Contents

INTRODUCTION

This book is a study of patriotism in the Egyptian province of the Ottoman Empire. What can we learn by re-examining Egypt's nineteenth-century history, not as the tale of progress towards a sovereign nation-state but as the saga of an Ottoman province? What are the consequences of reframing a national narrative in an imperial context?

I argue that the imperial context requires a new theory of national development. The imperial origins of patriotic ideas in provinces complicate standard accounts of how present-day nation-states came to be. Empires provide a fundamentally different structure of political power from that of national settings. The case of the Ottoman Empire is even more complex since the sultans were caliphs of Sunni Islam. Within the imperial system, the ideas and practices specific to provinces reveal the hidden architecture of the empire's networks. By retelling Egypt's nineteenth-century history as an Ottoman province, we follow the ways in which ideas, practices, and power struggles were enacted and constituted through these networks and imperial hierarchies.

In order to understand this complex story, we have to put aside the standard views of nationalism and religion. In the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, including the Egyptian province, two historical trajectories of political thought converged: Muslim concepts of just rule commingled with European notions of homeland framed by a centralizing imperial system. This discursive matrix manifested itself as *patriotism*. This book offers a new definition of this concept, based on the Ottoman Egyptian example.

Patriotism in Arabic (*waṭaniyya*) became manifest in two aspects. Firstly, it was an empire-wide ideology of power that provided a tactical vocabulary for Arabic-speaking elites to negotiate co-operation among themselves and with the Ottoman system. In the Egyptian province, it served the goal of achieving a tacit *compromise* with the semi-independent governor. Secondly, patriotism was a communal emotion, a physical experience of togetherness, constituted in and through public occasions. Such experiences allowed elite and ordinary individuals to imagine themselves as part of a community. Importantly, these were not just any experiences, but experiences that were made possible by new, *public* practices, institutions, and technologies.

This book, therefore, focuses on performance culture as a key aspect of patriotism. Stages and theater buildings were new public spaces, and going to the theater was a new public ritual in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Arab world. Arabic journalism and theater were intertwined enterprises and together built up a fragile public sphere. Arabic musical theater was connected to patriotism in Arabic journals. Prewritten musical plays performed on stages, involving women, in front of a seated audience, were innovations that creatively absorbed earlier practices like Arabic poetry, singing, and popular mimetic performances. Language was made compatible with the new spaces. The study of performance culture is crucial to understand what *being public*, hence *being a patriot*, meant in the changing Ottoman urban world.

Moreover, plays provide access to plural, often opposing, definitions about what exactly the community of the homeland is. Plays were written by learned and talented individuals; and their ideas often served political and business interests. Plays could also function as petitions. In general, during a performance, ideas are translated into experience and, *vice versa*, experience influences ideas. Plays, their performances, and reception can convey the change in the realm of subversive ideas before such change manifests itself in political action, but plays can also represent and serve official doctrine. Importantly, entertainment and journalism are commercial enterprises, and so the practices of patriotism also illuminate the history of Arab capitalism. Not only local or global but also imperial factors influenced the content, staging, and reception of plays. The Ottoman Egyptian elites, as we shall see, instrumentalized Western European opera for their own representation. *Arab Patriotism* therefore demonstrates the impure construction of nation-ness in the black box of culture.

For analytical clarity, I maintain a clear distinction between patriotism and nationalism. Modern nationalism is typically defined as an ideology of solidarity, organized around the idea of "the nation" (based on birth, *natio*) in a sovereign political unit.[1] I understand patriotism, by contrast, as an ideology of solidarity associated with the political use of the "homeland" (living territory, *patria*) without the explicit demand for a sovereign polity. Both can be mass phenomena for which intellectuals and political elites articulate the core ideas; their practices are similar. Whereas patriotism has generally been considered positive, nationalism has a darker reputation. As the historian Johan Huizinga once declared, "[nationalism] flourishes in the sphere of competition and opposition."[2]

[1] Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism*, 13; Smith, "Biblical Beliefs," 414; Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World*, 404–405.

[2] Huizinga, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 154.

A patriot would die for the homeland; a nationalist would purify the nation. This is admittedly oversimplified (many patriots would perhaps gladly purify the nation), and there have been calls to forget patriotism altogether,[3] but this distinction allows us to discuss the patriotic idea at a particular historical juncture.

