READING EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY TEXTS THROUGH THE
LENS OF IBN KHALDUN

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I examine the connection between Arab authors from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by focusing on notions of affinity to homeland, conceptualizations of state and nation, and on the relationship between these ideas and historical writing. The connection, I argue, lies in the appropriation of Ibn Khaldūn's ideas, which eighteenth and nineteenth century Arab authors received from seventeenth century Ottoman authors. My research reveals that several authors, whose texts served as models for eighteenth and nineteenth century writers, engaged Ibn Khaldūn. These authors worked either in Cairo or Istanbul and were affiliated with the Mamluk or the Ottoman State, respectively. The revival materialized through engagement with Ibn Khaldūn either directly or through the work of his students and their pupils. Ibn Khaldūn's ideas were disseminated through his students, such as al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418), al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442) and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 1449). The latter was the teacher of ḥadīth scholars and historians al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505) and al-Sakhāwī (d. 1497). I focus on Āzād Bilgrāmī (1704-1786), ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī (1721-1785), and Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī (1801-1873) and the influence of Ibn Khaldūn's ideas on their conception of homeland.

I consider this project to be an engagement with scholars of modern Arabic literary history, namely *Nahḍah* scholars such as Stephen Sheehi. Like Sheehi, I challenge the accepted notion of the *Nahḍah* as a historical period and see it instead as a narrative project rising out of specific conditions. My intervention is that the *Nahḍah* was a narrative project that made sense within Ibn Khaldūn's framework where civilizations rise, reach maturity, decline, and survive only if they can remedy their weaknesses and appropriate new crafts from other civilizations. Reading the *Nahḍah* as such also explains why the Abbasid period was regarded as a standard by *Nahḍah* intellectuals. First, Ibn Khaldūn himself held the Abbasids as the exemplary. Second, the Abbasids were singled out by Ibn Khaldūn for what he considered their ability to adapt Persian civilization into Arabo-Islamic civilization.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Atoor Lawandow is Assistant Professor of Arabic at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California, which she joined in 2018. From 2012 to 2018, she was a graduate student in the Department of Near Eastern Studies. She received her Master's Degree in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Chicago and her Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy at Northeastern Illinois University. Her research focuses primarily on Arabic literature and Islamic intellectual history.

TO MY FAMILY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Contents

PREFACE

The common wisdom in Arabic literary and intellectual history is that the nineteenth-century was a period of revival following the intellectual decline of previous centuries. As such, nineteenth-century Arabic literature, that is to say the texts of figures like al-Bustānī and al-Ṭahṭāwī, represented a break from the Ottoman and Mamluk period. Twentieth-century scholarship depicted al-Bustānī and al-Ṭahṭāwī as unique, Europe-oriented pioneers of a post-Ottoman period. I challenge that view by arguing that Arab authors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were very much grounded in Ottoman intellectual trends, which in turn had their roots in Egyptian Mamluk trends. The authors whose texts I analyze in this dissertation, Ghulām ʿAlī Āzād Bilgrāmī (d. 1786), ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī (d. 1785), and Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī (d. 1873), construct arguments according to a set of ideas that come from Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah*. They received Ibn Khaldūn's conceptualizations of the state and history of civilization from seventeenth-century authors, such as Kātib Çelebi (d. 1657) and al-Maqqarī (d. 1632), whose texts served as models or as sources in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus, Ibn Khaldūn's theories constitute a thread of continuity between the nineteenth and previous centuries, between the Ottoman and post-Ottoman periods. In Chapter One, I outline the received wisdom regarding the nineteenth century and how the reception of Ibn Khaldūn up to the seventeenth century compels us to look into his text as a shared source that connects the intellectual histories of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. In Chapter Two, I examine the thread of continuity between Kātib Çelebi and Āzād Bilgrāmī by focusing on Bilgrāmī's adaptation of Khaldūnian ideas from Kātib Çelebi. In Chapter Three, I examine the eighteenth-century text of al-Suwaydī, who wrote the biographies of two governors of Baghdad using Khaldūnian conceptions of the state and of the sovereigns' character. In Chapter Four, I focus on al-Ṭahṭāwī who engages with Ibn Khaldūn directly, both adapting Khaldūnian ideas in his own text and overseeing the printing of the *Muqaddimah* by the state press at Būlāq. We may conclude that there was continuity in Arabic literary and intellectual history of the nineteenth century and that an element of that continuity was Khaldūnian ideas.

Chapter One

Continuity, Not Rupture: Reading Seventeenth- Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century Texts through Ibn Khaldūn

> To us it seems more appropriate to regard Arabic poetics on its own terms and to avoid treating the subject as a kind of deviation from a model realized in other times and under other skies. The governing principles should be derived from characteristics that are intrinsic to it, not those of works from some other poetics…to be sure the negative approach can also be fruitful, but only when, in studying what a culture has not done, it manages to identify what it has done and not what it ought to have done.[1]

Introduction

Thomas Bauer cites the above statement by Abdelfattah Kilito in his review of *Arabic Literature in the Postclassical Period*.[2] He points to the irony that Allen makes the statement in a volume that treats Arabic literature between the years 1150 and 1850 through the lens of European historiography under the title *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*, implying that there was a classical, hence, a more superior age. The terminological critique posed by Bauer and Kilito compels us to locate a meaningful framework through which to view pre-nineteenth-century Arabic authors on their own terms.[3] To begin to do so, I focus on notions of affinity to homeland, conceptualizations of state and nation, and the relationship between these ideas and historical writing. The connection between authors in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, I suggest, lies in the appropriation of Ibn Khaldūn's theories, what Cornell Fleischer has termed Ibn Khaldūnism.[4] Khaldūnism informs certain authors' comments on the status of their homeland

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[1] Abdelfattah Kilito, *Les Séances*, translated into English by Roger Allen in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*, edited by Roger Allen and D.S. Richards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 20.

[2] Thomas Bauer, "In Search of 'Post-Classical' Literature," *Mamluk Studies Review* 11 (2007): 144.

[3] Thomas Bauer, "'Ayna hādhā min al-Mutababbī!' Toward an Aesthetics of Mamluk Literature," *Mamluk Studies Review* 17 (2013): 5-22; idem, "Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches," *Mamluk Studies Review* 9 (2005): 105-132.

[4] Cornell Fleischer, "Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism and 'Ibn Khaldunism,'" *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 18 (1983): 198-220.

and state, which they express to edify or to correct what they believed to be misconceptions held by their readers. Using the Khaldūnian framework, I examine eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts to see if they constitute elements of continuity with earlier discourses about the status of Arabs with respect to other civilizations. The eighteenth century, according to *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Age*, belongs to the "post-classical" and premodern period, and the nineteenth century is "modern." But by reading authors from those centuries along with Ibn Khaldūn and his seventeenth-century interpreters, we can understand them on their own terms, not according to the periodization of Western historiography.

I use the term "Arab authors" to mean authors who were trained in the Arabic language and poetic tradition, who produced texts in which they imagine themselves as part of an Arabic literary community, and who expressed ideas that were based on the direct borrowing, adaptation, or interpretation of other Arab authors. Arab/Arabic here does not signify ethnicity or native language. In fact, Arabic was not the native language of Āzād Bilgrāmī, whose Arabic text is the subject of Chapter 2. I use the terms "Arab" and "Arabic" as descriptors to designate a literary practice and its practitioners whose works span multiple centuries, geographies, and dynasties. Following Thomas Bauer's suggestion that Eurocentricism is inherent in terms such as "premodern," "modern," "*Nahḍah*," "classical," and "postclassical," and should therefore be avoided,[5] I try as much as possible to use "dynasty" and "century" as designators of period for the literary works I discuss. These dynasties and their literatures emerge from the provincial courts of the Mughal and Ottoman Empires, namely, the Deccan Nawabs and the Iraqi and Egyptian Mamluks.

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[5] Bauer, "In Search of 'Post-Classical' Literature," 145.

I focus on affinity to homeland and state as a common thread between texts produced and patronized by different dynasties during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. My examination reveals two main points. First, the authors of these texts were polymaths who wrote jurisprudence, poetry, biography, literary theory, and history. They incorporated these genres into their texts to explain the role of Arabs and non-Arabs and Muslims and non-Muslims and their respective contributions to Islamic civilization. Second, nineteenth-century Ottoman Arab intellectuals, such as Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī, began to conflate affinity to homeland (*waṭanīyah*) with civilization (*ʿumrān*) and urbanization (*tamaddun*), the development of which, al-Ṭahṭāwī believed, could be fostered through the adaptation of knowledge from the Europeans. In order to challenge the dominant evaluation of the literary and intellectual products of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, then, it is necessary to account for Arab authors' views of themselves as members of particular communities within a larger, Islamic community.

The View of Contemporary Arabic Historiography

Scholars of Arabic literature currently acknowledge that a teleological view of history generates concepts of decline and renaissance, according to which humanity supposedly progresses toward a single logical goal, with each civilization contributing its part to that progression.[6] The implication of that thesis is that once a civilization has fulfilled its role and has nothing more to contribute to human progress, it disappears from the historical record and becomes extinct. As a concept, modernity produces fictions that explain the power relationships between nations. These fictions generate anticipation for a logical end to history and the tendency to look for what is believed to be a superior civilization.

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[6] Such scholars include Stephen Sheehi, Shaden Tageldin, Tarek El-Ariss, and Elizabeth Holt.

A more compelling argument that challenges the older, teleological *Nahḍah* thesis is posited by Stephen Sheehi in his essay, "Towards a Critical Theory of al-Nahḍah." As I understand it, the older *Nahḍah* thesis posits that Arab civilization experienced a renaissance in the nineteenth century that was spurred by the awakening of Arab nationalist sentiment; this renaissance generated Arab modernity. Sheehi proposes that the literary and intellectual products of the nineteenth century were not generative, i.e. they did not produce new literary forms that inaugurated an Arab modernity, but were rather the results of the introduction of capitalist means of production during the period of Ottoman reform. He attempts a historical materialist reading of the *Nahḍah* period, relying on Marx, as mediated by Gramsci. Sheehi argues that surplus production and capital accumulation triggered certain historical events that then motivated writers like al-Bustānī and al-Yāzijī to produce literary works that would later become the hallmarks of *Nahḍah* discourse.

While Sheehi's thesis explains why nineteenth-century Arab authors were motivated to speak or write about the events happening around them, the historical materialism framework does not explain why these intellectuals focus their critique on language, national unity, and public education.[7] In addition, his reliance on Marx and nineteenth- and twentieth-century neo-Marxists (Gramsci, Deleuze and Guattari) to interpret his primary sources leads him to the conclusion that the nineteenth century was an exceptionally turbulent period. But there is evidence that the eighteenth century was also politically turbulent, especially at the imperial frontiers, in places like Iraq.

Sheehi's argument aligns him with H.A.R. Gibb, who also viewed the nineteenth century as an exceptionally turbulent period, arguing that "for the Muslim world, and especially its Arab

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[7] Stephen Sheehi, "Towards a Critical Theory of al-Nahḍah," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 43 (2012): 286.

lands, the nineteenth century ushered in an era of storm and stress, both from within and without."[8]

Gibb attributes the rise of Arab modernity to the influence of European colonialism. Napoleon's

invasion of Egypt, according to Gibb, was the watershed event that finally "tore aside the veil of

apathy" toward Europe.[9] Inspired by George Lukacs, Sheehi argues that the emergence of new

literary genres in Arabic, such as romance and the historical novel, was the result of the indigenous

bourgeoisie's changing consciousness. The new literature represented a form of protest that

expressed the unhappiness of the bourgeoisie class with its social and cultural conditions, as it

perceived itself to be stagnating with respect to European imperialism.[10] Thus, both Sheehi and

Gibb before him overstate the role of Europe in Arabic intellectual history and the volatility of the

nineteenth century.

Elsewhere, Sheehi has challenged the conception of *Nahḍah* as a historical period, opting

instead to see it as an *affect*.[11] Arab modernity is both a historical and a psychological condition,

Sheehi argues, and "the obsession of Arab and non-Arab thinkers, scholars, journalists, artists, and

activists with 'failure' is not a coincidence but rather a preoccupation that finds its roots in the very

formation of modern Arab subjectivity during the Arab Renaissance or *al-nahdah al-ʿarabiyah*."[12]

The condition arose in response to historical conditions – the same conditions favored the

emergence of an Arab bourgeoisie class and the genres of romance and the historical novel

mentioned above[13] – making the *Nahḍah* an epistemological and narrative project that allowed for

Arab subjectivity to develop. Sheehi makes a compelling argument for thinking of the *Nahḍah* as

a narrative project arising out of specific historical conditions, but it is unclear why the Arab

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[8] H.A.R. Gibb, *Arabic Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), 159.
[9] Gibb, *Arabic Literature*, 159.
[10] Stephen Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), 105-6.
[11] See Sheehi, *Foundations*.
[12] Sheehi, *Foundations* 3.
[13] Sheehi, *Foundations*, 105-6.

bourgeoisie's response was to emulate Europeans as they supposedly became aware of their cultural stagnation as imperial subjects.

We should not take for granted that the Arab bourgeoisie's reflex to emulate, rather than to innovate, for example, was the only logical response possible to an encounter with an intellectually and militarily ascendant Europe. Sheehi effectively illustrates how the Arabs simultaneously emulated new literary genres – as Jurjī Zaydān did with the historical novel – and protested their relative shortcoming vis-à-vis the Europeans or expressed nostalgia for a period when they believed their civilization was superior to that of Europeans. Nineteenth-century Arab authors could have emulated their European counterparts with the aim of surpassing them, but instead it seems that they emulated European literary genres to explore the reasons behind their civilization's perceived failure. Elsewhere, Sheehi has closely examines Buṭrus al-Bustānī's *Khuṭbah fī ādāb al-ʿArab* (*A Lecture on Arabic Humanities*, 1859). Likewise, he points to evidence in al-Bustānī's lecture of the condition whereby the Arabs' recognition of the need to emulate Europe is both a means to progress and an indication of their perpetual shortcomings vis-à-vis Europe.

Sheehi's thesis that the *Nahḍah* was a condition in which the Arab bourgeoisie became obsessed with failure does not adequately explain why the Arabs idealized the Abbasid Age in particular. What did the Abbasids share with eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe that made them civilizational role models for the Arabs? Additionally, if the *Nahḍah* was a condition as well as a discourse, Sheehi's thesis does not clarify how it developed in relation to earlier historiographical discourses. By acknowledging that the *Nahḍah* was a fiction and that the intellectual legacy of the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries may not have been as decadent as Orientalists and Arab nationalists thought it was, and by looking at the literary works of those

centuries, we can see how the discourses of patriotism and civilizational history came together to produce the *Nahḍah*.

The Nineteenth Century – continuation or rupture with the past?

Al-Bustānī's *Khuṭbah* is a good place to begin the search for the *Nahḍah*'s pre-nineteenth century origins. I read the *Khuṭbah* as a continuation of intellectual trends from the seventeenth century and a product of an entirely Islamicate tradition. In the *Khuṭbah*, which was delivered to a gathering of Europeans and Arabs, at a meeting of the Syrian Society of the Arts and Sciences, al-Bustānī examines the identity, history, and cultural achievements of the Arabs.[14] The *Khuṭbah*'s main subject, in al-Bustānī's words, is the "Arab humanities" (*ādāb al-ʿArab*) or the "Arab sciences, arts, or knowledge" (*ʿulūm al-ʿArab aw funūn al-ʿArab aw maʿārif al-ʿArab*).[15] After his introductory remarks, al-Bustānī divides the *Khuṭbah* into three sections focusing on the sciences (*ʿulūm*) among the Arab over three general periods: (1) "On the state of the sciences among the Arabs before the rise of Islam;" (2) "On the state of the sciences among the Arabs after the rise of Islam;" and (3) "On Arab humanities today."

Al-Bustānī begins, in section one, by describing the pre-Islamic Arabs as an "illiterate people" (*qawm ummīyyīn*), the majority of whom did not know how to read or write. The only sciences they knew were the rules of their language and the composition of poetry and orations. He adds that God did not grant the Arabs the science of philosophy nor did He make their "natures predisposed to caring for it" (*wa-lā hayyaʾ ṭabāyiʿahum li-l-ʿināyati bih*).[16] These two claims have

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[14] Sheehi offers a close reading of the *Khuṭbah*. See Stephen Sheehi, "Epistemography of the Modern Arab Subject: Al-Muʿallim Butrus Al-Bustani's Khutbah Fi Adab Al-ʿArab," *Public 16* (1997): 65-84.

[15] Buṭrus al-Bustānī, "*Khuṭbah fī ādāb al-ʿArab*," edited by Mājid Fakhry in *al-Ḥarakāt al-fikrīyah wa-ruwāduhā al-lubnānīyūn fī ʿaṣr al-nahḍah* (Beirut: Dār al-Nahār, 1992), 155.

[16] al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, ed. Fakhry, 155-181.

a long history in Arabic historical literature and works dealing with the classification of nations (*ṭabaqāt al-umam*). The first, that the pre-Islamic Arabs were illiterate and had not developed a literary culture, goes back at least to Ibn Khaldūn. The statement is the product of a tradition of classifying nations into nomadic and sedentary and of attributing essential qualities to each. In the case of the Arabs, they were classified as nomads. The essential characteristics they embodied were bravery, social cohesion, and austerity, but they lacked urban culture, which was attributed to sedentary nations. Al-Bustānī's second claim, namely, that pre-Islamic Arabs were not predisposed to philosophical thought, can be traced back to an influential eleventh-century classification of nations by the Andalusian jurist Ṣāʿid ibn Aḥmad al-Andalūsī (d. 1070), whom al-Bustānī cites in the opening of the second section of the *Khuṭbah*. In his only surviving work, *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-umam*, al-Andalūsī argues that, despite being numerous and varied in their beliefs, the nations of the world fall into two main categories: nations that concern themselves with the development of knowledge and nations that do not. In the following passage, al-Andalūsī posits his thesis regarding the classification of nations:

> There is a class [of nations] that concerned itself with knowledge. They produced different sciences and the crafts of knowledge originated with them. [There is another] class that did not give knowledge the care it deserves. They did not transmit any useful wisdom nor did they provide any visible product of thought.[17]

Eight nations concerned themselves with the cultivation of sciences (*ʿulūm*): the Indians, Persians, Chaldeans, Jews, Greeks, Byzantines, Egyptians, and Arabs. The remaining nations did not cultivate the sciences and, of those, al-Andalūsī mentions by name the Chinese, Gog and Magog,

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[17] Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī, *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-umam*, ed. Louis Cheikho (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿah al-Kāthūlīkīyah, 1912), 7-8.

the Turks, the Slavs, the Bulgars, the Rus, the Berbers, Ethiopians, the Nubians, and black Africans.[18]

Al-Bustānī's words leave no doubt that he was applying al-Andalusī's thesis to make his argument about the state of the Arabic humanities. Indeed, al-Bustānī's claim that the only disciplines the pre-Islamic Arabs knew were the rules of their language and the composition of poetry and orations is lifted almost word-for-word from al-Andalūsī's work.[19] Consider the two authors' words. This is al-Andalusī:

> As for the science with which [pre-Islamic Arabs] used to boast and compete, it was the science of its tongue and the rules of its language and the composition of poetry and oratory (*Wa-ammā ʿilmuhā alladhī kānat tatafākhar bihi wa-tubārī bihi fa-ʿilm lisānihā wa-aḥkām lughatihā wa-naẓm al-ashʿār wa-taʾlīf al-khuṭab*).[20]

And this al-Bustānī:

> The sciences that [pre-Islamic Arabs] used to take pride in were the science of their tongue and the rules of their language and the composition of poetry and oratory (*Wa-l-ʿulūm allatī kānū yatafākharūn bihā fa-hiya ʿilm lisānihim wa-aḥkām lughatihim wa-naẓm al-ashʿār wa-taʾlīf al-khuṭab*).[21]

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[18] Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8.

[19] It should be noted that Kātib Çelebi, whose *Kashf* was probably familiar to al-Bustānī, took from al-Andalusī the same passage that al-Bustānī did. In his introduction to *Kashf*, in a section titled "On the mixing of the sciences of the ancients and Islam," Kātib Çelebi says:

You should know that the sciences of the ancients were deserted in the Umayyad age. When the Abbasid clan emerged, the first among them to care about the sciences was the second caliph, Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr. May God Almighty have mercy on his soul. In addition to his skill in jurisprudence, he was advanced in the science of philosophy and especially in the science of astrology, and he was fond of astrologers. Then when the caliphate reached the seventh [caliph], ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʾmūn ibn al-Rashīd, he finished what his grandfather had started. He began seeking knowledge in the right place and at the right time and he mined from its sources by the power of his eminent self and by the height of his lofty ardor.

(*Al-ishārah al-rābiʿah fī ikhtilāṭ ʿulūm al-awāʾil wa-l-Islām. Wa-ʿlam anna ʿulūm al-awāʾil kānat mahjūrah fī ʿaṣr al-Umawīyah wa-lammā ẓahar āl ʿAbbās kān awwal man ʿuniya minhum bi-l-ʿulūm al-khalīfa al-thānī Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr wa-kān raḥamahu allāh taʿālā maʿa barāʾatihi fī al-fiqh muqdim fī ʿilm al-falsafah wa-khāṣatan fī-l-nujūm muḥibban li-ahlihā thumma lammā afḍat al-khilāfah ilā al-sābiʿ ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʾmūn ibn al-Rashīd tammam mā badaʾ bih jadduh fa-aqbal ʿalā ṭalab al-ʿilm fī mawāḍiʿih wa-istikhrājih min maʿādinih bi-qūwat nafsih al-sharīfah wa-ʿulū himmatih al-munīfah*).

Kātib Çelebi. *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asāmī al-kutub wa-l-funūn* (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthannā, 1941), 1:34.

[20] Ṣāʿid al-Andalūsī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 44.

[21] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭbah*, 157.

Al-Bustānī was no doubt attempting to orient contemporary Arabs toward other civilizations –

particularly Europe – by relying on the civilizational theories of al-Andalusī. In other words, al-

Bustānī's reasoning was informed by eleventh-century ideas derived from the Islamicate

cosmographical tradition.

Al-Bustānī also takes from al-Andalusī the story of how the Arabs, a nation that was said

to be initially uninterested and unequipped by God for the cultivation of knowledge, eventually

came to cultivate and protect philosophy and transmit it back to Europe. Once again, al-Bustānī

reproduces al-Andalusī's words verbatim when describing the transition from the Umayyad to the

Abbasid dynasties. This is al-Andalusī:

> This was the state of the Arabs under the Umayyad dynasty. Then, when God Almighty removed that dynasty with the help of the Hāshimites, and gave the kingship to the latter, the ardors awakened from their slumber and knowledge stirred from its sleep. The first one among the [kings] to care about the sciences was the second caliph, Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim, may God Almighty have mercy on his soul. In addition to his skill in jurisprudence and his progress in the science of philosophy and especially in the science of astrology, he was very fond of [the sciences] and scientists. Then when the turn for the caliphate reached the seventh caliph, ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʾmūn ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd ibn Muḥammad al-Mahdī ibn Abī Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr, he finished what his grandfather al-Manṣūr had started. He sought knowledge in the right place and at the right time and he mined from its sources by his own noble ardor and the power of his eminent self.
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> *Fa-hādhihi kānat ḥālat al-ʿArab fī al-dawlah al-umawīyah fa-lammā azāl allāh taʿālā tilka al-dawlah bi-l-hāshimīyyah wa-ṣaraf al-mulk ilayhim thābat al-himam min ghaflatihā wa-habbat al-fiṭan min sinatihā fa-kān awwal man ʿuniya minhum bi-l-ʿulūm al-khalīfah al-thānī Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim fa-kān raḥimahu allāh taʿālā maʿa barāʾatihi fī al-fiqh wa-taqddumih fī ʿilm al-falsafah wa-khāṣatan fī ʿilm ṣināʿat al-nujūm kalifan bihā wa-bi-ahlihā thumma lammā afḍat al-khilāfah ilā al-khalīfah al-sābiʿ minhum ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʾmūn ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd ibn Muḥammad al-Mahdī ibn Abī Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr tammam mā badaʾ bih jadduh al-Manṣūr fa-aqbal ʿalā ṭalab al-ʿilm fī mawāḍiʿih wa-istakhrajih min maʿādinih bi-faḍl himmatih al-sharīfah wa-qūwat nafsih al-fāḍilah.*[22]

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[22] Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 48.

In his version, al-Bustānī changes a few minor details, like the word "*sinatihā*" (its sleep) to "*mītatihā*" (its death):

> This was the state of the Arabs under the Umayyad dynasty. In the days of those caliphs, the wisdom of Greece had made some effect on the minds of the Arabs, but the golden age of the Arabic humanities did not begin in the East until the apportionment of the Islamic kingdom and the rise of Baghdad, which happened when the Abbasid caliphs took over the Arab empire in 750, as mentioned previously. Then the ardors awakened from their slumber and knowledge stirred from its death. The first one among the [kings] to care about the sciences was the second caliph, Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr, the builder of the city of Baghdad, which is famous for the great conquests. In addition to his skill in jurisprudence, he was very fond of the science of philosophy and especially the science of astrology.

> *Fa-hādhihi kānat ḥālat al-ʿArab fī al-dawlah al-umawīyah wa-fī ayyām hāʾulāʾ al-khulafāʾā kānat ḥikmat al-yūnān qad aḥdathat shayʾan min al-taʾthīr fī ʿuqūl al-ʿArab wa-lākin jīl al-ʿulūm al-ʿarabīyah al-dhahabī lam yabtadiʾ fī-l-sharq illā baʿd qismat al-mamlaka al-islāmīyah wa-qiyām baghdād wa-dhālik ʿindamā tabawwaʾ al-khulafāʾ banū ʿAbbās takht al-salṭanah al-ʿArabīyah sanat 750 kamā taqaddam, fa-ḥīnidhn thābat al-himam min ghaflatihā wa-habbat al-fiṭan min mītatihā fa-kān awwal man iʿtanā minhum bi-l-ʿulūm al-khalīfah al-thānī Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr bānī madīnat Baghdād al-mashhūrah bi-l-futūḥāt al-ʿaẓīmah wa-kān maʿa barāʿatih fī al-fiqh kalifan fī ʿilm al-falsafah, wa-ʿalā al-khuṣūṣ fī ʿilm al-nujūm*

Between the story of al-Manṣūr and al-Maʾmūn, al-Bustānī inserts a short anecdote about al-Manṣūr suffering from digestive problems for which he was treated by a Christian doctor; this was a pretext that made it possible for al-Bustānī to credit the doctor – a Greek and a Christian – for introducing Arabs to medicine. Al-Bustānī no doubt added the anecdote to the original historical narrative for the benefit of his European and Christian listeners, to show the Christians' superiority over the Muslims and to support his claim that Arab Muslims had no crafts of their own. After the digression, al-Bustānī continues with the story of al-Maʾmūn, using almost the same exact words as al-Andalusī, with one minor difference, a nickname al-Bustānī gives al-Maʾmūn.

> But the Augustus of the Arabic Humanities is the caliph ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʾmūn ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd. For when he became caliph, he finished what his grandfather al-Manṣūr had started.

(*Wa-lākin Aughusṭus al-ādāb al-ʿarabīyah huwa al-khalīfah ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʾmūn ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd fa-annahu lammā afḍat al-khilāfah ilayh tammam mā badaʾ bih jadduh al-Manṣūr fa-aqbal ʿalā ṭalab al-ʿilm fī mawāḍiʿih*).[23]

By reproducing al-Andalusī's theory almost verbatim, al-Bustānī identifies the transition of the Arabs from a nation incapable of cultivating knowledge to one capable of doing so with the Abbasids. Even without a thorough examination of al-Andalusī's text, one can detect evidence of favoritism toward the Abbasids in his language. Although a close reading of his work is outside the scope of this chapter, suffice it to say that by taking words from *Ṭabaqāt al-umam*, al-Bustānī adopted al-Andalusī's biases along with his civilizational theory. This may explain the fondness of proponents of the *Nahḍah,* as well as orientalists, for the Abbasids.

The identification of the Abbasid period with a "golden age" for the Arabic humanities, which has been reproduced in authoritative sources such as the *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, may have been the result of nineteenth-century intellectuals' borrowing (sometimes uncritically) from their intellectual predecessors. As the example of al-Bustānī's *Khuṭbah* illustrates, he was far from being innovative. Al-Andalusī's main argument in *Ṭabaqāt al-umam* is that knowledge flowed from the East to the West, with the Abbasids playing a pivotal role in its transfer. Al-Bustānī was trying to modify this argument by suggesting that, in the nineteenth century, knowledge needed to flow back from the West to the East, from Europe to the Islamdom. But in his appropriation of the argument, al-Bustānī reproduced al-Andalusī's valorization of the Abbasids.

The orientalists repeated al-Bustānī's and other *Nahḍah* figures' idealization of the Abbasid Age, positing the Abbasids as an ideal model to emulate to achieve Arab modernity, without necessarily criticizing al-Bustānī. In other words, the orientalists' favorable view of al-

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[23] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭbah*, 159-160.

Bustānī facilitated the spread of his (unintended) bias for the Abbasids, thus contributing to the negative attitude in the sources toward the period beginning from the fall of the Abbasids in 1258 and ending with Napoleon's campaign in Egypt in 1798. Several key twentieth-century nationalist historians of Arabic were also inspired by al-Bustānī, including Louis Cheikho – the author of *Tārīkh al-ādab al-ʿArabīyah* and editor of al-Andalusī's *Ṭabaqāt al-umam* – George Antonius, and Albert Hourani. These Arab historians, like the orientalists, continued the *Nahḍah* discourse and idealized the Abbasid period at the expense of the centuries that followed their fall.

A close examination of the sources, which I undertake in chapters 2, 3, and 4 below, reveals more continuities than ruptures between the so-called post-classical period and the nineteenth century. These continuities suggest that the literary products of the nineteenth century, which have been characterized as "modern" and "unique," were products of borrowing, interpretation, and adaptation of Islamicate works from the "premodern" period. In the *Khuṭbah*, al-Bustānī focused on the circulation of knowledge and its impact on civilizational progress. In another work, *Nafīr Surīyah* (*The Clarion of Syria*, 1860), he focused on the importance of unity to progress. The circulation of knowledge, unity between members of the same state, and the decline and efflorescence of states resonate with the topics about which Bilgrāmī and al-Suwaydī were writing in the eighteenth century.

Literary Continuity between the Nineteenth Century and Previous Centuries
To determine whether the nineteenth century was exceptional, we must consider it in the context of Islamic civilizational history. Notwithstanding Sheehi's and Gibb's assertions about the turbulent character of the nineteenth century, every period in the history of Islamic civilization can be described as an "era of storm and stress," and the closer the period's leading intellectuals were

to their political or military benefactors, the more exposed they were to the ongoing "epistemological wrenching." If we look at the biographies and careers of figures, beginning from the early Islamic period, through the Abbasid, and to the rise of Turkic ruling dynasties, we find examples of military violence and political uncertainty and their impact on the products and fates of patronized intellectuals. In this regard, the nineteenth century is not exceptional.

To understand why nineteenth-century authors, who later became enshrined as *Nahdah* pioneers, chose particular topics, it is useful to connect the nineteenth century with the two previous centuries and to apply a theory grounded in Islamicate civilization. A thread that seems to unify nineteenth-century and eighteenth-century authors is Ibn Khaldūn, or, more appropriately, their Khaldūnism, that is, their direct and indirect interpretations of his civilizational and historiographical theories. Far from being exceptional, when viewed from the perspective of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, nineteenth-century intellectuals, such as al-Bustānī, seem to walk in the footsteps of their predecessors. They continue to believe that civilizations exist in a hierarchy, that civilizational decay is inevitable but can be checked or reversed through knowledge provided by history's examples.

