antonius George." King's Collections : Victorian Lives : Ameen, Antonius George. Accessed March 1, 2021. <https://kingscollections.org/victorianlives/a-c/ameen-antonius-george>.

³⁹⁰ Edwards, Anthony. "Serializing Protestantism: the Missionary Miscellany and the Arabic Press in 1850s Beirut." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020, 15-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2020.1765141>.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Bawardi, Basiliyus. "First Steps in Writing Arabic Narrative Fiction: The Case of "Ḥadīqat Al-Akḥbār"." *Die Welt Des Islams*, New Series, 48, no. 2 (2008): 173. Accessed March 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20140808>.

many of the other intellectuals in the area.³⁹³ He was even Buṭrus al-Bustānī's neighbor.³⁹⁴ To say that he was within the social circle of the Nahḍawīs is an understatement; he was likely aware of these intellectuals' labors and works very early on in his life. It is quite possible that his extensive knowledge of the projects of his fellow intellectuals and his youth (being less likely to be tied down with other projects or having a family) made him an ideal point-man for the project.

After the dissolution of the *Syrian Society*, intellectual groups continued to exist and branch off elsewhere, most notably at places such as Mikha'īl Mudawwar's house which was an intellectual and social hub for Christians and Muslims, a development which differed from the earlier missionary-run *Syrian Society*.³⁹⁵ It was in Mudawwar's circle that the project for the first non-missionary based paper was undertaken in earnest among Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics, and 'Umar al-Unsi (who was Muslim) alike; it was an interconfessional and inter-religious project from the start.³⁹⁶ Receiving the license to publish such a paper involved religious cooperation as well, with al-Khūrī's church working with him to secure a license by promising that nothing subversive against the High Porte would be published.³⁹⁷ For their part, Istanbul thought that al-Khūrī was an appropriate choice to man the first paper in Beirut: he was Greek Orthodox so they assumed he would be a more neutral voice on matters and not inflame sectarian tensions between the local French-backed Maronites and the English-backed Druze.³⁹⁸ These attempts to keep tensions low are also exemplified by the fact that the prospective newspaper's

³⁹³ Edwards, Anthony. "Serializing Protestantism: the Missionary Miscellany and the Arabic Press in 1850s Beirut." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020, 15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2020.1765141>.

³⁹⁴ Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 47.

³⁹⁵ Edwards, Anthony. "Serializing Protestantism: the Missionary Miscellany and the Arabic Press in 1850s Beirut." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020, 15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2020.1765141>.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

³⁹⁸ Beshara, Adel, ed. *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood : Histories, Pioneers and Identity*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. 93. Accessed March 1, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central

name was changed from *The Shining Dawn* to *The Garden of News*.³⁹⁹ Meanwhile, al-Mudawwar and his associates bought defunct press equipment from the Greek Orthodox metropolitan and provided capital to commence the operations; It was in December of 1857 that *al-Maṭbaʿa al-Sūriyya* (The Syrian Press) began operations, and the first edition of *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* went out its doors on January 1st of 1858.⁴⁰⁰ Due to the networks that the founding group had in the region, the paper saw astonishing success, its first edition making it to Damascus, Aleppo, and even going outside the bounds of Greater Syria.⁴⁰¹ Al-Khūrī identified the paper as a Syrian project: commenting with pride, he likened Beirut to Paris under Louis XIV in terms of its literary output and noted that foreigners were beginning to call the paper “The Syria Journal”.⁴⁰²

Ecumenism and promoting national affinity and pride was one of the main themes pervasive in the paper. A look at an available copy is informative to the daily content and how it built a sense of simultaneity in the community; as Benedict Anderson notes, the newspaper is perhaps among the most poignant example of this.⁴⁰³ If one looks at the February 5th 1861 edition of *Ḥadīqat al-Akḥbār* they are hit with a panoply of information: on one page, which utilizes a rather ornate calligraphy and emblem, one can see the price of subscription and advertisement, and where one can find more copies-- the reader is made explicitly aware that there are people all over reading the publication.⁴⁰⁴ When one scans the page, they can learn of strong storms

³⁹⁹ Edwards, Anthony. “Serializing Protestantism: the Missionary Miscellany and the Arabic Press in 1850s Beirut.” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020, 16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2020.1765141>.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*

⁴⁰³ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2016. 34-36.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ḥadīqat Al-Akḥbār*. Issue 190. February 5, 1861. <https://gallica-bnf-fr.proxy.lib.umich.edu/ark:/12148/bpt6k4529890h/f1.image.zoom>.

