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Confronting Fascism in the Arabic Jewish Press

Intellectual Debates and Entangled Loyalties, 1933–1948

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Voor mijn ouders

CONTENTS

FIGURES

Notes on Transliteration and Translation

For the transliteration of Arabic, this book follows the guidelines of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES), with a few deviations: diacriticals and long-vowel markers have not been used, except to indicate the letters ayn (ʿ) and hamza (ʾ); personal names, when appropriate, follow the specific spelling used by the individual in question or the standardized spelling; the letter "jim" in Egyptian personal names is transliterated as "g" to more closely approximate the pronunciation of the Egyptian dialect. Unless otherwise stated, all translations in this book are mine.

PREFACE

On April 1, 1935, Egyptian Jewish communal leaders and intellectuals gathered at the Cairo Opera House to celebrate the 800th birthday of the Jewish scholar and philosopher Maimonides. Egyptian ministers, leading intellectuals, and literati attended the event and memorialized Maimonides in their speeches as part of Egypt's intellectual and Islamic heritage. The celebrations had been turned into a national event, covered extensively by the daily and periodical Arabic press, and broadcast by radio.[1] Representations of Maimonides's life and legacy occurred in the context of debates on Egyptian national culture and Egypt's relation to the Arab and Islamic world. For the Cairo Jewish community and the Jewish historians and intellectuals who steered the celebrations, Maimonides was not only a defining figure within their religious tradition but also a national symbol, an exemplary man who had served the ruler Saladin in Egypt and had led the Egyptian Jewish community.[2] The Egyptian press stressed Maimonides's connection to Egypt, simultaneously placing him squarely in the history of Islamic civilization, while pointing to the fact that he had written most of his works in the Arabic language.[3]

The same anniversary year witnessed numerous commemorations of Maimonides worldwide, including in the cities of Cordoba, Tiberias, and Fez, where Maimonides had resided, as well as in New York, Berlin, and London, with each of them bringing to the fore different cultural and national appropriations.[4] While the Maimonides celebrations in Cairo took place amid intellectual debates on national and regional culture, they were simultaneously part of global confrontations with Fascism that witnessed the embrace of Maimonides as a counterforce to exclusivist nationalism and Nazism.[5] Intellectuals in Egypt perceived Maimonides within a historical framework of coexistence, referring to a meeting of different cultural and religious traditions in *al-Andalus* and the integration of Jews in Egypt. The historical memory of *al-Andalus* as a shared cultural space marked by tolerance was held up against the forces of nationalism and racism in the present day.[6]

The Maimonides celebrations offer a window onto the dynamic life of Jewish intellectuals in interwar Egypt and their participation in debates on the nation and the region's past, present, and future. They show Egyptian Jews at the center of debates over Egyptian national culture and Islamic civilization and the place of Jewish heritage within them.[7] During the same period, various Jewish intellectuals in Egypt were part of extensive debates on Fascism and anti-Fascist movements. Intellectual discussions on Fascism and Nazism in Egypt were embedded in broader debates on the country's social and political future and cast in the civilizational lexicon of the *nahda*, a project of reform and revival in the Arab world. From a historiographical perspective, the commemoration of Maimonides in 1935 cautions against teleological understandings of Jewish history in Egypt; the

range of possibilities of the 1930s should not be retrospectively read as ultimately leading to the massive departure of Egyptian Jews from 1948 onward, culminating after the Suez crisis of 1956.[8] Rather, the Maimonides celebrations show Jewish intellectuals in Cairo as part of a pluralistic public sphere and the debates of the *nahda* during the 1930s.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Confronting Fascism in the Arabic Jewish Press examines Jewish intellectual debates on Fascism in Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria as part of *nahda* debates on race, civilization, and religion. It asks: How did Jewish writers in the Middle East view Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism during the 1930s and 1940s? The book uses the Arabic-language Jewish newspapers *al-Shams* (The Sun, Cairo, 1934–48) and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* (The Jewish World, Beirut, 1921–46) and its successor *al-Salam* (Peace, Beirut, 1946–8) as windows onto Jewish reorientations with regard to their positions and identities in the Middle East, evolving within the context of discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism. It will be concerned with how these discussions intersected with the way Jews envisioned their past, present, and future in the Middle East and how the articulation of their entangled loyalties was challenged.

The rise of Fascist and Nazi regimes in Europe brought forward new challenges for the heterogeneous Jewish communities in the Middle East. During the interwar period, Jews were rethinking their position in the Arab nation-states that were still under the colonial dominance of Britain and France. Egypt had been formally independent from Britain since 1922. The British, however, continued to hold Egypt's domestic scene under their grip in the period following the drafting of a constitution in 1923 and had prolonged their military presence in the country. The period 1922–56 in Egypt has therefore been termed "semicolonial."[1] France had officially held the League of Nations mandate over Syria and Lebanon since 1923. In 1920, Lebanon had been created as a separate state from Syria, against the wishes of those aspiring an independent Greater Syria. With the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the British government had aligned itself with the Zionist movement by expressing its support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. Though the declaration promised that the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish inhabitants of Palestine would be respected, their political or national rights were not mentioned.[2]

On a national and regional level, the context surrounding Jewish discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism was marked by widespread opposition to colonial rule as well as to the Zionist colonization of Palestine. The persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany and the territories it occupied during the late 1930s and 1940s prompted the international Zionist movement to spur further Jewish

immigration to Palestine. Zionist ambitions in Palestine were hard to reconcile with Arab nationalism and anti-colonial movements in the Middle East. By examining discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism among Jews in the Middle East, with *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* as primary case studies, this book provides insights into these challenges for the positions and loyalties of Jews in the modern Middle East from 1933 to 1948.

The editors of the Arabic Jewish press hoped to spread awareness about the developments in Europe and to stimulate the local opposition to Fascism and Nazism. Because they were writing about Fascism and Nazism in Arabic, Jewish intellectuals were involving themselves in the vibrant public spheres of the Middle East. The interwar period witnessed an intellectual boom and a diversification of national and ideological orientations facilitated by a burgeoning press and publishing industry. The flourishing and freedom of the press were most evident in Egypt, while the press in mandate Syria and Lebanon was more fragmented and controlled and censored by the French.[3] The emergence of totalitarian regimes in Europe was not merely observed from a distance. Rather, the discussions addressing Fascism and Nazism were directly relevant to communal, national, and regional processes of reorientation—encompassing society, the nation, and religion—in the wake of the Ottoman Empire's collapse. As such, these discussions became embedded in debates over various forms of self-definition, including what it meant to be Arab, Eastern, Muslim, Christian, or Jew and the intersections between these identities.

The appearance of Arabic-language Jewish newspapers in the Middle East during the first half of the twentieth century bears witness to the existence of an Eastern orientation among Jewish intellectuals in the Middle East as well as their participation in Arab culture and the flourishing of Jewish journalistic and literary creativity in Arabic.[4] The writers in the Arabic Jewish press often expressed their connection to the linguistic, historical, and cultural space of the "Arab East." Their use of terminology such as *al-yahud al-ʿarab*, "Arab Jews," and *yahud al-sharq*, "Jews of the East," commonly reflected their integrationist visions for Jews in the Arab world, and it also marked an identity distinct from that of Jews of European origin.[5] Moreover, the appearance of Arabic Jewish newspapers in the Middle East should be seen in the context of the *nahda*, a range of regional and transregional intellectual debates centered on the overlapping notions of revival and reform. The perspectives of Jews participating in debates on Fascism in the Arabic language offer insight into the process whereby Jews were redefining their position, alongside Muslim and Christian Arab intellectuals, within the Arab nation-states following the Ottoman disintegration.

In Beirut, the publisher and writer Selim Mann founded the Arabic-language Jewish newspaper *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* in 1921. From 1946 to 1948 it continued under the name *al-Salam* (Peace). Mann wanted especially to provide a platform for the Jewish community in Beirut, but more broadly he also aspired to represent the communities in Lebanon and Syria and the "Jews of the East." Mann and the editor in chief of his newspaper beginning in 1938, Moise Adjami, supported the Zionist movement and were connected to a network of Jewish intellectuals that

encompassed Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. The newspaper reported about Jewish communal topics such as education, local leadership, and youth clubs as well as Jewish and Arab culture and sought to connect its readers to Zionism. Furthermore, the editors hoped to mobilize local opposition to Nazism.

The Cairo-based Arabic-language Jewish newspaper *al-Shams*, like *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, was oriented toward the "Arab East" and its Jewish communities, although it was more closely connected with Egyptian culture and nationalism. The editor, Saad Malki, called for the Egyptianization of the Jewish community and for a Jewish commitment to Egyptian, Arab, and Jewish culture. He backed a cultural and economic revival in Palestine but did not explicitly support Zionism. He envisioned a shared homeland in Palestine where progress would be rooted in cooperation and coexistence between Arabs and Jews, the "Semitic brothers." *Al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* testify to the wide range of cultural and ideological affinities available to Jews; its editors and writers could adhere to Arabism, Lebanese, Syrian, or Egyptian nationalism and Zionism simultaneously without this being a contradiction.

In *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, the Arabic language was central to the ideological outlooks of its editors and writers. It was regarded as an identity marker that strengthened the ties between the Jewish communities in the "Arab East" and linked them to Arab society, history, and culture. In addition, the use of Arabic enabled Jews to express themselves within the regional Arabic public sphere and participate in the debates of the *nahda*. Moreover, Arabic was important for Zionism, because it served to promote Arab-Jewish cooperation and was perceived as a necessary means of understanding and responding to the mainstream Arabic press. The Arabic Jewish press should hence also be viewed in relation to discussions within the Zionist movement and among Zionist activists about their attitudes toward the Arab world and the role of the Arabic language in the Zionist project.[6] Holding similar aims of representing and connecting the Jewish communities in the Arab East and stressing commonalities between "Arabs and Jews," *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* show affinities with a group of Middle Eastern and European Zionist intellectuals who had been advocating the notion of a "shared homeland" of Arabs and Jews in Palestine since the early twentieth century.[7] Prominent among Palestinian Sephardic Jews, this vision on Palestine was also, as this book will demonstrate, articulated among Jews elsewhere in the Middle East.

The newspapers examined in this book were the product of a network of Jewish writers, intellectuals, and activists that transcended national borders. Its writers partly operated within terms set by the semicolonial nation-state and the genre of nationalist writings, yet at the same time they were engaged with, and identified with, a regional network comprising Jewish writers as well as Muslim and Christian Arab intellectuals. They also cited and translated a variety of authors globally and possessed intellectual and academic contacts across the Middle East and in Europe. *Al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* should thus be seen as platforms of cross-cultural exchange. Because their intellectual and journalistic activities traversed communal and national borders, this book uses the approach

of entangled history to look at transregional encounters, the circulation of ideas and concepts, adaptation, and appropriation. The entangled history approach allows for a novel reading of *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, an interpretation that accounts for these intersecting scales and, as such, enables us to understand the entangled loyalties of their editors and contributors.

The premise of this book is that discussions in the Arabic Jewish press on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism should be seen within the context of cultural and political reorientation(s) in the semicolonial Arab nation-states and mandates in the Middle East. The central aim here is to understand how the editors of *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* and their contributors reflected on how Fascism, and in particular Nazism and antisemitism, challenged their notions of Jewish belonging to their respective Arab societies, in which competing national identities were expressed including a growing pan-Arab awareness. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the writers of the newspapers to be discussed were generally critical toward Fascism and Nazism. In addition to the more general question of how the editors and contributors to the newspapers acquired knowledge of Fascism and Nazism and discussed these movements, this book is concerned with the question of how such discussions were embedded within Jewish reorientations of their positions and identities as part of the *nahda*'s broader debates.

Confronting Fascism in the Arabic Jewish Press addresses a set of interrelated questions: Which transnational and transregional journalistic and scholarly networks were the conduits through which knowledge of Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism was acquired and discussed by the writers of *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*? How did the writers relate Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism to the positions and identities of Jews in the Arab nation-states that were still part of the colonial realms of Britain and France in the Middle East? How did the views of the writers in *al-Shams*'s and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s pages develop over the course of the period 1933–48, and was there a noticeable change in their emphases on Jewish belonging to the Arab world and on Jewish and Arab commonalities?

The book focuses on the fifteen-year span—1933–48—in order to examine how these discussions changed and evolved in the period beginning with Hitler's rise to power in 1933 and ending during the aftermath of the Second World War. It hence covers the full chronology of Nazi rule (1933–45) in Germany and over Nazi-occupied territories as well as the postwar years up until 1948, the year the State of Israel was founded and the newspapers ceased publication. It also assesses several scholarly and popular historical works published during the late 1920s and 1930s by *al-Shams* contributors Israel Wolfensohn and Elie Levi Abu ʿAsal, which are thematically related to the discussions in *al-Shams* on Nazism and antisemitism during the 1930s and 1940s. The suspension in 1948 of *al-Shams* by the Egyptian authorities and the shuttering of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s successor *al-Salam* were direct consequences of the events in Palestine, Arab opposition to Zionism and the establishment of Israel. The era under consideration in this book thus covers precisely the period during which entangled loyalties, including to Arabism and Zionism, became increasingly difficult to maintain.

As this book will show, the writers publishing in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* perceived the rise of Fascism and Nazism in Europe to be a struggle between the opposed poles of "dictatorship and democracy," "tyranny and freedom," and "civilization and barbarism." In their responses to antisemitism, they resorted to apologetic narratives, stressing the contributions of Jews to civilization and democracy and emphasizing Jewish loyalty to the nation. Discussions in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism intersected with the regional cultural reform debates of the *nahda*—discussions centered on the notions of civilization and culture as well as conceptions of community, nation, and religion. Their discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism were inscribed within the civilizational lexicon and binary leitmotifs of the *nahda*; the level of civilization their societies possessed was diagnosed via the dichotomies of success and failure, progress and backwardness, civilization and barbarism, and tolerance and intolerance.[8]

Historical Debates on Fascism in the Middle East

Jewish intellectual debates on Fascism and Nazism in the Middle East did not emerge in a vacuum. They took place within the region's diverse and vibrant public spheres, in which Fascism and Nazism were extensively discussed and criticized. These public and intellectual debates have only recently drawn the attention of historians examining the impact of Fascism and Nazism and the Second World War in the region. Since the first study on Nazism and the Arab world by Lukasz Hirszowicz in the 1960s, the scholarship predominantly looked into the ambitions of the Nazi regime in the region and the stance of Arab nationalist and Islamist political actors and movements toward Fascism and Nazism, based mainly on European archival materials.[9] This early scholarship established the paradigm that the Nazi regime and various political actors in the Arab world shared ideological and strategic ambitions: the former to spread its influence in the Arab world and the latter to seek support in the struggle for independence from Britain and France.[10] Arab nationalists would have supported the Fascist and Nazi regimes following the logic of "the enemy of the enemy is my friend."[11]

During the interwar period, several Arab nationalists had indeed sought German support for their struggle against the British and French mandates and the Balfour Declaration. The perception that Germany lacked an imperialist orientation undergirded these attempts.[12] Scholarship by Francis Nicosia and Stefan Wild shows, however, that the supposed confluence of Nazi and Arab ambitions is a flawed notion because of the ideological and strategic incompatibility of National Socialism and Arab nationalism.[13] The Germans may have expressed sympathy for the cause of Arab independence in their propaganda and official meetings and contact with Arab nationalists, but Nazi Germany's policies toward the Middle East nonetheless ran contrary to the latter's aims.[14] Furthermore, the attraction to Nazism of Arab nationalist figures and movements was highly ambivalent, as

certain fundamental aspects of Nazism, most crucially its racial ideology, were seen as incompatible with their thought and ideologies.[15]

Despite these revisions, the paradigm of shared ambitions continues to resonate in more recent studies. Take, for example, Jeffrey Herf's *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, the most extensive analysis to date of the aims and content of Nazi propaganda in the Middle East.[16] Herf's study is an important treatment of the Nazi regime's attempts to win support in the Middle East, especially among the Muslim population, by delivering a message pointing up the affinities between Nazism and Islam.[17] As Nicosia underlines in a later study, however, the content of Nazi propaganda should be distinguished from its actual intentions and policies, as these were to a large extent contradictory.[18] Taken at face value, Nazi propaganda indeed created the image of shared interests, which was exactly the message that Nazi Germany wished to convey to its Arab audiences.[19] Nazi Germany's strategic policies toward the Arab world, however, often ran contrary to what was stated in its propaganda.[20] Though Herf makes clear that his study does not measure the reach and reception of Nazi propaganda across the Arab world, he nevertheless claims that based largely on American and European reports, it appears that its messages resonated widely in the Arab world.[21]

Confronting Fascism in the Arabic Jewish Press contributes to the recent scholarly literature that, acknowledging a multivocal public sphere and extensively using sources in Arabic and other relevant languages, examines intellectual debates on Fascism and Nazism in the Middle East in context, and that has supplemented and revised the dominant paradigm of influence, encounters, and attempts at collaboration.[22] This recent scholarship shows that Arab intellectuals widely and critically debated Fascism and Nazism and many of them supported the Allies during the war, despite their opposition to colonialism. This book shows how Jewish intellectuals in Egypt and Lebanon took part in these wider Arab debates and simultaneously engaged in discussions as part of what they viewed as the "Jews of the East" and the "Jewish world." In doing so, the book not only contributes to a fuller understanding of Arab intellectual responses to Fascism, but also argues for the integration of Middle Eastern Jewish intellectual perspectives in the expanding scholarship on global anti-Fascism.[23]

As Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski have shown, a well-informed critical debate took place among Egyptian intellectuals of various political stripes during the 1930s and 1940s, who observed the rise of Fascism in Europe with both interest and concern.[24] During the early 1930s, the leadership cult of Mussolini as well as Hitler's rapid political ascendency and his economic program for a "defeated and humiliated Germany" (recalling the defeat in the Great War and its aftermath) initially aroused the admiration of various intellectuals. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia of 1935 placed Fascism in a radically different light, and Egyptian intellectuals now started to compare Fascism and Nazism to Western colonialism and its long history of racism; some perceived Nazi racial policies as threatening the Arabs or Easterners as Semitic peoples.[25]

The dominant current in the Egyptian press and public opinion, especially in liberal journals such as *al-Risala* and *al-Hilal*, was an often-fierce rejection

of Fascism and Nazism, since they undermined liberal freedoms and promoted racism. The rivalry between democracy and dictatorship in Europe was seen in relation to domestic disillusionment with parliamentary politics in Egypt and the growing authoritarian tendencies of the Egyptian Palace.[26] New political forces such as the Egyptian nationalist, militant Young Egypt movement, and the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood were clearly inspired by authoritarian models, though this neither points to the existence of clear-cut Fascist organizations in Egypt nor justifies the grouping of these movements under the rubric of "Fascism."[27]

As in Egypt, and partly swayed by the regional circulation of Egyptian papers and magazines, newspapers in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine extensively discussed Fascism during the 1930s.[28] Led by the Lebanese left, a Syrian-Lebanese conference against Fascism was organized on May 6 and 7, 1939, during which intellectuals voiced their support for the democratic powers.[29] A wide range of ideas and positions on Fascism and Nazism were expressed in the Lebanese and Syrian press.[30] As Götz Nordbruch shows, Nazism was just one political reference point among many others (Kemalism, communism, Italian Fascism), and for some, a fascination with Nazism did not directly imply the exclusion of other political and ideological options and ideas. The ideas of politicians, intellectuals, and activists attracted to or inspired by Nazism were often marked by ambivalence and inherent tensions. This ambivalence is evident with regard to positions on Nazi racial thought. Various Arab nationalist intellectuals, though inspired by German ethno-cultural conceptions of community and race, questioned the ideas of pure races and racial hierarchy and expressed concern about the position or Arabs and "Orientals" in National Socialist ideology.[31]

Intellectuals in the Middle East debating Nazism during the 1930s often relied on translated fragments and discussions of *Mein Kampf* to learn about, discuss, and criticize Hitler and National Socialism. Tracing the circulation, translations, and reception of *Mein Kampf* in the Arab world is therefore important to any inquiry into the broader theme of Nazism's reception in the Arab world. As Stefan Wild has shown, Nazi officials unsuccessfully attempted to arrive at an official Arabic translation, reflecting broader propaganda efforts to win support in the Arab world.[32] Nevertheless, various partial Arabic translations of *Mein Kampf* were published in newspapers from 1933 and 1939 as individual translations or as excerpts included in books about Hitler and National Socialism.[33] These translations often served first and foremost to inform its readers about Nazi ideology rather than to express an ideological commitment to Nazism.[34] Various critical books and writings on Hitler and *Mein Kampf* were published around the same time.[35]

It is also important to see Nazi propaganda in the Arab world within the context of competing foreign propaganda campaigns in the Middle East, most notably the British, French, and Italian efforts in this regard. In 1934, the Italian Fascists established the Arabic radio station Bari, which was broadcast in Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, and the Red Sea region, focusing on music and talk shows. As Callum MacDonald and Manuela Williams show in their studies

on Radio Bari, the task of Italian propagandists addressing North Africa and the Middle East, especially after the invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 and its considerable impact on the image of Italian Fascism in the region, was to obscure the violent colonialist record of Italy in North Africa and to present Mussolini as a friend and champion of Islam.[36] In addition to its African colonies, Italy focused its propaganda on Palestine, where it sought to exploit the struggle in Palestine as a means of undermining the British mandate by supporting Palestinian and Arab nationalists and of establishing a strategic powerbase. Its campaign in Egypt proceeded along the same lines. The books, leaflets, cartoons, and other materials distributed in the region presented Italy as a friend of Islam and Muslims.[37]

In response to the Nazi and Fascist Arabic radio stations and propaganda materials, sharing the aim of presenting Germany and Italy as supporters of Arab nationalism and Islam, France and Britain enhanced their own propaganda strategies in the region. France intensified its radio broadcasts, mainly via Radio Orient and its later iteration Radio Levant, in which the anti-religious character of the Germans and the Soviet Union, the two main competitors to its colonial position, were underlined in order to bolster support for the democratic states.[38] Largely in response to the Italian campaign, Britain's BBC Arabic was established in 1938, accompanied by the Ministry of Information's pamphlet series *This Is London*. Complementing the focus of BBC Arabic on cultural programming and news coverage, the broadcasts and propaganda booklets proclaimed Britain's support for independence for the Arab states and presented Nazism as the antithesis of religion.[39]

The recent scholarship on intellectual debates on Fascism in the Arab world demonstrates that Fascism and Nazism were not merely European political ideologies disseminated through propaganda and transnational encounters in the Middle East and subsequently embraced or rejected among the region's diverse populations. Rather, debates on these ideologies were directly relevant to national and regional processes of societal reorientation in the emerging Arab nation-states within the colonial sphere controlled by France and Great Britain. Discussions of Nazism in the Arabic public sphere should thus not be studied in isolation, nor in a polemical manner determined by an attraction-rejection binary, nor merely within the paradigm of "response," suggesting passive reception. Rather, they should be examined within this broader context of reorientation outlined here. What this new field of scholarship, then, has made clear is that debates on Fascism and Nazism were embedded in diverse conceptualizations of society, community, the nation, and religion as well as debates on colonialism.

Jews were as much part of these reorientations, and hence, the present book adds to a fuller, more diverse understanding of intellectual ideas on Fascism in Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria. Fascism and Nazism were by no means marginal topics for Jews in the region. Gudrun Krämer and Michael Laskier have described the extensive expression of opposition to Nazism among Egyptian Jews during the 1930s.[40] This opposition largely occurred within the context of a struggle between a group of Germans resident in Cairo on the one side and Egyptian Jewish and Zionist organizations on the other. The former had been receiving Nazi propaganda

radio broadcasts and leaflets since the beginning of the decade, leading some of its members to openly express their support. The National Socialist German Workers Party had been active in Cairo and Alexandria before Hitler's rise to power.[41] Several Jewish organizations began to organize mass gatherings and boycotts of German products as a means of opposing Nazism and its influence on Germans residing in Cairo and Alexandria.[42]

Seeking to combat antisemitism and to support worldwide Jewish solidarity, the Egyptian branch of the international Jewish B'nai B'rith organization initiated local anti-Nazi efforts in 1933.[43] Following their first gatherings, an Egyptian section of the French Ligue Internationale Contre L'Antisémitisme (LICA) was formed, which also had a youth section.[44] In the early 1940s, several anti-Fascist committees and groups were formed.[45] In Beirut, a local branch of the LICA was established in 1933. The Nazi accession to power in Germany in 1933 had led German Jewish refugees to Lebanon. They often went to Palestine via Beirut but many remained in the city. Kirsten Schulze and Guy Bracha have shown that a debate soon emerged on the increasing influx of refugees.[46] In 1935, Jewish leaders petitioned the French high commissioner to allow more German Jewish refugees to enter the country.[47]

By analyzing discussions in the Arabic Jewish press and among its networks of writers, this book brings in the perspectives of Jewish intellectuals that have been missing in the aforementioned scholarship studying Arab confrontations with Fascism in context and presents the first comprehensive study of Jewish debates in Arabic on Fascism in the Middle East.[48] As these debates contain similarities to what was transpiring among liberal intellectuals in the region and express intra-Jewish concerns and attempts to reconcile Arabism and Zionism, the book offers novel perspectives on the extensive debates and anti-Fascist and anti-Nazi critiques in the Middle East's public spheres. As this book will show, Jewish writers of Arabic during 1930s and 1940s were deeply concerned with totalitarianism and antisemitism. Yet, as I will also argue, their discussions should be seen as part of broader scholarly and popular discourses about identity, the nation, religion, and society and the idea of civilizational and national revival in the East. Using an idea-based and conceptual historical approach allows us to see that their responses were part of these wider reorientations and intellectual debates.

The Arabic Jewish Press and the National Paradigm

In this book, I analyze the Arabic Jewish press in Egypt and Lebanon with a focus on the entangled loyalties of its writers—both within and beyond the contours the nation-state and the national orientations of Jews. The historiography on Jews in the modern Middle East has been commonly studied within the contours of the semi-independent Arab nation-states that emerged after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. I argue that the nation-state framework is limiting, as it foregrounds the question of Jews as national citizens, but does not sufficiently account for the regional and transregional networks, identifications, and loyalties

of Jews in their respective nation-states. This framework is also apparent in previous analyses of the Arabic Jewish press in Egypt and Lebanon.

Furthermore, within the national paradigm, two ideological nationalist narratives can be distinguished that had a significant impact on the scholarship on Jews in the Arab world, including the history of the Arabic Jewish press. The first is the Zionist narrative that suggests a homogeneous experience of persecution of Jews in the Arab world and their arrival in Israel as "refugees." Part of this narrative, or what could be called, following Mark Cohen, a "neo-lachrymose" understanding of Jewish history in the Arab world, is the idea that Arab antisemitism forms an important explanatory factor for the massive departure of Jews from the region during the latter half of the twentieth century.[49] The second nationalist narrative questions the national belonging of Jews to the respective Arab nation-states and perceives them as Zionists, despite the minor interest in Zionism among Jews in the Arab world. Although these narratives are ideologically opposed, they overlap in the sense that they ultimately question Jewish belonging and loyalty to the Arab nation-states in consideration.[50]

Several studies published in Egypt since 1979 have paid particular attention to the ideologically and linguistically diverse Jewish press in the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. These studies were part of a broader interest in the history of Jews in Egypt following the 1978 Egyptian-Israeli peace negotiations and eventual agreements.[51] The historian Siham Nassar has published several works since 1979 on the Jews of Egypt in the modern period. The national framework is apparent from the title of her first work, *Al-Yahud al-Misriyyun bayna al-Misriyya wa-l-Sahyuniyya* (The Egyptian Jews between Egyptianism and Zionism, 1979), which foregrounds the question whether Jews were Egyptians or Zionists.[52] As Joel Beinin has remarked, Nassar makes the distinction between Jews and Zionism a very small one indeed, as she wrongly claims that most Egyptian Jews supported the Zionist movement.[53] Nassar's work, based on her master's thesis, was later published as *Al-Yahud al-Misriyyun: Suhufuhum wa-Majallatuhum 1877–1950* (The Egyptian Jews: Their newspapers and magazines 1877–1950).[54]

The main sources for Nassar's work consist of the publications of the diverse Jewish press in Egypt and other Jewish journalistic activities in the period under consideration. Nassar describes how the beginning of Zionist activity in Egypt in 1897 was followed by initiatives for Jewish newspapers aiming to explain Zionism, in hopes that Jews would join the movement's ranks, and countering Muslim and Christian opposition.[55] In the period following the Balfour Declaration of 1917, Nassar argues that Zionism began to be actively promoted through the Egyptian Jewish press.[56] *Isra'il*, *al-Shams*'s predecessor, was the first Jewish newspaper published in Egypt after 1917. In discussing the goals of *Isra'il*'s owners and editors, the couple Albert Mosseri and Mathilda Mosseri, Nassar argues that these aims show the extent to which they misled Arab public opinion when the newspaper voiced Jewish intentions to cooperate with the Arabs in Palestine and create a shared civilization with them.[57]

Regarding *al-Shams*, Nassar writes that it was published in the service of Zionism.[58] She states that even though *al-Shams*'s editor, Saad Malki, tried to make his newspaper appear as if it were an Egyptian nationalist and not a Zionist publication, everything written and published there served the goals and interests of the Zionist movement. Therefore, *al-Shams* should be considered one of Egypt's most outspoken Zionist publications.[59] The Egyptian government only grasped the newspaper's real motives after Israel was established in 1948, amid complaints from the Arab League that the newspaper was violating Arabism and running counter to Arab interests.[60] Nassar goes on to make the historically unfounded claim that the Jewish Agency, the main operative Zionist institution in Palestine, supported Malki's program of Egyptianization.[61] She stresses that ultimately, Zionism and Egyptianism are incompatible, and therefore *al-Shams*'s outlook was in the service of Jewish communal and national interests.[62]

In her study *Al-Sihafa al-Sahyuniyya fi Misr 1897–1954* (The Zionist press in Egypt 1897–1954), the historian Awatif Abd al-Rahman relies extensively on Nassar's study and similarly presents *al-Shams* as a Zionist newspaper, though she remarks that the newspaper never made its support for Zionism explicit. Furthermore, Abd al-Rahman blames the Egyptian government during the time of *al-Shams*'s publication for not being aware of the danger of the newspaper, because the newspaper's promotion of Egyptian culture and nationalism covered its Zionist views.[63] Abd al-Rahman further argues that Jewish patriotism in Egypt, a current represented by *al-Shams*, served merely to promote Zionism in Egyptian nationalist circles, mainly among the Wafd party as well as among Egyptian intellectuals and in the Egyptian press.[64]

In 2014, Rashad Ramadan Abd al-Salam published *Yahud Misr, 1922–1956* (The Jews of Egypt, 1922–1956), a sequel to his earlier study *Al-Nashat al-Yahudi fi Misr* (Jewish activity in Egypt), which covered the period from 1897 to 1922.[65] Throughout the book, Abd al-Salam uses the terms "Jews" and "Zionism" interchangeably and often in tandem with global capitalism. The presence of Jews and Zionist activity in Egypt is persistently viewed through the prism of the colonization of Egypt. Abd al-Salam, following Nassar and Abd al-Rahman, understands *al-Shams* solely in relation to Zionism and capitalism. He rightly points out that *al-Shams*'s discourse stressed commonalities between Jews and Arabs by presenting both groups as Semites. But rather than placing this idea within the political and intellectual contexts in which *al-Shams*'s authors operated and tracing the lineages of the idea of the Semites in Egypt and beyond, he characterizes this conception as a manifestation of "cruel Zionist propaganda."[66]

The studies by Nassar, Abd al-Rahman, and Abd al-Salam thus all categorize *al-Shams* solely as an outlet for Zionist propaganda. In doing so, I argue, they reduce the cultural and political visions of the editors and writers to a hidden agenda and in the process exclude them from the historiography of Arab intellectual history and the *nahda*. The labeling of *al-Shams* as exclusively Zionist propaganda entails that the ideological line of Egyptianization expressed in the newspaper becomes nothing more than a cover-up for the purportedly essential Zionism of the newspaper and its authors. This interpretation not only forestalls

any critical reading of the specific meanings ascribed to Zionism during this period by Egyptian Jews, but it also banishes the possibilities that Egyptian Jews could be—without contradiction—Egyptians and Zionists and, more broadly, that their loyalties and identities could be diverse and multilayered.[67] Ultimately, Nassar, Abd al-Rahman, and Abd al-Salam fail to take seriously the Egyptian nationalist orientations of *al-Shams*'s writers, as in their understanding these perspectives are merely a "cover"—their real loyalties lay elsewhere.

Gudrun Krämer's consideration in *The Jews in modern Egypt, 1914–1952* of the different political affiliations of Jews in Egypt—though the majority was politically quietist—includes a discussion of a small group of Egyptian Jewish patriots, some of whom bore Zionist sympathies as well.[68] It is among this group that the editor of *al-Shams* and many Egyptian contributors to his newspaper were to be found. In contrast to what is claimed by Nassar, Abd al-Rahman, and Abd al-Salam, the views of this group, Krämer argues, were only partly compatible with those of local Zionist activists. The difference was mainly one of emphasis: "The Egyptian patriots wanted to turn their coreligionists into Jewish Egyptians, whereas the primary aim of the Zionists was, of course, to educate Egyptian Jews in the spirit of Jewish nationalism."[69]

In *The Dispersion of Egyptian Jewry*, Joel Beinin is similarly critical of the Egyptian and the Zionist national narratives through which the history of the Jews in Egypt has often been explained.[70] He notes in reference to *al-Shams* that Malki's vision was not particularly welcomed within the Zionist movement and unlikely to have been supported by it. Rather, it shows the multiple political commitments and identities that could be expressed by Jews in Egypt at the time.[71] Both Krämer and Beinin hence provide more nuanced and contextualized views on the current of Egyptian Jewish patriotism enmeshed with Zionism of which *al-Shams* was part. This book contributes to the understanding of this group by focusing attention on their intellectual activities and their writings in *al-Sham*s as well as situating their ideas and discussions within a regional and transregional context.

As for the historiography on Jews and the Arabic Jewish press in Lebanon, Kirsten Schulze argues in *The Jews of Lebanon* that Jews adhered to the vision of the Lebanese nation-state and took up their position in Lebanon as citizens alongside their counterparts belonging to other religious communities. Her work challenges both the idea that a distinct Lebanese Jewish identity did not exist and the notion that Jews in Lebanon should be regarded as Syrian Jews because of large-scale Jewish immigration from Syria to Lebanon.[72] Schulze argues that the Jews of Lebanon were largely apolitical and were "no less Lebanese" than Muslims and Christians. They "shared the vision of Lebanon as an independent, multicommunal, Levantine country" and "from a socio-economic perspective … embodied the Levantine stereotype."[73]

The concept of Levantinism, which she frequently uses to describe the identity and makeup of the Jews in Lebanon, remains undefined.[74] In combination with the nation-state framework and her thesis of Jewish belonging to Lebanon, this Levantinist filter leaves other senses of belonging and loyalties underexplored, including the importance, not to be underestimated, of rival Arab-Syrian and

Lebanese conceptions of the community and the nation. As a result, her references to *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* do not grasp the ambition that the newspaper aspired to be the organ of the Jewish communities of Lebanon and Syria as well as of the "Jews of the East" in a broader sense.[75]

Like Schulze, Franck Salameh, in his *Lebanon's Jewish Community*, cordons off Lebanon's Jewish communities from other Jewish communities in the Arab world.[76] The book is premised on the idea that there was a period of comfort and coexistence enjoyed by Jews in Lebanon during the mandate period, which was ended in the 1940s by the irruption of Arab nationalism; this pluralist Lebanon supposedly destroyed by Arab nationalism is now an object of nostalgia. In the first part of the book, which mainly focuses on the French mandate period, Jews are presented as the "most indigenous" of the different communities residing in the country and as Lebanese national citizens fully committed to the Maronite vision of "a multi-ethnic, *not* specifically Arab, Mediterranean federation of minorities."[77] Arab nationalism, portrayed as having ended diversity and plurality in Lebanon, is said to be the primary cause of the persecution of Jews as "dhimmis" in "Arab lands," contrasted with the comfortable position enjoyed by Jews in Christian-dominated Lebanon during the mandate period.[78]

There is no sense in Salameh's account that *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* sought to represent the Jewish communities in Lebanon, Syria, and the "East." Instead, this "mouthpiece of Lebanon's Jewish community" was a "distinctly Lebanese periodical" and a " 'Jewish,' *but* 'Lebanese' publication."[79] In addition, he persistently downplays or ignores the newspaper's Arabist outlook and the complexity of its perspective, informed as it was by various elements (Lebanese, Syrian, Arab, Eastern, Jewish, Zionist). Rather, he argues that the newspaper mainly appealed to non-Muslims in Lebanon adhering to Phoenicianism.[80] The newspaper's early years (1921–34) reflect a period when "Lebanon Loved the Jews," characterized by "a healthy unhindered Jewish life in Lebanon that could openly uphold Zionist principles."[81] Salameh argues that from 1938 onward, when the newspaper became more explicitly Arabist in orientation under the editorship of Moise Adjami, *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, once "amongst Lebanon's best" newspapers, transformed itself into a "cagey, rather politically different" publication that consigned itself to "insignificance."[82] Moreover, he argues that the newspaper faced external pressure to express its loyalty to Arabism.[83]

In his doctoral dissertation on *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, Guy Bracha examines the complex outlook of the newspaper beyond the framework of the Lebanese nation, focusing on the extent to which the newspaper succeeded in becoming the organ of the Jewish communities in mandate Syria and Lebanon and in voicing their cultural-nationalist aspirations. This question is addressed within the context of Jewish communal changes in Syria and Lebanon.[84] Bracha provides an extensive survey of the themes covered in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, encompassing its reports about the Jewish communities in the "East," the extensive writings on Jewish schools and the position of women, and its complex political outlook (combining Zionism and Lebanese, Syrian and Arab nationalism). Bracha denotes a "triangular" cultural axis, composed of Arab, French, and Hebrew strands. The editors did not

believe that either the Arabic language or an Arabist orientation, though more strongly associated with Syrian and Arab nationalism, ran counter to Lebanese nationalism.[85]

The present book builds on Bracha's analysis yet adopts a different approach toward the newspaper. It focuses on the question of how the newspaper's discussions and reflections on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism intersected with the ways Jews were repositioning themselves in the Middle East. In addition, its comparison of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* with *al-Shams* unfolds in relation to the contexts of fragmented national identities in the case of Lebanon and Syria and increasing Egyptianization in the case of Egypt. Bracha primarily applies a regional lens by situating *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* in the context of the Jewish communities in Lebanon and Syria and the Mashriq in a broader sense. He also shows how *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* was interconnected with other Arabic-language Jewish newspapers in the region, including those in Egypt and Iraq. Indeed, the editors of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* and *al-Shams* partly operated in the same regional networks, and their lists of contributors partly overlapped. By applying the perspective of entangled history, however, we can see that the discussions in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* and *al-Shams* extended beyond the contours of a regional public sphere.

By combining different frameworks, we can situate the ideas expressed by the editors and contributors of the newspaper contextually within global debates on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism and thus uncover additional layers of meaning. This way, Jewish debates on the pages of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* become part of a multifarious web: of global Jewish and non-Jewish confrontations with Nazi antisemitism, of intellectuals assessing the impact of Fascism on civilization and progress, and of reorientations vis-à-vis the place of Germany, Europe, and the West in "universal" civilization. Moreover, the entanglement perspective can shed light on how ideas and concepts travel and are transformed within new contexts. Yet this approach should not be taken to imply a flattening-out of the asymmetrical colonial contexts that conditioned the expression of ideas in the Arabic Jewish press in the Middle East.

Partly a response to the aforementioned nationalist narratives on Jews from the Arab world, recent scholarly debates on the "Arab Jew" have offered alternative readings of the history of Jews in the Middle East.[86] In recent academic works, "Arab Jew" has been used as an analytical term or has been comprehended as a (self) descriptive term used by historical actors in the Middle East and North Africa.[87] Much academic discussion has revolved around identity and, more specifically, the question whether there was indeed a distinct Arab Jewish identity and intellectual current prior to 1948.[88] The use of the Arabic language is commonly perceived to be an important identity marker for Jews writing and publishing in Arabic, as it often reflected a strongly felt connection to the society in which they lived and to Arab culture at large.[89] As a result, Jewish writings in Arabic and participation in Arab culture have often been understood as (historically attractive) examples of commonality and neighborly relations between Jews and Muslims or as manifestations of mediation between Jews and Arab society.[90]

Research on the intersections of Arabness and Jewishness in the modern Jewish experience has further sought to challenge the intra-Jewish Ashkenazi-Mizrahi dichotomy in Israel as well as the Arab-Jewish dichotomy in the context of Israel/Palestine.[91] Lital Levy has therefore underlined the need for historicization and disentangling the concept of the Arab Jew and its modern symbolic potential from the "hermeneutic circle of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."[92] Whatever the contemporary political significance of "Arab Jew," in Jewish texts from the Middle East published during the 1930s and 1940s, as we shall see in this book, we can detect an awareness of a growing gap between Jews of European descent—and their cultural dominance—and non-European Jews. Hence, the Ashkenazi-Mizrahi struggle, as well as the dissociation of Arabness and Jewishness, is not exclusive to the post-1948 period but already crystallized during the British mandate in Palestine.[93] Building on Jonathan Gribetz's work on Zionist-Arab encounters in late Ottoman Palestine, I argue that *al-Shams* and *al-Ālam al-Israili* should be analyzed as platforms within a politicized environment in which the intersections of Jewishness and Arabness often served ideological purposes.[94]

Considering the contemporary usages of the term "Arab Jew," a note on terminology is in place. Historically, Jews and non-Jews in the Middle East and North Africa had used the term "Arab Jew" in Arabic publications and in relation to the *nahda* and the rise of Arab nationalism. In this book, the term "Arab Jew" and related terms will be employed in accordance with how individuals writing for *al-Shams* and *al-Ālam al-Isrāīli* used and understood them. Though the meanings of the terms are not always clearly distinguishable and were in continual flux, some general remarks can be made. The term "Arab Jew" (*yahudi ʿarabi*) commonly referred to a Jew who spoke Arabic or had mastered literary Arabic. In a broader sense, it referred to Jews residing in countries where Arabic was the majority language. Paradoxically, while the term "Arab Jew" was also used as a self-descriptive term to emphasize Jewish Arabness, we find, in relation to Palestine and the Zionist project, the idea that the "Arab" and the "Jew" need to cooperate with each other and reach an equilibrium of mutual understanding, thus creating a political binary. The term "Eastern Jews" (*yahud al-sharq*, *al-yahud al-sharqiyyun*) generally referred to the Jews in the Middle East and North Africa and could also include the Jewish communities in Turkey. The term "Sephardim" (*sfaradim*) was used interchangeably with "Eastern Jews" and "Arab Jews" to indicate Jews from the Iberian Peninsula and their descendants following their expulsion from Spain in 1492, particularly in the former regions of the Ottoman Empire.[95]

An Entangled History of Jewish Intellectual Confrontations with Fascism

The writers discussed in this book operated within diverse intellectual environments that transcended the boundaries of nation-states. Because of the different scales of their journalistic and intellectual activities, the perspective of entangled history will serve here to grasp relations, exchanges, and intercrossings. Furthermore, I use the entangled public sphere as an analytical notion with

which to trace circulation of ideas and concepts and their transformation. While recognizing the limitations of the notion of the "global," this book's entangled history approach is imbued with insights drawn from global intellectual and conceptual history. The Arabic newspapers that these writers used as platform are the products of globalization as a historical process, marked by increasing interconnections linking different parts of the globe due to colonial expansion, the appearance of new means of transportation and communications, and the emergence of a world economic system. While these processes have led to greater homogeneity, they were accompanied by the hardening of national, linguistic, and ethnic boundaries.[96] Focusing attention on entanglements hence also implies the highlighting of limits, boundaries, and asymmetrical power relations.[97]

The orientations of entangled history and *histoire croisée* highlight interconnections yet refrain from adopting the assumptions of the "global" with its accompanying shortcomings.[98] In their 2006 article "Beyond Comparison: *Histoire Croisée* and the Challenge of Reflexivity," Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmerman present their approach of *histoire croisée* as an analytical toolbox for historians.[99] They connect this approach to the family of relational approaches, which includes comparative history and cultural transfer studies, and offer it as an alternative to the latter approaches, not as a substitute.[100] To practice *histoire croisée* does not entail an outright rejection of the nation-state framework; rather, it is considered a spatial frame that is entangled with multiple other (e.g., regional, transregional) frameworks. Central to *histoire croisée* is the notion of intersection or intercrossing. It serves to investigate relational configurations that are active, asymmetrical, and transformative. The notion of intercrossing is understood as dynamic in terms of relations, interactions, and circulation and as such is contrasted with the static framework of comparative studies and transfer studies. Whereas the former rests on predefined units, the latter uses a fixed framework of departure and arrival. Moreover, transfer studies focuses on introduction, transmission, and reception and does not take into account reciprocity and multidirectionality.[101]

Werner and Zimmerman propose adjusting the scales of analysis to the level of the object of study, rather than making scale solely a matter of theoretical choice. As Zimmerman describes it, the scales of time and place are not external and preexisting but rather "inhere in the actors under study."[102] By following the objects and protagonists, entangled history thus gives primacy to agency, while not ignoring the larger structures that exert an impact on action. Regarding the intercrossings intrinsic to the object, Werner and Zimmerman emphasize the nonlinearity of influence. They are concerned with how all parties involved in an intercrossing are affected, though it is emphasized that these transformations often occur asymmetrically, that is, not all parties are affected to the same extent.[103] As such, they are interested in the consequences of intercrossings and particularly the analysis of change through transformation, resistance, and modification.[104] Key to the "challenge of reflexivity" for the historian, in Werner and Zimmerman's view, is the historicization of categories and the historical trajectories of terminology and concepts.[105]

In light of the different types of intercrossings discussed by Werner and Zimmerman, this book recognizes various forms of entanglement. First, the intercrossing of points of view implies that the present entangled history brings *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* into dialogue with new fields and complicating the national paradigm: it shows points of convergence between Jewish and Arab intellectual histories; it embeds Jewish debates in Arabic within the history of the reception of and discussion on Fascism and Nazism in the Middle East; and, in analyzing these debates, it provides insight into the global circulation of ideas and concepts and their transformation. Second, the notion of entangled loyalties brings to the fore the intercrossing intrinsic to the object of study. The editors and contributors involved with *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* inhabited various worlds—Jewish, Arab, Eastern, Egyptian, Lebanese, and Syrian among them; they often sought to reconcile Arab nationalism and Zionism and engaged in an ongoing dialogue with notions of Europe, Jewish life in the West, and the colonial presence of Britain and France in the Middle East. Third, the intercrossing of scales refers to the combination of micro and macro levels. The macro level in this book concerns above all the international political context: the rise of Fascism and Nazism, Allied-Axis rivalries in the Middle East, Zionism, and anti-colonial nationalism, all impacting the lives of the diverse Jewish communities in the Middle East, creating new bonds, and erecting boundaries and asymmetries. The macro level further entails the genealogies of ideas and concepts and their circulation. This book aims to shed light on ideas as expressed on the micro level as well as how macro forces interact with their articulation.

As I will argue in this book, discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and anti-semitism in the Middle East were deeply entangled with reorientations of self, community, society, nation, and religion in the post-Ottoman semicolonial nation-states and mandates. The globalizing concepts of race, civilization, and religion were central vehicles of these debates. The confrontation with Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism thus nourished existing debates on civilization and the related concepts and tropes of decline and revival. This book focuses on three conceptual themes: the popularization and mobilization of the concept of Semitism in response to antisemitism; the idea and discourse of the Jewish contribution to civilization; and discussions of Fascism and Nazism in relation to religion and sectarianism. The following chapters will demonstrate not only the regional and transregional circulation of these concepts but also their appropriation and transformation by Jewish writers of Arabic, thus contributing to their globalization. The concepts and ideas centralized in this book further reveal a complex interplay between (orientalist) scholarship in and between Europe and the Middle East as well as between the writings of scholarship and those of the press. This study therefore underlines the multidirectionality of intellectual encounters and ideas evident in the works of Jewish *nahda* writers. This was neither a "movement" from Europe to the Middle East nor a top-down process involving the dissemination and popularization of scholarly ideas. While many intellectuals affirmed the "universal"—though particularly indebted to Europe—project of modernity and borrowed many of its colonial

hierarchies and categories, they fashioned this modernity according to their own agendas.

By considering the transformation of ideas and concepts under the impact of globalization, this book contributes to current discussions on the relation between intercrossings and conceptual change that take place within global conceptual history as a subfield of global intellectual history.[106] Historians of the *nahda* have applied Reinhart Koselleck's notion of Sattelzeit (saddle period) to describe the profound linguistic and semantic changes to the Arabic language that occurred during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[107] These transformations were the outcome of extensive language debates and reforms, efforts at modernizing the Arabic language, and the introduction of foreign political, social, and scientific vocabulary, all phenomena that were inextricably tied to the colonial encounter. The result of the Arabic saddle period was not the stabilization of new concepts but rather, during the first half of the twentieth century, a period of semantic and terminological flexibility.[108] More broadly, global conceptual historians have termed the period 1860–1940 a "Near Eastern and Asian saddle period".[109]

The concepts of civilization, race, and religion and its subsets are key examples of the process of conceptual globalization and transformation during the nineteenth century. Due to imperialism and new technologies of communication and transportation, concepts underwent a process of globalization through their circulation across national boundaries.[110] To understand this process, one must look not only at translation, reception, and appropriation, but also "how and why ideas travelled the world at specific moments."[111] The circulation and transformation of concepts were often mediated and involved popularization by mediating writers, meaning that certain concepts were more recognizable in their popularized form or reproduction than in their original expression. Particularization as a process is thus inherent in globalization, which is to say that when a concept circulates globally, it acquires multiple manifestations in different contexts. The resonance of a concept and its assimilation into diverse discursive fields are what make the recognition of this regularity and the need to explain it meaningful.[112]

As will be argued in this book, discussions on Fascism in the Arabic Jewish press were embedded within the East-West dialectics of the *nahda* and its debates on the relation between "Eastern" and "Western" civilizations. In *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, antisemitism was debated in relation to debates and critiques on the concept of race in the Middle East, which was part of civilizational thinking. As Marwa Elshakry has shown, discussions on race had been taking place since the late nineteenth century in Arabic newspapers and journals: there the works of Darwin and Spencer were translated and discussed in relation to the idea of civilization and the progress of cultural, religious, and political communities in the Arab world.[113] The work of Spencer in particular, a form of popularized Darwinism that emphasized biological self-responsibility, became popular outside Europe and in anti-colonial movements.[114] Omnia El Shakry has shown that, though not often acknowledged, race was an important concept in the various forms and expressions of Egyptian nationalism. Not limited to biology, it was voiced in various, albeit ambiguous, terms.[115]

In considering the writings of the editors of and contributors to *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, this book seeks to offer novel understandings of the genealogies of civilization, race, and religion by analyzing how these concepts were invested with new meanings within the global confrontation with Fascism and Nazism. In my analysis of the use of these concepts in the discussions of Jewish writers of Arabic, much emphasis will be placed on the intellectual, social, and political contexts that can enhance our understanding of their meaning and impact. Yet it is also relevant to examine how we can account for the centrality of the conceptual themes of civilization and culture, race and ethnicity, and religion and sectarianism, in the texts under scrutiny. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of this book, which are ordered thematically and conceptually, will thus also provide an unavoidably incomplete and generalizing discussion of the genealogies of these concepts and their globalization, before I proceed to analyze their particularization and transformation.

The writers who used *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili* as platforms operated within intellectual environments that did not neatly correspond to the borders of nation-states. Its writers were at once engaged with a regional network of Jewish writers and with Arab (Muslim and Christian) intellectuals, and they encountered, cited, and translated the works of various intellectuals, activists and politicians in and beyond the region. Their intellectual and journalistic activities thus encompassed overlapping linguistic, national, and transregional public spheres.[116] In the Middle East, the rise of the printing press in the nineteenth century played a defining role in the formation of the public sphere and civil society and as an agent of social change and self-formation.[117] As stressed by both Dyala Hamzah and Ami Ayalon, neither the press nor the public spheres in the post-Ottoman Arab world would align with the borders of the emerging nation-states. Hamzah therefore locates the public sphere in a transregional framework, between empire and colony.[118]

This book uses the entangled public sphere as analytical notion with which to trace transregional encounters, the circulation of ideas, and their transformation. Its focus is not on paradigmatic or canonical figures but mainly on Jewish popular writers and journalists who belonged to the expanding, educated middle strata of society. From a historiographical perspective, these writers have regularly fallen outside the established "canons" of both modern "Arab" and "Jewish" thought.[119] The attention does not merely shift to the popularization of elitist ideas; these journalists and non-elitist writers are shown taking an active part in the transformation and formation of these ideas themselves, because newspapers facilitated a continual interaction between prominent or elitist intellectuals and popular audiences.

By focusing on the role of the educated middle strata of society in the transformation and formation of ideas, I am informed by the scholarship on the social and cultural category of the *effendi* (pl. *effendiyya*).[120] Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski have defined the Egyptian *effendiyya* as the embodiment of modern Egypt, a broad and multifaceted cohort consisting of the expanding, (Western) educated middle strata of society during the 1930s. They further emphasize their mediating role between the elites and popular reading audiences.

Lucie Ryzova proposes that we understand the *effendiyya* as the middle strata of Egyptian society that actively made claims to be modern.[121] The *effendiyya* are not constitutive members of a socioeconomic middle class with empirical boundaries but rather a cultural construction and social category recognizable by various signs, shared values, and outward appearances—including a level of (Western) education, employment, and the wearing of the Western suit and the *tarbush*, a red Fez.[122] As those without a modern education also claimed "*effendi*-hood," and both poor and rich *effendiyya* existed, it represents a social cultural position in the middle, enabling the *effendi* to willingly navigate between the elite and the poor, between tradition and modernity.[123] The *effendiyya* placed themselves between the Westernized elites whom they criticized for their corruption, their imitative tendencies, and lack of authenticity (and whom they hoped to reform) and the lower and poor classes, which needed to be civilized and modernized.

The *effendiyya* were not exclusively bound to the Egyptian nation-state but comprised in fact a regional phenomenon.[124] As the next chapter will demonstrate, the writers for *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* express an *effendi* worldview that appears from their cultural reformist views and their self-image as the bearers of both tradition and modernity. The editors and writers of both newspapers were often amateur historians, philologists, and translators who made their livings in various other professions alongside their work as journalists and writers, including as teachers, doctors, and lawyers. They can be said to have belonged to the expanding group of *effendiyya* that was distinct from the elite intellectuals. Although the *effendiyya* as a cultural construct and culture is thus a useful way to grasp the social and cultural position—and ambitions—of the writers considered in this book, it is important to acknowledge that the dominant focus on masculinity and the male production of female types in the scholarship on the *effendiyya* has not fully captured female participation in, and production and consumption of, *effendi* culture.[125]

Al-Shams and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* provide windows onto the entangled intellectual worlds of its editors and contributors whose breadth exceeds the national framework that has been commonly applied to the modern history of Jews in the Middle East. This book focuses on the following question: How did *al-Shams*'s and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s editors and contributors view Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism from 1933 to 1948? To answer this question, I will closely examine the contents of *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* in addition to thematically related scholarly and popular historical works composed by its writers. Fascism and Nazism should be seen, as will be argued in the remaining chapters of this book, as providing important incentives for Jewish reorientations of their positions and identities in terms of ethnicity and race, culture and civilization, and religion and sectarianism.

Through which transnational journalistic and scholarly networks did the writers involved with *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* acquire and discuss their knowledge of Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism? How did these writers relate Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism to the positions and identities of Jews in the emerging Arab nation-states within the colonial realm of Britain and France in the

Middle East? How did the views of these writers evolve in the period from 1933 to 1948, and was there a noticeable change in their emphasis on Jewish integration and Jewish and Arab commonalities? In answering these questions, this book contributes to the expanding scholarship on intellectual debates in the Arab world during the 1930s and 1940s on Fascism and Nazism by adding an account of the perspectives taken by Jews in Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria. It also responds to the need for more comparative and integrative scholarship by introducing the approach of entangled history within this field.

Chapter 2 introduces and contextualizes the main sources addressed in this study: the newspapers *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*. It will provide the historical background to Jewish journalism written in Arabic from the nineteenth century onward and its connection to the reform and revival debates of the *nahda*. First, I will discuss the scholarly definitions of, and approaches toward, the *nahda*, and propose that we conceptualize the *nahda* as at once a range of civilizational debates on reform and revival and a central term in Arabic scholarship and journalism. I will then give a brief historical overview of Jewish participation in Arabic journalism as well as the promotion of Zionism in Arabic in the Middle East. This is followed by an analysis of *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, their editors, main contributors, and contents, with a particular focus on how the newspapers reflected the debates of the *nahda* and how their editors imbued these debates with new meaning.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 present an analysis of the views of *al-Shams*'s and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s editors and writers on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism. For heuristic purposes, these chapters have been ordered according to three conceptual themes: ethnicity and race, culture and civilization, and religion and sectarianism. In the analyzed texts, however, these concepts often overlapped and were interconnected. The chapters do not follow a chronological order, yet each individual chapter by and large adheres to an internal chronology. Thus, in every chapter, due attention will be paid to the development of ideas and concepts over time.

Chapter 3 focuses on the conceptual theme of ethnicity and race by analyzing how Semitism as a linguistic and ethno-racial construct was mobilized in opposition to antisemitism. An important strand here is the figure of Israel Wolfensohn and his connection with *al-Shams*. How, I ask, did *al-Shams*'s contributors come to define themselves and their communities as Semites, both in opposition to Nazi antisemitism and in other contexts? To answer this question, the chapter considers transregional intellectual encounters and circulation of ideas to explain the popularity of this concept and hence contributes to our understanding of the global conceptual history of Semitism.

Chapter 4 discusses the Arabic translation by Alfred Yallouz and Mansour Wahba, both Egyptian Jews, of the British historian Cecil Roth's work *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization*. This translation, published as a serial in *al-Shams* during the early 1940s, serves as a point of departure for an examination of Nazism's broader impact on the assessment of the concepts of civilization and culture in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*. The Jewish contribution to civilization has been

described in previous scholarship as a Western idea and as a discourse upheld within the contexts of Jewish emancipation as well as antisemitism. The entangled approach allows this idea to be reconsidered, via translation as intercrossing, as a globalizing discourse that is both part of the history of antisemitism and the civilizational discourse of the *nahda*.

Chapter 5 presents a chronological analysis of reports and discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* from 1933 to 1948, with a focus on its editors in chief Saad Malki and Moise Adjami. It is particularly concerned with the question of how the newspaper editorials developed over the course of this period. Building on the proposition of Chapter 3 concerning the ambivalence of the concept of race, it sets out to discuss debates in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* on Nazi prejudice and hostility toward Jews. Here the authors navigated between understandings of anti-Judaism and antisemitism; they also upheld the idea that Fascism and Nazism stood in opposition to the monotheistic traditions of the East, an idea commonly voiced among intellectuals in the Arab world. Not only are Christians in Germany persistently presented as victims of Nazism, but the incompatibility of Nazism and Islam is also made a central theme. This chapter's final parts will shift the focus to the ideological implications of these ideas, examining how Fascism and Nazism were presented as manifestations of Europe's colonial history and its sectarian governance.

Chapter 2

Middle Eastern Jewish Intellectuals in the Age of Reform

Jews, Arabization, and the Nahda *in the Middle East*

> Youth of the East, the sun has risen and awakened you from your deep sleep. The West has preceded you and is many stages ahead of you. It has boosted its civilization, which has become a model of progress. While still in your sleep, you have obscured the fact that your forefathers and ancestors have laid the foundation of the civilization that spread to the West, which has risen and is now shining its light after it was lost in the darkness of ignorance. Your forefathers have left the great pyramids and other accomplishments of the Pharaohs, such as mummification. These achievements demonstrate their capability and their firm establishment in the world and civilization.[1]

Such begins "The sun has risen," an address to the Jewish youth published on the front page of the first issue of *al-Shams* in September 1934, written by the Egyptian Jewish writer Albert Masliah. The text is replete with elements from the civilizational lexicon of the *nahda* and its tropes. Masliah uses the metaphors of sleep and awakening, representing conditions of activity and inactivity in the process of civilization. He expresses the notion that civilization has been transported from East to West, with the East entitled to reclaim its rightful place in the civilized world as well as claim its share in the current rise of the West. He further relies on past civilizations, Pharaonic civilization in particular, as proof of civilizational capability in the present. The celebration of the Jewish presence in Pharaonic Egypt may stand in tension with Jewish tradition, but for Masliah, this strand of the Jewish past was perfectly in line with the nationalist and *nahdawi* vogue of his time.