If we trace the continuity of Khaldūnian ideas, we do not need to emphasize social conditions, specifically the role of violence and political uncertainty, to understand the issues with which eighteenth and nineteenth-century intellectuals grappled. If civilizations inevitably go through cycles of ascendency and decline, as posited by Ibn Khaldūn, then the violence and uncertainty of the nineteenth century should have been anticipated by nineteenth-century Arab intellectuals as part of Islamic civilization's life cycle. Their focus on many of the same topics as Ibn Khaldūn helps us answer other questions, such as why and in which areas the so-called *Nahḍah* pioneers looked to emulate Europe to remedy what they believed was their civilization's ailment.

Reading nineteenth-century texts as a continuation of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century, Ottoman and Mughal texts, without relying wholly on twentieth-century theory or overstating the role of European colonialism, may reveal what truly preoccupied Arab authors in this period and why. Given the evidence that Ibn Khaldūn's ideas impacted later authors writing in Ottoman Turkish and Arabic, it behooves us to consider eighteenth-century texts within a Khaldūnian framework. Moreover, reading nineteenth-century authors alongside their predecessors from previous centuries reveals more continuities than breaks between the two. It lends further support to the thesis that the Khaldūnian framework is more appropriate than postcolonialism, historical materialism, or poststructuralism for understanding eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Arabic texts. This framework explains the continued preoccupation of Arabic texts with issues such as language, sectarian identity, education, and government. These issues cannot be explained by other frameworks without overstating the role of European colonialism or the effect of material conditions.

Focusing on the impact of Ibn Khaldūn's ideas on Islamicate intellectual production in the eighteenth century and examining the continuity between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century authors is crucial for helping us understand the *Nahḍah*, the so-called beginning of Arab modernity in the nineteenth century. This focus also illuminates all that the notion of modernity implies, including the break with a decadent past (*ʿaṣr al-inḥiṭāṭ*), renaissance (*nahḍah*, *yaqẓah*), contrasts between a dark age and an age of enlightenment (*tanawwur*), and patriotism (*ḥubb al-waṭan*). The continuity suggests that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Arabic texts may even be read as belonging to a single era, unified by the authors' engagement with Ibn Khaldūn's ideas, either directly or through his interpreters.

Finally, the work of early twentieth-century orientalists may shed more light on the impact of the Khaldūnian influence on conceptions of identity, place, and history. Twentieth-century historians of Arabic literature promulgated the idea that modern Arabic identity was distinct and antithetical to the historical and cultural conditions of the previous centuries. In literary histories, such as Clement Huart's *A History of Arabic Literature* (1903), R.A. Nicholson's *A Literary History of the Arabs* (1907), and H.A.R. Gibb's *Arabic Literature* (1926), the authors identify Napoleon's campaign in 1798 as a watershed moment that awakened a sense of Arabness in the people of Egypt and a desire to retrieve a lost, ideal past identified with the Abbasid Age. This view, clearly Eurocentric and colonialist, persisted into the postcolonial period. M.M. Badawi, editor of the modern volume of the *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, defined the literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as "the literature of the modern Arab world… generally assumed to begin with the French campaign in Egypt in 1798."[24] The parallel between the orientalists and Badawi is perhaps indicative of the arrival of a new coterie of Khaldūnian interpreters on the scene. These new scholars continued to be preoccupied with the status of Arab civilization, writing histories of, and in defense of, their *dawlah*. The difference is that the *dawlah* is now the nation state.

In the what follows, I offer a brief overview of Ibn Khaldūn's life as an intellectual in order to discuss how and where Khaldūnian ideas spread in the intervening centuries after his death. I highlight some of the authors employed by the Egyptian Mamluk and the Ottoman states, who adapted ideas from Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah* and *Kitāb al-ʿIbar* for the benefit of their respective state.

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[24] Badawi, ed., *Modern Arabic Literature*, 2.

Ibn Khaldūn: A Brief Overview

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Khaldūn was born in Tunis in a family of Andalusian origin in 1332.[25] His great-great-grandfather, al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad, settled in northwest Africa after emigrating from Iberia and established the connection between the Khaldūn family and the ruling Ḥafṣid house.[26] At twenty years old, Ibn Khaldūn left Tunis and his government post of *Ṣāḥib al-ʿalāmah* (Master of the Signature)[27] and went west, eventually landing in Fez, where he worked in the Merinid court from 1354 to 1362.[28] In 1375, Ibn Khaldūn retired to a remote castle in western Algeria for four years and wrote the first draft of the *Muqaddimah*, after which he returned to Tunis. He had to emigrate again, however, to escape the political intrigues of his rivals; and he used pilgrimage to Mecca as a pretext to go east. He arrived in Cairo in 1383 where the Egyptian Mamluk al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Barqūq welcomed him into his circle and granted him posts as professor and then judge.[29] In 1400, Ibn Khaldūn accompanied Barqūq's son, Faraj, to Damascus to confront Timūr and his army as they approached Syria. In 1401, with Damascus under siege and Faraj having returned to Egypt to quell a rebellion, Ibn Khaldūn met Timūr outside the city walls. The Mamluks had been unable to stop Timūr from besieging Damascus. The Mamluk judges, including Ibn Khaldūn, decided to surrender the city to Timūr, which ultimately resulted in the city being sacked by Timūr's troops. Ibn Khaldūn and his colleagues managed to leave unharmed after Ibn Khaldūn obtained a guarantee of safety from Timūr. Six months after the siege, Ibn Khaldūn

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[25] I rely on Rosenthal's detailed biography of Ibn Khaldūn in the introduction to the English translation of *The Muqaddimah*. Rosenthal, "Introduction," xxix-lxvii.

[26] Ibn Khaldūn's Andalusian ancestors were descended from a certain Khaldūn, who had reportedly migrated to Iberia from the Arabian Peninsula in the eighth century. His reported origins from Ḥaḍramawt, in modern-day Yemen, earned Ibn Khaldūn the appellation al-Ḥaḍramī. Rosenthal, "Introduction," xxxiii-xxxviii.

[27] Rosenthal, "Introduction," xli.

[28] After which he left for Granada, where he remained from 1363 to 1365. Rosenthal, "Introduction," xlix, xliii.

[29] In return, Ibn Khaldūn renamed his *History* after Barqūq, calling it *al-Ẓāhirī* after Barqūq's regnal name, al-Ẓāhir. Rosenthal, "Introduction," lviii-lix.

obtained permission to return to Cairo; he died there in 1406.[30] His long career in North African politics helps explain his inclination to examine states and their relationship to civilization and history. The *Muqaddimah* and the *History*[31] are the products of Ibn Khaldūn's interests; they constitute his meditations on the factors that contribute to the rise and decline of civilization.

Ibn Khaldūn scholars have long tried to portray him as an intellectual ahead of his time, as a forerunner of modernity. Most recently, Aziz al-Azmeh, Stephen Dale, and Robert Irwin have pushed back against this portrayal. Without diminishing the importance of the *Muqaddimah* and the *History*, al-Azmeh, Dale, and Irwin place Ibn Khaldūn within his fourteenth-century, North African context. Azmeh situates Ibn Khaldūn in a tradition in which the production of historical writing marks a people's existence as a nation but does so only insofar as the nation exists within the framework of a state (*dawlah*), or as an organized community under the absolute leadership of a king with whom the state and nation is identified. Al-Azmeh describes this type of historical writing as "the appurtenance of a sovereign to a state, *dawlah*, and the state is the state of a people in which the ruling dynasty… stands for the people and represents it completely." Thus, if the state should fall, the people would disappear from history.[32] Since the state is identified with its ruler, "the extinction of a nation is synonymous with the extinction of its sovereignty, and its historical significance is coterminous with the appurtenance to it of a power structure, i.e. a dynasty."[33] Outside of a *dawlah*, nations have no recourse to history. Being left outside of the historical record condemns nations to nonexistence. The only history is that of the state.

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[30] He was buried in the Sufi cemetery outside Cairo's Naṣr Gate. Rosenthal, "Introduction," lxiii-lxv.

[31] The *Kitāb al-ʿibar wa dīwān al-mubtadaʾ wa-l-khabar: fī ayyām al-ʿarab wa-l-ʿajam wa-l-barbar wa man ʿāṣarahum min dhawī al-sulṭān al-akbar* (The book of lessons and the register of origins and information: on the circumstances of Arabs, Persians, and Berbers, and contemporary major powers).

[32] Aziz al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldun: An Essay in Reinterpretation* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 13.

[33] Al-Azmeh, 14.

Ibn Khaldūn posited a hierarchy of nations that was informed by the Arabic cosmographical tradition.[34] In this hierarchy, the Arabs are descended from the nations of ʿĀd, Thamūd and Ṭasm, who are said to be descended from Noah's progeny after the flood.[35] Ibn Khaldūn considered these ancient Arabs to be the "most Arab of the Arabs" or "*al-ʿArab al-ʿĀriba*."[36] Inspired by Ibn Khaldūn, later Arab authors conceived of homeland and affinity to it within the framework of a state located somewhere among other states in civilizational history. Ibn Khaldūn describes his project by saying that he had "composed a book on history," in which he had "lifted the veil from conditions as they arise in the various generations. [And] arranged it in an orderly way in chapters dealing with historical facts and reflections." In the book, Ibn Khaldūn goes on to say, he showed "how and why dynasties (*duwal*) and civilizations (*ʿumrān*) originate."[37]

Ibn Khaldūn's definition of history and its underlying assumptions can be traced back to the tenth century. Ibn Khaldūn's project was inspired by *Murūj al-dhahab* by the historian and geographer al-Masʿūdī (d. 956), whom he viewed as a model, even implying that he was the Masʿūdī of his generation. In the first section of the *Muqaddimah*, in which Ibn Khaldūn enumerates the merits of history (*fī faḍl ʿilm al-tārīkh*) and gives the above definition, he discusses the merits of al-Masʿūdī as follows:

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[34] Al-Azmeh, 15-17.

[35] Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh al-ʿallāmah Ibn Khaldūn: Kitāb al-ʿIbar wa-dīwan al-mubtadaʾ wa-l-khabar*, ed. Y. A. Dāghir, (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1956) 2:28.

[36] Ibn Khaldūn, *K. al-ʿIbar*, 2:34. Ibn Khaldūn subscribes to the story of the origin of the Arabs from ʿĀd, but offers minor corrections, dismissing narratives that he considers weak or improbable. In the story, one of ʿĀd's descendants was the first to use the Arabic script and one of his children (ʿĀd was said to have fathered 4000 children and married 1000 women and lived for 300 years) conquered the Levant, India, and Iraq and built Damascus. Ibn Khaldūn, *K. al-ʿIbar*, 2:35-36. The Berbers, on the other hand, created Arab genealogies for themselves, not because they considered the Arabs the most noble nation, but to insert themselves into an established nation and the high culture of the time. Al-Azmeh argues that "it is only once the Berbers are established as a name that they can be considered as the possessors of states, and therefore as historically significant." Al-Azmeh, 40.

[37] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:11.

> There is a need at this time that someone should systematically set down the situation of the world among all regions and races, as well as the customs and sectarian beliefs that have changed for their adherents, doing for this age what al-Masʿūdī did for his. This should be a model for future historians to follow.[38]

Both Stephen Dale and Robert Irwin have noted al-Masʿūdī's influence on the *Muqaddimah*.[39] Whereas Irwin points out that al-Masʿūdī was "steeped in the writings of the ancient Greeks in a way that Ibn Khaldun never was," Dale argues that Ibn Khaldūn belongs to the same intellectual lineage as that of philosophically inspired political theorists. This lineage began with "Plato, Aristotle, and Galen; continued with Greco-Islamic rationalists."[40] Irwin and Dale suggest that Ibn Khaldūn most likely fashioned his theory out of ancient Greek philosophical ideas that he accessed indirectly through al-Masʿūdī. We know that al-Masʿūdī wrote history as a form of edification for readers. As Julie Scott Meisami has argued, for al-Masʿūdī, historical narratives constitute *adab*, or lessons, in the sense of discipline.[41] Writing history as edification seems to be what Ibn Khaldūn wants to emulate. Thus, the historians who followed Ibn Khaldūn were indirectly receiving from al-Masʿūdī a theory and practice of historical writing that were informed by Greek philosophy, the very tradition that Europeans attempted to revive beginning in the eighteenth century.

The eighteenth-century revival of Greek philosophy in Europe might explain why Arabs and European Orientalists conceived of Arab civilization's place within world history in similar ways. The Greek philosophical heritage constituted the grounds for a mutually-comprehensible discourse about civilizational history and the role that each civilization played in it. Moreover, there is evidence that Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah* may have been carried by travelers from the

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[38] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:65.

[39] Dale, *The Orange Trees*, 6-7. Robert Irwin, *Ibn Khaldun: An Intellectual Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 10-11.

[40] Irwin, *Ibn Khaldun*, 10; Dale, *The Orange Trees*, 6.

[41] Julie Scott Meisami concludes that both late-antique Islamic and European histories share the concept of "ethical-rhetorical" historiography, or the idea that history is to be written using advanced rhetorical skills to convey ethical lessons. Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 7; Julie Scott Meisami, "History as Literature," *Iranian Studies* 33 (2000): 18.

Islamicate realm into Europe. In his biography of Ibn Khaldūn, Irwin discusses the circular journey of Ibn Khaldūn's text from the east to the west and back, focusing on al-Ṭahṭāwī's encounter in France with Silvestre de Sacy, who translated parts of the *Muqaddimah* in his *Chrestomathie arabe* and included a biography of Ibn Khaldūn taken from *Kashf al-ẓunūn* by Kātib Çelebi (d. 1657).[42] Known widely among scholars of Arabic literature, *Kashf al-ẓunūn* is the encyclopedic work of Kātib Çelebi, a figure who played an important role in the transmission of Khaldūnian ideas beginning in the seventeenth century, which I discuss in the following sections.[43]

The Reception of Ibn Khaldūn

My own (non-exhaustive) search reveals that, prior to Kātib Çelebi, several Egyptian Mamluk authors whose texts served as models or sources for later writers either cite Ibn Khaldūn directly or engage with his ideas. The Mamluk Egyptian authors who were affiliated with the state and who referenced Ibn Khaldūn helped to transfer his ideas to their later, Ottoman counterparts in the seventeenth century. The fifteenth-century author, al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418),[44] a secretary in the chancery of the Mamluk administration in Cairo, exemplifies this intellectual transfer. In his manual for state secretaries, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*, al-Qalqashandī relies on Ibn Khaldūn's *History* to derive illustrative anecdotes.[45] This type of engagement with Ibn Khaldūn continued throughout the fifteenth century, both directly or through the work of his students and their students in Mamluk

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[42] Muṣṭafā ibn ʿAbdallāh Ḥajjī Khalīfah, known as Kātib Çelebi (1609-1657). Arabists know Kātib Çelebi primarily for his monumental encyclopedia, *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asmāʾ al-kutub wa-l-funūn* (Uncovering doubts about the names of books and arts), which he wrote over the course of twenty years and completed a final draft up to the Arabic letter *hāʾ* in 1652.

[43] Irwin, *Ibn Khaldun*, 165. On the popularity of Ibn Khaldūn's ideas among Europeans in the nineteenth century and their sources, see Warren E. Gates, "The Spread of Ibn Khaldun's Ideas on Climate and Culture," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28 (1967):415-422.

[44] "al-Ḳalḳashandī," in *EI2*.

[45] In the *Ṣu al-aʿshā bḥ*, al-Qalqashandī refers to Ibn Khaldūn when describing a historical event or trying to make a historiographical point. *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā* also happened to attract the attention European orientalists. Walter Bjorkman studied and commented on the *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*. Thus, by studying the *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*, European orientalists would also get the sense that Ibn Khaldūn was an authority on history.

Egypt, especially Cairo, which became a center for Islamic learning under the Mamluks then under the Ottomans. Khaldūnian ideas were disseminated in Arabic first and foremost through Ibn Khaldūn's students, such as al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442) and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 1449). The latter was a teacher of the *ḥadīth* scholars and historians, al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505) and al-Sakhāwī (d. 1497), both of whom constitute important sources for later authors. In his text, *al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ* (The brilliant light), al-Sakhāwī mentions Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. al-Azraq (d.1491), whose work *Badāʾiʿ al-silk fī ṭabāʾiʿ al-mulk* (The marvels of organization: on the nature of sovereignty), as Rosenthal points out, is an abridgement of Ibn Khaldūn's discussion of politics in the *Muqaddimah*.[46]

In the seventeenth century, Kātib Çelebi, a secretary in the finance department of the Ottoman Empire, classified Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah* and *History* under the science of history in his *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asāmī al-kutub wa-l-funūn*.[47] Kātib Çelebi was not merely familiar with Ibn Khaldūn's work, he was also influenced by the *Muqaddimah*. The influence of Ibn Khaldūn can be seen on his introduction to *Kashf* and also on Kātib Çelebi's classification the different sciences in the text. He cites all the books (*kutub*) and sciences (*funūn*) produced in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish – 14,500 books and 300 sciences followed by a brief description of each. Kātib Çelebi's comprehensive list of "sciences" includes disciplines such as astronomy, literature, Quran exegesis, calligraphy, veterinary medicine, general history and the history of caliphs, prophetic traditions, city management (or city planning), home management (or home economics), and surgery. These disciplines, according to Kātib Çelebi, originated with the Greeks. Thus, the 14,500 books he cites are a continuation of the Greek tradition in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.

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[46] Rosenthal, "Introduction," lxvi. Al-Maqqarī, relating on the authority of al-Sakhāwī, says that Muhammad ibn al-Azraq had abridged the *Muqaddimah*. Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Dar Ṣādir), 1:699.

[47] Al-Qalqashadī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*; Kātib Çelebi in *ʿilm qawānīn al-kitābah*.

Kātib Çelebi's understanding of the sciences resonates with Ibn Khaldūn's. In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn identifies four fundamental characteristics that distinguish humans from animals, i.e. the characteristics that distinguish rational from non-rational animals. These inherently human characteristics are: (1) the desire for a "governing rule and forceful power" (*al-ḥukm al-wāziʿ wa-l-sulṭān al-qāhir*); (2) endeavoring to earn a livelihood, or the need to perform labor; (3) civilizational development (*ʿumrān*); (4) the ability to produce sciences and crafts (*al-ʿulūm wa-l-ṣanāʾiʿ*) through rational thinking that distinguishes humans from non-human animals.[48] Like Ibn Khaldūn, Kātib Çelebi was interested in the sciences and crafts and, more importantly, knowledge, which he describes in his introduction as being natural and necessary for humans. Echoing Ibn Khaldūn, Kātib Çelebi says:

> The human being shares with animals all their animality, namely, sensation, movement, feeding, and other needs. But the human being differs from animals through thinking and the attainment of general concepts, which he uses to guide him to obtain his livelihood and to cooperate with others of his kind in obtaining it.[49]

The human being, according to Kātib Çelebi, is always thinking of how to earn a living and how to follow the word of God through His prophets. In other words, the human being focuses on his survival in this world and the next. The sciences and crafts grow out of this preoccupation and for its sake – *wa-ʿan hādhā al-fikr tanshaʾ al-ʿulūm wa-l-ṣanāʾiʿ thumma li-ajlih*. Like Ibn Khaldūn, Kātib Çelebi sees the human as a rational animal; human rationality produces scientific disciplines that help humanity thrive and become more rational.

In the first main section of *Kashf*, Kātib Çelebi argues that the "Islamic sciences" are of two types: the rational sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-ḥikmīyah*) and the transmitted sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-naqlīyah*). The transmitted sciences, which Kātib Çelebi also defines as the "legal sciences" (*al-*

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[48] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, 1:336.
[49] Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 1:23.

ʿulūm al-sharʿīyah), encompass all the disciplines dealing with the Arabic language, which include Quran exegesis, prophetic traditions (ḥadīth), Quran recitation (qirāʾāt), law (fiqh), theology (kalām), Arabic syntax (naḥw), and oratory (khuṭbah). In the second main section of *Kashf*, Kātib Çelebi argues that most of the proponents of the Islamic sciences are not Arabs, a phenomenon which, he says:

> [Is] strange but true because intellectuals of the Muslim community who specialize in the legalist and rational disciplines are mostly non-Arabs, with some rare exceptions, and even if one of them was a descendant of Arabs, then his [native] language is not Arabic.[50]

The reason for the underrepresentation of Arabs among specialists, according to Kātib Çelebi, lies in the early Muslim community's nomadism: "The community, in its beginning, did not cultivate any science or craft because of the demands of nomadic life, but rather the men used to transmit legal rulings by heart."[51] These early Muslims, who were all Arabs, did not keep written records (tadwīn) nor did the Prophet's Companions' early followers (al-tābiʿīn) need to. Instead they had specialists, called reciters (al-qurrāʾ) who would transmit legal rulings orally.[52] But when corruption threatened the Arabic language during the reign of Hārūn al-Rashīd,[53] it became necessary to standardize Quran exegesis and to limit (taqyīd) prophetic traditions, which necessitated knowing the chains of transmission, rules of grammar and syntax. To fight the corruption of language and to limit the production of legal rules based on weak traditions, the legal sciences became the main standards (malikāt)[54] for deriving inferences and standards. Thus, scholars developed the rules of Arabic grammar, of inference and of analogy into distinct

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[50] Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 1:40-41.

[51] Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 1:41.

[52] "*wa-kānū yusammūn al-mukhtaṣṣīn bi-ḥaml dhālik wa-naqlih al-qurrāʾ fa-hum qurrāʾ kitāb allāh subḥānah wa-taʿālā wa-l-sunnah al-maʾthūrah.*" Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 1:41.

[53] Kātib Çelebi does not give a specific reason why corruption increased during this time.

[54] "*wa-ṣārat al-ʿulūm al-sharʿīyah kulluhā malikāt fī al-istinbāṭ wa-l-tanẓīr wa-l-qiyās.*" Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 1:41.

disciplines that required education. These foundational rules, then, turned into the crafts that Kātib

Çelebi is classifying.[55]

Of all people, according to Kātib Çelebi, "the Arabs are the farthest from [these crafts]"

and for this reason the Islamic sciences, which developed into specialized crafts or disciplines, are

associated with towns and settled spaces, as opposed to nomadic spaces (*fa-ṣārat al-ʿulūm li-dhālik*

ḥaḍarīyah). Moreover, he argues:

> Townspeople are non-Arabs or the like (*aw man fī maʿnāhum*) because settled people are
> the successors of non-Arabs in civilization and its status with respect to crafts and
> professions. They are more adequate [as scientists and craftsmen] because of the
> civilization that has been established among them since the Persian state."[56]

Kātib Çelebi names several pioneering figures who were non-Arabs, such as the early Arabic

grammarians Sībawayh and al-Zajjāj.[57] The idea that non-Arabs contributed more than the Arabs

to the development of the Islamic sciences resonates with Ibn Khaldūn's ideas in the *Muqaddimah*

regarding the civilization of settled versus nomadic people. To explain how this is so, we must

understand how Ibn Khaldūn used the terms development (*ʿumrān*), settled or urban (*ḥaḍarī*), and

nomadic or rural (*badawī*). Civilization, according to Ibn Khaldūn, happens because people "have

to dwell in common and settle together in cities and hamlets for the comforts of companionship

and for the satisfaction of human needs, as a result of the natural disposition of human beings

toward cooperation in order to be able to make a living"[58] (*al-ʿumrān huwa al-tasākun wa-l-*

tanāzul fī miṣr aw ḥillah li-l-uns bi-l-ʿashīr wa-iqtiḍāʾ al-ḥājāt li-mā fī ṭibāʿihim min al-taʿāwun

ʿalā al-maʿāsh).[59] Ibn Khaldūn associates civilization with sedentariness because that is what

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[55] Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 41.
[56] Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 41.
[57] Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 41.
[58] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:84.
[59] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:336.

makes civilization's hallmark feature - ʿumrān – possible. Since early Muslims were nomadic, their nomadism would not have allowed for ʿumrān, i.e., they lacked a civilization of their own. Since the early Muslims were also Arabs, he concludes that Arabs (because of their nomadism) lacked the ability to build and sustain a civilization – unlike non-Arabs (ʿajam), namely, Persians.

Even though he does not explicitly refer to Ibn Khaldūn, Kātib Çelebi's claim that Islamic towns and cities are inhabited by non-Arabs who cultivate crafts and sciences is Khaldūnian. According to this view, nomads live on the periphery of cities – in mountains, rural encampments, and on the edges of deserts – while settled populations live in cities and villages, in (walled) towns and the countryside and take refuge behind the walls of cities and towns:

> Civilization may be either desert (Bedouin) civilization as found in outlying regions and mountains, in hamlets (near suitable) pastures in waste regions, and on the fringes of sandy deserts. Or it may be sedentary civilization as found in cities, villages, towns, and small communities that serve the purpose of protection and fortification by means of walls."[60] (*wa min hādhā al-ʿumrān mā yakūn badawīyan, wa-huwa alladhī yakūn fī al-ḍawāḥī wa-fī al-jibāl wa-fī al-ḥilal al-muntajiʿah fī al-qifār wa-aṭrāf al-rimāl. Wa-minhu mā yakūn ḥaḍarīyan wa-huwa alladhī bi-l-amṣār wa-l-qurā wa-l-mudun wa-l-madāʾir li-l-iʿtiṣām bihā wa-l-taḥaṣṣun bi-judrānihā).*[61]

Each group exhibits its own unique features due to its social organization.[62] However, when a nomadic civilization conquers a settled one and the nomads succeed the settled people as rulers, their new state (*dawlah*) begins to emulate the old one. This, according to Ibn Khaldūn, happened with the Arabs when they overran the settled Byzantine and Persian civilizations during the Islamic conquests. After conquering Persia and Byzantium, Ibn Khaldūn says, the Arabs "made their daughters and sons their servants. At that time, the Arabs had no sedentary culture at all." To this he adds that "the Arabs, then, enslaved the people of the former dynasties and employed them in

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[60] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, transl. Rosenthal, 1:84-5.
[61] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:336.
[62] The word which Ibn Khaldūn uses to indicate human organization is *ijitimāʿ*. Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:336.

their occupations and their household needs."[63] That there was no Arabic urban culture until the Arabs conquered the Persians is the main premise of Kātib Çelebi's argument. Thus, by obtaining urban culture and establishing a state, Arabs entered into history.

Kātib Çelebi, like Ibn Khaldūn before him, considers history a science in the service of the state. He defines the science of history as knowledge of different "communities, their lands, their rituals and habits, the character of their people, and their lineages" (*ʿilm al-tārīkh huwa maʿrifat aḥwāl al-ṭawāʾif wa-buldānihim wa-rusūmihim wa-ʿādātihim wa-ṣanāʾiʿ ashkhāṣihim wa-ansābihim*). The goal of writing history is to make past events known, and history's benefit is the examples it provides (*al-gharaḍ minhu al-wuqūf ʿalā al-aḥwāl al-māḍiyah wa-fāʾidatuh al-ʿibrah bi-tilka al-aḥwāl*).[64] In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn regards history as the distillation of information about past events from earlier communities' (*ṭawāʾif*) for the purpose of gaining insight from their experiences.[65] He says:

> History refers to events that are peculiar to a particular age or race. Discussion of the general conditions of regions, races, and periods constitutes the historian's foundation. Most of his problems rest upon that foundation, and his historical information derives clarity from it.[66]

Both Kātib Çelebi and Ibn Khaldūn consider history to be didactic and predicated on the existence of a state. People, or communities cannot enter the historical record without forming a state identified with a sovereign.

The engagement with Ibn Khaldūn's ideas on civilizational history gained momentum in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as they circulated among Ottoman authors, such as Kātib

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[63] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, transl. Rosenthal, 1:347-48.
[64] Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, 1:271
[65] Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī will later echo both authors in his definition of history even though neither Kātib Çelebi nor al-Ṭahṭāwī reference Ibn Khaldūn in their definition of history.
[66] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:63.

Çelebi and Naima (d. 1716), and many others who were influenced by them.[67] Franz Rosenthal has pointed out the Khaldūnian revival among seventeenth-century Ottoman authors, noting the revival and the key figures responsible for it, albeit without going into detail regarding its impact. Fleischer makes a similar observation as Rosenthal about the Ottoman rediscovery of Ibn Khaldūn, but he only examines its impact on eighteenth-century Ottoman-Turkish historiography.[68]

I suggest that Ottoman authors affiliated with the state, in Cairo and Istanbul, played an important role in transmitting the ideas of Ibn Khaldūn from his Mamluk-Egyptian interpreters to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Arab authors. My survey of scholarship reveals that the reception of Ibn Khaldūn in the Ottoman realm may be traced back to the emergence of the debate on the decline of the Ottoman Empire, which gained popularity among authors employed by the Ottoman state. The eastward migration of influential Maghrebi scholars who adapted Ibn Khaldūn's ideas, east to Ottoman territories after the collapse of the Moroccan Saʿdid dynasty in 1603 likely stimulated further interest in his ideas. Below I outline the reception of Ibn Khaldūn in the seventeenth century and conclude by highlighting who transmitted Ibn Khaldūn's ideas to eighteenth-century Arab authors.

Some Causes behind Ibn Khaldūn's Popularity in the Ottoman Empire

The debate on the decline of the Ottoman state arose among state secretaries beginning in early seventeenth century and became a popular trope among Ottoman historians. After a period of expansion, which included the conquest of Egypt from the Mamluks in 1516-17, the Ottoman Empire began to experience fiscal problems and corruption in government offices. Nevertheless, it was far from being an empire in decline. As Bernard Lewis points out, compared with the debate

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[67] Rosenthal, "Introduction," lxvii.
[68] Fleischer, "Royal Authority," 199.

on the reasons behind the decline of the Roman Empire, which began when the sack of Rome demonstrated the weaknesses of the Roman state, the debate on the decline of the Ottoman Empire began among Ottoman historians and state secretaries when the Empire "was at its zenith."[69] Nonetheless, the decline discourse seems to have influenced certain Ottoman authors who worked for the state, including Kātib Çelebi.

Like other authors before him who wrote about Ottoman decline, Kātib Çelebi was affiliated with the state, having occupied various positions in the finance department.[70] In 1653, when the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed IV held a meeting with high state officials to investigate the reasons behind a deficit in the state finances, Kātib Çelebi attended some of the discussions. He later presented his own views on the reasons behind the deficit in an essay titled "The mode of procedure for rectifying the damage, 1653" which he attached to a longer work called *Qavānīn-i ʿayn-i ʿālī*.[71] Like the *Kashf*, "The mode of procedure" evidences Ibn Khaldūn's influence on Kātib Çelebi. Even though Kātib Çelebi does not explicitly reference Ibn Khaldūn, according to Fleischer, the Leipzig autograph of the essay contains a marginal note that cites the *Muqaddimah* as a source.[72] Moreover, Kātib Çelebi's conception of the state and his language indicate that he was influenced by the *Muqaddimah*, as he "sets forth a theory clearly derived from the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldūn, of the rise and fall of human societies."[73] Kātib Çelebi uses the human body as a metaphor to explain the decline of the Ottoman state and to cast statesmen as physicians. He addresses the so-called ailments of the empire by focusing on the peasantry, the army, and the treasury and argues that the oppression of the peasantry leads to the draining of the

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[69] Bernard Lewis, "Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline," *Islamic Studies* 1 (1962): 774.

[70] Kateb Celebi was not a *divshirme*, or slave soldier, he was born in Istanbul and his father had also had a career with the state. Lewis, "Ottoman Observers," 74.

[71] *Destur al-ʿamal li-islah al-khalal*. Lewis, 79. Cornell Fleischer offers his own analysis of Kātib Çelebi's essay; I use his translation of the title.

[72] Fleischer, "Royal Authority," 218.