occurring in Beirut that destroyed many ships, the death of Portuguese king Don Pedro, and France, Spain, and Great Britain searching for an agreement on the conflict in Mexico: all of this, is under two dates side by side: anno domini and hijra.⁴⁰⁵ Since al-Khūrī considered this to be the preeminent source of journalism in Syria, paired with the fact that previous protestant missionary publications omitted the hijra makes clear his ecumenical national ideal and intent: Syria functions under Muslim and Christian time in a clear departure from previous publications.⁴⁰⁶

In other times, al-Khūrī was much more explicit in this anti-sectarianism. In issue 29 he condemns sectarianism and calls for an *ulfa waṭaniyya* (patriotic love), saying that this is what leads to personal good.⁴⁰⁷ In issue 31 he makes use of the term *ḥubb al-waṭan*, stating that besides God’s commandment to uphold the welfare and good of the people, that love of the homeland is what allows people to climb the ladder of human perfection.⁴⁰⁸ Throughout the years one can see him play with words that could be seen as having religious connotations when referring to the Syrian public, such as *Umma* and *Mā`āshar* among other words such as *Jamhūr*.⁴⁰⁹ This usage of religiously inflected terms could perhaps be seen as a conscious reformulation of religious communal consciousness to paint *al-waṭan* as what joins all communities. From the first issue, al-Khūrī emphasized that the main purpose of his paper was in service of the motherland and included Muslim writers as well.⁴¹⁰ He would also host editorials by those who supported his views, such as when he published an essay by Salīm Nawfal which

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Edwards, Anthony. “Serializing Protestantism: the Missionary Miscellany and the Arabic Press in 1850s Beirut.” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020, 8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2020.1765141>.

⁴⁰⁷ Beshara, Adel, ed. *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood : Histories, Pioneers and Identity*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. Accessed February 9, 2021. 100, 107. ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 100.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., 100, 107.

made a call for every citizen to have access to free education, regardless of religion.⁴¹¹ Zachs similarly takes note and posits that the side by side date usage was to put an emphasis on the ecumenical purpose of the paper.⁴¹² Along with notions of *al-waṭan*, al-Khūrī also began espousing values of Arabism (not contrary to Syrian or Ottoman identity, as per chapter one), and it is highly likely he was among the first journalists to support it in its more modern sense; this should very well be seen as a way of moving around sectarian-based identities.⁴¹³ Al-Khūrī's Syria was also very clearly geographically defined; to him it was between the Euphrates and Mediterranean and the Arabian Peninsula and Anatolia.⁴¹⁴ The literature that was published also spoke to an ecumenical Syrian identity. His *Alas, I Am Not a Foreigner* goes through several Syrian cities and provides commentary on the level of westernization there.⁴¹⁵ This works to define what the author imagines to be Syria. The main plot is a moralist tale which ends in condemning over-westernization telling the reader to be "...a civilized Arab, and not an incomplete European."⁴¹⁶ Bawardi also makes note that this is similar to a theme which al-Khūrī elaborated on in 1858 calling for the creation of an "Oriental Arabic literature."⁴¹⁷ Considering he also had passages from al-Mutannabī and 'Umar Ibn al-Farīd published, it looks as though he was trying to compile what could be considered an Arabic canon which stretched far into the past to the present day; Christians and Muslims alike being a part of this canon, giving a literary complement to the expansive history of Syria that included Greeks, Romans, and Phoenicians in

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 99-100.

⁴¹² Ibid., 107.

⁴¹³ Ibid., 99.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 99.

⁴¹⁵ Bawardi, Basiliyus. "First Steps in Writing Arabic Narrative Fiction: The Case of "Ḥadīqat Al-Akḥbār"." *Die Welt Des Islams*, New Series, 48, no. 2 (2008): 191. Accessed March 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20140808>.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 190-192.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., 192-193.

his *Kharābāt Sūriyya*, which was the first book that explicitly made use of the term *Sūriyya*.⁴¹⁸ If there was one early master of ecumenism in newspaper form, one need not look further than Khalil Al-Khūrī's *Hadīqat al-Akhhbār*, a project that was first conceived in contrast and in antithesis to the efforts of the Protestant missionaries and that was founded by a group of bourgeois intellectuals from a diverse background, and featured works by Muslims and Christians alike while formulating a concrete notion of Syrian proto-nationalism that was anti-sectarian and borrowed distinct literature and cultural signifiers from Islamic culture.