Patriotism is the expression of nation-ness that can emerge in various contexts, mostly imperial ones. Nation-ness is a narrative quality of identification connected to the use of the "homeland" as a political argument.[4] This type of narration appears as political temporality in the form of history or *historicization*.[5] Patriotism can precede nationalism, but it can also instantiate a muted nationalism within an imperial framework that makes allowance for a type of federal state. Nationalism begins when the patriotic ideas and experiences of a particular group are articulated in conjunction with arguments for an independent polity. When such a polity is attained, the ideology transforms into a state "theory of political legitimacy."[6] There is nothing romantic about patriotism. It also legitimizes power. Between its first murmurs in empires and the realization of a fully sovereign state, there are various ways in which the patriotic idea can serve governments. This book traces one of those ways in the context of the Ottoman Empire.

Modern Egypt as an Ottoman Province: The Khedivate

What does the framing of Egypt as an Ottoman province tell us precisely? Egypt became an Ottoman province in 1517 when the sultan's army conquered Cairo. The province was never fully integrated: the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw rebellious localized Turkic-Egyptian military alliances. After the brief French occupation (1798–1801), they were gradually crushed. Even within the province there were power struggles between peasants of Upper Egypt and the military leaders in Cairo, the seat of local power.

Administratively, Egypt was an *eyalet* (province) until 1867 when its designation changed to *hidiviyet* (khedivate). An *eyalet* was the largest administrative unit in the Ottoman imperial system in which the governor (*vali*), who was sent from the empire's center, was responsible for tax collection and redistribution. The governor, assisted by the chief judge

[3] Cohen and Nussbaum, *For Love of Country*.
[4] Anderson coined "nation-ness" (*Imagined Communities*, 4) but never defined it.
[5] Ricoeur, "Narrative Time," 182–184; 189.
[6] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1–7.

(*kadı*), also appointed from the imperial center, represented "the executive power of the sultan on all matters."[7] This is why, behind the words *eyalat* and *hidiviyet*, the Ottoman administrative language understood *vilayet*, "governorship," as the main designation of an imperial unit that owed tribute and soldiers to the center.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the governorship of the Egyptian province was in the hands of one Turkish-speaking family. They were neither local Egyptians nor sent from the imperial elite. This position explains their quest to belong to both the province and the empire in order to maximalize their security. While Istanbul attempted to reassert stricter control over its provinces in the nineteenth century (excepting those of Algiers and Tunis, which were lost to the French), the province of Egypt continued to experience a degree of autonomy. The governors of Egypt represented the sultan without being fully subject to him.

This was the achievement of Mehmed Ali (r. 1805–1848), a Turkish-speaking mercenary in the Ottoman army and founder of the dynasty. His political maneuvering made possible the special path taken by late Ottoman Egypt. After leading his new army to occupy the Syrian provinces in the 1830s, international pressure obliged him to retreat—but only on the condition that he receive the right to hereditary governorship in 1841. Thereafter his family stood between the distant sultan and the peoples in the Nile valley, making Cairo a rival center to Istanbul in the late Ottoman world.[8] The nineteenth-century history of Egypt as an Ottoman province is thus a history of the struggle of Mehmed Ali's descendants with both the center and each other over the resources of the Nile Valley.[9] From 1867 they used the title "khedive" exclusively. Their family intrigues, played out through the sultanic administration, greatly influenced the lives of ordinary Egyptians. Nineteenth-century Egyptian history is also a history of localized imperial legal codes, Turkish administrative orders, Egyptian participation in imperial wars, tribute to the central treasury, imperial censorship, and Egypt's subjection to a Sunni caliphate that belonged to the House of Osman. It is a history of networks: close commercial ties with the Hijaz and the Greater Syrian and the Balkan provinces; the intellectual networks of the Arabic-speaking Ottoman urban centers. It is a history of African conquests (Sudan and Ethiopia) in the name of the sultan and of gaining the right to contract foreign loans. In sum, it is the history of making the khedivate.

This book argues that it is not a coincidence that the idea of the homeland develops forcefully as a political argument in Arabic in the new

[7] EI2, "Eyalet" (Halil İnalcik).
[8] Fahmy, *Mehmed Ali*, 74.
[9] Toledano, *State and Society*, 3.

regime from the 1860s. The khedivate and political patriotism in Egypt were connected.

Patriotism as a Historiographical Problem

Positing Arab patriotism as both an imperial phenomenon and the particular ideology of the Egyptian khedivate requires critical engagement with two historical traditions. The first is the history of the Egyptian nation-state. The writing of this history began in the nineteenth century with the khedivial government itself, which sought to present itself as a sovereign nation-state well before this was a political reality. The second historical tradition concerns the development of Arab nationalism or "Arabism."