[73] Lewis, 79.

treasury and contributes to the decline of the state.[74] Kātib Çelebi concludes the essay by offering suggestions as to how the state may be reformed. The solution, according to him, must come from the "man of the sword," a military ruler. To reverse the decline of the state, the military ruler must fix the deficit, reduce state expenditure and the poverty of the peasants, shrink the oversized army, implement fiscal reforms, and abolish the practice of selling government offices.[75]

The metaphor of the state as a body, in which the health of one part impacts the rest, is arguably one of the most identifiable features of the *Muqaddimah*. Other features of the *Muqaddimah* include the relationships that Ibn Khaldūn highlights between a state's finances, its military, and its ruler's administration of justice. The same emphasis on fiscal reform runs through Kātib Çelebi's proposed strategy for Ottoman reform. Having accepted that the empire was in decline, Kātib Çelebi may have turned to Ibn Khaldūn to formulate his recommendations for reform. In the process, he characterizes the state as a human body and the statesman as a physician. Moreover, he emphasized the link between capital, the military, and justice, especially as he supports his argument with figures from the Ottoman finance department.

Mustafa Naima (d. 1716) was another author who attempted to address Ottoman decline by appropriating Khaldūnian theories of statehood, as represented in Kātib Çelebi and Qinālızāde ʿAlī Çelebi (d. 1572). One of these ideas was the "circle of justice" or "circle of equity," which Ibn Khaldūn calls *al-dāʾirah* (the circle) and Qinālızāde ʿAlī Çelebi terms *daire-i ʿadliye* (the circle of justice) in Ottoman Turkish.[76] Ibn Khaldūn cites al-Masʿūdī, who transmitted the story of the circle of justice in the form of a Persian parable as found in mirrors for princes works. The parable has several versions, but all of them identify the different conditions necessary to constitute a state.

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[74] Lewis, 79-81.
[75] Lewis, 81.
[76] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, transl. Rosenthal, 1:334. *EI²* s.v. "Circle of Justice" (Linda T. Darling).

Ibn Khaldūn attributes the origins of the circle to Aristotle's *Politics* (*al-kitāb al-mansūb li-Arisṭū fī al-siyāsah*), where Aristotle defined the world as a

> garden the fence of which is the dynasty. The dynasty is an authority through which life is given to proper behavior. Proper behavior is a policy directed by the ruler. The ruler is an institution supported by the soldiers. The soldiers are helpers who are maintained by money. Money is sustenance brought together by the subjects. The subjects are servants who are protected by justice. Justice is something familiar, and through it, the world persists. The world is a garden…[77]

> *Al-ʿālam bustān siyājuhu al-dawlah; al-dawlah sulṭān taḥyā bihi al-sunnah, al-sunnah siyāsah yasūsuhā al-malik; al-mulk niẓām yaʿḍidahu al-jund, al-jund aʿwān yakfiluhum al-māl; al-māl rizq tajmaʿuhu al-raʿīyah; al-raʿīyah ʿabīd yaknufuhum al-ʿadl; al-ʿadl maʾlūf wa-bihi qawām al-ʿālam; al-ʿālam bustān…*[78]

Each of these "eight sentences of political advice" (*thamān kalimāt ḥikmīyah siyāsīyah*) depends on the next and, together, they constitute a circle that continues *ad ifinitum*. Sixteenth-century Ottoman historians took these pieces of advice, modified them, and used them to comment on the status of the Ottoman state vis-à-vis its European rivals. A version of the circle is found in *Tarih-i Naima* (The history of Naima), in which Naima records Ottoman history from the year 1000 A.H. to 1070 A.H. (October 1591 to April 1660). This text became a source for later Ottoman historians.

In the preface to the first volume of the history,[79] Naima begins with the circle, which he attributes to his predecessor, Qinālızāde, who had taken it from Ibn Khaldūn.[80] The sixteenth-century Ottoman version of the circle includes five pieces of advice that are inscribed on the circumference of an actual circle, as follows:

> There is no *mulk* and *devlet* (*dawlah*) without the military and without man-power; men are to be found only by means of wealth (*māl*); wealth is only to be garnered from the

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[77] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, transl. Rosenthal, 1:81-2.

[78] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, transl. Rosenthal, 1:334.

[79] Naima dedicated this preface to his patron, Huseyin Koprulu, who became grand *wazīr* in 1699. Naima wrote a second preface, which is not as theoretical as the first, and dedicated it to his second patron, Morali Hasan, also a grand *wazīr*, who succeeded Koprulu in 1703. Lewis V. Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, ed. Norman Itzkowitz (New York: New York University Press, 1972), 65-66, 83.

[80] Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, 78.

peasantry; the peasantry is to be maintained in prosperity only through justice; and without *mulk* and *devlet* there can be no justice.[81]

Kātib Çelebi's argument for fiscal reforms in "The mode of procedure" and the emphasis he places on the link between capital, the military, and justice, embody the same values represented by Qinālızāde and Naima's version of the circle of justice and the same desire for restoring the state's strength through equity.

In addition to the Ottoman decline thesis, the migration of Maghrebi scholars, such as al-Maqqarī (1578/9-1632), to Ottoman Cairo may also have helped accelerate the transmission of Ibn Khaldūn's ideas in Ottoman territories.[82] According to Khaled El-Rouayheb, this movement of scholars from the Maghreb stimulated the study of the rational sciences in Cairo, where Maghrebi scholars enjoyed a good reputation and were sought out by local students.[83] Al-Maqqarī was part of this intellectual move eastward. In 1618, he left Fes to perform the pilgrimage and afterward he settled in Cairo, where he worked as a teacher of rational theology.[84] Franz Rosenthal identifies the beginnings of the revival of Ibn Khaldūn with al-Maqqarī, who cites numerous historical anecdotes from the *Muqaddimah* and *History* in his seminal work *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* (*The breeze of perfume*).[85] Moreover, judging from Kātib Çelebi's claim that al-Maqqarī had composed a commentary on the *Muqaddimah*, he was likely known as an authority on Ibn Khaldūn.[86] Thus,

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[81] Ibid. 78. The translation from Ottoman is Thomas's.

[82] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 131.

[83] The movement of Maghrebi scholars east to Ottoman Cairo paralleled the movement of Kurdish scholars west to Istanbul. Both movements, says El-Rouayheb, brought the two major Islamic centers of learning – Cairo and Istanbul – "under the influence of scholarly trends emanating from Kurdistan or the highlands of Morocco – regions that one might have supposed, falsely as it were, to have been intellectual backwaters." El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*, 131.

[84] El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*, 154.

[85] For example, the anecdote on the nations that ruled al-Andalus before the Islamic conquest, which he cites from Ibn Khaldun's *History*. Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās, (Beirut: Dār Ṣadir, 1968) 1:147.

[86] Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf*, (Cairo: Bulaq, 1858), 1:170; in the Istanbul 1892-1894 edition, 1:220.

the turn toward Ibn Khaldūn by Ottoman authors in Istanbul to remedy the perceived decline of the empire, coupled with the respect commanded by Maghrebi scholars in Cairo, helped to popularize Ibn Khaldūn's work in the seventeenth century.

There are several seventeenth-century authors whose works became important sources in the following centuries. Kātib Çelebi is one of them. His essay, "The mode of procedure," was influential among Ottoman historians. His *Kashf* was equally significant as a source for Arab authors in the Ottoman and the Mughal Empires. In the next chapter, I will focus on Azād Bilgrāmī, who was affiliated with a provincial court in the Mughal Empire. In what is arguably his most important Arabic text, Bilgrāmī cites Kātib Çelebi – and echoes Ibn Khaldūn – to support his argument for the superiority of Indians over pre-Islamic Arabs. When viewed on his own terms, Bilgrāmī seems to follow in the footsteps of Kātib Çelebi by engaging with the Khaldūnian theoretical framework to present a new form of poetry in Arabic. The Khaldūnian theoretical framework is Ibn Khaldūn's theory of civilizational history, his use of the human body as a metaphor for the state, and his structure for analyzing social organization. Mamluk Egyptian authors who used the *Muqaddimah* and *History* as sources contributed to transmitting Ibn Khaldūn's framework to later authors in the seventeenth-century, when the conditions were right for a revival of Ibn Khaldūn and the transmission of his framework to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century authors.

Chapter Two

Geography, Human Character, and Intellectual Legacy in the texts of Ghulām ʿAlī Āzād Bilgrāmī

Introduction

Ghulām ʿAlī Āzād ibn al-Sayyid Nūḥ al-Ḥusaynī al-Wāsiṭī al-Bilgrāmī was born in 1704 in Maydanpura, Bilgrām, he was a member of the illustrious line of the Sayyids of Bilgrām[87] and a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad through the Prophet's grandson, Ḥusayn, the son of Fāṭimah and ʿAlī.[88] He was well-versed in the Persian, Arabic, and Hindi literary traditions. As an intellectual, Bilgrāmī was well-versed in the Islamic sciences. He was trained in Arabic, the prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*) and the Islamic hagiographic tradition (*qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*) – or as he calls it "*al-siyar al-nabawīyah*" (lit. prophetic biographies).[89] Bilgrāmī also knew the Arabic poetic tradition and was himself an accomplished poet in Arabic.[90] His masterful panegyrics for the Prophet earned him the nickname "Ḥassān al-Hind," a reference to Ḥassān ibn Thābit, one of the Prophet's panegyrists. Bilgrāmī completed his education with training in Chishtī Sufism under the tutelage of a certain Luṭf Allāh al-Ḥusaynī al-Bilgrāmī.[91]

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[87] For a brief introduction to Bilgrām and its Sayyid and Shaykh families, see *EI²*, *s.v.* "Bilgrām" (A. S. Bazmee Ansari).

[88] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān* (Bombay: n.p., 1886), 118. In his own autobiographical notice from *The Coral Rosary*, he identifies Wāsiṭ, Iraq, as his place of origin (*aṣl*) and Bilgrām as his birthplace, introducing himself as: *al-faqīr Ghulām ʿAlī ibn al-Sayyid Nūḥ al-Ḥusaynī nasaban wa-l-wāsiṭī aṣlan wa-l-bilgrāmī mawladan wa-manshaʾan wa-l-ḥanafī madhhaban wa-l-chishtī ṭarīqatan.* ([I am] the modest Ghulām ʿAlī, the son of al-Sayyid Nūḥ, a descendant of al-Ḥusayn, [my] origin is from Wāsiṭ, [my] madhhab is Ḥanafī, and [I] belong to the Chishtī Sufi order). It is important to keep in mind that the relationship between *aṣl* (place of origin) and *waṭan* (homeland) is not identical for Bilgrāmī. One can choose any place and make it a homeland (*li-l-tawaṭṭun*).

[89] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 118. Bilgrāmī studied Arabic, *ḥadīth*, and biographies under the tutelage of his maternal grandfather, ʿAbd al-Jalīl ibn Mīr Aḥmad al-Bilgrāmī. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir wa-bahjat al-masāmiʿ wa-l-nawāẓir* (Hyderabad: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif, 1957), 6:201.

[90] Bilgrāmī studied Arabic poetics with his maternal uncle, Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Jalīl al-Bilgrāmī. Al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat*, 6:201, Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 250.

[91] Al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat*, 6:201.

In this chapter, I explore how Bilgrāmī's knowledge of the Islamic sciences and the Indic (Hindavī) Hindi literary tradition culminated in a patriotic argument for India in his monumental and most celebrated Arabic work, *Subḥat al-marjān fī āthār hindūstān* (*The Coral Rosary: Traditions about India and Indian Works* [henceforth *The Coral Rosary*], 1763-4). Bilgrāmī attempted to leave a lasting trace of himself in the form of a literary work, a contribution to Arabic poetics.[92] Bilgrāmī's contribution, as he conceived of it, was to Arabicize a *nāyikābheda* (catalogue of female characters) and *alaṅkāras* (ornaments of speech, figures of speech) from the Hindi court literature of early modern India. To be able to present his contribution, however, Bilgrāmī had to first present himself as an Indo-Muslim author to an Arabic community of poets with whom he imagined to be speaking. I posit that Bilgrāmī understood his relationship to his homeland in terms of Greco-Islamic philosophy, according to which a person's character is an extension of the character of the land that produces him. Thus, it was crucial for Bilgrāmī to prove the merits of India as he tried to introduce himself as an Indo-Muslim. In *The Coral Rosary*, Bilgrāmī presents Arabicized catalogues of female characters and figures of speech from the Hindi court literature tradition. Before Bilgrāmī made his literary presentation, he outlined a patriotic argument for India grounded in two significant ideas that went back to antiquity. First, the Greco-Islamic theory of climes (*iqlīm*), according to which the nature of things, human and non-human, depends on their natural environment. Second, the idea that non-Arabs were the developers and keepers of Islamic civilization, from whom Arab Muslims borrowed the crafts of forming of a civilization. Both ideas were as important to the development of Ibn Khaldūn's argument in the *Muqaddimah* as they are to Bilgrāmī's in *The Coral Rosary*. Thus, reading Ibn Khaldūn helps us understand Bilgrāmī.

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[92] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat*, ed. al-Siwānī, (Aligarh: Jāmiʿat ʿAlīgarh al-Islāmiyyah, 1976-80), 3.

Civilization as an Extension of Geography

The ancient Greeks and, later, Muslim geographers divided the inhabited world into climes based on a mathematical model that was linked to climate. According to the Greek model, the hottest climes lay along the equator and the coldest near the North Pole. The Greeks used the theory of climes to divide the world into areas and to determine the relationship between each different area. Later Muslim geographers adapted the Greek theory and developed it in a new direction by linking a clime to a type of government or authority through its capacity to produce religion and prophecy. Thus, the word *iqlīm* was redefined by the Muslims who continued to use it. It now denoted region, area, domain, and land subject to dynastic and divine rule.[93]

Ibn Khaldūn elaborates upon the influence of the natural environment on the character of human beings, linking royal authority and religion to geography. In the *Muqaddimah*, he states that the center of the inhabited world, the fourth zone, is "the most temperate cultivated region." Since the third and fifth zones border the fourth, they too are close to being temperate. These three central zones, says Ibn Khaldūn, are populated by humans who are temperate in their physical appearance as well as their character qualities. As such, the inhabitants of the central zones

> [Have] all the natural conditions necessary for a civilized life, such as ways of making a living, dwellings, crafts, sciences, political leadership, and royal authority. They thus have had (various manifestations of) prophecy, religious groups, dynasties, religious laws, sciences, countries, cities, buildings, horticulture, splendid crafts, and everything else that is temperate.[94]

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[93] Mohammad Hassan Ganji and Janis Esots, "Clime," in *Encyclopaedia Islamica online*, edited by Wilferd Madelung and Farhad Daftary. Another historical shift in the understanding of geography caused the word *iqlīm* to be redefined. At the turn of the twentieth century, as geographers began to divide the surface of the earth into continents, the term *iqlīm* came to denote climate conditions once again, as opposed to imperial territories.

[94] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:172.

Ibn Khaldūn is trying to correct what he views as a mistake on the part of genealogists who, he says, attribute human difference solely to difference in genealogy and overlook the impact of the natural environment. He argues that differences between races or nations are "in some cases due to a different descent," but in other cases, "they are caused by geographical location" and in still other cases, they are caused by "custom and distinguishing characteristics as well as descent," and, he adds, "they may be caused by anything else among the conditions, qualities, and features peculiar to the different nations."[95] Overall, Ibn Khaldūn was pushing against the tendency to trace back certain physical and character attributes to different historical personas, such as Noah's sons, and to say that the inhabitants of some zone are descended from one historical figure or another because they share certain characteristics. We may take away from Ibn Khaldūn's discussion two main points. First, temperate zones provide the conditions needed for complex civilization along with kingship. Second, complex civilization provides the conditions needed for prophecy to emerge. Thus, Ibn Khaldūn links human character, geography and prophecy.

Bilgrāmī draws a similar connection between natural environment, human character and prophecy. In the first chapter of *The Coral Rosary*, titled "On Everything the Leader of Humanity Said About India" (*fī mā warada fī-l-ḥadīth min sayyid al-bashar*),[96] Bilgrāmī highlights "*āthār*"[97] in the form of Islamic narratives pointing to the sanctity of India, especially the location where Adam reportedly left his traces.[98] He emphasizes that, according to Islamic narrative traditions,

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[95] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:173.

[96] According to Bilgrāmī, he initially wrote this chapter as a *risālah* (essay), a persuasive essay in which he argued for the preeminence of India over Arabia as the original home of Islam, relying on Quranic exegesis and prophetic traditions, titling it "The Ambergris Fragrance: What the Lord of Humanity Said about India (*Shamāmat al-ʿanbar fī mā warada fī al-hind min sayyid al-bashar*)." Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 7. Bilgrāmī, *Khazāneh-ʾi ʿāmirah* (Kanpur: Matbaʿ Nuvil Kishvar, 1871), 189.

[97] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 5.

[98] The Islamic story of the Fall bears many similarities to that in Christian and Jewish tradition. Adam and Eve are expelled from Paradise after breaking God's command and eating from the Tree of Knowledge. According to many Islamic versions of the story, Adam descends to India, Eve to Jeddah in the Arabian Peninsula, and the Serpent to Isfahan.

India is comparable to Mecca in that one of the first humans descended there: "one of the emblems of comparison is the descent of one of the mates (I mean Adam) in Ceylon and the descent of the other (I mean Eve) in Jeddah."[99] Referring to the abridged Quran exegesis by ʿAlī Dadah al-Saktawārī al-Būsnawī (d. 1598-9),[100] Bilgrāmī states that India is where the "springs of wisdom burst forth first through the first teacher sent to humanity, Adam the Sincere Friend of God, then in Mecca." In addition to being the birthplace of wisdom, Bilgrāmī points out that narrative traditions also indicate that India is the place from which pilgrimage and emigration to Mecca first occurred, since Adam performed pilgrimage to Mecca from his homeland, India.[101] To identify the location of the "special place" where Adam descended, Bilgrāmī cites al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), according to whom Adam descended on a mountain in India called *Būdh*, Eve descended in Jeddah, Satan (Iblīs) near Basra in Iraq, the serpent in Isfahan, and the peacock in Kabul, connecting these different places in the Islamic realm to the main characters in the story of the Fall.[102]

Bilgrāmī wanted to prove that India is comparable to the Hejaz in that it too is a homeland of a prophet. As the earthly home of humanity's father, India is equally sacred as the Hejaz, the first earthly home of humanity's mother. Bilgrāmī dwells on the exact location of Adam's descent in India. Reproducing al-Thaʿlabī's narrative as cited in later sources, such as al-Ghazālī, al-Suyūṭī, and al-al-Būsnawī, Bilgrāmī says that Adam descended to a place in Ceylon called Dujnā or Dijnā, where the trace of Adam's foot can still be seen on a mountain called either Būdh or Rāhūn, a tall mountain that can be seen by mariners at sea from a few days' distance, and that his foot's imprint emits an intense light.

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[99] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 9.

[100] Al-Būsnawī, *Muḥāḍarat al-awāʾil wa-musāmarat al-awākhir* (The lecture of the ancients and the conversation the moderns), an abridgment of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ṣuyūṭī and other earlier texts.

[101] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 9.

[102] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 10. Bilgrāmī (11–12) cites al-Ṣuyūṭī as having reported the same story as al-Ghazālī.

As the homeland of a prophet, India is depicted by Bilgrāmī as the source of all that is materially and spiritually valuable. Referencing al-Thaʿlabī, Bilgrāmī tells the reader that Adam brought tree leaves from heaven to the mountain on which he descended. These leaves became the origin of all fragrant substances on earth, all of which originate in India. The mountain is said to be surrounded by valleys filled with precious stones such as rubies and diamonds and valuable commodities such as oud, pepper, and musk. Important spiritually, the mountain is the location where God accepted Adam's repentance and the place from which Adam set out on pilgrimage and to which he returned. Bilgrāmī interprets the latter narrative about Adam's return to Ceylon to mean that "Adam had affection for the land of India, to which he returned, choosing it as a home."[103] Thus, Bilgrāmī emphasizes that India, the region to which Adam descended and which he chose as his home, is the source of all the precious material and spiritual gifts that God bestowed on humanity through Adam.[104] To this argument Bilgrāmī adds that, since Adam descended in India, it became entwined in sacred world history and in the story of humanity's final redemption and salvation through the relationship of Adam to Muhammad. Applying syllogistic logic, Bilgrāmī concludes that Adam's descent to India indicates that:

> [India] is the proven starting point of the light of Muhammad, the beginning of its eternal emanation and the Arabs are its end goal, its ethnic manifestation and the point where the

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[103] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 11-12, 14, 15-16, 18-20.

[104] Bilgrāmī cites many more traditions attesting to India's association with Adam's body – that Adam was created from the earth of the aforementioned Dujnā or Dijnā; that according to a tradition verified by al-Suyūṭī, Adam's grave is located on mount Būdh in Ceylon and, according to al-Ghazālī and Ṭabarī, Eve died a year later and was buried besides Adam on that mountain – Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 20. Bilgrāmī also cites traditions indicating that India is the site of God's covenant with humanity and where prophecy began, 20-22; that the black rock of the Kaʿbah, the staff of Moses, and the ark of the covenant were first brought down to India, 22-25; that gold and silver, which he says are the "most splendid of God's miracles and His greatest blessings," and mineral ores were first sent down to India from heaven, 25-27; that industrial instruments were first sent down to India from heaven, 27-30; that India is the first site where fragrant substances emerged, 31-33; that fruit trees, including the date palm, and grains first emerged in India, 33-40; that medicines first emerged in India, 40-42; that India was the site where animals appeared having descended from heaven, 42; that the flood in the story of Noah did not reach India, 43-45; that rivers, such as the Euphrates and the Nile, emerged from a heavenly river that descended to India, 45-47; he also refers to an interpretation of verse 29 from Chapter 13, al-Raʿd (Thunder) – "those who believe and do righteous deeds are blessed (ṭūbā lahum) and a fair resort" – that takes the word ṭūbā to mean "India," 48.

light terminates with His revelation, peace be upon Him. This is sufficient honor and merit for India.

Bilgrāmī explains the logic of his argument saying that "the light of Muhammad came down on Adam, and Adam came down to India. Thus, the light of Muhammad came down to India" which, he says, accords with "logical equivalence."[105] He sees the exit from paradise as part of a divine plan that includes India. He argues that eating from the forbidden tree was the *apparent* reason for the exit of Adam and Eve from paradise, but that "the hidden reason behind it is something else – it is the need for the affairs of the Divine Monism to become manifest in reality and for God's revelations to emerge for the masses to witness."[106] The argument for the transfer of divine light from Adam to Muhammad, which was posited by al-Būsnawī, links India to the Hejaz and to the origins of Islam through Adam, the first monotheistic prophet. Proving the existence of a link between India and Adam was crucial for Bilgrāmī as it attests to the good character of the land of India and the people who are a product of that land – such as himself.

As to how Bilgrāmī may have received Khaldūnian ideas regarding the impact of the natural environment on human character, we may look at the biographical dictionary in *The Coral Rosary* to find some clues. After he establishes in the first chapter that India is as good as Mecca, Bilgrāmī goes on to present a biographical dictionary in the second chapter of *The Coral Rosary* that supports his argument for India's special place in Islamic history and sacred geography. The biographical dictionary – titled *Fī dhikr al-ʿulamāʾ aʿlā allāh marātibahum* (*On scholars – may God elevate their ranks*) – consists of the biographies of forty-five Indo-Muslims who have contributed to the development of Islamic sciences: religious and literary. Carl Ernst argues that Bilgrāmī's biographical dictionary "presents a vision of the world in which Arabia is the ritual

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[105]Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 57.
[106] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 56-57.

center, but where networks of religious scholarship and humanistic culture are firmly based in India."[107] Although we may agree with Ernst's description, that does not help us understand why Bilgrāmī was concerned with depicting India as a sacred land.

Looking at his preface to the biographical dictionary, however, might shed some light. Bilgrāmī credits Indians and other non-Arab Muslims for being the guardians of the Arabic language and the Islamic sciences, echoing the seventeenth-century Ottoman writer Kātib Çelebi (d. 1657). Bilgrāmī supports his claim about the civilizational role of non-Arabs with a substantial quotation from Kātib Çelebi's encyclopedic work, *Kitāb Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asmāʾ al-kutub wa-l-funūn*. In the *Kashf*, Kātib Çelebi argues that Muslim scholars were predominately non-Arab (Ar. ʿajam, ʿajam) because the early Muslim community had memorized the Quran and the prophetic traditions and had no need for writing. Later, during the reign of Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 786-809), Muslims began to write down prophetic traditions and Quran exegesis. Doing so, argues Kātib Çelebi, put the language at risk of being corrupted, so religious scholars wrote Arabic grammar by deriving grammatical rules and authenticating traditions.

Ernst attributes Bilgrāmī's statements about non-Arabs to the *shuʿūbīyah* tradition of literary contestation between Arabs and non-Arabs that goes back to the ninth and tenth centuries C.E.[108] Bilgrāmī's statements about non-Arabs and his attempt to elevate India to the level of Hejaz may come off as *shuʿūbīyah*, which was often expressed in treatises that offered nothing else besides the discourse of contestation between Arabs and non-Arabs. Bilgrāmī, however, is not concerned with ethnic contestation. He is writing a biographical dictionary. Moreover, Bilgrāmī's biographical dictionary is encyclopedic and, in that regard, more akin to Kātib Çelebi's *Kashf al-*

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[107] Carl Ernst, "Reconfiguring South Asian Islam: From the 18th to the 19th Century," *Comparative Islamic Studies* 5 (2009): 249.
[108] Ernst, "Reconfiguring," 253.

ẓunūn. It is unlikely that Bilgrāmī's words were intended by him to be ethnic contestation between Arabs and non-Arabs. Instead, Bilgrāmī adopted Kātib Çelebi's view of non-Arab Muslims as custodians of the Arabic language and Islamic sciences, which stems from Ibn Khaldūn's idea that the environment plays a role in shaping human character. A text from the Mughal historiographical tradition may offer evidence that Bilgrāmī was writing within a framework in which environment shapes human character. Ali Anooshahr argues that beginning with the seminal sixteenth-century Mughal historical text, the *Taʾrīkh-i alfī* (*Millennial History*),[109] historical information was arranged according to the imperial geography of the Ottoman Empire (Rūm), the Safavid Empire (Irān), and the Mughal Empire (Hindūstān) and, therefore, functioned to reify, or define, these imperial territories. The dialogism in the *Millennial History*, wherein different sectarian views are equally represented in the text to allow the emperor to arbitrate between them, made it possible for the Mughal Empire to define itself against rival Muslim groups, namely, the Safavid dynasty and Sunnī, Central Asian elites in India.[110] Finally, the identity of kingship, as Anooshahr points out, "derived not from genealogy but from geography." An emperor such as Akbar was great not because of his biological ancestors but because of his environment.[111] Insofar as they are historical texts, Bilgrāmī's biographical dictionary represents a similar worldview with respect to Indo-

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[109] The *Taʾrīkh-i alfī* was commissioned by the Mughal emperor, Akbar, in 1585 as a history of Muslim states to commemorate the Muslim millennium, which fell on October 19, 1591. The seven historians who were initially assigned to write this history included four from Safavid Iran: Naqīb Khān who had escaped Safavid Iran with his father because they were suspected of being Sunnis, but in India he was considered a Shīʿī; Mīr Fatḥallāh Shīrāzī, a Shīʿī; two brothers, Abū Fatḥ and Humām Gīlānī, who were also Shīʿī; and later, Jaʿfar Beg Qazvīnī; the authors born in India were all Sunni: Ibrāhīm Sirhindī, Niẓām al-Dīn Aḥmad, and ʿAbd al-Qādir Badāʾūnī, the author of another important text – *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*. Badāʾūnī was sympathetic to the millenarian movement of the Mahdawīs and was investigated during the writing of the history for imposing Sunni views on the text, but was cleared of having any biases. According Anooshahr, harmonizing these authors' diverse sectarian identities as they wrote the book was meant to serve the overall goal of the project to outline a pan-Indian, territorial identity, which found a more defined expression at the end of the sixteenth century in Akbar's doctrine of *sulḥ-i kul*. Ali Anooshahr, "Dialogism and Territoriality in a Mughal History of the Islamic Millennium," *The Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient* 55 (2012): 223-225.
[110] Anooshahr, "Dialogism," 235, 247.
[111] Anooshahr, "Dialogism," 242-3.

Muslim scholars, a worldview in which geography outweighs genealogy as a determinant of human character.

An Indo-Muslim addressing Arabs

Having proven the status of India as *terra prima* as sacred as Mecca, Bilgrāmī presents what he considers to be his literary contribution to the Arabic poetic tradition, namely, his Arabicized *nāyikābheda* (catalogue of female characters) and *alaṅkāras* (ornaments of speech, figures of speech) from the Hindi court literature of Mughal-period India. In chapters three and four of *The Coral Rosary*, Bilgrāmī attempts to inscribe himself into the Arabic poetic tradition as both an Indo-Persian and an elite Indian "Method" (Sanskrit *rīti*) author. The word *rīti* is used – often in a derogatory manner – by modern historians of Urdu and Hindi literature to designate a type of early modern court literature patronized by the Mughal and other sub-imperial courts in north India and the Deccan. *Rīti* poets wrote in an elevated form of Hindi called Brajbhasha (i.e. Braj language, or simply Braj) that emerged in the sixteenth century, a period of linguistic and literary transformation from the classical Sanskrit language toward the local vernaculars.[112] These poets produced *rītigranth*s, or method books, which Allison Busch defines as "a poetics manual in which the author defines and illustrates concepts from Sanskrit rhetoric, such as *rasa* (literary emotion), *nāyikābheda* (catalogue of female characters), or *alaṅkara* (figures of speech)."[113] As I will illustrate below, chapters three and four of *The Coral Rosary*, in which Bilgrāmī defines and

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[112] The turn in literature toward the vernacular (Hindi), away from the classical Sanskrit in premodern India is discussed at length by Sheldon Pollock, who identifies it as "one of two great moments of transformation in culture and power in premodern India" – the first great transformation being the emergence of Sanskrit out of the sacred, liturgical realm to become a literary language in *kāvya*, or written literature. Sheldon Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 13.

[113] Allison Busch, *Poetry of Kings: The Classical Hindi Literature of Mughal India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 9.

illustrates types of female characters and figures of speech, respectively, are an Arabic *rītigranth* – a *rīti* method book rendered into Arabic.

Bilgrāmī was fond of the work of the *rīti* poet Chintamani Tripathi, the author of a book of figures of speech called the Kavittvicār and who, according to Hindi tradition, was one of three brothers who were all *rīti* poets.[114] Bilgrāmī mentions Chintamani in his Persian biographical dictionary *Maʾāsir al-kirām*, also known as *Sarv-i Bilgrāmī*. Bilgrāmī explains Chintamani's work on figures of speech (*alaṅkara*), instructing the Persian reader on how to pronounce the name of the work and its title – *Anunnīyā alinkār*. He explains that *Anunnīyā* means "without likeness" (Persian *bī shih*) and alinkār is "the crafting of figures of speech" (Persian *kār-i sinʾat-i fann-i badīʾ*).[115] His fondness for Chintamani probably inspired Bilgrāmī to write his own catalogue of figures of speech. Chapter three of *The Coral Rosary* is an Arabic catalogue of figures of speech in the form of an *alaṅkara* catalogue. The chapter consists of Bilgrāmī's descriptions and illustrations in Arabic of Sanskrit figures of speech, which he probably knew through Braj.

Chintamani's possible influence on Bilgrāmī does not stop at the figuration catalogue. In addition to being associated with a now lost book of figures of speech, Chintamani and his brothers have come to represent the idea of *kavikul*, or community of poets,[116] a term used by *rīti* poets to describe themselves and which might have also inspired Bilgrāmī. According to Busch, the term *kavikul* can refer to a network of relatives working in a court, such as the Tripathi brothers. *Kavikul* can also mean a broader (imagined) literary community, as in "a network of like-minded writers who shared literary presuppositions, practices, and courtly predilections across vast spaces."[117]

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[114] Busch offers an overview of the careers and works of the Tripathi brothers, *Poetry of Kings*, 188-196.
[115] Bilgrāmī, *Sarv-i Bilgrāmī: maʾāsir al-kirām*, ed. Zuhreh Nāmdār (Tehran: Shirkat Sihāmī Intishār, 2013-2014), 378.
[116] Busch, *Poetry of Kings*, 103.
[117] Busch, *Poetry of Kings*, 188-9, 196-99.