This chapter's premise is that journalism and literature by Jews in Arabic from the nineteenth century onward should be studied within the context of the reform and revival debates of the *nahda* (often translated as Arab renaissance or Arab awakening). The *nahda* can be defined and conceptualized in different ways: as a historical period, a debate, an epistemology, and a central term. The *nahda* is commonly understood as a period of major cultural, linguistic, and political

innovation and transformation starting in the Arab regions of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth century, an era in which scholars trace the emergence of modern Arab subjectivity.[2] The *nahda* is intrinsically related to the colonial encounter and denotes a project of "awakening" that accompanied an awareness of a presumed state of decline in the face of European imperialism.[3] The *nahda* as a concept spans a cumulative lexicon, which is centered on the notions of reform and revival and civility and backwardness. This lexicon creates an epistemology that forms the basis for aspirational reforms.[4]

The term *nahda* can be translated as "awakening" or "renaissance"; the verb *nahada* means "to rise" or "to get up." It only emerged as a popular term in journalism and in literary texts of the late nineteenth century, entering the mainstream in the 1890s through Jurji Zaydan's writings in his widely circulating Arabic journal *al-Hilal*.[5] The term's popularization, indeed its transformation into a central term, also meant that it was invested with multiple meanings.[6] The *nahda* manifested itself and was constituted in a plethora of newspapers and journals facilitated by the expansion of governmental and private printing presses as well as in new literary genres, educational reforms, and debates on language reform and translation. It was acted out in salons, social organizations, and activist movements.[7]

Here I define the *nahda*, following Kassab, as consisting of a range of debates, centered on the notions of reform and revival.[8] Major themes characterized these debates: the rise and fall of civilizations, political justice, critique of despotism, science, and religion in relation to modernity.[9] In addition, I approach the *nahda* as a central term within public debates as well as in journalism and scholarly texts. I argue that only if we understand the *nahda* both as a term and as made up of debates can we see what the *nahda* has implied in different contexts and for various individuals, including intellectuals who identified as Jews.

The *nahda* has long been associated primarily with a liberal and nationalist outlook in the Arab world, its intellectual centers of Cairo and Beirut, and mainly with its Christian and Muslim protagonists.[10] This conception, however, is too narrow. The *nahda* was expressed and produced by various actors—by foundational, canonical authors as well as lesser-known writers and popularizers—in diverse contexts.[11] Jewish intellectuals, who had hitherto been largely ignored or overlooked in histories of the *nahda* and its "canonical" actors, were involved in the *nahda* in various ways: by producing journalism and literature in Arabic, through their work as translators, and via calls for cultural and religious reform and revival.[12] The conceptualization of the *nahda* as both a range of debates and a central term makes it less relevant whether Jews were participants in the *nahda* and in a broader sense participants in, or parts of, Arab culture. Attention shifts away from identity politics and toward the multitude of ideas within the *nahda* debates, allowing us to uncover and explore the various meanings that were invested in these debates by Jewish authors.

To trace the meanings of the term *nahda*, this chapter traces how, and within which contexts, the term and idea of *nahda* were used in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*. It is part of my argument that discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism in Europe were embedded in the debates and project of the *nahda*

and its accompanying lexicon as well as specific binaries and rise-and-decline narratives. The term *nahda*, in the cultural discourses of *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, generally implied the idea, adhered to by their editors and contributors, of a regional cultural and literary revival. Yet, as will be argued later, *nahda* also implied that Zionism encompassed a Renaissance in the East, a notion central to Zionist thought and British propaganda discourse. This usage of the term *nahda* does not so much imply the participation of Jews in the *nahda* as a distinct movement or period, but rather points to the term's popularity, integration into the mainstream, and semantic flexibility.

Masliah's address to the Jewish youth at the start of this chapter shows that he believed in an ontological difference between East and West, which were primary categories in reformist and civilizational discourse. As we will see in this chapter, the editors and contributors of *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* often depicted the Jews in the East as backward, ignorant of their own heritage. This diagnosis is evidence of the hierarchy of civilizations appropriated and upheld by these writers. Arab intellectuals, starting in the nineteenth century, had begun to conceptualize their selfhood in terms of their otherness to Europe. *Nahda* intellectuals simultaneously accepted the doctrine of progress and sought to maintain tradition and authenticity in a dual attempt to modernize and resist European hegemony.[13] The interests of Arab reformers in Europe and its history and success, Sheehi argues, "drew them into a Hegelian dialogue with the West in which they were bound to find their own culture lacking in the universal spectrum of historical, social and culture progress."[14]

Various *nahda* intellectuals appropriated orientalist rise-and-decline narratives on Arab and Islamic history in which the Abbasid period was celebrated as a golden age of science and translation, followed by a long period of Ottoman ("Turkish") decadence and decline.[15] A similar rise-and-fall narrative existed on the "Oriental Jews" in the modern Middle East and North Africa.[16] In Jewish *nahda* debates, the claim that Jews in the East were in a state of backwardness and ignorance and now found themselves in need of cultural revival existed in tandem with a pride in Jewish heritage, voiced through admiration for "Golden Ages" of Jewish life in Abbasid Baghdad and *al-Andalus* and the "leitmotif" that Europeans had borrowed from Jews in the Arab-Islamic world.[17]

For *nahda* intellectuals who turned to the past as a means to accomplish revival, the study and production of orientalist scholarship were a means to access the past glories of the Arab and Islamic world. Scholars and intellectuals in the Middle East extensively engaged with, criticized, adapted, and produced orientalist scholarship.[18] Even as orientalism was perceived and criticized as a fundamental component of colonialism, as Heschel and Ryad denote, it also served as a "tool for negotiating various streams of modernity and for carrying out anti-colonial revolt."[19] The reliance of the region's rising nationalist movements on orientalism and archaeology serves as one example of how orientalism was both criticized and deployed. The European hegemony over the field spanning orientalist scholarship, archaeology, and manuscript collections was not lost on Jewish intellectuals in the Middle East; they, after all, were striving for Jewish revival in the region partly

through the (re)discovery and appreciation of their national and regional heritage. Both the editor of *al-Shams*, Saad Malki, and the editors of *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, Selim Mann and Moise Adjami, provided a platform for orientalist scholars and scholarship on Arab history, the Semitic languages, and Islam. The editors closely followed the developments at the Hebrew University and its School of Oriental Studies in Jerusalem and intellectuals loyal to the idea of Zionism as a cultural revival, its regional integration, and cooperation between Arabs and Jews. Their Zionist sympathies and network of Zionist intellectuals in the Middle East were also inextricably connected to orientalism, due to Zionism's indebtedness to orientalist tropes and its revisionist take on the European Jewish experience.[20]

Because the *nahda* debates, largely evolving as they did in newspapers and magazines, had been part of the burgeoning field of Arabic print culture since the late nineteenth century, *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili* should be situated within the histories both of journalism in the Middle East and of Jewish and Zionist publications in Arabic since the beginning of the twentieth century. Jewish newspapers in Arabic, along with Jewish writings in Arabic more broadly, were the publications of a minority. Jews in the post-Ottoman Middle East came from various backgrounds and spoke a variety of languages. It is important to acknowledge the heterogeneity of Jewish life in the region while focusing, as the present book does, on the relatively small number of Jews in Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria who were involved in Arabic publishing and participated in the intellectual debates of the *nahda*.

Jews began writing journalism in Arabic just as the nongovernmental Arabic press started to develop in the 1860s and 1870s, contributing to mainstream Arabic newspapers owned by Muslims and by Christians.[21] There were also dozens of newly established Jewish newspapers, founded especially from around the turn of the twentieth century onward, but these publications, with their often-small readerships, existed only for a limited time.[22] Besides the newspaper *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, we find only sporadic examples of Jewish intellectual activity in the realm of Arabic letters in Lebanon and Syria, although there circulated many Jewish newspapers and journals, published in foreign (mostly European) languages as well as in Hebrew and Judeo-Arabic.[23] The activities of Jews in Arabic journalism during the first half of the twentieth century were most significant in Iraq, closely followed by Egypt. Iraqi Jewish intellectuals were at the forefront of Iraqi print culture via the publication of Arabic literature and numerous journals.[24]

Reflecting the heterogeneity and multilingualism of the Jewish population, the Jewish press in Egypt was diverse linguistically and in terms of its political orientation. Though only a minority of the Egyptian Jewish population mastered literary Arabic, twenty-two of the more than seventy Jewish newspapers and periodicals published in Egypt from 1877 to 1948 were in Arabic.[25] Notably, the first Jewish newspaper in Arabic was named *Nahdat Isra'il* (The Jewish Renaissance).[26] Others were published in French, Italian, Greek, Hebrew, Judeo-Arabic, and Yiddish. Following the establishment of a Zionist office in Cairo in 1897 and the emergence of a Hebrew press, several Zionist papers were founded, such as *Misrayim* (1904), written in Arabic and printed in Hebrew letters.[27] The trilingual

Jewish newspaper *Isra'il* (to be discussed later) and its Arabic successor *al-Shams* illustrate the cultural and political pluralism displayed in the Egyptian press during the 1930s, a time when the press functioned substantially independent of state control and the number of writers and journalists grew significantly.[28] During the latter half of the 1930s, after the Arabic edition of *Isra'il* was shuttered, *al-Shams* was the only Egyptian Jewish newspaper published in Arabic and remained so until the founding of the Karaite newspaper *al-Kalim* (1945–57).

Al-Shams and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* echo the debates on the importance of the Arabic language among a network of Sephardic Zionist intellectuals and journalists in Palestine during the last years of the Ottoman Empire. Recent scholarship on Jews in late Ottoman Palestine has shown that various Zionist intellectuals and activists held that the best way for the Zionist project to develop was through the expression of loyalty to the Ottoman Empire, and for this reason Jews in the Ottoman Empire were called to support Zionism within an Ottoman civic framework.[29] The turn to Arabic among Zionist activists occurred in the wake of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, which resulted in press liberalization, and in the midst of opposition to a new wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine. Sephardic Zionist intellectuals repeatedly called for the founding of Arabic-language Jewish newspapers, perceived to be a good medium to promote Arab-Jewish cooperation and to respond to opposition to Zionism in the Arabic press.[30] The idea of promoting Zionism in the Arabic public sphere materialized through translations of Arabic newspaper content, the financing of newspapers favorable to Zionism, contributions of pro-Zionist content to the Arabic press, and the founding of Arabic-language Zionist newspapers.

The Sephardic journalists Nissim Malul (1892–1959) and Shimon Moyal (1866–1915) and his wife Esther Azhari Moyal (1874–1948) can be seen as representatives of the trend in which Zionists expressed their loyalty to Ottomanism and emphasized Arab-Jewish cooperation. In 1911 Malul had established a short-lived Zionist newspaper in Arabic, *al-Salam*, and later promoted Zionism in the Egyptian mainstream press, mainly in the Egyptian newspapers *al-Muqattam* and *al-Ahram*.[31] Pro-Zionist articles in these newspapers were met with well-informed critical responses. Prominent Arab writers, including Shakib Arslan and 'Isa al-'Isa, the editor of the newspaper *Filastin*, refuted Malul's claim that Zionism produced positive effects for Palestine, bringing in capital and creating jobs for the indigenous population.[32]

The Moyals published the newspaper *Sawt al-'Uthmaniyya* (The Voice of Ottomanism, 1913), promoting Ottomanism and Zionism and the idea of a shared homeland in Palestine within an Ottoman civic framework. The Moyals also monitored attacks on Zionism in the Arabic press.[33] Following the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War and the establishment of the French and British mandates, this intellectual trend was transformed: Ottomanism yielded to Arabism, in which Arab culture and nationalism were perceived as the way forward for Jews and the Zionist project within the new colonial order that had now been consolidated in the Middle East.[34] Various Sephardic Zionist intellectuals in post-Ottoman Palestine perceived themselves to be intermediaries

between Zionism and the Arab world and raised political, social, and cultural issues that broadly related to improved positions for Sephardic and "Oriental" Jews in Zionist institutions and to Arab-Jewish relations.[35]

Al-Shams*: A Jewish* Nahda *in Cairo*

In September 1934, the first issue of the Egyptian Jewish Arabic-language newspaper *al-Shams* rolled off the press in the busy Muski quarter in Cairo, closely bordering the old Jewish quarter known as the *Harat al-Yahud*. On its front page, Egyptian Jewish writers congratulated the editor and proclaimed that the newspaper was a bright light on the horizon for Egyptian Jews and boded auspiciously for their participation in Egyptian and Arab culture.[36] *Al-Shams* was printed and edited by Sa'd (Sa'diyya) Ya'qub Malki (1898–1988) (Figure 1).[37] Born in the Jewish quarter in Cairo, Malki had been educated in Jewish communal schools and had subsequently studied law at the Egyptian University.[38] In 1926, he married Flore Candiotti.[39] He worked as the director of Les Ecoles Green in the Jewish quarter.[40] Before his founding of *al-Shams*, he had edited the Arabic edition of *Isra'il*, a trilingual (French, Hebrew, and Arabic) Zionist newspaper owned by the couple Albert Mosseri (1867–1933) and Mathilde Mosseri (1894–1981).[41] The editions had different editors and varied in audience and editorial orientation.[42] Following the suspension of both the Hebrew and Arabic editions, in 1923 and 1933 respectively, Malki established his own weekly Arabic-language Jewish newspaper (Figure 2).[43]

In *al-Shams*, he called for the Egyptianization (*tamsir*) of the Jewish community and stressed Jewish commitment to Egypt and to Arab and Jewish culture alike. The goal of the newspaper, Malki wrote on the front page of the first issue, where he also pledged loyalty to Egyptian King Fu'ad, was to fight corruption and tyranny and to reform society. Such reforms, Malki wrote, were to be concerned with "our beloved Egypt" in particular, as Egyptian Jews would serve to improve Jewish institutions within the community, and the "rising East" in general.[44] Malki's ideological outlooks regarding Egyptianization and Zionism were merged through a repeated positioning of Jews conspicuously in the course of Egyptian history and in the Egyptian public sphere as well as in the historical-cultural space of the "Arab East," which also encompassed Palestine. He envisioned a shared homeland in Palestine (*watan mushtarak*) that would be rooted in cooperation and coexistence between Arabs and Jews, an idea encapsulated in the terms "Eastern" or "Semitic" brothers. Though Malki did not explicitly support political Zionism, he often referred to Zionist leaders in news articles and translated their speeches and writings. The first issue of *al-Shams* included an article by the Zionist leader Nahum Goldmann (1895–1982), most likely a transcript of the latter's speech during the World Jewish Conference in Geneva in August 1934, in which he had expressed his concern about antisemitism in Germany and Eastern Europe and had called for a boycott of German products.[45]

Shortly after Malki founded *al-Shams*, he and several other Jewish journalists and writers—all Egyptian patriots—founded, with the support of the Jewish community president and the chief rabbi, a youth club in the *Harat al-Yahud*: Jam'iyyat al-Shubban al-Yahud al-Misriyyin (The Association of Egyptian Jewish Youth). Their slogan was "Fatherland, Faith, Culture."[46] Similar groups existed for Muslim and Christian youth at the time, illustrating the growing prominence of Egyptian youth and the rise of politically engaged student movements during the 1930s.[47] The *jam'iyya* and *al-Shams* shared similar aims: to "Egyptianize" and integrate the fragmented Jewish community by promoting Arabic language and culture as agents of national unity. In addition, the *jam'iyya* was meant to tackle lacks in education and in knowledge of Arabic as well as to fight unemployment and poverty among Jewish youth, especially in the Jewish quarter. The youth group organized lectures and meetings on a wide range of topics related to the Jewish community and Jewish history. *Al-Shams* reported on the youth club's activities in its community news section. Despite its efforts to engage Egyptian Jewish youth, the *jam'iyya* was a limited endeavor, having in the early 1940s approximately fifty members.[48]

Alongside the rise of youth movements during the interwar years, a generation of Egyptian intellectuals and reformists complemented their efforts with—often short-lived—social organizations. Several writers for *al-Shams* were also involved in the Société d'Études Historiques Juives d'Égypte, founded in 1925.[49] Among them was the writer and translator Alfred Yallouz (1898–?), who served both as the secretary of the Société and as the president of the youth club, which used *al-Shams* as a platform.[50] The historical society seems to have been inspired by the Jewish Historical Society of England, headed by the British-Jewish historian Cecil Roth. Several articles in *al-Shams* on this British organization praised the various Jewish institutes in England and compared the situation there to that of the Jews in Egypt, who lacked local cultural and academic institutions.[51] Though the Société was Francophone, its members addressed Egyptian and Middle Eastern Jewish history and culture in their own published works and via translations into Arabic. *Al-Shams* reported on the society's activities as well as its stagnation and subsequent attempts to revive it during the 1940s.[52]

Al-Shams's primary audience was the minority of Egypt's Jewish population who had mastered literary Arabic.[53] The majority of Egypt's Jewish population, officially numbering 62,953 according to the 1937 census, had been educated in French, English, and Italian.[54] For many Egyptian Jewish polyglots, language was a marker of social status and class, and French often signified a modern identity.[55] Given the relatively small number of Jews versed in literary Arabic, *al-Shams*'s call for Arabization likely reached only a limited audience in Egypt. Among the Arabic-speaking parts of the Jewish community, there were, besides the indigenous Jewish population and an intellectual, multilingual elite, a group of middle-class Jewish businessmen.[56] The business section of *al-Shams* (which contained advertisements for major companies and brands, Egypt and foreign alike) suggests that the newspaper's readership included Jewish businessmen from the expanding Egyptian middle class.

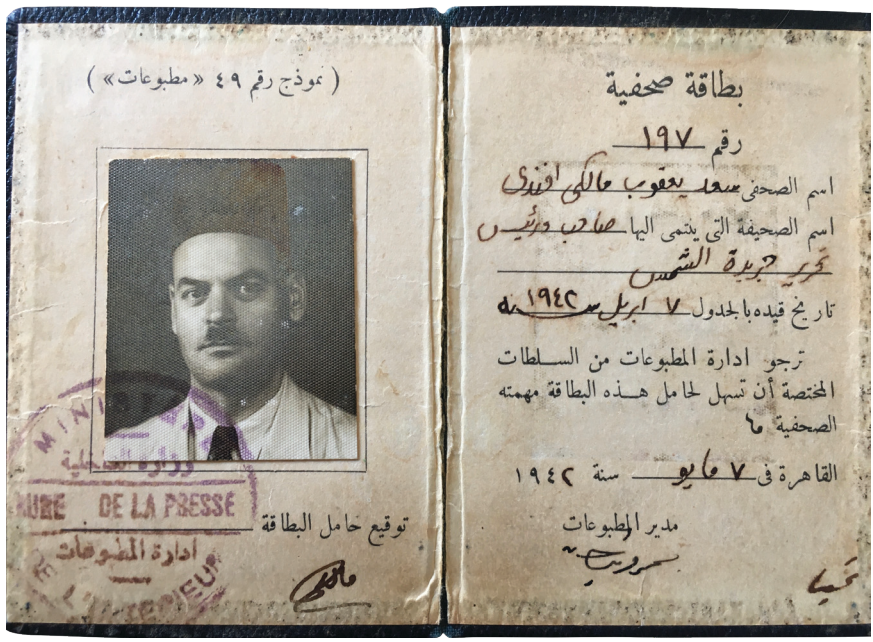

Figure 1 Saad Malki's Egyptian press card, issued in Cairo on May 7, 1942. Photograph by the author.
Source: Family of Saad Malki.

Victor Nahmias has estimated that approximately 1,500–2,200 copies of *al-Shams* were printed every Friday for distribution within the Jewish community and to several official institutions in Egypt and abroad.[57] Zionist reports from the 1940s reveal that there were Jewish subscribers in Baghdad as well.[58] The number of readers must have been significantly higher than the amount of printed copies, due to the continuing practice of public, communal, and collective reading, despite increasing literacy rates.[59] By publishing a Jewish weekly in Arabic and promoting interreligious solidarity, Malki was hoping to reach out both to Jewish and to non-Jewish readers. *Al-Shams* found its way to Muslim and Christian readers, but it is unlikely that they comprised a significant part of the readership. Though most of its contributors and readers were Jews from Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon, *al-Shams* also had Muslim and Christian readers and contributors, such as the Muslim writer ʿAbd al-ʿAzim Ahmad from Alexandria, who edited a section on Egyptian cinema during the 1930s.[60]

Despite the regional orientation of Saad Malki's political and cultural outlook, he primarily addressed the Egyptian Jewish community, in particular the Sephardic Rabbinite community. *Al-Shams* contained annual reports by the Sephardic community council, reported on public appearances by Egyptian and Middle Eastern Chief Rabbis and discussed current community issues such as education, care for the poor, marriage, health services, and religious practice. Sephardic

religious leaders from Egypt and Palestine often contributed to the newspaper by submitting articles or readers' letters. The newspaper may have focused on the Sephardic Jewish community, but Malki's ambition, as part of his Egyptianization program, was to unite the heterogeneous Egyptian Jewish population, comprising Sephardic, Ashkenazic, and Karaite communities.[61]

The poetry of the Egyptian Karaite Murad Farag (1866–1956) occupied a central place on the pages of *al-Shams*. Farag was a lawyer, writer, poet, and philologist who published numerous books and poetry collections in Arabic, Hebrew, and French. He had edited the Karaite communal newspaper *al-Tahdhib* (Edification, 1901–3) and later wrote for *Isra'il, al-Shams,* the Karaite newspaper *al-Kalim* (The Spokesman, 1945–57) as well as for leading Egyptian print media.[62] In his younger years, he had worked as a lawyer in the Karaite court in Cairo.[63] Encouraging closer relations between the Rabbinate and Karaite communities in Egypt, he reflected on this issue in his writings for *al-Shams* and later *al-Kalim.*[64] For Farag, whose patriotic poetry and short articles appeared in almost every issue of *al-Shams* and who had participated in the drafting of the Egyptian constitution of 1923, the national identity of Egyptian Jews was inherently bound up with Judaism and with the territory of Egypt. Moreover, he sought to fuse Egyptian nationalism with Zionism.[65]

The idea of Egyptianization was intrinsically related to the fact that many Jews in Egypt were at the time foreign nationals or stateless. The Jewish population in Egypt had grown substantially since the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1850 approximately 6,500 Jews resided in Egypt.[66] In the decades that followed, Jewish immigrants from Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, many of them lured by Egypt's expanding industrial sector and cotton industry, settled in Egypt's main cities and in the countryside.[67] Many Palestinian Jews, including several thousand Jaffa residents who were settled in Alexandria, moved to Egypt after being expelled by the Ottoman authorities from 1914 to 1918.[68] The newcomers also included European Jewish immigrants escaping persecutions and pogroms. During the 1940s, thousands of European refugees entered Egypt, among them many Jews.[69] With the arrival of new immigrants and European refugees during the Second World War the number of Jews in Egypt increased to an estimated 75,000–80,000.[70]

The Egyptian constitution of 1923 had granted equal rights to all Egyptians without regard to ethnicity, language, or religion. A secular-nationalist division between majority and minority communities replaced the previous hierarchical order of religious communities.[71] Egyptian Jews, heretofore a protected minority, were now citizens with religious and social rights.[72] The 1929 Nationality Law enabled foreigners to apply for Egyptian citizenship, although nationality would only become an issue for Egyptian Jews in the context of the Egyptianization of the economy in the late 1940s. Foreign nationals benefitted from the Ottoman system of extraterritorial jurisdiction, the Capitulations (abolished in Egypt in 1937), according to which foreign nationals could not be subjected to Egyptian jurisdiction. The 1929 law required proof that one's ancestors had resided in Egypt since 1848 or that as former Ottoman subject, one had stayed in Egypt since 1914,

and in general the procedures involved in obtaining Egyptian citizenship moved forward slowly.[73]

As Najat Abdulhaq has shown, it is difficult to arrive at an exact number of Egyptian nationals among the Jewish population during the 1930s and 1940s. Previous studies have stated that very few Egyptian Jews held Egyptian nationality during this period: Shamir gives the number of 5,000 and Krämer, based on the 1937 census, arrives at 25–30 percent of the Jewish population during the interwar period.[74] Less commonly referred to by historians than the aforementioned 1927 census, the 1947 census puts the number of Jews with Egyptian nationality at 50,831, amounting to 77.5 percent of the Jewish population.[75] Abdulhaq suggests that, though the number of Egyptian Jewish nationals must have indeed been higher than previously assumed, the high number in the 1947 census might have resulted from Egyptian Jews' self-descriptions, and not their legal status.[76]

Following the Company Law 138 of 1947, one of the most important Egyptianization laws that guaranteed a majority of Egyptian owners, management, and staff of companies in the country, Malki called upon his fellow Egyptian Jews to apply for Egyptian citizenship.[77] In an announcement in *al-Shams* about the new law, the number of Egyptian Jews is put at 80,000, one-sixth of which were Egyptian nationals, one-sixth foreign nationals, and the remaining part stateless, a number that contrasts sharply with the 1947 census data.[78] Malki himself had been born into a family of Jews of Italian descent residing in Egypt. With his wife and their children, Malki unsuccessfully applied for Egyptian citizenship during the late 1940s; ultimately he became an Italian citizen.[79]

A famous slogan of the Egyptian revolution of 1919 against British rule—"Religion is for God and the fatherland is for all"—had embodied the rise of Egyptian nationalism and the anti-colonial struggle. Several decades earlier, the Egyptian Jewish patriot Yaʿqub Sanuʿ (James Sanua) had promoted the slogan "Egypt for the Egyptians" in his satirical newspaper *Abu Naddara*.[80] Like Sanua, many Jews during the 1930s and 1940s expressed their sense of belonging to Egypt by stating that they were Egyptians first, Jews second.[81] Alfred Yallouz, the president of the Jewish youth club, delivered a speech to members of the club expressing his belief that Jews had continuously participated in Egypt's struggle for full independence since the revolution of 1919, in which "no majority or minority" existed.[82] During a *jamʿiyya* celebration commemorating the anniversary of the 1919 revolution, one speaker paraphrased the Islamic reformer Muhammad ʿAbduh, who had allegedly written in his memoirs of the 1879–82 Urabi revolt that Muslims, Copts, and Jews had been engaged in the anti-imperial struggle, which also involved both Egyptians and foreigners.[83]

Many of *al-Shams*'s Egyptian writers belonged to a generation that came of age during the 1919 Egyptian revolution against British rule. The unfulfilled promise of full Egyptian independence from Britain in the post-1922 constitutional monarchy allowed new political currents to gain prominence. The political situation in Egypt during the monarchical period is often described as a triangular power struggle among the British, the Palace, and the leading political party, the nationalist Wafd.[84] The domestic political scene during the 1930s and 1940s was

marked by disillusion about independence, the continued privileging of Europeans, autocratic rule by the British-backed monarchy, and rapid parliamentary changes. The nationalist Young Egypt movement and the Muslim Brotherhood gave voice to growing hostility toward the British and other foreign presences in Egypt as well as a rejection of secular-liberal notions of citizenship and the nation. During the same period, the question of Palestine fully entered Egyptian public debate, especially after the Palestinian uprising of 1936–9.[85]

Participation by Jews in the Egyptian political domain, though limited, mainly took place in Egyptian nationalism, leftism, and Zionism. The aforementioned contributor to *al-Shams* and president of the youth club, Alfred Yallouz, exemplifies the patriotic current among Egyptian Jews: in 1936, he was a candidate for the Egyptian nationalist Wafd party in the local elections in the Cairo Muski quarter, the neighborhood where *al-Shams* was printed.[86]

Between the 1930s and the 1950s, an estimated thousand Jews participated in the Egyptian communist movement, and thousands more were sympathetic to Marxist ideas.[87] The Marxist left in Egypt included staunch opponents of Fascism as well as anti-Zionists.[88] In 1945, two Sephardic Jews founded a journal with Marxist and anti-Zionist views, *al-Fajr al-Jadid*.[89] An Egyptian Jewish communist from Italian descent, Henry Curiel, founded the Egyptian Movement for National Liberation (*al-haraka al-misriyya lil-taharrur al-watani*) in 1943.[90] Curiel and other communists would be expelled from Egypt following the Arab-Israeli war of 1948.

There was very limited support for Zionism among Jews in Egypt, although the movement gained more ground during the Second World War due to the arrival of Zionist emissaries and expanding knowledge of the mass murder of Jews in Europe. The first Zionist activities in Egypt had started soon after the first congress of the World Zionist Organization in Basel in August 1897 and the visit of Theodor Herzl to Egypt in 1904. A Zionist office was opened in Cairo, followed by several Zionist federations in Cairo and Alexandria in the wake of the Balfour Declaration of 1917. Zionist organizations from Europe and Palestine often sent observers to the Middle East and North Africa. Their reports about Egypt show concerns about the limited support among Egyptian Jews for local Zionist organizations as well as a lack of communal organization.[91]

The few Jews in Egypt who supported expanding regional Zionist activism during the interwar period were also involved in Egyptian nationalism, leftism, or communism without considering these commitments to be contradictory.[92] Léon Castro, the head of the Zionist Organization of Cairo and later representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in Egypt, also supported the Egyptian nationalist Wafd party. The only countrywide Jewish organization, B'nai B'rith, supported Zionism but primarily promoted Jewish communal reform and cultural revival in Egypt.

Several Jewish leaders were outspokenly anti-Zionist and considered Zionism a threat to the position of Jews in Egypt and the Arab world. The anti-Zionist views of Robert J. Rolo, president of the Jewish community in Alexandria, contrasted with the Zionist sympathies of the city's chief rabbi Moise Ventura. The subsequent

presidents of the Sephardic Jewish community in Cairo, Joseph and René Cattaui (Qattawi) Pasha, were also opposed to Zionism. In the late 1940s, an anti-Zionist league was established with branches in Cairo and Alexandria.[93]

The late 1930s and 1940s witnessed a gradual politicization of the Jewish presence in Egypt. During the 1936–9 Palestinian uprising, the Muslim Brotherhood and Young Egypt had called for a boycott of Jewish businesses in Egypt.[94] The increased association of Jews with Zionism and imperialism and doubts about their loyalty to Egypt pressured Jews to publicly dissociate themselves from Zionism.[95] The publication of *al-Shams* can be viewed, at least in part, as a reaction to these political developments. In essence, the editor hoped that Jews would not be excluded from Egyptian society and thus presented the Jews as an integral part both of Egypt and of the Arab world at large.

If, however, one limits one's sense of Malki's ambitions to the reigning political context or to his Zionist sympathies, this would not do justice to his multifaceted outlook. In *al-Shams*, as with the Arabic-language Jewish press elsewhere in the Middle East, Malki and his fellow writers also expressed a sense of Jewish cultural belonging to the "Arab East," a broadly defined geographical, historical, and cultural space.[96] The writers published in *al-Shams* were connected to Jewish *nahda* writers in the region; the newspaper had correspondents and contributors in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. Its impact thus extended beyond its national readership and also had an effect on a regional audience of Jewish writers and readers of Arabic.

A central notion in Egyptian nationalism was the idea of the Unity of the Nile Valley, which had been continuously promoted since Mohammad Ali's conquest of Sudan in 1820.[97] Eve Trout Powell has argued that Egypt served a double role, at once colonized and colonizer, in its triangular relationship with Britain and Sudan.[98] During the late 1930s and 1940s, the Egyptian governments and the monarchy claimed Egyptian rule over Sudan, a form of rule limited, however, by the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 that secured British interests in Sudan.[99] The Jewish communities of Egypt and Sudan fell under the same chief rabbinate, then under the leadership of Haim Nahum Effendi (1872–1960).[100]

A weekly column in *al-Shams* was written by the rabbi of Sudan Solomon Malka (1878–1949). Born in the Moroccan town of Asfalou, Malka served in this position from 1906 until his death in 1949 following an invitation of the chief rabbi of Alexandria, Eliyahu Chazan.[101] Saad Malki had encouraged him to write on a weekly basis for *al-Shams* in the Arabic language that Malka promoted among the Jews in Sudan and which he used for his sermons and services for the community. Until Malka's arrival, the Sudanese-Jewish community did not have a religious leader and, lacking a synagogue, there were no religious services.[102] The Jewish community, dating back to the nineteenth century, peaked in the 1930s and 1940s, numbering 800–1,000.[103] Publishing in *al-Shams* from the 1930s until the newspaper's demise, Malka wrote articles based on his weekly sermons in Khartoum, a series on his interpretation of the Song of Songs and various essays on religious, social, and political issues, commenting as well on Nazi Germany and the persecution of Jews in Europe.[104]


العدد ١٤٨ — القاهرة في يوم الخميس ٢٩ يوليه سنة ١٩٣٧ — السنة الثالثة

الشمس

جريدة أسبوعية جامعة

صاحب الجريدة وناشرها ورئيس تحريرها المسئول سعد يعقوب مالكي

المكاتبات: تكون بعنوان الإدارة: ٦ شارع الموسكي، عمارة باب باشا، القاهرة بمصر

الاشتراكات: ٥٠ قرشاً عن سنة داخل القطر، ٦٠ " " خارج القطر. الإعلانات: يتفق عليها مع الإدارة

عرش موطد من أفئدة الرعية

احتفال الأمة بارتقاء مليكها عرش البلاد

احتفال أمة النيل

بارتقاء مليكها عرش الموطد

تحية اليهود

لمليكهم فاروق الأول

قرارات مؤتمر أندية القلم

رأي سياسي فرنسي

في مشروع التقسيم

اليهود في تركيا

سفر الوفد اليهودي

عاش الملك فاروق الأول

Figure 2 Cover page of *al-Shams* showing King Faruq wearing the *tarbush* under the heading “Celebration of the Nation of the Nile,” July 29, 1937.
Source: The Historical Jewish Press, the National Library of Israel.

Saad Malki presented his newspaper as the platform of a "Jewish *nahda*." We should thus ask, however, precisely how the term *nahda* was used and understood, and how Jewish *nahda* debates as manifested in *al-Shams* during the 1930s and 1940s can broaden our understanding of the *nahda* as a transregional and cross-confessional intellectual endeavor. In what follows, I will show that Egyptianization and cultural revival were closely intertwined within the Egyptian context and largely revolved around the use of Arabic, the revival of Egyptian Jewish heritage, and the participation of Jews in Egyptian intellectual culture. Furthermore, the idea of *nahda* was based on the assumption that the Jews of the East, to which the Egyptian Jewish communities were said to belong, were currently in a state of ignorance and decline and now found themselves in need of cultural revival—which could be effected through a renewed connection to their own heritage as well as their participation in Arab culture. From a regional perspective, the notion of *nahda* was strongly tied to the idea that a Jewish cultural revival in Palestine would bring about a Jewish awakening in the East.

The project of *tamsir* during the 1930s and 1940s related not only to the Egyptianization of the economy and the administration, but also to national culture, historiography, and the academy.[105] Yoav Di-Capua has shown that in Egypt's monarchic period, historiography became firmly established as the dominant mode of thinking; no longer merely an elitist intellectual activity, it had become the "ubiquitous habit of the urban middle class."[106] Though the struggle for liberation and full independence was the conceptual binding force of Egyptian historiography, various interpretations and "schools" existed.[107] The Egyptian monarchy, in response to de-Ottomanization within nationalist writing, launched an expansive project of royal historiography that would write the dynasty of Muhammad Ali into Egyptian national history.

In the wake of King Fu'ad's promotion of historiography, Egyptian Jews established the aforementioned Société d'Études Historiques Juives d'Egypte in 1925, and several Jewish middle- and upper-class writers began writing Jewish history into Egyptian national history, combining Egyptian, Jewish, and Pharaonic elements of identification.[108] These historiographical efforts should be seen within the context of Egyptianization and Arabization after the First World War, in which Egyptianized foreigners (the social-cultural category of the *mutamassirun*) and hence a substantial part of the Jewish population were increasingly cast as outsiders.[109] The omnipresence of nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiment during the interwar period in Egypt made it hard for *mutamassirun* to produce a historical counternarrative.[110] These barriers notwithstanding, *al-Shams*'s circle managed to produce, as this chapter shows, an inclusive discourse of Jewish integration into the Egyptian nation.

Within *al-Shams*'s program of Egyptianization, Egypt was perceived as a historical land, associated with the time of Moses, which had known an almost continuous Jewish presence up until the present day. But Jews were not only connected to Egypt as the land of Moses and the Exodus. The same Pharaonic Egypt had been one of the cradles of Egyptian civilization. The ancestral connection borne by Jews in contemporary Egypt to ancient Jews in Pharaonic Egypt and

their contributions to its civilization bear remnants of the Pharaonic current within Egyptian territorial nationalism ascendent during the 1920s, in which an exclusivist trajectory for Egypt was imagined vis-à-vis the post-Ottoman Arab world. By the 1930s, however, such Pharaonism had been challenged by Arab-Islamic orientations. Due to population growth, urbanization, higher literacy rates, and an expanding student population, a new, educated middle class had emerged by the early 1930s. These "new *effendiyya*" came to criticize the Westernized elites' failed road to fuller independence and their superficial linkage of the Pharaonic past with Egyptian territorial nationalism. The Arab and Islamic orientations that ultimately dominated the public sphere were closer to the experience of the popular masses and were also an outgrowth of increasing contacts between Egypt and the Arab world.[111]

This shift in orientations among the Egyptian public—though Pharaonism hardly disappeared from the scene—was clearly reflected in the frequent way *al-Shams* connected Jews to the Arab East and its historical Jewish communities. In his newspaper, Saad Malki continuously addressed the causes of the perceived ignorance (or social illness, as it was often called) among the Egyptian Jews and the Jews of the East more broadly and the concurrent need for revival and reform. Stagnation (*jumud*) was for Malki the result of the Egyptian Jewish cultural orientation to the West and the community's ignorance of its own Jewish and Arab religious and cultural heritage.[112]

In the first issue of *al-Shams*, Israel Wolfensohn (1899–1980), a Jewish professor of Semitic languages at Dar al-'Ulum and the Egyptian University, who was also active in the aforementioned youth club and historical society, lamented how Jews in the East, and particularly the enlightened public among them, were culturally inclined toward the West. Proclaiming that *al-Shams* would lead to a transformation of Jewish social and literary life in Egypt and the East, Wolfensohn addressed his educated Arabic readers:

> We need to dedicate our lives to the awakening of the civilization of the Eastern nations and a revival of writing in the Arabic language before considering a revival built on the languages of the Western nations. What is necessary is the appearance of intellectuals, scholars and poets who write the results of their genius in the Arabic language, the language that served as a mediator between all the nations in the Middle Ages.[113]

Wolfensohn's statement in *al-Shams*'s inaugural issue underlines the centrality of language in the *nahda* debates as an essential component of modernization, progress, and civilization. Inextricably tied to the notion of civilization is the notion of loss or setback, which in Wolfensohn's case means the loss of Arabic as an intellectual language used by Jews in the East. If the "Eastern nations" were to experience revival or awakening, Jewish intellectual productivity in Arabic, akin to what had transpired in the past, must return. To civilize does not (merely) imply Westernization, but also a revival of a former flourishing civilization to which Jews belonged, facilitated by the Arabic language as a "mediator."

Several of *al-Shams*'s authors had promoted Arabization since the early twentieth century. To facilitate the use of Arabic by Jews in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East, the Damascus-born doctor and scholar Hillel Farhi (1868–1940) had published the first Arabic translation of the Sephardic prayer book (*Siddur Farhi*, 1917) and an Arabic translation of the Passover Haggadah (1922).[114] The aforementioned poet Murad Farag had compiled a Hebrew grammar of Arabic that was used in Jewish schools in Egypt as well as a Hebrew-Arabic etymological dictionary.[115] The activities of Farhi and Farag are typical of the circle of Jewish *nahda* writers in Egypt who used *al-Shams* as a platform. As writers, historians, and philologists, they made their living from their middle-class jobs as teachers, lawyers, doctors, and translators, then in their evening hours worked on comparisons between the Semitic languages and between Judaism and Islam as well as histories of Arab-Jewish relations and the popularizing articles they published on these themes. By day Farhi rode through Cairo in a carriage visiting his patients; at night he worked on his articles on Jewish history and notable Jewish figures in Egypt, the Semitic languages, made translations into Arabic, and chipped away at his (ultimately unfinished) trilingual English-Arabic-Hebrew dictionary.[116]

Like their *nahda* contemporaries, the editors and writers contributing to *al-Shams* were preoccupied with language and translation—to such an extent that one could argue that language was their primary concern: Egyptianization first and foremost implied Arabization (*ta'rib*), of the community council and the Jewish schools in particular. At the same time, *ta'rib* was used to mean translation into Arabic and hence illustrates the centrality that knowledge of languages and translation occupied in *nahda* discourse.[117] In their importance, language and translation were closely intertwined with other central themes of the *nahda*: the call for modern education, a coming to terms with the "West" while remaining loyal to the culture and traditions of the "East," and the dissemination and popularization of science through translation.[118] The press was the driving force behind the spread of ideas as well as the popularization of science directed toward the expanding educated, cross-confessional audiences.[119]

The repeated calls for Egyptianization and Arabization in *al-Shams* found little support, however. As early as July 1937, Alfred Yallouz, the president of the Egyptian Jewish youth club, was complaining about the largely failing attempts to Egyptianize the Jewish schools: "The teaching of the Arabic language in the schools is still a big problem. Educated young people leave school and enter their working life without speaking the daily language properly."[120] Despite these disappointing results, the project of the *nahda* was further set out when a Jewish reform society, Jam'iyyat al-Islah al-Isra'iliyya, was founded in 1942. Optimistically announced in *al-Shams* as "a new *nahda*," it was aimed to facilitate Egyptianization in general, the public use of and education in Arabic, and the spread of "Arab and Hebrew culture."[121]

An article in *al-Shams* published shortly thereafter entitled "Why we have called for Egyptianization" emphasized the historical connection of Jews to the land of Egypt, the Nile Valley birthplace not only of Moses but also of Jewish nationalism.

The Jewish community's language in Egypt, the article also stated, had been Arabic since the Islamic conquest. The colonial era, however, had disrupted the harmony between Arabic as the language of the land and Hebrew as the language of religion due to the dominance of the French language, thus severing the connections to this harmonious past. Irrespective of their nationality, the members of the Jewish community council, and preferably others as well, should speak Arabic and wear the *tarbush* (a red Fez): "Nothing stands in the way of the foreigner to wear the *tarbush* during his work for the council and to be free after that to wear whatever he wishes."[122]

This statement marks a distinction between what a Jew should wear in public, in particular those community council members serving in public roles, versus what should be worn in private, expressing the idea of publicly "performing" one's Egyptianness through the distinctive headwear of the *tarbush*. The "foreigner" specifically implied in this context was the Ashkenazic or Western Jew (the terms were used interchangeably), whose numbers had increased significantly starting in the interwar period with the influx of Jews from Europe who had settled in Egypt and who, unfortunately in Malki's view, formed a separate community. Malki called for their integration (*indimaj*) into Egyptian society, which could be accomplished through the use of the Arabic language together with the wearing of the *tarbush*. This headwear had become an important emblem of Egyptian nationalism among the elite and the rising urban, educated middle strata of the *effendiyya*.[123] Mansur Wahba, a member of the reform society, criticized superficial borrowing from the West, aligning himself with many Egyptians involved in discussions on clothing and headwear that were tied to broader debates on modernization and civilization: "The Easterner who thinks he has become a foreigner by [using] French and [wearing] the hat is undoubtedly simple-minded."[124] He further called on the "newcomers" (*nuzala'*)[125] and those following the "trend of Europeanization," both Jews and non-Jews, to follow in the steps of the Egyptianizers.

The *tarbush* was a cultural marker of the *effendiyya*, whose worldview is readily apparent in *al-Shams* from its authors' reformist views and their self-image as the stewards of tradition, modernity, and ultimately (historical) truth. The *tarbush*, a sign par excellence of Egyptian or Arab masculine modernity, also illustrates that the activities of Malki and his national and regional colleagues were almost exclusively male affairs.[126] With certain exceptions, including the journalist Esther Azhari Moyal and the translated writings of foreign women authors, women were the subject of many communal reform debates carried out in the pages of *al-Shams*, but women did not themselves produce such discussions. Hence, central topics such as women's societal position, their education, their abandonment of religion, along with prolonged debates about Jewish dowry, or whether women should be allowed to serve as members of the community council, were mooted almost exclusively among male discussants debating the "Israelite woman."[127]

In addition to Egyptianization's focus on language, attire, and cultural expression, *al-Shams*'s *nahda* discourse contains the important trope of *al-Andalus*, referring to the period of Islamic rule on the Iberian Peninsula. The Jews of the Arab world, despite their highly diverse makeup, were said to have their historical

predecessors in *al-Andalus*, a historical and cultural space where "Arabs" and "Jews" had jointly established a golden age of science, literature, and arts.[128] During 1941–2, *al-Shams* published a Hebrew-Arabic translation, by the Jewish orientalist Abraham Shalom Yehuda, of "Duties of the Heart" by the eleventh-century Andalusian philosopher Bahya Ibn Paquda. *Al-Shams* depicted the latter as an example of Jewish integration into Arab-Islamic society, dedication to Arabism, and pride of the "Arab Semitic race."[129] Accompanying this idealization of Arab-Jewish cooperation and intellectual production in the past was a general feeling of decline and scholarly neglect among contemporary Arab Jewish communities and calls for a cultural and intellectual revival (Figure 3).

A November 1947 article, most likely by Saad Malki, expresses this idea that the Jews of the East lack interest in their own heritage:

> The Eastern Jewish communities have neglected the preservation of the works of their forefathers of the medieval period. What we know about our great scholars and writers is largely due to the work of Jews in Europe. The British Rabbi Altman [Alexander Altman] has published a book by Sa'diyya al-Fayyumi in English: *The Book of Doctrines and Beliefs*. This work is present in the Arabic library of al-Azhar. … a scholar of al-Azhar spoke to us about the book and he said it contains one the best works on divine unity. He further said that a great scholar recommended that Muslims consult the work. We know nothing about this book, which is the best work of al-Fayyumi, and no one owns a copy of it, nor considers publishing it.[130]

The lack of knowledge of the history of the Jews in the East is contrasted here not only to the awareness of more enlightened Jews in Europe who have long been interested in this legacy, but also vis-à-vis al-Azhar in Egypt, the institution for Islamic learning in Egypt par excellence. If Jews in Egypt had to rely on an Islamic institution to learn about their own history and culture, so Saad Malki seems to say, how could they find a way to reverse their decline? As he wrote: "How are we supposed to accomplish an intellectual revival (*nahda fikriyya*) in this suffocating environment?"[131] Meanwhile, Saad Malki took the matter into his own hands, writing a series of articles on his heroes Saadia Gaon (al-Fayyumi) and Ibn Gabirol, the former responsible for "a Jewish intellectual renaissance in Iraq," the latter the first "Arab Jewish Philosopher in al-Andalus" who had been a "lighthouse for humanity," as well as the Egyptian physician Ya'qub ibn Ishaq al-Isra'ili, whom Malki tellingly named "the Israelite Egyptian."[132]

During the 1930s and 1940s, a time when trains still ran connecting Egypt, Palestine, and beyond, the writers contributing to *al-Shams* frequently traveled to Palestine and other parts of the Middle East.[133] They were interested in the state of affairs among the different Jewish communities of the "East" and what they claimed to be the "progress" and "enlightenment" of Palestine, manifest through the rise of a new industry, agricultural exhibitions, and the founding of academic institutions.[134] *Al-Shams* had its own correspondent in Jerusalem as well as regular contributors from Palestine, such as the Aleppo-born Zionist journalist-intellectual

Figure 3 The Maimonides synagogue in the Jewish quarter in Cairo.
Source: The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People.

Avraham Elmaleh (Ibrahim al-Malih), who lived in Jerusalem.[135] Malki repeatedly expressed his admiration for the president of the Hebrew University, Judah Magnes. The latter had been a member of the Brit Shalom society in Palestine, which advocated for peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews, the establishment of a binational state, and the creation of a Jewish cultural center in Palestine.[136] Malki wrote that Magnes believed in the mutual understanding between Jews and Arabs because the two groups shared a similar Semitic mentality.[137] In his newspaper, he presented an idealized image of intensifying cooperation between "Arabs and Jews" in Palestine in their joint efforts to achieve an awakening (*nahda*) of the East, inspired by the "Golden Age" of *al-Andalus*:

> The East has taken big steps towards social progress, especially in Palestine. Ever since the Jews have started to colonize Palestine, the lands have been taken out of its Bedouin state and have progressed towards an upscale state that sparks amazement. Amongst the first things the Jews did was establish a university [the Hebrew University, 1925] as a source of knowledge for the backward land. The university has a special department for the study of the East, both Jewish and Islamic studies, and also publishes Arabic manuscripts that have not seen the light until now. These efforts result from the sincere believe in the joint revival of Arabic and Hebrew literatures in these lands, and their working side by side as they did before in the Middle Ages in the East and *al-Andalus*. In addition, many institutes have been founded that work towards social reform. Hospitals have been founded in many villages. The rest of the lands can follow the example of Palestine.[138]

The opposition between East and West was manifest in *al-Shams* not only as a way of positing European scientific and intellectual dominance and superiority over the Middle East and its Jewish communities. The East-West dichotomy appeared there also as an intra-Jewish concern marked by the divide between Ashkenazim and Sephardim in the region. Israel Wolfensohn expressed his growing discontent with the Ashkenazi-Sephardi divide in the Middle East and especially in Palestine, a topic touched upon primarily in his writings for the Hebrew press.[139] Writing in 1937 for the Palestine-based Hebrew newspaper *Ha'aretz*, in an article republished and commented on in *al-Shams*, he complained that new streets in Tel Aviv were being named only after Jews from Western Europe: among them there was not even "a single name of glorious Eastern and Arab Jews." Such wholesale omission, he feared, would lead to the Eastern Jewish population being distanced from "the Jewish homeland." The editor of *al-Shams* added that he had received many letters from "Eastern Jewish brothers in Palestine" that had described poor treatment at the hands of Ashkenazim.[140]

Wolfensohn's complaint about street names in Tel Aviv took pride in the (past) intellectual achievements of "Eastern Jews." But other accounts contain derogatory statements that more explicitly reveal colonialist attitudes. In November 1942 Yitzhak Shamush, an Aleppo-born, Beirut-educated Jew who had moved to Palestine in 1937 to teach Arabic literature at the Institute for Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University, discussed in *al-Shams* the state of neglect among the Jews of the East.[141]

His incentive was the recent establishment of a society of "Jewish youth of the East" in Jerusalem, aimed at enhancing the cultural and social level of the Jews in the East and in Palestine in particular. The Jews of the East, a group to which Shammas claimed he and his readers belonged, were in a state of neglect, weakness, poverty, obscurity, and disorder. The Eastern Jews in Palestine were oblivious to the progress that had been achieved all around them. Shamush's depicts them as uncivilized and lazy: their children walking barefoot in the streets, these Jewish parents go from one coffeehouse to another. The diagnosis of neglect was followed by a call for the Jews of the East to lift themselves up and to not blame the "Western Jew" for their current state. To realize their own awakening, they must take matters into their own hands.[142]

During the course of the 1940s, *al-Shams*'s program of Egyptianization, Arabization, and cooperation between Arabs and Jews in Palestine became difficult to contain. During the Second World War, Egypt's Jews were affected by the country's political crisis as well as anti-imperialism and the international struggle over Palestine. When Axis forces were advancing in North Africa in 1941–2, a substantial part of the Jewish community in Alexandria fled to Cairo to escape a possible Nazi assault on the city.[143] Tensions surrounding the conflict over Palestine further increased after the assassination in Cairo of Lord Moyne, the British Minister Resident in the Middle East, in November 1944 by the militant Zionist group Lehi. On Balfour Day a year later, anti-Jewish riots broke out in Cairo following demonstrations against Zionism organized by Young Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Young Men's Muslim Association. Attacks in the Jewish quarter by some demonstrators and subsequently in the European sections of the city left several dead and numerous Jewish properties destroyed. After a relatively calm period, new conflicts arose when the 1947 UN partition plan for Palestine stirred countrywide demonstrations.[144] As both Krämer and Beinin emphasize, despite the growing vulnerability of the Jewish community to the consequences of the conflict over Palestine, there was no sense of a continuous, escalating hostility toward Jews in Egypt during this period. Neither the majority of the population nor the government showed signs of anti-Jewish feeling.[145]

When the State of Israel was declared on May 14, 1948, the Egyptian army, together with several other Arab states, invaded Israel to counter the emerging reality dictated by the UN partition plan and the State of Israel. Banning all Zionist activity, the Egyptian government arrested hundreds of its political opponents, Zionist and communist Jews among them.[146] Jewish properties, mainly belonging to these interned Zionist and communist Jews, were confiscated, and many important Jewish stores and companies in Cairo and Alexandria were put under governmental supervision.[147] Soon after the Israel declaration, several bombs exploded in the Jewish quarter in Cairo, killing twenty and wounding dozens.[148] In the months leading up to the founding of Israel, Egyptian Jewish leaders had continuously expressed their loyalty to Egypt and signaled solidarity with the Palestinians. The day after the declaration, the Egyptian newspaper *al-Ahram* published letters from former community head René Cattaui and his brother Aslan, in which they emphasized that their homeland was Egypt, their religion Jewish.[149]

The Egyptian government's decision to make Zionist activity illegal meant that *al-Shams* was now banned. On May 14, a representative of the Ministry of Interior walked into Saad Malki's office to announce that the Egyptian government had decided to shut down his newspaper.[150] The general censorship authority suspended the newspaper as of June 11, 1948, and confiscated all copies in shops and in the hands of sellers.[151] According to Siham Nassar, the suspension came after the Arab League complained that *al-Shams* was violating Arabism and Arab interests through its promotion of Zionism in the Arab world and that the newspaper was being financed by Zionist organizations in Egypt.[152]

Malki's outlook of an entangled Egyptian nationalism and Zionism was now defeated; the dispersal of Jews in Egypt in subsequent decades made his idea of integration into the Egyptian nation a lost cause. In this light, it is relevant to trace the activities of the Jewish *nahda* writers who had contributed to his newspaper a bit further beyond 1948. Malki himself left Egypt with his family for Israel in the summer of 1949, settling in Bat Yam, south of Tel Aviv. In subsequent years, he worked as the editor of the Arabic newspaper *al-Yawm* (1948–68) published by MAPAI, the Israeli Workers Party, and as a Hebrew-Arabic court translator. He passed away in Bat Yam in 1988.[153]

Israel Wolfensohn, who had returned to Palestine in 1938, continued to be active after 1948 in Israel as an educator of Arabic and a promotor of Arab culture and literature. The poet Murad Farag remained in Cairo, where his career as a writer continued until his death in 1956.[154] Solomon Malka remained chief rabbi of Sudan until his death in 1949. Little is known about Alfred Yallouz's activities after 1948, except that he continued working as a translator. In 1952, he translated the work *Mohamed-Aly et l'Europe* by the brothers René Cattaui and Georges Cattaui, the former Cairo Jewish community president, into Arabic.[155] The book, published by the Egyptian Royal Society of Historical Studies, took its place in a long line of accounts within Egyptian nationalist historiography presenting Muhammad Ali's reign as the dawn of modern Egypt.[156] This work indicates that at least until 1952, when Egypt was on the brink of revolution, Yallouz was still participating in nationalist historiography as an Egyptian Jewish patriot.

Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*: A Platform in Beirut for the Jews of the East*

Dear dr. Mann,

With pleasure I have read the kind words and wishes that you sent to me and to my son Eli Elmaleh during the meeting that was organized by Maccabi[157] in Beirut. I am eternally grateful for these sincere acts of kindness coming from a true friend. I am especially grateful that you mentioned my literary works to which I have devoted the best years of my life. You spoke in particular about my contributions to the Hebrew, French and Arabic literatures that are appreciated by the citizens of Syria and Lebanon and that evoke feelings of gratitude amongst you.

> I know, my friend, that your journalistic works are not fully appreciated on the part of Arabic speakers in Syria and its surrounding areas. But you are not the only one suffering from this fate. The situation of your brothers abroad is not much better. The importance of the Jewish journalist is met by denial in every place. He is always subjected to criticism and, moreover, he is not understood. Yet we should not despair. The historian who will, one day, take it upon himself to write the history of the Jewish press in the Middle East and North Africa would necessarily include those servants of the nation, those who were able, despite roughness, deprivation and ingratitude, to continue their path with dedication and worthy self-criticism, who defend their offended rights by using the tool of the spoken language of their fellow citizens and raise high the banner of Judaism.
>
> Your name and the name of your companion, Moise Adjami, the editor-in-chief of your newspaper, and also the name of Saad Malki, the editor of *al-Shams* in Cairo, and your other co-operators, will be paved with golden letters in the histories of the Jewish communities in the East and North Africa. Judaism will be pleased with the favours they did for their people.
>
> Yours sincerest,
> Avraham Elmaleh

Avraham Elmaleh (1885–1967) wrote the aforementioned words to Selim Mann, the publisher and editor of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, in March 1942.[158] Elmaleh was a Jewish intellectual, an educator, and politician from Jerusalem and one of the newspaper's prominent contributors from Palestine. He produced a large number of studies on the history and culture of Jewish communities in the Middle East and North Africa and also published a series of articles in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* and *al-Shams* on this same topic.[159]

In addition to Elmaleh's intellectual and journalistic activities, he was also a prominent Sephardic Zionist activist and a frequent visitor to Beirut, seeking to promote Zionism among the Jewish community there.[160] Elmaleh referred in his letter to a meeting that had been organized in Beirut by the Maccabi club, the most prominent Zionist entity in the city and an organization about which Selim Mann wrote favorably in his newspaper.[161] What stands out in the abovementioned letter, though it sounds a different note than Elmaleh's enthusiasm about the publication of Arabic-language Jewish newspapers, is his regret that the Jewish community in Beirut lacked interest in Arabic. Most members of the Jewish community, numbering approximately 6,000 by the late 1930s, had been educated in French.[162] The marginality of Arabic was precisely what publisher Selim Mann, to whom Elmaleh's letter is addressed, hoped to counter by publishing the only community newspaper in Arabic. In doing so the endeavor also reached out to a regional audience of Jewish readers of Arabic.

The publisher and editor of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, Selim (Salim Ilyahu) Mann (Beirut 1872–1969), was a prominent figure in the Jewish community in Beirut as well as in local print culture. His father, Eliyahu Mann, was the leader of Beirut's Jewish community and went on to serve as the community's representative to the government.[163] As a young man, Selim Mann had taught Arabic at the Alliance

Israélite Universelle in Beirut and had published two Arabic textbooks for students.[164] With his brother Murad, he established a charity society in Beirut, and he ran unsuccessfully for the community council.[165] In 1902, he founded his own printing press in Beirut. In addition to printing community statutes and annual reports of the community council, he published the short-lived literary newspaper *al-Riwayat al-ʿAsriyya* (The New Stories) in 1911.[166] Mann was one of the few Jews in Lebanon who wrote and published in Arabic, joining in this regard several nineteenth-century Jewish playwrights.[167] During the 1940s, Mann wrote various articles for *al-Shams* and had previously been an agent in Beirut for *al-Shams*'s precursor *Isra'il*.[168] During the run of his weekly and subsequently biweekly newspaper *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili* (1921–34 and 1938–46), Mann's son Joseph was responsible for the printing and Selim wrote articles for the newspaper.[169]

Selim Mann hoped his newspaper would serve as a platform for the Jewish communities of Lebanon and Syria as well as for the "Jews of the East" more broadly. Amid the transformation of Beirut into an Ottoman provincial capital and prominent port city during the last decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jewish communities in what would eventually become the state of Lebanon had grown substantially.[170] During the Ottoman period, there had been Jewish communities in Tripoli, Beirut, Saida, Tyre, and the areas of the Shouf and Hasbeya.[171] In nineteenth-century Syria, most Jews had lived in the commercial centers of Damascus and Aleppo.[172] Following the 1875 Ottoman bankruptcy, many Jewish families in Syria, if they did not move to Europe, were lured by Beirut's economic opportunities as a port city and its integration into the global capitalist market.[173] During the Ottoman period, the Jewish communities had managed their own communal affairs within the millet system. In line with the Ottoman millet system, the constitution respected the right of every sect to be responsible for personal status law and communal education.