Salim al-Bustānī, Columnist and Novelist

The eldest son of Buṭrus Al-Bustānī (1819-1883), Salīm al-Bustānī (1848-1884) had a lot to live up to, and despite dying only a year after his father, managed to create a vast body of works, he wrote at least nine novels, five short stories, and eighteen short-stories.⁴¹⁹ While al-Khūrī's works predated that of Salīm, the latter was the one that truly made the novel a genre, as Stephen Sheehi posits that his *al-Huyām fī Jinān al-Shām* (translated as *Love in a Damascene Garden*) was the “..first attempt at a novel in Arabic...” which “...laid down the stock leitmotifs, character topoi, and narrative structure common to subsequent Arabic romance and historical novels.”⁴²⁰ These themes and structures would have a great deal of influence on later writers such as Nu'mān al-Qasāṭlī and Jurjī al-Zaydān.⁴²¹ Salīm, like the others in this thesis, showed promise from a very young age as an intellectual, studying at his father's *al-madrasa al-*

⁴¹⁸ Beshara, Adel, ed. *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood : Histories, Pioneers and Identity*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. Accessed February 9, 2021. 99, 101-102. ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁴¹⁹ Georgescu, Constantin Iuliu. "A Forgotten Pioneer of the Lebanese 'Nahdah': Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." Order No. 7912272, New York University, 1978, ii. <https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/dissertations-theses/forgotten-pioneer-lebanese-nahdah-salim-al/docview/302884803/se-2?accountid=14667> (accessed March 2, 2021).

⁴²⁰ Sheehi, Stephen. *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2004. 78.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

waṭaniyya and also (like al-Khūrī) under al-Yāzījī, becoming the American consul’s dragoman in Beirut, and subsequently teaching English and French at *al-madrasa al-waṭaniyya*.⁴²² The familial and social connections again highlight the underlying phenomenon of Christian domination of the earlier Greater Syrian press and the functioning of capital in the area. It was at the age of twenty-two that Salīm began publishing his novels, and he took over as principal editor *al-Jinān* after its inaugural year, where he also wrote a great deal of social and political commentary that focused on the topic of reform.⁴²³ In 1871 that he managed *al-madrasa al-waṭaniyya* in his father’s place and subsequently set up *al-janna* (*The Garden*, which served as a news wire specifically to inform merchants of important events) and *al-Junayna* (*The Little Garden*, which appeared on days of the week that *al-Janna* did not, meaning there were papers on a daily basis) as well as assisting with Buṭrus’ project of an encyclopedia.⁴²⁴

As for his overt expressions of ecumenism, one hardly needs to dive into his works very deeply before noticing: the cover of *al-Jinān* featured the ḥadīth “Love of the homeland is an element of faith” on its front cover from 1870-1883, an editorial choice that stayed for a dozen years after Salīm took over after primary editor.⁴²⁵ This was definitely a common slogan among many Naḥḍawīs, as can be seen from the work of Buṭrus and al-Khūrī it had come to be a specifically proto-nationalist and ecumenical phrase among this cadre. Its subscribers and contributors appeared to also be of a diverse religious background as well, like *Ḥadīqat al-*

⁴²² Ibid., 76.

⁴²³ Ibid., 77.

⁴²⁴ Georgescu, Constantin Iuliu. "A Forgotten Pioneer of the Lebanese 'Nahdah': Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." Order No. 7912272, New York University, 1978, 50, 62-63, 64. <https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/dissertations-theses/forgotten-pioneer-lebanese-nahdah-salim-al/docview/302884803/se-2?accountid=14667> (accessed March 2, 2021).

⁴²⁵ EISSA, ASHRAF A. "MAJALLAT AL-JINĀN: ARABIC NARRATIVE DISCOURSE IN THE MAKING." *Quaderni Di Studi Arabi* 18 (2000): 41-49. Accessed March 2, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25802893>.