Writing about the khedivate is a delicate exercise. Until 1952, the prevailing narrative was a glorified royalist history in which the rulers of the khedivate were "daring modernizers" responsible for ushering in an age of reform and "independence."[10] The pendulum has since swung fiercely in the opposite direction. After the 1952 military coup d'état, the agenda of the historian ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Rāfiʿī became the official state doctrine. Al-Rāfiʿī divided history into a "political history" (the khedives, the Ottomans, and the British) and a "national history" (the nation).[11] Following him, Egyptian and non-Egyptian historians have generally preserved the divide between politics and nation.[12] To the best of my knowledge, no attempt has been made to understand the khedivate as a theoretical problem in historical scholarship.[13]

The history of the period of the British occupation has typically been written from the standpoint of imperial and colonial history, as if Egypt was suddenly out of the Ottoman reach.[14] Only James Jankowski made an analytical distinction between religious (Ottomanism), territorial, and

[10] Di Capua, *Gatekeepers*, 38–43; 91–140.

[11] Al-Rāfiʿī, *Muṣṭafā Kāmil*, 320.

[12] Mohammed Sabry (French thesis 1924; Arabic translation 2006), ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Rāfiʿī's interwar Arabic works, Jamal Mohamed Ahmed (1960 in English), Nadav Safran (1961 in English), Luwīs ʿAwaḍ (1969 in Arabic), Anouar Abdel Malek (1969 in French, 1983 in Arabic), Charles Wendell (1972 in English), Israel Gershoni-James Jankowski (1987 in English), Gershoni (1992 in English); Ziad Fahmy (2011 in English). There is a branch of Marxist history substituting the "nation" with the "people": Sālim, *Al-Quwa al-Ijtimāʿiyya*; Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution*; and a Foucauldian history starting with Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt;* Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men.*

[13] Recent publications about the history of the offence against the ruler are promising. ʿAshmāwī, *Al-ʿAyb fī al-Dhāt al-Malikiyya*; Rizq, *Al-ʿAyb fī Dhāt Afandīnā.*

[14] The two canonical works are Berque, *Egypt*; Tignor, *Modernization.*

ethnic/linguistic nationalisms in this period.[15] Recent authors have investigated the nature of British rule and the way the occupation influenced political, social, and gender identities and practices, including nationalism.[16] Few study the continued Ottoman networks of occupied Egypt.[17]

In contrast, building upon the work of historians Ehud Toledano and Khaled Fahmy, this book situates the history of nineteenth-century Egypt within the Ottoman world until the 1890s.[18] The British occupation does not represent a break in this regard; as we shall see, the Ottoman context continued to inform patriotism in Egypt during the occupation.[19]

The other historiographical axis, associated primarily with the theorist Sāṭiʿ al-Ḥuṣrī (1880–1967), articulates a distinction between territorial nationalism (*waṭaniyya*) and pan-Arab nationalism (*qawmiyya*).[20] This distinction becomes manifest in the twentieth century in the contrast between the state nationalisms of new countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria on the one hand, and the vision of all Arabs united in a giant state on the other. The distinction continues to resonate in Arabic scholarship, although we are in a post-*qawmiyya* age today.[21]

Numerous valuable attempts have been made to connect nineteenth-century discourses to the twentieth-century pan-Arab idea (*qawmiyya*).[22] The scholarly consensus now is that the idea of an independent, united Arab polity became popular among intellectuals and army officers, especially Greater Syrians and Iraqis, only after 1908 during the Second Constitutional Period in the Ottoman Empire.[23]

However, we lack the conceptual tools to interpret the dominant ideas in Arabic *before* 1908. These ideas are typically understood as only the "origins," "prehistory," and "early stirrings" of either nation-state nationalism or pan-Arabism. Rashid Khalidi argues that this early Arabism is not identical with the pan-Arab idea (the giant Arab state) but does not explain its nature.[24] Youssef M. Choueiri uses the term "cultural Arabism" to describe nineteenth-century ideas but does not provide a clear explanation of their

[15] Jankowski, "Ottomanism and Arabism."

[16] Russell, *Creating the New Egyptian Woman*; Baron, *Egypt as a Woman*; Jacob, *Working Out Egypt*; Barak, *On Time*.

[17] Fahmī, *Al-ʿAlāqāt al-Miṣriyya*.

[18] Toledano, *State and Society*; Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*. A useful publication is Ihsanoğlu, *The Turks in Egypt*, without theoretical claims.

[19] Toledano, "Forgetting Egypt's Ottoman Past."

[20] Choueiri, *Arab Nationalism*, 112–116; Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism*, 85.