France had been awarded the mandate of Syria at the San Remo conference of April 19–26, 1920. In September 1920, it separated the former autonomous Ottoman province of Mount Lebanon from Syria, by declaring the state of Greater Lebanon (Grand Liban), which incorporated the areas of Tripoli, Sidon, and the Bekaa Valley. The independence that had been declared following the Syrian Arab Congress in 1920 for Greater Syria was now bypassed by the mandate system.[174] Though the mandates were formally intended to be a temporary road to self-determination for the newly created countries of Syria and Lebanon, the French used force to crush revolt against their rule.[175] The French treaties with Syria and Lebanon of 1936, which followed in the wake of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930 and the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, had promised Syrian and Lebanese independence following a transitional period of three years, and membership of the League of Nations. By 1939, however, the mandate was still in force.[176]

French mandate rule in Lebanon and Syria was characterized by a large military presence, an extensive bureaucracy that favored, in the Lebanese context, local Christians over members of other religious communities and a clientele of religious leaders and elites. The Lebanese constitution of 1926 laid the foundations for the political order within the newly defined borders of the state of Lebanon

and at the same time laid bare the contradictory nature of French mandate rule. Lebanon was to be ruled by a parliamentary government, and yet the French high commissioner was granted the power to dismiss parliament, annul laws, suspend the constitution, and control military and foreign affairs. The constitution granted religious freedom and granted religious communities the right to legislate on civil matters and to have their own educational system.[177] The constitution further decreed that all "sects" should be represented in the cabinet, parliament, and civil service while at the same time guaranteeing the right of every Lebanese to hold office. The constitutional attempt to secure the division of political representation of the different religious groups instead ensured, Elizabeth Thompson notes, "that politics would turn on sectarian rivalry."[178]

Selim Mann's hope that his newspaper would serve as the mouthpiece of Lebanon and Syria's Jewish communities was not only an attempt, in line with Elmaleh's regional activism, to connect and strengthen the Jewish communities of the "East" and enhance their enthusiasm for a regional revival linked to Zionism. It was also a reflection of the colonial order embodied within the French mandates. Though historical studies of the French mandate of Syria and Lebanon have often treated the two countries separately, partly due to later nationalist historiographies, the French colonial order in the two countries consisted in fact of a centralized bureaucracy, with French bureaucrats and colonial citizens frequently moving between the different parts of the mandate.[179]

Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili focused primarily on the news and history of the "Jews of the East." It contained short news items and longer editorial articles as well as letters from correspondents and readers. Though not very clearly defined, the East was primarily understood to be the historical, linguistic, and cultural space of the "Arab East." As a geographical concept, the East denoted the Mashriq and in a broader sense the former regions of the Ottoman Empire, including Turkey. Mann reported not only about Jewish communal topics such as education, youth, and sports, but also referred often to the other religious communities in Lebanon and published portraits of important Muslim and Christian religious leaders on its front page. In addition, Mann included photographic and written portraits of political leaders, while the discussion of political affairs, largely confined to communal politics, foreign news, and Zionism, did not delve much into the national politics of Syria and Lebanon. An exception was the editors' repeated expressions during the 1940s of Jewish loyalty to Lebanon and Syria and their support for independence.

Also figured on its pages were writings by prominent Christian and Muslim writers of Arabic. In addition to its regional lens on the Jewish communities in the East, the newspaper also aimed to cover "universal" Jewish news and paid particular attention to Jewish intellectuals, politicians, and Zionist figures. Mann thus simultaneously aimed to connect the Jewish communities of Syria and Lebanon to the other Jewish communities in the "East," to integrate them into the wider cultural environment through the use of Arabic and the promotion of interest in Arab culture, and to create a sense of global Jewish solidarity through reports on global Jewish news in addition to news about the Zionist movement. Selim Mann's newspaper was inspired by the French-Jewish journal *L'Univers Israélite*,

founded in 1844, an exemplar of the new sense of "global" Jewish solidarity or Jewish "internationalism" in the wake of the Damascus Affair of 1840. The French title page of Mann's newspaper bore the same name.

In the Damascus Affair of 1840, Jews had been accused of and tried for the ritual murder of a French missionary monk and his servant in the city's Jewish quarter. The blood libel accusations in Damascus were an important incentive for foreign and colonial intervention. It also fostered the idea among Jews in Europe, notably Adolphe Crémieux and Moses Montefiore, that Jews in the "East" were in need of saving and that their salvation could be effected through intervention and enlightenment, pursued via colonialist and diplomatic means. The extensive journalistic coverage of the 1840 events in the field of modern journalism enhanced the notion of worldwide Jewish solidarity as well as the phenomenon of Jewish philanthropy.[180]

Another sequence of events in the nineteenth-century history of Lebanon and Syria were the rounds of Druze-Maronite violence and the massacres at Mount Lebanon and in Damascus in 1860. These events both reflected and enhanced the Ottoman-European rivalry in the region. As Ussama Makdisi has shown, the Druze-Maronite clashes and the 1860 massacres resulted not from preexisting sectarian tensions coming to the surface but rather from a new "culture of sectarianism" in Mount Lebanon that had emerged out of the troublesome interplay of Ottoman reform, a rapidly changing social order and the colonialist European aim of forging alliances with Christian minorities.[181] One of the immediate effects of the events of 1860 was France's heightened intervention in the region and its alignment with local Christian communities under the purported aim of protecting them from "Muslim violence." As we will see in subsequent chapters, the events of 1840 and 1860 continued to resonate in public memory and intellectual debates in Syria and Lebanon and were often recalled in moments marked by instability and fears of national disorder.

An important outcome of the Damascus Affair of 1840 was the establishment of the French Alliance Israélite Universelle in 1860, an institution that expanded its school network in the Middle East to enfold the local Jewish communities within the French civilizing mission.[182] The establishment of Alliance schools was also a response to the missionary schools in Syria and Lebanon, which had begun to attract Jewish students.[183] In 1864, an Alliance school was established in Damascus, followed by branches in Aleppo and Beirut in 1869 and in Saida in 1902.[184] The Jews in the region, or what in colonialist terms was called "Oriental Jewry," had occupied a position different from that of Muslims in the French civilizing mission, as the latter were perceived as colonial subjects while Jews were seen as comprising a yet-to-be-civilized extension of France.[185] Despite Mann's emphasis on Arabic as a cultural orientation, he also internalized the colonialist European rise-and-decline narrative on "Oriental Jewry," in particular that of the Alliance Israélite Universelle. French advertisements for subscriptions to the newspaper were accompanied by the slogan "L'Univers Israelite: c'est sauver de l'ignorance l'esprit juif en orient."[186]

The Alliance school in Beirut was the most influential school in the community. In addition to the Alliance, there were several Talmud Torah schools that were run

by the community council.[187] Selim Mann wrote favorably about the Alliance, not least because his newspaper received financial support from the school direction of the Beirut branch.[188] On February 22, 1939, Mann published a special issue on the Alliance on the occasion of the visit of the French high commissioner Gabriel Puaux to the Alliance schools of Lebanon and Syria.[189] A previous article on the Alliance and the Jews of the East, which had been printed on the newspaper's front page, had described France as "the only Western nation, loved by all the Jews of the East" and dedicated this love to the work of the Alliance schools in the region.[190] Adolphe Cremieux, "one of the greatest French Jews of the nineteenth century," was credited for the "liberation of the Jews" (their emancipation), his efforts to unite world Jewry and for his defense, together with Moses Montefiore, of the Jews of Damascus in the wake of the events in the city in 1840 created by "ignorance and extremism."[191]

Despite the expressions of loyalty to France, French culture, and the Alliance in his newspaper, Mann seems to have viewed the Alliance primarily as a Jewish school that educated its pupils about Jewish culture, rather than a French school that oriented Middle Eastern Jews toward French culture.[192] Similar to Saad Malki in Egypt, one of Selim Mann's primary concerns was the teaching of Arabic in Jewish schools, alongside Hebrew, in response to the dominance of foreign languages, in particular French. It is perhaps ironic that despite their emphasis on Arabic, both Malki and Mann worked as teachers in French schools (the Green School in Cairo and the Alliance in Beirut, though Mann taught Arabic there, not French). Mann wanted to strengthen Jewish educational institutes in Beirut and regretted the foreign cultural orientation of many Jews and their neglect of Arab and Jewish culture.

In his newspaper, Selim Mann merged Lebanese and Syrian nationalism with the cultural orientation of Arabism and Zionism, a combination that was ultimately untenable (Figure 4). Though Mann expressed his sympathies for Zionism openly in his newspaper, his support for the Zionist movement in Palestine was not—as it also was not for many Egyptian Zionists—connected to the idea that Jews in the Arab world should move to Palestine. As a political movement, Zionism remained essentially a solution for European Jews, not a future trajectory for members of the Jewish communities in Lebanon and Syria; these communities he hoped to unite and strengthen through a combined engagement with Jewish and Arab culture, in addition to French and European culture.

As was the case in Egypt, Jews in Lebanon were not particularly involved in politics. While in Egypt there was a significant presence of Jews in the communist movement, this was not the case in Lebanon. The conflict in Palestine fully entered Lebanese public debate following the Western Wall disturbances and countrywide violence between Arabs, Jews, and the British in 1929 and the Arab Revolt of 1936–9.[193] The majority of the Jewish population in Lebanon showed apathy toward the Zionist movement, except for a few prominent activists, including Beirut community president Joseph Farhi, who served concurrently as the president of the B'nai B'rith organization's local branch.[194] Zionist activity largely revolved around the Maccabi sports organization, which had branches in Beirut

and Saida.[195] The French discouraged the Zionist movement, as they perceived it as a tool of their British rivals in the region.[196]

When Mann's newspaper resumed publication in 1938, having been shuttered for four years due to financial constraints, Moise Adjami (Muyiz ʿAjami, ?–1969)[197] took over as editor in chief. Born in Aleppo, Adjami lived and worked in Damascus, from where he edited the newspaper and wrote a significant portion of its contents. Adjami, hailing from a family of doctors, was educated in a medical school and subsequently studied law. During the 1930s, he headed a Jewish scouting club in Damascus. Until his death in Damascus in 1969 he worked as a lawyer and university teacher.[198] Under Adjami's editorship, *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili* oriented itself more toward Arabism, a shift partly explicable by Adjami's location in Damascus. In Syria, Arab nationalism and Arabism, as political and cultural movements, were much more prominent than in mandate Lebanon, where rival conceptions of the nation, such as Christian Lebanese nationalism, were strongly represented and culturally showed a more pronounced orientation toward France and Europe.[199]

For Bracha, the Lebanese and Syrian origins of Mann and Adjami are symbolic of the overlapping nationalist orientations that were expressed in *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*. He provides a credible explanation for the newspaper's lack of a clear nationalist orientation by attributing it to the French fear of Arab nationalism, which made its situation different from what was going on in Egypt. Egypt, though subject to continued British colonial influence, was formally independent and was headed by a monarchy that promoted the expression of patriotism by the country's different religious communities.[200] This explanation does not, however, sufficiently value the complexities of communal and national belonging in Syria and Lebanon during this time. Mann's entangled loyalties were not merely a response to French oppression of Arab nationalist and pan-Arab political forces or the strategic choice of someone seeking to represent a religious minority, but these enmeshed allegiances were also a reflection of the wide availability of communal, national, and regional senses of belonging, which did not necessarily exist in contradiction with one another.

As noted earlier, the primary audience addressed by Selim Mann's newspaper was Beirut's Jewish community. More broadly, the newspaper served Jewish communities throughout Lebanon and Syria. Mann particularly targeted the Jewish youth, a tendency reflected by the prominent place allotted to education, youth events, and sports in his newspaper. Jews from outside Syria and Lebanon also numbered among its readers and contributors, and the newspaper employed correspondents in Baghdad and Jerusalem. In addition to Jewish writers, the newspaper's contributors included various Christian and Muslim writers, hailing in particular from Lebanon and Syria. One such writer was the feminist Christian Lebanese publisher and author Jurji Nicula (Georges Nicola) Baz. Like Baz and other *nahda* contemporaries, Mann was preoccupied with the position of women in society.[201] Most of the writings on and by women in the Lebanese and Syrian press focused on "women's issues," which were mostly discussed in separate women's sections.[202] The "new Jewish woman" imagined and constructed by Mann and his colleagues on his newspaper's pages was modern, educated, active in the

community, and well-versed in Jewish tradition all at once.[203] The most prominent female writer for *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* was undoubtedly Esther Azhari Moyal (1874–1948). Even though she was a very active feminist, especially during the first decades of her career, her writings in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, as we will see in Chapter 5, were not limited to gender-related topics but rather focused more generally on contemporary relations between "Arabs" and "Jews."

Bracha estimates that the print run for an issue of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* numbered between 500 and 800. Reports made by the French Commission for Lebanon and Syria, he shows, mention 500–600 copies for each edition, while Selim Mann himself put the number much higher. Mann once stated that his newspaper had 1,500 subscribers in Baghdad alone, though Bracha assumes that he was exaggerating so as to motivate the Zionist leadership in Palestine to give him financial support.[204] In addition to Lebanon and Syria, the newspaper was available in Egypt, Palestine, and Iraq and had subscribers among the Syrian and Lebanese Jewish diaspora. Hence, the newspaper also had readers in the United States, Europe, and South America.[205] Financially, Selim Mann relied on advertisements, private donations, and support from various institutions. For financial support he called on Zionist institutions and the World Sephardic Organization in Palestine as well as the Alliance and B'nai B'rith in Beirut.[206] The newspaper's history bears witness to its hardships. Like many newspapers and magazines in mandate-era Lebanon and Syria, *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* was to a large extent a personal enterprise.[207] In its pages Mann often called for new subscribers and donations, expressing his regret that the community showed insufficient interest in an Arabic newspaper. The newspaper suspended publication from June 1934 to February 1938, due to a lack of financial means and the loss of Iraqi readership after the Iraqi authorities had prohibited the newspaper from entering their territory.[208] It resumed publication in 1938, with Adjami now serving as editor in chief.

Like Mann, Moise Adjami also contributed various articles to *al-Shams*. In April 1945, he reported about one of his trips to Egypt in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* and *al-Shams*. "Unforgettable moments between the sons of the Nile" was an account of the schools and societies he had visited, providing as well an overview of the Jewish press in Egypt. In Cairo, he had been welcomed in the house of Saad Malki, "a tall, medium aged man, with eyes shining with hope, who in addition to his intellectual outlook, has trust in the future of the Jewish people, something that more people need to have."[209] Selim Mann also published several articles in *al-Shams* during the 1940s. Though it is unclear if he also met Saad Malki in person, it is very likely that he traveled to Egypt on a regular basis, as his daughter was married to a man from Beirut living in Egypt and Mann's brother Murad lived in Egypt as well.[210]

Selim Mann often traveled to Palestine and reported about his trips in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*. Mann's frequent travels from Beirut to Jerusalem for educational and journalistic purposes can be gleaned from various announcements in the Hebrew newspaper *Doʾar Ha-Yom* during the 1920s and 1930s.[211] In 1934, Mann traveled to Tel Aviv to visit the Levant Fair.[212] Several months earlier, he had recounted one of his previous trips to Palestine in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*. This account provides an apt illustration of how the idea of "Arab-Jewish cooperation" largely served to

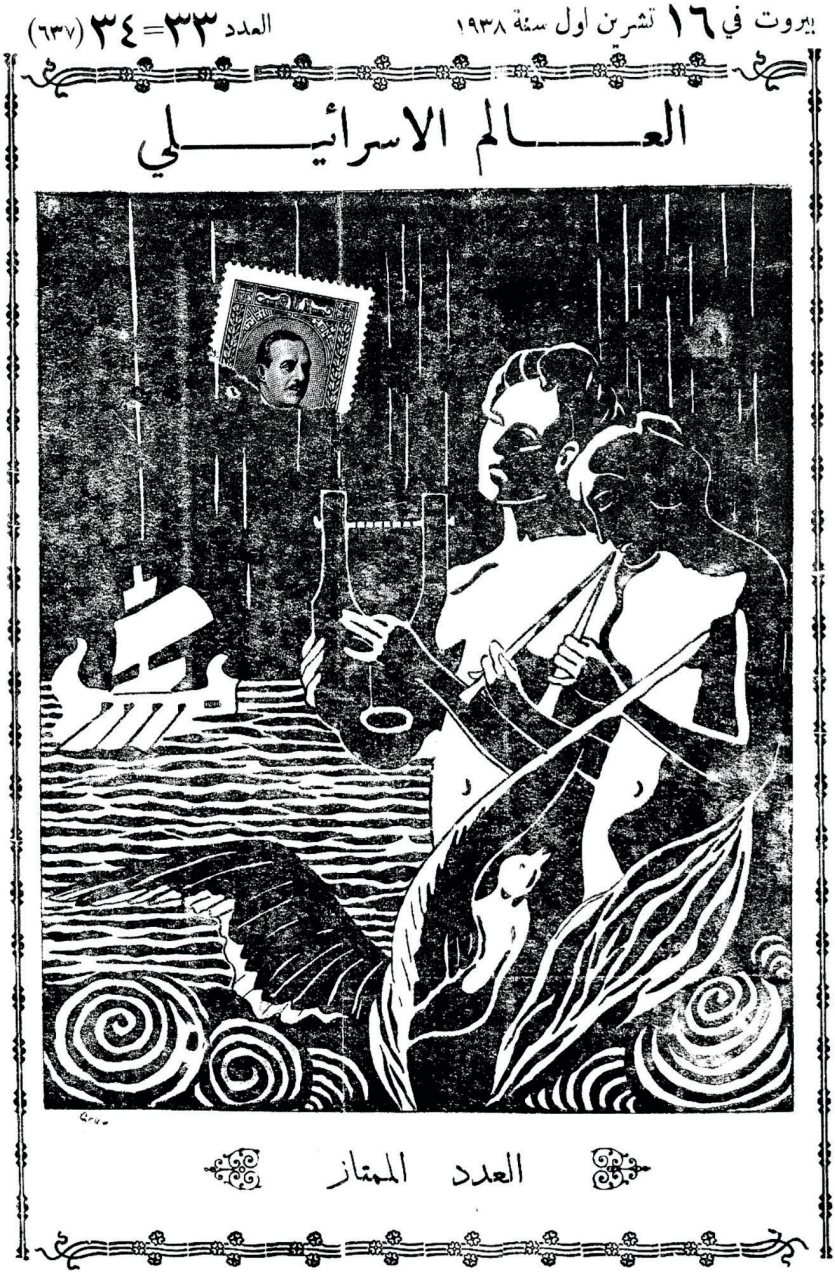

Figure 4 Cover page of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, October 16, 1938, showing Phoenician imaginary. The stamp shows the head of the Lebanese president Émile Eddé.
Source: The Historical Jewish Press, the National Library of Israel.

gloss over Arab opposition to Zionism. Mann writes that his reading of Beirut newspapers prior to his travels had led him to expect to find the two peoples, "the Jews and the Arabs," in a state of war. But upon arriving he soon found that they live in "friendship and harmony." During his stay, he concluded that Palestine was prospering to a greater degree than any other country in the world—and such prosperity was mainly attributable to Jews. In Tel Aviv, he saw Arabs "having a good time" with Jews, exchanging pleasant news, buying from Jewish bakeries, sitting in Jewish coffeehouses, and attending Jewish festivities. He also spoke to "some Arabs" in a Jewish settlement where Arabs and Jews worked together, and these Arabs had told him how comfortable they felt and how well they were treated. As for the "Arab opposition" and its call for a boycott of "the Jews," Mann stated that he did not find "any trace" of such resistance in Palestine.[213]

After the newspaper resumed publication in 1938 with Adjami as editor in chief, Mann and Adjami wrote that their main aims were to strengthen the bonds between the Jewish communities in the Arab world and to show their loyalty to the nation through the Arabic language. Moreover, the Arabic language served to defend the Jewish communities within the Arab public sphere:

> We are the Jewish communities in the East. We are the ones who live as a dispersed minority in the countries of the Arabs. We have become an easy pray for ignorant extremists. We have become entertainment in the newspapers that discredit us day and night and that accuse us with all sorts of accusations and lies. Our numbers exceed 250,000 in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq. We do not have a single Arabic newspaper that speaks in our language[214] and that defends us and that expresses our good intentions towards our fatherlands and our countries, that removes the misunderstanding that has been produced by the bribed newspapers, between us and between the ones who we are living with and are connected to by race, nationality, language and fatherland. We do not have an Arabic newspaper that strengthens our presence, which points to us and says to the world that among the Jewish communities there is a voice that speaks on behalf of 250,000 of the Jewish people in the East.[215]

One of the newspaper's aims was thus to take the measure of the "mainstream" Arabic press and respond to it. For example, *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* included a weekly section called "What the Arabic newspapers say" and, as is apparent from the 1938 letter by the editors cited previously, the intention was to formulate a counter-narrative. An important aspect of Mann and Adjami's responses was not only its "defense" of the Jewish communities of the East but also the promotion of Zionism. Mann derived some of his news content from the Zionist Telegraphic Agency. Zionist organizations such as the Jewish National Fund, the Keren Hayesod, and the Arabic Bureau of the Jewish Agency regularly sent him items for publication, including speeches by Zionist figures that had been translated into Arabic and were sent to various Arabic media.[216] Although *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, especially during its first decade, was outspoken in its support for Zionism, the editors tried to make a

clear demarcation between Zionism in Palestine and the indigenous Arab Jewish communities in the Middle East and the latter's loyalty to their Arab homelands.

The promotion of Zionism in the Arabic public sphere had, as we have seen, historical precursors and can be traced back to Ottoman Palestine in the period following the first waves of Jewish immigration. *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* echoes the aims of the publishers of Arabic-language, Zionist-oriented Jewish newspapers in the Middle East from the early twentieth century onward. Another important reason behind the Zionist orientation of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* was the presence of Zionist representatives in Beirut during the 1930s, most prominently Eliyahu Sasson. A native Arabic speaker born in Damascus in 1902, Sasson was educated at the city's Alliance primary school and at St. Joseph's University in Beirut. During his youth in Damascus, he became involved in Zionist societies and was also connected to Arab nationalist circles supportive of King Faysal.[217] Sasson expressed his perspective on Zionism in the language of the *nahda*. In his article "Our *nahda*," published in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* in October 1933, his notion of revival implied the revival of a Jewish cultural and national spirit in Palestine.[218] In 1934, Sasson joined the political department of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem and later in Beirut, where he dealt with Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine and elsewhere in the Middle East and wrote articles for Arabic media on Arab-Jewish relations and the improvement of the public image of Zionism.[219] In 1943, Sasson became directly responsible for the political department's policy toward Syria and Lebanon.[220]

The early years of Sasson's work for the Jewish Agency coincided with the 1936–9 revolt in Palestine against the British mandate and Jewish immigration. One of the main goals of the Arabic department of the Jewish Agency became to counter the influence of the Palestinian Mufti Amin al-Husayni, the leader of the revolt, via the establishment of relations with rival Palestinian elites and the promotion of Zionism in Arabic media.[221] When the Mufti settled in Beirut in 1937 after his expulsion from Palestine, the political department of the Jewish Agency sent people to Lebanon to monitor him. Moving to Beirut, Sasson increased his efforts to influence the Arabic press by writing Arabic articles for Beirut's newspapers. Jacobson and Naor recount that for several months Sasson closely monitored the Mufti's activities and his followers in the city.[222] Eisenberg not only speaks of "several hundred pro-Zionist articles in the Lebanese press during the course of the rebellion," but also notes that Zionist observers reported opposing sentiments in the Lebanese press.[223]

In addition to the situation in Palestine, the persecution of Jews by Nazi Germany also had a direct impact on the Jewish community in Beirut. Following Hitler's rise to power in 1933 a polarized debate emerged in Lebanon about the possible influx of large numbers of German Jewish refugees. Fears were voiced that the refugees would threaten Lebanon's political system and the already unstable local economy.[224] In the wake of the Nazi takeover in Germany, many German Jews had found their way to France. A plan emerged, supported by Zionist leaders as well as French-Jewish organizations, to settle German Jewish refugees in the French colonies and mandates in North Africa and the Middle East. The plan was never realized, however, as it was not supported by either the French Ministry

of Foreign Affairs or the high commissioners.[225] Yet German Jews, though in far lesser numbers than the estimate of 50,000 that circulated in rumors surrounding the plan, found their way to Lebanon. Some of them went to Palestine via Beirut, while others remained in the city. In 1935, Jewish leaders petitioned the French high commissioner to allow more German Jewish refugees to enter the country.[226] The support for Jewish immigration was not restricted to the Jewish community, though: various representatives of other religious communities expressed their support. One of them was the Maronite Patriarch Arida, whose relations with the Jewish community were generally good.[227]

Selim Mann welcomed the refugees and promoted their cause in his newspaper. He also supported the protests against Nazi Germany that took place in the city as well as boycotts of German products. His reports about the Nazi persecution of Jews in Europe were thus closely related to activism in the community. In April 1933, the newspaper reported on the protests in Beirut against the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany, which were accompanied by prayers in the Beirut synagogue.[228] Going forward from the time of the Nazi takeover in 1933, Mann called upon Britain and France to open the gates to Palestine.[229]

When war broke out in 1939, the lingering trauma of remembered famine during the First World War made itself felt in Syria and Lebanon, where there were widespread fears of another economic crisis.[230] In Lebanon, the French mandate authority declared a state of emergency after the war's outbreak, suspended the Lebanese constitution, and dissolved the parliament.[231] In Syria, the French suspended the constitution, dissolved the parliament, and replaced the government by a French directorate.[232] The war made its largest impact when the French mandate fell under the authority of the French Vichy regime of Pétain in June 1940. A delegation of Jewish community leaders in Beirut requested that the high commissioner Gabriel Puaux refrain from applying the Vichy racial legislations in the mandates.[233] Puaux, however, was replaced in November 1940 by the high commissioner Henri Dentz, appointed by the Vichy regime. As the Lebanese authorities did not apply the Vichy racial laws to members of the local Jewish communities, Vichy's impact was felt mostly by the non-Lebanese Jewish residents who were imprisoned in special camps and released when the French and British armies were victorious over the Vichy regime's forces in Lebanon and Syria in July 1941.[234] The French-British invasion was largely a response to the anti-British coup in Iraq of 1941.[235] Anti-Jewish measures were immediately annulled.

The abolition of the French mandate and the independence of Lebanon followed two years after. The National Pact of 1943 in Lebanon, negotiated between the Maronite politician Bishara al-Khuri (1890–1964) and the Muslim politician Riyad al-Sulh (1894–1951), paved the way for independence. It aimed to represent the different religious sects in the cabinet and to unite Christians and Muslims. It preserved the post of the presidency for a Maronite Christian, the prime minister for a Muslim, and the speaker of parliament for a Shi'i Muslim. As such, the pact maintained the system of political sectarianism installed by the French and as established by the constitution of 1926.[236] The last French troops would leave the country in 1946.

During the Second World War, and in particular during Vichy rule in Lebanon (June 1940–July 1941), *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* had come under increasing restriction and censorship. In various issues published during this period, the censor removed paragraphs and even whole pages. Particularly heavily censored were the front-page editorials of Moise Adjami, texts often polemical in tone and referring frequently to political events touching upon the Jewish communities in the region, as we will see in Chapter 5. The French high commissioner determined an upper limit for the number of pages that could be printed, which meant the newspaper shrunk from approximately twenty pages to twelve.[237] After another brief suspension in 1946, the newspaper resumed publication under the name *al-Salam* (Peace) until its final closure in 1948. Bracha argues that the Lebanese authorities had recommended that Mann change the newspaper's title so as not to reveal its Jewish identity.[238] In 1946, *al-Salam* was banned from circulation in Syria because of its Zionist content, and its "correspondent" in Damascus (likely denoting Adjami) was arrested by the government.[239] In his editorial titled "New evidence that *al-Salam* propagates peace between Arabs and Jews," Mann published the letter he had addressed to the Syrian president Shukri al-Quwatli (1891–1967) and the Syrian censor office. In the letter, he denied the newspaper's affiliation with the "political movement" of Zionism. In the response he subsequently received from the office, also published in the article, the director wrote that the office did not find evidence that the newspaper promoted Zionism, but did not want to comment further on the decision to ban the newspaper from Syria.[240] In contrast to the Syrian authorities, the Lebanese and French authorities let Mann continue publishing his newspaper in Lebanon. In the period following the announcement of the UN Partition Plan for Palestine in 1947, Bracha argues, "The developments in Eretz Israel and the atmosphere that was created did not allow him [Mann] to continue publishing a Jewish newspaper."[241] This particular formulation is problematic, however, as it suggests that the Jewish identity of the newspaper, rather than its Zionist content, is what thwarted its continuation.

The title change from *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* to *al-Salam* and the newspaper's permanent closure in March 1948 are more broadly emblematic of the struggle over Palestine and its impact on the domestic scene in Lebanon and Syria. The Jewish community in Beirut, in the years leading up to the Second World War, had already experienced the influence of the Palestine question. In 1938 and 1939, during the Palestinian uprising, bombs exploded in the Jewish neighborhood of Wadi Abu Jamil. In 1947, another bomb exploded in the area following the announcement of the UN partition plan for Palestine, which had been celebrated by Jews in the neighborhood's Magen Avraham Synagogue.[242] In the latter half of the 1940s, Adjami had repeatedly called for a distinction to be made between Judaism and Zionism and stressed Jewish loyalty to Lebanon and Syria. This evocation of loyalty must have been more than merely a rhetorical ploy: Selim Mann remained in Beirut until his death in 1969. Adjami died in Damascus in the same year.

Chapter 3

The Idea of a Semitic Brotherhood

Semitism in Opposition to Antisemitism

In the second issue of *al-Shams*, published on September 22, 1934, Saad Malki published an article titled "The propaganda of the Nazis in Arab lands, and its contradiction to the Arab spirit and Islamic tolerance."[1] Published as a response to rioting between Muslims and Jews in the Algerian city of Constantine in early August that year, Malki argued that the Nazis had instigated the riots as part of their efforts to expand their influence in the Arab world. He noted that the Nazis were spreading their propaganda among "the Semites" in the East, a region that they regarded as possessing "fertile ground for their message." At the same time, the Nazis looked at the Semites with disdain, regarding them as rigid, passive, and inferior. Nazi propaganda was thus full of errors and contradictions, Malki wrote, as it bypassed the fact that Arabs are Semites.

The riots in Constantine in French Algeria had occurred in a context of shifting relations between settlers, Muslims, and Jews under the experience of colonialism.[2] Among the factors that contributed to the violence were the unequal position of Jews and Muslims in Algeria, as the 1870 Crémieux Decree had granted Jews full French citizenship while Muslims remained colonial subjects, as well as antisemitism among the European settler population.[3] As a response to the growing tensions between Muslims and Jews in Algeria, Le Comité d'Union Sémite Universelle was founded by a group of Jewish intellectuals during the 1930s, which aimed to counter the diffusion of antisemitism in Algeria, to create partnerships between Jews and Muslims, and to establish a shared Muslim-Jewish administration of Palestine.[4] In the wake of the Constantine riots, the Ligue Internationale contre l'Antisémitisme (LICA), founded in France in 1929, expanded its activities in North Africa. Egyptian Jews from Cairo and Alexandria, who had begun to organize demonstrations against German antisemitism in 1933, had previously established an Egyptian branch of the LICA.[5]

Amid these transregional debates on communal violence and antisemitism following the riots, Malki wrote in *al-Shams* that Nazi propaganda in the Arab world intended to divide "Jews and Arabs." Yet he viewed that the Nazis would not succeed in spreading their antisemitic ideology because Arabs are, like Jews, Semites. Moreover, stressing that Jews possess a historical presence in the Arab

world and adhere to Arabism, he countered the view that the Arab world was fertile ground for antisemitic propaganda.

Malki argued that Nazism contradicted the "nature of the Arabs," "the spirit of the East," and the "Islamic brand of tolerance," and hence their efforts would fail. He further described Arabs as "noble-natured" and as adhering to a religion (Islam) that preaches tolerance and respect for one's neighbor; "Semitic principles" strongly contradicted Nazi racist ideology.[6] He went on to recall that Jews from Europe had been welcomed in the Arab world following their expulsion "by different kings in the Middle Ages" and concluded by mentioning the current Jewish participation in the *nahda*:

> Until this day the Jews participate in the revival and renewal in the Arab world to jointly return, hand in hand, the blossoming ages in which the Arabs and the Arab Jews fulfilled high positions to serve Arabism and the nation. The history of *al-Andalus* is running over with golden pages that express the cooperation between Arabs and Jews. It is the duty of every Jew in the East to be worried about the Nazi propaganda and to hinder it. The Jews in the East were always serving Arabism and its nations and cooperation with the Arabs.[7]

As his response to the Constantine riots shows, Saad Malki adhered to the notion that linguistic, historical, and civilizational characteristics shared by Jews and Arabs were derived from a common Semitic background. He and his cowriters for *al-Shams* used terms such as "Semitic brotherhood" and the "Semitic Arab race" in their ongoing news articles on Nazism and antisemitism as well as in their writings on Jewish and Arab history and on Zionism in Palestine. What accounts for the centrality of the idea of the Semites in Jewish intellectual debates on Fascism in the Middle East?

This chapter uses *al-Shams* and its *nahdawi* contributors as a window to examine the global conceptual history of Semitism and to contextualize how Jewish intellectuals in the Middle East came to mobilize Semitism in response to Fascism and antisemitism. Especially salient here is the interaction between scholarly notions of Semitism and the popular writings of Jewish writers in Egypt writing in Arabic from the 1920s through the 1940s. I ask how, and to what ends, these authors popularized scholarly and philological notions of Semitism. How, too, I ask, were these notions, including their ethnic and racial connotations, compatible with a rejection of racism and the opposition to Nazi antisemitism and its Aryan-Semitic binary? In other words, I aim to explain the ideological motives behind the use of Semitism as a concept as well as the scholarly and intellectual encounters and exchanges stimulating its spread and popularity.

The transregional encounters between orientalists and Egyptologists in Europe and the Middle East during the first decades of the twentieth century, particularly at the recently established Egyptian University and at the School of Oriental Studies at Hebrew University, will help illuminate how terminology and conceptualizations of the Semites and the Semitic were disseminated within the Arabic public sphere. In this way, I seek to contribute to our understanding of the

dissemination and appropriation of this concept among intellectuals within the colonial contexts of the Middle East and to shed light on the multidirectional ways that orientalist scholarship was produced, adapted, and popularized.

My aim is hence not merely to geographically expand our knowledge of the historical trajectories of Semitism. I am primarily interested in contextualizing its mobilization and explaining which ideological purposes it served. Needless to say, perhaps, I consider Semitism and the Semite(s) to be historical and cultural constructs that, initially produced by philology, were subsequently appropriated and adapted by historical actors for various ideological ends. Furthermore, I do not take the relationship between scholarly debates on Semitism and its discussion in popular writings to be top-down or unidirectional. As the following pages will show, the boundary separating scholarly from popular or ideological understandings of the Semite was not a clear-cut distinction. Often these understandings went hand in hand. The analytical focus on the global circulation of ideas and concepts helps highlight Semitism as something more than merely a European colonial and scholarly export. Rather, this idea was widely disseminated among and incorporated and transformed by intellectuals, including Jews, within the colonial contexts of the Middle East and North Africa. Jewish writers of Arabic in Egypt, I will show, invested Semitism with new meanings and novel connotations.

The terms "Semitic" and "Semite" originate in eighteenth-century German academia, the former coined as a linguistic term denoting a group or family of languages within the effort to classify "world languages" and their speakers. The latter was an ethnological term for the speakers of Semitic languages.[8] During the nineteenth century, the fields of comparative linguistics and philology produced the idea of the Indo-European or Aryan languages and their contrasting Semitic counterparts.[9] The Semites, mainly associated with the Hebrews, were valued for their contribution of monotheism to humanity, yet they were also negatively framed as having passively received and maintained the monotheistic spirit while being unfit to accept and adapt to historical change and progress. Western Christianity was claimed to have an Aryan linguistic system, yet it had inherited its monotheism from the Semitic Hebrews, a paradox which scholars attempted to resolve in different ways.[10]

In the late nineteenth century, political antisemitism and racial ideologies appropriated the concepts of the Aryan and the Semite, and their proponents often relied for legitimacy on the scholarly fields that had produced and sustained these concepts. Particularly since Edward Said's *Orientalism* and the emergence of postcolonial studies, the Semitic and the Semite have fallen from grace as analytical categories because of their strong association with European racialized discourse. The relational entanglement of Arabs and Jews as Semites in racial and colonial discourse has recently led to scholarly calls both to forget and to remember Semitism.[11] Meanwhile, the Semites and Semitism have started to draw scholarly interest not as neutral analytical designations but as historical categories that historical actors used within various intellectual, social, and political contexts.[12] Research on the genealogies of these concepts beyond the confines of Europe

has further stimulated their historicization through the examination of their use within distinct contexts.

The idea of Semitism was not only an important element of European understandings of Jews and Arabs, but also Jewish and Arab self-understandings since the nineteenth century.[13] The idea of Semitism as a way to define oneself and one's community in the Arab world had emerged long before intellectuals started debating Nazi antisemitism. Since the nineteenth century, it was part of a scholarly and popular interest in the histories and languages of the various peoples who had inhabited the "East," including the history of Arab ethnicity and race. This interest—shared by Arabic-speaking writers of various religious and ethnic backgrounds—built on European scholarship on the Semitic languages, but simultaneously subverted scholarly and popular notions and negative characteristics of Semitic cultures in opposition to Aryan cultures.[14] European race-thinking was discussed by Arab *nahda* writers, which shaped how these intellectuals chose to frame Jews as being racially connected to Arabs, even though the concept of "race" relied heavily on language. Whereas in Europe, racial ideas on the Jews as Semites or Orientals served to separate them from their neighbors, in the Middle East the conception of Jews as Semites often served to forge connections between Jews and Arab Muslims and Christians.[15]

Discussions on Semitism in relation to Nazi antisemitism were not limited to Jewish intellectuals in the Middle East. Since the early 1930s, there had been debates in the region about whether Nazi antisemitism applied to non-Jewish "Semites" as well. Ever since abstracts from *Mein Kampf* had been published in Arabic media in 1934, there had been a continuous debate on the position of "Arabs" and "Orientals" within National Socialist ideology.[16] The Nazi leadership in Berlin was well aware of the sensitive issue of the position of Arabs in National Socialism and how it might potentially hinder their imperial ambitions in the Middle East. Hence they adjusted their propaganda to suit their intended Arab and Muslim audiences. Despite these attempts, heated discussions continued during the latter half of the 1930s in Egypt, in the press, as well as among foreign (mostly German and British) diplomats in Cairo, on whether the Nuremberg Laws also applied to Egyptians. In 1936, when Egyptian participation in the Olympics in Berlin had become a topic of debate, the German ambassador in Cairo, Eberhard von Stohrer, wrote that the Jewish press in Egypt was claiming that the racist laws indeed applied to Egyptians.[17]

The idea that Nazi antisemitism threatened "non-Jewish Semites" persisted in public and intellectual debates and appeared in critical discussions of Fascism and Nazism in the Arabic press. In the liberal regional journal *al-Risala*, produced in Egypt, several intellectuals explained that Nazi antisemitism was directed at the Semitic peoples of the East.[18] A recurring theme in *al-Shams*'s discussion of Nazism was the idea of a racial hierarchy in Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in which Arabs were purportedly said to rank thirteenth in his division of human races. In fact, there was no such specific racial hierarchy in Hitler's book.[19] *Al-Shams* further deployed the idea of Semitism to rebuke the idea that Nazis and Arabs were aligned. Saad Malki argued that the Jews, belonging to the "Semitic genealogical tree" (*al-dawha*

al-samiyya), are "pure Arabs" in race (*jins*) and faith.[20] The idea of a Semitic culture and ethnicity shared by Jews and Arabs was used to counter antisemitism and Nazi ideology as well as to create feelings of solidarity between Jews and Arabs.

The compatibility of the rejection of Nazi racism and Arab nationalist ethno-racial thought makes it understandable that notions of Semitism were voiced in *nahda* journals, including *al-Shams*, in the very same writings that refuted Nazi racism and Aryan superiority. Thus there was nothing contradictory in delegitimizing Nazi racism while expressing notions of the Semite and the Semitic in ethno-racial terms. Although biological conceptions of race were generally rejected, linguistic, historical, and ethnic conceptions of "race" were expressed in relation to identity and the self and the project of reform and revival.

A Response to Renan: Israel Wolfensohn and the Semitic Languages

One of *al-Shams*'s notable contributors during the 1930s was Israel Wolfensohn, who, as we have seen, worked as a professor of Semitic languages at the teacher training school Dar al-'Ulum and the Egyptian University.[21] Wolfensohn had been born in Jerusalem in 1899 into a religious family of Ashkenazic Jews. He was educated at a Talmud-Thora school, the Lämelschule founded by the Hilfsvereins der deutschen Juden (Relief Organization of German Jews), and the Arabic institute Dar al-Mu'allimin, where he was the only Jewish student.[22] In 1922, he went to Cairo to study Semitic languages, Islam, Philosophy, History, and English literature at the Egyptian University.[23] One of his teachers was the prominent Egyptian intellectual Taha Hussein (1889–1973), a professor of Arabic literature who became Wolfensohn's mentor and friend and motivated him to obtain a doctorate. Wolfensohn's dissertation, on the history of the Jews on the Arabian Peninsula prior to and after the rise of Islam, was completed in 1927. After a period of teaching at the Egyptian University and Dar al-'Ulum, he continued his studies in Berlin and Frankfurt. In 1930, he joined the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, a prominent orientalist association.[24] He obtained a second doctorate from the Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt for his work on Ka'b al-Ahbar, a Jewish convert to Islam associated with the *isra'iliyyat*, narratives in the Islamic tradition with alleged Jewish origins. This thesis was published in 1933 as *Ka'b al-Ahbar und seine Stellung im Hadit und in der islamischen Legendenliteratur*.[25]

Shortly after the Nazis took power in Germany, Wolfensohn returned to Egypt to teach at the Egyptian University and Dar al-'Ulum.[26] While in Cairo he regularly published not only in *al-Shams* but also in prominent Egyptian newspapers and magazines such as *al-Risala* and *al-Hilal*, sometimes using the pen names Abu Dhu'ayb (a seventh-century poet from the Arabian Peninsula), and in Hebrew publications in Palestine, Ben Ze'ev (a Hebrew translation of his name). As we have seen in the previous chapter, he was active in the Jewish community, where he was one of the initiators of the Egyptian Jewish youth club, and also sought to involve the Jews in Egypt's continuing struggle for full independence.[27] Moreover, he was a member of the Société d'Études Historiques Juives d'Égypte, established in 1925.

In 1929, Wolfensohn published *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya* (History of the Semitic languages), which he dedicated to Taha Hussein.[28] With this work, Wolfensohn provided his Arabic readership with an update and discussion of the works of prominent European, mostly German, orientalists and their debates on the topic of the origins and development of the Semitic languages. During his academic stay in Germany, Wolfensohn had established good relations with prominent orientalists.[29] At the Egyptian University, he became acquainted with German, French, and Italian orientalists who taught there.[30] The German professor in oriental languages Enno Littman (1875–1958), who had taught comparative Semitic languages and literature in Cairo between 1910 and 1912 and had since then been a frequent visitor since to the city,[31] had read Wolfensohn's work on the Semitic languages, praising his eloquence in the Arabic language; Littman's comments on the manuscript were later included in the book as an appendix.[32]

In addition to introducing his readers to the work of European orientalists, Wolfensohn presented his own views on their debates. This discussion was followed by his analysis of the historical development and linguistic analysis of the Semitic languages.[33] In the introduction, Wolfensohn attributed the coinage of the term "Semitic languages" (*semitische Sprachen*) to August Ludwig von Schlözer (as scholars commonly do now[34]) in the eighteenth century.[35] Wolfensohn argued, however, that Jewish scholars in *al-Andalus* (he does not mention names) had been the first to direct their attention to connections among the Semitic nations (*al-umam al-samiyya*). European orientalists followed in their wake, and as a result of the former group's extensive research, the connections linking the Semitic languages had become clear.[36] The religious and colonial objectives of the European states, wrote Wolfensohn, were inseparable from the study of the languages and history of the ancient Semitic nations and their heritage, which formed part of the European search for the beginnings of civilization and the ancient world's influence, through their traditions and their spirituality, on the civilization of the modern world.[37] European orientalists, according to Wolfensohn, had devoted much of their efforts to the study of Hebrew and not as much to Arabic. Therefore Wolfensohn dedicated several chapters to the Arabic language beginning with the pre-Islamic period and extending up through his present moment.[38] By doing so, via a focus that was rather conspicuous in light of the history of European orientalist scholarship,[39] he likely aimed to engage his Arabic readership in Egypt, aware of the importance attached to the Arabic language within Egyptian and Arab nationalism.

Wolfensohn remarked in his book that the idea of Semitism had not gone unnoticed in the "Eastern nations." He marked the opening of the Egyptian University in 1908 as the beginning of the study of Semitic languages (in the East), which occurred at a time when Egyptian intellectuals had begun to realize that the study of Semitic languages was important to better understand the Arabic language. To this end, they had invited European orientalists to teach at the university. The idea of Semitic languages had become well established in the time since 1908, and Wolfensohn now hoped to acquaint "Arab scholars and educated people" with the latest debates in orientalist scholarship on the Semitic languages.[40]

In the first chapter, "The Semitic languages," an overview of orientalist debates, Wolfensohn takes from European orientalist scholarship the now-abandoned idea of a primordial Semitic language, or *Ursprache* (*al-lugha al-asliyya*), from which all Semitic languages have derived as well as the conception that all Semitic languages belong to a single "genealogical tree" (*dawha wahida*).[41] He addresses the question of the native region or homeland (*mawtin*) of the Semites who spoke this primordial language.[42] Following a discussion of the diverging hypotheses of the European orientalists Ignazio Guidi (Babylonia) and Theodor Nöldeke (Armenia), he concludes that the location of the homeland of the Semitic peoples is unclear.[43] Wolfensohn adheres to the view that the waves of migration undertaken by the Semitic peoples across various ages originated from the Arabian Peninsula, though he adds that this does not imply that the Arabian Peninsula was the original native region of the Semites.[44]

Wolfensohn here adheres to the "Semitic wave theory" that had itself migrated from orientalist scholarship and Semitic philology to Arab nationalist and pan-Arab thought, in which the scholarly notion of Semitism had become invested with new meanings and was fused with ideas regarding identity and the nation.[45] Wolfensohn does not mention that these discussions had long been part of the debates of intellectuals in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab world, a group that made up a significant part of his readership; he aims to present an overview of conflicting European orientalist theories, not a discussion of adaptations among Arab and pan-Arab nationalists during the same decade. By refraining from taking a clear position on the homeland of the Semites, and by simply summarizing the divergent opinions of European orientalists on this issue, Wolfensohn aligns himself, however, with the Syrian writer and *nahda*-icon Jurji Zaydan, who had presented precisely these varying theories in his 1908 book on the Arabs before Islam. Zaydan had also called the issue "unresolved."[46]

The Semitic wave theory continued to be debated in the Middle East's public fora, including in *al-Shams*, well after the publication of Wolfensohn's *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya* in 1929. In September 1945, the young scholar Moshe Piamenta (Jerusalem, 1921), a future professor of Arabic literature at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem (1950–89), published an article in *al-Shams* on the history of the Hebrew language and its revival.[47] He divided the history of Hebrew into four historical stages: its ancient history, a period of "law and interpretation," "the age of the Tibbons,"[48] and "the current age of revival." At the start of his essay, he referred to discussions among orientalists, meaning European orientalists, on the homeland of the Semites. He referred to the German orientalist Hugo Winckler (1863–1913), who supported the idea that the Semitic homeland (*al-mawtin al-sami*) was the Arabian Peninsula. This hypothesis was one of several on the Semites' original homeland that had already found its way to Arabic audiences, including the aforementioned discussion by Jurji Zaydan.[49] Piamenta, like Wolfensohn (and Zaydan), eschews any stance in this debate and merely remarks that the issue is unresolved. Nonetheless, his discussion illustrates how questions about the Semites' homeland continued to occupy scholars of the Semitic languages in the region. Piamenta is of course writing for a mainly educated

Jewish audience that could read Arabic, within a context related to Hebrew's Zionist revival.[50]

Returning to Wolfensohn's *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, we encounter another issue among European orientalists discussed in the book: the relation between the Aryan and the Semitic languages. Wolfensohn writes that certain orientalists have claimed that these languages were all once a single language, while others, such as Carl Brockelmann and Theodor Nöldeke, considered this idea to be foolish and pointed out the fundamental differences between the two language families.[51] Wolfensohn adheres to the latter view. He also argues that the idea of a relation between the Semitic languages and the Hamitic languages, despite their similarities, is unsubstantiated. Yet the military expansions in North Africa and Egypt resulted in the incorporation of the Semitic nations into the Hamitic nations. Wolfensohn states in his introduction that war victories in the ancient world provided one of the most important reasons behind the mixing of races, as in Egypt when the Semitic Hyksos conquered the Egyptian lands. Exerting a strong influence on the ancient Egyptian languages, the Hyksos mixed with the Egyptians to such an extent that some scholars perceive the Egyptians to be a Semitic nation. Wolfensohn adds, however, that the study of languages cannot likely resolve the question of the relation between the Egyptians and the Semites.[52] I will return to the idea of the Hyksos in relation to Egyptian nationalism and the concept of Semitism as appropriated by Saad Malki in *al-Shams*. First, though, we will consider Wolfensohn's embrace of Semitism.

In the first chapter of his book, Wolfensohn criticizes the French philosopher and orientalist Ernest Renan (1823–1892), author of *Histoire générale et système comparé des langues sémitiques* (1855), and his ideas regarding a Semitic mentality.[53] Renan had constructed the Aryan and the Semite as mirror images of the other. Each member of the pair represented a pole of the movement of humanity and civilization that had once shared the same cradle but had subsequently diverged.[54] Renan adhered to the idea that languages shape the spirit of their speakers.[55] In his view, the Indo-European languages enabled the Aryans to engage in myth-making, develop polytheism, and ultimately to attain heights of creative thought and genius because of their linguistic flexibility. The Semites, in contrast, preserved the key to monotheism, yet their rigid, inflexible languages made them incapable of evolution and progress and held them immobile in time.[56]

These conceptions reflected, according to Wolfensohn, Renan's disdain for Eastern peoples and his chauvinism toward his own race and nation. Moreover, he writes that Renan regarded present-day Arabs and Jews as representatives of the ancient Semitic peoples, attributing negative characteristics to them in opposition to a positive appraisal of the ancient Greeks and the Romans.[57] For Renan, writes Wolfensohn, the Semites were weak: their monotheism made them failed peoples in comparison to pagans and other nations or peoples possessed of much stronger imaginations.[58] Moreover, Renan had argued that the Semites were utterly devoid of military capability. Opposing Renan's ideas that the Semites were rigid monotheists who lacked imagination and strength, Wolfensohn countered that there were numerous historical examples of the Semitic peoples engaged

in warfare, ranging from Babylonian kings to Hannibal (deemed a Semite) and the victories of the Arabs after the coming of Islam. Moreover, he underlined the importance of verbs in the Semitic languages in connection with the idea that Semites possessed a rather practical mentality.[59] This emphasis can be interpreted as a likely response to Renan as well, since Semitic verb conjugation was inferior to Aryan verb conjugation according to Renan and accounted, in his view, for the lack of genius among the Semites.[60]

Wolfensohn was not the first Jewish scholar to criticize Renan's take on Semitism, nor was he the first intellectual in the Arab world to object to Renan's ideas.[61] Most notably perhaps, though he is not mentioned in Wolfensohn's book, is the Hungarian Jewish scholar of Islam Ignaz Goldziher (1850–1921), who had declined a teaching position at Dar al-'Ulum in 1911.[62] His *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern* (1876), generally regarded as a response to Renan's idea in his history of the Semitic languages that the Semites lacked myth, argued that myth-making had represented an important step among the Hebrews on their path to monotheism.[63] Goldziher's attempt to de-Aryanize mythologizing by demonstrating its universality has been explained as an effort ultimately aimed, given the rising antisemitism in the nineteenth century, at the assimilation of Jews into European culture.[64] Wolfensohn, like Goldziher,[65] did not oppose Renan's conceptual schema as such with its division of Aryan and Semite, nor was his book's discussion of the Semitic languages free of certain characteristics attributed to those languages by nineteenth-century philologists. He argued, for example, that the literary styles exhibited by the Semitic nations "incline towards preservation of the old, rather than desire for the creation of change and transformation," and therefore the literary styles of the ancient Semitic nations were restricted and rigid.[66]

Wolfensohn's response to Renan shows that he adhered to a particular understanding of Renan's work. Though Renan's ideas loom large in discussions of nineteenth- and twentieth-century racial discourse, we should bear in mind the ambiguity of Renan's ideas on race and the Semites, in particular his notion that the Semites were at once inferior and superior peoples because of their contribution of monotheism to humanity.[67] Moreover, Renan's understanding of race, Robert Priest has shown, bears less of a relation to modern understandings of race than is often assumed in the scholarly literature. In his published works and lectures, Renan rejected biological conceptions of race while adhering to a form of linguistic determinism, that is, the idea that languages shape their speakers and the societies in which they are embedded, which extended to his linguistic and religious understandings of the Semites.[68] Wolfensohn's reading of Renan emphasizes the latter's portrayal of the Semites as inferior and passive peoples but leaves out Renan's simultaneous validation of the Semites as a superior race because of their moral guidance of humanity and their preservation of monotheism. Wolfensohn's selective reading of Renan helps, for the purpose of this chapter, to account for the popularization and adaptation of the concept of Semitism by Jewish authors in Egypt and more broadly serves as an example of the diverse global interpretations and the varied reception of Renan's works.

A Shared Semitic Past: Histories of Jews and Arabs on the Arabian Peninsula

In 1927, Wolfensohn had published his dissertation on the history of Jews on the Arabian Peninsula, *Tarikh al-Yahud fi Bilad al-'Arab fi al-Jahiliyya wa-Sadr al-Islam* (The history of the Jews in Arab lands during the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods), which he had completed for the degree awarded him by the Egyptian University.[69] In the foreword to the dissertation, Taha Hussein praised Wolfensohn for combining his eloquence in European and Semitic languages with his knowledge of modern scholarly methods. The knowledge of the Semitic languages possessed by European orientalists, Hussein argued, did not equal their mastery of the methods of modern scholarship, and as a result many of them had made inescapable mistakes. Hussein's critique of European orientalism reminds us once again that the scholarship of orientalists was not uncritically received in the Middle East. Hussein claimed that the orientalists' sometimes flawed but nevertheless useful studies continued to be largely ignored in the Arab world, so Wolfensohn's study was to be regarded as a welcome introduction to a topic of great value and influence in the cultural, political, and religious history of the Arab community (*al-umma al-'arabiyya*).[70] Hussein agreed with the book's thesis, which posited that the Jewish "colonies" in the Arabian Peninsula had exerted a great intellectual and cultural influence on the pre-Islamic population on the peninsula. He concluded by expressing his hope that Wolfensohn would go on to study Jewish connections with the Arab community in the Islamic period as well.[71]

In the dissertation, Wolfensohn narrated a history of mutual influence and cooperation between Jews and Muslims on the Arabian Peninsula, which downplayed animosity and conflict. He discussed the opinions of orientalists on the Jewish influence on Islam and the prophet Muhammad's relations with the Jewish tribes in Mekka and Yathrib and judged the former's opinions in light of the Quranic text, Ibn Hisham's edition of Ibn Ishaq's biography of Muhammad, and the Talmud. By emphasizing the Jewish influence on Islam in his scholarly works, Abd El Gawad notes that Wolfensohn stands in line with German Jewish scholars Abraham Geiger and Gotthold Weil.[72] In addition to the German and the German Jewish orientalist tradition, I argue, Wolfensohn's historical views should also be understood in relation to his activities outside academia: they should be situated in relation to Egyptian and Arab nationalism as well as to his Zionist vision.

Israel Wolfensohn's former intellectual mentor Josef Horovitz (1874–1931), a German Jewish professor of Semitic languages in Frankfurt, had held the view that the Arabian Peninsula was the original cradle of the Semitic peoples (as discussed in his 1929 article "Judeao-Arabic Relations in Pre-Islamic Times"[73]). Though he did not identify himself as a Zionist, Horovitz was the founder and director of the School of Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University and a proponent of the idea of a Semitic brotherhood between Jews and Arabs, which he perceived to be fundamental for a regional solution to the alienation between "Jews and Arabs."[74]

In 1939, Wolfensohn, by then living in Jerusalem and working as an Arabic educator, wrote a letter in Hebrew to the Kedma Mizraha movement, which advocated Jewish-Arab rapprochement and Zionist integration in the East. He asked whether the organization would publish his work in Hebrew.[75] Yet a Hebrew edition of the book had already been published in 1931 and, tellingly, this edition was dedicated not to Taha Hussein but to the memory of his German mentor and friend, Josef Horovitz.[76]

When Israel Wolfensohn left Cairo for Palestine in 1938[77] to work in Arabic education, *al-Shams* continued to report about his activities and to publish interviews with him regarding the development of Arabic language instruction among the Jewish population in Palestine.[78] From 1940 until his retirement in the 1960s, Wolfensohn, now known as Ben Ze'ev, worked as the inspector of Arabic in the Jewish National Council's Department of Education.[79] In 1944, Wolfensohn, by then cooperating with Jewish Agency representatives Elias Sasson and Moshe Shertok to improve Arabic teaching for Jewish students in secondary schools, published a manual for the teaching of Arabic, *Al-Fusul al-Mukhtara min al-Adab al-'Arabi* (Selected works from Arabic literature), aimed at Jewish students of Arabic in secondary Hebrew schools in Palestine.[80] Wolfensohn was dedicated to teaching Arabic as a living and practical language as well as integrating spoken Arabic in the curriculum, as opposed to the focus on classical Arabic at the Hebrew University.[81]

As I will show later, Wolfensohn employed the idea of a Semitic brotherhood in relation to contemporary Palestine. Before discussing Wolfensohn's return to Palestine in 1938 and his views on Arab-Jewish cooperation, I will look more closely into the historical theme of Jews on the Arabian Peninsula in relation to the idea of the Semites. This theme, it will be argued, served as a historical reservoir among Egyptian Jews sympathetic to Zionism to promote Arab-Jewish cooperation.

In 1934, the year *al-Shams* debuted, the Egyptian Jewish writer and *al-Shams* contributor Elie Levi Abu 'Asal published in Arabic the book *Yaqazat al-'Alam al-Yahudi* (The awakening of the Jewish world), dedicated to the president of the Egyptian Jewish community, Joseph Cattaui Basha.[82] The first pages contain photographs of Cattaui, the Sephardic chief rabbi Haim Nahum Effendi, the Egyptian king Fu'ad I as well as the author himself (Figure 5). Unfortunately, besides this publication and his contributions to *al-Shams* during the 1930s, little is known about Abu 'Asal. Yitzhak Shamush, a Jewish scholar and journalist from Jerusalem who taught modern Arabic literature at the Hebrew University and frequently contributed to *al-Shams*, wrote an article for the *Palestine Post* published on November 14, 1947, about Jewish authors in contemporary Arabic literature in which he mentioned Abu 'Asal, alongside the poet Murad Farag and the newspaper *al-Shams*, as a representative of Jewish authorship in Arabic in Egypt at the time.[83] Like *al-Shams*, Abu 'Asal's book combines Egyptian nationalism and Zionism and emphasizes a shared Arab-Jewish history thought relevant for the awakening of the Jewish world at hand.