Akhhbār.⁴²⁶ Taking a note from his father's *Naḥḥr Sūriyya* which used the term (or its) plural over a dozen times, Salīm wrote extensively on the topic of *al-gharaḍ* which Buṭrus used to indicate “prejudice” but in these contexts spoke to prejudice specifically in the sectarian sense.⁴²⁷ The topic seemed of such importance to Salīm that he wrote on how it must be combatted in an editorial within the first year of *al-Jinān*'s publishing, stating that while it was valid in the case of self-defense, that prejudice otherwise was intolerable: “factional mobilization for one tribe against another, or devotion to a religion based on exclusive belonging and enmity of other religions, jeopardizes truth and justice.”⁴²⁸ Opposing exclusive notions of religion to truth and justice also echoes his father's notion of “true religion” placing all religions as sectarian versions of the truth. He also emphasized the importance of the separation of religion from politics, which appears in the first and third year of *al-Jinān*'s publication.⁴²⁹ In the first one, he puts politics and religion into two realms, noting that religion is a garden of conviction and faith and that its power is that of conscience; politics in opposition is the gardens of opinions/feelings and (perhaps, physical) existence, delineating the private and spiritual from the public and physical.⁴³⁰ Among the articles that he wrote on social issues such as marriage, rights of women, and smoking, and notably, the topic of the Khuṭba/Friday sermon: the religious becomes a manner of social study and perhaps allows Christian readers to understand Muslim practices.⁴³¹

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴²⁷ Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. 60-61, 143-144.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 61, 144.

⁴²⁹ Zolondek, Leon. "Socio-Political Views of Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." *Middle Eastern Studies* 2, no. 2 (1966): 145, 152. Accessed March 3, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4282151>.

⁴³⁰ al-Bustānī, Salīm Effendī. “سياسة الامس والآن والغد.” *الجنان* 1, no. 23 (December 1870): 705.

⁴³¹ Georgescu, Constantin Iuliu. "A Forgotten Pioneer of the Lebanese 'Nahdah': Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." Order No. 7912272, New York University, 1978, 61. <https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/dissertations-theses/forgotten-pioneer-lebanese-nahdah-salim-al/docview/302884803/se-2?accountid=14667> (accessed March 2, 2021).

Even more compelling in Salīm al-Bustānī's case is the way in which he constructs an inclusive history of Greater Syria in his literary works. Some of his earlier works are quasi-adaptions of the old Arabic tradition of *adab al-riḥlāt*, or travel literature, which became primarily popular after the advent of Islam and entered Christian Arab circles later, adapted with the narrative form.⁴³² With this al-Bustānī's novels often served as a way of teaching readers about the history of Syria and its people, connecting the people to the land.⁴³³ By taking up this literary form with early Islamic influences within a sub-genre that became dominated by Christians from Beirut and Tripoli, the Syrian travelogue itself serves as a literary genre of religious cross-pollination; Salīm also perhaps mimics the feel of the older Arabic travelogues by purposely adopting the lexicon, and opening *al-Huyām* in *saj'*.⁴³⁴ Sulaymān, the story's protagonist, opens the narrative by saying he was bored in Beirut and wished to travel throughout Lebanon and describes villages, cities, and their people throughout the plot; he then falls in love with Warda in the awe-inspiring gardens of Damascus.⁴³⁵ This travelogue manages to induce in its readers a sense of simultaneity by having the narrator observe other peoples in present time; it raises a national consciousness by connecting these cities to the concept of Syria and allows the reader to realize their fellow citizens are in constant motion, all while they could read about the various political, social, and scientific issues within the same periodical.⁴³⁶

Salīm also made great use of the historical novel to create a continuity in Syria from the past to the present. In *al-Huyām fī Fatūḥ al-Shām* he glorifies the conquest of Syria by the

⁴³² Bawardi, Basilius, and Zachs, Fruma. "Between 'Adab al-Ri Lāt and 'Geo-Literature': The Constructive Narrative Fiction of Salīm al-Bustānī." Articles. *Middle Eastern Literatures* 10, no. 3 (2007): 204-205, 208-209. doi:10.1080/14752620701664456.

⁴³³ Ibid., 208-209.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 207-208, 210.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 210.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 208-210.

Muslim Arabs and the zeal that the advent of Islam granted to them and their martial prowess.⁴³⁷ This point in history is an interesting because it highlights the time when Syria, or at least Damascus, switched from being under Christian control to Muslim governance; a very specific and significant juncture! One of the main points of conflict between characters is between two generals, one who wishes to allow his men to continue to slaughter Byzantines in revenge and the other who wishes to keep an armistice; the latter prevails with the edict of Caliph ‘Umar.⁴³⁸ Featuring ‘Umar is also significant because of his conquests, his epithet of *al-Fārūq* (one who knows right from wrong), and his treaty which codified a manner of coexistence among Muslims and non-Muslims; success comes not only from zeal and tenacity, but also fairness to religious minorities, for any empire.⁴³⁹ The choice to go against revenge in this tale is also telling and likely serves a didactic purpose to preach against sectarian-based revenge. The story also portrays the Byzantine generals and emperor as being arrogant, being brought low by the zealous Muslim armies.⁴⁴⁰ Salīm thus not only demonstrates to his readers the value of anti-sectarianism but also provides a treatise in form narrative on how the Ottoman Empire can thrive.