Looking at Bilgrāmī, we see that when he believes he has sufficiently argued for the merits of India in chapters one and two, he is confident that he has proven his own merits as a product of that land. His credentials as an heir to Adam – perhaps, even as the new Adam – allow him to then address an Arab reader as a product and a representative of India's *rīti* tradition who, at the same time, belongs to a larger and ancient community of Indian and Arab poets. In his introductory remarks regarding his aims in chapter three of *The Coral Rosary* he says:

> I saw that pure-blooded Arabs and the divinely-backed littérateurs made an art out of figures of speech and weaved in their manner a colorful garment[118] and extracted from the sleeves of pens flowers of paradise and brought out of the pockets of inkwells peacock wings. The Indians, those worshipping idols and the ones following Hinduism since ancient times, from the beginning of the world to now, also recorded figures of speech in their language and formed jewels from the gold of their speech and perfumed literary assemblies with the fragrance of sandalwood and imbued the congregations with the scent of Mandalay perfume. I wanted to translate some of their figures of speech into the language of pure-blooded Arabs and add the sound of *kavikul* into the cooing of doves.

> *Innī raʾayt al-ʿarab al-ʿarbāʾ wa-l-udabāʾ al-muʾayyidīn min al-samāʾ annahum jaʿalū ʿilm al-badīʿ funūnan wa-nasajū ʿalā minwālihim abā qalamūnan wa-akhrajū min ardān al-aqlām azhār al-farādīs wa-abrazū ʿan juyūb al-maḥābir ajniḥat al-ṭawāwīs wa-l-hunūd al-ladhīna hum ʿabudat al-awthān wa-l-ʿarīqūn fī al-hind min badʾ al-ʿālam ilā al-ān ayḍan dawwanū ʿilm al-badīʿ fī lisānihim wa-ṣāghū ḥulyan min ibrīzi bayānihim fa-ʿaṭṭarū al-maḥāfil bi-ʿurf al-ṣanādil wa-arrajū al-majāmiʿ bi-arj al-manādil fa-aḥbabt an anqul baʿḍ badīʿihim ilā lisān al-ʿarab al-ʿarbāʾ wa-uḍīf ṣawt al-kawkalāʾ ilā sajʿ al-warqāʾ.*[119]

We may conclude that Bilgrāmī imagined himself to be writing to a far-reaching community of poets that encompassed Arabia. Moreover, he saw his project as one in which he would merge two communities of poets – Arab and Indian.

After dedicating essays three and four to Persian and Arabic classical figures of speech, Bilgrāmī attempts to connect the Indian and Arabic poetic traditions through his own poetry. He begins the fifth and last essay in chapter three of *The Coral Rosary* with a literary genealogy that

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[118]"Abu Qalamūn" is the name Bilgrāmī gives to macaronic or multilingual poetry by the Indo-Persian poet Amīr Khusraw, whom he credits for inventing that style.

[119] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 3-5.

links him to prior composers of Arabic *badīʿiyāt* odes; a *badīʿiyah* is a poem exhibiting different figures of speech and stylistic embellishments. He claims to have "followed in the footsteps of the authors of *badīʿiyāt* and composed an excellent ode."[120] He states that he read four *badīʿiyah* odes and their commentaries– an academic accomplishment that signals to his reader that Bilgrāmī is indeed capable of accomplishing the task of connecting Arabic and Persian through his own verse.

By highlighting the sanctity of India and proving the merit of Indo-Muslim scholars, Bilgrāmī was attempting to gain access to an Arabo-Muslim reading space as a translator of Hindi poetic forms. In the remainder of this section, I outline some of the forms that Bilgrāmī Arabicized. Beginning with his introduction to chapter three of *The coral rosary*, we see that he considers eloquent speech to be important for establishing one's legacy and that he considers himself to be gifted in that regard, which he aims to show in chapters three and four with his translations and poetry. The reason he chose poetry may be explained by referring to Ibn Khaldūn's words in the *Muqaddimah* regarding poetry and the Arabic language.

In the *Muqaddimah*, in a chapter titled "The various kinds of sciences," Ibn Khaldūn discusses several disciplines, including jurisprudence, speculative theology, Sufism, astrology, alchemy, and language. He includes language among the technical disciplines – or sciences – insofar as, he says, it is a "technical habit." According to Ibn Khaldūn, languages are "habits similar to crafts (techniques). They are habits (located) in the tongue and serve the purpose of expressing ideas."[121] He defines eloquence as the ability of a speaker to convey anything he/she wants by being able to "combine individual words so as to express the ideas he wants to express" while also observing the "form of composition that makes speech conform to the requirements of the situation." Ibn Khaldūn concludes that "the habit of the Arabic language can be obtained only

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[120] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 284.
[121] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 3:342.

through expert knowledge of the (documents of) Arab speech."[122] To that end non-Arabs who grew up in other language traditions do not master Arabic beyond the surface level, "from rules codified in books."[123] While acknowledging that certain authorities on Arabic language, such as Sībawayh and al-Zamakhsarī, were non-Arab, Ibn Khaldūn explains that they were "non-Arab only by descent," meaning they grew up in Arabic-speaking environments. They were, he says, "not non-Arabs as far as language and speech are concerned, because they lived in a time when Islam was in its prime and the Arabic language in its young manhood."[124] Thus, any person, regardless of his or her descent, can become eloquent in Arabic if he/she is reared in an Arabic-speaking environment.

Because language is a habit, Ibn Khaldūn argues, only rarely is one person able to write both good poetry and good prose, since each is a different habit of the tongue.[125] With respect to forms of speech, poetry is a "difficult thing for modern people to learn."[126] Due to its difficult nature, poetry "constitutes a severe test of a person's natural talent." Proficiency in Arabic is not sufficient to allow one to write poetry, "a certain refinement is needed, as well as the exercise of a certain skill in observing the special poetic methods which the Arabs used."[127] It is unlikely that Bilgrāmī's decision to express himself in both prose and poetry was a coincidence. As will be evidenced through my discussion of his poetic contribution in *The Coral Rosary*, Bilgrāmī was operating within the linguistic framework outlined by Ibn Khaldūn.

Bilgrāmī's license to insert himself into the Arabic poetic tradition

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[122] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 3:358.
[123] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 3:361.
[124] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 3:362.
[125] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 3:371.
[126] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 3:374.
[127] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 3:375.

Chapter three is divided into five essays (*maqālah*, *maqālāt*) through which Bilgrāmī attempts to prove his mastery of both Arabic and Hindi poetry. In essay one, Bilgrāmī begins with a discussion of the merits of what he calls "embellishments" (*muḥassināt*) of speech, or figures of speech which, he says in the first sentence of the essay, are "without exception, ornaments for speech." Bilgrāmī intends to translate a set of so-called embellishments, or figures of speech, from Hindi into Arabic poetic forms, but before doing so he devotes the first half of the essay to highlighting the merits of using figures of speech. As in the previous two chapters, before delving into the main subject of this chapter, i.e. before translating figures of speech for Arab-Muslim readers, Bilgrāmī dedicates a significant section to arguing why the subject is good and to highlighting its merits.[128]

As in his argument for the merits of India, Bilgrāmī turns to Islamic narrative traditions to support his argument for the merits of poetry. Once again, the narrative tradition leads him back to Adam and, by extension, to the preeminence of both poetry and India. Bilgrāmī begins by citing a prophetic tradition regarding poetry transmitted by a Companion of the Prophet Muhammad named Jābir ibn Samūrah, who relates that he had been in the company of the Prophet "more than a hundred times and his companions used to recite poetry and reminisce about things from the pre-Islamic period (*jāhiliyyah*) while [the Prophet used to sit] in silence or might sometimes smile at them."[129] Here, the Prophet's reported silence and smiling signal his implicit approval of poetry, which indicates that the composition of poetry is licit. After providing evidence for poetry's acceptability in Islamic law, Bilgrāmī cites another prophetic tradition, according to which Adam is said to have composed verses lamenting the death of his son Abel, who reportedly was murdered in India. As in the chapter on the preeminence of India, where Adam's descent proves the country's

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[128] As with the first chapter, chapter three was written as part of a different project. It was part of Bilgrāmī's book, *Tasliyat al-fuʾād fī qaṣāʾid Bilgrāmī* (The heart's solace: [an anthology] of Bilgrāmī's poems, 1773).

[129] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 123. Bilgrāmī also references prophetic traditions in which poetry is said to contain wisdom (*ḥikmah*), 125-126 and, like other forms of speech, good poetry is good and bad poetry is bad, 126-129.

antiquity, Adam is a source of authority for the antiquity of poetry. The fact that Adam composed poetry means, according to Bilgrāmī: (1) that poetry is as old as humanity, and (2) that its origins are in India, making India the first home of poetry.

After establishing the antiquity of poetry through its connection with India and Adam, Bilgrāmī outlines his interpretation of the history of Indo-Persian stylistics and poetry vis-à-vis its Arabic equivalent, placing himself in an exceptional position as an Arabic-speaking Indo-Muslim who is simultaneously fluent in two poetic traditions. Because he focuses on figures of speech, Bilgrāmī begins by recapping the history of their development in Arabic, displaying his knowledge of the poetic tradition. He attributes the invention of figures of speech to the Abbasid prince and littérateur ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Muʾtazz (d. 908). Qudāmah ibn Jaʿfar (d. 932 or 948), another Abbasid-period littérateur, Bilgrāmī goes on to say, composed additional literary figures adding to those of Ibn al-Muʿtazz. The works of these two authors – *Kitāb al-Badīʿ (The book of literary figures)* and *Kitāb al-Kharāj wa-ṣināʿat al-kitābah (The book of land tax and the craft of writing)*, respectively – became sources of figures of speech and stylistic embellishments for subsequent writers. Later authors, such as Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī (d. 1063 or 1071),[130] and Zakī al-Dīn Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ (d. 1256),[131] according to Bilgrāmī, added more figures until the number of Arabic figures of speech reached 150.[132] Regarding *al-ʿajam* (foreigners), non-Arabs who wanted to compose Arabic poetry, he says:

> As for a foreigner who wants to compose Arabic poetry, he must learn Arabic prosody and [he must learn] not to stray from the meters. Some of the master Arab poets deviated from

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[130] The tenth-century author was born in North Africa and died in Sicily. He was a critic and the court poet of the ruler al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs. He is the author of *al-ʿUmdah*, which was praised by Ibn Khaldūn, contributing to its fame among later writers. The work deals with all aspects of poetry as well as literary figures. In a discussion of poetry in the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn praises *al-ʿUmdah* saying that "no work on poetry like it has been written either before or since." Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 3:384.

[131] He was an Egyptian poet and litterateur and author of works dealing with poetry, literary criticism, and the Quran. His most famous work, *Taḥrīr al-taḥbīr fī ṣinʿat al-shiʿr wa-l-nathr*, deals with literary figures.

[132] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 134.

the meters, so how can foreigners avoid it? The Arab masters who have strayed include Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī.

Wa-ammā man yarghab bi-l-shiʿr al-ʿarabī min al-aʿājim fa-ʿalayh an yataʿallam al-ʿurūḍ al-ʿarabīyah wa-allā yazal qadamah ʿan jādat al-wazn, faqad kharaj ʿan al-wazn jamāʿah min fuḥūl shuʿarāʾ al-ʿarab fa-kayf al-aʿājim wa-min tilka al-jamāʿah Abu al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī. [133]

The requirement that non-Arab poets learn Arabic prosody is due to its absence in Persian and Turkish poetry, according to Bilgrāmī. Comparing Arabic to Sanskrit poetry, he says that a foreigner must learn Hindi prosody to know its meters because Indians are the "inventors of their own arts and sciences" and because their arts are not derivative like Persian poetry. Like the Arabs, the ancient pre-Islamic Indians produced literary figures, some of which they share with Arabs, such as double entendre, assonance, and rhymed prose.[134] Bilgrāmī considers Arabic and Hindi poetry as original and non-derivative, unlike Persian and Turkish poetry, which are derivative traditions. This valuation of the four poetic traditions helps to cast Bilgrāmī as an innovator due to his adeptness in both Arabic and Hindi.

Despite their shared originality and the existence of overlapping literary figures in the two traditions, Bilgrāmī says, certain figures of speech are unique to Arabic and others are only found in Hindi. For this reason, he chose to translate a selection of the latter into Arabic. In addition, he claims to have invented thirty-seven figures of speech of his own, which he translates and presents along with examples in Arabic verse. The caveat, he explains, is that not all Hindi figures of speech are translatable into Arabic, so he translates a "portion" of what he considers to be the most "excellent." His goal is to have "true Arabs appreciate the [poetic] inventions of Indians, just as

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[133] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 133.
[134] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 135.

they have appreciated Indian swords as precious things."[135] Bilgrāmī translates twenty-three Hindi

figures of speech, rendering them in Arabic as:

> Deanthropomorphism, the depiction of something as itself, the depiction of proof, dispossession, the depiction of plunder, the depiction of negation, the depiction of reinforcement, the depiction of renunciation, the depiction of hope, preference over preference, the preference of expression, skillful reply, the combination and dispersion of a treasury,[136] the inversion of something's essence, despotism, tyranny, authority, coercion, befriending the enemy, intercourse, interpretation, the concealment of prohibition, and diversification.

> *Wa-hiya al-tanzīh wa-tashbīh al-shayʾ bi-nafsih wa-tashbīh al-burhān wa-l-intizāʿ wa-tashbīh al-silb wa-tashbīh al-nafī wa-tashbīh al-taqwiyah wa-tashbīh al-istighnāʾ wa-tashbīh al-tamannī wa-l-tafḍīl ʿalā al-tafḍīl wa-tafḍīl al-taʿbīr wa-barāʿat al-jawāb wa-jamʿ al-khazānah wa-tafrīqihā wa-qalb al-māhiyah wa-l-istibdād wa-l-ṭughyān wa-l-tasalluṭ wa-l-iʿtisāf wa-muwālāt al-ʿaduww wa-l-mukhālaṭah wa-l-taʾwīl wa-iḍmār al-nahī wa-l-tanawwuʿ.*[137]

After translating the figures of speech from the Hindi tradition, Bilgrāmī outlines his own:

> Optimism, vow, accordance, ascertainment, anger, admonition, the spirit's speech, the tugging of something heavy, inspiration, transformation, the extraordinary, silence, interweaving, remonstrance, jest, division, settlement, the depiction of caution, the depiction of utilization, the depiction of argumentation, the depiction of the exercise of judgment, the depiction of advancement, separation, the preference that is imposed, the preference of something over itself, the preference of utilization, splitting, spiritual preface, prayer and the opposite of dispossession, and the opposite of intercourse – I listed these last two within the Indian types for reasons which I will mention in the appropriate place.

> *Al-tafāʾul wa-l-nidhr wa-l-wifāq wa-l-tathabbut wa-l-ghaḍab wa-l-tawṣiyah wa-kalām al-rūḥ wa-jarr al-thaqīl wa-l-tanzīl wa-l-taḥawwul wa-l-khāriq wa-l-ifhām wa-l-tashbīk wa-l-muʿāraḍah wa-l-muzāḥ wa-l-inqisām wa-l-taswiyah wa-ḥusn al-naṣīḥah wa-l-ghubṭah wa-ḥusn al-iʿtidhār wa-tashbīh al-athar wa-tashbīh al-intiqāl wa-tashbīh al-iḥtirāz wa-tashbīh al-istifādah wa-tashbīh al-istidlāl wa-tashbīh al-ijtihād wa-tashbīh al-taraqqī wa-l-mufāṣalah wa-l-tafḍīl al-mashrūṭ wa-tafḍīl al-shayʾ ʿalā nafsih wa-tafḍīl al-istikhdām wa-l-tashqīq wa-l-taṣdīr al-maʿnawī wa-l-duʿāʾ wa-ʿaks al-intizāʿ wa-ʿaks al-mukhālaṭah wa-hādhān al-akhīrān adrajtuhumā fī athnāʾ al-anwāʿ al-hindīyah li-wujūh adhkuruhā fī maḥallihā.*[138]

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[135] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 135.

[136] Bilgrāmī says he invented this figure of speech which consists of using a word that has two meanings in a verse where both meanings are applicable. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 149.

[137] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 135.

[138] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 135.

In the essay that follows his translations, Bilgrāmī presents each of his thirty-seven figures of speech and explains how each figure works by providing an example of its use. In addition to his own verses, Bilgrāmī cites ones by prior poets and verses from the Quran which, he says, illustrate the figures of speech in question.[139] He classifies and names extant speech forms and recasts them as new figures of speech. He describes this act of reclassifying and recasting as "extracting" figures of speech. In short, Bilgrāmī observed the figures in extant verses, named them and composed or found verses to illustrate them. Highlighting Indians and Arabs as producers of beautiful and innovative speech and translating selections of their most excellent speech gives weight to Bilgrāmī's own compositions, which he describes as "additions to" or "innovations upon" the older Hindi or Arabic figures of speech. He positions himself between Arabic and Hindi as a translator and an heir to both traditions.

One of the authors with whom Bilgrāmī identifies is the polyglot, Indo-Persian poet Amīr Khusraw al-Dihlawī (d. 1325), who is traditionally credited with developing Indian Islamic culture.[140] An author of both Hindi and Persian poetry, he is famous for being the first to make a parallel in poetry between the ideal lover in Persian poetry who annihilates itself in its love and the "sati," the ideal Hindu woman who is cremated with her husband.[141] Bilgrāmī dedicates essay three to Amīr Khusraw and to eight "old" Persian figures of speech –which Bilgrāmī updates or extends in some way. The first figure of speech is macaronic or multilingual poetry, for which

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[139] For example, with respect to the figure of speech that Bilgrāmī calls "optimism," he refers to the *Miftāḥ al-ʿulūm*, a thirteenth-century text on Arabic morphology, syntax, and style by the rhetorician Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf al-Sakkākī (d. 1229). According to Bilgrāmī, when Arabs call the desert (*falāḥ*) "an attainment" or "desert crossing" (*mafāzah*), as al-Sakkākī says they do, they are employing the figure of speech that he calls "optimism." Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 162; *Mafāzah* (pl. *mafāwiz*), a noun derived from the roots *f-y-z* or *f-w-z* meaning "to be successful, be victorious, to attain, and to cross or to travel in or through the desert," is a synonym for *falāḥ*, a noun meaning "desert." *Lisān al-ʿArab*, *f-w-z*.

[140] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 204.

[141] Sharma, "Translating Gender," 91.

Amīr Khusraw was known. Bilgrāmī calls it "Ibn Qalamūn" and describes its composition as being

built around

> [A] word that is shared between two or more languages that the poet uses in a way that it
> is meaningful in two or more languages. The figure of speech can be traced back to double
> entendre – and the double entendre that is composed in different languages appeals to
> [good] taste. Amīr Khusraw – may God Almighty have mercy on him – invented different
> types of figures of speech. This was one of them and it is one of the finer types, but the
> name Abū Qalamūn is my invention.
>
> *Lafẓah mushtarakah bayn al-lisānayn aw akthar wa-yaʾtī bi-hā al-mutakallim bi-ḥayth
> yaṣiḥḥ maʿnā al-kalām ʿan al-lisānayn aw akthar wa-huwa yarjaʿ ilā al-tawrīyah wa-l-
> tawrīyah al-murakkabah min al-alsinah al-mukhtalifah taḥlū li-l-madhāq wa-l-amīr
> khusrū raḥimahu allāh taʿālā ikhtaraʿ anwāʿ min al-badīʿ minhā hādhā al-nawʿ wa-huwa
> min alṭaf al-anwāʿ lākin tasammaytuhu bi-abī qalamūn min mukhtaraʿātī.* [142]

It is unclear who the inventors of the other seven Persian figures of speech are and it was probably

not important since Bilgrāmī's purpose in citing them was to find the right illustrative verse to

showcase each. According to Bilgrāmī, the figures include: Making Amends (*al-tadāruk*),[143]

Polishing (*talmīʿ*),[144] Encryption (*taʿmiyyah*),[145] Chronograms (*al-taʾrīkh*),[146] Psalms and Clear

Proofs (*al-zubur wa-l-bayyināt*),[147] the Circle of History (*dāʾirat al-taʾrīkh*),[148] and Diminution

(*taṣghīr*).[149] The fourth and second-to-last essay in this section of *The Coral Rosary* consists of

older figures of speech. He briefly presents two figures of speech that reportedly were invented by

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[142] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 204.

[143] Which is when a poet begins by composing a satire but as he goes on it turns out to be a panegyric. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 206.

[144] *Talmīʿ* is when a verse is composed of one Arabic and one Persian hemistich. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 207.

[145] *Taʿmiyyah* is riddle poetry, which was very popular in Persian. This type of poetry is encrypted. The reader extracts a hidden name or meaningful word from the words of a poem by applying certain rules. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 209.

[146] *Al-taʾrīkh* is when the poet composes a meaningful phrase about an event, the sum of the numerical values of its letters when read as numerals add up to the date of the event to which it refers. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 211.

[147] *Al-zubur wa-l-bayyināt* is also based on assigning numerical values to letters. The sum of the letters in a word equal those of the following word which also happens to be its opposite in meaning. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 213.

[148] *Dāʾirat al-taʾrīkh* is a circle divided into fourteen sections. The author of the History Circle composes a phrase consisting of fourteen words and each is placed into a section within the circle. The sum of the numerical values of half the words in the phrase equals the year in which a historical event took place. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 213.

[149] *Taṣghīr* consists of writing poetry using diminutive nouns throughout. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 217.

Arabs: Good Transition (*ḥusn al-takhalluṣ*)[150] and Using the Concealed (*istikhdām al-muḍmar*).[151] Once again, Bilgrāmī provides an illustrative example for each.

By outlining sufficient figures of speech, new and old, Bilgrāmī proves his linguistic mastery in Arabic and Hindi, which authorizes him to insert himself into the Arabic poetic tradition as an Indo-Muslim. He begins the fifth and last essay in chapter three by linking himself to prior authors of *badīʿiyāt* odes. By presenting the so-called "embellishments of speech," Bilgrāmī says he "followed the footsteps of the authors of *badīʿiyāt* and composed an excellent ode." He reportedly read four *badīʿiyah* odes along with their commentaries: those of Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī, al-ʿAlawī, and that of Ibn Maʿṣūm al-Makkī, the famous *Anwār al-rabīʿ fī anwāʿ al-badīʿ* (*The lights of spring: types of badīʿ*) which consists of nine odes, Ibn Maʿṣūm's and eight others by al-Ḥillī, Ibn Jābir al-Andalusī, ʿIzz al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī, Ibn Ḥujjah al-Ḥamawī, al-Maqqarī, al-Suyūṭī, Wajīh al-Dīn al-ʿAlawī al-Yamanī, and ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Ṭabarī. After establishing that he is well-versed in the *badīʿiyah* tradition, Bilgrāmī describes his position vis-à-vis the Arab authors as follows:

> [They] are all pure-blooded Arabs and lofty forerunners. I followed their example and snuck in the Indian sword by endorsing them. Perhaps the frail one emulates what the strong ones do and the weak breeze pleases the moods of the healthy and perfect littérateurs. If they notice, it would be the ultimate act of charity and if they give criticism it would constitute caution against shortcoming.
>
> *Wa-hāʾulāʾ al-jamāʿah kulluhum ʿarab ʿarbāʾ wa-aʾimah ajillāʾ wa-anā salakt manhaj taqlīdihim wa-salalt al-muhannad bi-taʾyīdihim wa-rubbamā yafʿal al-ḍaʿīf fiʿl al-aqwiyāʾ wa-l-nasīm al-nasīm al-ʿalīl yufarriḥ amzijat al-aṣiḥḥāʾ wa-l-udabāʾ al-kumalāʾ in iltafatū fa-huwa ghāyat al-iḥsān in ʿaraḍū fa-huwa tanbīh ʿalā al-nuqṣān.*[152]

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[150] The figure *ḥusn al-takhalluṣ* refers to the rhetorical devices that poets employed to make smooth transitions from the introductory section of the polythematic ode, which could be amatory (*nasīb*), boast (*fakhr*), or admonishment (*waʿẓ*), to the ode's main message. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 218.

[151] According to Bilgrāmī, he invented *istikhdām al-muḍmar* to refer to a literary practice similar to double entendre, in which a word with multiple meanings is used in a verse allowing the verse to be read in more than one sense. Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, 220.

[152] Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān* (Bombay: Unknown publisher, 1886), 220.

Bilgrāmī then revisits each of the figures of speech he presented in the previous essays and cites a verse from his *badīʿiyah* ode to illustrate how he used the figure, glossing rare words and clarifying grammatical rules along the way. He therefore composed a *badīʿiyah* exhibiting the figures of speech and stylistic embellishments he "extracted" from both Arabic and Hindi. According to his own assessment of the different poetic traditions and forms, his *badīʿiyah* would be considered the highest accomplishment within two of the most innovative poetic traditions.

Conclusion

The decentralization of the Mughal Empire and the rise of provincial autonomy in the eighteenth century, which constitute the historical backdrop to Bilgrāmī's writings, in addition to his pilgrimage to the Hejaz were likely factors in prompting him to reflect in *The Coral Rosary* on his position as an Indo-Muslim vis-à-vis Arab-Islamic civilization. Bilgrāmī found in language a way to insert himself into a community of elite Arab poets. *The Coral Rosary* manifests Bilgrāmī's ability to compose parabolic history, biography, and the Arabicization of catalogues of female lovers and beloved character types and of figures of speech from the *rīti* literary tradition. Translating from the Indic poetry tradition into ornate Arabic, Bilgrāmī tried to establish his merits as a writer. To orient himself as an Indo-Muslim writer, he borrowed ideas from Kātib Çelebi and, indirectly, from Ibn Khaldūn.

By choosing to frame his Arabicization of *rīti* forms with the story of Adam, Bilgrāmī aimed to establish the sanctity of India in order for the merits of the land to reflect on the people it produced, i.e. Indian scholars such as himself. The strategy that Bilgrāmī uses to establish his and other Indo-Muslim figures' merit as scholars is based on the understanding that geography, not genealogy, determines one's character. A sacred land like India produces good people. To ensure

the circulation of his words in *The Coral Rosary*, Bilgrāmī had to render himself recognizable to his readers, to make his connection to a sacred land known. Thus, he sets out to show his worth as an innovator by showing the worthiness of Indian civilization.

Chapter Three

Geography, Religion, Gender and Political Authority in the Texts of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī

Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on the eighteenth-century Iraqi-Ottoman author, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī (1721-1785) and the role that sectarianism and gender played in his texts, especially in his accounts of military encounters with the Shīʿī Safavids. Recent scholars claim that sectarianism and heteronormative gendering of homeland are the result of the encounter with Europe. In his texts, however, al-Suwaydī uses sectarian and heteronormative language as a strategy to influence appropriate behavior. This use of language suggests that sectarian and gender categories were actively forming within an Islamic, Asiatic context long before the encounter with European colonialism. Rather than being a reaction to Europeans, al-Suwaydī's language was persuasive within a framework inspired by Ibn Khaldūn, in which geography, political authority, and religion intersect.

Al-Suwaydī was born in Ottoman Iraq, a frontier province between the Sunnī Ottoman and the Twelver Shīʿī Safavid empires.[153] In the eighteenth century, Ottoman provinces, such as Iraq, were on their way to becoming militarily and economically independent from the Ottoman imperial center. Thus, the provincial rulers relied increasingly on local forces to defend against

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[153] Historians usually divide the history of Iraq under the Ottomans into five periods: 1534 to 1623, from the conquest of Suleyman "the Law Giver" (Suleyman The Magnificent) to Iraq's conquest by the Safavids; 1638 to 1749, from Iraq's reconquest by the Ottoman Murad IV and the beginning of Mamluk rule in Baghdad; 1749-1831, the period of Mamluk governors; 1831-1869, from the fall of Mamluk rule to the end of the governorship of Midhat Pasha marking the beginning of the Ottoman reforms (*Tanzimat*) period; 1869-1917, from the beginning of the *Tanzimat*, when provinces were brought back under the direct control of the capital, to the British occupation of Iraq. Ebubekir Ceylan, *Ottoman Origins of Modern Iraq* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 3.

foreign invasion.[154] The historian Tom Nieuwenhuis has shown that Iraq's socio-economic and demographic conditions were not conducive to "substantial and protracted socio-economic and demographic development" in the early modern period. Instead, Iraq went through periods of "complex stagnation and decline."[155] Nonetheless, there were periods when parts of Iraq enjoyed relative stability and economic health, marked by increased patronage of scholars and authors, like ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī and his father ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī (1692/3-1760/1), who were patronized by the Baghdad Mamluks.

Like the rulers of the Deccan, with whom Bilgrāmī was affiliated, the Baghdad Mamluks obtained hereditary authority due to a shift away from the centralized authority of the imperial capital toward local authority in the provinces, which began in the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century and would continue to the nineteenth.[156] Hasan Pasha (r. 1702-1724) and his son, Ahmad Pasha (r. 1724-1747) achieved political and military power throughout their exceptionally long rule, paving the way for a semi-autonomous dynasty in Baghdad beginning in 1749.[157] Hasan Pasha imitated the capital and established a similar patrimonial system in Baghdad. He formed a page corps, which was initially composed of recruits from local families, but later came to be

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[154] Dina Rizk Khoury describes the eighteenth century as a period marked by shifts in the social and political structures of the Ottoman Empire in which the center, Istanbul, devolved fiscally and politically to the provinces, giving previously marginalized social groups the opportunity for social mobility. Dina Rizk Khoury, "The Ottoman Center versus Provincial Power-holders: an analysis of the historiography," *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, volume 3, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 135-156. In the same century, the shifts in political power also resulted in a "literary disorder" stemming from "the disorder of the new order." For the first time authors outside the scholarly community found authority to produce texts and to record historical events. Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 77-78.

[155] Tom Nieuwenhuis, *Politics and Society in Early Modern Iraq* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982), 8-9.

[156] Ceylan, *Ottoman Origins*, 37.

[157] Looking at the broader context, other notable dynasties also emerged in the eighteenth century operating independently from the Ottomans – the Jalīlī family in Mosul, which continued to rule until the mid-nineteenth century, and Muhammad Ali's dynasty in Egypt, which ruled until the mid-twentieth century. Carter Vaughn Findley, "Political Culture and the Great Households," in the *Cambridge History of Turkey Online*, vol. 3, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 63-80. Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of the Households in Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

composed of Abkhaz, Circasian, and Georgian recruits.[158] In an effort to set up a system in Baghdad that resembled the imperial palace administration in Istanbul, the Pasha established a treasury, soup kitchen and a school in Baghdad.[159] His son's, Ahmad Pasha's patronage of the al-Suwaydīs may be understood as part of these governors' efforts to establish a patrimonial political system in Baghdad, turning the provincial capital into a microcosm of the imperial capital.[160]

The rise to prominence of ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī[161] by joining the circle of the then new governor of Baghdad, Ahmad Pasha, was likely due to the practice of emulating the capital by using patronage to establish a patrimonial system of government.[162] Ahmad Pasha, who sought to surround himself with intellectuals to create a Baghdad-centered intelligentsia that would lend intellectual support for his political projects, chose ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī as one of these scholars. The relationship of patronage continued with ʿAbd Allāh's son, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī, who, in *Ḥadīqat al-Zawrāʾ* (*The Baghdad Garden*), legitimized the dynasty's authority using several strategies. One of the strategies of legitimization al-Suwaydī used was geography, namely, the idea that geography determines the character of a person in addition to, or more than, genealogy.

In *The Baghdad Garden*, al-Suwaydī begins with an account of the life of the dynasty's founder, Hasan Pasha. Like most biographers, al-Suwaydī recounts the story of his birth and highlights who the Pasha's parents are. The birth story is followed by a short chapter about the

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[158] Nieuwenhuis, *Politics*, 13.

[159] Ceylan, *Ottoman Origins*, 38.