Looking at the book's encyclopedic contents, one finds a variety of topics that broadly relate to the aim of emancipation and that highlight Jewish contributions to the societies in which they have lived. Starting with the Pharaohs and "the history of Zionism and Moses the Spokesman," Abu ʿAsal jumps to Herzl, with whom the "second episode of Zionism" is said to have begun.[84] The remaining chapters of the book discuss the centuries in between these episodes, focusing on, among others, the Islamic conquests, the work of Jewish scholars in modern Germany, prominent Jewish figures in contemporary Egypt such as Simon Mani and Leon Castro (known for their Zionist activism), notable British and French figures of Jewish birth, including Adolphe Crémieux, Moses Montefiore, and Benjamin Disraeli, Jewish participation in national armies during the First World War, Jewish tribes in the Arabian desert, Yehuda ha-Levi, Napoleon, the Ottoman Jewish vizier Haim Farhi, and the relations between Arabs and Jews past and present. To the contemporary reader, the collection might seem peculiar because of its wide range of briefly discussed topics and the relative absence of a chronological or geographical order. At the same time, the book can be said to provide us with an extraordinary glimpse into the mind of a—now obscure—Egyptian writer of Arabic possessed of a clear emancipationist agenda and Zionist sympathies. Here we find the historical episodes that mattered to him in relation to the Jewish awakening currently at hand.

The booklet also contains a discussion on antisemitism in Europe, which will be considered in Chapter 5. For the purpose of this chapter, I will focus on Abu ʿAsal's discussion of Jewish history in the Arab world and on the Arabian Peninsula in particular. In a three-page chapter entitled "The tolerance of the Arabs toward the Jews," Abu ʿAsal argues that Arab tolerance can be ascribed to their "natural inclinations."[85] Moreover, compared to other nations, their tolerance has been exceptional:

> The Arabs have always and everywhere been on intimate terms with the Jews, an intimacy based on sincerity and the best intentions. The Jews walk with them on a well-trodden, straight and clean path. Rarely did the Jews find amongst the other nations a noble sympathy that could equal the sympathy of the Arabs. It would not be remarkable if the two races would mix. Because they are a creation of the same substance, and they are both the offspring of Abraham, peace be upon him.[86]

The last and longest chapter of *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam al-Yahudi*, and the only one to contain several footnotes that are helpful in situating Abu ʿAsal's ideas, is dedicated to the topic of Jews on the Arabian Peninsula. Abu ʿAsal starts by crediting "Professor Wolfensohn or Abu Dhuʾayb"—the latter's Arabic pen name—for his extensive research on a topic that, in Abu ʿAsal's words, "is of great importance and has an extensive influence on the literary, political and religious history of the Arab community."[87] The topic allowed for "the uncovering of the dialects of the Arabs and their religion and habits, the blood relationship between Jews and Arabs, and the resemblances between the Hebrew language and the Arabic language."[88]

In addition to the work of Wolfensohn, Abu ʿAsal refers to the works of the Dutch orientalist Reinhart Dozy (whose *The Israelites at Mecca* was published in 1864), Oxford professor of Arabic David Samuel Margoliouth (author of the 1924 study *The Relations between Arabs and Israelites prior to the Rise of Islam*), and professor of Hebrew Joseph Klausner and considers their discussions on the periodization of the Jewish migrations to the Arabian Peninsula.[89] Abu ʿAsal's work seems to have been based primarily, however, on the Tanakh and the Islamic tradition such as the works of al-Bukhari, Ibn Hisham, and al-Waqidi and the tenth-century collection *Kitab al-Aghani* (Book of Songs). The "silence" of Hebrew sources on the Jews of the Arabian Peninsula suggested, according to Abu ʿAsal, that the Jews there had been cut off from their brethren, and the peninsula had been isolated from the civilized world.[90]

Abu ʿAsal seeks primarily to argue that Jews on the Arabian Peninsula had exercised an extensive influence on the inhabitants of the *Hijaz*, first by spreading monotheism among the pre-Islamic population on the peninsula. He writes: "The monotheists were few at the beginning, but increased gradually, and as the ages passed, the Jewish faith with its Mosaic law filled their hearts."[91] The Jewish influence on Islam is further illustrated by Muhammad's initial direction of Islamic prayer to Jerusalem as well as the borrowing of the practice of fasting from Jewish fasting observed on *ʿashura*.[92] The Jews, in turn, were heavily influenced by Arab habits and traditions, so much so they were hardly distinguishable from the Arabs: "From the history of the Jews, one does not learn about a region in which the Jews were so extensively influenced by the morals, habits and traditions of its sons, except for the Arabian Peninsula."[93]

Besides their overlap in the religious, social, political, and economic domains, Abu ʿAsal claims that the Jews and Arabs on the peninsula together took part in an intellectual and poetic awakening.[94] The Arab-Jewish symbiosis on the peninsula is symbolized by its poetic heritage. Abu ʿAsal cites at length a poem by al-Samaw'al bin ʿAdiya that is said to reveal the values of "generosity, braveness, modesty, mildness and patience" shared by Jews and Arabs.[95] This poet, who a century earlier had attracted the interest of German Jewish scholars, occupied a legendary status in Arab culture as a paragon of loyalty ("More loyal than al-Samaw'al" ran one proverb).[96] Among Jewish contemporaries in the Arab world, al-Samaw'al was popularized as a modern-day exemplar of Jewish loyalty.[97]

As we find in Wolfensohn's writings, Abu ʿAsal's vision of Arab-Jewish and Muslim-Jewish relations on the Arabian Peninsula emphasizes a shared cultural and religious space and the harmonious relations between the two groups. Abu ʿAsal passes over conflict entirely and in the last chapter of his book is rather explicit about the contemporary relevance of harmonious relations. Adopting the present tense, Abu ʿAsal states that since Jews and Arabs are connected by ethno-racial ties and shared interests the two groups cannot be separated. Moreover, concerning the long history of Jews in the Arab world and the continuous mutual Arab-Jewish influence there, the Jews have a rightful place in Palestine, where they have yet again contributed to its awakening. This passage deserves to be quoted at length:

> It is inevitable for us to see that the two nations are completely tied, and they share material and spiritual interests and the conviction that they will be two partners for better or for worse. They cannot live separately, because they feel that none of the two can befall evil or suffering without the other suffering from it. It is unavoidable for their brotherhood, the spiritual unity and the natural agreement stretched out over long periods of time that exists between them, to be transported into the political domain and to mould it materially and officially, without any rebellion against it, or departure from it. The Arabs will not pick any fruits from the demonstrations that are undertaken by the advocates of disorder and their leaders. The removal of the Jews from Palestine is not supported by humanity and is not allowed by the principles of justice. It is legitimate to remove them from those areas after they have civilized and vitalized it? Is it correct to dispossess them of their factories, farms, business, synagogues, residencies, and schools, after they have made every effort of their souls for the sake of its development and progress, after they have spent their money for it to reach its awakening and success? For the Jews need the Arabs, and the Arabs need the Jews, as they are one, connected nation, they belong to the Semitic race and do not accept their separation and dissolution. They are descending from one ethnic background, that of Abraham (Ibrahim), peace be upon him.[98]

In Abu 'Asal's call for cooperation between the Semites in Palestine, he shows an awareness of the opposition among the "Arab" population in Palestine to Zionist colonization, as he refers to the demonstrations taking place. He presents the opponents of Zionist efforts to be creators of disorder and chaos, hindering the awakening of the land—an awakening they could take part in, alongside their Jewish racial brothers. This sort of rhetoric was common in *al-Shams*: the focus was on mutual partnership in Palestine, and opposition to the Zionist movement was presented as coming from a small extremist faction of Palestinian society aimed at creating strife between Arabs and Jews.

Ideas that Jews (and Arabs) belonged to the Semitic race had circulated within the Zionist movement before the Balfour Declaration and Mandate Palestine. Ideas on Semitism and Pan-Semitism were not a marginal phenomenon in Zionist history from its inception onward. These visions included, from the early twentieth century onward, the idea that the Semitic race of Jews and Arabs were equal partners in a revival of the East.[99] However, within turn-of-the-century racial hierarchies, Jews were often regarded above the Arabs in the Semitic hierarchy. The British position toward Palestine was also deeply rooted in a racial discourse on Jews and Palestinian Arabs.[100] As James Renton shows, the idea of the Semites appeared in British colonial discourse in the Middle East following the First World War with the aim of using it to reconcile Zionism with Palestinian Arab nationalism.[101] The Middle East adviser Sir Mark Sykes (1879–1919), a firm believer in racial nationalist thought, promoted the purported Semitic bond between Arabs and Jews and had publically declared that the Jews should closely connect themselves to the Arab revival and cooperate with the Arabs, advising Jews "to look through Arab glasses."[102]

Figure 5 Photo of Elie Levi Abu ʿAsal in *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam al-Yahudi* (1934).
Source: Historical Society of Jews from Egypt.

The Palestine question had fully entered Egyptian public debate during the Palestinian uprising against Zionist immigration and the British Mandate from 1936, which led to the appointment of the Peel Commission and the Partition Plan of 1937.[103] This is the moment that, according to James Renton, marked the "splintering of the Semite": the propagation of coexistence between Arabs and Jews, and the idea that they formed one race, was abandoned in the report of the British Royal Commission.[104] Within the race discourse of the Semites underpinning the idea of the partition of Palestine (in 1937 and in later plans), Yair Wallach shows, Arabs and Jews were regarded as equally legitimate, yet ultimately incompatible national groups, as Jews were conceived as "modern" and Arabs as "backwards."[105] Wallach further notes that political visions among Jews and Arabs themselves, based on the idea of Semitic affinities, had been quickly marginalized after the British occupation of Palestine and resistance to Jewish immigration.[106] The mobilizations of Semitism examined in this chapter show that despite its demise in British colonial discourse, the idea of Semitic affinities between Jews and Arabs, including ethno-racial bonds, continued to resonate in public debate and was not completely stripped of its political and cultural potential.

In 1937, before his departure from Cairo, Israel Wolfensohn had commented on the political question of Palestine in *al-Shams*. He declared that he had previously wanted to avoid the topic, perhaps averting possible controversy arising over his Zionist views.[107] Wolfensohn wrote that his colleagues at Dar al-'Ulum were increasingly asking him about his opinion and that he decided to announce his stance publicly. In the article entitled "A call for mutual understanding," he expressed his support for a shared homeland and for cooperation between Arabs and Jews in Palestine, in accordance with what was being propagated by Malki and his network of Jewish writers in the Middle East. Wolfensohn opposed the partition plan, which, he stated, had failed to please either side of the conflict.[108] Instead, he proposed an international conference, in which both Arab and Jewish civilian and governmental representatives would participate, the delegates drawn from the Arab capitals, all Islamic countries, the Zionist movement, and Western countries "in which large Jewish communities reside, such as Britain, North America and Poland."[109] Wolfensohn expressed the idea, common among *nahda* thinkers, of Islamic tolerance of Jews during the Middle Ages, as opposed to the position of Jews in Europe during the same period. He further stated:

> Jews view Muslims in a special way because they firmly believe that the Arabs are the descendants of Isma'il, peace be upon him, and they are the closest to them of all humankind. The Jews do not forget that until today, the Jews are treated well in Islamic countries, and they wholeheartedly wish that the struggle in Palestine will end, and that the people there will find a solution that will please both sides.[110]

In Wolfensohn's "Call for mutual understanding," we can thus see how the idea of cultural and ethnic ties between Arabs and Jews was for Wolfensohn not merely of scholarly interest; rather, he saw its political potential to foster good Arab-Jewish

relations. Saad Malki responded to Wolfensohn a week later, employing Zionist imaginary:

> Ever since the Jews have started to return to Palestine, they have been examples of peace and cooperation with their racial brothers, the Arabs, in the revival of the shared homeland. They did not return as conquering plunderers, but as dedicated builders, an olive branch, symbol of peace, in the one hand, and a plough in the other, cultivating the barren land, bringing it to life, turning the ruined land into gardens and industries, overflowing with movement and life. They have raised their voices since the earliest hour in demand of peace and cooperation, and reached their hands towards their Arab brothers. But until today politics has failed to realize these hopes.[111]

Like Wolfensohn, Malki rejected the Partition Plan because it contradicted his view of a shared homeland for Arabs and Jews. He criticized the policies of the British Mandate government in general, which, he argued, had only created division between Arabs and Jews rather than bringing them closer together. He argued that politics was unreliable in general and that rapprochement between Arabs and Jews should be accomplished through culture.[112]

As the abovementioned discussion on Palestine makes clear, the history of the Jews on the Arabian Peninsula and the mutual influence of Arabs and Jews and their cultural accomplishments there provided an analogy for contemporary Arab-Jewish relations. Moreover, this sense of the past was a common historical wellspring for proponents of the *nahda*, for whom the newspaper *al-Shams* sought to provide a Jewish platform.

In 1943, *al-Shams* reported about a lecture by Taha Hussein at a Jewish school in Alexandria on the theme of the historical relations between Arabs and Jews and connected its content to the idea of Semitism and opposition to Nazi antisemitism. Hussein had delivered his lecture on December 23 in the presence of Alexandrian notables and the Alexandrian chief rabbi Moshe Ventura. *Al-Shams* published several laudatory articles about the lecture, including an interpretation of Hussein's ideas published on the issue's front page.[113] In the lecture, Hussein had presented a thesis similar to the one advanced by his former student Wolfensohn in the latter's dissertation on the historical Jewish presence on the Arabian Peninsula and the Jewish influence on the Arabs. Hussein maintained contacts with orientalists at the Hebrew University and had traveled to Jerusalem the year before, though his visit to the Zionist institution was kept away from the press to avoid controversies.[114]

Mansur Wahba, a lecturer of engineering at Fu'ad I University in Alexandria and member of the aforementioned Egyptian Jewish reform society, wrote a summary of the lecture.[115] Hussein's speech had led Wahba to conclude that his Jewish readers should not forget that they, as Jews, were members of a clan closely related to the Arabs, had lived in harmony with the Arabs, and had always been protected by them.[116] Wahba summarized the lecture as follows: after the Romans had ousted the Jews from Palestine, the latter spread out northward and

southward in the Arabian Peninsula and near Medina in particular. There, the Jews began to transform the host culture with their religious culture and their meritorious behavior, so that many of them (the Arabs) would come to accept the (monotheistic) religion of Islam. When Islam appeared, the (Arabian) tribes of Aws and Khazraj near Medina had been so influenced by the teachings of the Jews that "they were the Arabs that were mostly prepared to accept the newly revealed religion."[117] Conversely, the Jews were also influenced by the Arabs and adopted the latter's language and many of their ways, including their poetry.[118] Hussein had further said, Wahba tells us, that the Jews were known among their Arab brethren for their loyalty and their quest for ideals, mentioning in this regard the pre-Islamic Jewish poet al-Samaw'al bin 'Adiya.

Wahba continues with the early Islamic period. Under Islam, the order of the second Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattab declared that only one religion would be tolerated on the Arabian Peninsula: Jews and Christians were either expelled or converted to Islam. Although the activities of the Jews waned in the Eastern parts of the "Arab empire," they continued to flourish elsewhere. When 'Amr ibn al-'As entered Egypt with his army, many Jews resided in Alexandria. They would enlist in the Arab armies in large numbers and take part in the conquest of North Africa as well as the Iberian Peninsula under the leadership of Tariq ibn Ziyad. Jews would then continue to cooperate with the Arabs in the political and economic administration of the Umayyads in *al-Andalus*. Wahba writes: "If there had not been this strong cooperation, then there would not have been this enormous Arab empire." Moreover, during the ages of the vast Arab empire, he claimed, Christian Europe looked toward the East in the same manner that the East was currently looking toward Europe with regard to their scientific achievements and knowledge. It was the Jews, Wahba writes, who transmitted the Arab heritage to Europe and kindled the flame of civilization there.[119]

In Mansur Wahba's writings on Hussein's lecture, it is hard to pinpoint where he stops paraphrasing Hussein and starts to express his own take on the matter. The latter seems to be particularly the case in another article in the same issue, entitled "The historical relations between Arabs and Jews." Here he explicitly connects these relations to the present and creates a historical binary setting the Jewish experience of antisemitism in Europe, particularly the experience of the Inquisition and pogroms, against a presumed harmonious Jewish history in the Arab world.[120] Moreover, present-day Europe, in his view materialistic and cruel, is starkly contrasted with the morally superior and spiritual East.[121]

As elsewhere in his writings in *al-Shams*, Wahba's interpretation of Hussein's lecture shows him adhering to an opposition between a materialist Europe and a spiritual East. The material/spiritual binary seems distant from Hussein's Hegelian thesis of East-West interaction and integration and his claim that Egypt was essentially a part of the Mediterranean and had already been integrated into Europe, a view put forth in his seminal work *Mustaqbal al-Thaqafa fi Misr* (*The Future of Culture in Egypt*, 1938). The idea of a morally superior, spiritual East, its overriding virtues manifested when contrasted with a technically advanced,

materialist Europe, was a very common notion in intellectual and nationalist debates of 1930s' Egypt, a time of an emergent orientation to the Arab East that provided a sympathetic environment for the claim that its own spiritual and moral heritage had been a source of modern advancement in Europe.[122]

The topic of Hussein's lecture led Wahba to share his perspective on the current predicament of the Jews in Europe under the Nazis, which he merged with a vision of their future. He wrote that although the Jews had assisted Europe and had civilized the Europeans for ages, the latter's resentment and hate toward them would not disappear any time soon. Wahba explicitly addressed his Jewish readers when he wrote that Hitler had ended "our era of Europe": "we need to be farsighted," he added, "and understand that our future will be with the sons of our Arab cousins."[123] The future that Wahba envisions for the Jews among their Arab "kin" takes shape as a relationship of cooperation and mutual understanding but not necessarily of equal status. The Jews need to transform themselves into a "strong Hebrew unity" that will enable them to work together optimally with the Arabs: "they with their strength and abundance and we with our knowledge and art."[124] Thus, in the context of a Jewish presence in the Arab world, as had previously transpired in Europe, the Jews carry the torch of civilization and culture; it is they who will raise the scientific and cultural level of the Arabs. This is also necessary, Wahba writes, for a strong front to be mounted against the biased propaganda coming from Europe (likely a reference to Nazi propaganda) and to "live in Hebrew-Arab unity."[125]

Saad Malki discussed Hussein's lecture in *al-Shams* on January 7, 1944, and once more the coverage was given pride of place on the front page. It was a sign of the "awakening of the East" and of care for its heritage, manifesting the mutual support between the "sons of Arabism."[126] The lecture came at the right time, in his view, given contemporary discussions on Arab unity.[127] Malki stressed the Jewish contribution to European progress: the lecture served as a reminder of how the Jews had served as the crucial link in the transmission of Greek and Arab knowledge to Europe, and how they taught Europe the means of "awakening and science" and provided it with faith and ideals. But the West—and here he reinforces the East-West binary premised on the idea of tolerance versus persecution—has failed to put these ideals into practice: the Jews in Europe still do not find peace.[128] The history of Jews and Arab culture is then connected to Zionism and to a regional Arab-Jewish revival as he understands it:

> The Jews are one part of the Semitic race that is now known as the Arab … their wish to return to Palestine proves the attachment of Jews to Arab Semitic traditions. The Hebrew University[129] shows the fierce interest of the Jews in Arab culture … The East currently witnesses an Arab cultural awakening that finds expression amongst the Jewish youth, who have used *al-Shams* as a platform to express their personal sentiments and write their ideas. In short, the Jews are no strangers to Arabism and Arab culture. They are proud to belong to the Arab family tree, and seek to accomplish the renewal of this noble past in the service of Arabism and Arab culture.[130]

Al-Shams's discussion on the lecture of Taha Hussein in Alexandria was also related to resistance to Nazi antisemitism. The Nazi Arabic radio station in Berlin, which employed Arab journalists and presenters, had allegedly picked up the lecture. In September 1944, *al-Shams* commented on the "Arabs on the payroll of radio Berlin" who had "sold themselves to the Nazis."[131] An Arab presenter had, so it appears from the report in *al-Shams*, attacked the president of Fu'ad I University and had claimed that the "Arab Jews" discussed in Hussein's lecture had known no other poet or intellectual than al-Samaw'al. "No wonder," *al-Shams* commented in the article "The Jewish share in Arab culture," which aimed to show the opposite was the case, "to hear such claims from someone who betrayed his fatherland to serve the Nazis and distort the truth."[132] The author, most likely again Malki himself, unfolds a historical narrative that could hardly have been unfamiliar to his regular readers, encompassing Jewish literati on the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula, Jewish scholars and translators in Baghdad, and the golden ages of Yehuda ha-Levi and Maimonides in *al-Andalus*. He concludes: "We do not write these remarks in order to respond to the traitors of the Berlin [radio] station, but because it pleases us to speak about the Arabism of Israel (*'urubat isra'il*)."[133] These observations illustrate once again how Nazi antisemitism served as a counterpoint to underscore his national and regional agenda with regard to Arab-Jewish relations, for which the history of Jews on the Arabian Peninsula and in the rest of the Arab world provided an important repository.

The Semites and Colonial Archaeology in Egypt

The idea of Semitism and the Semitic peoples was also a recurring theme in Saad Malki's writings on the occasion of the annual celebrations of Pesach, in which he not only reflected on the exodus story's relevance to the present day but also regularly touched upon recent scholarly debates on the Israelites in Egypt.[134] He regarded Pesach above all as the feast of freedom and its victory over tyranny, in which truth had triumphed over falsehood; he logically connected it to the European arena and its contemporary struggles between "tyranny and freedom" and "dictatorship and democracy." Malki further wrote numerous articles on the "historical events" of the Passover, which contained popular summaries of scholarly debates on its historicity as well as fictional narratives. In the issues of *al-Shams* published on Pesach in 1945, 1946, and 1947, Malki wrote various historical and fictional narrations of the exodus from Egypt with an eye to the situation in contemporary Egypt. These articles allow us not only to grasp how he envisioned and explained the exodus to his Jewish readers within the context of Egyptian nationalism, and hence to more closely examine his attempt to reconcile his Egyptianist orientation with Jewish tradition, but also to further explore the role of the category of Semitism in his integrationist vision for Jews in Egypt.

The idea of Semitism and the Semitic peoples was a recurring theme in Malki's writings on "Israel in Egypt" and the "story of the Exodus," particularly with regard to the debated Jewish and Semitic origins of the foreign Hyksos rulers. The latter

are commonly said to have ruled Pharaonic Egypt during the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries BCE. Because they arrived in Egypt from present-day Syria, they were commonly called Semitic in the scholarly literature of the first half of the twentieth century, described often as "Shepherd rulers."[135] Israel Wolfensohn's *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, as we have seen, argued that the Hyksos had exerted a strong influence on the ancient Egyptian languages. Some contemporary scholars perceived the ancient Egyptians to be a Semitic nation, so mixed were the Hyksos with the latter. As a philologist, Wolfensohn was hesitant to connect the Semitic origins of the Hyksos to the racial composition of modern Egyptians, as the study of languages could not likely resolve questions concerning the relation between the Egyptians and the Semites. Wolfensohn's reservations notwithstanding, Malki offered extensive discussion of whether Egyptians were Semites due to the Hyksos influence in his newspaper. Why was Malki so preoccupied with the origins of the Hyksos in his articles?

Malki was certainly not alone in his interest in the "foreign" rulers of ancient Egypt. The scholarly and popular interest in the Hyksos during this period should be seen within a wider context encompassing the entanglements of Egyptomania and colonialism, Pharaonism, and anti-imperialism. The year 1922 had marked the first year of Egypt's constitutional monarchy under King Fu'ad following its formal independence from Great Britain. That same year Howard Carter discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings, setting in motion a new wave of foreign and Egyptian interest in the country's Pharaonic past. The history of foreign-led excavations in Egypt and the privileging of Westerners within the study of antiquity, the European monopoly on Egyptian museums, and the exhibition of archaeological treasures (such as the bust of Nefertiti) in European museums are painful evidence of the mechanisms of the colonial order that continued to operate in the postindependence period.[136]

Egyptomania, the European and predominantly French and British fascination with ancient Egypt that dates from Napoleon's invasion (and reflected mutual rivalry between the two European powers), was heightened by the discoveries of Carter and his contemporaries. In parallel, Egyptian nationalists and anti-imperialists took pride in Egypt's Pharaonic past, contributing to a public and intellectual trend commonly labeled Pharaonism.[137] The Pharaonic current among Egyptian nationalists and its popular imaginary were deeply entangled with colonial archaeology in Egypt. What European Egyptologists and Egyptian nationalists shared was a fascination with a glorious Egyptian past; what was at stake in the latter's anti-imperial struggle were the rights of access to, and ownership of, Egypt's past and present.

William Flinders Petrie (1853–1942), one of the most prominent figures of British archaeology in Egypt and the author of *Hyksos and Israelite Cities* (1906), had led several excavations in Egypt during the early twentieth century. Bound up with his archaeological efforts was his hope to prove, as Reid notes, "the literal accuracy of the Bible, and [he] saw racial conquest as the critical determents of the history of civilizations."[138] He argued, based on his analysis of sculptures, that the Hyksos had Semitic origins.[139] During the 1930s, precisely the time of the Nazi

rise to power, a new scholarly debate on the Hyksos emerged in which the idea of Aryan or Indo-European origins of the Hyksos (and hence an Aryan origin for innovation in the Near East) came to rival the Semitic hypothesis.[140]

In the blossoming genre of popular historical writings in Egypt during the Monarchic period, the invasion of the Hyksos often served as an analogy for foreign rule in Egypt. They were perceived to be one of the various foreign rulers, such as the Turkish Ottomans, who had occupied Egypt since Pharaonic times up until the modern British invasion. Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz relied on the works of Egyptologists, including Flinders Petrie, when exploring Pharaonic themes in his first three historical novels.[141] In 1944, he published the historical novel *Kifah Tiba (Thebes at War)* in which he retold the expulsion of the Hyksos by the Pharaoh Ahmose, the latter serving as the novel's hero. Literary critics have interpreted *Kifah Tiba* as an extended analogy for the foreign occupation of Egypt: the Hyksos' ouster prefigures the 1919 Egyptian revolt against British rule and the ruling Turkish elites in Egypt.[142] Moreover, the national struggle of the Egyptians against the foreign Hyksos was cast in racial terms, the expulsion of the Hyksos presented as racial purification.[143] Yet in Egyptian writings the Hyksos figured as more than merely foreign rulers posing a threat to a transhistorical Egyptian identity. For the prominent writer and journalist Muhammad Husayn Haykal, a significant representative of the Pharaonist current during the 1920s (though he switched to Arab and Islamic themes during the 1930s), the mixing or incorporation (*indimaj*) of foreign elements, including the Hyksos rulers, into the Egyptian collective represented a crucial aspect of Egyptian history and identity.[144]

On March 28, 1945, Malki published an article on Pesach in which he discussed the possibility that the Israelites in Egypt were oppressed because they bore Semitic origins and had been associated with the Semitic Hyksos rulers ousted by Ahmose and his "patriotic movement." Acknowledging that much about the period of the Hyksos rulers in Egypt remained unknown, Malki discussed various findings and arguments that historians and archaeologists had brought forth about the mysterious foreign shepherd-rulers, their Semitic origins, and their reign over the Nile valley. He summarized and discussed the archaeologists' opinions on the question of the Jewishness of the Hyksos as well as on their Semitic origins and whether Joseph had become a vizier in Egypt during or following Hyksos rule, a topic then under debate.[145]

Although Malki stated from the outset that it was uncertain whether the Hyksos had in fact ruled Egypt during the time of Joseph and whether they could be associated with the oppression of the Israelites that followed, he discussed this possibility at length. According to this view, Pharaoh would have welcomed Joseph only if there were a "racial relation" between them, a notion that suggested the Semitic origin of the rulers at the time. The Israelites enjoyed peace and tranquility under the rule of the Hyksos, inhabiting defensive areas along Egypt's eastern borders and helping to build fortresses and cities. Here, Malki referred to the excavations in Egypt of the aforementioned British archaeologist and Egyptologist Flinders Petrie and his book *Hyksos and Israelite Cities*, whose findings, Malki argues, showed that the Hyksos were not to be regarded as barbaric or backward

but rather were a civilized people, possessing a strong desire to excel in arts, craftsmanship, and architecture. The ancient Egyptians, however, thought of themselves as the greatest people on earth in terms of civilization and religion; they regarded the Semitic nations with disdain.[146]

Malki then summarized the view that held that the Hyksos were not Jewish and that they ruled Egypt before the Israelites came into the picture. According to this chronology Joseph was a vizier under a "full Egyptian Pharaoh." The professor Abraham Shalom Yahuda (1877–1951) had set out this position in his book *The Accuracy of the Bible* (1935) that had been published in 1935. At that time a visiting scholar in New York, Yahuda had been born in Jerusalem into an Iraqi-Jewish family and had studied Semitic languages in Germany, where he developed close relations with Goldziher. In 1915, he became a professor of Judaic studies at the University of Madrid. In the 1920s, he became a collector at The National Library in Jerusalem. A Zionist proponent of Arab-Jewish relations, he had unsuccessfully urged Herzl to be more concerned with the Arabs.[147] The works of Yahuda, described in *al-Shams* as an "Eastern Jew," were important references for Malki, who in 1941–2 had serially published Yahuda's 1912 Arabic edition of *Duties of the Heart*, the subject of Yahuda's 1905 dissertation. In print Malki praised Yahuda's lecture series "Arab Civilization in al-Andalus," delivered at the American University in Cairo.[148]

In *The Accuracy of the Bible*, aimed at a popular audience, Yahuda criticized the school of biblical Higher Criticism, most notably represented by Julian Wellhausen (1844–1918). Though he was generally positive about biblical criticism, the Higher Criticism, Yahuda argued, had made it "customary to consider it highly scientific to challenge everything Biblical and to alter the text at one's heart desire."[149] He also criticized the view that denied that Egyptology and archaeology could contribute to an understanding of the Bible. Yahuda expanded his theory of a "Hebrew-Egyptian environment," set out in his earlier work *The Language of the Pentateuch in Its Relation to Egyptian* (1932), which held that archaeological and linguistic evidence from the field of Egyptology confirmed the antiquity and historicity of the Joseph and Exodus narratives. He offered his proof by demonstrating that there were Egyptian linguistic elements in the Hebrew of the Bible but also by arguing that the Bible included information about the manners and customs of ancient Egypt that corresponded to what had been gleaned from archaeological findings.[150]

Malki summarized Yahuda's arguments against what the latter called the Hyksos-Joseph thesis. Yahuda rejected not only the idea that the Hyksos were Jewish but also the claim that Joseph had been a vizier under a Hyksos ruler. His research aimed to show that Joseph had served as vizier under a full Egyptian Pharaoh in the period following the expulsion of the Hyksos. In *The Language of the Pentateuch*, Yahuda wrote,

> We cannot but come to the conclusion that the Hyksos not only did not assimilate themselves to Egyptian life and Egyptian spirit, as it is alleged, but that, much to the contrary, they had done everything to offend the Egyptians in their

> innermost religious feeling and to deprive the ruling classes of their political rights, so that the Hyksos fully deserved to be regarded by the Egyptians as "the plague of the land."[151]

Although Malki concluded that the arguments of Yehuda were convincing, his subsequent articles on the Hyksos theme show that he still clung to the view that Joseph had been vizier under the Hyksos, contrary to Yahuda's claims. But neither consistency nor the accuracy of Malki's representations of the scholarly Hyksos debates is what matters most. His articles illustrate that the Hyksos provided a template for the narration of the relation borne by the Jews, up through and including the present, with Egypt and its past. Malki accepted Yahuda's notion that Egyptology and biblical studies were mutually beneficial and the idea that the Torah contained accurate information about ancient Egyptian life, as appears from his article, with Yahuda as his source, on the ten plagues and its conformity to the climate of Egypt as well as the name Moses and its meaning "Son of the Nile."[152]

In the same article, Malki discussed once again the Semitic origins of the Hyksos. The presence of the Semitic Hyksos and Hebrews in Egypt had, in Malki's view, imprinted a lasting Semitic influence on Egyptian culture and civilization. He explained the oppression of the Hebrews following the expulsion of the Hyksos as the racist revenge of the Egyptians on the Hebrews for their close relations with the Hyksos stemming from shared Semitic origins; the Egyptians were held to be of African origin.[153] Malki's attention to the shared Semitic origins of the Hyksos and the Hebrews in Egypt, in contrast to the presumed African origin of the Egyptians, is not strange in light of his repeated emphasis elsewhere in his articles on the Semitic identity of both the Arabs who conquered Egypt in the seventh century CE and the Jews. His narrative was part of the ongoing negotiation among Egyptian nationalists about identity, their debates on the racial composition of Egyptians, and their relations to the ancient Egyptians and their language.

Entirely absent from Malki's narrative are the Copts, who in fact played a prominent role in the contemporary fascination with Egypt's ancient past. Coptic intellectuals such as the journalist and writer Salama Musa (1887–1958) were among the most prominent representatives of the Pharaonic current in Egypt. For them, Pharaonism was at once an attempt to create a nationalist identity that transcended religious difference and a discourse that presented Copts as the true sons of the Pharaohs. Musa had argued, in accordance with the view of certain European orientalists and Egyptologists, that Coptic Christian liturgy had preserved the ancient Egyptian language.[154] Coptic political and cultural Pharaonism was also entangled with, and some argue was the byproduct of, European orientalism and Egyptology, which offered diverging views and racial discourses on the Copts as "sons of the Pharaohs."[155] The ideas in circulation included the notion that the Copts were racially pure descendants of the ancient Egyptians—who, in contrast to Muslims in Egypt, had not mixed with other races such as the Arabs—and also the view that contemporary Copts had regressed and had left behind the civilized status that marked their past.[156] The idea that the Copts had preserved ancient

civilization is illustrated by Flinders Petrie's statement that "Egypt will never be a civilised land till it is ruled by the Copts—if ever."[157]

In 1947, in an article entitled "The importance of the story of the Exodus. Freedom conquers tyranny," Malki discussed the Hyksos from the perspective of the "science of race." The ancient Egyptians, he wrote, perceived themselves to be the most refined people, superior to all in science, arts, and faith, and they looked down on other nations and peoples as lesser humans. In particular the inhabitants of Syria were regarded as inferior races. This Egyptian racial fanaticism disinclined them to mix with other races or to allow other races to mix with them. Even the Hyksos, he stated, who ruled Egypt for 400 years remained strangers to the Egyptians despite the former's respect for the Egyptian Gods, and their eventual departure was caused by Egyptian racial pride. Malki concluded that the history of ancient Egypt confirmed the "fanaticism of the Pharaohs towards the Semites, the inhabitants of the lands of the Arabs."[158]

Malki's narrations of the ouster of the Hyksos are replete with contemporary political terminology such as the "Egyptian revolution," "the patriotic movement," and the "coup," which imbued his historical narration with a sense of contemporary political relevance. In contrast to the aforementioned novel *Kifah Tiba* of Naguib Mahfouz, the Hyksos in Malki's telling are not foreign occupiers but are instead credited with providing the Hebrews a comfortable stay in Egypt and contributing to the civilization of the Pharaohs. Malki's ideas on the Hyksos come close to those of Muhammad Husayn Haykal and his positive evaluation of the mixing or incorporation of foreign elements into Egyptian history and identity. Yet this *indimaj*, the integration that Malki had in view for his fellow Jews in Egypt, was hindered, as he argued in his later writings on the Hyksos, by the racially based attitudes of the Egyptians. It is hard not to read such sentiments in light of the simultaneous discussions in his newspaper about the foreignness of Egyptian Jews, along with contemporary political, anti-imperial debates in Egypt about the need to distinguish between Egyptians and foreigners.[159]

We can thus see that Malki's take on the Hyksos rulers partly complemented, yet also contradicted the dominant narration of this historical episode in Egyptian nationalist writings. For Malki, the analogy served not to narrate the long history of foreign occupation in Egypt but rather to turn this foreign influence on its head: first, by directing the attention to a Semitic and Hebrew contribution to the ancient Egyptian civilization so highly celebrated within nationalist intellectual and literary circles in Egypt; and second, by opposing the removal of these foreign influences and their contribution to Egypt. His writings thus make our perspective on Egyptian nationalist tropes and their functions more nuanced, since they were employed in rival ways within the processes of national redefinition, which ultimately meant the negotiation of exclusion and inclusion. Moreover, a common view in studies on Egyptian nationalism holds that a shift occurred during the 1930s, whereby an Egyptianist territorial nationalism, exemplified by the Pharaonic current, yielded to Arab-Islamic orientations. Within the latter paradigm the Arab and Semitic elements of Egyptian identity were emphasized.[160] In line with recent scholarship that has challenged the idea of this rupture in Egyptian intellectual

history, the writings of Malki on Pesach underscore that the shift in nationalist orientations was not as clear-cut as has often been suggested in the scholarly literature.[161] Pharaonic themes continued to be employed during the 1940s, and not necessarily in contradiction to Arab-Islamic orientations or the depiction of contemporary Egyptians (including Jews) as Arabs and Semites.

The rivaling Egyptian nationalist orientations of Pharaonism and Arabism in the interwar period each had a strong ethnological basis, while nationalist discourses on modern concepts such as culture and civilization frequently bore biological undertones and racial associations.[162] Terms surrounding ethnicity and race did not represent clearly defined analytical categories, as is evident from the numerous shifting terms that were used to describe race during this period.[163] This ambiguity, I argue, underscored the ideas about Semitism voiced by *al-Shams*'s writers. One could delegitimize Nazi racism while expressing, at the same time and without contradiction, notions of "the Semite" and "the Semitic" in both linguistic and ethno-racial terms. The most frequent and often interchangeable terms used for race were *'unsur* and *jins*. These terms were employed in discussions of European race-thinking, including the Nazis' racism, as well as in conceptions of national identity and ethnic nationalism. In general European biological conceptions of race were rejected, but historical, linguistic, cultural, and ethno-racial conceptions of "race" were expressed in relation to identity and the self as well as to the project of reform and revival.

The editor and contributors of *al-Shams*, this chapter has shown, employed the idea of Semitic affinities between Arabs and Jews as a way to confront Nazi antisemitism through the medium of the Arabic language. The centrality of the concept of Semitism in Egypt can be partly explained through the scholarly and intellectual entanglements of Europe and the Middle East and the dissemination, reception, and popularization of orientalist and archaeological knowledge in Egypt. Israel Wolfensohn's reading of Renan and Malki's engagement with Egyptology are cases in point. The idea of Semitic brotherhood was an equalizing linguistic and cultural notion expressed among Jewish intellectuals in the Arabic *nahda* debates and underpinning their reformist program of Jewish cultural and intellectual revival in the Arab world. The Jewish intellectuals' writing in Arabic in the Middle East mobilized the Semite as a binding force and a badge of honor and in doing so subverted European orientalist conceptions of the Semites, all the while remaining within the European Aryan/Semite binary paradigm. While the concept of Semitism was strongly attached to notions of cultural reform and revival, it simultaneously served as a rhetorical tool to promote Zionism and Arab-Jewish cooperation. Moreover, the emphasis on Jewish and Arab ethno-racial Semitic affinities did not exclude the expression of civilizational hierarchy and a modern-backward divide between "Jews" and "Arabs" in Palestine. Finally, the Semites were, besides being the bearers of a cultural heritage, associated with monotheism, its claimed Eastern origins, and its moral contributions to both the Arab world and Europe. The latter expression of Semitism was, after all, not so far removed from Renan's appreciation of the Semitic contribution of monotheism to humanity.

Chapter 4

The Jewish Contribution to Civilization Discourse

Civilization and Culture in the Nahda *Debates*

The discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism considered in this book were embedded in the *nahda* debates and its notions of civilization and culture in dialectical relation to barbarism.[1] This chapter addresses civilizational reorientations toward Europe and the West jointly with their "turn to the East" counterparts through the prism of Jewish writers for the Arabic Jewish press. I inquire into the role they attributed to Fascism and Nazism in this shift of orientations revolving around the concepts of civilization and culture. Furthermore, I will discuss how the discussions of these Jewish Arabic-language writers relate to the broader contours of civilizational and cultural debates during the *nahda*.

Civilizational thought was intrinsic to the *nahda* debates.[2] The story of the *nahda* has long been told, not least by its proponents themselves, in civilizational and linear terms. Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 commonly marks, in this narrative, the starting point of a period of reform and modernization in the Ottoman world, which offered a way out of stagnation and decline and an entrance into the civilized world, dominated by European progress.[3] Civilizational discourse, part and parcel of the nineteenth century, was central to European imperial hegemony and Ottoman reform. But the concept of civilization as a subject of conversation was not straightforwardly a European import. The classic example of premodern civilizational thought in the Arab world is the work of Ibn Khaldun, who in his *Muqaddima* (Introduction) envisioned a cyclical conception of society based in a dialectical alternation between nomadic Bedouin life (*badawa*) and urban, civilized life (*hadara*).[4] During the nineteenth century, Khaldun served as inspiration for various *nahda* intellectuals. Yet there also emerged a shift from cyclical to linear, and from particular to universal, conceptualizations of civilization.[5]

Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, the Arabic terms for "civilization" were in flux and became invested with new meanings.[6] The terms *hadara* (civilization or urbanism) and *'umran* (prosperity, populousness, or inhabitedness) carried a Khaldunian legacy, though this influence is not straightforward.[7] *'Umran* and *hadara* were accompanied by *tamaddun* and *madaniyya*, and these terms were often used interchangeably by Arab intellectuals,

though *tamaddun* was likely the most prominent term for much of the latter half of the nineteenth century.[8] To these civilizational terms was added, in the early twentieth century, the modern term for culture *thaqafa*, which built on older terms such as *adab* for culture and manners,[9] cultivation (*taqthif*), education (*tarbiyya*), and refinement (*tahdhib*).[10]

The term *tamaddun*, as it would come to be used during the nineteenth century, was related to the concept of the polity and political society, yet its often ambiguous meanings were in flux.[11] In addition to this political conception, *tamaddun* also denoted urban life, sociability, and cooperation. *Tamaddun* generally indicated the process of becoming civilized, whereas the term *madaniyya* indicated the state of civilization. The concept of *tamaddun* was commonly paralleled by and connected with the concepts of *taqaddum* (progress), reform (*islah*), and success (*najah*) and was set against savagery and barbarism (*barbariyya*, *wahshiyya*).[12] In the wake of the massacres of 1860 on Mount Lebanon, the publisher and writer Butrus al-Bustani (1819–1883) used the term *tamaddun* in his influential patriotic pamphlets *Nafir Suriyya* (Trumpet of Syria) to encompass society as a whole, as a quality transcending individual cultivation (*tahdhib*) and, crucially, private and sectarian interests. He contrasted this universal conception of civilization to barbarism.[13]

Within the genealogy of the concept of civilization, the French thinker and race theorist Gustave le Bon (1841–1931) occupies an important role. His influence on *nahda* thought and Arab nationalism is illustrated by the various translations of his work from the early twentieth century onward. Samah Selim has argued that Le Bon was among the most influential European thinkers in Egypt during the British occupation, especially through his works *La Civilisation des Arabes* (1884) and *Les Premières Civilisations de l'Orient* (1899), which dealt with Pharaonic civilization.[14] The idea of Islamic civilization was taken up by *nahda* icons Jurji Zaydan (1861–1914) in his *Tarikh al-Tamaddun al-Islami* (The history of Islamic civilization), inspired by Le Bon[15] and the reformer Muhammad ʿAbduh (1849–1905), though ʿAbduh regarded religion as a key component of Islamic civilization whereas Zaydan perceived Islamic civilization as comprising various cultural aspects (Arab, Byzantine, Persian, Ancient Semitic).[16]

Nineteenth-century civilizational discourse had been accompanied by a discourse of fall in the Arab world. The social and cultural diagnosis of decline put forth by *nahda* intellectuals underlined the need for reform and revival. The age of "high imperialism" in the late nineteenth century marked a break in the *nahda* debates. Previous ideas on positive and productive borrowing from the West in the service of revival, along with a belief in the universal qualities of Western civilization, increasingly gave way to a critique mounted at "blind imitation of the West" as well as the highlighting of the evils of Western colonialism and "materialism."[17] After the Ottoman Empire collapsed and the colonial mandate system emerged, new social and national orientations were stimulated once again, along with disillusion among intellectuals in the Arab world about failed European promises of independence.

During Europe's interwar period, "cultural pessimism," as a strand of civilizational thought, broadly expressed the view that (material) Europe/

the West was in decline, an idea sometimes accompanied by an idealization of the (spiritual) East or Asia.[18] Simultaneously and not infrequently in explicit engagement with European representatives of this trend, scholars and intellectuals in the Arab world articulated the idea of Islamic, Arab, or Eastern civilizations and their contemporary awakening.[19] This articulation often took shape in contrast to Europe, as the East remained, in its varying conceptions, a civilizational category defined against its Western counterpart. The latter was not only paradoxically and often simultaneously associated with progress and imperialism but, in the post–First World War period, with materialism and moral decline as well.[20]

Having sketched, in a very general manner, the trajectories of civilizational discourse in the *nahda* debates up through the post–First World War period, I now return to the position of Jewish writers within these debates. This chapter aims neither to arrive at a definition of the concepts of civilization and culture on which the *nahda* heavily relied, nor to clearly distinguish the two.[21] Taking into account the enduring centrality of the concepts of civilization and culture within the *nahda* debates and these concepts' interconnection, I seek here to analyze the social and political roles they played in Jewish debates on Fascism and antisemitism during the 1930s and 1940s. How did Jewish writers for *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* contribute to civilizational discourse and its tropes of stagnation and awakening, of rise and decline, as well as to the shifting semantics and purposes of such a discourse? How can an analysis of their ideas on civilization and culture in relation to Nazism and antisemitism broaden our understanding of the *nahda*? The contributors to the Arabic Jewish press, I will demonstrate in what follows, presented Nazism and Nazi antisemitism as a crisis of German culture and debated what they perceived as contradictions and tensions between German civilizational contributions and Nazi barbarism. Furthermore, the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany and Nazi-occupied territory provided an important incentive for the authors writing in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* to resort to apologetic narratives about Jewish contributions to civilization.

The Jewish contribution to civilization as an idea and discourse has received scholarly attention primarily within the context of Europe and the United States.[22] Thus far, this discourse (which is part of the history of Jewish and Christian apologetics) as it appeared and evolved beyond Western contexts and how it traveled and was transformed within non-Western and colonial contexts have not been explicitly assessed.[23] In what follows, my aim is not only to show that the Jewish contribution discourse is not an exclusively Western phenomenon; what is more, this discourse was both expressed and appropriated, as I will show, by Jewish intellectuals debating Fascism and antisemitism in the Arabic Jewish press. The expressions of the idea of the Jewish contribution to civilization discussed in this chapter were not merely replications of European and American discourse but served the integrationist and emancipative agendas possessed by the authors of *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*. Their deeply apologetic texts illustrate the primary motivation underlying their writings: to communicate to their Arabic readership that Jews have been, and should once again be, part and parcel of the surrounding "Arab culture" and the civilized world.

The prominence of apologetic texts hence did more than mount a response, on behalf of Jewish observers in the Middle East, to antisemitism in Europe. The authors also aimed to transform images of Jews as foreigners and Zionists in the public sphere resulting from, as their texts testify, the conflict in Palestine as well as exclusivist conceptions of the nation and the Arab community. Although the Jewish contribution discourse was never disentangled from (antisemitic) Europe, given the juxtaposition of Semitism and antisemitism in the Arabic Jewish press, it was expressed in a radically different context and aimed at a specific audience: the regional Arab-Islamic majority culture into which Jews sought to integrate. The analysis of the Jewish contribution discourse in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* thus adds a new, non-Western layer to the multifaceted notion of the "Jewish contribution to civilization," an idea that, in its global reach, remains connected to the aim of political and cultural emancipation.

From German Culture to Nazi Barbarism

A recurring theme in the debates on Nazism in *al-Shams* was a dual perception of Germany. The quintessential nation of civilization and high culture, Germany had now become home to a dictatorship and had fallen headlong into "barbarism." How to reconcile these two "faces"? This question preoccupied German Jewish intellectuals overseas and would continue to do so in the decades following the Second World War.[24] The reflections in *al-Shams* on German culture in response to Nazism show an endorsement of German notions of culture and a leading role for intellectuals as a model for their own cultural vision of the *nahda*. During the 1930s, this view is reflected in the recurring questions of how, in the era of Nazism, to come to terms with Germany as a model of culture and whether all Germans were to be held accountable for the Nazi dictatorship and its oppression. In 1944, when it seemed clear that the war was nearing its end, this discussion shifted to the topic of how the Germans should be punished for their exterminations and destruction.

A 1937 article by Malki on Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) reveals him initially distinguishing Nazism from German culture. Malki reprinted a translated letter of Nietzsche "and his opinion on racial discrimination" in *al-Shams*'s section on literature, science, and art.[25] According to Malki, racial discrimination and claims of Aryan superiority over the Semitic race had been fundamental to Nazism since the beginning of the movement. It was Nietzsche who, as Malki understood the matter, had introduced the division of humanity into high and low ranks. But the distribution of these ideas and their association with racial thought, Malki wrote, were due to the antisemitic publisher and writer Theodor Fritsch (1852–1933). Fritsch had established a newspaper in which he outlined his version of Nietzsche's racial ideas, to which Nietzsche himself, via a letter to the newspaper, objected. Fritsch, however, refused to publish this letter. Malki translated and published Nietzsche's letter "because it proves that Nietzsche opposed racial discrimination, the scorn of the Semitic race and the heroism of the Nazi leaders, who use the

philosopher to justify their horrible deeds against the dignity of humanity, civilization and thought."[26]

By addressing Nietzsche's distance from Nazi racial ideology, Malki acted in a way similar to what we find various Jewish intellectuals in Germany doing: they either severed Nietzsche from Nazism or appropriated him, disseminating positive understandings of his works via the careful selection of passages most useful for this end.[27] Malki's dissociation of Nietzsche and Nazism further reflects the broader distinction cordoning off German intellectual culture from Nazism that runs through much of the early discussions on Nazism in his newspaper. Malki wrote admiringly about European and German intellectuals who warned of the dangerous manifestations of authoritarianism and stressed their important public and educational role. Articles in *al-Shams* often referred to writers in exile in France, Britain, and the United States who opposed Fascism and Nazism in their writings and speeches, such as the famous German novelists Thomas Mann (1875–1955) and Heinrich Mann (1871–1950), the Austrian writer Stefan Zweig (1881–1942), and the scientist Albert Einstein (1897–1955).[28] Thomas Mann delivered various lectures during the 1940s that expressed his growing concern about the Nazi persecution and extermination of the Jews. In October 1942, a speech by Mann, part of his series of German speeches for the BBC in New York, "Deutsche Hörer!", was discussed in *al-Shams*. Within Mann's shifting position toward Germany and German culture, the speech, marking a break from his earlier understanding of the Germans as victims of Nazism, now voiced the idea that they all bore responsibility and guilt.[29]

During the 1930s, Malki made a distinction between "Nazis" and "Germans" in his writings. Once war had broken out and the Nazi persecution of their opponents had radicalized, he continued to stress that not all Germans supported the Nazis and that non-Jewish Germans were also victims of Nazi oppression and brutality. The last thing many German civilians sought, he wrote in 1939, was another humiliating war.[30] In 1942, in the article "The responsibility for the war," Malki again discussed the German people's relation to Hitler and Nazism, but here we can see that a shift in his perception has occurred. How *could* the Germans, "the most scientific, progressive and intelligent people of Europe," have embarked on such a "life and death" war?[31] The answer lay, he wrote, simply in the support of the German people for Hitler and his ambitions. This support had grown out of the "Prussian spirit" (denoting the militaristic spirit) that had been transmitted to the Germans and had endangered Europe since the unification of Germany under Bismarck's rule. Germany should be disarmed, Malki argued, so it could once again serve civilization peacefully alongside its neighbors.[32]

The issue of how to reconcile German culture and barbarism found its most explicit expression in an exchange of ideas between Mansur Wahba and Solomon Malka, the chief rabbi of Sudan.[33] The exchange was published in *al-Shams* in the wake of D-Day (June 6, 1944) and in anticipation of an Allied victory. Wahba argued that the Germans, in light of their important cultural role in the past and their contributions to civilization, should be treated mildly after the war. Fiercely opposing this view, Malka argued that all Germans should be held accountable

for the Nazi crimes. Wahba had stated in his article that "although I am a Jew, and the Germans are the people who have treated the Jews the worst … the Germans are the most refined people on earth, the most organized, ambitious, proud and honourable."[34] In Wahba's view, not all Germans should be held accountable for the deeds of their "ignorant leader and his cruel treatment of the Jews and other minorities."[35] Malka responded with the bodily language of civilizational discourse and the metaphor of "surgery" that would purge the German criminals from the body politic. He proposed harsh treatment to erase the German "social disease." Furthermore, he perceived the current destructive war and its predecessor to have resulted from a decline of morals in Europe, yielding as one of its outcomes the unbelief manifested by Hitler and his followers: "There he is, telling the Christians that *Mein Kampf* is a substitute for the Bible, that 'Heil Hitler' is the greatest prayer, that Germany is above all, and that the Aryan race is the noblest race."[36] Yet Malka's words also suggest that he understood the confusion inherent in Wahba's plea, and the resulting question of how to reconcile European civilization with Nazism:

> What surprises man and leaves him in confusion when he looks at civilized Europe and what she has accomplished in terms of strength, science, beauty and creations, is that if she would have used this Godly blessing wisely, she would have led the most comfortable life. However, civilized Europe has dealt civilization a heavy blow. Look at these destructive wars, these rivers of blood, this barbarism, these horrors, and these crimes committed. How can we explain this contradiction?[37]

Wahba responded two weeks later, stating that "the pure spirit of forgiveness" lay beneath his plea that the Germans be given mild postwar treatment. Although he did not oppose the trial of war criminals, he argued against physical punishment and the "destruction" of Germany through severe economic restrictions.[38] In the ensuing response Solomon Malka reiterated his amazement about Wahba's praise for German civilization:

> When Wahba says that the Germans are the cradle of civilization, then we say to him that they are its grave, that they are monstrous savages who have returned civilization to the days of gloomy cavemen who are a shameful presence in the twentieth century.[39]

Malka thus claimed that Nazism implied civilizational setback, marking a regression from the stage of civilization to that of savagery.

In Saad Malki's discussion of the future trials for German war criminals, his prior distinction between the German people and the Nazis was replaced by the understanding that all Germans were responsible for having brought Hitler to power and should be punished for their crimes. In August 1943, he described the unification of German states into the German Empire in 1871 as a "catastrophe for Europe" and as the ultimate cause of the war of 1914 and the current war. For peace to be restored, the Allies needed to bring an end to German unity and return the

country to its former existence as a confederation of small states.[40] In September 1944, he wrote: "When Hitler states that he wants to exterminate the Jews and the other small nations, he represents the will of the German people. The German people are responsible for all the crimes that the Gestapo and the rest of the Germans have committed."[41] He further claimed that the German population was fiercely resisting the Allied struggle to bring the war to an end, which confirmed his view that "every German is essentially a Nazi, and believes in Hitler's mission and has participated in the horrors and barbaric deeds."[42] He argued in his articles that Hitler and his followers had completely poisoned the German mentality.[43] Malki thus agreed with Malka that the Germans should be punished harshly and was "truly surprised" that his friend Wahba had advised tolerance and leniency toward the Germans because of their civilization, cleverness, and creativity: "Any tolerance or mildness toward the Germans is a crime against civilization and humanity. Humanity should not forget the horrors of the Germans. What is the history of Germany except for a series of wars?"[44]

The Idea of Jewish Genius in Response to Nazi Antisemitism

As part of the debate on German culture and Nazism in *al-Shams*, discussions on Nazi antisemitism emphasized the contributions of German Jewish intellectuals to German culture and universal civilization. The idea of the Jewish contribution to civilization constituted a prominent theme in both *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*. In what follows, I will analyze the manifestations of this discourse in reflections on Nazi antisemitism, as well as in relation to the idea of a revival of Jewish culture in the Arab world, as part of the editor's integrationist agendas. In both newspapers, Jews are characterized as upholders of the monotheistic spirit and its morals and as luminaries of science and culture. Jewish participation in the national armies of Europe during the Great War epitomized Jewish patriotism and support for democracy, a topic connected to the expression of Jewish loyalty to the Arab world and the mobilization of regional Jewish support for the Allies during the Second World War.

A logical result of the impulse to demonstrate Jewish contributions to civilization is the search for the Jewish origins of notable and canonical figures as well as shifting attention to Jews who served as middlemen, acting as assistants, translators, and mediators; this latter group, despite comprising lesser-known figures, can be credited with playing a crucial role in human progress. The writers participating in the debate were preoccupied with the role of education and intellectual revival, and thus their indignation about the persecution of German Jews was mostly concerned with scientists, literati, and intellectuals and scarcely touched upon ordinary Jewish people not aligned with their apologetic and ultimately elitist "contribution" discourse. A problematic assumption inherent in the Jewish contribution idea concerns Jewish success and influence, an inverted mirror of the antisemitic conception of Jewish power. Thus a paradoxical feature of the idea of the Jewish contribution is that though it was often, if not primarily,

a response to antisemitism, the themes and arguments surrounding this idea often manifest precisely the stereotypical images and supposed particularity of Jews that opponents of antisemitism seek to discredit. The discourse of the Jewish contribution to civilization has therefore been criticized, not least by Jewish intellectuals, for its apologetics and its naïveté.[45]

The idea of Jewish contributions to civilization in explicit relation to Nazi antisemitism can be found in an editorial in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* in May 1933 written by Selim Mann:

> The world in the present day acknowledges the excellence of the Greeks and the Romans, whose culture and civilization had a great influence on the progress of Europe. But when do we hear the world acknowledge the Jewish contribution to the refinement and progress of the world?[46]

He went on to argue that the Jews were the "spiritual guide of the civilized people" and that "the principles of European civilization of social justice, rights and culture" were "essentially based on the Torah."[47] In the same year, *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* took an article in the British press on the persecution of German Jewish intellectuals as a starting point to vigorously assert that German Jews were indispensable to German culture and civilization. There was, Selim Mann wrote, "absolutely no justification for the persecution of the Jews." He continued: "What are the misdeeds of the scientists and intellectuals, of the doctors, scholars of nature, medicine, chemistry, music, and arts who have raised the name of Germany high amongst the civilized peoples (*al-shuʿub al-mutamaddina*) and who have greatly served humanity?"[48] It was particularly astonishing for *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s writers that the German "nation," which had "enlightened" the world with music, art, and science and which could number among its great men many Jews—from Mendelssohn and Heine to Einstein and Zweig—was now persecuting its Jewish intellectuals.