Things are not doom and gloom for all Christians in this novel either: there is a pair of Christian lovers named Julian (a Byzantine officer) and Augusta (the daughter of a minister), the latter accompanying her love on the campaign to defend Syria.⁴⁴¹ Augusta is dumbfounded to see

⁴³⁷ Georgescu, Constantin Iuliu. "A Forgotten Pioneer of the Lebanese 'Nahdah': Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." Order No. 7912272, New York University, 1978, 94-95. <https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/dissertations-theses/forgotten-pioneer-lebanese-nahdah-salim-al/docview/302884803/se-2?accountid=14667> (accessed March 2, 2021).

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 96.

⁴³⁹ Böwering Gerhard, Patricia Crone, Mahan Mirza, and Sean W Anthony. "'Umar b. Al-Khattab.'" In *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, 580–82. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013.

⁴⁴⁰ Georgescu, Constantin Iuliu. "A Forgotten Pioneer of the Lebanese 'Nahdah': Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." Order No. 7912272, New York University, 1978, 98. <https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/dissertations-theses/forgotten-pioneer-lebanese-nahdah-salim-al/docview/302884803/se-2?accountid=14667> (accessed March 2, 2021).

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 229.

the haughtiness of the Byzantines and so tries to get an upper hand over the Arabs by disguising herself as a Bedouin and spying on them in service of her country, and Julian comes to her rescue disguised as a merchant.⁴⁴² Julian appears to be lost amidst the battle for Damascus but they reunite after many years and marry in Constantinople.⁴⁴³ To mirror this, there are also two Muslim lovers Salmā and Salīm, who both battle valiantly against the Byzantines; after being sent to and imprisoned in Aleppo for eighteen months, she too reunites with her lover and they marry.⁴⁴⁴ What one can see in this narrative is one that similarly plays out in other ecumenical Nahḍawī works, religion (in this case the Muslims) can be a great builder of character and build great people and civilizations, but arrogance and superiority (prejudice) can just as much bring people of faith low and lead them astray. People of all faiths, as with the two pairs of lovers, can prove to be valiant individuals, which in the end results in reward and triumph on the personal level that can transfer to a stronger country. It speaks not only to a sort of ecumenism or anti-sectarianism, but to bourgeois values of self-refinement and individualism, all within these four characters. Through both his overt political commentary and through his use of narrative fiction both modern and historical, Salīm puts forth a vision of Greater Syria, a designated area with distinct peoples that has a long and storied past of many religions; Syria is great when people adhere to their personal faith with zeal but also interact with people of other religions compassionately and fairly. The character of a person, then, is not derived from what religion they adhere to, but their personal valor and positive traits which in turn leads to the magnification of the glory of a storied nation.

Conclusion

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., 230.

The cadre of Christian Nahḍawīs and littérateurs of the latter half of the 19th century in Greater Syria (largely residing in Beirut) built a protonationalist Syrian subnational Ottoman identity that was not based around religious identity but open to people of all faiths. In order to convey this idea, these writers made use of various Islamic cultural signifiers to cross and blur the lines of religious faith with a majority religion to create a common national heritage among people of all religions, whether it was by adapting traditional literary forms, the citing of scripture (often side by side or with Biblical references in the same work), the accompanying of the hijra and anno domini on publications which produced a sense of simultaneity, or pointing to historical Muslim figures that had once brought glory to the Arab-Islamic tradition, highlighting aspects of these rulers that coincided with their own goals. In using this in conjunction with other identities such as Greek, Roman, and Phoenician, these writers constructed a continuity from the ancient past to their present which also tracked with the protonationalisms of other countries around the same time. The vagueness and permeability of this idea of what constituted Syria underlined that these writers were protonationalists and that these ideas were open to change. Similarly, the additive nature of their protonationalism falls within the parameters of liberal thought on what constitutes a nation rather than something more exclusive such as the exclusively ethnic-linguistic nationalisms of later times. The fact that this class of writers and the private press was dominated by Arab Christians specifically at first did not speak to some innate religious values driving them to write, but rather was the result of economic developments in Greater Syria, especially in and around Beirut and the mountain. Arab Christians were the benefactors of conditions which led to them dominating the silk industry and import/export trade: the integration of the Ottoman Empire into the capitalist system not only enriched many within this milieu (leading to a developing bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie heavily tilted