[160] The historian ʿImād ʿAbd al-Salām Raʾūf argues that Ahmad Pasha patronized al-Suwaydī's father, ʿAbd Allāh, as a way of establishing intellectual support for his political projects.

[161] ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī received patronage as a judge and scholar from the governor of Baghdad. He was also a prolific poet. His most well-known prose works include the travelogue *al-Nafḥah al-miskīyah fī al-riḥlah al-makkīyah* (1744), which I discuss below, and two *maqāmāt*.

[162] Ahmad Pasha's political career began when he became the governor of Shahrizor and Kirkuk in 1715. He was appointed the governor of Baghdad after the death of his father, Hasan Pasha, in 1724. He continued an expedition undertaken by his father against the Persians and took Hamadan in the same year, an event I discuss below. In 1727, he acquired Kermanshah, Hamadan, Tabriz, and Tbilisi on behalf of the Ottomans. He was the governor of Baghdad when Nādir Shāh led his campaigns in Iraq, and Ahmad Pasha was able to repel him. *EI²* s.v. Aḥmad Pasha; Ceylan, *Ottoman Origins*, 38.

governor's birthplace, titled "A statement on the village of Katerini" (*Fī bayān qaṣabat qaṭrīn*), which was a village in the Salonika province. Al-Suwaydī describes the geographical features of Katerini, its vegetation, air, and rivers. Katerini has the greatest forest (*annahā dhāt al-sawād al-aʿẓam*), he says, and it has "good air and moderate moods and weather." He describes the place as being filled with fruit orchards and "luxurious fields," with rivers that run through it (*fa-lam yattafiq mithlahā fī al-aqṭār ḥayth tajrī taḥtahā al-anhār)*. Al-Suwaydī links fragrant plants and beautiful animals with Katerini, "the gazelles languish in its corners on the sage and the laurel plants and the young women walk throughout it, softening the hardened heart for its refinement."[163] The birds sing beautifully in Katerini and it always feels like spring there (*kull awqātihā rabīʿ*): clearly Katerini has a moderate climate.[164]

After he highlights the geographical beauty of Katerini, al-Suwaydī turns to its people. The beautiful and moderate character of the place is reflected in the character of the people. He attributes to the people of Katerini the characteristics of bravery, intellect, honesty, religiosity, dependability (*amānah*), eagerness to carry out *jihād* and to take hard matters head on. Placing the discussion of the location's attractive physical character first is probably intended by al-Suwaydī to provide evidence for the good character of its people, just as Bilgrāmī places the prophetic traditions about India before his biographical dictionary.

Al-Suwaydī's Sectarianism

In addition to geography, sectarian discourse was another strategy that al-Suwaydī used to legitimize the authority of the Baghdad governors. Like Bilgrāmī, ʿAbd Allāh and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī were also descended from a line of *ashrāf*, as the Suwaydī clan traces its roots back to

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[163] Al-Suwaydi, *Ḥadīqat al-Zawrāʾ*, 47.
[164] Al-Suwaydi, *Ḥadīqat al-Zawrāʾ*, 46-47.

the Prophet through the Abbasids – a fact that probably helped their chances of being selected for patronage.[165] ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī received an annual land tax from the governor of Baghdad.[166] In exchange for the land tax, he was called upon to perform various duties on behalf of the governor, mostly pertaining to religious matters. The most onerous duty Ahmad Pasha assigned ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī, and the one for which he is most well-known today, was to take part in a Sunnī-Shiʿī debate on behalf of the Sunnī-Ottoman side. In 1743, during his military campaigns in Iraq, Nādir Shāh organized a conference in Najaf the aim of which, he claimed, was to reconcile all the Muslim schools of jurisprudence (*madhāhib*).[167] ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī recorded the events from his trip to the conference in his travelogue *al-Nafḥah al-miskīyah fī al-riḥlah al-Makkīyah* (*The musk breeze: on the Meccan Journey*, 1744) and his son ʿAbd al-Raḥmān reproduced them in his biography of the two founding governors of the Baghdad Mamluk dynasty, *Ḥadīqat al-Zawrāʾ fī sīrat al-wuzarāʾ* (*The Baghdad Garden: the biography of the governors*, 1748). Details from the narrative account of the Najaf Conference indicate the dangerous levels of sectarian tension at the Ottoman-Safavid frontier.

According to ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī's account, after his unsuccessful attack on Mosul, Nādir Shāh requested to make peace (*ṣulḥ*) with the governor of Baghdad, Ahmad Pasha. The governor then oversaw the writing of a peace treaty, which stipulated that Nādir Shāh return to Iran on the condition that the Ottoman state agreed, otherwise the fighting was to resume. Nādir Shāh agreed to the terms set by the Ottomans without protest. In the meantime, he went on

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[165] Anistās Mārī al-Karmilī and Buṭrus ibn Jibrāʾīl Yūsuf ʿAwwād, *Majallat lughat al-ʿarab al-ʿirāqīyah: majallah shahrīyah adabīyah, ʿilmīyah, tārīkhīyah* (Baghdad: 1911-1931), 2:219. Regarding the Abbasid lineage, the Iraqi historian, ʿImād ʿAbd al-Salām Raʾūf says that he has seen the al-Suwaydī family tree, which is currently in the possession of one of their descendants in Baghdad, notarized in the sixteenth century and showing the clan's lineage. ʿImād ʿAbd al-Salām Raʾūf, introduction to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ fī sīrat al-wuzarāʾ* (Baghdad: Maṭbaʿat al-Majmaʿ al-ʿIlmī, 2003), 4.

[166] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 557.

[167] His goal was most likely to legitimize himself as a ruler over Twelver Shīʿīs in Safavid territory and Sunnīs in Ottoman territory, as he was a Persian-speaking Sunnī.

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pilgrimage to the tombs of ʿAli and al-Ḥusayn in Najaf and Karbala. During the pilgrimage, al-Suwaydī says, the Shāh "pretended to be a Sunnī" and requested from Ahmad Pasha that he send over a Sunnī scholar, a request the governor understood to mean that Nādir Shāh wanted the scholar to debate Persian, i.e. Twelver Shīʿī, scholars (*li-l-munāẓarah maʿa ʿulamāʾ al-ʿajam*).[168]

Even though they were enemies – or perhaps because of it – Ahmad Pasha accommodated Nādir Shāh's request to dispatch a Sunnī-Shīʿī scholar to take part in the debate he was organizing. He sent ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī. The latter chronicled the events of what appears to have been a dangerous journey and the events of the debate, including meeting and speaking with Nādir Shāh. By his own account, al-Suwaydī dreaded going on this assignment out of fear that he would be killed by Ahmad Pasha if he failed or by Nādir Shāh if he were to win the debate for the Sunnī side. He became physically ill on the journey down to Najaf with what seems to have been a bladder infection or kidney stones. He was afraid to debate sectarian matters with other scholars, Sunnīs and Shīʿīs, whom he encountered on the road out of fear that someone might twist his words to the Shāh. He also feared that any Shīʿī who judged a debate in the absence of Nādir Shāh might be biased against the Sunnī side, and a Sunnī who judged might be biased in favor of Sunnism. The only way, thought ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī, that he would agree to a debate in the absence of the Shāh was if a scholar who was Jewish, Christian, or anything other than Sunnī or Shīʿī acted as judge. The amount of thought he put into the precautions he would take should a debate ensue in the absence of the Shāh is striking. Al-Suwaydī outlines several possible scenarios that he imagined might play out, saying "I imagined all this in my mind" (*hādhā kulluh ajraytuh fī mukhayyalatī*).[169] Al-Suwaydī's anxiety indicates how acute the Sunnī-Shīʿī sectarian tension

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[168] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 526-7.
[169] The chronicle of the debate is reproduced by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī in *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 530.

was at the Ottoman-Safavid frontier. The debate, however, did not take place before ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī reached Nādir Shāh's camp.[170]

As he approached the Shāh's encampment, al-Suwaydī had resigned himself to death as a confirmed Sunnī. He recounts driving up to the camp while reciting the Islamic testimonies of faith, repeating the *two* testimonies of faith (*shahādah*) – *ashhadu an lā ilāha illā-l-lāh* ("I testify that there is no God but God") and *ashhadu anna Muḥammadan rasūl Allāh* ("I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of God"). This is a significant detail as we know that Safavid Twelver Shīʿīs added a third article to the testimony of faith in their calls to prayer: *ashhadu anna ʿAlīyan walī Allāh* ("I testify that ʿAlī is the friend of God"), which al-Suwaydī must have heard as he traveled through Shīʿī-controlled territory. By telling the reader that he was repeating the two *shahādah*s indicates that, at that fateful moment, al-Suwaydī was ready to face death and to do so as a Sunnī.[171]

Once again, however, it seems that al-Suwaydī was being needlessly anxious. Upon meeting Nādir Shāh, he found the Shāh to be friendlier than he had imagined, adding that as soon as he saw the Shāh, he ceased to be terrified. He even described the Shāh as having a beautiful face. Speaking to each other in Turkmen, Nādir Shāh explained to al-Suwaydī that the reason he had summoned him was because his Turkish and Afghan soldiers, who were Sunnīs, accused the Iranians, i.e. Twelver Shīʿīs, of being heretics. The Shāh hoped to end this sectarian conflict, so he wanted al-Suwaydī to sanction certain Shīʿī practices as a way of reconciling these sects. Al-Suwaydī recounts the Shāh's explaining to him that

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[170] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 529-530.

[171] Marion H. Katz, "Call to prayer," *in Encyclopaedia of Islam Three*, edited by: Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson.

because heresy is ugly, and it is not appropriate to have people in my kingdom accusing one another of it, I charge you to revoke all charges of heresy and judge among the three sects. Tell me everything you see or hear and report it to Aḥmad [Pasha] as well.[172]

Al-Suwaydī's fear subsided because the Shāh apparently needed him to mitigate the sectarian tension among his troops by exerting his authority as a Sunnī ʿālim and an affiliate of the Ottoman state, the self-proclaimed patron of Sunnī Islam. In a way, al-Suwaydī was an honored attendee at the Najaf Conference.

Nādir Shāh's words notwithstanding, the debate was not truly ecumenical, as the Sunnī ʿulamāʾ had the upper hand.[173] The list of names of the scholars in attendance, which al-Suwaydī recorded using the scholar's name and his *nisbah*, or his city affiliation, includes Afghan, Uzbek, and Iranian ʿulamāʾ. The debate began with a reading of the story of succession to the Prophet Muhammad, the historic point of contention between Sunnīs and Shīʿīs.[174] It ended with Nādir Shāh's acceptance of several of the tenets that al-Suwaydī posited from a pro-Sunnī position, which meant that al-Suwaydī ultimately achieved a victory for the Sunnī side.

The Najaf Conference suggests that an entrenched culture of sectarianism flourished at the Ottoman-Safavid frontier in Iraq. The debate aligns with what some scholars have observed about sectarian Sunnī-Shīʿī relations in Ottoman Iraq, where the Ottomans were wary of the Shīʿī Safavids, suspecting them of attempting to gain control of the Shīʿī shrine cities, Karbala and Najaf. Meanwhile, the Iraqi Shīʿī population, especially the ʿulamāʾ, were often viewed as potential agents of the Safavids.[175]

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[172] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 534.
[173] Meir Litvak, "Encounters between Shiʿi and Sunnī ʿUlamāʾ in Ottoman Iraq," in *The Sunna and Shiʿa in History: Division and Ecumenism in the Muslim Middle East*, edited by O. Bengio and Meir Litvak (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 71-77.
[174] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 539.
[175] Litvak, "Encounters," 70.

Nonetheless, in scholarship on nineteenth-century Ottoman history, European colonial empires are depicted as meddling in the domestic affairs of the Ottomans based on claims of patronage for different religious minorities, creating an atmosphere of suspicion between religious minorities and causing sectarian identities to become more entrenched and antagonistic. In his important work on sectarianism, Ussama Makdisi looks at the 1860 massacre of Maronite Christians by the Druze in Mount Lebanon and argues that sectarianism is a modern phenomenon because those who engaged in the massacre had considered themselves to be modern Ottoman citizens. He concludes that sectarianism was not a boiling over of old hatreds, as Europeans and Ottomans wanted to portray it, "but a historical development of new ones."[176] The massacre was the result of the violation of the social order that had existed prior to the Ottoman reforms known as the *Tanzimat*.[177] Violence did not stem from the elites infighting, but from popular disregard for traditional figures of authority, such as emirs, patriarch, and heads of notable families. The reforms indirectly produced infighting. The *Tanzimat* introduced the idea of citizenship, that all Ottoman subjects were equal before the state with respect to taxation and juridical representation. The shaykhs were no longer necessary to mediate between the individual and the state. Thus, "villagers demanded equality with the shaykhs and formal representation"[178] and when violent incidents occurred between individuals from different sects, traditional authorities no longer had the power to stop them from erupting into communal violence.

Makdisi's overall argument is that, since the *Tanzimat* reforms were an attempt by the Ottomans to modernize and reform their state as it faced aggressive competition with Europe, the sectarianism that was indirectly caused by them is by extension a modern phenomenon. He

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[176] Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 119.
[177] Makdisi, *Sectariansim*, 137.
[178] Makdisi, *Sectarianism*, 96-97.

addresses how the *Tanzimat* precipitated disregard for the traditional leaders of the sects but does not allude to how those leaders came to be there. The sectarian basis of authority created the conditions that Makdisi is describing. For Sunnī, Shīʿī, or Christian notables to justify their existence, the lines demarcating these sects had to be clearly drawn. In fact, it was in the interest of sectarian elites to solidify the difference between their sect and others'. This suggests that the process whereby one sect differentiated itself and its territory from the others was gradual and preceded the *Tanzimat*. That Sunnī and Shīʿī scholars convened at the Najaf Conference – despite Nādir Shāh's otherwise known indifference toward religion – tells a different story. It suggests that sectarian identities had to be rigid enough within the Persianate context so much so that Nādir Shāh had to attempt to institute his ecumenical policy.

Al-Suwaydī's Heteronormative View of Gender

In addition to highlighting his father's participation in the Najaf Conference and engaging in pro-Sunnī sectarian discourse himself, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī also deployed gender in a way that challenges the received wisdom about gender relations in the Persianate context. Afsaneh Najmabadi attributes the shift in gender relations in nineteenth-century Qajar Iran to the encounter with Europe. She points to nineteenth-century nationalist and patriotic discourses as being productive of the "heterosexualization of eros" and challenges the assumption, including her own in her earlier work, that premodern love was heterosexual and that it shaped modern patriotism and the conception of homeland (Persian *vatan*) as a female beloved. Instead, she argues that the outlines of the nation as a geobody were produced by the new science of geography, by territorial conflicts between empires, and by imagining homeland as a female body. Focused on the idea of purity – the "pure soil of the homeland" – and the female body, the concept of loving a female

homeland emerged in the later decades of the nineteenth century and became common to courtly

and dissident discourses.[179]

Under the European gaze, heteronormative love became synonymous with modernity and

homoerotic practices, such as love between an older and a younger man, came to be considered

backward and a vice.[180] Throughout the nineteenth century, Iranians remained anxious about how

Europeans interpreted their sexual mores.[181] In response, Iranians denied and disavowed

homosexuality,[182] which resulted in the gradual disappearance of the male-male amorous couple

and the consolidation of gender-differentiated notions of beauty in visual art.[183]

Heterosexualization, according to Najmabadi, became a marker of modernity. It was shaped by

the pressure of being observed by travelers at the same time that Qajar Iran was taking shape as a

modern state under the pressure of European imperial expansionism.

Al-Suwaydī's text, however, challenges Najmabadi's thesis. Like Bilgrāmī,

heteronormative gender roles figure prominently in his texts. Heteronormativity was part of al-

Suwaydī's strategy to motivate men to protect their territory. Provincial autonomy meant that the

imperial army could not or would not be readily available to defend the frontier in case of invasion.

In the absence of readily available military support from the capital, the provincial governor relied

on the notables from local tribes and patronized religious and intellectual authorities, like members

of the Suwaydī family, to rally local forces to defend the cities on behalf of the Ottoman state in

the name of protecting true (i.e. Sunnī) Islam. Thus, in addition to lending legitimacy to the

governor, al-Suwaydī seems to have also been tasked with inciting the Sunnī population to defend

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[179] Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 97-98.

[180] Najmabadi, *Women*, 32-33.

[181] Najmabadi, *Women*, 35.

[182] Najmabadi, *Women*, 37-38.

[183] Najmabadi, *Women*, 55.

the Ottoman frontier in the case of attack by the Shīʿī Safavids from the east. But convincing the local (male) population to remain resolute and to defend a city under siege was not an easy task. Anecdotes of people fleeing cities during military, natural, or microbial disasters, such as plague outbreaks, indicate that being born and raised in a certain place was not enough to compel a person to stay and defend it. Moreover, flight or emigration could also be justified under military or political oppression with a simple reference to the Prophet's flight from Mecca to Medina and the desire to seek a place where one could be free to be a good Muslim. To tie men to a territorial home, that home had to be identified with something valuable. And nothing was more valuable than men's honor which, as I will show below, al-Suwaydī linked with a man's female relations.

As a biographer, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī took on the role of spokesperson for the governor's household, interpreting historical events in a way that legitimized their rule. In 1748, Khadījah Khānum, the granddaughter of Hasan Pasha and niece of Ahmad Pasha, asked al-Suwaydī to write the biographies of her maternal uncle and grandfather respectively. The historian, ʿImād ʿAbd al-Salām Raʾūf, argues that she probably also provided him with information for the biographies.[184] Al-Suwaydī agreed and wrote *The Baghdad Garden*. The text, however, is more than the two governors' biographies. It is also a chronicle that covers the period from Hasan Pasha's birth (ca. 1657) to the death of Ahmad Pasha in 1747. Events chronicled by al-Suwaydī include Nādir Shāh's military campaigns in Iraq, Baghdad, Mosul, Irbil, and Kirkuk. Al-Suwaydī's interpretation of Nādir Shāh's sieges of these three cities is crucial to the development of a discourse, in both prose and verse, in which Ottoman-Sunnī territory is identified with women as their shelter.

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[184] *EI²*, s.v. Ḥasan Pasha; al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 3.

While both the father and son al-Suwaydī describe Nādir Shāh, only the son takes a decidedly anti-Nādir Shāh stance in his text. In the sections chronicling the Shāh's attacks on Iraqi cities, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī consistently follows the mention of Nādir Shāh's name with phrases such as "may God make him horrendous" (*qabbaḥahu Allāh*), "may God curse him" (*laʿanahu Allāh*) and referring to him with adjectives like "The Wicked One" (*al-khabīth*). The father, ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī, did not use any disparaging epithets to refer to Nādir Shāh, even though he was apprehensive about meeting him. The use of such epithets in the biography of the two governors indicates that, at the time of its writing, there was no question about the official Ottoman position toward Nādir Shāh. If there had been room for questions over the sincerity of his intentions behind seeking a reconciliation with the Ottomans in ʿAbd Allāh's chronicle of the Najaf Debate, five years later in 1748, in ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's biography of the two governors it was confirmed that Nādir Shāh was nothing more than a dissimulator who would do and say anything to advance his interests.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī's characterization of Nādir Shāh as a brutal conqueror. He was aware of the Shāh's conquests in India and his taking Delhi, as well as his campaigns in central Asia.[185] He interprets Nādir Shāh's applications to the Ottoman State for peace and his attempts at developing an ecumenical policy in cooperation with the Ottomans as insincere and as nothing more than the Shāh's machinations to take Ottoman territory. The terror of Nādir Shāh, however, did not lie merely in his brutality as a conqueror or his irreverence for Ottoman sovereignty. As he points out, the Shāh's dissimulation, i.e. his insincerity as a believer, is what made him especially terrible.

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[185] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 477.

The depiction of non-Sunnīs as nonbelievers seems to justify what would otherwise be considered violations of the property and honor of Ottoman subjects by the ruler. In an anecdote about a Yezidi rebellion in Sinjar, whom al-Suwaydī describes as a sect that follows Zayd the son of ʿAlī and that worships Satan, he recounts that, when the Ottoman army came to quell their rebellion, the Yezidis sought refuge in a small citadel controlled by a Muslim community. The Ottoman governor then besieged the citadel and attacked it with bombs and subdued everyone inside. The Muslim inhabitants requested safety from the governor, which he granted to them after forgiving them for aiding the Yezidis. As for the Yezidis, their men and horses were killed, and the governor ordered that their women and children be captured. Their property was distributed among the soldiers, including women who were sold by and among the soldiers.[186] When compared to another anecdote about a confrontation between Hasan Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Baghdad, and the al-Ghurayr tribe, an Arab Sunnī tribe, the comparison highlights the different treatment by the Ottoman state of different sects during war. The Iraqi branch of the al-Ghurayr had been raiding towns and travelers along the road to Kirkuk, which they had consequently blocked. The said governor moved against them, ultimately subduing them using gunpowder weaponry. And even though their property was gone, "destroyed at the hands of the soldiers," the tribe was "content with the safety of their honor" (raḍū bi-ṣiyānat ʿirḍihim). The governor had returned their women, whom al-Suwaydī identifies as ʿirḍ, to them after holding them during the conflict. Al-Suwaydī specifies that "not one soldier touched a single one of their women and no one dared take their children or slaves, but the zealous one (al-ghayūr) gathered them." These two stories illustrate that with respect to believers, the ruler was expected to display zealous protection

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[186] Al-Suwaydī, Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ, 140-141.

(*ghīrah*) toward believing women who were under their protection, even as he engages in war with their men.[187]

Al-Suwaydī's View of Dawlah

Al-Suwaydī conceives of authority in paternalistic terms: the king rules over his domain, the empire and the father/husband rules over his domain, the household and tribal land. The defining feature of male authority for al-Suwaydī is the ability and willingness to be a protector. As al-Suwaydī writes about rulers of the two dynasties, the Ottoman and the Safavid, he ties each dynasty's (*dawlah*) fate with the way its rulers treat the women of their domain, equating the health of the *dawlah* with the treatment of its women by their presumed protectors. Regarding the Shīʿī Persians, al-Suwaydī says that the reason the Persian dynasty became extinct (*sabab inqirāḍ dawlat al-ʿajam*) was due to the fact that cursing the companions of the Prophet had become a common practice among the Shīʿī Persians.[188] Al-Suwaydī directs his reproach to the Shīʿīs' way of speaking about ʿĀʾishah in particular which, he says, they did in the manner of "infidels" (*yatakallamūn ʿalā al-sayyidah ʿĀʾishah bi-kalām lā yaṣdir bi-naṣṣ al-Qurʾān illā min al-kāfirīn*).[189] He adds that the Persians doubted and rejected prophetic traditions that proved the honor of the Companions, and they created traditions that attributed shortcomings to the very Companions praised by the tradition (*Sunnah*) and the text of the Quran (*naṣṣ al-kitāb*). Finally, al-Suwaydī attributes the "extinction" of the Safavid dynasty to the fact that Persians changed the laws and engaged in debauchery (*fujūr*). He describes what he says was the habit of the Persian ruler as follows:

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[187] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 68-74.

[188] He is referring here to Ahmad Pasha's conquests of Safavid territory when he conquered Kermanshah in 1723. On Ahmad Pasha's campaign, see Ceylan, *Ottoman Origins*, 38.

[189] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 172-3.

The things with which they were preoccupied included changing legal judgments and debauchery, which is forbidden in Muhammad's community. The Persian Shāh was in the habit of gathering the women of the country around him and dressing them in short robes that were set against their posteriors. He would throw money at them, so that when [the women] bent down to pick it up, he could look at them. They considered this [practice] a noble deed and a source of pride. The reason for the destruction of their kingdom and the extinction of their dynasty was due to ugly acts such as this.[190]

Al-Suwaydī's portrayal of the Safavid ruler as morally corrupt toward the women of his realm is set against the author's portrayal of his patrons, the Ottoman governors, as protectors of the women in their charge.

Al-Suwaydī's contrasting portrayals of the treatment of women under Ottoman and Safavid rulers becomes a tool to legitimize the Ottoman conquest of Safavid territory by playing on the different shades of meaning inherent in the word *dawlah*. In addition to meaning "state" or "dynasty," *dawlah* connotes "change," "the revolution of fortune," and a fortune that is subject to revolution as God sees fit. In early Islamic historical texts, "*dawlah*" is used in the latter sense.[191] If the Shīʿī Persians are morally bankrupt, then conquest of their territory by the morally upstanding Ottomans is acceptable and even desirable as one dynasty loses its God-given fortune to another. By the same token, the Sunnī subjects of the Ottoman realm must guard against Safavid conquest to prevent the exposure of their women to morally corrupt rulers and the loss of their *dawlah* by failing to protect the women in their charge.

Al-Suwaydī's account of Nādir Shāh's military campaigns in Iraq is shaped by sectarian and paternalistic notions of territory and home. Al-Suwaydī describes the mobilization of Baghdad's Arab clans in defense of the city as Nādir Shāh began campaigning in Iraq. When a

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[190] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 173.

[191] E.g., in a letter from the Kūfans to al-Ḥusayn calling on him to lead the opposition against Yazīd: *ammā baʿd, fa-l-ḥamd li-llāh al-ladhī qaṣam ʿadūwak al-jabbār al-ʿanīd al-ladhī intazā ʿalā hādhīhi al-ummah…thumma qatal khiyārahā wa-istabqā shirārahā wa-jaʿal māl allāh dawlatan bayn aghniyāʾihā…*Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 3:157.

siege seemed imminent, he says, the clans in the Karkh neighborhood of the city, including his own, relocated to Ruṣāfah, the eastern side of the city, in preparation for the battle. Their homes were left empty as they would only visit to check on them during the day and return to Ruṣāfah in the evening.[192] After a brief description of Nādir Shāh's maneuvers on his way toward Baghdad after his siege of Basra, al-Suwaydī shifts into a long, first-person narrative focusing on his own personal experience of the event.[193] After it was confirmed that Nādir Shāh was coming to conquer Baghdad and that "he would not leave a lowland or a hill standing with all his mortars and bombs and his numerous soldiers and armies,"[194] al-Suwaydī, feeling desperate, says that he contemplated fleeing to Aleppo with some of his students. He did not leave Baghdad during the crisis, however, because his zealous sense of protection (*ghīrah*) toward his family stopped him. Al-Suwaydī justified his decision to stay in Baghdad, saying: "my death in the crowd is better than my living while my family and relatives are at the mercy of Persians (*aʿjām*),"[195] suggesting that his personal attachment to the city was his intimate relations, namely, the protection he felt he owed them.

Al-Suwaydī projects the same sectarian and paternalistic views he holds towards Baghdad and his family to the people of the other Iraqi cities to which Nādir Shāh laid siege. He says that "the evil one" (*al-khabīth*), that is Nādir Shāh, subdued all the villages in the vicinity of Baghdad, and that the Bedouins (*aʿrāb*), whom al-Suwaydī describes as "people of corruption" (*ahl al-fasād*) and some Kurdish clans, acquiesced to the conqueror. After subjugating Shahrizor (on the modern-

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[192] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 478-79.

[193] Al-Suwaydī's narrative is comprised of prose interspersed with poetry, through which we get a very personal perspective of the event. One gets a sense that the author was bored as the clan awaited a possible battle by the walls of the city, far from the comfort of their homes. Al-Suwaydī offers formulaic imagery about the clans' displacement, complaining of the agony of separation (*kurab al-furāq*) and homesickness (*ḥanīn*), moaning over the empty homelands (*awṭān*) with the moans of "a woman in labor." Al-Suwaydī describes himself staying up some nights, sleepless and longing for Karkh, while listening to the dawn prayer among the traces of abandoned abodes (*aṭlāl*). The memory of home makes him cry, he says, "shedding from both eyes tears that are almost like blood." He composed poetry in this state of discomfort and possible boredom. Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 479-481.

[194] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 479-80.

[195] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 480.

day border of Iran and Iraq, near Sulaimania) and getting the support of the Kurdish tribes there, Nādir Shāh headed to Kirkuk where he mounted an aggressive attack on the city, besieging it for eight days. Finally, "its people had no choice but to surrender. So they surrendered and obeyed, but they regretted what they had done when [Nādir Shāh] dealt them a great blow and took a great number of their women."[196] The city of Irbil suffered the same fate at the hands of Nādir Shāh before he headed to Mosul with a purportedly immense army. As recounted by al-Suwaydī, the battle between the assailants and the people of Mosul unfolded in apocalyptic proportions:

> [Nādir Shāh] headed to Mosul with an army of approximately 200,000 fighters. He erected two bridges over the Tigris, and his army crossed over to Mosul, which they besieged for forty days. In the span of seven days, he bombarded them with close to forty thousand explosives, and the same number of bombs. [The people of Mosul] stood strong and surrendered their affairs to the Master Planner, that is, to God Almighty. Then [Nādir Shāh] dug mines and filled them with gunpowder and bullets and lit them on fire. But these backfired on him. He attacked the wall [of the city] using ladders, but the lions [the people of Mosul] repelled him and killed those who resisted [from among Nader Shah's soldiers]. When [Nādir Shāh] realized that he had failed at Mosul, he left it and headed to Baghdad with his army.[197]

After their victory, al-Suwaydī sent a letter and a forty-eight-line ode rhyming in the Arabic letter *hamzah* to the people of Mosul congratulating them and praising their governor, Husain Pasha al-Jalīlī (r. 1730-1757).[198] Al-Suwaydī commended them for embodying a number of characteristics. First, al-Suwaydī congratulates the people of Mosul for being "subjects with perfect loyalty" (*raʿīyah ḥasunat fī al-ikhlāṣ*). The people of Mosul were loyal in their belief "when others' hearts were changing" (*akhlaṣtum fī iʿtiqādikum ḥīna al-qulūbu taghayyarat*), a reference to Kirkuk, as

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[196] al-Suwaydī, *The Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 482-3. Nādir Shāh reportedly also arrested the *ʿulamāʾ* of Kirkuk, who were released only after ʿAbd Allāh al-Suwaydī interceded on their behalf with the Shāh and imposed such high taxes that the people had to sell everything they owned to pay them.

[197] al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 483-4.

[198] When Nādir Shāh besieged Mosul in 1736 Husain Pasha al-Jalīlī put up a vigorous and ultimately successful fight against the invader. The Jalīlī victory at Mosul against Nadir Shah would become a key source of legitimacy for the dynasty over the next century, helping establish it as one of the important *aʿyān* families who joined the Ottoman administration and acquired important offices in the state, comparable to the ʿAẓm family of Damascus. Jane Hathaway, *The Arab Lands under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1800* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008), 94-95.

we will see.[199] Al-Suwaydī's praise of the constancy exemplified by the people of Mosul also justifies his own decision to stay in Baghdad during the siege because of his sense of duty toward his intimates.

The second characteristic for which al-Suwaydī congratulates the people of Mosul is their ability to defend their city, thereby protecting its women and their honor, through cooperation and perseverance: "You assisted each other in protecting your homes time after time and helped each other in the struggle with a tenacious spirit" (*wa-tanāṣartum ʿalā al-muḥāmāt ʿan diyārakum marrat^{an} baʿda marrah, wa-tawāzartum ʿalā al-muʾnāḍalah bi-nufūsin murrah*). Al-Suwaydī praises them for enduring (*ṣabr*) the events of the siege.[200] Again, the ability of the people of Mosul to endure justifies his own experience during the siege at Baghdad. Men's successful protection of their homes is tantamount to protecting their women, i.e. their *ʿirḍ* or honor, a belief affirmed by the poem al-Suwaydī composed in honor of the people of Mosul. In the poem, al-Suwaydī eulogizes the endurance of the people of Mosul, saying, "You fought for God the proper way to fight for Him / and you endured the events of the tempests."[201] The endurance to which al-Suwaydī refers is what enabled them to protect their honor. He goes on to say: "You protected the guarded honor from harm / since you took on the character of the ancestors," and he then identifies the paternalism of Mosul's men with that of its governor, whom he portrays as the primary keeper of the city as a haven for the vulnerable – women, children, and slaves – and for Islam:

He was able to defend the women with his diligence/and likewise defend children and slave women

If not for him the explosives of al-Ḥudaybāʾ are of no use / nor are al-Ḥadbāʾ's bombs of any use[202]

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[199] al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 485.
[200] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 486.
[201] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 487-492.
[202] *Al-Ḥadbāʾ* is one of the names of Mosul and *al-Ḥudaybāʾ* is its diminutive form.