In 1933, the year the Nazis assumed power in Germany, the possible influx of German Jewish émigrés to Beirut became a topic of intensive debate.[49] Mann strongly supported the idea of incorporating German Jewish refugees into the city. His articles in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* on this topic make clear that he was also addressing a non-Jewish audience. Because the Jewish community's leaders in Beirut were generally favorably disposed to the idea, Mann attempted to convince his non-Jewish audience that accepting the immigrants would be beneficial, arguing that Lebanon would profit from newcomers presumed to be highly educated Germans, possessed of financial fortunes and agricultural expertise.[50] The tension inherent in the contribution discourse is thus also visible in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s repeated portrayal of Jews as successful businessmen and moneymakers, sometimes explicitly as capitalists.[51] This image of Jews, and specifically when it referred to Lebanese Jews, should be understood in terms of Beirut being a port city of increasing importance during the first decades of the twentieth century[52] as well as in relation to a Lebanese nationalist imaginary whose conception of Lebanese identity hearkened back to the Phoenicians as successful traders and businessmen.[53] At the same time, this image also reflects the Zionist idea that

Jewish immigrants were making the East bloom. In their calls for a removal of the restrictions on Jewish immigration to Palestine, Mann and Adjami argued in the newspaper that Palestine was not suffering from the international crisis the way neighboring states were—and such good fortune was due to the immigrants, who brought with them "money, arts and science."[54]

When war broke out in September 1939, Selim Mann and the newspaper's new editor, Moise Adjami, expressed unequivocal support for the Allies and called upon the Jews of the East to support the armies of France and Britain. Jewish participation in the European national armies during the Great War had epitomized Jewish patriotism and support for democracy, which had become a recurring topic. This history of Jewish military service and their dedication to their respective homelands would be repeatedly brought forward during the war years as an example for Jews in the East to follow and as a means of mobilizing their support for the Allied armies. In this regard, frequent mention was made of the Jews in the East who had volunteered in the British army, in particular in Palestine. For example, we find Najib Salim Jabir[55] writing on November 14, 1939:

> The Jews love freedom, truth, justice and democracy, as the other nations of the world. … The Jews all around the world are joining the ranks of France and Britain, because the Jews are loyal friends of France and Britain which know how to keep their truces and agreements, of which history serves as the greatest proof. … Look at the Jewish youth in Europe, America, Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, trying to get ahead of one another in joining the Allied armies; at Jewish journalism in all corners of the world, in particular *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* in Beirut, supporting the allies completely all along the line; and at those rich Jews donating enormous amounts to support the Red Cross and the establishment of councils everywhere to support the Allies effectively.[56]

Moise Adjami devoted one of his editorials in October 1939 to the topic of "Jews and war," in which he argued that Jews were among the oldest of peoples to wage war and listed their various military struggles from antiquity to the present.[57] We saw this connection between Jews and warfare in Israel Wolfensohn's introduction to his *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, discussed in the previous chapter, in which Wolfensohn, albeit in a very different context, opposed Renan's claim of Semitic passivity by underlining the long history of Semitic warfare. Adjami writes that in the current war, Jews will yet again perform their duty and support democracy.[58]

A common trope within the discourse of the Jewish contribution to civilization was the figure of the Jewish physician. In *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, we find various articles extolling the lives of Jewish doctors in the Arab and Islamic world, who are held up as examples of Jewish excellence, their participation in wider society, and their ability and willingness to loyally serve kings and rulers.[59] An article in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* derived from the French Egyptian Jewish newspaper *La Tribune Juive* on Jewish Nobel Prize winners, including Jewish medical scientists, aimed to show that religious difference had no value, whereas contributions to science in the service of culture and civilization did.[60]

In January 1944, Albert Jamal from Aleppo, who frequently published in *al-ʿAlam al- Isra'ili* and *al-Shams*, wrote the article "Hitler's propaganda and the lies of the Nazis," which was published in both newspapers.[61] He viewed propaganda to be Hitler's most dangerous weapon against the world and civilization (*madaniyya*). Nazi propaganda leveled all sorts of accusations against the Jews, which Jamal hoped to refute:[62]

> The Jews were and continue to be God's chosen people. To the Jews goes the credit of kindling the lights of civilization (*anwar al-madaniyya*) and eliminating the pains of tortured humanity, as the greatest scientists, inventors, doctors, and artists are descended from the people who are, together with the Arabs, called by Hitler the most inferior people. But it is a people that gave birth to Moses, Jesus, and great men such as Heine, Ludwig, Zweig and Moreau in poetry, Einstein and Bergson in medical science and philosophy, Ehrenburg and Martin Meyer in medicine, a people which gave birth to great artists who are universally known, such as Sarah Bernhardt, Max Reinhardt, Arturo Toscanini, Charlie Chaplin [sic],[63] and other great scientists, doctors, and artists who are very famous. A people like this cannot be counted amongst the most inferior people.[64]

Albert Jamal's list of Western luminaries offers a counternarrative to Nazi antisemitism and propaganda and their claims of Jewish inferiority. The Jewish contribution to civilization is twofold: the contribution of monotheism is joined by the contribution to modern civilization in the fields of science, including the expanding natural sciences, and arts.

In *al-Shams*, we find a similar twofold contribution, this time framed as a joined Arab and Jewish Semitic contribution to civilization. In May 1939, an anonymous author, most likely Malki himself, took as a point of departure the recently published book *The Problem of Palestine* by the British Christian missionary Maude Royden (1876–1956). Royden is mentioned as among those who felt it necessary to reach an agreement with the Arabs in Palestine. The author of *al-Shams*'s article summarizing Royden's work is obviously very interested in, and in agreement with, Royden's statement that the Arabs and the Jews are both offspring of the Semitic family tree (*dawha samiyya*), as well as her discussion of their contributions to civilization and her proposal that a joint Semitic civilization (*hadara samiyya mushtaraka*) in Palestine represents a solution to the question of Palestine.[65] Once again, these views are explicitly posited against antisemitic claims. In *al-Shams*, we read that Royden's book provides "a glance at the history of the accomplishments of the Arab nation (*umma*)," which shows the contribution (*fadl*) of the Semitic race (*al-jins al-sami*) to "civilization in general, and European Aryan civilization in particular."[66] In the recapitulation of Royden's work given in *al-Shams*, the Jewish contribution to civilization consists above all in their adherence to, and spread of, monotheism. The Jews, according to the anonymous author, brought about the shift that delivered humanity from the "shadows of paganism" to the "light of monotheism."

In *al-Shams*'s summary of Royden's work, intelligence is defined as a decisively Jewish characteristic, a point illustrated by the high percentage of Jewish Nobel Prize laureates, especially in the field of medicine, explicable because of the importance of medical study in Judaism due to it being one of Judaism's "religious duties" and the robust numbers of Jewish doctors during the Middle Ages. In the discussion of Royden's idea of Arab civilization, the main argument is something that by now we can recognize as the trope of the Arab transmission of knowledge to Europe. Referring to the geographic location of the Arabs on the Arabian Peninsula before the coming of Islam, the author of the article in *al-Shams* rhetorically asks: "What would Europe's situation have been today if the Arabs had stayed there?"[67] The idea of Arab transmission of knowledge to Europe, the greatest Arab contribution to civilization, also carries the appealing sense of an egalitarian Arab culture involving Muslims, Jews, and Christians under the umbrella of the Arabic language.[68]

Cecil Roth's The Jewish Contribution to Civilization *in Arabic*

In 1941, *al-Shams* published an Arabic translation of *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization* (1938) by Cecil Roth, a British-Jewish historian and president of the Jewish Historical Society of England (Figure 6).[69] *Nasib al-Yahud min al-Hadara*, the title of Roth's book as translated into Arabic, was serialized in *al-Shams* over a period of four years.[70] Commenting on the first excerpt, Saad Malki wrote that he considered it "one of the most important books of recent years," which they had decided to publish in order "to serve the truth and to demonstrate the merit that the antisemites (*a'da' al-samiyya*) seek to diminish."[71] Although these words suggest an interest in countering antisemitism similar to Roth's, I will argue that the idea and discourse of the Jewish contribution to civilization were primarily embedded in the program of Jewish cultural reform shared by *al-Shams*'s editor and writers and their regional network of Arabic-language Jewish contributors.[72]

Roth's book had been translated by the aforementioned Alfred Yallouz, a translator at the Ministry of Agriculture in Cairo who had previously served as the librarian of the Société Royale de Géographie during the 1920s, and Mansur Wahba, Lecturer of Engineering at Fu'ad I University in Alexandria.[73] As we have seen in Chapter 2, both were frequent writers for *al-Shams* and were involved in local Jewish cultural reform projects, such as the establishment of a reform society that called for the use of Arabic in schools, the community council, and public life by Egyptian Jews. Yallouz was the secretary of the Société d'Études Historiques Juives d'Egypte, and directed the Egyptian Jewish youth club in Cairo, the Jam'iyyat al-Shubban al-Yahud al-Misriyyin. His translations (from English, French and Arabic) further included the anthology *A Book of Jewish Thoughts* (1920) by the British chief rabbi Joseph Hertz.[74]

The translation of Cecil Roth into Arabic by Yallouz and Wahba exemplifies the central practice of translations and popularizations of Western research and scholarship during the *nahda*.[75] Yallouz and Wahba's integral translation (*ta'rib*)

was made at a time of profound transformation for the Arabic language, effected through language debates and reforms largely driven by the press and marked as well by the development of new styles and genres. Absent from their translation are the common neologisms and transliterations in nineteenth-century Arabic translations of foreign scientific and scholarly works. These "borrowings" had come under increasing criticism following the British occupation of Egypt in 1882 and again after the nationalist revolution of 1919.[76] The translators remained close to Roth's original text, maintaining its structure and using the clear, concise language that had become typical of *nahda* journalistic prose.

Yet an overt focus on the question of fidelity might lead to judgments about good and bad translations, assessments often tied to linear narratives about translation styles in the *nahda* and the development of Arabic as a "modern" language.[77] An analysis of Yallouz and Wahba's more subtle translation choices would require a different study; I am primarily interested here in Yallouz and Wahba's appropriation of Roth's discourse. The universalist emphasis they added to the book's title, however, deserves to be mentioned. The translation's four-year serialization in *al-Shams* was entitled *Nasib al-Yahud min al-Hadara* (*The Jewish Contribution to Civilization*, or more literally, The Jewish share in civilization) and alternately, interchangeably, *Nasib al-Yahud min Hadarat al-ʿAlam* or *Nasib al-Yahud min Hadarat al-Dunya* (The Jewish contribution to world civilization). This is telling because, as will be explained later, Roth's thesis was ultimately concerned with Jewish contributions to European culture, which the translators logically sought both to universalize and to localize for their Arabic readership. In what follows, I will use the notion of appropriation while following Marwa Elshakry's proposal that we view translation as a "creative act" and knowledge production as a process that is always "socially embedded," allowing us to look for meaning beyond the original text.[78] As Julie Sanders argues, an appropriation "frequently affects a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain."[79] The textual relationship is less explicit and more embedded, and the political or ethical motivation shaping the interpretation is often inescapable.[80]

The appropriation of the Jewish contribution to civilization discourse for Jewish projects of cultural reform and revival in the Middle East can be illustrated by the publication of an article by Yallouz in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* on May 14, 1943, entitled "The Jewish contribution to Arab culture" ("*Nasib al-yahud fi al-thaqafa al-ʿarabiyya*").[81] The editors, Selim Mann and Moise Adjami, introduced Yallouz as "one of the finest amongst the Egyptian Jewish youth" (though he must have been at least forty-four at the time), whose communal intellectual projects had continued to arouse "pride and astonishment." Later that year, they announced the publication of Yallouz's Arabic translation of Cecil Roth's *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization*, to enable their readers "to study this useful book."[82] However, the publication of the translation, which would have followed its earlier appearance in *al-Shams*, did not go forward. Though Yallouz does not mention Cecil Roth's work, I argue that his article can be considered an appropriation of the idea of the Jewish contribution to civilization.

Figure 6 Caricature of Cecil Roth in *al-Shams*, January 14, 1937.
Source: The Historical Jewish Press, the National Library of Israel.

In the narrative that Yallouz unfolds in "The Jewish contribution to Arab culture," he mentions antisemitism only in reference to its European context. The enemies of the Jews, he states, perceive the Jews to be "materialists, remote from the splendour of the imagination, who hold on with an iron fist to worldly matters."[83] Yallouz refutes this idea and defensively states that Jews during the Middle Ages, being constantly persecuted and forced to move from one country to another, simply had no time to devote to imaginative pursuits. Nevertheless, they accomplished much that is worth remembering. Here, we see Yallouz engage, as did Roth, with Western debates dating from the nineteenth century onward, in both their antisemitic versions and (philosemitic) counterclaims, on Jewish intelligence and genius. He also challenges the antisemitic claim that Jews lack imagination.[84] The latter idea was strongly present in European philological classifications of world languages and their speakers; it was bound up with the creation of an opposition between Greek and Indo-European creativity and myth-making on the one hand and Semitic monotheism and rigidity on the other.[85]

In his preface to the 1940 edition of *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization*, Cecil Roth wrote that German antisemitism had spurred him to write on the Jewish contribution to civilization, which was "about Jews and not Judaism alone."[86] In a footnote, he wrote that the terms "Aryan and non-Aryan" represented a "scientific monstrosity."[87] Antisemites, Roth wrote, held that Jews were "middlemen" who had not themselves produced anything of value. In the book, Roth challenged such claims by discussing various domains in which Jews had excelled, such as science, religion, journalism and medicine. The examples collected in the book showed that, in Roth's view, the Jew was "perhaps" distinguished by "intellectualization," "freshness of outlook because of his external position," as well as his "faculty for synthesis" and "for introducing new ideas."[88] Roth's general aim was to illustrate the various ways Jews had contributed, throughout history, to European civilization, and hence show that they were a fundamental part of it.[89] Thorstein Veblen, asserting a similar thesis two decades earlier in "The Intellectual Pre-eminence of the Jews in Modern Europe," had explained the Jewish contributions to the "civilization of Christendom," an outgrowth of the Jewish people's position as a "nation of hybrids" within gentile society that had resulted in a "flexibility of aptitudes and capacities."[90] Roth was thus not alone in his endeavor to counter antisemitism with the idea of a distinct Jewish contribution to civilization: as ample entries in his bibliography attest, many works on this idea had been published during the first decades of the twentieth century, including publications by, among others, Joseph Jacobs, Laurie Magnus, and Mordecai Kaplan.[91]

The idea of Jews as recipients and carriers of monotheism that, as we have seen, strongly resonated in *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* is also present in Cecil Roth's *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization*, though he was hardly the first to advance this idea. The legacy of Ernest Renan's Hebraic monotheistic contribution to humanity looms large in this connection of Jews to civilization through monotheism. In the first chapter of Roth's book, "The Hebraic Heritage," he discussed the Jewish monotheistic contribution to the Western world and its "breaking of the shackles of polytheism."[92] Even from a nonreligious viewpoint,

he wrote, monotheism lay at the basis of Western spiritual life. But the Hebrews were, in Roth's view, not merely the group to which the Western world owed its monotheistic morals and ethics; they were also the source of its scientific attitude and the triumphs of modern science, which he perceived to be grounded in the monotheistic search for order.[93]

In "The Jewish contribution to Arab culture," Yallouz directs the gaze not to European Christendom and civilization and the Jewish place within it but rather to the past and present Arab-Islamic world and the relations between Arabs and Jews as Semitic peoples. His historical tour of Arab and Jewish cultural pride starts with the pre-Islamic period, the *jahiliyya*. He discusses the "Arab Jewish" tribes who had lived on the Arabian Peninsula and their literary contributions, in particular the Jewish poets exemplified by the figure of al-Samaw'al bin 'Adiya. The latter had attracted the interest of German Jewish scholars a century earlier and was known in Arab culture as an exemplar of loyalty. In his survey *Jewish Literature from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Century. With an Introduction on Talmud and Midrash* (1857), Moritz Steinschneider had discussed al-Samaw'al as part of what he perceived as the early emergence of Jewish literature on the Arabian Peninsula.[94] In his work *Al-Shu'ara' al-Yahud al-'Arab* (The Arab Jewish poets, 1929), *al-Shams* contributor Murad Farag had extensively discussed al-Samaw'al.[95] Farag's work was a response to claims by the Lebanese Jesuit scholar Louis Cheikho (1859–1927) that only Muslims and Christians had made contributions to Arabic literature and that al-Samaw'al was in fact Christian.[96]

Yallouz underlines that the Arab Jewish tribes on the Arabian Peninsula were original Arab tribes, to be distinguished from the Arabized tribes, and he credits the former for the spread of monotheism and their religious values among the Arabs. This idea echoes what we find in German Jewish orientalist scholarship when it addresses the topic of Jewish influence on Islam, a line of thinking that Abraham Geiger's *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?* (1833) is held to have inaugurated.[97] Yallouz and his fellow writers often expressed ideas and topoi that reflect the (diverse) tradition of German Jewish scholarship on Islam. The scholarship was not only available to them through their encounters with Jewish scholars, such as the orientalist Abraham Shalom Yahuda (1877–1951), much admired by *al-Shams*'s editor. European and German Orientalist scholarship was widely read, appropriated, and criticized by Egyptian intellectuals, and the Egyptian University hosted a large number of European orientalists.[98]

Yallouz's narrative continues with the expansion of the Islamic Empire. During the Abbasid caliphate, he writes, the Arabic language had been "corrupted" by grammatical mistakes and distortions due to the non-Arab peoples now living under Islamic rule. This era saw the Jewish scholars come into their own through meritorious labors, maintaining as they did the Arab literary heritage through their translations of Greek, Persian, and Syriac scholarship into Arabic. Under the Fatimid rulers in Egypt, Yallouz notes, the focus of Jewish intellectual productivity in Arab culture shifted to science and philosophy. The final stage is the Andalusian Golden Age of poetic and intellectual productivity. Together with al-Samaw'al, the Andalusian Jewish poet Judah ha-Levi demonstrates, in Yallouz's view, "the

supremacy of Jews in both Arabic and Hebrew poetry."[99] In *al-Andalus*, Jews further excelled via their translations of many works on medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and history, available to later Muslim scholars to consult and refine.

The role of the Jews in the spread of monotheism and their work as safe-keepers, translators, and transmitters of science to the Arabs enabled the latter to achieve their Golden Age. In Yallouz's narrative, Jews are thus credited with a triple contribution: to the rise of Islam, to the development of Arab culture, and, subsequently, to (European) civilization. This perspective on the Arab Jewish past gives rise to the question whether the historical stages and topoi present a mutual Arab and Jewish renaissance or whether they ultimately confirm a Jewish source for the Arab and European/universal civilizational rise. Yallouz would seem to be partial to the latter idea, as in his narrative the "Arabs" are regarded less as active contributors than as builders onto a base of Jewish monotheism and knowledge, and as having profited from the work of Jewish translators.

Yallouz's representation of *al-Andalus* contrasts with Roth's rather brief reflection on Jews in "Moslem Spain," for which he admittedly relied heavily on earlier accounts such as Joseph Jacobs's *Jewish Contributions to Civilization* (1919) and Charles and Dorothea Singer's *The Legacy of Israel* (1927).[100] Obviously Roth is primarily concerned neither with singling out Jewish contributions to Arab culture nor with the notion of the Jewish and Arab Semites; rather he homes in on the Hebraic heritage and the Jewish boost to the European Renaissance through their transmission of Hellenic tradition via Arab-Islamic culture. In his view, the Jews in Muslim Spain served as intermediaries connecting the separated Greek, Arab, and Latin worlds, which they bridged through the "Hebrew medium of intercourse" and their linguistic knowledge.[101] "From the truly catholic point of view," Roth stated, "The Jews were the only real Europeans."[102]

In "The Jewish contribution to Arab culture," the periods of Mamluk and Ottoman rule are glossed over. Yallouz's neglect of these historical periods accords not only with the European scholarly (orientalist) periodization of the Ottoman rise and decline and the centralization and idealization of the "Classical Islam" period, but it is also aligned with the views on Arab-Islamic history taken during this period by Arab *nahda* intellectuals, who, operating within the same rise-and-decline paradigm, often posited Turkish (non-Arab) despotism and decadence to be the source of Arab decline.[103]

The themes and topoi in Yallouz's article further show that he incorporated, to a large extent, a specific element of the Jewish contribution to civilization discourse: the "Golden Age and decline discourse" on Sephardic and "Oriental" Jews. Since the nineteenth century, German Jewish scholars had imagined the Jews of the medieval Islamic world, and of *al-Andalus* in particular, as the ideal type of the assimilated, emancipated Jew. The world of medieval Islam served here as the mirror image of European Christianity and its antisemitism.[104] This idea was accompanied by the notion of decline now besetting the "Oriental" Jews of the modern Arab world. The latter view was also part and parcel of the *mission civilisatrice* of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, aimed at enhancing the level of the once flourishing but now "orientalized" and "degraded" Jews of the Arab

East.[105] The idealized notion of the Andalusian Muslim/Arab-Jewish Golden Age later "traveled" to Palestine, where it was absorbed and transformed by scholars of German Jewish origin working at the recently established School of Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University.[106]

In the history of Arab-Jewish "Semitic" cooperation Yallouz saw the formation of civilization (*takwin al-hadara*) and its advancement, and he situates his argument within debates on the rise and fall of civilizations. He discusses the "contemporary idea" that the first civilization was established in a single geographical region, spreading from there to the rest of the world, rising here and declining there, in one place remaining unchanged, in another undergoing reorganization by neighboring rulers, raids, or translocation. He notes that the latter idea has supplanted prior notions of civilizations as being made up of cultures created by shared mentalities and subsequently Darwinist theory. In contrast to other nations, Yallouz argues, the Arab and Jewish nations have remained closely tied over the ages due to their unity of race, historical homeland (the Arabian Peninsula), and linguistic (Semitic), moral, habitual, and traditional proximity.[107] Yallouz thus understood civilizations to be based on racial, geographic, linguistic, and cultural ties. Hence the title of his article is attributable to his understanding that Arab culture (*thaqafa*) was part of a (Semitic) civilization (*hadara* or *tamaddun*) in which both Jews and Arabs, as Semitic peoples, had flourished.[108] His account testifies to the ambivalent issue of race within the *nahda* as well as Egyptian and Arab nationalist thought.[109] The question of race among Arab intellectuals was addressed and debated as a subset of civilizational thought, fostered by the nineteenth-century confrontation with European imperialism and its accompanying search for past "golden ages" out of concerns about civilizational positions in the present.[110]

Yallouz's historical narrative can hardly be disentangled from his political and cultural vision for Jewish life in the contemporary Arab world. His motivation to write about his titular "Jewish contribution to Arab culture," he tells his readers in the article, sprang from discussions in Egyptian and Palestinian newspapers on the presumed "remoteness" of "Eastern Jews" from the cultural movement in the Arab world. Not wanting to delve into the reasons for this ostensible "remoteness," he seeks rather to underline, he claims, the historical contributions of Jews to Arab culture and hence to show that the current state of neglect stands in stark contrast to the grandeur of Arab-Jewish history.[111]

In the early 1940s, however, Saad Malki repeatedly addressed the causes of the perceived ignorance (or social illness, as it was often called) among the Egyptian Jews and the Jews of the East more broadly, along with the need for revival and reform. As we have seen in Chapter 2, Malki perceived the present stagnation to be the result of the Egyptian Jewish cultural orientation toward the West and the ignorance of their own Jewish and Arab heritage, both religious and cultural. Malki, Yallouz, and the aforementioned Wahba were all involved in the establishment of a reform society that aimed at enhancing the cultural and intellectual level of Egyptian Jews and promoting the Arabic language in order to realize a Jewish *nahda*—an awakening or revival.[112] For Yallouz, the Jewish contribution to Arab culture was not solely a thing of the past: contemporary Jewish scholars of Islam,

the Arab world, and the Semitic languages (including himself, perhaps) were continuing the work of their medieval coreligionists, although (strangely, and almost ironically) he mentions only European Jewish scholars in this regard:

> With the cooperation of the Jews with the Arabs, the Semitic race carried the banner of general human thought, and transmitted the Arabic sciences to Europe. Even until this day, the Jews continue to be in earnest about the translation of Arabic literature, the history of Islam and its philosophy, the civilization of the Arabs in every respect, and the comparison of the Semitic languages. Amongst these contemporary scholars we recall Salomon Reinach,[113] Théodore Reinach, Levy[114] and others.[115]

Despite the presence of this historical continuum, Yallouz did not refute the idea that the contemporary Jews of the East were in a state of decline and ignorance. Their revival was in the hands of the Jewish youth:

> How nice it would be if our Jewish youth in the East would turn to this heritage that our worthy ancestors have left us, so that the old is connected to the new, and the Jews participate in the contemporary literary awakening. Why not be alongside Shawqi, Hafiz, Mutran, al-Rafi'i and other intellectuals? Why would there not be, alongside Taha Husayn, al-Mazini, Haykal, Taymur and al-Hakim, Jewish historians performing their duty towards the East, alongside the few whose names have finally appeared on the horizon?[116]

As former president of the Egyptian Jewish youth association, it makes sense that Yallouz's hope for cultural revival is fixed on the Jewish youth.[117] The list of names is of course not arbitrary but includes some of the most prominent intellectuals and literati of his day. His rhetorical question obscures how, in fact, some of his Jewish colleagues had already encountered and interacted with these literati: significant points of contact include Wolfensohn's cooperation with Husayn, Shawqi's appreciation of Murad Farag's poetry and Mutran's poetry recitation at the Cairo Opera House during the Maimonides celebrations in 1935, which Yallouz had helped organize.

The narrative of Alfred Yallouz shows that he appropriated the rise-and-decline narrative on Oriental Jewry on his own terms. What distinguishes the rise-and-decline narrative of Yallouz and his fellow reformer-writers Wahba and Malki from the colonialist missions of European Jews aimed at civilizing their coreligionists in the East was not the idea that the latter were in need of regeneration but rather the direction that this upward movement should take. Although both narratives agreed on a general state of decline and a need for awakening, European Jewish efforts generally aimed at emancipating and ultimately Westernizing the "Oriental" Jews through the spread of knowledge and education. Yallouz and his fellow writers criticized the European cultural orientation adopted by Jews in the Arab world; they wanted instead to restore the links with their Arab Jewish intellectual and spiritual heritage.

Moreover, my analysis of Alfred Yallouz's discursive appropriation shows that the Jewish contribution discourse of Jews in the Middle East and its incorporation into *nahda* debates should not be interpreted solely as a response to antisemitism in Europe and the Middle East. Rather, the translation in *al-Shams* and the surrounding Arabic discourse on the Jewish contribution dovetailed with regional intellectual debates on European antisemitism. These debates encompassed fears that Nazi antisemitism would spread into the Middle East and that the Semitic peoples of the "East" would be targeted, yet they were simultaneously embedded within national and regional processes of social reform and national reorientation in the wake of the Ottoman Empire's collapse.

Whereas Roth's Jewish contribution discourse evolved within the explicit context of European and Nazi antisemitism, Yallouz's narrative should be understood first and foremost within regional cultural debates: the position of Jews in Arab society, the attempts of a regional network of Jewish intellectuals to promote Jewish and Zionist integration into the "Arab East," as well as the intra-Jewish cultural struggle between Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews in Palestine and the wider region that was also premised on an East-West binary.

Translation plays various roles here: it serves to capture the West and its power and knowledge, as is evident in the translation of Cecil Roth's work into Arabic. It involves the translational act of appropriation, as we see in Yallouz's later article on the Jewish contribution to Arab culture. Finally, it functions as a tool of "portable" civilization in his historical narrative on Jews in the Arab world. Because translation lay at the basis of Arab and subsequently European civilization through the transmission of science and scholarship by Jews, for Yallouz it is also the means of accomplishing Jewish revival.

The Jewish contribution to civilization discourse also bore racial overtones. In the article "Jewish intelligence" ("*Al-dhaka' al-yahudi*") published in *al-Shams* in 1944, Yallouz's fellow translator Mansur Wahba addressed the topic of Jewish genius from the perspective of theories of evolution. Since the nineteenth century Darwin had been widely read and discussed in the Arab world, where his thought, in addition to other forms of Darwinism and evolutionary theory, particularly the work of Herbert Spencer, occupied a prominent place in civilizational thinking. The first translation of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, by the Egyptian intellectual Ismail Mazhar, was published in 1918, followed by a second, expanded volume in 1928.[118]

Wahba's article discusses Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's theory of the human inheritance of characteristics as a prelude to Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection. Wahba writes that though Darwin agreed to a large extent with Lamarck, he focused his theory of evolution on natural selection. Wahba notes that the Nazis had applied Darwin's theory of natural selection, linked to industrial selection, to their idea of the regeneration of the Aryan Germanic race. The "current war" and "foreign acts of extermination" should thus be understood as a Darwinist "struggle for survival of the fittest." Further examples of natural selection discussed include the "Indians in America," who have nearly been extinguished because of the "superiority of the White race" and whose remaining offspring will be limited to those possessing those characteristics necessary for the struggle for existence.

Having stated the influence of Darwinist thought on Nazi ideology, as well as presenting the near-extinction of the native population of North America as due to the process of natural selection, Wahba then moves on to apply the same framework of Darwinist thought to the Jews, arguing that "natural selection has clearly served the Jewish people." The Jews, "one of the oldest existing people on earth," have experienced lengthy periods of "humiliation, captivity and expulsion," so that the "weak in faith," the "traitors," and "deserters" have been pruned from their ranks, leaving only the strong, faithful, stubborn, and patient Jews. Thus the Jewish people have collectively evolved into the "most pure human race when it comes to intelligence."[119] Wahba's explanation of Darwinist theory to his Arabic readership, at once observing that the Nazis had appropriated Darwinist thought and articulating his idea of Jewish intelligence, shows a continuing engagement with the racial elements of evolutionary theory in the 1940s. Crucially, it lays bare the essentialist and racial tensions inherent in discourses on Jewish genius and contributions to civilization.

Arab and Jewish Transmissions of Civilization

The Jewish contribution to civilization discourse has been described as a discourse by and on Jews in the process of emancipation during the age of nationalism and within the context of antisemitism. Discourses on contributions to civilization, however, represent a global phenomenon that emerges wherever processes of emancipation, inclusion, and exclusion are negotiated, including in colonial contexts. In *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, the Jewish contribution to civilization discourse coincided and overlapped with what we can call the "Arab contribution to civilization discourse." This can be further illustrated by a 1944 article in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* by the German professor of Arabic and Islam Joseph Schacht (1902–1969), published in three parts. In "The sciences of the Arabs in the opinion of the evil Nazis," Schacht's aim was to refute the Nazi regime's claims with regard to science, progress, and civilization that completely ignored the Arab scientific tradition.[120]

Schacht, born in an area of Germany that is now part of Poland, had studied classics, theology, and Semitic languages at the University of Breslau and at twenty-five became professor in Freiburg. In 1930, he was appointed visiting lecturer at the Egyptian University in Cairo. In 1932, he became the chair of Oriental Studies in Konigsberg but left this position two years later because he could no longer pursue his scholarship under the Nazi regime. He then became professor of Oriental Studies at the Egyptian University in 1934, where he lectured in Islamic law (in Arabic) until 1939 and also collaborated with the historian of Islamic medicine Max Meyerhof.[121] He was on holiday in London when war broke out on September 1, 1939, and the British government did not allow him to return to Cairo. Remaining in London until 1944, he worked as an orientalist specialist in the British Ministry of Information and for the BBC Arabic and Persian broadcasts, many of which were published in the publication *al-Mustamiʿ al-ʿArabi*

(The Arab Listener). His contributions to these media led the Nazis to strip him of his German citizenship in 1943.[122]

Schacht's article in *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili* was likely derived either from a BBC Arabic broadcast or its connected publication in Arabic. A far cry from Schacht's influential scholarly works on Islamic jurisprudence, the article shows the orientalist engaged in British foreign propaganda efforts. Hence, his narrative on the idea of the Arab contribution to civilization should be viewed primarily within the context of the propaganda war between the Allies and the Axis powers in the Middle East, particularly the rivalry between Britain and Nazi Germany for "Arab" listeners and support. Schacht's popularizing narrative on the Arab sciences and its relation to European and American civilization underlines the role of orientalist scholarship in this war of narratives and more broadly its connection to colonial ambitions.

In "The sciences of the Arabs in the opinion of the evil Nazis," Schacht's point of departure is the Nazi ideologue and politician Alfred Rosenberg, who had allegedly stated that "only the German race has contributed to civilization." Rosenberg, in Schacht's words, had claimed that the period between 100 BCE and 1500 CE represented a scientific void, because the Greek sciences had disappeared and for all intents and purposes perished, only to ultimately be revived by the Germans. These statements, an outgrowth of the "evil racist ideology," revealed an unmistakable disdain for the accomplishments of the Arabs, Schacht was eager to explain.

Schacht aims to show that Rosenberg's vision of science and civilizational progress completely overlooked the scientific tradition of the Arabs. While Europe was still "struggling with barbarism," the Arabs preserved the cultural tradition of the Greeks as well as the natural and medical sciences. Schacht credits the Arabs for introducing numbers, algebra, and astronomy to Europe. Most importantly, he writes, they maintained the "spirit of rational life." Schacht supported his argument with references to George Sarton's recent study *An Introduction to the History of Science* (1939), in which significant parts dealt with Arab scientists.[123] Schacht further states that the European Renaissance would have been impossible without the Arabs, as the latter maintained the spirit of scientific research and had "lit the torch" of civilization while Europe "was in the shadows." The Arabs thus served as the ties of unity and the inevitable link between ancient and modern civilization.[124]

Schacht's narrative recalls the trope of transmission, also present in Yallouz's previously discussed ideas on the Jewish contribution to Arab culture, expressing the notion that the Arab-Islamic intellectual and cultural tradition had enabled Europe's civilizational rise. The difference lies in the emphasis that Yallouz places on the role of Jews in the Arab world and their role as mediators between the Arab world and Europe. Schacht, for his part, is more interested in speaking about the Arabic-speaking community as a whole. The scientific history of the Arabs, he writes, includes Muslims, Christians, and Jews, encompassing Arabs and Arabized Arabs alike. Though Schacht argues that many scientists "were of fully Arab origin," he is also quick to underline that "we absolutely do not accept the ideology of the Nazis on the differences between races." Schacht here differentiates the possible

connections linking Arabism, Arab nationalist ideas, and its ethno-racial notions, on the one hand, from Nazi (biological) race ideology on the other—a distinction also made by various Arab nationalists discussing Nazi ideology.[125]

Another obvious difference lies in the two writers' respective positions: Schacht—most likely—in London and Yallouz in Cairo. Schacht was contributing to the BBC Arabic service with the aim of winning the hearts and minds of the Arabic-speaking populations in the Middle East in opposition to Nazism, while Yallouz was hoping to provide Jews with a sense of their rightful place within Egyptian and Arab cultural and intellectual life. In its republished form in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, however, Schacht's article becomes part of the Arabist orientation set out under the editorship of Moise Adjami in 1938 and Adjami's aim of reconciling Arabism and Zionism.

In December 1946, a Jewish writer from Iraq under the name of Bahjat S. published a two-part article in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*'s successor *al-Salam* entitled "How the Jews benefitted the world."[126] In contrast to Yallouz's appropriation and Arabization of Cecil Roth's European narrative, Bahjat S.'s article provides a long list of modern Jewish thinkers, philosophers, scientists, and doctors who are, without exception, Europeans, predominantly German, French, and British, or in the case of Americans are of European descent. The Iraqi writer lumps together Sigmund Freud, Marcel Proust, Albert Einstein, Bret Harte, Michel de Montaigne, and Baruch Spinoza, among various others, within the framework of Jewish genius. He offers a summary of Jewish contributions to the modern world of scientific progress, culture, welfare, and global health, pointing to the Jewish origins of modern innovations such as the telegraph, the phonograph, and the gramophone. Much as with Roth, Nazi antisemitism provides the incentive for Bahjat S.'s article, which opens with reference to antisemitic statements by Goebbels and Hitler and their claim that Aryans are responsible for the world's greatest achievements.[127]

For the Iraqi writer Bahjat S., Jewish genius is associated with the civilizational progress conceived simultaneously as European/Western and as universal. His Jewish contribution narrative centers Europe as the core of civilization, from where it is exported to the rest of the world—the place where modern progress originates and where inventions are made, albeit with strong Jewish foundations. It is a colonialist narrative in the implicit way the Jews of the Arab world, a group to which the writer himself belongs, have no place as producers of the modern world—an idea which Alfred Yallouz resisted in pointing to the Arab and Jewish origins of Europe's civilizational rise. The Jewish contribution narrative of Bahjat S. thus seems at first glance to differ from Yallouz's because there is no justificatory attempt to weave the Arab Jewish experience into the course of civilization.

In a later publication, however, the same author expresses the idea that Jews in the mediaeval world had transmitted civilization from the East to the West, another example of the trope of transmission as a subset of the Jewish contribution discourse among Jewish writers in the Middle East.[128] In an article on the life of the Jews in the Middle Ages and professions they occupied in Europe, Bahjat S. provided a discussion of the Jewish presence in trade and finance in which he simultaneously criticized and strengthened the stereotype of the Jewish usurer.

He offered a historical explanation for the Jewish association with money and, at the same time, presented the profession of moneylending in a positive light. He also explained the phenomenon of the ghetto in Europe, unknown to his Arabic readership.[129]

It is worth pausing to observe that the notion of transmission (*naql*) in Bahjat S.'s account of Jewish history evolves into a discussion of the particular position of Jews in Europe. Jews, he writes, had been scattered throughout the world following their period of "agricultural" existence in the "Hebrew state" located in Palestine. In their later places of residence, Jews were not allowed to possess land and were thus forced into professions involving trade and finance. As a result, many Jews became adventurous travelers; their knowledge of multiple languages enabled them to journey around the world with relative ease.[130] The marked presence of Jews in mediaeval trade is then connected to civilizational discourse: "They [the Jews] transmitted from the East its civilization, and the Westerners have greatly benefitted from it."[131] Later on, he writes that the Crusades represented another era in which Europeans imported Eastern civilization, a transfer effected via the European Christian soldiers who occupied Palestine.[132]

The idea of *naql* can hardly be isolated from the Arabic revival movement and its commonplace that knowledge in the past had been transmitted from East to West, a notion that entailed that the roots of European progress were Eastern in origin.[133] Bahjat S. attributes a central role to Jewish intermediaries, in the role of polyglot traders, in the transmission of civilization, an idea that also resembles the rise-and-decline narrative with regard to oriental Jewry, though here lacking a clear revivalist agenda. Bahjat S.'s historical narrative comes close to depicting a history of persecution in Europe (which pushed Jews into the trading and moneylending professions and confined them to ghettos) that serves, by way of contrast, to highlight the historical experiences of Jews in the East. The civilizational narratives of Yallouz and Bahjat S. both appear retrospective, looking back at a glorious past of Jews in the medieval (Arab) world and their role as mediators in the spread of civilization from East to West, either as intellectuals or as traders known for their mastery of languages, so as to look forward toward the universal civilization, now dominated by the West, in which Jews could again claim their place.

Chapter 5

Viewing Fascism through the Lens of Religion and Sectarianism

Religion and Sectarianism in Debates on Fascism in the Middle East

In April 1940, an anti-Nazi cartoon was published on the cover of the newspaper *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* (Figure 7). It shows the arm of a Nazi—as appears from the armband showing the Swastika—tearing down a minaret from its adjoining mosque. Below the mosque, plumes of smoke billow out the windows of a burning synagogue, while a Nazi boot at the bottom of the cartoon hits the towers of a church. The caption reads as follows:

> The destructive policy of Hitler. He shakes the pillars of the Islamic mosques, demolishes the Christian churches, burns the Jewish synagogues, and battles against the principles of Freemasonry calling for freedom and equality, in order to create the religion of unbelief and apostasy.[1]

The cartoon sends a clear message to the Arabic readership of the newspaper: Nazism is the enemy of the three monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which all have originated in the Middle East. While the editors primarily reached out to Jewish readers in Lebanon and Syria, the message of the cartoon and its publication on the cover of *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* reveals how the editors simultaneously aspired to address a multi-confessional, regional Arabic readership. It captures how Jewish journalists and intellectuals writing for the Arabic Jewish press presented Fascism and Nazism as anti-religious movements targeting the monotheistic traditions of the East, with the aim of mobilizing opposition among their Arabic readership.

Religion was a primary theme in Axis propaganda, the multifocal responses to this propaganda, and discussions on Fascism and Nazism more generally, in the public spheres in the Middle East. Though Fascist and Nazi propaganda directed at the Arab world suggested, as we have seen in Chapter 1, an affiliation linking Nazism with Islam and Arabs, the actual Nazi policies toward the Arab world were incompatible with the message that its propaganda sought to convey. Various Arab intellectuals critically engaged in debates on Fascism and Nazism expressed the idea that Nazism was incompatible with both Islam and, in a broader sense, the

other monotheistic religions. This chapter homes in on the conceptual themes of religion and sectarianism in an analysis of discussions on Fascism in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* from 1933 to 1948. It focuses on the rhetorical and ideological functions served by the mobilization of religious traditions as well as the notions of paganism and sectarianism that often accompanied the invocation of the Semitic religions and its contributions to civilization as its binary opposite.

The framing of Fascism and Nazism as anti-religious movements was not only a rhetorical ploy to mobilize opposition. Jewish *nahdawi* intellectual conversations on Fascism and antisemitism took place within what Ussama Makdisi has called the "ecumenical frame" of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish solidarity and critique of sectarianism and extremism in the late Ottoman and well into the post-Ottoman, Middle East. It was a body of thought that rested on a dual notion of secular citizenship and segregated religious personal spheres as well as "attempts to nationalize religion as a pillar of coexistence and national unity."[2] Although intellectuals were highly aware of their religious affiliations and the histories and cultures of their respective communities, they also sought ways to overcome religious difference and critique religious fanaticism. Debates on antisemitism among *nahdawi* intellectuals since the late nineteenth century, Orit Bashkin has shown, were part of pluralist conversations about the rights of ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities in the Ottoman Empire, combined with anti-colonial critique of European treatment of minorities.[3]

The critique and warning of sectarianism was an important leitmotif within the civilizational debates of the *nahda*, particularly following the 1860 massacres in Mount Lebanon and Damascus. In the wake of the events, Christian and Jewish intellectuals presented secular citizenship rights as a solution to communal violence.[4] Butrus al-Bustani called in his patriotic publications *Nafir al-Suriyya* for the construction of civilization (*tamaddun*) in Syria in which the general interests of the homeland would transcend sectarian interests.[5] As Makdisi has shown, the term "sectarianism (*taʾifiyya*)" came to be used in Lebanon and Syria during the mandate era to denote a political problem and was expressed within critiques of the political sectarianism entrenched in Lebanon's political system.[6] The drafting of the Lebanese constitution in 1926 and its focus on the political representation of the religious "communities" in the country, Makdisi argues, formed "the colonial moment when the term 'sectarianism' entered the modern Arabic political lexicon."[7] During the 1930s and 1940s, organizations, social movements, and newspapers in Lebanon operated in the logic of the sectarian state, yet explicitly opposed sectarianism as a problem and were "acutely aware of the stigma of being labelled sectarian."[8]

In what follows, attention shifts away from a perspective focusing on intellectual encounters and the global circulation of ideas and moves into a chronological analysis that addresses how the editors of *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* and their contributors understood and discussed Fascist and Nazi ideology and antisemitism. I will also trace the development of these intellectuals' ideas into the postwar period up through 1948. This chapter is thus particularly concerned with how the discussions among the editors and contributors of these publications developed over time. As I will show, the authors under consideration understood

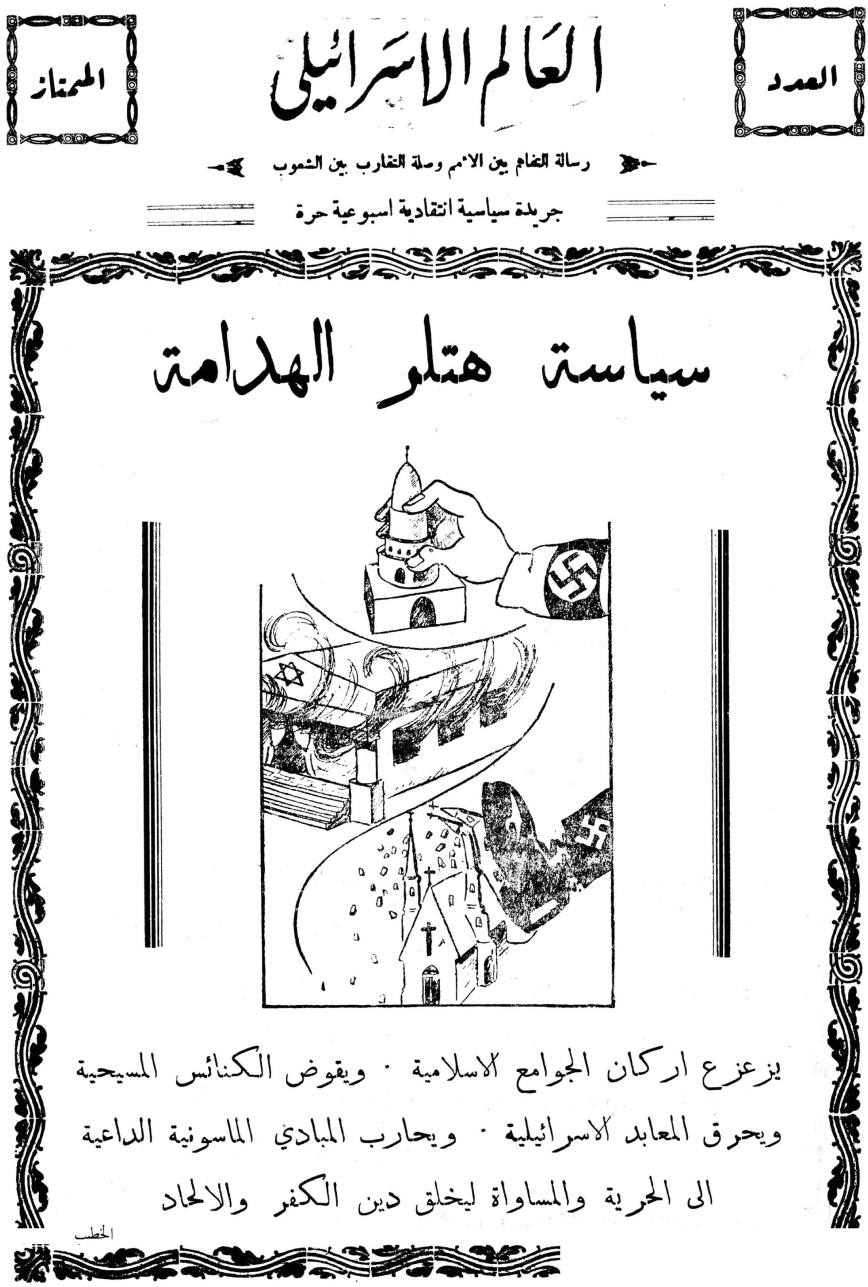

Figure 7 A cartoon on the cover of *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, April 21, 1940.
Source: The Historical Jewish Press, the National Library of Israel.

Fascism and Nazism primarily in religious terms, though this did not exclude an understanding and critique of racism. They emphasized the anti-religious character of National Socialism, which was grasped as targeting not only Jews but also Christians and Muslims. The connection of Nazism to anti-religious prejudice is also placed within the framework of colonial sectarianism; as such, Nazism is to be understood as the outcome of European treatment of religious minorities within and beyond its borders over the span of a long history.

How is modern antisemitism related to premodern religious prejudices and ideas with regard to race? If race is a pseudoscientific construct, then how can it serve as an explanation of antisemitism? Is antisemitism eternal and omnipresent or is it inextricably tied to the history of modern Europe and the rise of nation-states? How is the history of antisemitism connected to Zionism? By exploring the connections as well as the discontinuities between "religious fanaticism" and modern, racial antisemitism, *al-Shams*'s and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s editors and contributors were engaged in a pervasive debate that has continued up through the present.[9] They discussed how premodern religious prejudice against Jews was related to modern racism, yet they explained both anti-Judaism and antisemitism in religious terms. This conception is also related to the idea of Semitism, which bore, as we have seen in Chapter 3, ethno-racial as well as religious connotations.

The belief that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam were Semitic religions played a central role in the discussions of Nazi antisemitism and racism, once again emphasizing the nexus of religion and race in the ideas of the writers under consideration.[10] We will see that, in general, these writers criticized notions of racial purity and biological conceptions of race. Based on the idea that race is a "myth" or "invention," they conclude that antisemitism can only be understood as an animus targeted at Jews as a religious group. This position does not contradict the belief that the Jews were a people possessing national rights. The debate over the nature and origins of modern antisemitism is also reflected in the terminology they used. We will encounter *khusumat al-samiyya*, *al-lasamiyya*, and *muʿadat al-samiyya*, the latter two terms quite literally translatable as "antisemitism," whereas *khusuma* denotes a quarrel or dispute. The authors discussed here frequently, albeit ambivalently, used the phrases "enemies of the Semites" (*aʿdaʾ al-samiyya*) and "enemies of the Jews" (*aʿdaʾ al-yahud*).

Between Anti-Judaism, Antisemitism, and Anti-Religious Prejudice

Among *al-Shams*'s contributors, we find different interpretations of Nazi antisemitism. It is perceived as the heir to a long lineage of religious fanaticism dating back to the ancient and medieval periods. But this religious fanaticism is also regarded as an older phenomenon that has been transformed into a racial ideology in the modern era. In his 1934 work *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam al-Yahudi* (The awakening of the Jewish world), *al-Shams* contributor Elie Levi Abu ʿAsal devoted several chapters to antisemitism in Europe. In considering Abu ʿAsal's views on antisemitism, it is important to recall that the book is ultimately structured around

Zionism and Jewish revival in Palestine and more precisely aims to bolster Arab-Jewish "Semitic" relations. His adherence to the idea of Semitism notwithstanding, he rejects, in his chapter "A refutation of the German ideology," the notion of a pure, unmixed Aryan race or species by arguing that (military) conquests, migrations, and the influx of various elements have resulted in different origins or lineages.[11] He described German antisemitism as racial fanaticism stemming from a mix of social, religious, and political factors—a novel incarnation of the religious fanaticism (*ta'assub dini*) of the past that he associates most vividly with the Spanish Inquisition.[12] Abu 'Asal, thus placing German antisemitism within the framework of religious fanaticism that has all but disappeared since medieval times, perceived it to be a new form of the older, religiously motivated hostility against Jews.

Abu 'Asal claims that antisemitism dates back to antiquity, but that in its particular racial form it has become one of the most significant phenomena of contemporary human society intrinsically related to the development of nation building in Europe.[13] While Abu 'Asal understood religion to be the most important motivation for discrimination in the medieval era, antisemitism in the modern period was for him a result of the "national question," economic changes, and the debate over (including opposition to) Jewish rights and citizenship during the nineteenth century.[14] This was a time, he argued, when Jews had become leading figures in the fields of medicine, law, and journalism in Europe, often outpacing their fellow "bourgeois" citizens.[15] Here Abu 'Asal's understanding of modern antisemitism comes close to Theodor Herzl's explanations in *The Jewish State*, which attributed modern antisemitism primarily to Jewish emancipation, the Jews' move out of their ghettoes and into the middle classes, and the subsequent competition between these bourgeois groups and the *arriviste* Jews now in their midst.[16]

According to Abu 'Asal, Bismarck "and his followers" had "awakened" antisemitism (*khusumat al-samiyya* or *khusum al-samiyyin*) in nineteenth-century Germany.[17] But in influence and cruelty, France's antisemitic movement had exceeded its German counterpart during this era. Abu 'Asal cast the Dreyfus affair (1894) in France as the climax of antisemitism in nineteenth-century Europe, revealing the danger of the "national question" in post-revolutionary France and in Europe more broadly.[18] Abu 'Asal's Arabic readership was likely familiar with the affair, as it had been covered in the Arabic press. In their discussions of antisemitism, various Arab intellectuals in the Middle East had expressed their support for Dreyfus, rejected sectarianism and racism, and had praised Emile Zola, who had famously defended Dreyfus.[19] In 1903 Esther Azhari Moyal, who will be discussed below, published a biography of Zola written in the wake of the affair.[20] Abu 'Asal, in his 1934 work *Yaqazat al-'Alam al-Yahudi*, thus places Nazi antisemitism within a tradition of Christian religious persecution in Europe, which was then followed by the emergence of modern antisemitism in relation to the position occupied by Jews in European nation-states. As such, Abu 'Asal's understanding of antisemitism touched upon the history of the nation-state as well as on particular aspects of Jewish history, namely the economic and social positions of Jews.

Conspicuous in *al-Shams*'s coverage of Nazi antisemitism during the 1930s is its explanation that National Socialism's anti-Jewish measures were components of a general battle against religions. In contrast to what one finds in Abu 'Asal's work, the newspaper commonly posits that antisemitism does not exclusively target Jews, though they bear the brunt of the animus. Christians in Germany could also be targets of antisemitism in this conception. Another notable difference is that whereas Abu 'Asal refers to particular features of Jewish history in Europe in relation to the emergence of modern antisemitism, the discussions in *al-Shams* focus more on Nazi ideology and its stance on religion. Saad Malki sought to demonstrate the incompatibility of Nazism with the religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, faiths brought together under the umbrella of civilization and its moral and spiritual origins in the East.

In April 1937, Saad Malki observed that "the struggle in Germany today is between the old paganism on the one side and Christianity on the other."[21] According to Malki, Nazi Germany fought against Christianity in German society because of its association with Jews and the Torah and because Jesus was Jewish.[22] An article published in July 1937, based on the British paper the *Sunday Times*, speaks of a "confessional struggle" taking place in Germany. The conflict invoked here is not one between the different religious groups in Germany, but rather the Nazi fight against Christianity and its preaching of paganism.[23] The article further discusses German Catholics who, being better organized and more active than their Protestant counterparts, posed a greater challenge than the latter to the power of the Nazis. In addition, Malki notes that the Nazi oppression of the Jews and its general anti-religious attitude had drawn Catholics and Jews closer together worldwide.[24] In describing Nazism as imbued at once with paganism and atheism setting it primarily in opposition to Christianity and Judaism, the article gives the impression that the Nazis are not only anti-Jewish but also anti-religious in general.

A series of articles published by Malki in January 1939 analyzed Hitler's political ambitions and the racist ideas he formulated in *Mein Kampf*. According to Malki, National Socialism was characterized by racism, oppression, and intolerance.[25] Referring to sections of *Mein Kampf* in which Hitler had stated that "the future would not belong to Protestantism or Catholicism, but the superior Aryan race," Malki concluded that Hitler's hostility was not aimed exclusively against the Jews but was directed against all Semitic peoples and monotheistic religions.[26] Hitler regarded the Jews first and foremost as an inferior race, and the Nazi persecutions in Europe mainly fell on them. Yet Hitler had also described Arabs and Egyptians as inferior, Semitic peoples in *Mein Kampf*. In July 1939, *al-Shams* referred to a report in the British newspaper the *Sunday Chronicle* that the Nazi's had circulated Arabic editions of *Mein Kampf* in which derogatory statements about Arabs and the Semitic peoples had been removed.[27] Malki went on to call Hitler the enemy of all prophetic religions.[28] Other articles argued that while the Nazi regime waged a battle against Islam and the Arabs, Nazism was incompatible with Islam's principles of democracy, freedom, and brotherhood.[29]

Malki argued that the Nazis detested religion, since they believed only in Hitler and National Socialism. German youth believed in Nazism as their

substitute religion: Hitler was their prophet, and Christian prayers and the Bible had been replaced by *Heil Hitler!* and *Mein Kampf*.[30] His description of Nazism as a political religion and *Mein Kampf* as a new Bible resemble the writings of the British journalist Emily Overend Lorimer (1881–1949). Her critical essays on Hitler and Nazism had appeared in British media, and some of her writings had been translated into Arabic. Her discussions of *Mein Kampf* were an important source of reference for Egyptian intellectuals seeking to learn about Hitler and Nazi ideology. Her book *What Hitler Wants* (1939), in which she opposed Hitler and Nazism, had been translated into Arabic and was published in Cairo in August 1939.[31] In the book, Lorimer had described *Mein Kampf* as "Germany's Bible" and as a "Holy book."[32] In *al-Shams*, Malki described Lorimer's analyses of *Mein Kampf* in articles entitled "Hitler's position on the Jews" and "The myth of the Aryan race."[33] Her notion that the British were not sufficiently aware of Hitler's dangerous ambitions was shared by Malki in relation to the Egyptian public. In his newspaper, he called for cooperation with the British in Egypt in response to the Nazi danger.[34]

The writings in *al-Shams* about the situation in Nazi Germany and its occupied territories, in addition to reports on the persecution of Jews, were often also concerned with the persecution of Christians in Nazi Germany and Nazism's hostility to religion in general.[35] Malki claimed that the Nazi fight against Christians in Germany was the result of Christianity's association with Judaism and the Jewishness of Jesus. In his newspaper, he cited Christian religious leaders who had denounced Nazi oppression of Christians and had stated that Christianity was a Semitic religion. Other articles referred to resistance to Nazi rule by church leaders in Germany.[36] In "The new culture in Germany," Malki wrote that the Semitic religions had not been excluded from the Nazis' hostile sights; he claimed that the Nazis had "revised the books of the Bible and removed every part that opposes their racist policies or that points to the Eastern and Jewish origins of Jesus."[37] In "The politics of racial discrimination," he compared the Nazi persecution of the Jews to "the horrors of the Middle Ages" and argued once again that Nazism was fighting Christianity based on the claim that Jesus was a "Semitic Jew." In the article, he referred to two books about Nazi racism: the refutation of the Aryan thesis in *Inside Europe* (1936) by the American writer John Gunter and *Sein Kampf* (1935) by the Austrian writer Irene Harand, whose author rejected Hitler and antisemitism and wrote that "Jews are indistinguishable from Germans."[38]

The notion of the Semitic religions was also mobilized by more prominent Egyptian intellectuals in response to Nazism, including Ahmed al-Zayyat in his influential journal *al-Risala*, which circulated regionally and had an Islamic and Arab cultural and national orientation. For Zayyat, the humanism and universalism of the monotheistic religions proved the falsehood of Nazism and its racist policies.[39] As Gershoni shows, Zayyat also addressed a broad readership of Muslims, Christians, and Jews in his sarcastic attack on Hitler by calling him a "self-proclaimed prophet" and *Mein Kampf* a "holy book."[40]

The perception of Nazism as an anti-religious movement did not exclude, as we have seen in Chapter 3, discussions on Nazi antisemitism in relation to racism

and the idea of race. In 1941, *al-Shams* published a series of translated articles on "European racism" by the British biologist and popularizer of eugenics Julian Huxley (1887–1975), in which he refuted the idea of "blood connections," "race," and "national character."[41] Because of constant migration, peoples and tribes had always mixed. Hence, it was impossible to speak of a German, French, or British race or an Aryan race.[42] This idea that migration had caused the mixing of races was mentioned often in the discussions of *al-Shams*'s writers. In Abu ʿAsal's work *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam al-Yahudi*, he centralized the notion of "mixing" or "mingling" to refute Nazi antisemitism and used the same notion to describe the close relations and mutual influence between the Arab and Jewish tribes on the Arabian Peninsula. For Malki, this was specifically linked to the notion of *indimaj*, the fusion, mixing, or integration of different (foreign) elements into the Egyptian collective, whereby he particularly aimed at the Egyptianization of Jews in Egypt—if not by nationality, then in their language, loyalty, and attire.

Malki's articles during the first years of the Second World War and the advance of Fascism in North Africa show that he continued to mobilize opposition to Nazism among his Arabic readers under the banner of Semitism. In October 1941, Malki commented on the nationalist coup d'état in Iraq in April of that year, which had overthrown the pro-British government of Nuri al-Saʿid and had installed the pro-German Rashid ʿAli al-Kaylani as prime minister. The coup led to the British reoccupation of Iraq. The events in Iraq supported the idea, by then already controversial, that Nazism and Arab nationalism shared ambitions in the Middle East. In the months following the coup, Malki sought to invalidate this idea by disconnecting the Arabs from Nazism and by publishing abstracts from Arabic newspapers and journals that voiced opposition to Nazism. He quoted an Arabic newspaper from the Iraqi city of Basra, which claimed that Nazi hostility toward the Jews in Europe was only the beginning of their fight against the Semitic religions, which were said to include Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. *Al-Shams* agreed that it was very likely that if the Nazis expanded their influence in Iraq, they would do what they were doing to the Jews in countries already under their control. They would also limit the freedom of Muslims.[43]

In November 1942, Malki discussed the situation in Tunisia, which had been subjected to the French Vichy regime since 1940 and was now under Nazi occupation and reflected once again on the position of Nazi's toward the Semitic Arabs and the latter's disdain for Nazism. He wrote that the racism of the Germans was wrong and was not supported by scientific evidence:

> The intention of the Nazis has been to divide humanity into two parts: the Aryans and the Semites, and they attribute to the cultivated race the most favorable characteristics and to the Semitic Arabic race all sort of shortcomings and terrible characterizations. With this idea, they try to mislead the mind and justify their hostility towards the sons of the Semitic Arab nation.[44]

In *al-Shams*, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia was seen as illustration of Nazi racial ideology's malevolent influence on Italian Fascism. A 1942 article discussing Nazi

racism against the "Semitic Arab race" finds Malki arguing that the Italians, taking cues from the Nazi persecution of Jews as their primary victims of their racist program, now applied racial policies as well in North Africa, Ethiopia, and "all the lands that are inhabited by the Arabs and are subjected to Italian rule."[45]

Although Fascist rule in Mussolini's Italy did not receive as much attention as the Nazis did in *al-Shams*, both were described in equally negative terms: like Hitler and National Socialism in Germany, Fascism was a "catastrophe" for Italy and was likely responsible for the spread of evil propaganda in the Middle East. Mussolini was described as an "oppressor" and an "enemy" of "the individual and the nation" as well as the entire "civilization of Europe."[46] Italian Fascism was chiefly differentiated from National Socialism, according to the authors, because of Hitler's racial ideology and its antisemitism in particular. The increasingly racial domestic policies of Mussolini were viewed as a result of Hitler and National Socialism's influence on Italian Fascism. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 marked a major shift in the attitudes of Egyptian and Arab intellectuals toward Fascism and Nazism, which were now perceived to be new manifestations of European racism and colonialism.[47] In March 1939, *al-Shams*'s correspondent in London, Haim Musa Nahman, interviewed Palestinian politician Fakhri al-Nashashibi (1899–1941) on Palestine and Nazi propaganda. The report states that al-Nashashibi had warned that both Hitler and Mussolini aimed to colonize the Arab world.[48]

Writing after Mussolini's fall in 1943, Mansur Wahba claimed that racism had not existed in Italy until Mussolini began to adopt Hitler's racist policies: this made the Italian dictator a "traitor."[49] Saad Malki cast Mussolini's "move" to embrace Nazi antisemitism as breaking with a long history of Italian tolerance toward Jews. Malki emphasized the national connection between Italy and its Jews, Italy's predominance in Jewish history and the continued Jewish presence there since antiquity, as well as Jewish contributions to the country and their comfortable position there.[50] At the same time, writing about the future punishment of war criminals once the war was over, Malki argued that "Mussolini and his helpers had not been involved in the slaughtering and exterminations in Eastern Europe. There are horrors in which no civilized nations have participated except for the German people."[51]

In the optimistic aftermath of the eventual Allied victories in North Africa and in the battle of Alamayn in the western Egyptian desert (October 23–November 11, 1942), *al-Shams*'s writers began to discuss the postwar order, the punishment of war criminals, and the possible solutions to the "Jewish question" in Europe. Malki used this terminology to denote the worrisome situation of Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, for which he pondered a solution. In December 1942 and January 1943, he repeatedly wrote that the Allies, preoccupied with their fight against dictatorship, were not making sufficient efforts to rescue Jews from Europe or to help them settle elsewhere.[52] It is important to mention here that Malki did not regard Palestine to be the only possible destination for persecuted Jews in Europe to flee to: he also mentioned India and China as suitable destinations, based on his assumption that Jews had lived there peacefully for ages and, most importantly, these states had no tradition of oppression based on religious belief.