toward the Christians) but also attracted the ire of some Muslims (specifically not of their corresponding bourgeoisie which gladly cooperated with their Christian counterparts) that led to a greater concentration of the Christian Arab bourgeoisie in Beirut. Shaped by their experience of sectarian violence and socio-economic class, paired by many gaining experience with the printing press by way of missionaries, their ecumenism, protonationalism, and bourgeois ideals were heavily entwined, and their experiences and worldview were expressed in their writing. The fall away from the religious as the primary identity towards the nation state then, spoke not only to their lived experience and the trauma that sectarianism wrought (thus bringing this topic to the forefront) but was also a manifestation of capitalist modernity which reformulates ideas of community. These ideals were not so much a western import but rather constituted a local development that grappled with changes in affinities, loyalties, and associations as the land became incorporated into a wider global system, transitioning away from subsistence farming toward more specialized divisions of labor and what comes with it. The hope from this thesis then, is that by studying the Nahḍa one can not only see the formulation of later forms of nationalism in the region, but also view the development of the nation-state and ecumenism/anti-sectarianism as something which seen as having consistency and predictability in development, which also can contribute to scholarship that avoids tropes about the Middle East and sectarianism as an inevitability, which otherizes and denies the commonality of human experience. By studying these writers and their ecumenical and anti-sectarian worldview and the status of the region in material terms, it can be made clearer that sectarianism is not innate but born of social, historical, and economic causes, and so too are reactions to try and stem its tide.

Bibliography

- Acts 9:11-12, 17-18 KJV
- Al-Qur’ān 75: 29-30, 96: 4-5.
- Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq, and Humphrey Davies. *Leg Over Leg: Volume One*. Leg Over Leg or The Turtle in the Tree. New York: NYU Press, 2013.
<http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=668552&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Ali, Nadia Bou. "Blesseth Him That Gives and Not Him That Takes: Butrus al-Bustānī and the Mercy of Debt." *Modern Intellectual History* 16, no. 2 (2019): 443-69. doi:10.1017/S1479244317000294.
- Al-Qattan, Najwa. "Litigants and Neighbors: The Communal Topography of Ottoman Damascus." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 3 (2002): 511-33. Accessed January 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3879378>.
- Althusser, Louis. *On Ideology*. Brooklyn, New York: Verso, 2020.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2016.
- Anscombe, Frederick F. "The Balkan Revolutionary Age." *The Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 3 (2012): 572-606. Accessed January 25, 2021. doi:10.1086/666053.
- Ayalon, Ami. "Private Publishing in the Nahda." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 4 (2008): 561-77. Accessed February 4, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40206008>.
- Ayalon, Ami. *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1995. Accessed January 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.
- Bawardi, Basilius, and Zachs, Fruma. "Between 'Adab al-Ri Lāt and 'Geo-Literature': The Constructive Narrative Fiction of Salīm al-Bustānī." *Middle Eastern Literatures* 10, no. 3 (2007): 203–17. doi:10.1080/14752620701664456.
- Bawardi, Basiliyus. "First Steps in Writing Arabic Narrative Fiction: The Case of 'Ḥadīqat Al-Akḥbār'." *Die Welt Des Islams*, New Series, 48, no. 2 (2008): 170-95. Accessed March 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20140808>.
- Beaton, Roderick. "Imagining a Hellenic Republic, 1797–1824: Rigas, Korais, Byron." *Comparative Critical Studies* 15, no. 2 (2018): 169–82. <https://doi.org/10.3366/ccs.2018.0287>.
- Beshara, Adel, ed. *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood: Histories, Pioneers and Identity*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. Accessed February 9, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.
- Boojamra, J. L. "CHRISTIANITY IN GREATER SYRIA : SURRENDER AND SURVIVAL." *Byzantion* 67, no. 1 (1997): 148-78. Accessed January 22, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44172318>.
- Böwering Gerhard, Patricia Crone, Mahan Mirza, and Sean W Anthony. "Umar b. Al-Khattab." In *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, 580–82. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Brand, Laurie A. *Official Stories: Politics and National Narratives in Egypt and Algeria*. Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Societies and Cultures. Stanford,

California: Stanford University Press, 2014.