If he was not the fire in the rifles, they would not protect / the homes from the assailment of enemies

Without him your graves would be in desolation/and your women would be considered captives

Without him the abode of religion was almost wiped out / and your link to the Law almost disappeared[203]

Al-Suwaydī's message is clear. Their loyalty to one another and unity through coordinated military action helps the men of Mosul to protect their honor by defending their homes from invasion and exposing their women to captivity. They are also portrayed as mirroring the protective actions of their ruler who is in turn depicted by al-Suwaydī as the ultimate protector of the Muslim city that shelters women.

In his poem and letter to Mosul, al-Suwaydī casts the governor as the ideal patriarch who is able to keep other men from accessing the women in his territory. This relationship to territory is mirrored in ordinary men's relationship to their households and the women therein, making the household a microcosm of the city.[204] This is evidenced by comparing al-Suwaydī's praise of Mosul's people with the censure he directs, in another poem, at the people of Kirkuk, who, he says, have no one to blame for the dishonor they suffered but themselves. Admonishing their inability to defend their city, al-Suwaydī rebukes the people of Kirkuk:

May evil befall Kirkuk and may evil befall its people / they brought all the harm onto themselves

When they did not shield their households / even though their citadel is well-built[205]

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[203] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 484-492.
[204] Note that the provincial city was also turned into a microcosm of the capital by the Baghdad Mamluk governors.
[205] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 491.

Given that al-Suwaydī was writing a historical narrative, juxtapositions such as this one between Mosul and Kirkuk are part of a fiction he was spinning to reconstruct the events of Nādir Shāh's sieges and to interpret them in a certain way to his readers. The meaning assigned by al-Suwaydī to the sieges of Baghdad, Kirkuk, and Mosul by Nādir Shāh is that the onus of defending men's honor falls on their own shoulders. Good leaders, like Ahmad Pasha of Baghdad and al-Jalīlī of Mosul, are the ideal patriarchs. As such, they will be emulated by ordinary men, ensuring their attachment to their territorial home and reinforcing their role as defenders of that territory.

By casting the ideal ruler as a protector of the abode of Islam ("Without him the abode of religion was almost wiped out / and your link to the Law almost disappeared"), al-Suwaydī couches territorial defense in religious terms, as a fight for God and resistance to religious corruption where men's honor is at stake. The suffering visited on the people of Baghdad, Mosul and Kirkuk during the sieges of Nādir Shāh were a test and those who endured it patiently, through loyalty and cooperation, were rewarded with honor. The fickle and weak who cannot endure, like the people of Kirkuk, will suffer further from the dishonor of having their city walls breached and allowing their women to be exposed to captivity.

If being born in a place was not sufficient reason for men to risk their lives defending it in times of crisis, as evidenced by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī's initial inclination to escape to Aleppo, identifying a man's territorial home with his household and women might be. This was the discursive strategy al-Suwaydī employed in his account of Nādir Shāh's sieges on Baghdad, Mosul, and Kirkuk. The underlying message in his historical account, in the letter to Mosul, and in his poetry, is that a city must be defended because it protects the women from being exposed to captivity and to moral decadence at the hands of the invader. The defense of the place that shelters

one's women is critical to the protection of a man's honor because the latter is seen as being contingent on the moral status of the women in his charge.

The power of al-Suwaydī's historical accounts of the sieges of Nādir Shāh lies in the fact that they are descriptive within a prescriptive framework. They are marked by a simultaneous abhorrence for the conqueror, a devotion to territory as the place that houses man's intimate relations and the glorification of those who defend its borders. The underlying message in his rhetoric is that "real" men are those who take up arms in defense of their cities and withstand the hardship of combat due to their zeal (*ghīrah*) for their women since their honor is at stake.

Al-Suwaydī's narrative strategy is far from unique. This, after all, was Ibn Khaldūn's strategy in the *Muqaddimah*. In the early modern period,[206] Ottoman historians' notions of history and state were shaped by the rediscovery of Ibn Khaldūn and the fashioning of his ideas of dynastic cyclism to meet their contemporary needs. According to Cornell Fleischer, "the early eighteenth century marks the true beginning of Ibn Khaldūn's popularity among Ottoman historians."[207] Either directly or through his commentators, Ibn Khaldūn's ideas proliferated in Ottoman intellectual circles. Ottoman interpreters of Ibn Khaldūn did not turn to him simply to describe the Ottoman Empire, but to solve financial, political, and social problems. Nor did these authors apply the Khaldūnian historical theory of dynastic cyclism indiscriminately. They appropriated Ibn Khaldūn's concept of historical cycles that govern the life of dynastic states.[208] Ottoman

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[206] "Early modern" is a contentious term. I use it here to mean the centuries between the rise of the Ottoman Empire as a successor to previous Arab-Muslim empires and its transition into an empire republic, so from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century.

[207] Fleischer, "Royal Authority," 48.

[208] The cycle consists of four dynastic generations, which he compares to the five stages of human life: birth, growth, maturity, stasis, decline, and disintegration.

authorsbelieved that if they could correctly identify their state's decline, as defined by Ibn Khaldūn, it could be halted or reversed.[209]

Although al-Suwaydī does not engage with Ibn Khaldūn neither directly nor indirectly, his use of the concept *dawlah* aligns with Ibn Khaldūn's. *Dawlah*, derived from the Arabic root cluster *d-w-l* meaning a rotation or cyclism in ownership of property and the waging of war, is an old concept in literary Arabic. Two morphological forms of the root appear in the Quran, in Surah 3, Āl ʿImrān, verse 140: and We rotate those circumstances between people (*wa-tilka al-ayyām nudāwiluhā bayn al-nās*) and in Surah 59, al-Ḥashr, verse 7: so that it [war booty] does not become the property of the rich among you (*kay lā yakūn dūlatᵃⁿ bayn al-aghniyāʾ minkum*). In the eighth century CE, the word *dawlah* was used in the sense of "revolution" during the Abbasid overthrow of the Ummayads. Like Ibn Khaldun, al-Suwaydī uses the term *dawlah* to refer to states – Ottoman and Safavid – but, for him, *dawlah* still encompasses the earlier meanings of rotation and property.

In al-Suwaydī's texts, women constitute the thread that connects the earlier connotations of property and its rotation with the Khaldūnian meaning of *dawlah* as a state identified with its ruling dynasty. In his explanations of why the Persian state became extinct, women serve as indictors of the turning fortune of the Persians in their power play with the Ottomans. The Safavids degrade ʿĀʾishah, one of the matriarchs of the Muslim community, who, al-Suwaydī says, "is cleared from guilt by the text of the Quran [and is] the beloved of [Muhammad]."[210] And the Persian Shāh degrades contemporary women in his realm. The moral status of a central female figure in the Islamic tradition and that of everyday, ordinary women is compromised. The mistake that dooms the Safavids, according to al-Suwaydī, is the Shāh's and his men's lack of zeal for the

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[209] This is because these authors, like Ibn Khaldūn, "viewed their own polity as very much a creation of history and human calculation rather than divine decree." Fleischer, "Royal Authority," 48-50.

[210] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 172.

honor of their women, both, the women in their charge and the women in the Prophet's charge. Al-Suwaydī seems to attribute the Safavid state's disintegration (as a way of prescribing to his Ottoman readers how to guard against it) to their failure to keep their women from having their moral status compromised in the public sphere or being exposed as sexual objects to strange men. The inability of men to protect their women, or their outright disregard for keeping their women cloistered is due to lack of *ghīrah* which caused the Safavids to lose their *dawlah*.

In an account about Hasan Pasha's raid (*ghazw*) of Persia in *The Baghdad Garden*, al-Suwaydī includes certain details to indicate that the raid was sanctioned by God and was therefore legal. According to al-Suwaydī, the Ottoman state issued an order (Ottoman Turkish *fermān*) for Hasan Pasha to lead a raid on "the Persians' homelands and to conquer what was left of those nations after God destroyed them."[211] As in the passage about the moral decline of the Persians (see above), divine anger constitutes a reason to conquer Persian territory and to execute God's plan to wipe out the Persian state. In other words, as al-Suwaydī implies, God saw it fit to rotate the rule over Persia, giving kingship to the Ottomans. The Ottomans' seizure of Persian property and women is depicted by al-Suwaydī as the manifestation of this divinely-sanctioned rotation. In addition to the written order from the Sultan, al-Suwaydī says that Ḥasan Pasha also received a legal opinion (*fatwā*) in support of the raid from the highest legal authority in the empire, the Shaykh al-Islām. According to the *fatwā*, it was licit for Ḥasan Pasha's army to fight the Persians, take their property, and capture their women and children.[212]

These anecdotes point to a conception of territory, like wealth, women and children, as a gift from God bestowed onto a community of elite, believing Muslim men. When the believing Muslim men fall into moral decadence, God punishes them by removing their authority. Their

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[211] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 188.
[212] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-zawrāʾ*, 189.

material property, including land, women, and children, is passed on to a morally righteous dynasty and so on. In his conception, *dawlah* is both a material phenomenon (e.g. the rotation of territory and its people between different groups of people), and the abstract idea of a gift from God contingent on the recipients' good moral status.[213] To protect or prolong their God-given *dawlah*, men must have zeal toward their women, their honor. In his travel diary, *Tārīkh ḥawādith Baghdād wa-l-Baṣrah* (*Chronicles of Baghdad and Basra*), we get a brief but jarring glimpse of what it meant for ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī to embody the role of man as a zealous defender of the women in his charge at a time of crisis.

When an outbreak of the plague struck Baghdad in the 1770s, al-Suwaydī moved his family out of the city, as many other families were doing, and took flight to southern Iraq. He recorded the experience in his travel diary, which chronicles the flight from Baghdad and al-Suwaydī's stay in Basra, spanning the years 1772 to 1778.[214] After a series of escapes from one plague-ridden city to another, al-Suwaydī and his family settled briefly in Basra before the plague struck there and they were forced to move further south to Kuwait. When the family received news that the plague was subsiding, they returned to Basra once again, intending to make their way back to Baghdad. Going back to Basra, however, proved to be heartbreaking for al-Suwaydī. He quickly discovered that his good friends and students had perished in the plague. To make matters worse, he also discovered that the road to Baghdad had become too dangerous for travel. The plague had killed

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[213] The idea of God-bestowed property between groups has a long history. The root for the word *dawlah* appears twice in the Quran. In Surah 59, al-Ḥashr, the word *dūlatan* (an object of exchange) appears in verse 7: "What God grants His messenger (from the property) of the people of the towns belongs to God, His messenger, the kinfolk, the orphans, the destitute, and those who may become needy on a journal, so that it will not become an object of exchange between the rich among you. Take only what the Messenger gives to you and reject what he forbids. Fear God; God is severe in His retribution." In early Islamic historical texts, historians used the word "*dawlah*" to refer to dynasties, such as the Byzantines, the Umayyads and the Abbasids. These early Arab historians, like their Byzantine predecessors, conceived of kingship as a temporary and earthly God-given property that would ultimately be returned to God.

[214] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī, *Tārīkh ḥawādith baghdād wa-l-baṣrah*, ed. ʿImād ʿAbd al-Salām Raʾūf (Baghdad: Wizārat al-Thaqāfah wa-l-Funūn, 1978), 39-40; 42-43.

so many people in the towns along it that the road and towns between Baghdad and Basra were now vulnerable to attacks by gangs of nomadic Arabs.[215] Finally, the death toll due to plague seems to have caused a brain drain in Basra, which made someone with al-Suwaydī's training as a scholar needed there. He was asked to work as a judge and a teacher. He accepted the offer, but he continued to look for opportunities to return to Baghdad. Just when it seemed that he had finally found the opportunity to obtain permission to leave Basra, the governor, ʿUmar Pasha, issued an order that he stay and work as a judge and teach at the Khalīliyah School there.[216] Al-Suwaydī accepted these positions but, he says, only out of fear that ʿUmar Pasha, who was the governor of Baghdad and Basra at the time, might retaliate against his family in Baghdad.[217] The road to Baghdad opened to travel a few days later, but, sadly, al-Suwaydī was unable to leave as he sent his family back and stayed alone.[218] The loneliness made al-Suwaydī long for Baghdad (*fa-li-dhālika kuntu ashtāqu ilā baghdād*).[219] And the "love of homeland" — *ḥubb al-waṭan*— made him think that the situation in Baghdad was the same as that in Basra after the plague (*wa-kāna yakhṭur fī-l-bāl anna ḥāl baghdād baʿd al-ṭāʿūn ka-ḥāl al-baṣrah wa-ḥubb al-waṭan yadfaʿu hādhā al-khāṭir*). His friends and colleagues in Baghdad had probably also perished in the plague.[220]

Despite the hopelessness of his situation, al-Suwaydī continued to try to return to Baghdad. He describes an encounter with an old acquaintance of his from Baghdad who he thought could help intercede on his behalf with the governor to help him go back to Baghdad. Al-Suwaydī complained to his friend that in Basra he was a "stranger and alone, without wife or concubine,

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[215] al-Suwaydī, *Tārīkh*, 47.
[216] These efforts by the notables of Basra to coerce ʿAbd al-Raḥmān to stay as a judge and teacher were no doubt motivated by their desire to remedy the brain drain caused by the plague.
[217] al-Suwaydī, *Tārīkh*, 50.
[218] al-Suwaydī, *Tārīkh*, 51.
[219] al-Suwaydī, *Tārīkh*, 51.
[220] al-Suwaydī, *Tārīkh*, 51. Moved by his homesickness for Baghdad and his grief, al-Suwaydī says he composed a poem, which he includes in the *Tārīkh*.

everyone who was with me having left me." Al-Suwaydī's old friend told him that ʿUmar Pasha "has made you a Basran" (*qad jaʿalaka baṣrīyᵃⁿ*) and tried to dissuade al-Suwaydī from returning to Baghdad by telling him that "Baghdad is not as you remember it before the plague. Its men have changed, and it has changed. Marry someone here and we will keep each other company."[221] Al-Suwaydī had no choice but to try to make Basra his home. He remained there for two years.

To make the strange city home, al-Suwaydī followed his friend's advice and married a "respectable and religious" woman named Zaynab. After getting married, he says, he became reconciled with the idea of staying in Basra (*baʿd zawājī raḍītu bi-l-maqām fī al-baṣrah*). No sooner had he begun to feel at home in Basra than news arrived that the Persians were coming to attack the city. Al-Suwaydī applied and finally received permission to return to Baghdad. In order to secure the permission to leave, however, he had to leave his wife and furniture behind as insurance that he would return. He assured Zaynab that he was leaving because he had news that the Persians were coming to Basra, in which case he assured her that she would be safe because she would be treated as one of the notable women, i.e. as a member of the harem and thus would not be subject to capture as a slave.[222] Shortly after he left Basra, al-Suwaydī says, the Persians besieged the city and his house was ransacked and seized and Zaynab tried to run away. Al-Suwaydī was very concerned about her and he composed a poem expressing his preoccupation with her, until

> a messenger with good tidings came and gave me the happy news that she died. [Her heart had exploded from fear], for she was easily scared – may God rest her soul. I thanked God for the safety of my honor (*fa-ḥamadt Allāh ʿalā salāmat ʿirḍī*) and begged Him to reunite me with her in heaven, He does not turn down those who beg him.

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[221] al-Suwaydī, *Tārīkh*, 53.
[222] Al-Suwaydī, *Tārīkh*, 54.

Zaynab was not treated as honorably as al-Suwaydī said she would be, and when she died he was relieved that God had protected *his* honor by keeping her from being taken into captivity. Additionally, as the passage suggests, the death of Zaynab made severing his ties with Basra easier for al-Suwaydī. He never wanted to stay in the city and his marriage seemed to be a strategy to manufacture feelings of attachment to the city by establishing a household in it. The strategy was successful for a time but, in a moment of crisis, and after he got his chance to return to Baghdad, al-Suwaydī was willing to put his honor at risk to be where he truly felt more at home. Al-Suwaydī understood home in two ways. Home could be anywhere al-Suwaydī had friends and students. As mentioned earlier, he had contemplated leaving Baghdad for Aleppo with his students and he found comfort in Basra because of his students there. But he felt lonely in the city after their death. At the same time, home was anchored by his sense of honor, which he attached to his vulnerable relations, like his wife. It is because he conceived of territorial home in this way al-Suwaydī expresses revulsion at the people of Kirkuk, who failed to protect these vulnerable relations. By failing to defend the city, the people of Kirkuk exposed their women to slavery, which dishonored the men.

Zeal is a fundamental value as it helped to maintain the integrity of territorial home for the sake of keeping man's female relations cloistered. *Ghīrah*, as portrayed in al-Suwaydī's accounts, motivates men to fight, kill, and possibly be killed for the places that shelter their women. Lack of *ghīrah* leads to decadence and perverse behavior because it erodes the social links that constitute the household and the state insofar as the former is a microcosm of the latter. The Persians' lack of *ghīrah* for their women, then, makes them appear as perverse in contrast to al-Suwaydī and his patron, who display *ghīrah* toward women under their protection. The Persians' lack of *ghīrah* is blamed for their weakened their state, making their perceived deficiency as zealous protectors of

women a pretext for their Ottoman rivals to conquer their territory and capture their women. His conception of *ghīrah* with respect to women also explains al-Suwaydī's attitude toward the men of Kirkuk and Irbil, whom he blames for losing their women to captivity because they did not fight with enough zeal, choosing instead to negotiate with the conqueror.

Thus, sectarianism as well as heteronormative gender relations were an integral part of al-Suwaydī's conception of *dawlah*. While it is understandable that Makdisi and Najmabadi would attribute sectarianism and rigid gender binaries to colonialism, it is not entirely true that these problematic social phenomena took their modern, nineteenth-century forms during the Islamic encounter with Europe. Al-Suwaydī deployed sectarian discourse and paternalistic conceptions of territorial home to link men's honor to the cloistering of their women. That al-Suwaydī used these discourse strategies indicates that sectarianism and gender binaries played a fundamental role in shaping his Khaldūnian notion of *dawlah*.

Conclusion

Even though al-Suwaydī does not cite Ibn Khaldūn or any of his later interpreters and does not follow Ibn Khaldūn's example in writing a civilizational history, the prescriptive power of his historical narratives and his understanding of the state are arguably Khaldūnian. Ibn Khaldūn conceived of the relationship between people and history as one where people can only enter history as an organized community under the absolute leadership of a sovereign – i.e. a state – with whom the community is identified. If the political community should fall, the people would disappear from history.[223] Understanding this relationship between history and state can shed some light on the otherwise inexplicable absence of Jews and Christians from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-

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[223] Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldun: An Essay in Reinterpretation* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 13-14.

Suwaydī's text. Given his consciousness of sectarian differences and the attested existence of sizeable Jewish and Christian communities in Iraq in the eighteenth century, we would expect these groups to play a more active role in his historical narrative. Yet they are only mentioned in a cursory way and not as subjects of his historical anecdotes. Their absence can be attributed to their lack of a state and a sovereign, without which they did not "qualify for historicity," i.e. they had no recourse to history.

In addition, al-Suwaydī's conception of the relationship between state and history may help us to understand his sectarianism and his heteronormative view of gender roles. The lesson from most of al-Suwaydī's anecdotes is that the sovereign and the community of elites supporting him must behave equitably if they are to keep their territory from falling into the hands of Shīʿi Safavids who, he says, violate basic Islamic principles by cursing the companions of the Prophet. Al-Suwaydī raises the stakes in protecting territory when he identifies it with women then links the control and sheltering of women to their male relatives' honor. Al-Suwaydī's focus on proper behavior echoes the first two conditions of the Circle of Justice, which state that "the dynasty is an authority through which life is given to proper behavior. Proper behavior is a policy directed by the ruler."[224] Behaving equitably meant ensuring one's place in history and protecting one's honor. In the following chapter, I will focus on Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī to argue that he shares several similarities with writers, like al-Suwaydī and al-Bilgrāmī, through his appropriation of Khaldūnian ideas.

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[224] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, trans. Rosenthal, 1:81-2.

Chapter Four

Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī: The Continuation of Eighteenth-century Ottoman Khaldūnism

Introduction

Unlike ʿAlī Āzād Bilgrāmī and ʿAbd Allāh and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī, the subject of this chapter, Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī (1801-1873), is better known to scholars. Historians of Arabic literature, both early and recent, regard al-Ṭahṭāwī as a major figure, a translator of French cultural institutions and ideas, such as patriotism and constitutionalism, into Arabic. Scholars argue that al-Ṭahṭāwī was influenced by French humanism, as exemplified by his *waṭanīyāt*, his military songs that exhort the listener to love the homeland (the Khedival state) and its ruler (the Khedive), and al-Ṭahṭāwī's prose, which encompasses a universal history, theory of education, and travelogue.[225]

The consensus among literary historians is that al-Ṭahṭāwī's works, along with certain others by his contemporaries, mark the beginning of Arab modernity – an idea that is contested. For twentieth-century historians of Arabic, modernity was synonymous with a French-inspired Arab ethno-national revival (*al-Nahḍah*) and constituted proto-nationalism. Sasson Somekh considers al-Ṭahṭāwī a "neoclassical poet" because he supposedly created the first Arabic patriotic song (*nashīd*, pl. *anāshīd*), a new genre that, according to Somekh, al-Ṭahṭāwī adapted from

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[225]Abdulrazzak Patel, *The Arab Nahḍah: The Making of the Intellectual and Humanist Movement* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 138-140; ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Hilāl ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, *Shiʿr al-Ṭahṭāwī bayna al-taqlīd wa-l-tajdīd* (Cairo: n.p., 1988), 21-22. Al-Ṭahṭāwī was exiled to Khartoum from 1850 to 1854 during the reign of ʿAbbās Ḥilmī I (r. 1849-1854), the grandson of Muḥammad ʿAlī, al-Ṭahṭāwī's patron. Al-Ṭahṭāwī returned to Cairo after ʿAbbās I was assassinated and was patronized by the new Khedive, Saʿīd Pasha (r. 1854-1863). Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī, *An Imam in Paris: Account of a Stay in France by an Egyptian Cleric (1826-1831)*, tr. Daniel Newman (London: Saqi Books, 2004), 52, 66-68.

French. Shmuel Moreh regards al-Ṭahṭāwī as modern, i.e. a proto-nationalist, because of his military songs.[226]

Somekh and Moreh considered al-Ṭahṭāwī "modern" because they viewed Arab modernity as a project of translation and assimilation of European nationalism and secularism into Arabic that later was transformed into Arab nationalism. In other words, they read al-Ṭahṭāwī through the lens of Arab nationalism, in which affiliation to homeland is based on ethnic and linguistic, not religious, identity. In his introduction to the *Modern Arabic Literature*, M.M. Badawi describes al-Ṭahṭāwī as one of those who attempted to reconcile "the reason and rationalism of the French Enlightenment with Sharīʿah."[227] Badawi's view of al-Ṭahṭāwī as a mediator between tradition and innovation (*bayn al-tajdīd wa-l-taqlīd*) and between secularism and Islam (*bayn al-ʿilmāniyyah wa-l-islām*) is also echoed in Arabic scholarship.[228] Thus, nineteenth-century authors who Arabicized European literary genres, such as al-Ṭahṭāwī, Buṭrus al-Bustānī, and Jurjī Zaydān, were said to be pioneers of modernity, synonymous with Arab nationalism.

Since the early 2000s, scholars have begun to back away from the received wisdom on Arab modernity and from the roles traditionally ascribed to nineteenth-century authors such as al-Ṭahṭāwī. The most significant challenge to the Eurocentric definition of modernity emerged from postcolonial theory, from authors inspired by the work of Edward Said. Trying to find anticolonial resistance to French hegemony in the work of al-Ṭahṭāwī, Tarek El-Ariss considers the poems and anecdotes in his travelogue as assimilations of European "practical sciences" – as opposed to

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[226] Sasson Somekh, "The Neo-Classical Arabic Poets," in *Modern Arabic Literature*, ed. M.M. Badawi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 64. For a discussion of his strophic verse, see Shmuel Moreh, *Modern Arabic Poetry: 1800-1970* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 15-21.

[227] Badawi, ed. *Modern Arabic Literature*, 12.

[228] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, *Shiʿr al-Ṭahṭāwī*; Maḥmūd ʿIṣām al-Sayyid, *Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī bayna al-ʿilmāniyah wa-l-islām* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥikmah, 2012).

slavish assimilation of the colonizer – and as sites of Egyptian nationalist resistance to Europe.[229]

Likewise, Myriam Salama-Carr argues that, in his travelogue, al-Ṭahṭawī constructs and legitimizes the French Other through a process of "constructive translation and representation," which constitutes an early form of Occidentalism.[230]

The postcolonial framework, however, does not work very well in the case of Egypt and other Ottoman provinces in the nineteenth century. Regarding Egypt and France through the postcolonial framework as colonized and colonizer, where the former is passive and gendered feminine, and the latter is active and masculine, Shaden Tageldin reads al-Ṭahṭawī's travelogue and his translations as a game of desire in which French culture "seduces" him. Al-Ṭahṭawī's belief that he was equal to his French intellectual counterparts, like Silvestre de Sacy, constitutes his seduction, as it allows French culture to enter Egypt and to colonize it through al-Ṭahṭawī's adaptions of French ideas in his books. Tageldin's analysis of al-Ṭahṭawī falters, however, because it is grounded in a framework that views Egypt as a French colony when, historically, it was not. Like Iraq and Greater Syria, Egypt was not a European colony during al-Ṭahṭawī's lifetime. Even though it was only loosely controlled by the Ottoman capital, it remained (nominally) an Ottoman province until the end of World War I. As Adam Mestyan says, "Egypt is not India."[231] It is not likely that al-Ṭahṭawī was "seduced" into allowing French hegemony into Egypt. It is also possible that he and his French interlocutors regarded themselves as colleagues working within the same civilizing project.

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[229] Tarek El-Ariss, "Tracing the Nation in French and Arabic Travel Narratives from Late Eighteenth to Mid Nineteenth Century" (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2004), 167. In his recent book, El-Ariss underscores the element of liminality in al-Ṭahṭawī's writing by examining his embodied experiences of disorientation, nausea and anxiety. Tarek El-Ariss, *Trials of Arab Modernity: literary affects and the new political* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).

[230] Myriam Salama-Carr, "Negotiating Conflict: Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭawī and the Translation of the Other in Nineteenth-century Egypt," *Social Semiotics*, 17 (2007): 217-220.

[231] Adam Mestyan, *Arab Patriotism: The Ideology and Culture of Power in Late Ottoman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 10.

More recently, Adam Mestyan has joined a growing number of scholars who are challenging the large role that historians ascribe to Europe in shaping nineteenth- to early-twentieth-century Egyptian identity, either as a colonizing force or a source of knowledge. With respect to al-Ṭahṭāwī, Mestyan complicates the accepted notion that al-Ṭahṭāwī modeled his patriotic military songs on the French national anthem, *La Marseillaise* (written in 1792) after his exposure to the form in Paris. Mestyan suggests that al-Ṭahṭāwī may have modeled his *waṭanīyāt* on Ottoman military songs written to motivate soldiers deployed in the Crimean War (1853-1856). He points out formal similarities between the rhyming couplets of al-Ṭahṭāwī and, later, of his student, Ṣāliḥ Majdī (d. 1881), and those written by the Lebanese poet Mārūn Mikhāʾīl Naqqāsh (1817-1855) in Beirut in praise of the Ottoman sultan ʿAbd al-Majīd.[232] Mestyan points out that a contemporary of al-Ṭahṭāwī, the Istanbul poet Yusuf Halis (1805-1882), wrote military songs for the Crimean war, which he also called *waṭanīyāt*. In Halis's most famous poem, *Vatan Kasidesi* (The Homeland Ode), he admonishes the listener that love of homeland (Turk. *hubb-ul-vatan*, Ar. *ḥubb al-waṭan*) is imperative, an idea that resonates with the tradition that al-Ṭahṭāwī popularized, namely, *ḥubb al-waṭan min al-īmān* ("love of homeland is part of faith").

In modern Turkish literary history, Yusuf Halis Effendi – as he is known – is considered among the first Ottoman-Turkish patriotic poets, occupying a position similar to al-Ṭahṭāwī's in Arabic. Halis worked as an Arabic translator in the Translation Bureau in Istanbul. His legacy includes poems that he wrote during the Crimean War, and military songs in simple Turkish that were the first of their kind. His poems have been compared to the Marseillaise because of his use

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[232] Mestyan, *Arab Patriotism*, 45. Mārūn Naqqāsh was born in Sidon in 1817 and moved to Beirut in 1825. He knew Arabic, Turkish, French, and Italian. He worked as a clerk in the Customs Department in Beirut. During a trip to Italy in 1846, Naqqāsh visited many theaters there and was impressed by Italian drama. After returning to Beirut, he established the first theater there, putting on plays that he wrote, using a mixture of *fuṣḥā* and colloquial Arabic. Ottoman officials and the governor likely attended Naqqāsh's plays and he even obtained a *fermān* (a government decree) to set up a stage next to his home. Matti Moosa, "Naqqāsh and the Rise of the Native Arab Theater in Syria," *Journal of Arabic Literature*, 3 (1972): 106-107.

of the word *vatan*.[233] Mestyan suggests that the large number of Egyptian soldiers deployed to Crimea to reinforce the Ottoman army probably heard Halis's military songs and brought them back to Egypt. Seeing the effectiveness of the Marseillaise in motivating the soldiers on the battlefield, al-Ṭahṭāwī imitated the Ottoman military song in Arabic using the form created by Naqqāsh in Beirut.[234]

Mestyan is trying to argue that Arab patriotism emerged within an Ottoman imperial context and was inspired foremost by Ottoman, not European, texts. Though Mestyan's broader argument is new, Bernard Lewis had already established that patriotic speech emerged in Ottoman-Turkish discourse prior to its appearance in Arabic with al-Ṭahṭāwī. Lewis traces its appearance in Ottoman-Turkish to an Ottoman ambassador in Paris, but he does not consider the possibility that al-Ṭahṭāwī may have borrowed from any source other than the French.[235] Mestyan's thesis is more convincing because it explains the contributions of French and Ottoman-Turkish discourse to the development of al-Ṭahṭāwī's patriotic odes without overstating the role of the *Marseillaise*. In the following sections, I will build on Mestyan's thesis to argue: (1) that al-Ṭahṭāwī was not unique as an intellectual. He shared many similarities with other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ottoman intellectuals. And (2) that the similarities between al-Ṭahṭāwī and his contemporaries become apparent when we view al-Ṭahṭāwī and his French interlocutors through the Khaldūnian framework, which suggests that al-Ṭahṭāwī and his French interlocutors understood each other as part of the same civilizational project. I will begin, in the following section, by highlighting that al-Ṭahṭāwī was very much a product of the Khadūnian tradition as mediated by Ibn Khaldūn's students at al-Azhar.