Another possibility for resettlement, in his view, would be certain "remote parts" of Africa where Jews would be able to "establish a civilization comparable to the one in Palestine."[53]

In December 1943, during the same period in which the contributors to *al-Shams* began to be concerned with the postwar order, the punishment of war criminals, and the Atlantic Charter (1941), a certain Victor Shamla from the Egyptian city of Tanta wrote that the history of the Jews contained two truths: the first was their loyalty and service to the nations where they lived and the second was their experience of persecution. The nature of these persecutions had changed: once religiously motivated, as in medieval Spain, they had become politically charged in modern France and motivated by economic, social, and moral considerations in other countries. Yet he ultimately concluded that the persecution of Jews as a people had been stronger than as a religious community.[54] Shamla's focus on the Jews as a people had direct relevance given the promise of the Atlantic Charter to grant peoples the right to self-determination. *Al-Shams*'s authors received the Charter positively, as it provided hope that Jewish national aspirations would be realized.

Saad Malki was well informed about the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany and Nazi-occupied territories and, during the war, their mass extermination. He derived information about the persecutions in Europe mainly from European, Russian, and American newspapers and radio stations, relying most extensively on the British press, notably the *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Manchester Guardian*. In his analysis of the events in Europe, Malki based his perspective on those of prominent writers and intellectuals. The Jewish journalist Ilya Ehrenburg (1891–1967), one of the most influential journalists in the Soviet Union, was an important source of information about the Nazi atrocities.[55] One of his articles republished in *al-Shams* had been taken from the French newspaper *La Marseillaise* (also printed in Cairo)[56] and then translated into Arabic. Ehrenburg, along with detailed descriptions from eyewitnesses and survivors of how the Germans had killed thousands of Jews in "Russian, White Russian and Ukrainian cities," mentioned killings by gas in vans. He called upon Jews and intellectuals globally, and especially in the United States, not to remain silent.[57] *Al-Shams* also made reference to Thomas Mann's oppositional speeches to the German population that had been broadcast from the United States. In these speeches, he was among the first to publicly address the Nazi exterminations of the Jews and mentioned experiments involving chemical gas.[58]

In the years that followed, Malki's reports about the estimated number of Jewish victims illustrate how wartime transnational news circulation enabled him to inform his readers early on about the scale of the killings. In August 1943, *al-Shams* cited a figure of five million Jews killed in "Russian" territory.[59] In December that year, an article mentioned that three million Jews had been killed in Poland.[60] In July 1944, an article on Jewish suffering in Europe put the number of Jews killed at four million.[61] An article published in October 1944, derived from the British Zionist newspaper the *Jewish Chronicle*, contained testimony from a Polish Jewish woman regarding the horrors in "Birkenau Auschwitz."[62] In December 1944, *al-Shams* quoted "official Russian sources" in making the claim that "Israel has

lost six million innocent people."[63] In April 1945, with Ilya Ehrenburg once again serving as a source, a list giving the numbers of Jews killed in Europe per country cited a total number of six million.[64]

Apparent in Malki's reports on the exterminations is the religious framework within which Nazism was understood: "Nazism is a religious doctrine and not an ideology," he wrote in February 1945, in response to the accumulating knowledge about the extent of the Nazi exterminations. The extermination of the Jews, he argued, should be viewed as a religious campaign, resembling that of the Crusaders, opposed to everyone possessing different beliefs. The Gestapo wages war on Christianity, and the German youth are taught in the schools about the "German national religion" that places Germany above all else, dictating that they worship the Teutonic idols and believe in Hitler as a god.[65]

Two aspects stand out in the news coverage provided by *al-Shams*, mainly written by Saad Malki, of the exterminations during the war. First, Malki continued to view the mass murder of Jews within the broader framework of Nazi antimony toward religion. In this way, though not equalizing all forms of victimhood, he related the fate of the Jews in Europe to the suffering of Protestants and Catholics in Nazi territories and warned of the danger posed by Nazism to Islam and Christianity in the East. Second, he emphasized the idea that national unity would transcend religious difference in relation to the European countries where the persecutions and exterminations were taking place. He wielded a nationalist perspective in which the populations of Nazi-occupied territories such as Poland, the Netherlands, and France, comprising Jews and non-Jews alike, were united in their resistance to Nazism and antisemitism. He also projected this idealized picture of national unity, loyalty, and bravery onto Jews in Europe, as is illustrated by articles on Jewish resistance and accounts of heroism in the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.[66]

In the discussions in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* on Nazi antisemitism, there is a strongly expressed notion of "eternal" antisemitism, an animus also present in the Middle East. "Haman is present in every place," it was written in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* on the occasion of the Jewish holiday of Purim in 1933, and "The spirit of antisemitism (*ruh al-lasamiyya*) intensifies day after day."[67] Selim Mann, comparing Hitler to the biblical figure who had plotted to kill the Jews in the story of Esther, called him "the second Haman."[68] He wrote:

> The spirit of Haman is still omnipresent. He is present in Russia, Romania and Germany, and in every Eastern European country. He is present in Aden, and in Palestine, where he tries to create strife and attack the civilization and education projects that the Jews establish in the country with millions of pounds. He is present in every country where the Jews reside.[69]

The idea expressed in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* that antisemitism was omnipresent echoes the notion of eternal antisemitism that strongly informed the Zionist movement.[70] Theodor Herzl had written in *The Jewish State* (1896) that Jews were persecuted "wherever they live in perceptible numbers"; "antisemitism increases day by day

and hour by hour among the nations."[71] Herzl took care to emphasize that modern antisemitism should be distinguished from the religious prejudice directed against Jews in the past. He argued, as we have seen, that modern antisemitism was primarily the result of Jewish emancipation.[72] The break between premodern anti-Jewish religious prejudice and modern antisemitism in relation to the nation-state is less evident in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, however. As we will see in the remainder of this chapter, the editors understood Nazi antisemitism in religious terms and as targeting Jews as a religious group. Furthermore, they placed Nazi antisemitism within the framework of colonial sectarianism in the Middle East.

Mann and Adjami gave extensive coverage to the situation of the Jews in Europe under Nazi rule. Following the German annexation of Austria in March 1938, various articles in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* described the annexation's catastrophic impact on the lives of Jews in the country and detailed attacks by Nazi supporters or "followers of the swastika.[73] The articles report that many Jews committed suicide in response to the annexation, including many "doctors, lawyers, intellectuals, artists, and scientists."[74]

Alongside these news reports were various discussions that sought to explain Nazi antisemitism. In 1938, *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* republished "The true reasons for the persecution of the Jews in the world" by Fu'ad Shimali, an article that had appeared in the Lebanese newspaper *al-Jumhuriyya*. According to Shimali, an Egyptian communist exiled in Beirut, antisemitism could be explained by two historical factors: first, religious extremism, which ran contrary to the traditions of the Semitic religions, and second, the envy and competition that resulted from Jews attaining superior positions in commerce, finance, and government. Particularly important to the spread of antisemitism was the blood-libel myth, which according to Shimali many Christians and Muslims believed. In another piece written by Shimali in response to the article "Red Judaism" (earlier published in a Syrian newspaper), he presented Fascist and Nazi antisemitism as a consequence of the economic crises in Germany and Italy, which had come about not from Jewish Bolshevism but rather from capitalism. In Shimali's account of the history of antisemitism, religious extremism had thus evolved into a form of antisemitism that was economically motivated.

The editors of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* focused their discussions of Italian Fascism on Mussolini's changing position toward the Jews and on racism more broadly. An article from 1938 entitled "Italy between today and yesterday" argued that Fascist Italy had at first rejected racism, then changed its policy, and was now "on its way to Nazism." This lamentable new direction marked a break with the past: Jews had always been protected in Italy, the country had strongly supported the Balfour Declaration, and Jews occupied important positions and were at the forefront of the country's "scientific and cultural movement."[75] An article from the same year cited two quotes attributed to Mussolini that were meant to show he had previously denied the existence of "races," only to later adopt a belief in an Italian Roman race in need of protection from alien elements, thus illustrating his shift to Nazi racial ideology. The article claimed that Jews had lived in Italy "since Roman times" and "mixed with the rest of the population," so "if a Roman race indeed existed, the

Jews would belong to it."[76] The discussions about Italian Fascism and its racial policies in both *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* emphasize Jewish patriotism and Italian Jews' strong attachment to their country. Both newspapers gave voice to the assumption that Mussolini's move to adopt the Nazis' racial thinking and their persecution of Jews marked a break from the tolerance that Jews had experienced in Italy throughout the country's history.

In June 1939, the editors of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* published an Arabic translation of a discussion of Italian racism by an unnamed French writer who had written that even though Mussolini had previously rejected the racial question, he had now implemented anti-Jewish racist policies such as the exclusion of Jews from the army and public education. According to the writer, these racist policies of Fascist Italy came as a surprise, considering the long history of Italian friendliness toward the Jews and Italian Jews' loyalty to their country as well as their participation in the struggle for "independence" and service in the Italian army during the Great War. By taking their cue from Germany in enacting new racist laws and policies, Italy was acting as an "obedient slave."[77]

In July 1939, the newspaper included the speech "The truth about Fascism" by Tawfiq Yusuf ʿAwwad (1911–1981), a Lebanese journalist and editor of the newspaper *al-Nahar*, an address delivered at the first Syrian-Lebanese conference against Fascism on May 6 and 7, 1939.[78] Götz Nordbruch calls this event "one of the most outstanding public statements against Fascism and Nazism and in support of European democratic forces in the pre-war years" in Syria and Lebanon.[79] The conference had been organized by the League Against Nazism and Fascism, which had been established by leftist Lebanese intellectuals and had branches in various cities in Lebanon and Syria.[80]

In his speech, ʿAwwad had argued that many Arabs were initially sympathetic to Mussolini and Hitler. However, the invasion of Ethiopia by the Italian Fascists in 1935 "had opened their eyes."[81] ʿAwwad's idea that the invasion constituted a turning point in the public perceptions of Fascism was widely shared by Arab intellectuals, as has been shown in recent scholarship on Arab attitudes toward Fascism. A level of existing sympathy, in particular for Fascist and Nazi strength and their economic reforms, underwent a large shift following the invasion and yielded to a widespread rejection of their imperialist aims, along with the perception that Fascism and Nazism were embodiments of new forms of colonialism.

Once more, we see that the debates taken up in the Arabic Jewish press cannot be read in isolation from the responses given by Arab intellectuals to Fascism and Nazism; they were part of a wider, regional trend of anti-Fascism intertwined with anti-colonial opposition. For many Arab anti-Fascist intellectuals, Britain and France temporarily represented the lesser colonial evil in the fight against Fascism and Nazism. There is, however, also a stark difference between the religiously themed discussions of Fascism and Nazism in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* as well as regional Arabic journals such as *al-Risala* and the "secular" debates of prominent leftist anti-Fascist intellectuals. The leftist and anti-colonial ideological stance of the League Against Nazism and Fascism was only partly compatible with the religiously themed and Zionist leaning content of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*.

We saw previously that *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* shared an interest in casting the persecution of Jews and Christians in Nazi Germany as examples of a general hostility shown by Nazism toward the monotheistic religions. This attention to the oppression of Christians and to Christian opposition to Nazism and Fascism should also be viewed as part of the attempt of both newspapers to address non-Jewish readers and, within the broader context of the, often religiously themed, propaganda war between the Allies and the Axis powers in the Middle East, to mobilize Muslim, Christian, and Jewish opposition against the latter.

Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili stressed the oppression of Catholics in particular, which was a logical move given Lebanon's religious makeup, the political representation of the Maronites, and the good relations between the Maronite patriarch and the Jewish community in Beirut. In July 1938, Pope Pius XI gave a speech at the Urbanian College in which he expressed his growing dissatisfaction with the Fascist regime in Italy and Mussolini's recent implementation of racial policies. In a later interview with a Belgian Catholic radio station he stated, with regard to a Christian denunciation of antisemitism and the relations between Jews and Christians, that "spiritually, we are all Semites."[82] The pope's increasingly critical attitude toward Mussolini was welcomed by the editors of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, who published a profile of Pius XI and several articles stressing the bonds between Jews and Catholics and their oppression under the Nazi and Fascist regimes. In the wake of the speech, several articles in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* expressed the idea of a shared Jewish-Catholic victimhood at the hands of Nazism and Fascism.

In the article "Italy on the road of Nazism: The struggle between truth and falsehood and between the Pope and Mussolini," also written in the wake of the implementation of racial laws in Italy in 1938, we find an ambivalent image of Mussolini, depicted as an experienced and clever politician known for his "intellectual strength, leadership and authority" who has only recently shifted to embrace the extremism and foolishness of Hitler and Nazism. His long political career is contrasted to Hitler's reckless rise to power in Germany. But Mussolini is now understood to be following in Hitler's footsteps, transporting his "racial religion" (*diyana ʿunsuriyya*) to Italy, targeting the Jews and, secondarily, the Catholics. The increasing tension between the Fascists and the Vatican marked another shift in Mussolini's policies. While he had previously undertaken to limit the "age-old dispute between the Italian Kingdom and the Vatican," he was now fighting Catholicism and the Jews.[83]

In the article "We and the Catholics," an anonymous author argued that the recent misfortunes befalling Jews and Catholics only strengthened their centuries-long friendly relations and expressed hope in God's support for the pope's "crushing of the Swastika and the blackshirts." The author did make the idea of shared victimhood more nuanced by stating that "they say that the racial question in the land of colonialism, despotism and oppression concerns both Catholics and Jews. We have no doubt about that, but the Catholics have not reached and will not reach the level of oppression and expulsion that the Jews have faced."[84] Moreover, the Jews found themselves in a more precarious position, lacking the sort of authority that the pope possessed to mobilize moral support. He went on to state

that the racial question was essentially a religious question that had taken on a new character; racism was a "fable," as was evident in Jews being "fully incorporated into the peoples and countries in which they live."[85]

In *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, Nazism was thus presented as a movement and an ideology that was antithetical to the monotheistic religions. Mann and Adjami published the writings of Muslim and Christian intellectuals involved in the opposition to Fascism, such as the aforementioned Tawfiq Yusuf 'Awwad and the influential Palestinian intellectual and communist Muhammad Najati Sidqi (1905–1979).[86] Sidqi, known for his involvement in the Palestinian uprising of 1936–9 and the anti-Fascist struggle in Spain, is a remarkable example showing how various Arab intellectuals sought to demonstrate the incompatibility of Nazism and Islam.

In 1940, he published the book *The Islamic Traditions and the Nazi Principles: Can they Agree?*, in which he argued that Nazism was antithetical to Islam and that Muslims supported democracy. As Gershoni has shown in his analysis of the book, Sidqi expressed the idea that Nazism was a materialist ideology that aimed to eliminate the spiritualism of the monotheistic religions so that it could establish a new "religion" of paganism. Nazism should thus be understood, Sidqi reasoned, as opposed not only to Jews but also to Muslims and Christians. He regarded the Nazi propaganda efforts in the Arab world as an attempt to incite the local population against the region's religious minorities.[87] Furthermore, he presented the Nazis as a colonial force that sought to take over extensive parts of the Islamic world.[88] The publication, as well as Sidqi's prior critique of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939) between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, led to another conflict between him and the Communist Party and his eventual expulsion from its ranks.[89] Sidqi later wrote in his memoirs that the book was criticized because it relied heavily on Islamic texts.[90]

In *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, we find similar expressions of the idea that Nazism and Islam are incompatible. An article from January 23, 1939, was titled: "Germany welcomes the religion of Islam. Al-Hajj Muhammad Adolf ibn Ahmad Hitler." Although the title would suggest a connection between Nazi Germany and Islam, the article is not as provocative as it might seem, given the arguments brought forth in it; in fact the title appears to have been derived from a different article published in the Lebanese Arabic newspaper *al-Jumhuriyya*, written in response to Nazi propaganda, which discussed Hitler's supposed appreciation of Islam and even contained the mocking speculation that Hitler was so taken with Islam that he might make the pilgrimage to Mecca and subsequently change his name.[91]

The anonymous writer of the article criticized the embracement of Islam by Nazi propagandists who argue that Islam, not Christianity, is in agreement with the mentality of the German people.[92] The attraction of certain Muslims to Nazism notwithstanding, Islam and Nazi ideology were ultimately incompatible. The author explained this incompatibility along three axes: colonialism, Semitism, and religion. The author argues that one of the main aims of the Germans, and of the Italian Fascists as well, was to expand their influence and realize their colonial ambitions in the Mediterranean. Pursuing this end, Nazis and Fascists opportunistically use the dispute "between the two peoples" in Palestine to spread

propaganda directed at Muslims. Ultimately, the connection of Nazism to Islam has little to do with Nazi sympathy for religion as such but rather serves to conceal their colonial ambitions in the Mediterranean. For the Nazi, there is only one divine, German race, which they regard as divinity itself. Islam is incompatible, the author writes, with Nazi paganism.[93] Moreover, Nazi Germany has oppressed religions, destroying synagogues and burning holy books. The author concludes that Nazism has very little to do with religion, and God rejects such a barbaric figure as Hitler among his worshippers.[94] In a somewhat contradictory presentation of Nazism both in religious terms (as paganism) and as opposed to religion, the author aims to show Nazism's incompatibility with monotheism.

In the aftermath of the British-French invasion ousting the Vichy regime in the French mandates, Moise Adjami delivered a speech for the French Radio Levant[95] on December 7, 1941, later published in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*. In the speech, Adjami discussed antisemitism in light of the history of French and German racial thought since the eighteenth century. He traced the European tradition of racial thought back to the German philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814) and the French writer Joseph Arthur de Gobineau (1816–1882). Gobineau, placing the Aryan race above all other human races, regarded the Germans to be the quintessential Aryan race. Adjami is speaking on a French radio station to listeners in the Levant, and he takes great pains to disconnect Gobineau from French culture as a whole and the ideals of the French Revolution.

Adjami further stressed that the ideas of Gobineau and others about the purity of races, and the notion of bloodlines, were not supported by science.[96] Adjami argued that France was composed of various peoples who had come from different areas at different periods. This mixing did not lead to the decline of the French nation, as Gobineau has argued, nor did mixing result in decline in the cases of England and Germany.[97] Adjami also discussed, as Saad Malki had in *al-Shams* several weeks before, the views of the British evolutionary biologist Julian Huxley to refute the idea of pure races and pointed to the latter's view that different races had founded the world's great civilizations and thus Nazi claims in these matters should be regarded as a myth.[98] Adjami's critique on the idea that mixing (*ikhtilat*) led to national or civilizational decline should remind us of Malki's positive evaluation of integration or mixing (*indimaj*).

Adjami further reproduced the claim that Arabs ranked fourteenth in the division of human races in *Mein Kampf*. The notion that *Mein Kampf* contained a concrete racial ranking or hierarchy, an idea frequently expressed by the writers of *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, as well as Malki's assertion that the book contained denigrating statements about the Egyptians and the Arabs as Semites requires explanation. Stefan Wild's study on the partial Arabic translations of *Mein Kampf* during the 1930s provides some clarifying clues. The original text of *Mein Kampf* included neither a racial ranking nor a discussion of Egyptians and Arabs, although Hitler had made derogatory statements about anti-colonial nationalism, including that of the Egyptians. Nevertheless, with regard to a possible Arabic translation, Hitler had given permission for the removal of passages that Arab populations might find offensive. In a 1934 letter to the German Foreign Office

the German consul in Baghdad, Fritz Grobba, recommended that the terms "antisemitic" and "antisemitism" be replaced by "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Judaism" in a planned translation.[99] Wild also discusses two reports submitted by the German consuls in Berlin and Cairo to officials in Germany in 1938, which noted local "Jewish propaganda" claims about a Nazi racial ranking in which Arabs ranked fourteenth.[100] In Egypt, this idea was allegedly promoted by the "Ligue Pacifiste d'Alexandrie."[101] The consul requested permission to counter these allegations, as they would be harmful for relations with Arab countries, as well as the necessary materials to do so.[102]

Adjami concluded his speech by declaring the monotheistic religions' rejection of racism, the principles of Nazism, and the crimes committed in its name. Adjami stated that "the true religion of Islam rejects pagan Nazism and its racism completely," making reference to Muhammad 'Abduh's *Risalat al-Tawhid* (*The Theology of Unity*) to support his argument.[103] Adjami further claimed that European Catholics fiercely resisted antisemitism as an expression of their Eastern spiritual descent from "Syria and Palestine." Adjami, like Malki, thus asserts the Eastern or Semitic origins of Christianity. The persecution of the Jews was only a foretaste of the oppression of the "weak nations," Adjami claimed. His speech unsurprisingly closes with his declared hope for an Allied victory.[104]

Mann and Adjami's reports during the 1940s on the Nazi persecution and eventual exterminations of Jews in its occupied territories show their reliance on foreign news outlets and provide detailed information about the number of victims. These reports often contain statements by intellectuals such as Ilya Ehrenburg as well as eyewitness accounts.[105] Mann and Adjami recognized the centrality of antisemitism in Nazi Germany and acknowledged that the Jews were the primary victims of National Socialism. Like Saad Malki in *al-Shams*, however, they were also deeply concerned with the persecution of Christians, in Adjami's case particularly of Catholics in Nazi Germany, and they presented antisemitism as a poisonous animus that was opposed to the monotheistic or Semitic religions of the East. In their attempts to address Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Arabic readers and mobilize their support in the struggle against Nazism, the idea of the "Semitic religions" was a useful unifier.

In the editorial discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism during the interwar period and the Second World War, several commonalities between *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* stand out. In these discussions, the editors and writers involved with both newspapers extensively debated the relation between religious prejudice and racism in the history of antisemitism. In their representations of antisemitism they navigated between premodern anti-Judaism and modern racial antisemitism while often still explaining the latter in religious terms. Saad Malki, Selim Mann, Moise Adjami, and other writers for these newspapers mobilized the traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as "Semitic" or "Eastern" religions as a counterforce against what they perceived as Nazi and Fascist anti-religious prejudice and persecution. In addition, writing in a context of rival nationalisms in the Middle East, both *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* depicted Jews in Europe as loyal patriots of their respective nations, who

overcame religious difference and cooperated with Christians in the fight against Fascism and Nazism, pictured as atheism and as paganism. These intellectuals' Zionist sympathies, it is worth noting, are enmeshed with the conceptualization of Jews as an ethno-religious group and ideas about their right to self-determination as a people within the confines of the Atlantic Charter. In that sense, the Jews are a "small nation" who also deserve a land of their own. This conception is combined with, yet not perceived as contradicting, the idea of Jews as a religious group living as patriots alongside other religious groups.

In addition to these commonalities, several differences can be noted. By presenting antisemitism as eternal and omnipresent, the editorial outlook of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* differs from that of *al-Shams*. In the latter's discussions, antisemitism is mainly discussed within its European context: primarily in relation to Nazism, and also traced back to medieval religious prejudice and nineteenth-century racism in the era of nation-states. The discussions hence focus on antisemitism as it was embedded in Europe's history of religious fanaticism and its racial ideologies. It is contrasted to the spiritual and moral traditions of the East and idealized narratives of interreligious cooperation and tolerance. In *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, discussions on antisemitism are related to a greater extent than in *al-Shams* to the Middle Eastern context, Syria and Lebanon in particular. The idealized narrative of interreligious tolerance among Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is also expressed in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s discussions, yet here it is combined with the conception of an eternal and omnipresent antisemitism and the idea that Jews in the Middle East are subject to continuous attacks. The impact of the Palestine question is thus more strongly present in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s reports.

Fascism and Nazism in Relation to Sectarianism and Colonialism

We have seen that the writers for *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* extensively discussed Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism during the interwar period and the war. What stands out in their discussions of German Nazism and Italian Fascism is the use of religious themes and terminology, such as the notion of "Semitic religions." In doing so, the editors hoped to mobilize opposition to Fascism and Nazism in the region by addressing a cross-confessional Arabic readership. This religious framing also leads to a representation of Fascism and Nazism as part of Europe's history of sectarian policies in the Middle East. The British mandate in Palestine is perceived as one outcome of this tradition, while the influence of Fascist and Nazi propaganda on the Arab public is another. An important aspect of discussions on antisemitism in the Arab world was that it was commonly perceived within the broader framework of European colonialism, with its accompanying sectarianism and racism. To understand how Jewish writers in the Arab world conceived of antisemitism, the remains of this chapter therefore consider their ideas on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism in relation to the notion of sectarianism.

As we have seen, *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s editors expressed the idea that antisemitism was eternal and omnipresent. During the late 1930s, when he took over the editorship, Moise Adjami responded to Arabic newspapers in Syria and Lebanon and their depictions of Jews and Zionism and the question of Palestine. In his polemics with Arabic newspapers, he underscored the idea that European antisemitism had also found its way to the Middle East. In the summer of 1938, a special issue on Jews in the Syrian Arabic cultural newspaper *al-Makshuf*, published and edited by Fu'ad Hubaysh, heightened a debate on the regional Arabic press in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* roughly concomitant with the Palestinian uprising and the presence of the Mufti Amin al-Husseini in Beirut. Eisenberg notes that on July 8, 1938, Eliyahu Sasson (who, as we have seen in Chapter 2, frequently wrote for *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*) informed Moshe Shertok, the head of the Jewish Agency, about the publication of the sixteen-page special issue, which warned of the supposed danger posed by Jews to "Christian and Islamic countries," past and present. According to Sasson, the booklet was ideologically linked to Hitler and Fascism.[106]

In August, Moise Adjami, alarmed about the booklet's hostility toward the Jewish communities in the East, devoted his weekly editorial in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* to the matter, noting that the issue cast blame on the Egyptian king for protecting the Egyptian Jews, who were said to be monopolizing the Egyptian economy.[107] The newspaper had made a similar argument regarding the Jews of Lebanon and their dominant position in Beirut's financial life. For Adjami, a "strange hand" had brought forth the issue.[108] He claimed that the booklet was the product of European influence on the newspaper's writers, whom he accused of blind imitation of the West: in imitating Westerners and their sciences, knowledge, and creations, they had also blindly taken up the West's hatred of the Jews.[109]

Though Adjami described the booklet in terms of sectarianism and racial incitement, he also posed the question whether it was also an attack on religion. He called racism "a foolish theory" and argued that attacks on Jews were motivated by hostility toward their religion.[110] To emphasize his conviction that the publication in *al-Makshuf* was a "sectarian incitement" engineered by foreign powers, he recalled the massacres of 1860. According to Adjami, the events of 1860 had been instigated by both the British and the Turks—the former aspiring to weaken French influence in the East, and the latter hoping to intensify their ruling grip over Mount Lebanon. In 1938, as in 1860, foreign powers (he perceived the Ottomans as Turkish foreign rulers) used sectarianism to tighten their hold on Lebanon. Although not explicitly identified with a concrete referent, the "strange hand" refers to Fascist and Nazi propaganda in the Middle East: Adjami writes that the enemies of France and Britain, the "dictatorial states," are spending "thousands of pounds to influence the press and public opinion." But the sectarian incitement in *al-Makshuf* was not only the result of Fascist propaganda. Adjami argued that the recent "estrangement between Arabs and Jews in Palestine," referring to the Palestinian uprising of 1936–9, was being misused for local political purposes. The "roots of chaos and strife" had been transported into the Lebanese domain, bearing dangerous consequences for public opinion.[111]

Several weeks later, Moise Adjami devoted his weekly editorial to the "journalistic charlatanry" in the newspaper *al-Sharq*. The latter had reported critically about aid from Jews in Beirut and Syria sent to the Jewish Agency in Palestine. The local community councils were said to be collecting money from the communities and depositing these funds in a bank in Beirut. Adjami denied this was happening and added that "the local councils that represent the Jews of Syria and Lebanon are most sincerely and most fiercely dedicated to Arabism."[112] In a later issue in October 1938, Adjami responded to the Syrian newspaper *al-Qabas*, which served as a mouthpiece of the Syrian National Bloc,[113] and its take on the donations sent to Palestine by Syrian Jews. The newspaper's editor, Najib al-Rayyis, had argued that the Jews in Syria were loyal citizens and dedicated Syrians. Whereas the Jews who immigrate to Palestine, al-Rayyis had stated, have experienced all sorts of persecution, the Jews of Syria possess a fatherland that has left them entirely free from oppression. He further emphasized that not all Jews are Zionists and that Syrian Jewish aid to Palestine did not contradict their feelings of Syrian patriotism.[114]

Adjami, himself born in Aleppo and editing the newspaper from Damascus, stressed that Syrian Jews are an inseparable part of the Arab Syrian people and that Zionism in Palestine should not be confused with the condition of the Jews in Syria and their loyalty to Arabism. He disagreed with al-Rayyis, however, on the point of Jewish "neutrality" and "calmness" in the era of anti-colonial nationalism and their supposed lack of participation in the national struggle, which allowed al-Rayyis to place them outside the nationalist collective. He agreed that the Jews in Syria had not experienced any sort of oppression comparable to that which had afflicted Jewish immigrants to Palestine. Yet he warned about the writings found in the Arabic press in Syria, which for him consisted of a dangerous campaign that exploited the political struggle between the Zionists and the Arabs, poisoned Arabic public opinion with religious extremism, deepened the gap between the different sects, and complicated the position of the Arab Jews.[115]

Shortly thereafter, Adjami devoted another editorial in opposition to the Syrian newspaper *al-Shabab*. In its pages the Jews of Syria had been accused of betraying their country when they had given aid to Palestine, and at the same time they were called upon to join the Arabs in their struggle in Palestine. Adjami responded by accusing journalists in the East, particularly in Lebanon and Syria, of being politically biased and commercially oriented, as in his view they were writing with a discriminatory animus against local Jewish communities in order to increase the circulation of their papers, and had fabricated news and conspiracies. Reminiscent of how he had previously written about the Jews in Lebanon, Adjami now argued that the Jews in Syria could hardly be of any importance to the Zionists, whose sole weapon, he thought, was money.[116] Moreover, the members of the Jewish community paid their taxes and expressed their loyalty to the government just like the members of every other sect in the country. They were tightly connected to their nation and remained far removed from politics, Zionism, and anti-Zionism: "The Jews in this country are most dedicated to Arabism."[117]

In Beirut on July 26, 1939, two bombs planted in the Jewish neighborhood of Wadi Abu Jamil exploded, causing only light damage to buildings and shops.[118] Moise Adjami interpreted the attack to be directed at the Jews in Beirut for their presumed support of Zionism. He stressed that the Jewish community in Beirut was relatively small and of little relevance for the Zionists in Palestine. He further noted that most of the Jews in Beirut were not financially able to support the project of building a national home or the establishment of a Jewish state. Like his responses to the aforementioned publications in Syrian and Lebanese Arabic newspapers, he perceived the bomb attacks to be the product of Nazism's long reach in the Arab East, where the Palestine issue was used to incite the local population. The title of his article, "Arabs, do not pollute your holy struggle with hate of the innocent," referred to those calling for jihad against the Zionists in Palestine during the uprising; the essay claimed that foreign propagandists were leading them astray. The Nazis used the struggle against Zionism as a cover for their creation of hatred against the Jews and the French. He wondered when France would put an end to the "arms of the Nazis" in the East and the support of Fascism in Lebanon. France, responsible above all for what has happened, should act with an "iron fist."[119] Arab support for Nazism was not widespread, in Adjami's view, but rather a position taken by an extremist minority. To underline Arab opposition to Fascism, he referred to the aforementioned speech by Tawfiq Yusuf ʿAwwad during the Syrian-Lebanese conference against Fascism.[120]

In his postwar editorials in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, Adjami claimed that the Jewish communities in the Arab world found themselves in a state of constant fear and were under the ongoing threat of persecution. In February 1945, he discussed the situation of the Jewish communities in Yemen and Iraq. The 80,000 Jews living in Yemen faced discrimination by "Muslims" under Imam Yahya's rule, a "racist regime" resembling Nazi and Fascist rule.[121] Adjami's editorials should be seen within the context of concerns raised by international Jewish organizations, the British Board of Deputies, and the Anglo-Jewish Association among them, about the Jews in Yemen and these organizations' impression that Imam Yahya's regime was persecuting them.[122]

In his discussion of Jews in Iraq, Adjami pointed out that the Iraqi government's fear that the Jews there would resettle in Palestine had recently led it to ban Jewish emigration. The "terrorist" events of the Farhud in 1941, Adjami wrote, had resulted from Nazi influence on the Arabs and had brought the Jews' comfortable days under Faysal's reign to an end. The problem, in his view, was not so much Zionism and the intention of Iraqi Jews to move to Palestine, but rather the conditions of Jews in Iraq. If these would improve, Jews would continue to be completely dedicated to the Iraqi nation.[123] What we see here is an example of Adjami's ongoing attempt to cast the Jews of the Arab world as loyal citizens and to draw a line of demarcation distinguishing Jews from Zionism. Moreover, Zionism is seen here as an outcome of aggression against the Jews in Iraq, and thus its adherence among local Jews would be avoidable: if attacks and restrictions on Jews were to be brought to an end, their desire to settle in Palestine would naturally disappear.

In October 1945, Adjami responded to accusations made in local newspapers that the Jews in Lebanon had supported Zionism during the "recent crisis in Palestine." He stressed Jewish loyalty to Arabism, the Lebanese nation, and its independence and emphasized that his newspaper had always called for mutual understanding and harmony between the Semitic brothers in Palestine and an end to their struggle against each other. There was a need, he pointed out, to differentiate between Jews and Zionism, referring in this regard to the recent statement on Palestine, "the Arabs respect Judaism," made by the Lebanese president Bishara al-Khuri.[124]

During the late 1930s and the war, Adjami views the precarious position of Jews in the Arab world as yet another result of foreign intervention in the Middle East, attributing disturbances of Arab-Jewish relations and Semitic brotherhood to the long hand of Nazism. In the postwar period, Nazism is replaced by Britain and foreign powers in general within this conception. He belittles Arab resistance to Zionism and presents it as a threat to Arab-Jewish relations, working against the interest of Jews and Arabs itself; it is furthermore not representative of the population in Palestine. During the latter half of the 1940s, we continue to find Palestine depicted in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* as a place of harmony as opposed to the "foreign" representations showing conflict. The majority of its inhabitants lived in cooperation and harmony with one another and did not support the "terrorism" sponsored by Jewish organizations—the latter observation, it might be remarked, a rare acknowledgment of Zionist attacks on British and Palestinians targets.[125]

In the first issue of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* published under its new title, *al-Salam*, Moise Adjami's editorial entitled "Is the persecution of the Jews of Arab countries the solution to the problem of Palestine?" discussed recent attacks on Jews in Libya, Egypt, and Iraq.[126] He concluded that the Jews in the Arab world were in a state of constant danger and fear, threatened with attacks from "terrorists" and politicians who had become spokesmen for the Palestinian case. Adjami thus placed responsibility for the attacks in the hands of the Palestinians' supporters, but he described the attackers as a small extremist group that sought by its actions to influence wider Arab opinion. "The group of terrorists" aimed to create hostility and aggression among "the Arabs" of "Semitic blood" who were believers in the "human teachings of the Quran"; the unrest in Palestine caused by "terrorists" upheld the interests of the British and other foreign powers, who used it to tighten their colonial grip on the Arab world. Thus ultimately serving the colonial aims of the British, Arab "terrorism" was counterproductive in the ongoing Arab struggle for independence.

For Adjami, the British in Palestine were instigators of civil strife and disorder intended to benefit their strategic and economic interests. In response to the increasing association of Jews in the region with the Zionist project, Adjami and Mann called for a clear distinction to be made between Jews and Zionism and between "religion and politics." In August 1947, the editors praised the Iraqi newspaper *al-Taqaddum* for its criticism of statements by the Lebanese Arab nationalist Fawzi al-Qawuqji (1890–1970), who had called for Arab unity and strength and allegedly declared "every Jew an enemy of the Arab." By making such

statements, the editors wrote, al-Qawuqji opposed those Arab leaders who viewed Zionism as one thing and Judaism as another. His view, moreover, did not allow a Jew, unlike their Muslims and Christians counterparts, to be a pure Arab.[127]

We have seen that a common move made by *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s editors was to present Nazism as a movement and ideology antithetical to Islam and Arabism and thus to declare that the Nazi attempts to influence and incite Arab populations through propaganda were ultimately unsuccessful. The idea of Nazi-Arab incompatibility evolves in the postwar period into the claim that Arab opposition to Zionism is not a response to the Zionist colonization of Palestine in its own right, but the belated product of Nazi propaganda in the Arab world, made manifest by attacks on Jews in Palestine and elsewhere in the region. The shift in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s discourse implied the abandonment of neither the idea that Arabs and Jews as Semitic brothers should make a front against "Nazism" nor the notion that their shared Semitic origin could counter conflict and sectarianism. "Semitic brotherhood" continued to be a central idea in the newspaper's outlook on the position of Jews in the Arab world as well as on what the Zionist project in Palestine ought to become. On the one hand, there is the central idea of peaceful coexistence and cooperation between Arabs and Jews in Palestine and beyond, embodied in the idea of the Semites. On the other, the tone of writing on Arab resistance to Zionism hardens, and attacks on Jewish communities in the Arab world are covered extensively and presented as the effects of Nazism's influence. The discourse of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* in the postwar period encapsulates, in a sense, a lachrymose conception of contemporary Jewish life in the Arab world, considering its emphasis on hostility and attacks directed toward the Jews, as well as notions of harmony and tolerance reflected in its persistent appeal to Semitic brotherhood.

In the postwar discussions found in *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, we also encounter frequent comparisons between Fascism and British colonialism in Palestine. "The new Pharaoh is the British mandate government of Palestine," wrote the publisher of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, Selim Mann, on the occasion of Pesach in April 1947. For Mann here Britain was the enemy of Arab-Jewish relations, mutual understanding, and Semitic brotherhood in Palestine. In the late 1940s, Adjami and Mann argued that Semitic brotherhood was under threat by the British, who continued to control the country, as well as by international plans for the partition of Palestine. It is an ironic twist of history that the idea of the Semite was part and parcel of British propaganda during the post-1917 period in Palestine in its attempt to reconcile Zionism and Arab nationalism and that the same notion of "Semitic brotherhood" is claimed by the editors to be under threat by Britain, the new quintessential enemy in the Middle East following the collapse of Nazism.[128]

The idea of British colonialism as the new enemy in the Middle East and as threatening the Semitic brotherhood through its sectarian policies also strongly resonates in Saad Malki's editorials and writings in *al-Shams* in the postwar years. "In the shadow of the Gestapo" is a short fictional narrative written by Malki published in *al-Shams* in September 1947.[129] In the story we are introduced to the British Jewish figure of Lewis Gordon, a young and successful lawyer living in London. Following his engagement to his cousin Janet, the couple starts

making plans for their honeymoon. Lewis suggests going to Switzerland for its nature and calm, but Janet insists on traveling to Palestine, seeking to witness its "institutes" and "the Hebrew countryside." Janet prevails, and the rest of the story is an account of the young couple's trip. During their journey by train and ship (they arrive in the port of Haifa) and their subsequent travels to Jerusalem and agricultural settlements, Lewis and Janet encounter British soldiers, American tourists, Jewish soldiers, and immigrants, whose worldly knowledge and often cynical comments help gradually transform Lewis' idealized perception of Britain. The disillusionment starts all the way back in London, where Lewis is surprised to learn from a civil servant that British Jews are required to obtain a permit before traveling to the "countries of the empire," a policy at odds with his pride in his British citizenship and the notion of a "British freedom of faith."

On board the ship to Haifa, Lewis and Janet encounter a group of travelers discussing "British-Russian rivalry" in the Middle East and the current political situation in Palestine. A British trader, arguing with an American tourist about Jewish terrorism in Palestine, blames the Jews for spreading terror and unrest and then hears the American defend these acts as justifiable responses to broken British promises to the Jews. The debate is interrupted by a Jewish soldier, who notes the Jewish contributions to the British army during the First and Second World Wars and the Jewish participation in the British "conquest" of Palestine led by General Allenby. Despite Jewish contributions to the British Empire, he states that the British are waging war against the Jews in "East and West" and have fueled the dispute between Arabs and Jews ever since setting foot on Palestine. The Jewish soldier goes on to blame the British for their "support" and "arms supplies" during the first Arab "revolution," for the implementation of the White Paper (restricting Jewish immigration), and for their failure to have rescued the Jews from the Nazis in Europe. Lewis is incredulous, the horrors of these accounts running contrary to what he imagines the British "superman" to be.

Lewis and Janet continue their journey on land, enjoying the signs of "awakening and revival" in Palestine as well as the modern city of Haifa, "the scientific institutes" in Jerusalem, and the agricultural blossoming in the countryside. Yet their experiences are spoilt by British armored cars, the security measures imposed, and the British incitement of the local population, a souring of their enthusiasm that is enhanced by the cynical comments made by Jews as well as British soldiers and bureaucrats who cross their path. In a Jewish club in Jerusalem, Lewis discusses the recent rise of Fascist movements in Britain with a soldier, who attributes these developments to Nazism's influence in Britain and tells Lewis that he expects Nazism to eventually take power there. When the couple finally returns to London, Lewis exclaims to the eager family members awaiting them that the situation in Palestine is not much different from what transpired under Nazi rule in Germany. They have returned from "the shadow of the Gestapo."

Saad Malki's fictional narrative deserves our attention because the dialogues and comments of Lewis and Janet's interlocutors are a compilation of his own impressions of Britain during the postwar period as expressed in his news articles. The story of Lewis, a British Jew, and his transformation formulate a political and

social critique that is ultimately aimed at shaping Egyptian and Arab perceptions of the situation in mandate Palestine.

Lewis's patriotic feeling and his belief in British superiority, yielding subsequently to disillusionment through his experiences in Palestine, can be said to form a fictionalized account of Malki's shifting views of the British in 1947. The reversed meaning of the title, referring not to an escapee from the Gestapo in Germany on his way to Palestine but to a British Jew returning from British-ruled Palestine to London, illustrates how the British had become the new quintessential enemy in Malki's worldview following the collapse of Nazi rule and the postwar struggle over Palestine. In his perception Britain, no longer the upholder of democracy and civilization, had become the archetypical enemy, a hostile ruler that propagates religious and racial conflict in both its domestic and overseas policies in order to maintain its colonial position. Malki's fictional narrative is a not-so-subtle call for British withdrawal from Palestine and a celebration of Jewish revival in Palestine, symbolized by its institutes, modern cities, and the "Hebrew countryside." Notwithstanding Malki's persistent calls elsewhere in his articles for Arab-Jewish mutual understanding and cooperation, the Palestine encountered on Lewis and Janet's visit is a land without Palestinian Arabs. The absent presence of Palestinian Arabs is confirmed only through the negative accounts of British soldiers and American tourists of British sectarian policy and the violent "Arab revolution," an obvious reference to the 1936–9 Palestinian revolt against Zionist colonization and the British mandate.

From the end of the Second World War up until *al-Shams*'s final issues in the spring of 1948, Malki wrote extensively on the continuation of Nazi and Fascist movements in Europe. He wrote, for example, about underground Nazi groups in occupied Germany that were planning for a restoration of Nazi rule.[130] Moreover, he reported that Nazism lingered in the Allied zones, since Nazi figures still occupied high bureaucratic positions.[131] In addition to remarking upon the British failure to implement sufficient denazification policies in the zone of occupied Germany under its jurisdiction, he blamed Britain for allowing their overseas territories to be havens for fleeing Nazis.[132] Britain devoted itself, Malki argued, to the protection of the remnants of Fascism and Nazism within Europe and beyond its borders.[133]

Malki showed particular interest in the rise of Fascism in postwar Britain. Fascist movements and parties had been active in Britain since 1934. The best-known British Fascist, Oswald Mosley, the leader of the British Union of Fascists (BUF, founded 1932), had been in contact with the Italian Fascist and German Nazi parties and regimes since 1931.[134] Following the imprisonment of many British Fascists during the Second World War, the immediate postwar period witnessed a rebirth of various Fascist movements in Britain.[135] Despite Fascism's limited appeal, the different Fascist movements held various outdoor rallies in 1947 that all featured antisemitic speeches.[136] Malki called the leaders of the British Fascist movements "imitators" and "pupils" of Hitler and Mussolini.[137] The British Union of Fascists as well as the British People's Party were in his view a continuation of Nazism and Hitler taking root in Britain. Oswald Mosley styled himself a leader

similar to Hitler, and his book *My Answer* (1946) was written in the style of *Mein Kampf*.[138] "The Fascist movement in Britain, like every Fascist movement," Malki wrote in October 1947, "is accompanied by racial fanaticism (*ta'assub 'unsuri*). Those who attended their latest meetings heard antisemitic slogans such as 'Britain for the British!,' 'Away with the Jews!,' the same slogans that were uttered by the Nazis in Germany."[139]

Malki blamed the ruling Labour Party in Britain for making no effort to halt the advance of Fascism in the country. In hindsight, Britain had not done enough to counter Hitler and Nazism, and the Labour Party's current inability to stop the Fascist movement echoed Chamberlain's assent to the infamous Munich Agreement with Hitler in 1938.[140] "In no other country in the world has Fascism spread to the extent that is has in Britain today," Malki wrote in December 1947. "It is very surprising indeed that this has occurred under the Labour government. But actually, every Briton is a colonialist. Britain entered the war to end Fascism, but now it is actually supporting it. The aims of its participation during the last war were colonial. Complaints have been raised against the government about the rise of Fascism, but it remains in its traditional silence."[141] Because he believed that the fight against communism was now underlying the British toleration of Fascism, Malki characterized British policy as "reactionism."[142] In Malki's view, British toleration of the Fascist movements was further motivated by the nation's sacred principle of freedom of speech and opinion.[143]

Malki's critique of the Labour government's neglect, its adherence to the notion of free speech, the early Cold War context of the struggle against communism, and the representation of the Fascist movements as new manifestations of Nazism all correspond to the sentiments voiced among anti-Fascist groups in Britain.[144] What stands out in Malki's news articles on the public reemergence of Fascist movements in Britain is the representation of Britain as the new quintessential enemy in the Middle East and as a colonial power pursuing sectarian and racial policies in its own interest. This representation marks a radical shift from his positive wartime perceptions that favored Britain as the Allied power that should be supported ideologically and militarily in the global struggle between democracy and dictatorship. Despite continuing British obstacles to Egyptian independence, he understood Britain to be working toward what would ultimately be Egyptian independence. The shift from support to hostility in his position toward Britain in the postwar period corresponds to the changed view of many Arab intellectuals who had temporarily expressed unequivocal support for the Allies during the Second World War despite their continued struggle for full independence and the end of British and European colonial interference in Egypt and the wider region. And from a Zionist perspective Malki's hostile perception of Britain is, moreover, unsurprising: Zionist resistance to the continuation of British rule in Palestine and its restrictions on immigration became radicalized during the late 1940s.

Malki places his assumption that the British tolerated and even supported Fascism within a colonial framework: in his understanding, the rise of British Fascist movements, including in particular the government's reluctance to intervene and to quash these movements and their incitement against Jews, was aligned with

British colonial sectarian practices. The toleration of antisemitism in Britain had resulted from Britain's colonialist aim of creating strife between religious and ethnic groups in order to weaken nationalist movements and to continue Britain's own colonial rule. Malki called religious and racial strife the pillar of colonial rule and compared the situation in Palestine to what was happening to India and likened Hindu-Muslim clashes to Arab-Jewish confrontations.[145] Wherever people demanded their freedom from British colonialism, the British used their weapons of sectarianism, or religious incitement, and racism. The British hoped to dominate the world market and, more specifically, to maintain their economic position in Palestine by destroying the "industrial revival" in Palestine.[146]

"Britain has put itself in the place of the Germans, and London has manifested itself as the successor of Berlin in its propagation of religious racism for colonial aims," wrote Malki in April 1947.[147] Malki compared British Arabic news agencies and the Jaffa-based *al-Sharq al-Adna* (the Near East Broadcasting Station) to Radio Berlin, the Nazi Arabic radio station of the 1940s.[148] As we have seen, during the interwar and war periods Malki had presented conflict between Arabs and Jews in Palestine as the outcome of Nazi propaganda in the Middle East. In the postwar period, within the context of early Cold War rivalry over colonial influence in the Middle East as well as Zionist resistance to the British mandate, he wrote that British propaganda, as Nazi propaganda had done previously, aimed to foment chaos and disorder so that the British colonial presence in Palestine could continue and its economic and strategic position in the Middle East be secured.

In response to the London Conference on Palestine (September 1946–February 1947), at which the American president Harry S. Truman expressed his support for increased Jewish immigration to Palestine, Malki contrasted American support for "the freedom of the small nations" to unfulfilled British promises of "independence" and its refusal to "open the doors of Palestine" to save the Jews in Europe during the war.[149] He addressed his Egyptian readership in particular when he stated that Egypt would know how little British promises for independence were worth, since it worked only for its own "material" interests. The British struggle against Russia had the sole aim of securing the Soviets' petrol, and now the Arabs were the target audience to be recruited for that cause:

> It looks like Britain has succeeded Germany in its circulation of propaganda against the Jews in the name of combatting communism, which is the same as the Nazis did … Hitler used hatred against Jews as a curtain to mislead the German people, and turn them away from perceptible dangers, so do the British in East and West use the Jews as a means to mislead people about their colonial ambitions.[150]

The idea that British colonial and sectarian policy was at the root of the problems in Palestine served, of course, to mask Palestinian and Arab opposition to Zionism. "Arab-Jewish" clashes in Palestine were, in this reasoning, the result not of opposition to Zionist colonization and imminent plans for the partition of Palestine; rather, they were a consequence of British sectarian policy.[151] Malki

argued that the British, and in particular the foreign secretary of the Labour government Ernest Bevin—called "the Nazi who resembles Haman"—had no intention of leaving Palestine anytime soon; they fomented unrest and strife between Arabs and Jews so their continued colonial rule could be justified and the partition plan be stopped in its tracks.[152] This picture portrays Arabs and Jews merely as passive victims entangled in the colonial strategies of Britain, which created civil strife in order to weaken nationalist independence movements in its colonial domains. Furthermore, Malki makes the struggle in Palestine analogous both to Hindu-Muslim clashes in India and to Muslim-Coptic tensions in Egypt and thus rhetorically aligned with the anti-colonial sentiments in the Egyptian political and intellectual scene. Whereas many Egyptian intellectuals who opposed Zionism perceived it to be part and parcel of European colonialism, Malki placed Zionism—though the term itself was rarely used explicitly in his newspaper—alongside anti-imperialism among the Arab nation-states and the opposition to European colonial intervention. The British mandate in Palestine was thus explained as hindering the progress of the land, creating strife and division among its inhabitants, and serving essentially the same economic and strategic goals as Britain's continuing presence in Egypt.

The idea that the entanglement of British Fascism and its efforts at religious incitement were a tool of colonialism was also connected to Malki's emphasis on the Egyptian Jews' loyalty to Egypt and their involvement in the struggle for full independence from Britain. In the article "Stagnation and silence" of November 14, 1947, he recalled that Jews had lived in Egypt since Pharaonic times and had always been loyal citizens serving the nation:

> When we started publishing *al-Shams*, our main goal was participation in public life, the participation of Jews in cultural life, and serving the nation by being included in political parties. Mustafa Kamil[153] was very proud to have Jews, Copts and Muslims included in his struggle for the liberation of the nation. The British have claimed long ago that they will grant Egypt full sovereignty over Egypt and the Sudan, but this has not occurred. It is still carrying out its colonial campaign.[154]

Malki's rhetorical link between British colonialism and Fascism served his Zionist views and his resistance to the British mandate in Palestine, as well as his support for furthering Egypt's independence, the latter closely intertwined with an expression of Jewish loyalty to Egypt. In the visions that Malki sought to uphold and entangle, namely Zionism and Egyptian nationalism, resistance against British colonialism was a common denominator, an idea he used to create common ground between anti-colonial nationalism in Egypt and Zionism for his Egyptian and regional Arab readership.

In the steady stream of Malki's postwar news articles addressing the role of the British in the Middle East, we find the idea that British policy in the region contains the remnants of Nazi antisemitism and sectarianism, also evident in the recent rise of Fascist movements in Great Britain given extensive coverage in the publication. Saad Malki presented the British as the sole disturbers of otherwise

peaceful relations in Palestine. What stands out in Moise Adjami and Selim Mann's editorial direction of their newspaper during the postwar years is the emphasis on the increasingly vulnerable state of the Jewish communities in the Arab world as a result of the Palestine issue. In both Adjami's response to Arabic media and his emphasis on the distinction between Judaism and Zionism and Malki's resistance against British policy in Palestine and the wider region, we can detect their Zionist sympathies. Whereas Adjami directly seeks to counter opposition to Zionism in the Arabic public sphere, Malki situates his critique of British policy in Palestine within a framework of anti-colonial struggle across Britain's colonies, including the movements in Egypt and India. He thus combines a plea for full independence from Britain for Egypt during the 1940s with a call, motivated by his Zionist convictions, for the end of the British mandate.

The Impossibilities of Brotherhood: Arab-Jewish Relations in the Postwar Period

In January 1946, the journalist, translator, and feminist Esther Azhari Moyal published what would be one of her last articles in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*: "The Jew yesterday, the Jew tomorrow."[155] Writing from Jaffa,[156] where she had returned after several decades spent in Marseilles, the "brilliant and singular female Israelite writer," as the newspaper's editors introduced her, reflected on the past and present of Jewish life. In the article, she not only shared her view on Jewish hardships in the past, which had culminated in the killing of millions during the recent war, but also touched upon key elements of the shifting postwar political order: the Atlantic Charter, the atomic bomb, and, most importantly, plans for the partition of Palestine. Her article also contained a plea for democracy, universal education, and free and unfettered journalism.[157]

Moyal's articles in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* contain reflections about the war and the Holocaust in explicit relation to the position of Jews in the "Arab East." Moyal is an exceptional figure, being one of the few female writers who were published in the Arabic-language Jewish press. She led a life of remarkable intellectual productivity, moving between different literary and political worlds. By 1946, however, she was impoverished and living alone in Jaffa.[158] In a profile of Moyal, published in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* on April 12, 1946, the Lebanese journalist Jurji Niqula Baz (Georges Nicolas Baz, 1881–1959), the publisher of the women's magazine *al-Hasna'* (Belle), listed the accomplishments of a woman who, in her old age, continued to make appearances in the "Arab literary world." Moyal had mastered multiple languages, had managed a girls' school in Beirut, had edited several Arabic newspapers, translated more than twenty novels into French, was a participant in many women's societies, and had been invited as a speaker representing Syria to the international women's conference held during the World's Columbian Exhibition of 1893.[159]

A contributor to various prominent Arabic journals published in Egypt, such as *al-Ahram* and *al-Hilal*, Moyal had edited and herself founded several

newspapers, including the short-lived journal *al-ʿA'ila* (The Family, 1898–1907). Saad Malki cited Moyal in *al-Shams* as an example of Jewish participation in Egyptian journalism in line with the nineteenth-century patriotic writings of Yaʿqub Sanuʿ in his journal *Abu Naddara Zarqa* (The Man with the Blue Glasses, 1839–1912) and praising her work for Egyptian newspapers.[160] Moyal's writings were not limited to her feminist activism, as she also touched upon various literary topics and world affairs. Moyal's late husband, the Palestinian Jewish journalist Shimon Moyal, had played, as we have seen, a crucial role in the early twentieth-century debate about the idea of Zionist newspapers in Arabic, of which *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili* was the belated result. Together, the couple had published the newspaper *Sawt al-ʿUthmaniyya* (The Voice of Ottomanism, 1913), promoting Ottomanism and Zionism and the idea of a shared homeland in Palestine within an Ottoman civic framework. The Moyals also monitored attacks on Zionism in the Arabic press.[161]

As Moyal's last articles in *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili* in 1946–7 show, she remained concerned with the question of Palestine and Arab-Jewish relations until the end of her life. In fact, this was her primary topic of concern in her writings for the newspaper. These articles further illustrate that Moyal, whom the writer Ya'akov Yehoshu'a said had been "forgotten by the living and the dead" in the newspaper *Hed Ha-Mizrah* (The Echo of the East) after he visited her at home in Jaffa in 1944,[162] continued to engage with the cultural and political world surrounding her. Moyal opens her article "The Jew yesterday" of January 4, 1946, in *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili* as follows:

> In the old days, the Jew, from the cradle to the grave, did not have social or general relations, such as intellectual or cultural relations etc., with the neighboring communities of the country in which he lived. His whole life revolved around two things: his work by which he provided for his needs and the needs of his family, and his worship, that bound him to his creator and loved ones and drove away his suffering and that of his family. All of his days he spent in this manner, between his house in which he found refuge at night, his place of work in a shop, whether he was the owner of a crafts workshop or a warehouse if he had taken up the trading profession, and his house of worship in which he performed his prayers.[163]

In Moyal's description of the Jew of yesterday, she depicts a pious (male) Jew, who is very much part of his religious community and yet refrains from interacting with the other communities in his country of residence. Judaism comprises his primary sense of belonging, as his entire life revolves around his family, work, and worship. This image is, in European terms, that of the non-assimilated Jew. The Jew, Moyal continues, did not voluntarily avoid relations with gentiles, but the citizens of the country where he lived pushed him to be this way, through any number of unfounded accusations regularly hurled at him. She writes that Muslims have called Jews infidels, Christians have accused them of killing Christ, and from time to time Jews were slandered with the charge of killing children during Passover.

Moyal's depiction of the Jewish past is not tied to a specific location, and it is unclear whether she meant the conditions she describes to refer to the position of Jews in the Middle East, Europe, or elsewhere. Moyal's reference to the blood libel, however, would have struck a familiar chord among her readers in Syria and Lebanon and would surely have been understood with reference to Ottoman Syria in the nineteenth century, when various cases involving the blood-libel myth occurred in Damascus and other cities. These events were often recalled, together with the massacres of 1860, by *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s writers in moments of possible national disunity: they served as dangerous reminders of sectarianism under the impact of colonial intervention.

Moyal is quick to remark, however, that the situation of Jews in this unspecified past cannot be compared to the more recent horrors in Europe: "All of this," she writes, "is relative compared to the horrors and cruelty that the Jews of Europe have suffered during the six years of the murderous war, when Hitler plundered their money, imprisoned them in camps—a hell in which they experienced all sorts of tortures … until this barbarity killed nearly five million men, women and children."[164] Like many intellectuals in the Middle East responding to Nazism in the 1930s and 1940s who had fearfully discussed Hitler's position on the Arabs, Moyal reproduces the idea that the Nazis believed in a racial ranking, asserting that Hitler had ranked Arabs thirteenth and Jews fourteenth in his hierarchy of the human race. The understanding of the Arab and the Jew as joint victims of European antisemitism trapped within the category of the Semite also carries political potential, as this idea is for Moyal (as for others) inextricably linked to her vision of the future in Palestine, a prospect she articulated in subsequent articles.