<http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=806821&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

- Brawer, Abraham J., and Jonathan Frankel. "Damascus Affair." In *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., edited by Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 399-401. Vol. 5. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007. *Gale eBooks* (accessed January 28, 2021). <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX2587504831/GVRL?u=umuser&sid=GVRL&xid=d170dcdd>.
- *Britannica Academic*, s.v. "Edict of Nantes," accessed January 24, 2021, <https://academic-eb-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/levels/collegiate/article/Edict-of-Nantes/54792>.
- Chevallier, Dominique. "Aspects Sociaux De La Question D'Orient: Aux Origines Des Troubles Agraires Libanais En 1858." *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 14, no. 1 (1959): 35-64. Accessed February 8, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27580000>.
- Dawn, C. Ernest. "From Ottomanism to Arabism: The Origin of an Ideology." *The Review of Politics* 23, no. 3 (1961): 378-400. Accessed February 27, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1405441>.
- Defoe, Daniel, and بطرس بن بولس، بستانى. *Al-Tuhfah al-Bustānīyah Fī al-Asfār al-Kurūzīyah, Aw, Riḥlat Rūbinṣun Kurūzī*. Book. Translated by Bustānī, Buṭrus ibn Būlus. Early Arabic Printed Books from the British Library. Beirut: [publisher not identified], 1861-1863.
- Edwards, Anthony. "Serializing Protestantism: the Missionary Miscellany and the Arabic Press in 1850s Beirut." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2020.1765141>.
- El-Ariss, Tarek, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī. "The Culture of the Arabs Today." In *The Arab Renaissance: a Bilingual Anthology of the Nahda*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2018.
- Engin Akarli. *The Long Peace : Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=19137&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Fawaz Layla Tarazi. *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983.
- Firro, Kais. "Silk and Agrarian Changes in Lebanon, 1860-1914." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 2 (1990): 151-69. Accessed February 8, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/163737>.
- Fortna, Benjamin C. "Education and Autobiography at the End of the Ottoman Empire." *Die Welt Des Islams*, New Series, 41, no. 1 (2001): 1-31. Accessed January 9, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1571375>.
- Georgescu, Constantin Iuliu. "A Forgotten Pioneer of the Lebanese 'Nahdah': Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." Order No. 7912272, New York University, 1978, <https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/dissertations-theses/forgotten-pioneer-lebanese-nahdah-salim-al/docview/302884803/se-2?accountid=14667> (accessed March 2, 2021).

- Grehan, James. "Imperial Crisis and Muslim-Christian Relations in Ottoman Syria and Palestine, C. 1770-1830." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 58, no. 4 (2015): 490-531. Accessed March 22, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43919253>
- Haarmann, U. 'Waṭan'. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs, P.J. Bearman (Volumes X, XI, XII), Th. Bianquis (Volumes X, XI, XII), et al. Accessed April 6, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_7891.
- Hanssen, Jens, Hicham Safieddine, Ussama Samir Makdisi, and Būlus Bustānī Buṭrus ibn. *The Clarion of Syria: a Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019.
- Hare, J. Laurence, and Fabian Link. "The Idea of *Volk* and the Origins of *Völkisch* Research, 1800–1930s." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 80, no. 4 (2019): 575-596. doi:[10.1353/jhi.2019.0032](https://doi.org/10.1353/jhi.2019.0032).
- Headrick, Daniel R. *Power Over Peoples: Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism, 1400 to the Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. 196-197. <https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb.31051>. EPUB.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1992. <https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb.01299>. EPUB.
- Holt, Elizabeth M. "Narrative and the Reading Public in 1870s Beirut." *Journal of Arabic Literature* 40, no. 1 (2009): 37-70. Accessed February 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25597995>.
- Hourani, Albert Habib. "Bustani's Encyclopaedia." Essay. In *Islam in European Thought*, 164–73. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Ismail, Sherif H. "Multiple Encounters: Philology, Exile, and Hospitality, from Fāris al-Shidyāq to Auerbach and Edward Said", *Philological Encounters* 3, 1-2 (2018): 67-104, doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/24519197-12340039>
- Issa, Rana. "Scripture as Literature: The Bible, the Qur'ān, and Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq", *Journal of Arabic Literature* 50, 1 (2019): 29-55, doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1163/1570064x-12341379>
- James L. Gelvin. *Divided Loyalties: Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=21188&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Kamer, Selman Tunay. "Evaluation of Public Education and Teacher Training on the Basis of 1869 Regulation in the Ottoman Era." *Journal of History Culture and Art Research* 9, no. 2 (2020): 15-24. <https://doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v9i2.2221>.
- Khalidi, Rashid, and C. Ernest Dawn. "The Origins of Arab Nationalism." Essay. In *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, 1–23. New York: Columbia University, 1991.
- Lenin, Vladimir Il'ich. *The State and Revolution: Marxist Teaching on the State and the Task of the Proletariat in the Revolution*. Book. London etc: British Socialist Party, 1919.
- Makdisi, Ussama Samir. *Age of Coexistence: the Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World. De Gruyter, University of California Press*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019. <https://www-degruyter-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/california/view/title/571647>.