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[233] Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 10-11, 394-395.
[234] Mestyan, *Arab Patriotism*, 40-46.
[235] Bernard Lewis, *The Shaping of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 76.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's Khladūnism

The fact that al-Ṭahṭāwī's later, more theoretical works are organized around topics and themes with which Ibn Khaldūn was also concerned raises the question of influence. Al-Ṭahṭāwī's *Manāhij al-albāb al-miṣrīyah fī mabāhij al-ādāb al-ʿaṣrīyah* (*Courses for the Egyptian mind: on the delights of contemporary manners*, 1869) and *al-Murshid al-amīn fī tarbiyat al-banāt wa-l-banīn* (*The reliable guide: on the education of girls and boys,* 1873), both written later in his life – *The reliable guide* was actually published the year he died – are works that delve into social theory and historiography in order to articulate a comprehensive program for Egyptian rulers and subjects through which Egypt can compete with the most advanced contemporary states. In terms of framework, which I will discuss below, al-Ṭahṭāwī uses historical narratives in a manner that resonates with Ibn Khaldūn's descriptive within a prescriptive framework. The topics that al-Ṭahṭāwī treats in his theoretical texts, many of which are treated by Ibn Khaldūn in the *Muqaddimah* and the *History*, offer further evidence that he was influenced by Ibn Khaldūn in his conception of civilizational history and in his attempt to frame and solve the problems facing Egypt.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's connection to Ibn Khaldūn begins with the institution of al-Azhar. After arriving in Cairo in 1383, Ibn Khaldūn won the favor of the Mamluk ruler of Egypt, al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Barqūq, and gained an appointment as a teacher and, later, judge at al-Azhar.[236] Ibn Khaldūn left his mark on famous Azharites, such as Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 1449) and al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442), both teachers at al-Azhar. Ibn Khaldūn's ideas were perpetuated by the students of Ibn

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[236] Rosenthal, "Introduction," lviii-lix. Nurollah Kasa'i, Suheyl Umar and Yadollah Gholami, "Al-Azhar" in *Encyclopaedia Islamica*, ed. Wilferd Madelung and Farhad Daftary.

Ḥajar and al-Maqrīzī – al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418),[237] al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505), and al-Sakhāwī (d. 1497) – all three of whom taught at al-Azhar as well. Their works became important sources for later Ottoman and Mughal writers.[238]

The impact of Ibn Khaldūn on al-Ṭahṭāwī was probably mediated by his contemporaries, both Europeans and Ottomans, who studied Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah* and appropriated his ideas in their own works. Among the Europeans, there was al-Ṭahṭāwī's mentor in Paris, the Orientalist Silvestre de Sacy, whom al-Ṭahṭāwī described as an "erudite" Arabic scholar.[239] Along with Hammer-Purgstall, de Sacy was one of the first translators of the *Muqaddimah* in Europe.[240] Like de Sacy, al-Ṭahṭāwī was interested in the publication of the *Muqaddimah*. In 1857, at al-Ṭahṭāwī's recommendation, the government press in Būlāq published the first Arabic edition of the text.[241] At that moment, the first complete scholarly edition of the *Muqaddimah* in Europe was still in press. Ten years later, Būlāq published the complete text of Ibn Khaldūn's *History* (the *Kitāb al-ʿIbar*), in seven volumes.[242]

It is tempting to attribute al-Ṭahṭāwī's desire to publish the *Muqaddimah* entirely to de Sacy's influence and to say that al-Ṭahṭāwī was copying de Sacy by taking an interest in the work. The European translations, however, were not the first. In 1730, Pīrī-Zāde Effendi (d. 1749), an Ottoman Shaykh al-Islam, published the first translation of the *Muqaddimah* ever in Ottoman-Turkish.[243] The Turkish translation became a source for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century

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[237] *EI²* *s.v.* "al-Ḳalḳashandī" (C.E. Bosworth)

[238] Rosenthal, "Introduction," lxvi. Al-Suyūṭī became a significant authority among Mughal and Ottoman writers who studied and quoted his *ḥadīth* compilation.

[239] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *An Imam*, 156.

[240] In Europe, de Sacy and Hammer-Purgstall were the first to translate small sections of the *Muqaddimah* before 1858. Rosenthal, "Introduction," cvi-cvii.

[241] Irwin, *Ibn Khaldun*, 189.

[242] The first European edition was completed by Etienne Marc Quatremère who died before it was published in Paris in 1858. Rosenthal, "Introduction," cii-ciii.

[243] Rosenthal, "Introduction," cvi-cvii; *EI²* *s.v.* Pīrī-Zāde (C.E. Bosworth).

Ottoman historians who could not access it in Arabic. Thus, as with the *waṭanīyāt*, Ottoman intellectuals arguably played an important role in shaping al-Ṭahṭāwī's interest in publishing the *Muqaddimah*.

With respect to al-Ṭahṭāwī's colleague and reported rival, ʿAlī Mubārak Pasha, the author of *al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfīqiyyah*, published between 1886 and 1889 and dedicated to the Khedive, Sheehi argues that the work was not the result of Mubārak's European education or his vision of modern Cairo as Paris. Mubārak's best-known texts, including *al-Khiṭaṭ*, Sheehi argues, "demonstrate a language and worldview that seem completely commonplace to any scholar familiar with the literature of the day."[244] Sheehi ultimately describes Mubārak as an "organic intellectual representing the new classes that were generated by Muhammad Ali's initial project."[245]

Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, ʿAlī Mubārak represented a common worldview to the literature of their day. Their worldview, however, was not due, as Sheehi argues, to Muhammad Ali's project. He was more likely influenced by Khaldūnian ideas as mediated by the work of Ibn Khaldūn's devoted student, al-Maqrīzī, who revered the *Muqaddimah*.[246] Contemporary scholars have highlighted the influence of Ibn Khaldūn on al-Maqrīzī with respect to the latter's interest in divination and the occult sciences, his view of history as cyclical, and the structure of his treatise, *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*.[247] Al-Maqrīzī went on to become an influential historian

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[244] Sheehi, *Towards a Critical Theory*, 278-9.
[245] Sheehi, *Towards a Critical Theory*, 279.
[246] Al-Maqrīzī wrote a glowing biography of Ibn Khaldūn in his biographical dictionary. Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīdah fī tarājim al-aʿyān al-mufīdah* (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2002), 2: 383-410.
[247] Robert Irwin, "Al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Khaldūn, Historians of the Unseen," *Mamluk Studies Review 7* (2003): 217-230. Anne Broadbridge, "Royal Authority, Justice, and Order in Society: The Influence of Ibn Khaldun on the Writings of al-Maqrizi and Ibn Taghribirdi," *Mamluk Studies Review* 7 (2003): 231-245. Nasser Rabbat, "Was al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ* a Khaldūnian History?" *Der Islam 89* (2012): 118-140. Nasser Rabbat, "Who was al-Maqrīzī? A Biographical Sketch," *Mamluk Studies Review* 7 (2003): 1-19. Al-Maqrīzī wrote *al-Mawāʿiẓ* between 1415 and 1439/40, or two years before his death.

whose work inspired Egyptian historians and perpetuated Khaldūnian ideas into the twentieth century.[248] Al-Maqrīzī's influence is palpable on Mubārak's *al-Khiṭat*. Like al-Maqrīzī's *al-Mawāʿiz*, Mubārak's *al-Khiṭat* presents the history of Egypt using buildings and topography as chronicles. He is preoccupied with education, cultural heritage, and urban development, the same issues with which Ibn Khaldūn was concerned. [249]

If we agree with Sheehi that Mubārak was an organic intellectual, then reading him as a continuation of Ibn Khaldūn's project through al-Maqrīzī may offer a more meaningful approach to his work and that of his contemporaries, including al-Ṭahṭāwī.[250] Like Ibn Khaldūn, who elaborated a theory of ʿumrān (civilization) in the *Muqaddimah*, al-Maqrīzī tried to theorize the relationship between civilization and prosperity. Al-Maqrīzī structured the two-volume work to "thoroughly cover every aspect of the history of Cairo and Egypt," including its different historical moments, its monuments and patrons, its wonders and religious merits, and its relationship to other Islamic realms.[251] The first half of the book begins with a geographic survey of Egypt, followed by Egypt's pre-Islamic history, then an urban history focusing on Alexandria, Cairo, and al-Fusṭāṭ. In the second half, al-Maqrīzī offers a typological survey of Cairo in which he records his own personal observations of the city's decline. He had planned to analyze the causes of Cairo's decline in the final chapter of the book, but he died before he could complete the work. Even though al-Maqrīzī quotes only one passage from Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah*, the latter's concept of ʿumrān plays a central role in al-Maqrīzī's *al-Mawāʿiz*. As Nasser Rabbat points out, "its signs and

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[248] ʿAbd al-Majīd ʿĀbidīn, *al-Bayān wa-l-iʿrāb ʿammā bi-arḍ Miṣr min al-aʿrāb li-l-Maqrīzī maʿa dirāsāt fī tārīkh al-ʿurūbah fī wādī al-Nīl* (Cairo: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1961). In this book, ʿĀbidīn appends a treatise by al-Maqrīzī to his own work, a nationalist history of the Arabs in Egypt.

[249] *EI³ s.v.* ʿAlī Mubārak (Bekim Agai). In addition to al-Maqrīzī, Mubārak also obtains information from the works of al-Sakhāwī, al-Suyūṭī, al-Jabartī, and from the French *Description de l'Egypte*.

[250] Rather than reading him through the lens of Althusserian ideology, as Sheehi does. Sheehi, *Towards a Critical Theory*, 279.

[251] Rabbat, "Was al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭat* a Khaldūnian History?" 131.

consequences provide the backbone of the book's narrative."[252] It is important to point out here that al-Maqrīzī's intention to analyze the decline of Cairo also anticipates the monumental *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Edward Gibbon (1737-1794), in which Gibbon analyzes the decline of the Roman Empire and the rise of its successors, including Islamic empires. Garth Fowden argues that Gibbon was informed by the work of Muslim historians, including the Ottoman Kātib Çelebi, whose work, *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asmāʾ al-kutub wa-l-funūn (Uncovering doubts about the names of books and artsI*, Gibbon obtained in French translation.[253]

The influence of Ibn Khaldūn, no doubt mediated by the Azharī scholars, is visible in al-Ṭahṭāwī's Paris travelogue. The travel account begins with al-Ṭahṭāwī's acknowledgement that Paris is home to Europeans and obstinacy, that it is far from Egypt, and expensive. Al-Ṭahṭāwī's acknowledgment of the drawbacks of going to Paris is followed by the reason for going there. As justification for the journey, he offers a sketch of civilizational history and geography to frame the trip as a quest for knowledge. Human beings in the state of nature, al-Ṭahṭāwī says, are "simple and lack adornment" (*al-aṣl fī al-insān al-sādhijīyah wa-l-khulūṣ ʿan al-zīnah*).[254] Either by chance, accident, inspiration, or revelation, "some people acquired certain knowledge that they had not previously had" (*thumma ṭaraʾa ʿalā baʿḍ al-nās ʿiddat maʿārif lam yusbaq bihā*). Although he does not explicitly say so, al-Ṭahṭāwī implies that knowledge is the source of the human crafts (*al-ṣanāʾiʿ al-basharīyah*) and civil sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-madanīyah*). With regard to the relationship between the arts and sciences and urbanization, al-Ṭahṭāwī echoes Ibn Khaldūn. In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn classifies crafts (arts) as "secondary and posterior to agriculture,"

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[252] Rabbat, "Was al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ* a Khaldūnian History?" 134.

[253] Garth Fowden, "Gibbon on Islam," *English Historical Review* 131 (2016): 272.

[254] I rely on Daniel Newman's translation, but use my own where I disagree with him. Newman, for example, translates the phrase "*diyār al-kufr wa-l-ʿinād*" as "the Land of Infidelity and Obstinacy." It is correct that *Kufr* means infidelity, a word with negative connotations in English, but al-Ṭahṭāwī uses *kufr* and *kafarah* (infidels) to refer to Europeans in a seemingly neutral manner. Newman, *An Imam*, 101.

and he describes them as "composite and scientific" because they require thinking and speculation, stressing the mutually-constitutive relationship between urbanization and knowledge.[255]

Both Ibn Khaldūn and al-Ṭahṭāwī argue that, in addition to wealth, which allows for intellectual preoccupation with the development of new crafts, the uninterrupted transmission of knowledge is necessary for the cultivation of crafts.[256] Over time, the knowledge necessary for the development of crafts is passed on from one civilization to another. Al-Ṭahṭāwī explains that the further we look back in time "the more [we] can see the backwardness of people in terms of the human crafts and civil sciences" (*fa-kullamā taqādam al-zaman fī-l-ṣuʿūd raʾayt taʾakhkhur al-nās fī al-ṣanāʾiʿ al-basharīyah wa-l-ʿulūm al-madanīyah*). Conversely, if we examine time from early history to the present, we see that the crafts and civil sciences progress and become more elevated (*wa-kullamā nazalt wa-naẓart ilā al-zaman fī-l-hubūṭ raʾayt fī-l-ghālib taraqqīhim wa-taqaddumahum fī dhālik*). Al-Ṭahṭāwī's description of the transmission of knowledge again resonates with Ibn Khaldūn's argument that skills and mastery of a science are "the result of a habit." The development of a habit, according to Ibn Khaldūn, requires the repetition of a certain action over time. Because crafts are habits, and habits take time to develop, Ibn Khaldūn concludes that only when a society becomes fully sedentary and highly urbanized can it attain scientific crafts, i.e. people become interested in activities beyond their bare survival and have the luxury to pursue their advancement.

But human civilizations, al-Ṭahṭāwī argues, do not develop equally over time; some become complex urban societies while others do not. He divides humanity into three categories according to their level of civilizational progress. From least to most developed, humans fall into the following classes: wild savages, uncivilized barbarians, and those who are "cultured, refined,

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[255]Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 2:316-317.
[256] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 2: 346-348; 426.

sedentarized (*taḥaḍḍur*), civilized (*tamaddun*) and have attained the highest degree of urbanization (*tamaṣṣur*)."[257] Black Africa (*bilād al-sūdān*) falls into the first category, nomadic Arabs (ʿ*Arab al-bādiyah*) into the second, and Egypt (*bilād miṣr*), the Levant (*al-Shām*), Yemen, Byzantium/Turkey (*al-rūm*), Persia (*al-ʿajam*), the Europeans (*al-ifranj*), Maghreb, Sinnār;[258] most of America, and most of the islands of the Atlantic Ocean fall into the third category, i.e. the most civilized people.[259] Al-Ṭahṭāwī further classifies the third category of people. Among the more civilized people, Europeans, he says, have attained the "highest degree of proficiency in mathematics, natural sciences and metaphysics."[260] Thus, the reason why Paris was the right place for the Egyptians to seek knowledge was due to the Europeans' attainment of the highest degree of progress.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's division of the world resonates with Ibn Khaldūn's geographical theory, which was informed by Muḥammad al-Idrīsī's (d. 1162) *Nuzhat al-mushtāq*.[261] In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn says that "these men," i.e. Ptolemy and al-Idrīsī, divided the habitable world into seven zones whose "borders are imaginary." These zones extend from east to west and are identical in width but vary in length. The first zone, which runs along the equator, is the longest. The seventh zone is the shortest because of the spherical shape of the earth.[262] The first zone includes the lands of the *Zanj* (black Africans) and the Berbers who do not belong to the Maghrib

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[257] Newman, *An Imam*, 102.

[258] Sinnār, also known as the Funj Sultanate, was a kingdom in the Sudan, formerly Christian then Muslim. The Muslim kings claimed descent from Umayyads who took refuge in Abyssinia after the Abbasid revolution. According to Ibn Khaldūn, Juhaynah Arabs intermarried with daughters of Nubian kings introducing Islam into the Sudan. *EI¹*, *s.v.* "Sennār" (S. Hilleson); according to ʿAbd al-Mājid ʿĀbidīn, "the kings of Sinnār were Qurayshīs known by the name of 'Funj' who founded the first influential Islamic sultanate in the Sudan." ʿĀbidīn, *al-Bayān*, 161.

[259] Newman, *An Imam*, 103-105; al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Takhlīṣ al-ibrīz fī talkhīṣ bārīz*, ed. Mahdī ʿAllām, Anwar Lūqā, and A. A. Badawī (Cairo: al-Hayʾah al-Miṣrīyah al-ʿĀmmah li-l-Kitāb, 1958), 66-68.

[260] Newman, *An Imam*, 105.

[261] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:94-97. Ibn Khaldūn sometimes refers to Idrīsī's book as *Kitāb Rūjār* (*The Book of Roger*).

[262] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:97.

tribes. The fourth zone, the most temperate,[263] includes the Mediterranean region, namely, coastal Syria, the Maghrib, Ifrīqiyah (Tunisia), Alexandria, Constantinople, Venice, Rome, Spain, France, the islands of Crete, Cyprus, Sicily, Majorca, and Sardinia.[264] Ibn Khaldūn argues that the first and second zones have lower level civilization because of the abundance of deserts there and their small number of inhabitants. The third and fourth zones are the opposite. According to Ibn Khaldūn, "civilization has its seat" in the third and fourth zones as they are more populated and have numerous towns and cities.[265]

Greek and Muslim geographers believed that climate shapes human character and argued that the three most temperate zones produce humans who are "extremely moderate in their dwellings, clothing, foodstuffs, and crafts."[266] Following the Greek geography tradition, as transmitted by al-Idrīsī, Ibn Khaldūn describes the inhabitants of temperate regions as characteristically pleasant. The people with the best character include the people of the Maghrib, Syria, the two Iraqs (i.e. Iraq and Iran), western India (Sind), China, Spain and the "European Christians nearby," the Galicians, and "all those who live together with these peoples or near them." Moreover, because the two Iraqs and Syria are "directly in the middle," Ibn Khaldūn says, they are the most temperate and their inhabitants are therefore the best people. As to the least temperate people, they include the black people of Africa and the Slavs, whose character is "close to those of dumb animals."[267] These people's remoteness from moderate climate makes them remote from humanity and from religion as well. There are exceptions, however. Abyssinians and

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[263] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:167.
[264] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:98.
[265] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:103-104.
[266] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:168.
[267] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:168.

Yemenites, says Ibn Khaldūn, have been Christian since pre-Islamic times. Likewise, the inhabitants of Mali are Muslim because they live close to the Maghrib.

Ibn Khaldūn regards human civilization along a continuum, from nomadic to fully sedentary and urban, with climate impacting human character, crafts, and living conditions. People who make their living from animal husbandry are inclined to become nomadic in order to find pasture for their animals, but as nomads their living conditions do not compel them to develop crafts beyond the most basic required for their survival. Once the nomads begin to intensively cultivate land, to build monumental and complex structures, they become sedentary, urban, and begin to make their living through commerce. Nomadism is therefore prior to sedentarism. Moving at various speeds, societies can develop differently, and a sedentary society can return to nomadism if necessary.[268] According to Ibn Khaldūn, Berbers and non-Arabs constitute the majority of those who are settled into small communities that live on agriculture. Next, are those who make their living from animals and travel in search of pasture; these include Berbers, Turks and Slavs. Camel-breeding nomads are said to move around the most and, as a society, "they are on a level with wild, untamable animals and dumb beasts of prey."[269] They include Arabs, nomadic Berbers, Kurds, Turkomans, and Turks.[270] Thus, according to Ibn Khaldūn, intemperate climates lead to nomadism, which moves people away from humanity and religion.[271]

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[268] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:249-250. In his history of Islam, Marshall Hodgson applied the thesis that societies alternate between nomadism and sedentarism according to political and ecological needs.

[269] For Ibn Khaldūn, "Arab" means "Bedouin, nomad" irrespective of racial, ethnic, or linguistic markers. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:250, note 6.

[270] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:250-251.

[271] Even though they are less advanced as a society, Ibn Khaldūn attributes several positive qualities to the Arabs, i.e. camel nomads. According to Ibn Khaldūn, in comparison with sedentary people, they are "closer to being good" and more austere, they are more disposed to courage, they have more fortitude, they have a stronger sense of group feeling (ʿaṣabīyah), and their lineages are pure. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:253-254; 257; 258; 266.

Both Ibn Khaldūn and al-Ṭahṭāwī use religion as a measure to rank human civilizations. In his discussion of the impact of climate on human character, Ibn Khaldūn cites the lack of religion among the inhabitants of the first and second zones as evidence of their remoteness from humanity.[272] Similarly, al-Ṭahṭāwī ranks the regions of the world according to their inhabitants' proximity to Islam, which resonates with Bilgrāmī's argument that India is the best land due to its connection to Islam. In a passage in the introduction to his travelogue, al-Ṭahṭāwī distinguishes the "Islamic realm" (*al-bilād al-islāmīyah*) from the "Western realm" (*al-bilād al-gharbīyah*).[273] The Islamic realm encompasses several regions. Al-Ṭahṭāwī ranks each part of the world according to its "superiority in Islam and attachment to it," (*bi-ḥasab mazabbat al-islām wa-taʿalluqātih*).[274] Asia – by which he means western Asia – is the best region because it is where Islam began. Africa is second best because "it is inhabited by Muslims, holy men and pious people, and especially because it contains Cairo the Victorious (*Miṣr al-qāhirah*)."[275] Then comes Europe because of "the strength of Islam there and the presence of the greatest *imām*, i.e. the one of the two holy cities, the Sultan of Islam" – referring to the Ottoman sultan. Oceania is fourth, or second to last, because it is inhabited by Islam, but "it appears that it is not far advanced in the sciences."[276] The Americas occupy the fifth and lowest rank because Islam is absent there.[277]

As a geographical region, Europe ranks behind Asia and Africa because of its proximity to the origins of Islam, but Europeans, according to al-Ṭahṭāwī, had, by the nineteenth century, attained the highest degree of proficiency in the arts and sciences, for which reason they rank above

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[272] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:169.
[273] Newman, *An Imam*, 105; al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Takhlīṣ al-ibrīz*; 68.
[274] Newman, *An Imam*, 125; al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Takhlīṣ al-ibrīz*, 89.
[275] Newman, *An Imam*, 125.
[276] Newman, *An Imam*, 125.
[277] Apparently, al-Ṭahṭāwī was not certain about the presence of Islam in the America, which is probably why he added the following disclaimer: "at least that is how it appears to me, but God knows better what is right." Newman, *An Imam*, 125.

all the civilized people. The Europeans, however, did not always have an advantage over Muslims with respect to knowledge, crafts, and civil sciences. The Europeans themselves, al-Ṭahṭāwī says, acknowledge that *"we* [Arabs] were their teachers in all sciences and that *we* had an advantage over them."* In the time of the Abbasid caliphs, he continues, *"we* were the most perfect of all countries." The Abbasids were superior, according to al-Ṭahṭāwī, because their caliphs supported scholars and artists. Indeed, some caliphs were scholars themselves. Here, he gives the popular example of the caliph al-Maʾmūn (r. 813-833), who patronized scholarship and translation projects and was interested in astronomy. Al-Ṭahṭāwī also mentions the Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847-861), who promoted the translation of Greek books, and the Andalusian caliph ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir (r. 912-961), who reportedly asked the Byzantine king to send someone who could teach his slaves Greek and Latin.[278] Thus, al-Ṭahṭāwī regarded both the French (*ifranj*) and his own civilization as belonging to the same class, but at his particular moment in history, the French had the advantage of having in their possession the most advanced knowledge. In other words, al-Ṭahṭāwī's French contemporaries occupied the same historical position as the Persian contemporaries of the Abbasids. They were a source of practical knowledge for Muslims seeking to advance their state.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī between Bilgrāmī and al-Suwaydī: Eighteenth-century trends in al-Ṭahṭāwī's work
As an intellectual, al-Ṭahṭāwī is comparable to Bilgrāmī and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī and, together, these men represent a larger intellectual trend in the Ottoman and Mughal Empires during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The three of them were connected to provincial courts in empires that were once highly centralized states, but by the eighteenth century, power

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[278] Newman, *An Imam*, 109.

had moved away from the center toward the provinces. Thus, al-Ṭahṭāwī, Bilgrāmī and al-Suwaydī were supported by governors who were increasingly independent and who aspired to model their provincial capitals after the imperial capital. In the case of al-Suwaydī and al-Ṭahṭāwī, their patrons were only nominally connected to the imperial center and they were not native to the lands they ruled over – Iraq and Egypt, respectively. As patronized writers for the state, both al-Suwaydī and al-Ṭahṭāwī, unlike Bilgrāmī, had to write history in ways that legitimized their patrons.

Patronage aside, the three authors shared a common framework, which they received from Ibn Khaldūn's Ottoman interpreters, and which offered them a particular way to understand history and their civilization's place in it. In *Manāhij al-albāb al-misrīyah* (*The Paths for the Egyptian Minds*), in which al-Ṭahṭāwī focuses on the idea of *tamaddun*, or civilization in the sense of refinement and urbanization, he offers an assessment of the Arabs that resembles Bilgrāmī's (who was influenced by Kātib Çelebi). Al-Ṭahṭāwī wrote *Paths* as a meditation upon the history of Egypt and its conquerors, beginning with the pre-Islamic period. He aimed to evaluate the personal characteristics needed in Egypt's rulers and subjects to meet the demands of contemporary culture. Among the various conquerors who passed through Egypt, al-Ṭahṭāwī comments on the Arabs. He describes the pre-Islamic Arabs as an "illiterate nation" (*ummah ummīyah*), for whom "poetry constituted compensation [for literacy]" (*juʿila lahā al-shiʿr ʿawaḍan*), and through poetry, the Arabs came to learn their genealogies and history.[279] In a later section in the text, where al-Ṭahṭāwī elaborates upon the merits of travel (*al-siyāḥah*), he explains that "it has continually been proven by logic (*tawāturan*) that the Arabs are the most brave, generous, and honorable people. Their language is the most perfect in terms of expression and differentiating meaning."[280] The Arabs,

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[279] Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij al-albāb al-misrīyah* [*The Paths for the Egyptian minds*], ed. Muḥammad ʿImārah in *al-Aʿmāl al-kāmilah li-Rifāʿah Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2011), 357.
[280] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 455.

according to al-Ṭahṭāwī, did not work in "some of the purely rational sciences, such as medicine, arithmetic, and logic," but they were able to know whatever their talents allowed, i.e. poetry and sermons.[281] Islam, says al-Ṭahṭāwī, emerged and "transformed the Arabs from their state of illiteracy" and it became their salvation such that "their survival was through Islam and their annihilation lay in their corruption of [Islam]"(*fa-li-dhalik kān baqāʾuhum fī al-islām wa-fanāʾuhum fasād fīh*).[282] Al-Ṭahṭāwī's historiography of Arab intellectual history is the same as that of Bilgrāmī who, in turn, received it from Kātib Çelebi and, indirectly, from Ibn Khaldūn.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's discussion of Egypt as an *iqlīm*, both in the geographical sense and as a domain subject to human rule, also resonates with Bilgrāmī's discourse about India. While Bilgrāmī associates India with Adam, al-Ṭahṭāwī links Egypt to Joseph, using the story of Joseph to make the case for the antiquity of Egypt's civilization (*tamaddun*), an important issue for al-Ṭahṭāwī. Like Bilgrāmī, al-Ṭahṭāwī draws on Islamic narrative sources to highlight the connection between Egypt and prophecy.[283] Al-Ṭahṭāwī attempts to prove that Egypt has had *tamaddun*, i.e. civilization, since the time of Joseph. In his narration of the story of Joseph, he points out that, when it became known that Joseph was innocent he was able to rise to a position of power (*lammā ʿulimat barāʾatuh irtaqā ilā mā irtaqā ilayh min al-ʿazāzah*).[284] The reason why he highlights this detail is because, as al-Ṭahṭāwī says, it shows that "in Egypt, at that time, there was fair judgement, organized laws, and legal punishment free of personal interest and ego, all which is the result of total civilization." (*fa-minhu yuʿlam annahu kān fī miṣr idh dhāk aḥkām ʿādilah wa-qawānīn murattabah wa-ḥudūd mashrūʿah khāliyah min al-aghrāḍ wa-l-nafsānīyāt wa-hiya natījat al-*

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[281] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 455.
[282] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 455.
[283] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 487-491.
[284] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 491.

tamaddun al-tāmm).[285] Al-Ṭahṭāwī highlights another anecdote. When Joseph was mourning over the death of his father, he took care not to enter the into the court of the Pharaoh in mourning clothes because there were customs that forbade that. Referring to the story, al-Ṭahṭāwī says, "it is known that only a society advanced in knowledge is characterized by such official manners." Al-Ṭahṭāwī illustrates the good manners of the Pharaoh's courtiers to argue that "the counterpart of all the good morals and habits that exist in later states existed in the ancient Egyptian state because civilization is not unique to recent times."[286] According to al-Ṭahṭāwī, only tastes distinguish a modern civilization from its ancient predecessors because a civilization's taste depends on the times and the circumstance. Thus, al-Ṭahṭāwī concludes that Egypt can acquire the happiness of its ancients because contemporary Egyptians have the same form (*bunyah*) and genius (*qarāʾiḥ*) as the ancients.[287]

Like Bilgrāmī, who connects Adam to India to support his argument for the merit of later Indo-Muslim scholars, al-Ṭahṭāwī identifies the bodies and intellects of ancient Egyptians with those of contemporary Egyptians. By doing so, al-Ṭahṭāwī aims to make an argument for the legitimacy of Muhammad Ali's rule. Like al-Suwaydī, al-Ṭahṭāwī was patronized by the state, and this relationship of patronage shapes these parts of his text that deal with the relationship of the ruler to Egypt as a domain. In the fourth chapter, titled "On the results of Alexander the Roman's Conquest of the Egyptian Lands" (*Fī-mā tarattab ʿalā futūḥ Iskandar al-Rūmī li-l-diyār al-Miṣrīyah*), al-Ṭahṭāwī gives an account of the campaigns of Alexander the Great in Egypt and describes his style as a ruler.[288] He contrasts Alexander with those who conquered Egypt before,

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[285] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 491.
[286] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 491-2.
[287] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 492.
[288] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 500. Al-Ṭahṭāwī was familiar with the history of Alexander the Great through *Tārīkh al-qudamāʾ* and had written a brief article on his life as part of his examination at the end of his studies in France. Muḥammad ʿImārah, introduction to *al-Aʿmāl al-kāmilah li-Rifāʿah Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī*, 85.

such as the Greeks, the Iraqis, and the Persians. The latter conquerors, al-Ṭahṭāwī says, "used to destroy the country and annihilate the nations." On the other hand, whenever Alexander conquered a kingdom

> he would establish [institutions] in it, would modernize, build and construct, ready and prepare it, build cities, increase money in [its] treasuries, he would find the means to development, and would revive the hearts of the natives.[289]

Al-Ṭahṭāwī depicts Alexander as the ideal ruler by highlighting certain biographical information[290] and political policies. According to al-Ṭahṭāwī, Alexander dispensed justice and ruled for the people. "He used to allow the people of each domain (*iqlīm*) he conquered to continue to follow their ancient habits." This policy, al-Ṭahṭāwī continues, "was simply to delight them; to make them accustomed to loving his government and to get them used to it." Alexander's policy, however, was not the custom of most conquerors and rulers. According to al-Ṭahṭāwī, Alexander's military leaders and governors would advise him to "abrogate the religion of the countries he conquered and not let it be, but he would not listen."[291] Thus, in al-Ṭahṭāwī depiction of him, Alexander is justified to rule over the domains he conquered even though he was neither a native nor sanctioned by god. One of the criteria that legitimizes Alexander is that he allowed the conquered people the freedom to continue practicing their native religion and customs. In other words, even though Alexander was an absolute ruler who ignored the advice of his governors, he was just to the people. And unlike other conquerors who destroyed the lands they conquered, Alexander would develop the land and increase its wealth and population.

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[289] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 500.
[290] Alexander, al-Ṭahṭāwī points out, was born in the province of Rumelia, which is where Muhammad Ali's birthplace, Kavala, happened to be. Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 501.
[291] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 501.