What is the nature of the Jewish past that Moyal is presenting here? It is, above all, a past of involuntary exclusion from wider society, of religious prejudice, and of persecution and extermination in Europe. These threats are not to be "solved" by Jewish emancipation or by moving out of the ghetto, so to say. Rather, a solution to persecution must be found. Moyal logically sets the Jew of the past against the Jew of the future, a contrast that leads her to Zionism. In the second part of her article, "The Jew tomorrow," Moyal envisioned an optimistic vision of Jewish life in which Jews would continue to express love for their neighbors, based on the Torah and the Ten Commandments, and for democracy, equality, education, and the four freedoms of the Atlantic Charter. She further stated that "the Jew since ancient … times, until the present day, has wished for his return to the holy land in Palestine."[165] Typical Zionist tropes, such as the idea of Palestine as a barren land cultivated and civilized by Jews, recur in other articles on Palestine written by Moyal during this period. She depicts Palestine as the holy land, a "land of milk and honey" that, because of its geographical location, has been conquered throughout the ages successively by the Romans, the Arabs, Christian crusaders, and the Turks. After all these conquests, the country had been reduced to a state of poverty by the time the Ottomans ceded power to the British. But at this point, the Holy Land had been transformed into "a lofty garden whose blossoming increases by the day."[166]

The first issue of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s successor *al-Salam*, published on July 1, 1946, included Moyal's article "A sincere mutual understanding between Jews and Arabs is the real solution to the problem of Palestine," which contained an acknowledgment of Arab demands.[167] She writes that the political struggle "is not easy for us to solve." At the basis of Moyal's navigation of the political struggle lies the Balfour Declaration. She is fully aware of the ambiguities inherent in the text of the declaration, as she mentions that British politicians disagreed on whether the declaration of support for the "founding of a national home for the Jews in Palestine" implied that the whole or only parts of Palestine were to be the territory where a Jewish national home would be founded. She paraphrased the alleged statement of the Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann during "the peace conference of 28 February 1928":[168] "How we understand the expression 'a national home for the Jews' is that it establishes for us the primary conditions in Palestine that allows us the immigration of 50,000–60,000 Jews annually and their settling [in Palestine], the development of our projects and schools, so that Palestine finally becomes Jewish like America is American, and Britain is British."[169]

Despite Moyal's support for the Balfour Declaration as the sole legitimization of the Zionist project, she distanced herself from the position taken by the Zionist leadership in the wake of the Balfour Declaration, including Weizmann's statements, which ran counter to her idea of a shared homeland (*watan mushtarak*). Moyal acknowledged that the demands of the "Arab" population of Palestine were radically opposed to what was outlined in the Balfour Declaration. She writes that "the Arabs" viewed the declaration as a denial of their rights and demanded the halting of immigration and the selling of land, their liberation from British rule via the suspension of the mandate, and the establishment of an independent Arab state. Yet the postwar crisis in Europe is decisive for Moyal, as she writes that Jewish "refugees" have only one wish: to find refuge in the nation where they would find, as had previously been promised to them, peace and tranquility. She concludes with the statement that there should be sincere understanding between Jews and Arabs.[170]

On November 30, 1947, the day after the announcement of the UN partition plan for Palestine, *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* published Moyal's response to the address delivered to the United Nations by the Palestinian leader of the Arab Higher Committee, Jamal al-Husayni (1894–1982), on September 29 of that year, where he had spoken as a representative of a Palestinian delegation. Moyal expressed her anger over Husayni's alleged statement that the Americans had promoted bloodshed in Palestine in which the Arabs would fall victim to the Jews. In the original speech, Husayni did not mention anything close to what is disclosed in Moyal's account of Jewish violence against Arabs incited by the United States.[171] Moyal mobilized the traditions of Judaism and Islam as religions of the book, opening with a Quran citation that acknowledged Israel as "People of the Book" and invoked Jewish adherence to the commandment not to kill. She thus supported her plea for Arab-Jewish mutual understanding with the idea that the inhabitants of Palestine were "People of the Book." Alongside this appeal to related religious traditions, she marked a distinction between Arab and Jew across the

racial backward/civilized divide. Husayni, in her view, was blind to the benefits of Jewish immigration for the Arab population. The "rags" in which "poor Arabs" used to walk the streets of Jaffa have been replaced by beautiful clothes, and Arab gentlemen live in beautifully furnished palaces.[172]

In the same issue, the editors of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* published a call to Arabs and Jews in Palestine from the League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement and Cooperation, an organization formed in the early 1940s in Palestine that included former members of Brit Shalom and Kedma Mizraha.[173] The league implored the "Arab and Jewish" inhabitants of Palestine to avoid bloodshed, chaos, and the outbreak of racial war between them and instead to strive for solidarity with one another. The editors reminded their readers that they, like the league, had always aspired to improve Arab-Jewish relations and to promote brotherhood between the two Semitic peoples.[174] Moyal's call for mutual understanding and cooperation, and more broadly the sentiments expressed by *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*'s editors, was ever more unlikely to change the course of events in Palestine. Moyal died in Jaffa in 1948, in the year the State of Israel was founded, and did not live long enough to see the worlds she had inhabited, and had sought to keep together, be decisively disentangled from each other.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

> Europe has lost its hope in its civilization. There she is today, suffering deeply, drowning in a sea of blood and corpses. The time has come to make her hear the pleasant voice of the East and to return to her the wisdom of its prophets and their call for cooperation and human brotherhood. If there are difficulties in reaching this goal, Jews and Muslims will be capable to overcome them and to return the memory of the golden ages of the past. The Jews and the Arabs have cooperated in Africa, Asia, and Europe. Their cooperation has greatly benefitted the surrounding nations, which have been enlightened by their knowledge.[1]

In January 1945, Simon Mani, the head of the B'nai B'rith chapter in Cairo and one of the initiators of the local branch of the Ligue Internationale contre l'Antisémitisme (LICA), recalled in the pages of *al-Shams* the celebration of Maimonides's 800th birthday in Cairo ten years earlier.[2] It had been a celebration of Semitic brotherhood and the Golden Age of *al-Andalus*, an age of enlightenment transmitted to the West.[3] Mani's article opened with a brief autobiographical account of his education, a genre typical of the *effendiyya*, in which he recalled his elementary schooling in the Hebrew and Arabic languages in a Jewish and later a Muslim *kuttab* in his Egyptian birthplace of Mansura and the village of Faraskur, close to Damietta, where he used to spend his summers.[4]

Mani evoked this personal experience to make a plea for Arab-Jewish and Muslim-Jewish cooperation. To advance his case, he recalled the age of *al-Andalus* as well as more recent examples of cooperation between Egyptian Jews and the monarchy and between Jewish and non-Jewish intellectuals in Egypt: the Maimonides celebrations of 1935, the speech by Taha Hussein at the Jewish school in Alexandria in 1943, and the support the latter had given in the 1930s, together with the prominent intellectual Muhammad Husayn Haykal, to the LICA, in which Mani had been involved as committee member. Yet Mani also situated his call for cooperation within the framework of the catastrophe that had beset European Jewry and a reorientation with regard to Europe. Mani then ties his notion of European civilizational crisis to the idea that moral revival will come from a source in the East, Palestine in particular.[5] In his response to the wholesale destruction wrought by the Second World War in Europe, Mani thus, wittingly

or unwittingly, adheres to different orientations: the Zionist imagination, the intellectual as well as popular current of Egyptian Easternism, and the idea of the East teaching the declining West a moral lesson, a notion voiced by various intellectuals in colonial contexts.

Simon Mani's historical narrative in *al-Shams* reflects the main arguments that this book has sought to advance. First, it exposes that discussions in *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al- Isra'ili* on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism were inextricably tied to the East-West dialectics of the *nahda*. Observing the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe and the destructive Second World War strengthened the authors in their conviction that the turn now to be made was a turn toward the East. Mani's account underscores that the editors and contributors adhered to the idea of a Jewish revival in the East, a manifestation of the *nahda* as well as the equation of Zionism with cultural revival. Second, his narrative captures how the concepts of race, civilization, and religion were debated and transformed within the discussions on Fascism and Nazism, yet remained embedded in the *nahda* debates. Mani describes the cooperation between "Jews and Arabs" in the Arab-Islamic world's history and the present as an example of Semitic brotherhood. The concept of Semitism, employed in relation to linguistic, cultural, and ethno-racial conceptions of the community and the nation, also came to be wielded as a rhetorical tool used to mobilize opposition to Nazi antisemitism and to promote Zionism. The monotheistic religions, in Mani's narrative, stand in opposition to the destruction and exterminations in Europe. The religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, described as Semitic religions, served as countervailing forces opposed to Nazism and antisemitsm.

Ultimately, Mani perceives Europe to be in civilizational crisis. He operates in a scheme of difference between East and West that had been grounded in civilizational thought, a view endorsed by many intellectuals in Egypt and in the Arab world more broadly. As in the past, when Jews and Arabs had enabled Europe's civilizational rise, so Mani claims, Europe now needs the moral and spiritual East. Mani's list of instances of cooperation between Muslims and Jews in Egypt shows how the editors of and contributors to *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* relied on apologetic discourses regarding Jewish participation in majority society, reflecting their integrationist aims. Mani's text also sketches the asymmetrical colonial contours that shaped the loyalties of the writers, as he rejoices in the fact that the West appreciates the cultural heritage of the East. This is intrinsically related to the prominent idea within the *nahda* debates, discussed in this study through the lens of Jewish writers of Arabic, that the West is in possession of knowledge of the East and that the East should reclaim its own heritage by fighting its own ignorance.

How did Jewish intellectuals in the Middle East view Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism during the 1930s and 1940s? In this book, I have analyzed the Arabic Jewish newspapers *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, its editors and contributors, their intellectual networks, and participation in an entangled public sphere from 1933 to 1948. It has provided the first comprehensive analysis of *al-Shams*, its editor and contributors, and their activities, societies, and allegiances. In addition, it has studied *al-Shams* in connection to *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, bringing the two newspapers

into dialogue with the fields of entangled and global conceptual history. The analysis of *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* presented here offers a window into how its editors and contributors reflected on the positions and loyalties of Jews in the Middle East during a turbulent period of political transition on the national, regional, and international levels.

In situating *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* historically within the *nahda*, I have proposed to conceptualize the *nahda* as encompassing a multifocal debate centered on the notions of revival and reform; the word itself was a central term appearing extensively in the Arabic press. My reading of *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* underscores the importance of studying marginal figures (from a historiographical perspective at least) within the history of the *nahda*: popular writers invested the *nahda* debates with new meaning, while their ideas and activities demonstrate the interaction between "canonic" intellectuals (such as Taha Hussein) and their lesser known interlocutors, allowing for a more diversified understanding of the *nahda*.

Al-Shams, I have shown, took part in a literary field of Jewish *nahda* intellectuals in Egypt involved in overlapping patriotic societies and associations. For *al-Shams*'s editors and contributors, the *nahda* mainly entailed the Arabization, Egyptianization, and modernization of Jewish life in Egypt and Jewish participation in Egyptian and Arab intellectual culture. The entangled approach of this study has served to trace, in addition to the national context, the meaning attributed in a regional context as well—through contacts with Sephardic Zionist intellectual networks—to the term *nahda*. Regionally, it enclosed the Zionist project and the idea that it would lead to a revival in the East. The latter meaning of *nahda* is dominantly present in the more outspokenly Zionist newspaper *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*. Amid the increasing impact of the struggle over Palestine on the domestic scene in Lebanon, Selim Mann and Moise Adjami sought to hold competing national orientations in Lebanon and Syria together.

The expanding body of literature on Arab confrontations with Fascism has shown that intellectuals viewed Fascism and Nazism in relation to their own societies and the prospective political futures awaiting them. Their discussions should thus be situated in relation to the reorientations toward society, the nation, and religion after the First World War and the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Following this line of enquiry, this book has shifted the focus to Jewish intellectuals in the semicolonial context of Egypt and the French mandate for Syria and Lebanon, a change in emphasis that has shed new light on these reorientations. The discussions engaged in by these writers contain various parallels with what intellectuals writing in prominent Arabic newspapers and journals were thinking about Fascism and Nazism, such as the idea that antisemitism targeted the Semitic peoples of the East and the traditions of the monotheistic religions. These similarities underline that debates in the Arabic Jewish press cannot be viewed in isolation from the wider intellectual context and anti-Fascist critiques in the Middle East as well as that religious background was not the main criterion for diverging views on Fascism in the Arab world.

The rise of Fascism and Nazism had, however, immediate implications for Jews in the Middle East. During the 1930s in Beirut, Jewish refugees from Germany

found their way there, while plans for a large resettlement of refugees in the French mandate sparked a public debate. In 1941–2, many Jews from Alexandria fled to Cairo to escape an expected Nazi invasion of their city. Apart from these direct confrontations, the Nazi persecution and eventual exterminations of Jews in Europe ultimately impacted the political futures of Jews living in the Middle East. The position of Jews in European nation-states in the past and their persecution in Nazi Germany and Nazi occupied territory in the present provided, as it were, a template for Jewish considerations on their own (historical) positions in the Arab world, navigating between the poles of assimilation and Zionist national aspirations.

In foregrounding the perspectives of Jewish writers of Arabic on Fascism and by utilizing the approach of entangled history, this book carries implications for understanding the extensive and multifocal debates of Arab intellectuals in the Middle East on Fascism. Ideas on Fascism in the Arab world, I have shown, provide insight in the genealogies of race, civilization, and religion within the broader debates of the *nahda*. The entangled history perspective opens up new avenues to study Arab discussions on Fascism in the context of regional and transregional intellectual networks and circulation of knowledge. It also points to conversations between Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Arab intellectuals as well as between Jewish intellectuals in different national settings. From a global perspective, the study of anti-Fascism has tended to focus on the political left. Anti-Fascism in the Arabic Jewish press was tied with, among others, the anti-colonial struggle, Arab nationalism, and Zionism. As such, this book underscores that Jewish intellectuals in the colonial contexts of the Middle East were part of a diverse global landscape of anti-Fascism.

The editors and contributors to *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, I have shown, extensively discussed Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism during the interwar, war, and immediate postwar periods. Their continuous news articles were part of Jewish communal debates as well as responses to Fascism and anti-Fascism in national, regional, and global contexts. The news reports in both newspapers show that Selim Mann, Moise Adjami, and Saad Malki derived their information from international news outlets, by following the statements of prominent Jewish intellectuals in Europe and the United States, and through Zionist news outlets and networks in the region. They also reprinted and paraphrased articles from Arabic, French, English, and Hebrew newspapers available in the region. I have not primarily focused, however, on the circulation, collection, and production of news. It has been my aim to examine the intellectual worlds and ideas of the editors and writers, who have too often been viewed through an exclusivist nationalist lens, even as they resist such a categorization.

The complexity of the intellectual worlds of the editors and contributors, and hence their ideas and expressions, cannot be fully captured when they are viewed exclusively within the contours of nation-states and debates over the futures of national culture and political orientation. Therefore, this book has adopted the analytical notion of the entangled public sphere to trace regional and transregional knowledge circulation, intellectual encounters, circulations of ideas and concepts,

and their appropriation and transformation. To further determine how knowledge was acquired, I have argued that orientalist scholarship provided an important source of knowledge for Jewish writers of Arabic to delineate a sense of their own pasts, presents, and futures. The educational institutions with which the editors and writers were themselves involved as well as various societies and associations were central places of production and popularization of orientalist scholarship, historiography, and archeology on which nationalist movements in the region heavily relied.

The approach of entangled history has allowed me to trace the circulation of globalizing ideas and concepts, and the particular meanings that Jews have imbued them with, within the *nahda* debates. By situating the ideas of the editors and contributors in an entangled public sphere traversing mainly, yet not exclusively, Europe and the Middle East, I have provided a novel reading of *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, an interpretation that extends beyond the nation-state framework. To understand the globalization of concepts, it is important to account for the circulation and resonance of individual concepts. Civilization and culture were, as we have seen in Chapters 2 and 4, the defining concepts of the *nahda* debates that accompanied the doctrine of progress and modernization and the colonial encounter. The concept of race had been extensively discussed in Arabic periodicals since the nineteenth century. The racial ideology of National Socialism gave new impetus to these debates on the notion of race, which was pondered by Arab intellectuals in relation to European science and scholarship as well as to the composition of their own societies. Finally, religion was a central factor in the Fascist and Nazi propaganda directed toward the Arab world. In the multifocal responses to Fascism and Nazism in the Middle East, intellectuals there claimed that Fascist and Nazi ideology stood in opposition to the monotheistic traditions of the Abrahamic religions and were hence incompatible with the region's societies, traditions, and cultures. *Nahdawi* intellectuals, including Jews, viewed Fascism within an ecumenical frame of communal and anti-imperial solidarity and anti-sectarianism that had persisted since the nineteenth century.

In addressing the conceptual history of Semitism, I have argued that the presence of European orientalist scholars at the Egyptian University as well as German Jewish orientalists at the Hebrew University provide important context with which to understand the dissemination of Semitism as a concept in the Middle East. This is illustrated by the case of Israel Wolfensohn, trained at the Egyptian University and in the German orientalist tradition, and also a prominent intellectual within the Egyptian Jewish community. His life and works show the enmeshment of the *nahda* debates and German orientalist scholarship and reveal how these two cultural registers intersected in the discourses of Jewish writers of Arabic. His response to Ernest Renan in his *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, written in Arabic, stands in a tradition of critique on European orientalist scholarship in the Middle East. With his study, Wolfensohn also contributed to the popularization of the concept of Semitism in *al-Shams*, where the idea of Semitism lay at the heart of Saad Malki's opposition to Nazi antisemitism as well as his promotion of Arab-Jewish cooperation and Jewish cultural revival in the Arab East.

The confrontation with Fascism and Nazism in the Middle East accelerated existing debates on civilization and its tropes of decline and revival. A recurring theme in the debates on Nazism was the ambivalent perception of Germany: the nation of civilization and culture par excellence on the one hand, in which Jews had played an important role, and yet home to dictatorship, "barbarism," and antisemitism on the other. I have further shown that the idea of the "Jewish contribution to civilization" was held up in response to Nazi antisemitism. The discourse of the Jewish civilizational contribution was, however, transformed by Jewish reformist writers of Arabic. The translator Alfred Yallouz appropriated Cecil Roth's ultimately European discourse, seeking to advance a sense of the Jewish contributions to Arab culture, a narrative that is indebted, I argue, to both the cultural environment of the *nahda* and German intellectual legacies. In particular, he engages with the nineteenth-century German Jewish appeal to the medieval Jewish experience in the Arab world and the civilizational discourse on their rise and decline.

In their discussions of Fascism and Nazism, the editors and contributors of *al-Shams* and *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* explained antisemitism in different ways, reflected by an ambivalent use of terminology. Elie Levi Abu 'Asal ties antisemitism to the economic and social position of Jews in Europe following their emancipation. Esther Azhari Moyal finds the cause of historical anti-Judaism in Jewish-Gentile relations or, better phrased, a lack of such relations, as Jews were pushed into seclusion because of persistent resentment. Saad Malki and Moise Adjami, rejecting the notion of racial purity in Nazi ideology, arrive at the idea that antisemitism is in fact anti-Judaism and is targeted at the monotheistic religions in a broader sense. By discussing the conceptual themes of religion and sectarianism in relation to each other, I have further shown that Fascism and Nazism were perceived within Europe's colonial tradition of political sectarianism. The analogy between Fascism and European sectarian policy in the Middle East was primarily targeted at the British colonial presence in the Middle East, and it also served to discredit opposition to Zionism.

Taken together, Chapters 3, 4, and 5 underscore that the distinctions between the concepts of race, civilization, and religion—as the abovementioned account by Simon Mani highlights—are not clear-cut. Rather, the chapters demonstrate how the concepts and their meanings often overlap and are in flux: the analysis shows the ambiguity of "race," as religion, culture, and ethnicity are encapsulated in the concept of Semitism; the "Jewish contribution to civilization" dominantly consists of the monotheistic contribution to civilization, underscoring the place attributed to the monotheistic religions in these authors' civilizational discourse; the writers' discussions on antisemitism reveal that they ambiguously traversed the nexus of religion and race in their writings on Fascism and Nazism. The conceptual themes of race, civilization, and religion and their global genealogies underscore that discussions on Fascism, Nazism, and antisemitism did not emerge out of a vacuum, but were deeply embedded in the epistemology of the *nahda* and simultaneously were part of global debates on civilization, progress, nationalism, and colonialism. My analysis of these conceptual themes further demonstrates that the interest,

shared by Muslim, Jewish, and Christian intellectuals within the *nahda*, in Jews and Judaism was nourished in novel ways during the 1930s and 1940s within the context of debates on Nazi antisemitism. The history of how *nahda* intellectuals conceived of Jews and Judaism, as well as historiography of Jews and Judaism in the context of the Middle East, provides a fruitful theme for further research.

How did the views of writers involved with *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* develop from 1933 to 1948? Did they maintain their ideas on the necessity of cooperation between Arabs and Jews, as were captured by the notions of Semitic brotherhood and a joint revival of the East? What stands out in the postwar newspaper articles by Saad Malki, Moise Adjami, and Esther Azhari Moyal is their persistence in upholding the interrelated ideas of a Semitic brotherhood, Arab-Jewish cooperation and the notion of a "shared homeland" in Palestine. Moyal, who had been promoting these ideas since the early twentieth century, at that time within the contours of the Ottoman Empire, continued to do so until her last breath. Yet in their writings, we can also see that the entanglement of Zionism, Arabism, and Lebanese and Syrian nationalism becomes difficult to maintain. Moise Adjami's articles in response to Arabic newspapers in Syria and Lebanon during the late 1930s, amid the revolt in Palestine, as well as his resistance against the blurring of Zionism and Judaism during the late 1940s show that the loyalties of Jews in Syria and Lebanon were questioned in the public sphere as a result of the struggle over Palestine. In Egypt, Saad Malki maintained his Egyptian nationalist orientation in combination with Zionism until the permanent closure of his newspaper. Yet his writings during the late 1940s also reflect the challenge of exclusivist distinctions between Egyptians and foreigners and the limits of Egyptianization.

The cultural and intellectual worlds of Saad Malki, Selim Mann, Moise Adjami, and their fellow writers ultimately show how Jews in the Middle East could adhere to a multilayered set of allegiances in the dynamic period between the end of the Ottoman Empire up through the late 1940s. This study has shed light on the entangled loyalties of the writers on the brink of disentanglement. Through the prism of *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, we can see the public sphere, here understood as an entangled public sphere that can capture the globalizing force of ideas and concepts, gradually lose its pluralist force. This development quite literally leads to closure, as Saad Malki was forced by the Egyptian authorities to shutter *al-Shams* in 1948 and Selim Mann found himself unable to continue the publication of *al-Salam* amid opposition in Syria and Lebanon to the UN Partition Plan and the Zionist colonization of Palestine. The end of their journalistic projects and fragmentation of their cultural worlds should not, however, lead to the teleological assumption that 1948 marks the beginning of the end for the Jewish communities for which Malki and Mann had sought to provide an Arabic platform. On the basis of this book, it is possible to assume that the cultural vision, not void of ideological implications, of a shared Arab-Jewish revival under the heading of *nahda* diminished after 1948. Yet the "afterlives" of the writers examined in this study, discussed briefly in Chapter 2, also suggest possible cracks in the assumption of an end to their projects, which only a future analysis of their later trajectories and loyalties will be able to reveal.

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NOTES

Preface

1 *Israël l*, March 28, 1935, 1; *al-Risala*, April 1, 1935, 515.
2 See, for example, the speech by the Sephardic chief rabbi Haim Nahum at the Cairo Opera House: *al-Ahram*, April 2, 1935, 7.
3 *Al-Risala*, April 1, 1935, 515; *al-Ahram*, April 2, 1935, 7; *al-Muqtataf*, June 1, 1935, 65–9.
4 Among these celebrations, the events in Cordoba, Maimonides's birthplace, are particularly noteworthy. The Spanish government had decided to restore the city's synagogue, which had since long been ruined, now renamed after Maimonides and officially given back to the Jews. For the first time since 1492, services were held in the synagogue. The government further installed an inscribed commemorative tablet on the Rambam Square in the old Jewish quarter of the city. The Spanish celebrations hence served as atonement for the Inquisition and expulsion of the Jews. See *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, March 29, 1935, 10; *The American Jewish World*, April 5, 1935, 3.
5 Benjamin Aldes Wurgraft, "How to Read Maimonides after Heidegger. The Cases of Strauss and Levinas," in *The Cultures of Maimonideanism. New Approaches to the History of Jewish Thought*, edited by James T. Robinson (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 353–83, 370; Emmanuel Levinas, translated by Michael Fagenblat, "The Contemporary Relevance of Maimonides (1935)," *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 16, no. 1 (2008): 91–4, 91. Originally published as "L'actualité de Maïmonide," *Paix et Droit* 15, no. 4 (April 1935): 6–7.
6 *Al-Risala*, April 1, 1935, 515; *Al-Majalla al-Jadida*, January 1, 1936, 65–72.
7 Lucia Admiraal, "Celebrating Maimonides in Cairo (1935): Jewish Historiography, Islamic Philosophy and the *nahḍa*," *Contemporary Levant* 8, no. 2 (2023): 189–207.
8 Both Gudrun Krämer and Joel Beinin have criticized these teleological narratives in their works on Egyptian Jewish history. See Gudrun Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt, 1914–1952* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1989); Joel Beinin, *The Dispersion of Egyptian Jewry: Culture, Politics, and the Formation of a Modern Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

Chapter 1

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3 Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Confronting Fascism in Egypt. Dictatorship versus Democracy in the 1930s* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 53–4; Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 76, 89.
4 Lital Levy, "Jewish Writers in the Arab East: Literature, History, and the Politics of Enlightenment, 1863–1914" (Ph.D dissertation, University of California, 2007); Lital Levy, "Historicizing the Concept of Arab Jews in the Mashriq," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 98, no. 4 (2008): 452–69; Orit Bashkin, *New Babylonians: A History of Jews in Modern Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012); Reuven Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs' between Total and Conditioned Arabization: The Participation of Jews in Arabic Press and Journalism in Muslim Societies during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 27, no. 2 (2007): 261–95; Reuven Snir, *Arab-Jewish Literature: The Birth and Demise of the Arabic Short Story*, *Arab-Jewish Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2019); Moshe Behar and Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, eds., *Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought: Writings on Identity, Politics, and Culture, 1893–1958* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2013).
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8 Stephen Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2004), 12.
9 Lukasz Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966). See for an overview and critique of this body of scholarship and its assumptions of Arab Fascist inclinations Israel Gershoni, ed., "Introduction," in *Arab Responses to Fascism and Nazism: Attraction and* Repulsion (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015), 5–12; Israel Gershoni and Ulrike Freitag, "The Politics of Memory: The Necessity for Historical Investigation into Arab Responses to Fascism and Nazism," *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft: Zeitschrift Für Historische Sozialwissenschaft* 37, no. 3 (2011): 311–31.
10 Gershoni and Freitag, "The Politics of Memory," 319.
11 Gershoni, "Introduction," 2.
12 Francis R. Nicosia, "Arab Nationalism and National Socialist Germany, 1933–1939: Ideological and Strategic Incompatibility," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12, no. 3 (1980): 351–72, 351.
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14 Nicosia mentions in this regard the Haavara Transfer agreement in 1933 between Nazi Germany and Zionist German Jews, and Hitler's eschewing to intervene and thus disrupt the British pursuit of their interests in the Middle East: at the time he believed in Anglo-German understanding and racial kinship; see Nicosia, "Arab Nationalism," 356–7, 361.
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19 René Wildangel previously arrived at the same insight: "The Invention of 'Islamofascism'. Nazi Propaganda to the Arab World and Perceptions from Palestine," *Die Welt des Islams* 52, nos. 3–4 (2012): 526–44, 528.
20 Nicosia repeatedly acknowledges that he is not able to make claims about the reception and responses to National Socialism in the Arab world, leaving the latter task to scholars of the Middle East who are able to consult sources in Arabic and other relevant languages. Nicosia, *Nazism and the Arab World*, 4, 14, 276.
21 Herf, *Nazi Propaganda*, 44, 56.
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23 Braskén, Featherstone, and Copsey, *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective*.

24 Israel Gershoni, *ʻAlmah ve-Satan: Mitsrayim veha-Natsizm, 1935–1940*, volumes 1 and 2 (Tel Aviv: Riesling, 2012); Israel Gershoni, *Milḥemet ha-Umot ha-Ḥalashot: Mitsrayim be-Milḥemet ha-ʻOlam ha-Sheniyah, 1939–1945*, volumes 1 and 2 (Tel Aviv: Riesling, 2017); Gershoni and Jankowski, *Confronting Fascism in Egypt*; Israel Gershoni, "Why the Muslims Must Fight against Nazi Germany: Muhammad Najati Sidqi's Plea," *Die Welt des Islams* 52, nos. 3–4 (2012): 471–98; Israel Gershoni, " 'The Crime of Nazism against Humanity': Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyat and the Outbreak of the World War II," in *Arab Responses*, edited by Gershoni, 217–42.

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30 Nordbruch, *Nazism in Syria and Lebanon*; Nordbruch, "A Challenge"; Götz Nordbruch, "Defining the Nation: Discussing Nazi Ideology in Syria and Lebanon during the 1930s," in *Nazism, the Holocaust*, edited by Nicosia and Ergene, 128–52.

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32 Wild, "National Socialism."

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35 See for an overview Gershoni and Jankowski's findings of critical, partial *Mein Kampf* translations and commentaries in Egypt: *Confronting Fascism in Egypt*, 18–19.

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41 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 129.
42 Ibid., 132.
43 Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt*, 55–6.
44 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 130.
45 Ibid., 157–8.
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48 Previous case studies include Norman Stillman, "The Response of the Jews of the Arab World to Anti-Semitism in the Modern Era," in *Living with Anti-Semitism. Modern Jewish Responses*, edited by Jehuda Reinharz (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1987), 349–67; Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 100–40; Bashkin, "The Barbarism from Within"; Schlaepfer, "When Anticolonialism Meets Antifascism"; Aomar Boum, "'Partners against Anti-Semitism': Muslims and Jews Respond to Nazism in French North African Colonies, 1936–1940," *The Journal of North African Studies* 19, no. 4 (2014): 554–70; Bensoussan, Georges, and Haïm Saadoun, eds. *Les Juifs d'Orient Face Au Nazisme et à La Shoah (1930–1945). Revue d'Histoire de La Shoah* (Paris: Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, 2016).
49 Mark Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3–16; Mark Cohen, "The 'Golden Age' of Jewish-Muslim Relations: Myth and Reality," in *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day*, edited by Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Stora (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 28–38.
50 See for a detailed analysis of these narratives Najat Abdulhaq, *Jewish and Greek Communities in Egypt. Entrepreneurship and Business before Nasser* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 13–48.
51 For Egyptian historiography, memoirs, and literature on Egyptian Jewish history during and following the Egyptian-Israeli peace negotiations, see Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 60–89; Abdulhaq, *Jewish and Greek Communities*, 13–48.
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53 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 264.
54 Siham Nassar, *Al-Yahud al-Misriyyun: Suhufuhum wa-Majallatuhum 1877–1950* (Cairo: al-'Arabi lil-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi', 1980).
55 Ibid., 50.
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57 Ibid., 57.
58 Ibid., 63.
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62 Ibid., 105.
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64 Ibid., 90–113.
65 Rashad Ramadan Abd al-Salam, *Yahud Misr, 1922–1956* (Cairo: Matbaʿat Dar al-Kutub wa-l-Watha'iq al-Qawmiyya, 2014). See also Abd al-Salam, *Al-Nashat al-Yahudi fi Misr* (Asyut: Jamiʿat Asyut Kulliyyat al-Adab, 2002).
66 Abd al-Salam, *Yahud Misr*, 76.
67 In this regard, it is useful to draw an analogy with the creation of Zionist national culture by middle-class, assimilated Western and Central European Jews during the early twentieth century, as studied by Michael Berkowitz. He argues that they created a "supplementary nationality" not contradicting other nationalities, serving more as a "special interest" for assimilationists. See Michael Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 7, 189.
68 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 168–72.
69 Ibid., 170.
70 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 14–28.
71 Ibid., 264.
72 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 9.
73 Ibid., 1.
74 On page 1, she relates Levantism to the vision, advocated by Maronite notables and merchants, of an independent, multi-communal country, and hence to a strong socioeconomic underpinning. On page 26, however, she calls the combination of European, Arabic, and Jewish elements (referring to Arabic plays by Jews in Beirut) as a "classic Levantine mixture." On page 28, she describes Jewish religious and community life in Lebanon as "a combination of 'Levantineness' with Syrian, Iranian and Iraqi *minhagim* (customs)." Another study on Jews in Lebanon in which Levantinism is a central notion is Tomer Levi, *The Jews of Beirut. The Rise of a Levantine Community, 1860–1930s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2012).
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76 Franck Salameh, *Lebanon's Jewish Community: Fragments of Lives Arrested* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).
77 Italics in original. Ibid., 24, 26.
78 Ibid., 47, 59.
79 Italics in original. Ibid., 79. Salameh here adheres to Bat Ye'or's ideological concept of "dhimmitude."
80 Ibid., 80–1.
81 Ibid., 111. The title of the first chapter of the book is "Prolegomenon: When Lebanon loved the Jews."
82 Ibid., 92–3.
83 Ibid., 97.
84 Guy Bracha, "Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili. Meḳomo be-ʿOlam ha-ʿItonut ha-Yehudit veha-ʿAravit ba-Mizrah ha-Tikhon ʿal-Reka ha-Tmurot be-Kehilot Suria ve-Levanon" (Ph.D dissertation, Bar Ilan University, 2012).
85 Ibid., 50
86 Lital Levy, "The Arab Jew Debates: Media, Culture, Politics, History," *Journal of Levantine Studies* 7, no. 1 (2017): 79–103; Orit Bashkin, "The Middle Eastern Shift and Provincializing Zionism," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 3 (2014): 577–605; the workshop "Arab Jews: Concepts, Histories, Definitions," Department of Islamic & Middle Eastern Studies, University of Edinburgh, July 1–2, 2016.

87 Orit Bashkin defines Arab Jews as those who identified themselves as such or as those who practiced "Arab Jewishness": they "wrote in Arabic, read Arabic texts, interacted with fellow Muslim and Christian Arabs, and enjoyed Arab cinema, music and theater" (Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 2).

88 Reuven Snir, *Who Needs Arab-Jewish Identity? Interpellation, Exclusion, and Inessential Solidarities* (Leiden: Brill, 2015); Levy, "Historicizing the Concept"; Jonathan Marc Gribetz, " 'To the Arab Hebrew': On Possibilities and Impossibilities," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 3 (2014): 589–92.

89 Snir, " 'Mosaic Arabs' "; Snir, "Arabic Journalism as a Vehicle for Enlightenment: Iraqi Jews in the Arabic Press during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 6, no. 3 (2007): 219–37.

90 Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*; Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 88–94.

91 The anthology *Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought*, a welcome selection of little-known texts in translation that had been written by Jewish authors from the Middle East from 1893 to 1958, presents itself as a counternarrative to the Eurocentric canon of Jewish intellectual history; Orit Bashkin, "The Middle Eastern Shift and Provincializing Zionism," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 3 (2014): 577–80; Jacobson and Naor call the various attempts by Sephardi and Oriental Jews in mandatory Palestine to achieve a reconciliation between Jews and Arabs a "road not taken": *Oriental Neighbors*, 12.

92 Levy, "Historicizing the Concept," 456. See also Jonathan Marc Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors: Religion, Race, and the Early Zionist-Arab Encounter* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 37.

93 The Hebrew term "mizrahim," Eastern or Oriental Jews, has been in use since the early twentieth century and now has come to refer to Jews in Israel hailing from the Middle East, including Turkey and Iran, and North Africa. It is used both as a self-descriptive term by activists and academics and as a contested (because of its racial and orientalist connotations) analytical term. On pre-1948 Mizrahi and Ashkenazi relations, see Moshe Behar, "1911: The Birth of the Mizrahi-Ashkenazi Controversy," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 16, no. 2 (2017): 312–31; Yehuda Sharim, "The Struggle for Sephardic-Mizrahi Autonomy: Racial Identities in Palestine-Israel, 1918–1948" (Ph.D dissertation, University of California, 2013).

94 Gribetz notes that the discourse of Zionist newspapers in Hebrew and Arabic advocating Arab-Jewish cooperation and mutual understanding "essentially delegitimized any criticism of the Zionist endeavour"; its proponents "desired such relations only on their own terms." See Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*, 128.

95 See on the genealogy of these terms Harvey E. Goldberg, "From Sephardi to Mizrahi and Back Again: Changing Meanings of 'Sephardi' in Its Social Environments," *Jewish Social Studies* 15, no. 1 (2008): 165–88.

96 Christopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 1–2.

97 Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 55.

98 One common critique of global history lies in the claim that a truly empirical global practice does not exist: global historians are thus faced with the unbridgeable gap between the idea of the global and the lack of empirical evidence. Furthermore, as global history focuses predominantly on connections, contacts, and integration, "global" can appear as a substitute for modern, and accordingly the "non-global" stands in for tradition and isolation. See Frederick Cooper, "How Global Do We

Want Our Intellectual History to be?," in *Global Intellectual History*, edited by Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 283–94.

99 Werner and Zimmerman use the metaphor of toolbox as an alternative to an "analytical model," which implies, in their understanding, "a static view of things." See Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity," *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 30–50, 39.

100 Ibid., 31, footnote 5.

101 Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Histoire Croisée: A Relational Process-Based Approach," *Footprint* 14, no. 1 (2020): 7–14, 8.

102 Ibid., 9.

103 Werner and Zimmerman, "Beyond Comparison," 38.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid., 44–6.

106 Margrit Pernau and Dominic Sachsenmaier, eds., *Global Conceptual History: A Reader* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

107 Reinhart Koselleck, "Introduction (*Einleitung*) to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*," in *Global Conceptual History*, edited by Pernau and Sachsenmaier, 34.

108 Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, "The Conceptualization of the Social in Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Arabic Thought and Language," in *Global Conceptual History*, edited by Pernau and Sachsenmaier, 259–87; Florian Zemmin, "Modernity without Society? Observations on the Term *Mujtama'* in the Islamic Journal *Al-Manār* (Cairo, 1898–1940)," *Die Welt des Islams* 56, no. 2 (2016): 223–47.

109 Florian Zemmin, *Modernity in Islamic Tradition. The Concept of "Society" in the Journal al-Manar (Cairo, 1898–1940)* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 177; Hagen Schulz-Forberg, *A Global Conceptual History of Asia, 1860–1940* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2015).

110 Christopher L. Hill refers to this process as "conceptual universalization," implying not the universality or inherent quality of European concepts but the possibility of observing universalization in a particular concept's use. See Christopher L. Hill, "Conceptual Universalization in the Transnational Nineteenth Century," in *Global Intellectual History*, edited by Moyn and Sartori, 135.

111 Ibid., 144–5.

112 Andrew Sartori, "The Resonance of Culture: Framing a Problem in Global Concept-History," in *Global Conceptual History*, edited by Pernau and Sachsenmaier, 243.

113 Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860–1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

114 Christian Geulen, "The Common Grounds of Conflict: Racial Visions of World Order 1880–1940," in *Competing Visions of World Order: Global Moments and Movements, 1880s–1930s*, edited by Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Sachsenmaier (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 78.

115 Omnia El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory: Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 60.

116 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989); Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text*, nos. 25–26 (1990): 56–80; Nancy Fraser, "Transnationalizing the Public Sphere. On the Legitimacy and Efficacy of Public Opinion in a Post-Westphalian World," *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 4 (2007): 7–30.

117 Dyala Hamzah, ed., "Introduction. The Making of the Arab Intellectual (1880–1960): Empire, Public Sphere and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood," in *The Making of the Arab Intellectual. Empire, Public Sphere and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood* (London: Routledge, 2013), 1–19.
118 Ibid., 2; Ayalon, *The Press*, 3.
119 Behar and Ben-Dor Benite, *Modern Middle Eastern*, xxiii; Lital Levy, "Reorienting Hebrew Literary History: The View from the East," *Prooftexts* 29, no. 2 (2009): 127–72.
120 Gershoni and Jankowski, *Confronting Fascism in Egypt*, 51–5, 207–9; Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation, 1930–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 8–22.
121 Lucie Ryzova, *The Age of the Efendiyya: Passages to Modernity in National-Colonial Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 8–16.
122 Ibid., 8.
123 Ibid., 12. Building on Ryzova, Alon Tam argues that both socioeconomic and cultural factors were important and underlines the flexibility of the term *effendi*. See Alon Tam, "Cairo's Coffeehouses in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries: An Urban and Socio-Political History" (Ph.D dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2018), 138–9.
124 See Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 58–99, on the Jewish *effendiyya* in Iraq. Bashkin defines this group as "an urban middle class that identified with, and actively propagated, the goals of Iraqi Arab nationalism," 8.
125 Noga Efrati, "The Effendiyya: Where Have All the Women Gone?," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 2 (2011): 375–7, 377. In her work on the culture of the *effendiyya* in Egypt, Lucie Ryzova does not quite tackle this problem, as she writes: "Technically, the effendi has no female counterpart." Ryzova, *The Age of the Efendiyya*, 15–16. Alon Tam acknowledges the presence of women among the *effendiyya* class, yet rarely explicitly refers to women from this class in his discussion of female participation in Egyptian public spaces: "Cairo's Coffeehouses," 132.

Chapter 2

1 *Al-Shams*, September 14, 1934, 1.
2 Sheehi, *Foundations*, 9.
3 As Kamran Rastegar notes that nineteenth-century Arab authors were both a product of socioeconomic changes and producers of a project called the *nahda* ("Introduction," *Middle Eastern Literatures* (Authoring the Nahda: Writing the Arabic 19th Century) 16, no. 3 (2013): 227–8).
4 Sheehi, *Foundations*, 12.
5 Jens Hanssen and Max Weiss, eds., "Introduction. Language, Mind, Freedom and Time: The Modern Arab Intellectual Tradition in Four Words," in *Arabic Thought Beyond the Liberal Age: Towards an Intellectual History of the Nahda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 2.
6 Hannah Scott Deuchar, "'Nahda': Mapping a Keyword in Cultural Discourse," *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, no. 37 (2017): 50–84.
7 Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 46.

8 Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab, *Contemporary Arab Thought: Cultural Critique in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 19.
9 Ibid., 20–1.
10 The two main examples of this strand are the classic work on the *nahda*, which had a profound impact on subsequent scholarship, by George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening* (London: H. Hamilton, 1938) and Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011 [1962]). On Hourani's work, see Hanssen and Weiss, *Arabic Thought*.
11 Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean*, 40.
12 Levy, "Jewish Writers"; Lital Levy, "The Nahda and the Haskala: A Comparative Reading of 'Revival' and 'Reform,'" *Middle Eastern Literatures* 16, no. 3 (2013): 300–16; Bashkin, *New Babylonians*; Aline Schlaepfer, "Between Cultural and National 'Nahḍa': Jewish Intellectuals in Baghdad and the Nation-Building Process in Iraq (1921–1932)," *Journal of Levantine Studies* 1, no. 2 (2011): 59–74; Zvi Zohar, *Rabbinic Creativity in the Modern Middle East* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2013), 340–50; Behar and Ben-Dor Benite, *Modern Middle Eastern*; Aline Schlaepfer, *Les Intellectuels Juifs de Bagdad: Discours et Allégeances (1908–1951)* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); Moshe Behar, "Fusing Arab Nahda, European Haskalah and Euro-Zionism: Eastern Jewish Thought in Late-Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Palestine," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 16, no. 2 (2017): 271–4; Snir, "Arabic Journalism"; Reuven Snir, *Arab-Jewish Literature: The Birth and Demise of the Arabic Short Story. Arab-Jewish Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).
13 El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory*, 12–13; Sheehi, *Foundations*, 24, 78.
14 Sheehi, *Foundations*, 135.
15 Dietrich Jung, *Orientalists, Islamists and the Global Public Sphere: A Genealogy of the Modern Essentialist Image of Islam* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011), 21; Gabriel Piterberg, "The Tropes of Stagnation and Awakening in Nationalist Historical Consciousness: The Egyptian Case," in *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, edited by Israel Gershoni and James P. Jankowski (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 42–61; Muhsin Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? [Pt. I]," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 1, no. 2 (2014): 270.
16 Daniel Schroeter, "From Sephardi to Oriental: The 'Decline' Theory of Jewish Civilization in the Middle East and North Africa," in *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization: Reassessing an Idea*, edited by Jeremy Cohen and Richard I. Cohen (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2008), 125–48.
17 I borrow the idea of a "leitmotif of borrowing" from Sheehi's discussion of Butrus al-Bustani's appeal to Abbasid and Andalusian history to show Arab cultural development in the past and European borrowing from the Arabs. See Sheehi, *Foundations*, 74. See also Yuval Evri, "Translating the Arab-Jewish Tradition: From al-Andalus to Palestine/Land of Israel," *Essays of the Forum Transregionale Studien*,1 (Berlin: Forum Transregionale Studien, 2016)...
18 Ronen Raz, "The Transparent Mirror: Arab Intellectuals and Orientalism, 1798–1950" (Ph.D dissertation, Princeton University, 1997); Jung, *Orientalists, Islamists*; Susannah Heschel and Umar Ryad, eds., *The Muslim Reception of European Orientalism: Reversing the Gaze* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).
19 Heschel and Ryad, eds., "Introduction," in *The Muslim Reception*, 2.
20 On Jewish and Zionist orientalism, see Aziza Khazzoom, "The Great Chain of Orientalism: Jewish Identity, Stigma Management, and Ethnic Exclusion in Israel,"

American Sociological Review 68, no. 4 (2003): 481–510; John M. Efron, "From Mitteleuropa to the Middle East: Orientalism through a Jewish Lens," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 94, no. 3 (2004): 490–520; Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar, *Orientalism and the Jews* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2005); Arieh Bruce Saposnik, "Europe and Its Orients in Zionist Culture before the First World War," *The Historical Journal* 49, no. 4 (2006): 1105–23; Steven E. Aschheim, *The Modern Jewish Experience and the Entangled Web of Orientalism* (Amsterdam: Menasseh ben Israel Instituut, 2010).

21 Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs,'" 262.
22 Ibid., 285.
23 Levy, "Jewish Writers," 107, 167–72; Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs,'" 279.
24 Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs,'" 307; Orit Bashkin, "The Lamp, Qasim Amin, Jewish Women and Baghdadi Men: A Reading in the Jewish Iraqi Journal al-Misbah," in *The Press in the Middle East and North Africa, 1850–1950: Politics, Social History and Culture*, edited by Didier Monciaud and Anthony Gorman (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 323–44.
25 Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs,'" 273.
26 Nassar, *Al-Yahud al-Misriyyun: Suhufuhum wa-Majallatuhum*, 49.
27 Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs,'" 274.
28 Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 13; Ayalon, *The Press*, 75.
29 Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, 204–8; Michael Talbot, "'Jews, Be Ottomans!': Zionism, Ottomanism, and Ottomanisation in the Hebrew-Language Press, 1890–1914," *Die Welt des Islams* 56, nos. 3–4 (2016): 359–87.
30 Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, 230; Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 86–94; Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*, 186–7.
31 Nassar, *Al-Yahud al-Misriyyun: Suhufuhum wa-Majallatuhum*, 50; Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*, 190, 194.
32 Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 130–2.
33 Lital Levy, "Partitioned Pasts: Arab Jewish Intellectuals and the Case of Esther Azhari Moyal (1873–1948)," in *The Making of the Arab Intellectual*, edited by Hamzah, 138.
34 Campos, *Ottoman Brothers,* 230.
35 Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors.*
36 *Al-Shams*, September 14, 1934, 1.
37 His name and the title of the newspaper were written respectively as "Saad Malki" and *El Chams* on the front page.
38 Autobiographical notes by Saad Malki. Source: family Saad Malki.
39 *Israël*, April 30, 1926, 3.
40 The Green schools were established in 1924 by M. M. Jacques and Ralph and Esther Green as a replacement for the Keter Torah schools in the Jewish quarter. In 1938, the school had 440 students. Maurice Fargeon, *Les Juifs en Egypte: depuis les origines jusqu'à ce jour: histoire générale suivie d'un aperçu documentaire* (Cairo: Paul Barbey, 1938), 221.
41 Hagar Hillel, *"Israel" be-Qahir: 'Iton Yehudi be-Mitsrayim ha-Le'umit 1920–1939* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2004).
42 Ibid., 55.
43 The editions were mainly suspended because of a lack of subscriptions and financial difficulties, but the death of Albert Mosseri in 1933 contributed to its demise as well. According to Hagar Hillel, the Hebrew edition reflected the Mosseris' attempt

to promote the use of Hebrew as a modern, national language. She writes that the readership of the Hebrew edition mainly included Palestinian Jews exiled in Egypt and Eastern European immigrants. See ibid., 57. Reuven Snir mentions, with regard to the Arabic edition, that Mathilde Mosseri unsuccessfully requested financial support from the Jewish Agency for the declining Arabic edition. See Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs,'" 278.

44 *Al-Shams*, September 14, 1934, 1.

45 Ibid., 4.

46 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 169–70.

47 James P. Jankowski, "The Egyptian Blue Shirts and the Egyptian Wafd, 1935–1938," *Middle Eastern Studies* 6, no. 1 (January 1, 1970): 77–95; Omnia El Shakry, "Youth as Peril and Promise: The Emergence of Adolescence Psychology in Postwar Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011): 591–610.

48 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 170.

49 A list of its executive committee and members as of 1925 can be found online: https://farhi.org/Documents/bulletin_historical.htm. Last accessed on May 15, 2023. The society ceased to be active during the 1930s and resumed its activities in 1946. See also *Revue de l'histoire juive en Égypte. Publiée par la Société d'Etudes Historiques Juives d'Egypte* 1 (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1947).

50 Yallouz's translations included the anthology *A Book of Jewish Thoughts* (1920) by the British chief rabbi Joseph Hertz, which included an introduction by the Egyptian chief rabbi Haim Nahum. See *Al-Shams*, July 22, 1937.

51 *Al-Shams*, December 24, 1934, 2; December 31, 1936, 2; June 18, 1943.

52 *Al-Shams*, June 18, 1943, 1; September 15, 1944, 2 and 5; December 13, 1946, 2; January 10, 1947, 1; July 11, 1947, 3; November 7, 1947, 2; January 23, 1948, 2; January 30, 1948, 3.

53 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 4, 10, 26–9.

54 The estimated number is higher and often put at 75,000 during the 1930s. See Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 4; Simon Shamir, "The Evolution of the Egyptian Nationality Laws and Their Application to the Jews in the Monarchy Period," in *The Jews of Egypt: A Mediterranean Society in Modern Times*, edited by Simon Shamir (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1987), 33–67.

55 Liat Maggid Alon, "Class Performativity, Modernity and the Ashkenazi-Mizrahi Divide the Jewish Urban Middle Classes of Egypt in Israël, 1948–1967," *Journal of Israeli History* 40, no. 1 (2022): 51. Note that Alon's arguments in this article are largely based on interviews with Jews from Egypt in Israel after 1948, without addressing how language use and social status might be viewed differently in retrospect by the interviewees.

56 Jean Marc Ran Oppenheim, "Egypt and the Sudan," in *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, edited by Reeva S. Simon, Michael M. Laskier, and Sara Reguer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 419.

57 This estimate was based on his interview with the editor Saad Malki, in 1975. See Victor Nahmias, "'Al-Shams' 'Iton Yehudi be-Mitsrayim, 1934–1948," *Pe'amim* 16 (1983): 130; Victor Nahmias, "Sahifat 'al-Shams'. Sahifa Yahudiyya Misriyya, 1934–1948," *Bulletin of the Israeli Academic Centre in Cairo*, no. 26 (2003): 36–40.

58 Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs,'" 275.

59 Ami Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution: Cultural Production and Mass Readership, 1800–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 177–93.

60 See, for example: *al-Shams*, December 3, 1936, 4; December 10, 1936, 4; December 24, 1936, 4; January 14, 1937, 4.
61 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 13.
62 Lital Levy, "Edification between Sect and Nation: Murad Farag and al-Tahdhib 1901–03," in *Intellectuals and Civil Society in the Middle East: Liberalism, Modernity and Political Discourse*, edited by Mohammed A. Bamyeh (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 57–78.
63 Levy, "Partitioned Pasts," 178.
64 Zohar, *Rabbinic Creativity*, 340–50.
65 Sasson Somekh, "Participation of Egyptian Jews in Modern Arabic Culture, and the Case of Murad Farāj," in *The Jews of Egypt*, edited by Shamir, 130–40; Leon Nemoy, "A Modern Karaite-Arabic Poet: Mourad Farag," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 70, no. 4 (1980): 195–209; Murad Farag, "The War for Our Nation," in *Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought*, edited by Behar and Ben-Dor Benite, 48–61.
66 Oppenheim, "Egypt and the Sudan," 412.
67 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 8–13.
68 Oppenheim, "Egypt and the Sudan," 412–13; Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt*, 5–6.
69 Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt*, 75. The refugees were placed in special camps, mainly under the auspices of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).
70 The census of 1947 gives the number of 65,639, but this is commonly taken as an undercount. Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 4; Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 2.
71 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 37.
72 Shamir, "The Evolution," 33.
73 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 38; Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 33.
74 Shamir claims that in 1948, 40,000 of the 75,000–80,000 Jews in Egypt were stateless; 30,000 had the status of foreign nationals, and the remaining estimate of 5,000 were Egyptian nationals. Shamir, "The Evolution," 34; Krämer notes that as the census does not list stateless persons, but only Egyptians and foreign nationals, it might have been the case that stateless Jews were listed as "Egyptians" on the basis of their eligibility for Egyptian citizenship or their non-foreignness. Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 32–3.
75 Abdulhaq, *Jewish and Greek Communities*, 163.
76 Ibid., 178.
77 For the question of Egyptian Jewish applications for Egyptian citizenship in the context of the Company Law 138 of 1947, see Abdulhaq, *Jewish and Greek Communities*, 166–87.
78 *Al-Shams*, November 7, 1947, 2. The census was published in 1954, but concerned the population on March 26, 1947. See Abdulhaq, *Jewish and Greek Communities*, 164.
79 Aviva Pinto and Yosef Malki (children Saad Malki) in conversation with the author (Modi'in, Israel, January 23, 2020).
80 *Al-Shams* called Sanua an "Egyptian Jewish Journalist," December 6, 1946, 2. On Sanua, see Levy, "Jewish Writers," 142–67.
81 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 37.
82 *Al-Shams*, January 28, 1937, 4.
83 *Al-Shams*, November 22, 1946, 6.
84 Janice J. Terry, *The Wafd, 1919–1952: Cornerstone of Egyptian Political Power* (London: Third World Centre for Research and Publishing, 1982).

85 James Jankowski, "Egyptian Responses to the Palestine Problem in the Interwar Period," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12, no. 1 (1980): 11–14; Thomas Mayer, *Egypt and the Palestine Question 1936–1945* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1983).
86 Ruth Kimche, *Tsiyonut be-Tsel ha-Piramidot: Ha-Tenu'ah ha-Tsiyonit be-Mitsrayim 1918–1948* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2009), 166.
87 Rami Ginat, "Remembering History: The Egyptian Discourse on the Role of Jews in the Communist Movements," *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 6 (2013): 919–40, 921.
88 Rami Ginat, "The Rise of Homemade Egyptian Communism: A Response to the Challenge Posed by Fascism and Nazism?," in *Arab Responses to Fascism*, 195–216.
89 Joel Beinin, *Was the Red Flag Flying There? Marxist Politics and the Arab-Israeli Conflict in Egypt and Israel, 1948–1965* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 55–6.
90 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 143.
91 Ibid., 43–5.
92 Gudrun Krämer, "Political Participation of the Jews in Egypt between World War I and the 1952 Revolution," in *The Jews of Egypt*, edited by Shamir, 69; Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 167–204. On Jews in the communist movement, see Rami Ginat, *A History of Egyptian Communism: Jews and Their Compatriots in Quest of Revolution* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2011); Ginat, "Remembering History," 919–40.
93 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 180–1.
94 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 63–4.
95 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 201–3, 207.
96 Reuven Snir, "'Mosaic Arabs.'"
97 Ḥagai Erlikh and Israel Gershoni, *The Nile: Histories, Cultures, Myths* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000); Israel Gershoni and Meir Hatina, eds., *Narrating the Nile: Politics, Identities, Cultures* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008).
98 Eve M. Troutt Powell, *A Different Shade of Colonialism. Egypt, Great Britain, and the Mastery of the Sudan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
99 Rami Ginat, "Swimming against the Nationalist Current: The Egyptian Communists and the Unity of the Nile Valley," in *Narrating the Nile*, edited by Gershoni and Hatina, 67.
100 Gabriel Warburg, "Notes on the Jewish community in Sudan in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Bulletin of the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo* 24 (2001), 26. On Haim Nahum's career as Chief Rabbi of the Ottoman Empire and subsequently of Egypt, see Esther Benbassa, *Haim Nahum. Sephardic Chief Rabbi in Politics, 1892–1923*, translated by Mirian Kochan (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995).
101 Ilan Nahem, "Mi-Maroko le-Sudan. Ha-Rav Shlomo Malka. Manhig be-'Itot Tmura," *Pe'amim* 80 (1999), 93–111, 96; Warburg, "Notes on the Jewish Community," 23–4.
102 Nahem, "Mi-Maroko le-Sudan," 97.
103 Warburg, "Notes on the Jewish Community," 23. For a history of the Jews in Sudan written by one of Malka's sons, see Eli Malka, *Jacob's Children in the Land of the Mahdi: Jews of the Sudan* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1997).
104 In 1977, Edmond Malka, one of Solomon Malka's ten children, published a collection of his father's articles for *al-Shams* translated into English. The book includes Malka's weekly sermons that he himself had published in Arabic as *Al-Mukhtar fi Tafsir al-Tawrat bi-Kalam al-Hakham Salmun Malkah* (Cairo, 1949) shortly before his death. Edmond Malka, ed., *Frontiers of Jewish Faith* (Trenton: E.S. Malka, 1977).
105 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 205–7.

106 Yoav Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers of the Arab Past: Historians and History Writing in Twentieth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 141.
107 Anthony Gorman, *Historians, State and Politics in Twentieth Century Egypt: Contesting the Nation* (London: Routledge, 2003), 112.
108 Dario Miccoli, "Moses and Faruq. The Jews and the Study of History in Interwar Egypt 1920s–1940s," *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History*, no. 4 (November 1, 2012): 166.
109 Gorman, *Historians, State and Politics*, 174–5.
110 Ibid., 186.
111 Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 7–11.
112 See, for example, *al-Shams*, January 28, 1937, 1; October 26, 1942, 2; July 28, 1944, 1; June 20, 1947, 2; November 14, 1947, 3.
113 *Al-Shams*, September 14, 1934, 1.
114 Ilan Nahem, "Le-mi No'edet Haggadat Farhi? La-Dmutam shel Yehudim be-Mitsrayim ba-Mahatsit ha-Rishonah shel-ha-Me'ah ha-'Esrim," *Jewish Studies Internet Journal* 4 (2005): 35–59.
115 Levy, "Partitioned Pasts," 178.
116 Alain Farhi (Hillel Farhi's grandson) in conversation with the author (March 14, 2019). See also farhi.org. Last accessed on May 15, 2023.
117 Marwa S. Elshakry, "Knowledge in Motion: The Cultural Politics of Modern Science Translations in Arabic," *ISIS* 90, no. 4 (2018): 701–30. This article includes a discussion of the different understandings of *ta'rib* during the *nahda*; Samah Selim, *Popular Fiction, Translation and the Nahda in Egypt. Literatures and Cultures of the Islamic World* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 67.
118 Kassab, *Contemporary Arab Thought*.
119 Elshakry, "Knowledge in Motion," 721.
120 *Al-Shams*, July 8, 1937, 1, 4.
121 *Al-Shams*, June 15, 1942, 3.
122 *Al-Shams*, June 22, 1942, 1.
123 Gershoni and Jankowksi, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 7; Wilson Chacko Jacob, *Working Out Egypt. Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870–1940* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 187–8. See, for a regional perspective on Sephardic Jews and the *tarbush*, Caroline R. Kahlenberg, "The Tarbush Transformation: Oriental Jewish Men and the Significance of Headgear in Ottoman and British Mandate Palestine," *Journal of Social History* 52, no. 4 (2018): 1212–49.
124 *Al-Shams*, June 4, 1943, 2.
125 The Egyptian nationalist leader Mustafa Kamil employed the term *al-nuzala' al-urubiyyun*, "European guests." See Gorman, *Historians, State and Politics*, 175.
126 Efrati, "The Effendiyya"; Ryzova, *The Age of the Efendiyya*, 15–16. On women and the *nahda* in Egypt, see Beth Baron, *The Women's Awakening in Egypt: Culture, Society, and the Press* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
127 On the crisis of dowry: *Al-Shams*, June 22, 1942, 3; Mansur Wahba on reform and dowry: June 18, 1943, 2; Saad Malki on women in Jewish history: September 7, 1945, 21; Mansur Wahba on the "freedom of women," January 5, 1945, 8, and a response by Rami Habir on February 2, 1945, 5; and Malki's argument that women should be allowed to become members of the community council: November 29, 1946, 6.
128 *Al-Shams*, May 27, 1937, 2.
129 *Al-Shams*, November 7, 1941, 1.