- Makdisi, Ussama. "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible: Missionaries, Secularism, and Evangelical Modernity." *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 3 (1997): 680-713. Accessed February 27, 2021. doi:10.2307/2171506.
- Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. *Collected Works*. 17. Vol. 17. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1981.
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015005982726&view=1up&seq=6>.
- Masters, Bruce. "The 1850 Events in Aleppo: An Aftershock of Syria's Incorporation into the Capitalist World System." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 1 (1990): 3-20. Accessed January 30, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/164379>.
- Maxwell, Alexander. "Typologies and Phases in Nationalism Studies: Hroch's A-B-C Schema as a Basis for Comparative Terminology." *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 6 (November 2010): 865–80. doi:10.1080/00905992.2010.515970.
- "Nationalism." Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. Accessed January 6, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/nationalism>.
- Roper, Geoffrey. "Aḥmad Fāris Al-Shidyāq and the Libraries of Europe and the Ottoman Empire." *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 3 (1998): 233-48. Accessed February 22, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25548637>.
- P.J. Bearman, Th. Banquis, C.E. Bowworth, E. van Donzel, W. P. Heinrichs Bowworth, and C. Ott, eds. 'Naḥr'. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition, Glossary and Index of Terms*. Accessed March 7, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei2glos_SIM_gi_03578.
- Safi, Khaled. 'Al-Jazzār, Aḥmad Pāshā'. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson. Accessed January 25, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_32807.
- Sahner, Christian. *Among the Ruins: Syria Past and Present*, Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014. *ProQuest Ebook Central*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/lib/umichigan/detail.action?docID=1920735>.
- Salibi, Kamal S. "The Buḥturids of the Garb. Mediaeval Lords of Beirut and of Southern Lebanon." *Arabica* 8, no. 1 (1961): 74-97. Accessed January 23, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4054971>.
- Salibi, Kamal S. *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*. London: I.B. Taurus, 1988.
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015013497667&view=1up&seq=5>.
- Sheehi, Stephen. "Towards a Critical Theory of Al-Naḥḍah: Epistemology, Ideology and Capital." *Journal of Arabic Literature* 43, no. 2/3 (2012): 269-98. Accessed February 9, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41725602>.
- Sheehi, Stephen. *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Tibawi, Abdul Latif. "The American Missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus Al-Bustānī." *Middle Eastern Affairs: St. Anthony's Papers*, no. 16 (1962): 137–82.
- Tibawi, Abdul Latif. "The Genesis and Early History of the Syrian Protestant College ." *Middle East Journal* 21, no. 1 (1967): 1–15.
- Traboulsi, Fawwaz. "Beirut, Capital of Trade and Culture." Essay. In *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 52–72. London: Pluto Press, 2012.

- Zachs, Fruma, and Sharon Halevi. *Gendering Culture in Greater Syria: Intellectuals and Ideology in the Late Ottoman Period*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015.
- Zachs, Fruma. "Cross-Glocalization: Syrian Women Immigrants and the Founding of Women's Magazines in Egypt." *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 3 (2014): 353-369.
- Zachs, Fruma. "Toward A Proto-Nationalist Concept Of Syria? Revisiting The American Presbyterian Missionaries In The Nineteenth-Century Levant." *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 2 (2001): 145–73. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1570060011201268>.
- Zolondek, Leon. "Socio-Political Views of Salim Al-Bustani (1848-1884)." *Middle Eastern Studies* 2, no. 2 (1966): 144-56. Accessed March 3, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4282151>.