Like al-Suwaydī's historical narratives, the power of al-Ṭahṭāwī's historical accounts of Alexander and his conquest of Egypt lies in the fact that they are edifying tales.[292] In Ottoman historiography, which was influenced by Ibn Khaldūn, the historian's description of historical events carried a prescriptive power, that is to say the historian attempted to persuade or influence the powerbrokers who patronized him and to whom his text was addressed. Like al-Suwaydī, al-Ṭahṭāwī never explicitly says how a contemporary leader, such as Muhammad Ali, should behave. Nor does he specifically outline how the subjects should behave. Instead, he gives examples from history that illustrate good and bad behavior. For example, about the Egyptian Mamluks (whom Napoleon displaced and Muhammad Ali completely destroyed when he took control of Egypt), al-Ṭahṭāwī says that they "never looked after [Egypt's] development; instead they took whatever they pleased every year until it was devasted and destroyed."[293] The contrast between the Mamluks and Alexander becomes obvious to the reader indirectly, without al-Ṭahṭāwī explicitly saying what a good leader should do. There are subtle signals, however, that may confirm to al-Ṭahṭāwī's reader the illegitimacy of the Mamluks. For instance, he uses the verb "*istawlā/yastawlī*" (to seize or to appropriate)[294] when talking about the Mamluks while he uses "*fataḥ/yaftaḥ*" (to conquer), which has positive connotations, when discussing Alexander.[295] The difference between Alexander (legitimate) and the Mamluks (illegitimate) is in their respective relationship to the development (*ʿumrān*) of their domain (*iqlīm*).

For al-Ṭahṭāwī, the legitimacy of a ruler is a function of the development that he oversees and promotes in his domain. So much is evidenced by his reference to a prophetic tradition in

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[292] Fleischer, "Royal Authority," 48. I define the descriptive-prescriptive framework in chapter 1 above.

[293] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 531.

[294] Al-Ṭahṭāwī begins his discussion about the Mamluks with: "*fa-kān al-Mamālīk al-mustawlūn ʿalayhā…*" the Mamluks who had seized [Egypt]…). Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 531.

[295] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 500.

which the Prophet reportedly said, "whoever revitalizes a dead land it becomes his; the descendants of a tyrant do not have rightful possession [over it]" (*man aḥyā arḍ*ᵃⁿ *mayyitah fa-hiya lahu wa-laysa li-ʿirq ẓālim ḥaqq*). Even though the tradition does not mention the words *ʿammar/yuʿammir* or *ʿumrān*, al-Ṭahṭāwī inserts the word in his interpretation, saying that the tradition means that "whoever develops a land effectively owns it through revitalization and development" (*yaʿnī man ʿammar arḍ*ᵃⁿ *fa-qad malakahā bi-l-iḥyāʾ wa-l-taʿmīr*).[296] He further supports the interpretation with a reference to Napoleon, who, upon seeing the lands of Egypt, reportedly said:

> If this region is ruled by an organized government, similar to the governments of France, Italy, England, or Austria, its agricultural lands and population would increase threefold what they were under the Mamluks. (*qāl Nābulyūn ḥīna taʾammulih fī arāḍī misr: law ḥukimat hādhihi al-diyār bi-ḥukūmah muntaẓimah muḍāhiyah li-ḥukūmat frānsā wa-īṭāliā, wa-ingiltīrah wa-l-nīmsā la-zādat mazāriʿuhā wa-ahālīhā thalāth aḍʿāf mā kānat ʿalayh ayyām al-mamālīk*).[297]

The fact that al-Ṭahṭāwī cites Napoleon to support his argument as to why the Mamluks were not good rulers of Egypt is significant because it shows that any conqueror, Muslim or non-Muslim, may be considered legitimate as long as he promotes development in his domain and allows his subjects the freedom to practice their ancient religion and customs. Similarly, Ibn Khaldūn did not consider the religion of the ruler to be as important as his sense of justice. Thus, both authors consider any person capable of being a just leader qualified to rule.[298]

With respect to the identity of their patrons, it is useful to compare al-Ṭahṭāwī with al-Suwaydī. Both authors were patronized by Ottoman governors who came to rule over their domain as foreigners and both had to find characteristics, other than genealogy, with which to measure the efficacy of their patrons. Al-Ṭahṭāwī's patron, Muhammad Ali, was not from Egypt. A native of the Macedonian port town of Kavala, Muhammad Ali came to Egypt as a military leader to drive

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[296] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 531.
[297] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 531.
[298] Rosenthal, "Introduction," lxxv.

out Napoleon on behalf of the Ottomans. After successfully defeating the French, Muhammad Ali turned to the Mamluk elite and destroyed them in order to consolidate his power over Egypt. Without any serious rivals, Muhammad Ali established a dynasty, the khedival state, in Egypt which remained an Ottoman province until the dissolution of the empire.[299] Like al-Suwaydī, whose patrons, the Mamluks of Iraq, governed on behalf of the Ottoman Empire, al-Ṭahṭāwī had to find a way to legitimize his patrons who arguably were the descendants of a military strongman, no different than Napoleon or the Mamluks whom he had defeated. Whereas al-Suwaydī portrayed his patrons as ideal leaders who protect their domain from the menace of Safavid Shīʿism,[300] no doubt influenced by the fact that Iraq was the frontier between Safavid Persia and the Sunnī Ottoman Empire, al-Ṭahṭāwī drew on Egypt's ancient and modern history to portray Alexander as the ideal leader without linking him directly to his patron. The ideal leader for al-Suwaydī was one who could protect his domain from the threat of falling into the hands of the wrong sect, one who would uphold the principles of Islam and would not disgrace the honor of Muslim women. Al-Ṭahṭāwī sees the ideal leader as one who implements management strategies that maximize development and civilization (ʿumrān and tamaddun), increasing the population of his domain and enriching it. Despite their divergent ideas of the model ruler, both authors describe historical events and characters as a way of prescribing the ideal behavior of the ruler.

Not only was al-Ṭahṭāwī using Ibn Khaldūn's historical framework – the same framework used by al-Suwaydī before him, in which the descriptive has prescriptive power – he also understood development in Khaldūnian terms, as agricultural and population growth. In chapter two of *Courses*, "On the mention of general remarks connected with the lands of Egypt,"[301] al-

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[299] *EI²* s.v. Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha (E.R.Toledano)
[300] Al-Suwaydī, *Ḥadīqat al-Zawrāʾ*, 68-74.
[301] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 593.

Ṭahṭāwī outlines some necessary measures for "advancing civilization" (*taqdīm al-tamaddun*) in order to "improve public benefits" (*taḥsīn aḥwāl al-manāfiʿ al-ʿumūmīyah*). He begins by restating that because the land of Egypt is characterized by "fertility, a location in the moderate zone, and clear days," it is capable of reaching "happiness and the pinnacle of wealth" (*anna khusūbat arḍ Misr wa-iʿtidāl quṭrihā wa-saḥw zamanihā, kull dhālik yuʾdhin bi-istiʿdādihā ilā al-wuṣūl li-darajat al-saʿādah wa-awj al-tharwah*).[302] According to al-Ṭahṭāwī, Egypt's potential, however, has been wasted in the past due to its poor management by Ottoman governors and the Mamluks. To make his point, he refers to the French army that arrived in Egypt and, reportedly:

> Closely examined Egypt and realized the value of [its] means of livelihood and realized that if Egypt were to be ruled by a government similar to the organized European states, it would be possible to increase its population and have it reach eight whole millions. (*Lammā ḥalla bihā jaysh al-faransāwīyah amʿan al-nazar fīhā wa-ʿurifa qīmat al-ṭuruq al-maʿāshīyah wa-anna Miṣr law ḥukimat bi-ḥukūmah mumāthilah li-duwal ūrūbā al-muntaẓamah la-amkan takthīr ahlihā wa-bulūghihā ilā thamāniyat malāyīn mutammamah*).[303]

Similarly, Ibn Khaldūn viewed development (*ʿumrān*) in terms of agricultural growth that supports a healthy population. In his discussion of geography and the different zones of the earth, Ibn Khaldūn argues that the first and the second zones "have less civilization than other zones." He explains that the inhabited area of the first and second zones is "interspersed with empty waste areas and sandy deserts and the Indian Ocean is located to its east. The nations and populations of the first and second zones are not excessively numerous."[304] Like Ibn Khaldūn, al-Ṭahṭāwī sees a large population as a sign that a domain has achieved development. His texts are therefore

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[302] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 593.
[303] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 594.
[304] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. Rosenthal, 1:103-109; he also discusses the effect of abundant food on human character, 1:177

connected to those by eighteenth-century authors who were indirectly influenced by Ibn Khaldūn in their conception of the state and its connection to geography and religion.

Situating al-Ṭahṭāwī Among his Contemporaries

In many respects, al-Ṭahṭāwī's career resembles that of his reported Egyptian arch-rival ʿAlī Mubārak (1824-1893),[305] the man who, al-Ṭahṭāwī suggests, was behind his exile to the Sudan. Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, Mubārak was not from Cairo. He was born in a village in the Nile Delta into a family of local elites but who were poor during his lifetime.[306] He left his home as a young man to embark on a long career with the state in Cairo. Unlike al-Ṭahṭāwī, he was not affiliated with al-Azhar and he began his studies at the government-run military school of Qaṣr al-ʿAynī. Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, Mubārak was sent to France for five years as a member of a government-sponsored educational mission. When Mubārak returned from Paris in 1849 or 1850, the Khedive ʿAbbās was in power and he soon closed the translation school – the School of Languages – which al-Ṭahṭāwī oversaw. The Khedive sent al-Ṭahṭāwī to Khartoum to oversee a school for the children of Egyptian officials, a move that was in fact a thinly-veiled exile. By contrast, Mubārak was appointed to a teaching position and as a supervisor at two different military schools in the same year. Also, like al-Ṭahṭāwī, Mubārak is recognized today for his contributions to developing Egypt's school curriculum.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's career as a poet is also comparable to that of the Syrian Buṭrus Karāmah (1774-1851), whose patron, the Amīr Bashīr Shihābī II (r. 1788-1840), ruler of Mount Lebanon, was connected to Muḥammad ʿAlī's court. In 1831, Muḥammad ʿAlī's son Ibrāhīm Pasha invaded

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[305] *EI³*, *s.v.* ʿAlī Mubārak (Bekim Agai)

[306] ʿAlī Mubārak, *Ḥayātī: sīrat al-marḥūm ʿAlī Mubārak bāshā* (Cairo: al-Jamʿīyah al-Khayrīyah al-Islāmīyah, 1904), 18. Mubārak wrote an autobiography, which was printed by al-Jamʿīyah al-Khayrīyah and presented as an annual prize to top students in the Jamʿīyah schools.

Syria on the orders of his father. Ibrāhīm had a local supporter there, the Amīr Bashīr Shihābī II, an Ottoman-appointed local ruler from a notable family who, by the time of the invasion, had consolidated his power over his Druze rivals in Mount Lebanon. Shihābī's support for the Egyptian invasion required him to provide Druze recruits to the invading army, but the Druze resented him and resisted conscription. Moreover, Shihābī's Druze and Christian troops fought with each other and, ultimately, they both rebelled against him. Thus, in addition to mediating between the Christian and Druze soldiers, Shihābī also had to meet Ibrāhīm Pasha's recruitment demands. In 1840, when the Ottomans recaptured Syria from Muḥammad ʿAlī (with help from the British), Shihābī was exiled, first, to Cyprus and then to Istanbul, where he died in 1850.

Shihābī was obliged to consent to the difficult and thankless task of supporting the Egyptian invasion of Syria in the first place because he had received help from Muḥammad ʿAlī in 1821 when he was in a difficult position. The Ottoman state had dismissed Shihābī from his position due to his disputes with regional governors. He had conspired with a tax collector from Acre against the governor of Damascus. Both Shihābī and his co-conspirator were reinstated to their posts when Muḥammad ʿAlī interceded on their behalf and convinced state officials in the capital to restore them to their positions.[307] On his flight to Egypt, Shihābī did not travel alone. On this and subsequent flights from Mount Lebanon, Shihābī was always accompanied by his trusted aid, travel companion, translator, and court poet, Buṭrus Karāmah.

Even though he is less-known,[308] Karāmah is similar to al-Ṭahṭāwī. Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, Karāmah enjoyed a long career as an intellectual in an Ottoman provincial court. Born in Ḥimṣ, Syria, Karāmah moved to Acre and worked as a panegyrist for the local ruler, Ali Pasha al-Asʿad

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[307] *EI³* s.v. Bashīr Shihāb II (Abdulrahim Abu-Husayn).

[308] After Buṭrus and his father, Ibrāhīm, converted to Greek Catholicism (or the Melkite Church) they were forced by the Greek Orthodox to leave Ḥimṣ and go to Acre. Louis Cheikho, *Tārīkh al-ādāb al-ʿarabiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1991), 58-59.

(d. 1806).[309] As compensation, the Pasha rewarded Karāmah with a position in his court. Karāmah stayed in Acre for five years before relocating to Mount Lebanon, where he established a connection with Niqūlā al-Turk (1763 ca. to 1828), a court poet, scribe, and chronicler patronized by Bashīr al-Shihābī.[310] Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, Karāmah was a successful courtier and an official translator for his patron and, later, for the Ottoman state. In 1813, after al-Turk introduced Karāmah to Shihābī, the latter was impressed by Karāmah's "learning, intellectual capabilities, and eloquence, in addition to his knowledge of the Turkish language," and he employed Karāmah as a tutor to his sons and as an advisor "because of the superiority of his writing."[311] He relied on Karāmah's opinion and entrusted him with his treasury, which Karāmah managed so well that Shihābī appointed him as his *ketkhudā* or advisor and aide. Karāmah accompanied Shihābī on his exiles from Mount Lebanon in his capacity as *ketkhudā*. Thus, when Shihābī landed in Istanbul, Karāmah was with him. He managed to impress some officials there and obtained a position as court interpreter (*tarjumān*), which he held until his death in 1851.

Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, Karāmah borrowed from the poetry of the Ottoman-Turkish court to produce poetry that he dedicated to a potential patron. He is best known for *Khāliyat Buṭrus Karāmah* (The Ode Ending in *Khāl*, 1840-1845). By his own account, while mingling with poets in Istanbul, Karāmah was impressed by a Turkish poem in which the homonym "*khāl*" was repeated as an end rhyme. One of the poets reportedly told Karāmah to compose a few Arabic lines

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[309] Alī Pasha al-Asʿad was from the family of ʿAlī Ṣaghīr, a Shīʿī dynasty that ruled the Bishārah region, part of Jabal Āmil in Lebanon. Zaynab Fawwāz al-ʿĀmilī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī ṭabaqāt rabbāt al-khudūr* (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿah al-Kubrā al-Amīriyyah, 1914), 1:428.

[310] Al-Turk was also connected to Egypt. Bashīr Shihābī sent him to Egypt from 1798 to 1804 to chronicle Napoleon's campaign. He produced a history which is extant in several versions: *Dhikr tamalluk jumhūr al-Fransāwiyya al-aqṭār al-Miṣriyya wa-l-bilād al-Shāmiyya* (*1792-1801*), ed. Alix Desgranges ainé, Paris 1839, and ed. Dr. Yāsīn Suwayd, Beirut 1990; Gaston Wiet (ed.), *Chronique d'Egypte, 1798-1804/Mudhakkirāt Niqūlā Turk*, Cairo 1950; and *Taʾrīkh Nābulyūn al-Awwal* (*1792-1801*), ed. Amal Bashshūr, Tripoli 1993. *EI²* s.v. al-Turk, Niḳūlā (P.C. Sadgrove)

[311] Cheikho, *Tārīkh*, 59.

in the style of the Turkish poem. Karāmah says he composed an ode in which the word "*khāl*" was the end rhyme and invented a type of *luzūm*, i.e. a style of composition in which the writer observes rules that are not prescribed.[312] This ode was the *Khāliyah* in which he illustrates twenty-six different meanings of the homonym *khāl* at the end of each verse.

Karāmah dedicated the *Khāliyyah* to Dāwūd Pasha, the former governor of Baghdad who was known as an intellectual and patron of literature.[313] Dāwūd Pasha received the *Khāliyyah* with approval and then sent it to Baghdad so that the "great poets there may look at it, confirm its merit, and compose [odes] similar to it."[314] One of the poets who read Karāmah's ode in Baghdad was ʿAbd al-Bāqī al-Fārūqī al-ʿUmarī (1790-1862).[315] In response, al-ʿUmarī composed a poem in the tradition of *muʿāraḍah* and *munāqaḍah* (an imitation using the same subject, rhyme, and meter to lampoon and boast).[316] Al-ʿUmarī dedicated his *Khāliyyah* to Dāwūd Pasha and boasted about being a better poet than Karāmah.[317] Even though his reaction seems antagonistic, in the context of court poetry, al-ʿUmarī clearly regarded the *Khāliyyah* as worthy of emulation. Another courtier of Dāwūd Pasha, however, the poet and historian Ṣāliḥ al-Tamīmī (d. 1845),[318] denied the *Khāliyyah's* merits and Karāmah's abilities as a poet. Whereas al-ʿUmarī merely questioned Karāmah's claim to have innovated new ways to use the word "*khāl*," al-Tamīmī claimed that a Christian like Karāmah could not be innovative in Arabic in the first place.[319]

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[312] Karāmah, *Maqāmah*, Leeds ms. 54, 51-2. Karāmah reproduces the *Khāliyyah* in the *Maqāmah*.

[313] Karāmah praises the governor, Dāwūd Pasha, in his *maqāmah* for being equally adept with the pen and the sword, an allusion to the Pasha's ability as a fighter and a writer, Leeds ms., 54. The Pasha's love of literature is also noted by Jurjī Zaydān, who describes the governor as "an intellectual and patron of literature." Jurjī Zaydān, *Tarājim mashāhīr al-sharq* (Cairo: al-Hilāl,1910), 2: 282.

[314] Karāmah, *Maqāmah*, Leeds ms. 54, 54-5.

[315] Also known as The Poet of Iraq (*Shāʿir al-ʿIrāq*). Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām* (Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm, 2002), 3:271. Jurjī Zaydān, *Tarājim*, 2: 282-284.

[316] Ahmad al-Shayib, *Tārīkh al-naqāʾiḍ fī al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahḍah al-Misriyyah, 1954*)*, 3.

[317] Karāmah responded with yet another *Khāliyyah* and it seems as if he had the last word as there is no record of a rebuttal from al-ʿUmarī.

[318] Al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 3:191.

[319] Instead of composing a *Khāliyyah* in the *muʿāraḍah* form, al-Tamīmī composed a poem rhyming in *rā* arguing that a Christian could not be eloquent in Arabic. In response, Karāmah wrote a *maqāmah* arguing that "God does not

The divergence in the reception of their most innovative poetic forms sets Karāmah and al-Ṭahṭāwī apart. While al-Ṭahṭāwī enjoys renown, Karāmah has been all but forgotten. The difference in the reception of their poetry indicates who was permitted to adapt foreign ideas and forms into Arabic poetry. As a Christian, Karāmah was allowed less freedom in borrowing and introducing new forms into Arabic poetics. In the idealized image of the Abbasid translation project, authors from al-Ṣāʿid al-Andalūsī and Ibn Khaldūn through Kātib Chalabī down to Buṭrus al-Bustānī, attributed to Christians the role of mediators and translators – not innovators. Even al-Bustānī, a Christian, did not challenge the role of the Christians within the translation project. Thus, when Karāmah claimed to have invented new meanings for the word *khāl* in Arabic after hearing a *khāliyyah* in Turkish, it might have appeared to al-Tamīmī as if he were overstepping his boundaries as an intellectual. Al-Tamīmī's response may therefore be understood as an attempt to police the traditional roles of Muslim and non-Muslim intellectuals. Unlike al-Ṭahṭāwī's patrons – Muḥammad ʿAlī and then the Khedive Saʿīd – Karāmah's patron, Shihābī was exiled and did not found a state. Karāmah's works, unlike al-Ṭahṭāwī's, did not become founding texts for state institutions. Al-Ṭahṭāwī was coopted by Arab nationalist historiography, which cast him as a pioneer. The same historiography overlooked Karāmah, perhaps because his works were not as accommodating to the Arab nationalist project as al-Ṭahṭāwī's (Karāmah wrote mostly panegyrics for his Ottoman patrons).

Another figure who has been overlooked by literary historians of Arabic but is comparable to al-Ṭahṭāwī is Maḥmūd Ibn Ḥamza al-Ḥanafī (1820/1-1887), an Ottoman *muftī* from Damascus. In addition to legal opinions, he wrote a commentary on the Quran in a style that he copied from a sixteenth-century Mughal original. In 1593, a courtier of the Mughal emperor Akbar wrote a

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does not withhold His favor and grace because of the defect of a sect and religion." Karāmah, Maqāmah, Leeds ms. 54, 51.

commentary on the entire Quran using only the undotted Arabic letters.[320] In 1857/8 Ibn Ḥamza published his undotted commentary and dedicated it to the Ottoman sultan. The text shares many lexical similarities to the Mughal original, as Ibn Ḥamza uses the same interpretations as the Mughal author.[321]

Clearly, copying literary traditions of non-Arab courts to produce new Arabic forms in the hope of gaining patronage was common practice. Thus, despite the temptation to characterize al-Ṭahṭāwī as unique and to use him to demarcate the beginning of a modern period, we should be more cautious about labeling him and other nineteenth-century Arab authors as original. As a poet, al-Ṭahṭāwī shared several similarities with his contemporaries among patronized Ottoman scholars. Borrowing from foreign, high cultural traditions seems to have been a standard practice among eighteenth and nineteenth-century scholars, as illustrated by the *Khāliyyah* of Karāmah, the undotted Quran commentary of Ibn Ḥamzah, not to mention the Arabicized *nāyikābheda* and *alaṅkāras* of Bilgrāmī. If al-Ṭahṭāwī was convinced of the efficacy of patriotic songs after seeing them in Paris and wanted to create something similar, he likely borrowed the form already in circulation in Ottoman-Turkish and Arabic.

Similarly, as a historian, al-Ṭahṭāwī was influenced by eighteenth and nineteenth-century Ottoman historiographical trends. In his conclusion to *Courses*, he says that:

> Among the things that reckon kings with respect to justice and beneficence is history, or the narration of their encounters to those who come after them, including their descendants and successor from the future generations. The historian recounts to the nation stories of its kings. Thus, the [account] transforms from a phenomenon to a tradition, from a fact to a story, and it spreads the merits of kings and their shortcomings to their offspring to

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[320] The commentary is titled *Sawāṭiʿ al-ilhām* and was written by the Mughal courtier Abu al-Fayḍ Fayḍī (d. 1595), the brother of the important Mughal historian, Abū al-Faẓl, author of the *Akbarnama*.

[321] I examined both texts and concluded that the Ottoman commentary is a copy of the Mughal on the basis of the length of the authors' respective introductions. The Mughal commentary includes a long introduction, which the author wrote using only undotted letters, consisting of several sections that deal with his family history, his biography, and an explanation of what he thinks constitutes good and bad scholars and scholarship. Ibn Ḥamzah's introduction is much shorter and echoes the Mughal text, probably because he could not write a more substantial one using only undotted letters.

consider as examples (*wa-mimmā yuḥāsab al-mulūk ayḍᵃⁿ ʿalā al-ʿadl wa-l-iḥsān al-tārīkh ay ḥikāyat waqāʾiʿihim li-man baʿdihim min dharārīhim wa-khalfihim min al-ajyāl al-ātiyah. Fa-inna al-muʾarrikh yadhkur li-l-ummah akhbār mulūkihā fa-yantaqil min al-ʿayn ilā al-athar wa-min al-bayān ilā al-khabar fa-yabith maḥāsin al-mulūk wa-mathālibahum li-aʿqābihim li-yaʿtabirū*).[322]*

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's definition of the function of history and historians vis-à-vis kings resonates with Ibn Khaldūn's conception of history. Both authors see history as a collection of descriptive narratives about kings, past and present, that aim to influence the behavior of rulers through example.

Conclusion

Al-Ṭahṭāwī shares many similarities with contemporary scholars from Ottoman provincial courts, such as Buṭrus Karāmah, Ibn Ḥamzah, and ʿAlī Mubārak. He is also similar to eighteenth-century scholars, like al-Suwaydī and al-Bilgrāmī, who appropriated ideas from Ibn Khaldūn's text, such as the Greco-Islamic theory of climes, which Ibn Khaldūn had appropriated from earlier sources. Thus, the French ideas that historians of Arabic literature say appealed to or seduced al-Ṭahṭāwī may not have been that foreign to him after all. The so-called modernity, which is synonymous in scholarship on Arabic literary history with Arab ethno-nationalism and patriotism, was most likely al-Ṭahṭāwī's version of Ibn Khaldūn's notion of *ʿaṣabīyah* (group feeling). Scholars who see al-Ṭahṭāwī as a modern and unique figure because of his patriotic poetry and his translations from the French may also miss the fact that he probably regarded the French as the new Persians, from whom the state could appropriate useful knowledge to promote development (*ʿumrān*) and civilization (*tamaddun*).

We do not have to read al-Ṭahṭāwī through the postcolonial lens to avoid casting him as the subject of a Eurocentric and teleological history of Arabic literature. If we accept that al-

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[322] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Manāhij*, 661.

Ṭahṭāwī was operating within the Khaldūnian framework, it would mean: (1) he wrote history as a way of correcting certain flaws he perceived in the state that patronized him; (2) he looked for the answer to his state's problems outside it, with other more advanced states; and (3) he conceived of the state as a total system that encompassed geography, religion, and education/edification. As a historian, al-Ṭahṭāwī's role was to address the problem of the state. He had to incorporate geography, religion and edification into his texts by offering examples from history to illustrate the ideal behavior expected from rulers in order to encourage development. The Arabs historically obtained useful knowledge, according to Ibn Khaldūn and his interpreters like Kātib Çelebi, from non-Arabs, such as the Persians and Indians. Thus, al-Ṭahṭāwī saw Europeans as a source of useful knowledge the way that Persians were portrayed by Ibn Khaldūn and Kātib Çelebi, among others, in their accounts of the Abbasid caliphs.

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have tried to propose a meaningful framework through which to view Arabic authors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on their own terms, without relying on Eurocentric or teleological language inherent in terms such as "postclassical." I suggest that the Arabic literary and intellectual histories of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are connected through authors' appropriation of Ibn Khaldūn's theories. Their Khaldūnism informs their comments on their homeland and state and their understanding of history as a source of edification. The texts of Āzād Bilgrāmī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī, and Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī share similar conceptions of geography, civilizational stratification, religion, and authority over a domain.

The connected worldviews of these authors compel us to examine their works side-by-side, outside the confines of periodization. My examination reveals that al-Ṭahṭāwī and Bilgrāmī both see geography as a determinant of human character. Both authors connect their homeland to biblical prophets to prove its sanctity in order to argue for the merit of the homeland's contemporary residents. On the other hand, in their narration of historical events, both ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suwaydī and al-Ṭahṭāwī use past events as illustrative examples to instruct those with authority to behave equitably and to allow the development of their domain. The comparable worldviews of Bilgrāmī and al-Ṭahṭāwī and of al-Suwaydī and al-Ṭahṭāwī raise the question as to how these authors came to share a similar understanding of the effect of geography on human civilization and the role of rulers vis-à-vis their domain.

The connection, I argue, is the result of the transfer of Ibn Khaldūn's theories to later authors through his Ottoman interpreters. Ottoman authors who were students of Ibn Khaldūn or those who interpreted and appropriated his works for the benefit of the Ottoman state constitute a link between him and eighteenth and nineteenth-century authors, like Bilgrāmī, al-Suwaydī, and

al-Ṭahṭāwī. The linkages are observable, especially when we consider the authorities to whom Bilgrāmī and al-Ṭahṭāwī appeal, namely, al-Suyūṭī and Kātib Çelebi, both of whom are connected to Ibn Khaldūn. The Egyptian al-Suyūṭī was the student of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, who was a student of Ibn Khaldūn's at al-Azhar. Kātib Çelebi, along with other sixteenth-century Ottoman bureaucrats, appropriated Ibn Khaldūn's theory of civilizational history and the development of arts and sciences. Thus, organizing Arabic texts according to the dynasty under which they were produced, as opposed to a periodization derived from European history, and reading them in light of their authors' engagement with Ibn Khaldūn's theories can help us understand these texts on their own terms.

I am not the first to suggest reading Arabic texts in their contexts. Abdelfattah Kilito and Thomas Bauer, as I mention in my introductory chapter, have been calling for such an approach since the publication of *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period* in 2006. Stephen Sheehi's attempt to use historical materialism as a framework through which to read nineteenth-century texts in context comes closest to allowing us to read Arab authors in context. Unfortunately, however, Sheehi's framework does not account for the intellectual development of Arab authors in the nineteenth century in any way other than material conditions. In other words, it does not allow for a meaningful examination of nineteenth-century authors' engagement with their intellectual predecessors. Sheehi attributes even the authors' ideology to material conditions, using Althusser as a point of reference. Thus, his analysis leaves us in the same place we started, with nineteenth-century authors disconnected from their predecessors in the eighteenth century and before that.

By disconnecting nineteenth-century authors from previous centuries, whether through our periodization or otherwise, we continue a legacy of Eurocentric historiography. We are effectively

saying that nineteenth-century authors, like al-Ṭahṭāwī, were unique. Thus, we contribute to mystifying the nineteenth century and singling it out as a special period in the history of Arabic literature. Reading his text in context with those of his contemporaries as well as reading him as a continuation of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century intellectual trends reveals that al-Ṭahṭāwī was innovative as an author, but he was not unique. Such a reading is important because to view him as unique and disconnected from his immediate past, we will be carrying on the colonial and postcolonial, Arab nationalist agendas. The texts and their contexts should take priority over theoretical frameworks, cannons, and periodizations.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's work resonates with that of his predecessors in the eighteenth century through their appropriation of Khaldūnisms to meet the needs of material reality. But he is innovative in his turn toward the French as the source of knowledge. Previously, Ibn Khaldūn had cast non-Arabs, namely, the Persians as the source from whom Arab-Muslims appropriated the necessary knowledge to produce an Arab-Muslim civilization. Al-Ṭahṭāwī replaced the Persians with the French as a source of useful knowledge, unlike Bilgrāmī who still viewed non-Arab Muslims, like Indo-Muslims, as such a source of knowledge. Al-Ṭahṭāwī turns to the French, just as the Abbasids had reportedly turned to the urbane Persians, to adapt their institutions and culture into the Egyptian context to help the Egyptian state achieve civilization, or *tamaddun*.

Thus, what might have seemed to twentieth-century orientalists as Francophilia on the part of al-Ṭahṭāwī or an obsession over his civilization's shortcomings vis-à-vis the French, may have been his reinterpretation of Ibn Khaldūn's theory, that a state achieves civilization and urban development through the adaptation of knowledge from the state that preceded it. The fact that his French interlocutors, such as Silvestre de Sacy, also knew Ibn Khaldūn's work may have led them to understand their role as the source of knowledge in Khaldūnian, not necessarily colonial, terms.

H.A.R. Gibb, the author of *Arabic Literature* (1926), who divides Arabic literary history into five periods: The Heroic Age, The Age of Expansion, the Golden Age, the Silver Age, and the Age of the Mamluks, and argues in the epilogue that the nineteenth and early-twentieth-centuries were a time of revival of the Golden Age initiated by Napoleon's campaign in Egypt, also happened to have been familiar with Ibn Khaldūn. In addition to works on Arabic literary history and the history of Islamic civilization, he is also the author of an article titled "The Islamic Background of Ibn Khaldūn's Political Theory" (1933), in which he evaluates all the major European studies on Ibn Khaldūn extant at the time, and posits his own argument regarding Ibn Khaldūn's view of Islamic law with respect to the demands of history.

If both Arabs and the Orientalists were familiar with Ibn Khaldūn, with the Arabs having at least a two-centuries-long tradition of adapting Ibn Khaldūn's theories to fix what they believed were weaknesses in their states, then the two sides would have been mutually-comprehensible to each other as givers and receivers of knowledge, respectively. The fact that both, Egyptians and Europeans, saw the time of encounter between the French and Egyptians as the starting point of a revival of Arab civilization is not a coincidence. Both Orientalists and Arab authors were operating according to the theories outlined in the *Muqaddimah* and they would have comprehended each other according to the roles assigned to the Persians and the Arabs by Ibn Khaldūn. Accordingly, what may seem like France's intellectual hegemony in Egypt may actually have been the fulfillment of a Khaldūnian vision by both sides, wherein Egypt was poised to succeed in developing civilization by appropriating the culture of France.

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