130 Ibid., 3.
131 Ibid.
132 *Al-Shams*, November 22, 1946, 3; November 29, 1946, 3; December 27, 1946, 2; January 3, 1947, 3.
133 The section *hawadith wa-akhbar* included announcements about the travel activities of Egyptian and Middle Eastern Jewish public figures.
134 *Al-Shams*, December 12, 1941, 2, April 20, 1942, 2, May 4, 1942, 2.
135 Avraham Elmalih, "East and West," in *Modern Middle Eastern*, edited by Behar and Ben-Dor Benite, 1–9; Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 86–120.
136 Shalom Ratzabi, *Between Zionism and Judaism: The Radical Circle in Brith Shalom 1925–1933* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).
137 *Al-Shams*, July 29, 1937, 2.
138 *Al-Shams*, August 26, 1937, 2.
139 For an extensive analysis of Wolfensohn's activism on behalf of "native Jews" in Palestine and their marginalization by Zionist institutions, see Aviv Derri, "The Construction of 'Native' Jews in Late Mandate Palestine: An Ongoing Nahda As a Political Project," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53, no. 2 (2021): 253–71.
140 *Al-Shams*, July 8, 1937, 1.
141 Mendel, *The Creation of Israeli Arabic*, 36–7.
142 *Al-Shams*, August 26, 1942, 1.
143 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 156–57.
144 Michael M. Laskier, "Egyptian Jewry in the Post-World War II Period: 1945–1948," *Revue des Études Juives* 148, nos. 3–4 (1989): 337–60; Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 64.
145 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 65; Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 208–10.
146 Laskier, "Egyptian Jewry," 351; Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 67.
147 Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 69.
148 Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt*, 133.
149 Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 213.
150 Nahmias, "Sahifat 'al-Shams,'" 36.
151 Nassar, *Al-Yahud al-Misriyyun: Suhufuhum wa-Majallatuhum*, 67.
152 Ibid. I have not been able to verify this claim.
153 Aviva Pinto and Yosef Malki (children Saad Malki) in conversation with the author (Modi'in, Israel, January 23, 2020). See also David Tidhar, *Entsiklopedyah le-Halutse ha-Yishuv u-Vonav* [Encyclopedia of the Founders and Builders of Israel], vol. 6 (Tel Aviv, David Tidhar 1955), 2624.
154 Levy, "Jewish Writers," 182.
155 René Qattawi and Georges Qattawi, *Muhammad 'Ali wa-'Urubba* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1952).
156 Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers of the Arab Past*, 151–9.
157 Maccabi was an international Zionist youth movement. *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili* regularly reported about the activities of the Maccabi youth club in Beirut. See Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 46–52.
158 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, March 31, 1942, 7.
159 Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 94.
160 Levi, *The Jews of Beirut*, 141.
161 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 49.
162 Ibid., 25.
163 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 19.

164 Levy, "Jewish Writers," 175.
165 Bracha, "Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili," 19.
166 Yaron Harel, "Mann, Elijah Salim," in *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, Executive Editor Norman A. Stillman, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1878–9781_ejiw_SIM_0014630. Last accessed on May 15, 2023. First published online: 2010.
167 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 28; Levy, "Jewish Writers," 172–5.
168 Bracha, "Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili," 20.
169 Harel, "Mann, Elijah Salim"; Bracha, "Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili," 20. The newspaper appeared biweekly from 1938 to 1946.
170 Jens Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005).
171 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 15.
172 Yaron Harel, *Syrian Jewry in Transition, 1840–1880*, translated by Dena Ordan (Oxford: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 25.
173 Ibid., 29.
174 On the Congress, see Elisabeth Thompson, *How the West Stole Democracy from the Arabs. The Syrian Arab Congress of 1920 and the Destruction of Its Historic Liberal-Islamic Alliance* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2020).
175 Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 46.
176 Meir Zamir, *Lebanon's Quest: The Road to Statehood 1926–1939* (London: Tauris, 1997), 179.
177 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 33.
178 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 51.
179 Ibid., 59.
180 Sasha R. Goldstein-Sabbah, "Global Jewish Philanthropy and Linguistic Pragmatism in Baghdad," in *Religious Minorities and their Languages in the Emerging Nation States of the Middle East (1920–1950)*, edited by Heleen Murre-van den Berg, Karène Sanchez Summerer, and Tijmen Baarda (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 205.
181 Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
182 Aron Rodrigue, *Images of Sephardi and Eastern Jewries in Transition: The Teachers of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, 1860–1939* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993).
183 Harel, *Syrian Jewry in Transition*, 88.
184 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 26–7; Harel, *Syrian Jewry in Transition*, 80–1.
185 The most explicit concrete implementation of this unequal status was of course the Crémieux Decree of 1870, which granted French citizenship to Algerian Jews but not to the country's Muslims, who remained colonial subjects.
186 See, for example, the advertisement in *al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*'s special issue on the Alliance Israélite Universelle, February 22, 1939, 14.
187 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 44.
188 Bracha, "Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili," 137.
189 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, February 22, 1939.
190 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, June 19, 1933, 2.
191 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, 7.
192 Bracha, "Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili," 140.

193 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 52–8.
194 The B'nai B'rith, established in the United States in 1843 by German Jews, was an international philanthropic organization seeking to represent and support global Jewry. By the 1940s, it had worldwide lodges that organized various communal, educational, and welfare activities.
195 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 46.
196 Ibid., 46–51.
197 I follow the spelling of his name in Latin characters as shown on the front page of the newspaper. Adjami's date of birth is unknown. Bracha, who discovered that he graduated in Damascus in 1932, assumes he must have been born in the second half of the 1910s: Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 20.
198 Ibid.
199 Philip Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920–1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).
200 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 49.
201 On Jurji Nicula Baz in relation to gender politics, see Marilyn Booth, *May Her Likes be Multiplied. Biography and Gender Politics in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 73, 83.
202 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 217.
203 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 129.
204 Ibid., 56, 243.
205 Ibid., 58. The distribution of the newspaper to Iraq was prohibited, however, by the Iraqi authorities in 1933. See Guy Bracha, "A Letter from Iraq: The Writing of Iraqi Correspondents in *Al-'Alam Al-'Isra'ili* and *Isra'il*," *Middle Eastern Studies* 52, no. 1 (2016): 102–15.
206 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 62, 242.
207 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 215–16.
208 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 243.
209 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, April 30, 1945, 3–4.
210 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 206; Bracha, "A Letter from Iraq," 105.
211 On August 22, 1923, *Do'ar Ha-Yom*'s correspondent in Beirut wrote that the "Arab-Jewish writer" (*ha-sofer ha-'aravi ha-yehudi*) Selim Mann had written a letter to the French high commissioner requesting permission for the twice-weekly publication of his newspaper. The commissioner apparently responded negatively and provided no further explanation. On June 17, 1924, Mann arrived in Jerusalem to select a new teacher for the Talmud Torah school in Beirut who would be qualified to "spread Hebrew culture." On June 3, 1930, *Do'ar Ha-Yom* announced the arrival of Mann in Jerusalem. This time primarily concerned with journalism and his newspaper, he visited the editors of *Do'ar Ha-Yom*. See August 22, 1923, 4; June 17, 1924, 3; June 3, 1930, 3.
212 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, February 23, 1934, 1.
213 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, June 19, 1933, 2.
214 This statement is incorrect: at that time *al-Shams* was published as well and also aimed at a broad readership of Jews in the East.
215 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, March 18, 1938, 7–8.
216 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 86–7.
217 Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 60–1.
218 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, October 4, 1933, 2.
219 Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 60–73, 99–105.

220 Laura Zittrain Eisenberg, *My Enemy's Enemy: Lebanon in the Early Zionist Imagination, 1900–1948* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 19.
221 Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 63.
222 Ibid.
223 Eisenberg, *My Enemy's Enemy*, 103–4.
224 Bracha, "'The Germans Are Coming!'"
225 Ibid., 41.
226 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 58.
227 Ibid., 59.
228 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, April 3, 1933, 1.
229 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, April 24, 1933, 1.
230 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 225. See also the article "Do not fear famine" by Muhammad Najati Sidqi in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, September 12, 1939, 8–9.
231 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 225.
232 Zamir, *Lebanon's Quest*, 238.
233 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon,* 59.
234 Ibid., 60.
235 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 231.
236 Ibid., 251; Ussama Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), 139.
237 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 71.
238 Ibid., 231.
239 *Al-Salam*, December 17, 1946, 3–4; Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 21.
240 *Al-Salam*, December 17, 1946, 4.
241 Bracha, "Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili," 231.
242 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 69.

Chapter 3

1 *Al-Shams*, September 22, 1934, 1.
2 Joshua Cole, "Anti-Semitism and the Colonial Situation in Interwar Algeria: the Anti-Jewish Riots in Constantine, August 1934," in *The French Colonial Mind*, edited by Martin Thomas (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), 77–111, 78.
3 Cole, "Anti-Semitism and the Colonial Situation"; Ethan Katz, "Constantine Riots (1934)," in *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, edited by Norman A. Stillman, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1878-9781_ejiw_COM_000509. Last accessed on November 12, 2023. First published online: 2010.
4 Boum, "Partners against Anti-Semitism," 554–70, 563.
5 On the LICA in Egypt, see Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt*, 55–72.
6 *Al-Shams*, September 22, 1934, 1.
7 Ibid.
8 Martin Baasten argues that this ambiguity is already apparent in the writings of the German historian August Ludwig Schlözer, who is generally held to have coined, in a 1781 essay, the term "Semitic languages," derived from Shem, the eldest son of Noah. In his writings predating 1781, Schlözer wrote about the languages of the Semites, an ethnological term used in explicit connection to the Semitic languages

spoken by these people. Martin F. J. Baasten, "A Note on the History of the Semitic," in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Professor T. Muraoka on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, edited by M. J. F. Baasten and W. Th. van Peursen (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 65.

9 Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 18.

10 Ibid., 20.

11 Joseph Massad, "Forget Semitism!," in *Islam in Liberalism*, edited by Massad (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 312–42, Gil Z. Hochberg, "'Remembering Semitism' or 'On the Prospect of Re-Membering the Semites,'" *Re-Orient* 1, no. 2 (2016): 192–223.

12 See, for example, the special issue: Islam Dayeh, Ya'ar Hever, Elizabeth Eva Johnston, and Markus Messling, "Formations of the Semitic: Race, Religion and Language in Modern European Scholarship," *Philological Encounters* 2, nos. 3–4 (2017).

13 James Renton, "The End of the Semites," in *Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe. A Shared Story?*, edited by James Renton and Ben Gidley (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 99–140, 129. Renton emphasizes the "tremendous cultural capital" of the Semite: by the mid-nineteenth century the notion had already travelled well beyond the borders of Western Europe and orientalist scholarship, and "by 1914, the Semitic had moved into the intellectual culture of the eastern Mediterranean itself."

14 Orit Bashkin, "The Colonized Semites and the Infectious Disease: Theorizing and Narrativizing Anti-Semitism in the Levant, 1870–1914," *Critical Inquiry* 47, no. 2 (2021): 189–217, 190.

15 Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*; Yoni Furas, "We the Semites: Reading Ancient History in Mandate Palestine, *Contemporary Levant* 5, no. 1 (2020): 33–43; Bashkin, "The Colonized Semites"; Orit Bashkin, "On Noble and Inherited Virtues: Discussions of the Semitic Race in the Levant and Egypt, 1876–1918," *Humanities* 10, no. 3 (2021): 88; Jonathan Hirsch, "Egyptian Semitism and the Quest for Arab-Jewish Scholarship in Interwar Egypt," in *Minor Perspectives on Modernity beyond Europe: An Encounter between Jewish Studies and Postcolonial Thought*, edited by Yael Attia, Jonathan Hirsch, and Kathleen Samson (Baden-Baden: Ergon-Verlag, 2023), 95–116.

16 Wild, "National Socialism"; Gershoni and Jankowski, *Confronting Fascism in Egypt*, 18–19.

17 Herf, *Nazi Propaganda*, 15–35.

18 Gershoni, "The Crime of Nazism."

19 Wild, "National Socialism," 140.

20 *Al-Shams*, July 13, 1942, 2.

21 On the histories of these institutions, see Donald Malcolm Reid, *Cairo University and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Hilary Kalmbach, *Islamic Knowledge and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

22 Israel Wolfensohn, *Ka'b al-Ahbar und seine Stellung im Hadit und in der islamischen Legendenliteratur* (Gelnhausen: F.W. Kalbfleisch, 1933), 95; Walid Abd El Gawad, "Israel Wolfensohn als Pionier der israelischen Orientwissenschaft," in *Ein Paradigma der Moderne Jüdische Geschichte in Schlüsselbegriffen Festschrift für Dan Diner Zum 70. Geburtstag*, edited by Arndt Engelhardt, Lutz Fiedler, Elisabeth Gallas, Natasha Gordinsky, and Philipp Graf. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 290.

23 Wolfensohn, *Ka'b al-Ahbar*, 95.
24 Abd El Gawad, "Israel Wolfensohn," 303.
25 Wolfensohn, *Ka'b al-Ahbar.*
26 Wolfensohn, *Ka'b al-Ahbar*, 95; Abd El Gawad, "Israel Wolfensohn," 292.
27 Reid, *Cairo University*, 154.
28 Israel Wolfensohn, *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya* (Amman: Al-Ahlia, 2017 [1927]).
29 His teachers in Berlin and Frankfurt were Carl Heinrich Becker, Josef Horovitz, Georg Küntzel, H. Maier, Eugen Mittwoch, Kurt Rheindorft, Hans Heinrich Schaeder, and Gotthold Weil. See Wolfensohn, *Ka'b al-Ahbar*, 95.
30 Donald Malcolm Reid, "Cairo University and the Orientalists," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19, no. 1 (1987): 51–75.
31 Reid, *Cairo University*, 154.
32 Wolfensohn, *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, 331–7.
33 He discussed Assyrian Babylonian, Canaanite, Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, and the dialects of Hadramaut and Ethiopia in separate chapters.
34 Baasten, "A Note on the History."
35 Wolfensohn, *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, 15.
36 Ibid., 17.
37 Ibid., 7.
38 Ibid., 9.
39 See, for example, the volume Jan Loop, Alastair Hamilton, and Charles Burnett, eds., *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).
40 Wolfensohn, *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, 8.
41 Ibid., 17.
42 Ibid., 18.
43 Ibid., 19.
44 Ibid., 20.
45 Nimrod Hurvitz, "Muhibb Ad-Din Al-Khatib's Semitic Wave Theory and Pan-Arabism," *Middle Eastern Studies* 29, no. 1 (1993): 118–34.
46 Ibid., 121.
47 *Al-Shams*, September 7, 1945, 5–6, 19. This article was originally written in Arabic for *al-Shams*. For Moshe Piamenta's list of publications, see Judith Rosenhouse and Ami Elad-Bouskila, eds., *Linguistic and Cultural Studies on Arabic and Hebrew: Essays Presented to Professor Moshe Piamenta for His Eightieth Birthday* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001), XVIII.
48 Referring to Judah Tibbon (1120–*c.* 1190) and his son Samuel Ibn Tibbon (*c.* 1165–1232), who translated (Judeo-)Arabic works into Hebrew, including Maimonides's *Guide for the Perplexed* as well as works by Plato and Aristotle.
49 Hurvitz, "Muhibb Ad-Din Al-Khatib," 121.
50 *Al-Shams*, September 7, 1945, 5.
51 Wolfensohn, *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, 32–3.
52 Ibid., 34.
53 For a discussion of Renan's ideas on the Semitic, see Olender, *The Languages*, 51–81.
54 Ibid., 53.
55 Ibid., 54.
56 Ibid., 4–57.
57 Edward Said writes that Renan "wanted it understood that he speaks of a prototype, not a real Semitic type with actual existence (although he violated this too by

discussing present-day Jews and Muslims with less than scientific detachment in many places in his writings)": *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 142.
58 Wolfensohn, *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, 28.
59 Ibid., 30.
60 Olender, *The Languages*, 63; Bill Ashcroft, "Language and Race," *Social Identities* 7, no. 3 (2001): 321–2.
61 The most famous reply is that of Islamic reformist thinker Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897), written in response to Renan's lecture "L'Islam et la science." Al-Afghani rejected Renan's understanding that Islam was incompatible with science and progress and that the Arabs were antipathic to rationalism. See Jung, *Orientalists, Islamists*, 24; Sheehi, *Foundations*, 138–49.
62 Reid, "Cairo University," 56.
63 On Goldziher in relation to Renan, see Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 327–8; Olender, *The Languages*, 115–35; Dietrich Jung, "Islamic Studies and Religious Reform. Ignaz Goldziher. A Crossroads of Judaism, Christianity and Islam," *Der Islam* 90, no. 1 (2013): 109; Lawrence I. Conrad, "Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan: From Orientalist Philology to the Study of Islam," in *The Jewish Discovery of Islam. Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis*, edited by Martin Kramer (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 1999), 137–80; Céline Trautmann-Waller, "Semites and Semitism: From Philology to the Language of Myth," *Philological Encounters* 2, nos. 3–4 (2017): 346–67.
64 Olender, *The Languages*, 134.
65 Trautmann-Waller, "Semites and Semitism," 347.
66 Wolfensohn, *Tarikh al-Lughat al-Samiyya*, 32.
67 Robert D. Priest, "Ernest Renan's Race Problem," *The Historical Journal* 58, no. 1 (2015): 312; Renton, "The End of the Semites," 104–7.
68 Priest, "Ernest Renan's Race Problem," 212–13; Renton, "The End of the Semites," 105.
69 Israel Wolfensohn, *Tarikh al-Yahud fi Bilad al-'Arab fi al-Jahiliyya wa-Sadr al-Islam* (Cairo: Al-I'timad, 1927).
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
72 Abd El Gawad, "Israel Wolfensohn," 299.
73 The original article from 1929 has been republished as Josef Horovitz, "Judaeo-Arabic Relations in Pre-Islamic Times," *Islamic Studies* 52, nos. 3–4 (2013): 357–91.
74 Hanan Harif, "The Orient between Arab and Jewish National Revivals: Josef Horovitz, Shelomo Dov Gotein and Oriental Studies in Jerusalem," in *Modern Jewish Scholarship on Islam in Context: Rationality, European Borders, and the Search for Belonging*, edited by Ottfried Fraisse (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 323–5.
75 I would like to thank Asaad Zoabi for informing me about this letter and generously sharing a copy with me. Central Zionist Archives, A113/17.
76 Yisrael Ben Ze'ev, *Ha-Yehudim be-'Arav* (Tel Aviv: Mitspeh, 1931).
77 Abd El Gawad, "Israel Wolfensohn," 289.
78 See for an analysis of Ben Ze'ev's involvement in the promotion of the teaching of Arabic in Palestine and his activism on behalf of "native" Palestinian Jews: Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 106–20; Mendel, *The Creation of Israeli Arabic*, 29–40; Derri, "The Construction."
79 Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 106; Derri, "The Construction," 262.

80 *Al-Shams*, November 24, 1944, 8.
81 Mendel, *The Creation of Israeli Arabic*, 29–40; Derri, "The Construction," 262.
82 Elie Levi Abu ʿAsal, *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam al-Yahudi* (Cairo: Al-Nizam, 1934). For his publications in *al-Shams*, see September 14, 1934, 1; October 26, 1934, 1, 4.
83 Yitzhak Shamjush, "Jewish Authors in Contemporary Arabic Literature," *The Palestine Post*, November 14, 1947. See also *al-Shams*'s summary of his article on November 28, 1947, 1. The article mentions that Elie Levi Abu ʿAsal had already passed away.
84 Abu ʿAsal divides the history of Zionism in Egypt into four periods: the time of the Torah, the time before Herzl, the time after Herzl, and the time following the Balfour Declaration. See Abu ʿAsal, *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam*, 16.
85 Ibid., 97.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid., 288.
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid., 291–2.
90 Ibid., 299–300.
91 Ibid., 290.
92 Ibid., 304–5.
93 Ibid., 305.
94 Ibid., 307.
95 Ibid., 308–10.
96 Heinrich Graetz discussed "Samuel," "the most celebrated poet of Arabia in the time before Mahomet" in the third volume of his *Geschichte der Juden* (1853) in a chapter on Jews on the Arabian Peninsula: Graetz, *History of the Jews*, volume 3, translated by Bella Löwy (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1891), 68–71.
97 The Iraqi-Jewish journalist and poet Anwar Shaul used the pseudonym Ibn Samaw'al (son of Samaw'al) during the 1920s: Reuven Snir, "From al-Samaw'al to Ibn al-Samaw'al: Modern Arab-Jewish culture, Its Historical Background and Current Demise," *Acta Orientala* 67 (2006): 19–79.
98 Abu ʿAsal, *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam al-Yahudi*, 310–11.
99 Hanan Harif, *Anashim Ahim Anahnu: ha-Peniyah Mizrahah ba-Hagut ha-Tsiyonit* (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center, 2019). See also John M. Efron, *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
100 Renton, *The Zionist Masquerade*, 11–22; Yair Wallach, "The Racial Logic of Palestine's Partition," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 46, no. 8 (2023): 1576–98.
101 Renton, "The End of the Semites," 126.
102 Ibid., 113.
103 Jankowski, "Egyptian Responses," 11–14.
104 Renton, "The End of the Semites," 124–5.
105 Wallach, "The Racial Logic," 1586.
106 Ibid., 1582.
107 *Al-Shams*, July 15, 1937, 1.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid., 4.
110 Ibid.
111 Ibid., 1.
112 Ibid., July 22, 1937, 1.

113 *Al-Shams*, December 31, 1943, 1.
114 Amit Levy, "Conflicting German Orientalism: Zionist Arabists and Arab Scholars, 1926–1938," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 5 (2023): 1112–31, 1117.
115 *Al-Shams*, December 31, 1943, 1.
116 Ibid.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid., 2.
119 Ibid., 2.
120 Ibid., 1.
121 Ibid.
122 Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 35–53. On the position of Husayn in the debate on East versus West, see 51–3.
123 *Al-Shams*, December 31, 1943, 2.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.
126 *Al-Shams*, January 7, 1944, 1.
127 The topic of Arab unity was positively discussed in *al-Shams* (though not the idea of a political unity). The return of a Jewish presence in Palestine, it was stressed, was not in opposition to the idea of Arab unity. The Arab League was established in Cairo in March 1945.
128 *Al-Shams*, January 7, 1944, 1.
129 The original words read as "Arab university" rather than "Hebrew University," but that must be an error.
130 *Al-Shams*, January 7, 1944, 1.
131 *Al-Shams*, September 29, 1944, 2.
132 Ibid.
133 Ibid.
134 *Al-Shams*, March 25, 1937, 2; *Al-Shams*, March 28, 1945, 6.
135 On the racialization of the Hyksos under the impact of imperialism and orientalism, see Danielle Candelora, "Entangled in Orientalism: How the Hyksos became a Race," *Journal of Egyptian History* 11, nos. 1–2 (2018): 45–72.
136 Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 51–133.
137 Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 109–33; Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 125–7.
138 Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 22.
139 Candelora, "Entangled in Orientalism," 54–5.
140 Ibid., 55–6.
141 Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 320.
142 Rasheed El-Enany, *Naguib Mahfouz: The Pursuit of Meaning* (London: Routledge, 1993), 38–42; Elliott Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 256–60; Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 321–2.
143 Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 258–9.
144 Israel Gershoni, "Imagining and Reimagining the Past: The Use of History by Egyptian Nationalist Writers: 1919–1952," *History and Memory* 4, no. 2. (1992): 5–37, 16.
145 *Al-Shams*, March 28, 1945, 4.
146 Ibid.

147 Evri, "Translating the Arab-Jewish Tradition." See also the special issue of the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (109, no. 3, 2019) on Yahuda's life and scholarship.
148 *Al-Shams*, March 28, 1945, 4.
149 A. S. Yahuda, *The Accuracy of the Bible. The Stories of Joseph, the Exodus and Genesis Confirmed and Illustrated by Egyptian Monuments and Language* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1935), xxi.
150 Ibid., xxvi–xxx.
151 Ibid., 53–4.
152 *Al-Shams*, April 15, 1946, 9.
153 Ibid., 4.
154 Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 300.
155 Jacques van der Vliet, "The Copts: 'Modern Sons of the Pharaohs'?," *Church History and Religious Culture* 89, no. 1 (2009): 279.
156 Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 212–21, 299–302; Van der Vliet, "The Copts," 279–90, 284–5.
157 Quoted in: Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 213.
158 *Al-Shams*, April 5, 1947, 3.
159 *Al-Shams*, November 14, 1947, 2; December 12, 1947, 2.
160 Israel Gershoni, "Imagining and Reimagining," 16.
161 Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 296; Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers of the Arab Past*, 340.
162 El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory*, 55–6. See also Troutt Powell, *A Different Shade*, 16–17.
163 El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory*, 60.

Chapter 4

1 Sheehi, *Foundations*, 3, 12. On civilizational discourse in the Ottoman and Arab world, see Birgit Schaebler, "Civilizing Others. Global Modernity and the Local Boundaries (French/German/Ottoman and Arab) of Savagery," in *Globalization and the Muslim World: Culture, Religion, and Modernity*, edited by Birgit Schaebler and Leif Stenberg (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), 3–31. On the dialectic of civilization and barbarism, see Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 47–76.
2 Peter Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation in the Arab Nahda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 118.
3 Among the critiques of this narrative one should mention Peter Gran, *Islamic Roots of Capitalism: Egypt, 1760–1840* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979). More explicitly in relation to the *nahda*, see Abdulrazzak Patel, *The Arab Nahdah: The Making of the Intellectual and Humanist Movement* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013).
4 Ibn Khaldun had enjoyed popularity among Ottoman men of letters hoping to reform and regenerate the empire since the sixteenth century. See Cornell Fleischer, "Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and 'Ibn Khaldunism' in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Letters," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 18, nos. 3–4 (1983): 198–220. On the nineteenth-century popularity of Ibn Khaldun, see Ahmed El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics. How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 78;

Khuri-Makdisi, "Conceptualization of the *Social*," 268; Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 135–7.

5 Khuri-Makdisi, "Conceptualization of the Social," 267; Orit Bashkin, "Journeys between Civility and Wilderness. Debates on Civilization and Emotions in the Arab Middle East 1861–1939," in *Civilizing Emotions: Concepts in Nineteenth Century Asia and Europe*, edited by Helge Jordheim and Margrit Pernau (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 126–45, 127.

6 Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation*, 118–19.

7 Ibn Khaldun also, though less often, used the term *tamaddun* (urbanization). In his brief survey of the reception of Ibn Khaldun, Michael Cooperson argues that the main entity of rise and fall in Khaldun's conception of history, the polity (*dawla*), is quite distinct from Hegel's understanding of civilization as the life and spirit of a particular people manifested in history. The rise-and-decline paradigm one finds during the late Ottoman period still took the *dawla* as a unit of analysis. He writes: "What rises and falls are dynasties, not something called Islamic civilization." See Michael Cooperson, "The Abbasid 'Golden Age': An Excavation," *al-'Usur al-Wusta* 25, no. 1 (2017): 46.

8 Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation*, 118.

9 It is difficult to find an English equivalent for the term *adab*, which encompasses culture, literature, manners, and refinement.

10 El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory*, 56; Bashkin, "Journeys between Civility and Wilderness," 126.

11 Wael Abu-'Uksa, *Freedom in the Arab World: Concepts and Ideologies in Arabic Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 81–92.

12 Abu-'Uksa, *Freedom in the Arab World*, 92; Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation*, 118.

13 Ussama Makdisi, "After 1860: Debating Religion, Reform, and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 4 (2002): 614; Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation*, 101.

14 Samah Selim, "Languages of Civilization. Nation, Translation and the Politics of Race in Colonial Egypt," *The Translator* 15, no. 1 (2009): 139–56, 147. See also: Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 122–5.

15 Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 169.

16 Ammeke Kateman, *Muḥammad 'Abduh and His Interlocutors: Conceptualizing Religion in a Globalizing World* (Leiden: Brill), 150–1; Bashkin, "Journeys between Civility and Wilderness," 129.

17 Bashkin, "Journeys between Civility and Wilderness," 130–3.

18 On the appropriations of Ibn Khaldun's cyclical approach to civilization by, among others, Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee, see Robert Irwin, *Ibn Khaldun: An Intellectual Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 162–203.

19 Cemil Aydin, "Beyond Civilization. Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asianism, and the Revolt against the West," in *Debates on Civilization in the Muslim World: Critical perspectives on Islam and Modernity*, edited by Lutfi Sunar (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 144–70, 152, 159. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5 provided a crucial incentive for this "turn to the East" as evidence of progress. See Aydin, "Beyond Civilization," 154; Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, 91–4; Bashkin, "Journeys between Civility and Wilderness," 132–3.

20 Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 47–51.

21 For a discussion of the concept of culture in relation to civilization and the various distinctions that were made between them in Germany, also vis-à-vis conceptualizations of *Bildung*, see Sartori, "The Resonance of Culture."

22 Cohen and Cohen, *The Jewish Contribution*.
23 Daniel Schroeter discusses two counternarratives to the rise-and-decline model on Oriental Jews. The first challenges the idea of Islamic tolerance by presenting the "Oriental" Jews as victims of persecution and antisemitism. The second, opposed to the first, is exemplified by Ammiel Alcalay's post-Zionist notion of "Levantine Culture" characterized by Arab-Jewish crossover. This model does not include a decline period and extends the idealized past into modern times: Schroeter, "From Sephardi to Oriental," 145–6.
24 Steven E. Aschheim, *Culture and Catastrophe. German and Jewish Confrontations with National Socialism and Other Crises* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), 72–3.
25 *Al-Shams*, February 4, 1937, 2.
26 Ibid.
27 Aschheim, *Culture and Catastrophe*, 72–3.
28 See, for example, *Al-Shams*, October 1, 1939, 4; March 30, 1942, 1; October 19, 1942, 2.
29 *Al-Shams*, October 19, 1942, 1.
30 *Al-Shams*, December 8, 1939, 1.
31 *Al-Shams*, October 12, 1942, 1.
32 Ibid.
33 I have so far not been able to find the dates of Mansur Wahba's birth and death.
34 *Al-Shams*, December 8, 1944, 4.
35 Ibid.
36 *Al-Shams*, December 22, 1944, 7.
37 Ibid.
38 *Al-Shams*, January 5, 1945, 6.
39 *Al-Shams*, March 23, 1945, 6.
40 *Al-Shams*, August 20, 1943, 1.
41 *Al-Shams*, September 1, 1944, 1.
42 *Al-Shams*, September 22, 1944, 1.
43 *Al-Shams*, September 22, 1944, 1; October 20, 1944, 1; October 27, 1944; January 12, 1945, 1.
44 *Al-Shams*, September 1, 1944, 1.
45 Jeremy Cohen, "Introduction," in *The Jewish Contribution*, edited by Cohen and Cohen, 4; Yaakov Shavit, "From Admission Ticket to Contribution: Remarks on the History of an Apologetic Argument," in *The Jewish Contribution*, edited by Cohen and Cohen, 162–4.
46 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, May 15, 1933, 1.
47 Ibid.
48 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, May 22, 1933, 2.
49 Bracha, "'The Germans Are Coming!'," 41–54.
50 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, June 5, 1933, 1; April 13, 1934, 1.
51 See, for example, April 3, 1933, 1.
52 Levi, *The Jews of Beirut*; Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut*.
53 Asher Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia: The Search for Identity in Lebanon* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004).
54 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, April 24, 1933, 1.
55 I have not been able to find information about this writer for *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*.
56 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, November 14, 1939, 9.
57 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, October 4, 1939, 3.

58 Ibid.
59 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, April 18, 1942, 6–7; September 4, 1945, 8.
60 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, November 24, 1941, 6–7, 6.
61 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, January 3, 1944, 6; *al-Shams*, February 25, 1944, 4.
62 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, January 3, 1944, 6.
63 Neither Arturo Toscanini nor Charlie Chaplin was Jewish. Both were anti-Fascists.
64 Ibid.
65 *Al-Shams*, May 12, 1939, 2.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
68 The article in *al-Shams* mentions Royden's statement that not only the Jews can be credited for this contribution to European scientific progress, the Nestorians also played an important role, especially in the dissemination of knowledge to France.
69 Parts of this section have been previously published as Lucia Admiraal, "The Jewish Contribution to Civilization Discourse: An Egyptian-Jewish Appropriation in the 1940s," *Zutot* 18 (2021): 140–56.
70 The translation was published from November 28, 1941, to June 8, 1945.
71 *Al-Shams*, November 28, 1941, 3.
72 Cecil Roth, *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940 [1938]), x.
73 Mansur Wahba translated the introduction and chapter nine, the latter under the title "Al-Yahud wa Taqaddum al-ʿUlum" ("The Jews and the progress of the sciences"). Alfred Yallouz translated the remaining eleven chapters. Little is known about Yallouz's and Wahba's personal and professional lives. I have derived their occupations as translator and lecturer, respectively, from descriptions in *al-Shams* and *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili.*
74 *Al-Shams*, November 14, 1941, 1; *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, June 30, 1939, 5. While the book and its translation were discussed in the newspapers, the translation itself was not published.
75 Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*; Elshakry, "Knowlegde in Motion"; Shaden M. Tageldin, *Disarming Words: Empire and the Seductions of Translation in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 5.
76 Elshakry, "Knowledge in Motion," 716–19.
77 Recent critiques on these linear perspectives on Arabic literature and their accompanying traditional/modern binary include two works that focus on translations of fiction in Egypt: Selim, *Popular Fiction*; Maya Kesrouany, *Prophetic Translation: The Making of Modern Egyptian Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019).
78 Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, 18.
79 Julie Sanders, *Adaptation and Appropriation* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 12.
80 Ibid., 2, 4, 32.
81 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, May 14, 1943, 3–5.
82 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, August 20, 1943, 6.
83 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, May 14, 1943, 3.
84 The discourse of the Jewish contribution to civilization has often been criticized, not least by Jewish intellectuals, for its apologetics and notions of superiority. Roth was well aware of what was at stake, considering his statement in the introduction that "nothing has been further from my mind than any sort of Jewish chauvinism": Roth, *The Jewish Contribution*, xv. For a discussion of this tension, see Cohen, "Jewish

Contribution," 4, 11; Sander L. Gilman, *Smart Jews. The Construction of the Image of Jewish Superior Intelligence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 42.

85 Olender, *The Languages*, 18.

86 Roth, *The Jewish Contribution*, xiii.

87 Ibid., x.

88 Ibid., xiii.

89 The idea of the Jew as ultimately European resonates in the essay by Reinharz and Shavit on the complex and ambivalent Jewish perceptions of Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which lead them to conclude that "the Jews in Europe were …, to one extent or another, European Jews": Jehuda Reinharz and Yaacov Shavit, *Glorious, Accursed Europe: An Essay on Jewish Ambivalence* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2010), 192.

90 Thorstein Veblen, "The Intellectual Pre-eminence of the Jews in Modern Europe," *Political Science Quarterly* 34 no. 1 (1919): 33–42. Veblen expressed this idea in response to the rise of the Zionist movement. He expected that the Zionist project, if realized, would result in national and intellectual isolation (and in that sense a new ghettoization), ending the intellectually productive Jewish traits of skepticism and flexibility within the gentile world.

91 Roth, *The Jewish Contribution*, 369–70. David Biale argues that the Jewish contribution to civilization discourse in the United States adopted a trajectory that differs from that of the discourse in Europe. Mordecai Kaplan's book *Judaism as Civilization*, he shows, was written from the rather "safe" confines of America; it contains not so much an apologetic discourse but rather an attempt to reconcile rival conceptualizations of Jews as religion, people, and culture under the rubric of civilization: David Biale, "Louis Finkelstein, Mordecai Kaplan, and American 'Jewish Contributions to Civilization,'" in *The Jewish Contribution*, edited by Cohen and Cohen, 185–97.

92 Roth, *The Jewish Contribution*, 5.

93 Ibid., 6.

94 Irene E. Zwiep, "From Dialektik to Comparative Literature: Steinschneider's Orientalism," in *Studies on Steinschneider. Moritz Steinschneider and the Emergence of the Science of Judaism in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, edited by Reimund Leicht and Gad Freudenthal (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 137–50, 145–6.

95 Murad Farag, *Al-Shuʿara' al-Yahud al-ʿArab* (Cairo: Al-Matbaʿa al-Rahmaniyya, 1929).

96 Farag, *Al-Shuʿara' al-Yahud*, 11–12; Nora K. Schmid, "Louis Cheikho and the Christianization of Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Ascetic Poetry," *Philological Encounters* 6, nos. 3–4 (2021): 339–73.

97 Susannah Heschel, "The Rise of Imperialism and the German Jewish engagement in Islamic Studies," in *Modern Jewish Scholarship*, edited by Fraisse, 61–92, 68.

98 Reid, "Cairo University."

99 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, May 14, 1943, 3.

100 Roth, *The Jewish Contribution*, 52–7.

101 Ibid., 54.

102 Ibid. See also Cecil Roth, "The Jew as a European," Presidential Address delivered before the Jewish Historical Society of England (London, 1938).

103 On the process of de-Ottomanization in Egyptian historiography from the 1890s onward: Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers of the Arab Past*, 66–90. See also Piterberg, "The Tropes of Stagnation," 42–61.

104 For a discussion of this narrative in explicit relation to the idea of the Jewish contribution to civilization, see Schroeter, "From Sephardi to Oriental." More general examinations of European (Jewish) narratives on Sephardic and Oriental Jews include John M. Efron, "Scientific Racism and the Mystique of Sephardic Racial Superiority," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 38 (1993): 75–96; Efron, "From Mitteleuropa"; Ismar Schorsch, "The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 34, no. 1 (1985): 47–66; Cohen, "The 'Golden Age.' "

105 Rodrigue, *Images of Sephardi.* See also the essay by Eli Bar-Chen, including Rodrigue's commentary, "Two Communities with a Sense of Mission: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Hilfsverein der deutsche Juden," in *Jewish Emancipation Reconsidered: The French and German Model*s, edited by Michael Brenner, Vicki Caron, and Uri R. Kaufmann (Tübingen: Leo Baeck Institute, 2003), 111–28.

106 Harif, "The Orient," 319–35.

107 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, March 14, 1943, 4.

108 Aziz Al-Azmeh holds that during the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Arabic term *thaqafa* (culture) carried a strong association with German *Bildung* and intellectual and artistic life, while *hadara* (civilization) was understood as a more general concept encompassing the entire life of a society: Aziz Al-Azmeh, "Civilization, Concept and History of," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences: Second Edition*, edited by James Wright (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 2015), 1903–9.

109 El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory*, 55–86.

110 Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, 86–91; Elshakry, "The Invention of the Muslim Golden Age: Universal History, the Arabs, Science, and Islam," in *Power and Time: Temporalities in Conflict and the Making of History*, edited by Dan Edelstein, Stefanos Geroulanos, and Natasha Wheatley (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 80–102.

111 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, March 14, 1943, 3.

112 *Al-Shams*, June 15, 1942, 3.

113 Salomon Reinach (1858–1932) was a French archaeologist and historian of religion. His brother Théodore Reinach (1860–1928) was a French polymath working in the fields of archaeology, history, philology, and papyrology, among others.

114 He might be referring here to Reuben Levy, an Oxford professor of Persian Literature and Islamic history and the author of *A Baghdad Chronicle* (1929) and *The Sociology of Islam* (1931–1933).

115 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, March 14, 1943, 5.

116 Ibid. He refers here to Ahmad Shawqi (1868–1932), Hafiz Ibrahim (1871–1932), Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi'i (1889–1966), Taha Husayn (1889–1973), Ibrahim al-Mazini (1889–1949), Mahmud Taymur (1874–1973), Muhammad Husayn Haykal (1888–1956), and Tawfiq al-Hakim (1898–1987), all prominent Egyptian intellectuals and literati. Khalil Mutran (1872–1949) was a Lebanese poet who lived in Egypt.

117 At that time the youth association was headed by Rafael Haim Saqqal. See *al-Shams*, December 14, 1942, 3.

118 Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, 261–2. Elshakry shows that Mazhar's translation project manifests a strategy of domestication and synthetization: an attempt to reconcile Western science with the (mediaeval) tradition of Arabic science as well as to harmonize Darwin's thought with transcendentalism, a position that Elshakry terms "transcendental positivism."

119 *Al-Shams*, September 15, 1944, 4.

120 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, June 23, 1944, 6–7; July 21, 1944, 8; September 1, 1944, 8.
121 George F. Hourani, "Joseph Schacht, 1902–69," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 90, no. 2 (1970): 164. See also Reid, *Cairo University*, 95–6.
122 Rainer Brunner, "Joseph Schacht and German Orientalism in the 1920s and 1930s," in *Studying the Near and Middle East at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 1935–2018*, edited by Sabine Schmidtke (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2018), 348.
123 Sarton's later work *The History of Science and the New Humanism* was translated by Ismail Mazhar, the same translator who had brought Darwin's works into Arabic, during the postwar years while he was working for the Franklin Book Program, an initiative that promoted American literature in the Middle East. See Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, 301.
124 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, September 1, 1944, 8.
125 Nordbruch, *Nazism in Syria and Lebanon*, 73–4.
126 The author was likely Bahjat Sion, a student at the Shamash Jewish Secondary High School in Baghdad. See the memoirs of Albert Khabbaza, MD, *The Last Tango in Baghdad* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2010), 102. Bahjat Sion published another article in *al-Salam*, this time using his full name, about Moses Mendelssohn. See *Al-Salam*, November 14, 1947, 9.
127 *Al-Salam*, December 17, 1946, 7.
128 *Al-Salam*, April 25, 1947, 6–7.
129 Ibid.
130 *Al-Salam*, April 25, 1947, 6.
131 Ibid.
132 Ibid.
133 Hanssen and Weiss, "Introduction," 32–3; Elshakry, "Knowledge in Motion," 717.

Chapter 5

1 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, April 21, 1940, 1.
2 Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 21–2.
3 Bashkin, "The Colonized Semites," 195.
4 Ibid., 204.
5 Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation*, 99–100.
6 Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 130.
7 Ibid., 135.
8 Ibid., 146.
9 The debate on definitions and explanations of antisemitism, its connection to Zionism, and its relation to other forms of prejudice and racism is, needless to say, too expansive to be discussed here. For a historiographical overview, see Scott Ury, "Strange Bedfellows? Anti-Semitism, Zionism, and the Fate of 'the Jews,'" *The American Historical Review* 123, no. 4 (2018): 1151–71 as well as the other contributions to the special issue of *AHR* on the history of antisemitism; a *longue durée* approach connecting the history of anti-Judaism and antisemitism: David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2013); a contextual-comparative approach to antisemitism: Renton and Gidley, *Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe*; on the relation between religious and racial prejudice in the context of the development of a pseudo-academic field in Nazi Germany

seeking to provide antisemitism with a scientific basis, see Horst Junginger, *The Scientification of the "Jewish Question" in Nazi Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

10 Ammeke Kateman demonstrates, in her discussion of Muhammad ʿAbduh's response to the French historian Gabriel Hanotaux's conceptualization of Christianity as Aryan, that ʿAbduh "employs the genealogical characterization of Islam and Christianity as civilizations-cum-races-cum-religions that Hanotaux introduces. He refers to 'Aryan religion' (*al-din al-ari*) and 'Semitic religion' (*al-din al-sami*)." Kateman, *Muḥammad ʿAbduh*, 221.

11 Abu ʿAsal, *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam*, 71.

12 Ibid., 68.

13 Ibid., 72.

14 Ibid., 75.

15 Ibid.

16 Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* (New York: Dover Publications, 1988), 85, 91.

17 Abu ʿAsal, *Yaqazat al-ʿAlam*, 69.

18 Ibid., 78.

19 Orit Bashkin, "Three Syrian Intellectuals, a French Jewish Officer, and the Question of Late Ottoman Pluralism," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 50, no. 4 (2018): 765–8.

20 Levy, "Jewish Writers," 260–7; Levy, "Partitioned Pasts."

21 *Al-Shams*, April 29, 1937, 4.

22 *Al-Shams*, April 29, 1937, 4; September 2, 1937, 4.

23 *Al-Shams*, July 22, 1937, 1.

24 This association had been formed by the Canadian Jewish Congress; its president was not Jewish.

25 *Al-Shams*, January 19, 1939, 1.

26 *Al-Shams*, January 12, 1939, 1; January 19, 1939, 1; March 2, 1939, 2.

27 *Al-Shams*, July 7, 1939, 3.

28 *Al-Shams*, June 16, 1939, 4.

29 *Al-Shams*, June 16, 1939, 3, 4; September 22, 1939, 2; December 8, 1939, 1.

30 *Al-Shams*, June 16, 1939, 4.

31 Gershoni, *ʿAlmah ve-Satan*, volume 2, 235–7. Gershoni notes that, as a full English translation of *Mein Kampf* was not published until 1938, Lorimer's book served to expose Nazi ideology to an English audience based on her strong command of German and close reading of *Mein Kampf*. See also Dan Stone, "The Mein Kampf Ramp: Emily Overend Lorimer and Hitler Translations in Britain," *German History* 26, no. 4 (2008): 504–19.

32 Gershoni, *ʿAlmah ve-Satan*, 235.

33 *Al-Shams*, June 23, 1939, 2; July 30, 1939, 2.

34 *Al-Shams*, January 26, 1939, 2, 4; June 23, 1939, 2.

35 *Al-Shams*, November 10, 1939, 1; June 16, 1939, 2.

36 See, for example, *Al-Shams*, February 25, 1937, 1; April 8, 1937, 1; April 29, 1937, 4; May 12, 1939, 4; September 19, 1941, 2; October 3, 1941, 3; November 7, 1941, 1; July 13, 1942, 1.

37 *Al-Shams*, August 5, 1937, 2.

38 *Al-Shams*, September 2, 1937, 2.

39 Israel Gershoni, " 'The Crime of Nazism against Humanity': Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyat and the Outbreak of World War II," in *Arab responses*, 217–41, 232.
40 Ibid.
41 *Al-Shams*, October 31, 1941, 2; November 14, 1941, 2; November 21, 1941, 2.
42 *Al-Shams*, November 14, 1941, 2.
43 *Al-Shams*, October 3, 1941, 3.
44 *Al-Shams*, November 23, 1942, 1.
45 Ibid.
46 *Al-Shams*, November 2, 1942, 2; June 30, 1943, 1.
47 Gershoni and Jankowski, *Confronting Fascism in Egypt*, 59–63, 166–75.
48 *Al-Shams*, March 10, 1939, 1.
49 *Al-Shams*, August 20, 1943, 4.
50 *Al-Shams*, July 9, 1943, 1; July 30, 1943, 1.
51 *Al-Shams*, December 17, 1943, 1.
52 *Al-Shams*, December 14, 1942, 1–2; December 21, 1942, 1; December 27, 1942, 1; January 4, 1943, 1.
53 *Al-Shams*, December 14, 1942, 2.
54 *Al-Shams*, December 3, 1943, 2.
55 Joshua Rubenstein, *Tangled Loyalties: The Life and Times of Ilya Ehrenburg* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 200–17.
56 Angela Kershaw, *Translating War: Literature and Memory in France and Britain from the 1940s to the 1960s* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 70.
57 *Al-Shams*, September 17, 1943, 4.
58 *Al-Shams*, October 19, 1942, 1. See also Thomas Mann, *Listen Germany! Twenty-Five Radio Messages to the German People over BBC by Thomas Mann* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1943).
59 *Al-Shams*, August 28, 1943, 1.
60 *Al-Shams*, December 3, 1943, 1.
61 *Al-Shams*, July 28, 1944, 1.
62 *Al-Shams*, December 7, 1944, 2.
63 Ibid.
64 *Al-Shams*, April 27, 1945, 1.
65 *Al-Shams*, February 16, 1945, 1.
66 *Al-Shams*, June 9, 1944, 2; June 23, 1944, 2, 4; August 14, 1944, 1; May 2, 1947, 4.
67 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, March 20, 1933, 1.
68 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, April 3, 1933, 1.
69 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, March 20, 1933, 1.
70 Ury, "Strange Bedfellows?."
71 Herzl, *The Jewish State*, 85, 91.
72 Ibid., 90.
73 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, April 15, 1938; April 20, 1938, 11; June 4, 1938, 30; June 21, 1938, 26; July 25, 1938, 12–13.
74 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, April 20, 1938, 11.
75 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, September 25, 1938, 24–5.
76 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, November 17, 1938, 8.
77 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, June 30, 1939, 7–8.

78 The article had originally appeared in the journal *al-Tali'a* in May 1939. See Tannoury-Karam, "This War," 430.
79 Nordbruch, *Nazism in Syria and Lebanon*, 69; Tannoury-Karam, "This War"; Tannoury-Karam, "No Place for Neutrality."
80 Tannoury-Karam, "This War," 432.
81 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, July 31, 1939, 4.
82 Lucia Ceci, *The Vatican and Mussolini's Italy* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 222–31.
83 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, August 30, 1938, 8–10.
84 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, September 15, 1938, 20.
85 Ibid., 21.
86 In the article "Do not fear famine" in *al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, September 12, 1939, 8–10, Sidqi addressed the economic crisis in Syria and Lebanon and fears among the population for a famine such as the one during the First World War.
87 Gershoni, "Why the Muslims Must Fight against Nazi Germany," 471–98; Gershoni, *'Almah ve-satan*, 247–51.
88 Mustafa Kabha, "A Bold Voice Raised Above the Raging Waves: Palestinian Intellectual Najati Sidqi and His Battle with Nazi Doctrine at the Time of World War II," in *The Holocaust and the Nakba: A New Grammar of Trauma and History*, edited by Bashir Bashir and Amos Goldberg (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 154–72, 158–9.
89 Kabha, "A Bold Voice," 167.
90 Salim Tamari, "The Enigmatic Jerusalem Bolshevik: The Memoirs of Najati Siqi," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 32, no. 2 (2003): 79–94, 84.
91 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, January 23, 1939, 4.
92 Ibid., 3.
93 Ibid., 4.
94 Ibid.
95 This was most likely the French Radio East, founded in 1938, from 1940 onward called Radio Levant.
96 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, December 12, 1941, 3.
97 Ibid., 5.
98 Ibid., 5.
99 Wild, "National Socialism," 154.
100 Ibid., 139–40.
101 Ibid., 140. The Ligue Pacifiste was founded in Alexandria in 1935 by the Swiss journalist Paul Jacot-Descombes. Many Egyptian Jews were active in the league. See Krämer, "Political Participation," 76–7.
102 Wild, "National Socialism," 140.
103 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, December 12, 1941, 5.
104 Ibid.
105 See, for example, *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, April 7, 1944, 3–4; January 5, 1945, 5; February 9, 1945, 6.
106 Eisenberg, *My Enemy's Enemy*, 103.
107 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, August 11, 1938, 8.
108 Ibid., 7.
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid., 10.
111 Ibid., 10.
112 *Al-'Alam al-Isra'ili*, September 15, 1938, 26.

113 Nordbruch, *Nazism in Syria and Lebanon*, 11.
114 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, October 16, 1938, 13–14.
115 Ibid.
116 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, October 31, 1938, 5.
117 Ibid., 13–14.
118 Schulze, *The Jews of Lebanon*, 57.
119 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, July 31, 1939, 3–4, 3.
120 Ibid., 4.
121 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, February 9, 1945, 3–4. The rule of the Zaydi Imam Yahya (1867–1948) from 1908 until 1948 has been interpreted in Zionist historiography as the main reason for the migration of Jews out of Yemen. For a discussion of his rule and a critical assessment of the idea that Jews in Yemen were persecuted, see Ari Ariel, *Jewish-Muslim Relations and Migration from Yemen to Palestine in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 117–36.
122 Ariel, *Jewish-Muslim Relations*, 122.
123 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, February 23, 1945, 3–4.
124 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, October 26, 1945, 3–4.
125 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, May 30, 1945, 5.
126 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, July 1, 1946, 1. Adjami referred to the following events: first, the aforementioned "Farhud" in Iraq in 1941, critically assessed by Orit Bashkin in *New Babylonians*, where she speaks of a "farhudization" of Iraqi Jewish history, especially in Zionist historiography, p. 138; second, the anti-Zionist protests in Egypt that were held on Balfour Day, November 2, 1945, organized by the Muslim Brotherhood, Young Egypt, and the Young Men's Muslim Association, which turned into anti-Jewish rioting in the Jewish Quarter on November 3 instigated by some of the demonstrators. Though the riots were condemned by the Egyptian king, the prime minister, and secretary-general of the Arab League, as well as in the Egyptian press, the riots showed, in Joel Beinin's words, "the vulnerability of the Jewish community to the consequences of the conflict over Palestine." See Beinin, *The Dispersion*, 64–5; third, the anti-Jewish riots in Tripoli in November 1945 during which 130 Jews were killed. Harvey Goldberg argues that, contrary to the common conception of these riots as marking the beginning of an exodus of Libyan Jews in subsequent years, the events should be understood in the context of Italian colonial rule and its impact on Jewish-Muslim relations. See Harvey E. Goldberg, *Jewish Life in Muslim Libya. Rivals and Relatives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 97–122. See also Jens Hoppe, "The Persecution of Jews in Libya between 1938 and 1945: An Italian Affair?," in *The Holocaust and North Africa*, edited by Boum and Abrevaya Stein, 50–75.
127 *Al-ʿAlam al-Isra'ili*, August 15, 1947, 7.
128 Renton, "The End of the Semites."
129 *Al-Shams*, September 12, 1947, 5.
130 *Al-Shams*, February 28, 1947.
131 *Al-Shams*, September 25, 1946, 6; March 7, 1947, 1.
132 *Al-Shams*, September 12, 1947, 3.
133 Ibid.
134 David Renton, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism and Britain in the 1940s* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 13.
135 Ibid., 28.
136 Ibid., 33.

137 *Al-Shams*, May 29, 1947, 1.
138 *Al-Shams*, September 12, 1947, 1.
139 *Al-Shams*, October 3, 1947, 4.
140 *Al-Shams*, December 13, 1946, 2; November 14, 1947.
141 *Al-Shams*, December 20, 1947, 8.
142 *Al-Shams*, September 12, 1947, 3; January 16, 1948, 1.
143 *Al-Shams*, December 19, 1947, 4.
144 Renton, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism*, 37. See also Graham Macklin, "'A Plague on Both Their Houses': Fascism, Anti-Fascism and the Police in the 1940s," in *British Fascism, the Labour Movement and the State*, edited by Nigel Copsey and Dave Renton (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 46–67.
145 *Al-Shams*, December 12, 1947, 1; December 19, 1947, 1.
146 *Al-Shams*, December 27, 1947, 1.
147 *Al-Shams*, April 25, 1947, 4.
148 *Al-Shams*, October 11, 1946, 1; November 28, 1947, 4.
149 *Al-Shams*, October 11, 1946, 1.
150 Ibid.
151 *Al-Shams*, June 20, 1947, 4.
152 *Al-Shams*, December 19, 1947, 1.
153 Mustafa Kamil (1874–1908) was an Egyptian nationalist leader, lawyer, and journalist who served as president of the National Party that he formally established in 1907.
154 *Al-Shams*, November 14, 1947, 3.
155 On Esther Azhari Moyal, see Levy, "Partitioned Pasts"; Selim, *Nation, Translation and the Nahda*, 127–33.
156 Lital Levy has shown that after her return to Palestine from Marseilles, Esther Azhari Moyal lived in Jaffa, where she died in 1948. See "Partitioned Pasts," 151. In the introductions to her articles provided by the editors of *al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili* during the period under consideration here (1946–8), however, she was said to be living in Tel Aviv.
157 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, January 4, 1946, 6–7; January 18, 1946, 6–7.
158 Levy, "Partitioned Pasts," 129–30.
159 Ibid., 151.
160 *Al-Shams*, December 5, 1947, 3.
161 Levy, "Partitioned Pasts," 138.
162 Quoted in Levy, "Partitioned Pasts," 129–30, and Levy, "Jewish Writers," 230–2.
163 *Al-ʿĀlam al-Isrāʾīlī*, January 4, 1946, 6–7.
164 Ibid.
165 *Al-ʿAlam al-Israʾili*, January 18, 1946, 6–7.
166 *Al-Salam*, July 1, 1946, 6.
167 Ibid.
168 It is unclear to which peace conference Moyal is referring here. During the 1919 peace conference in Paris, Weizmann was asked how he understood the Balfour Declaration, and he responded that "the country [Palestine] should be Jewish in the same way that France is French and Britain is British." Quoted in Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete. Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate* (New York: Henry

Holt, 2013), 117. Moyal's quotation corresponds more closely, however, to Weizmann's address to the British Zionist federation of September 19, 1919, soon thereafter, in which he rephrased his sentiments thus: "By a Jewish National Home I mean the creation of such conditions that as the country is developed we can pour in a considerable number of immigrants, and finally establish such a society in Palestine that Palestine shall be as Jewish as England is English or America American." Quoted in Barnet Litvinoff, ed, *Chaim Weizmann, The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, *August 1898–July 1931* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983), 257.

169 *Al-Salam*, July 1, 1946, 6.

170 Ibid., 7.

171 According to the text of Husayni's speech published in *New York Times*, he had closed his address by warning that the Palestinian Arabs would defend their country with zeal and by force in case of segregation or partition imposed by the great powers. The two sides in the conflict consisted, Husayni stated, of an "aggressive" invasion by the Zionists on the one hand, backed by Britain, and the self-defense of the Palestinian Arabs on the other. He underlined that Palestinian Arab resistance did not result from antisemitism, which, unlike in Europe, had no history in the Arab world, a region where Jews had enjoyed neighborly relations with the Arabs in Palestine until the British occupation and the Balfour Declaration. The declaration was for Moyal the major legitimization of the Zionist project, upon which Arab-Jewish coexistence should nonetheless be built; Husayni evidently took the opposite view. For him, the declaration, with its paradoxical claims of establishing a national home for the Jewish people and safeguarding the indigenous population, is an "illegal" and "unjust" promise. See "Text of the Statement Before U.N. by Jamal el Husseini on the Arabs' Position on Palestine: Arab Statement Denounces U.N. Proposal for Partitioning Palestine," *The New York Times*, September 30, 1947, 14.

172 *Al-Salam*, November 30, 1947, 5.

173 Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*, 2, 70.

174 *Al-Salam*, November 30, 1947, 6.

Chapter 6

1 *Al-Shams*, July 21, 1944, 2.

2 Mani was one of the founders of the Egyptian Ligue Contre l'Antisémitisme Allemand in 1933, which was later included in the Ligue Internationale Contre l'Antisémitisme Allemand (LICA). He supported the Zionist movement, despite the fact that B'nai B'rith avoided being associated with Zionism. See Krämer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 130, 195.

3 *Al-Shams*, July 21, 1944, 2.

4 Ryzova, *The Age of the Efendiyya*, 139–77. Ryzova discusses the autobiographical genre in which young *effendiyya* told of their traditional origins and narrated their (educational) passages toward modernity, which often encompassed a move from the countryside to Cairo.

5 *Al-Shams*, July 21, 1944, 2.

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Newspapers and Journals

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L'Aurore
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Alain Farhi, grandson Hillel Farhi, March 14, 2019.
Aviva Pinto and Yosef Malki, children of Saad Malki, Modi'in, Israel, January 23, 2020.
Eyal Sagui Bizawi, relative of Saad Malki, Modi'in, Israel, January 23, 2020.

Websites

www.farhi.org (Les Fleurs de L'Orient)
www.hsje.org (Historical Society of Jews from Egypt)

INDEX

Note: Page numbers are followed by *italics* refers to figures. Endnotes are indicated by the page number followed by "n" and the endnote number e.g., 20 n.1 refers to endnote 1 on page 20.