[21] Ḥijāzī, *Al-Waṭaniyya al-Miṣriyya*, 11–12.

[22] Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, ch. 4; Duri, *The Historical Formation*.

[23] Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism*; Tauber, *The Emergence*; Khalidi et al., eds., *The Origins*; Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*; Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism*, 14–27.

[24] Khalidi, "Arab Nationalism," 1365.

function and their relationship to what he terms "political Arabism" in the twentieth century.[25] He calls for the restoration of the "Ottoman option" in historiography, by which he means the understanding of Ottomanism among Arabs "as a response to European penetration."[26] Aziz Al-Azmeh suggests there is no contradiction in theorizing a "civic Ottoman patriotism, combined with an Arab linguistic and local patriotism," although he provides clues to such a theorization only in passing.[27]

Bringing the empire and culture back into the study of national development significantly alters our understanding of the Arab historical trajectory in two regards. First, it shows the local structure of political power and the relationship between local Arabic-speaking and imperial elites within the Ottoman system. Second, unlike the dominant theory of tracing Arabism to modernist Muslim thought (the usual chain is Muḥammad ʿAbduh, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī, Rashīd Riḍā) and to some Christian intellectuals, I argue that Arabness had an earlier, noncolonial Ottoman mode. In this mode, revivalism and invented traditions were deployed to negotiate compromises within the various Ottoman subsystems. I use the term "Arab patriotism" to describe this complex mode of politics in the Egyptian province.

Patriotism as Theoretical Problem

The theoretical problem of Arab patriotism in the Ottoman Empire lies in recognizing the emergence of imagined national communities in an empire that was, simultaneously, a mosaic of religious collectivities and a Sunni caliphate. Put another way, the problem is how to account, theoretically, for local patriotic ideas that were not premised on a fundamental rejection of empire.

Local Patriotisms and Imperial Networks

One has to leave behind the received definitions of nationalism to understand how imperial networks can contribute to local patriotic ideas and how a provincial governing family could insert itself among these ideas.

Ehud Toledano suggests two simultaneous strategies of the "power elite" in the Ottoman Empire after the seventeenth century: localization and Ottomanization. Turkic military-administrative elites became culturally "local" in provinces, while at the same time local notable families

[25] Choueiri, *Arab Nationalism*, 65–70.
[26] Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography*, 205.
[27] Al-Azmeh, "Nationalism and the Arabs," 73.

started to learn Ottoman Turkish and participate in imperial governance. The elaborate balance of these two processes slowed down the disintegration of the empire and, according to Toledano, explains that separatism was not welcomed in the Arab provinces.[28]

Recently, Alexei Miller and Stefan Berger have argued that "nations emerged in empires" partly as the consequence of "the nation-building project which was conceived and implemented in the imperial core" but which never aimed at a complete homogenization of citizens.[29] In the Ottoman Empire, indeed, there was a central Ottoman ideology manufactured largely in the imperial core. This model accounts for the centralized production of imperial nations and accommodates the existence of plural patriotisms while giving more analytical attention to the former than to the latter.

My suggestion is that the various patriotisms in the Arab provinces were the nineteenth-century forms of the Ottomanization/localization strategy. There was an interaction between centrally produced imperial and local patriotisms. The "local-Ottoman," typically Muslim, elite did embrace patriotism and developed their own local versions. These provincial patriotisms did not aim at the external sovereignty of a people but at the acknowledgement of the localized representation of (Ottoman) power as a form of internal sovereignty. The various provincial elites designed various degrees of this acknowledgment.

These local discursive patriotisms were based on imperial networks. I use "network" here to refer to commercial, religious, and linguistic connections, as well as shared intraimperial political interests. I identify at least four urban hubs: Cairo, Beirut, Tunis, and Damascus, each of which came to stand for different aims and political agendas.[30] Beyond the Arab provinces, Istanbul was the main center of translating Ottoman imperial patriotism into Arabic. Imperial framing means the translation of ideas from the central language and the experience of this language in everyday life, such as in the army and in school. It also works in the other direction—that is, the central language reacts to and absorbs provincial and global discourses. The Ottoman case is interesting since it used Arabic words (*waṭan* as pronounced in Turkish *vatan*) with Turkish and Persian grammar, thus "translation" to Arabic did not occur between languages but between mental maps which shared the same words. The Ottoman Arab urban network was also part of a larger Mediterranean and global networks, and transmitted other ideologies later.[31]

[28] Toledano, "The Emergence of Ottoman-Local Elites," 155–156.
[29] Berger and Miller, eds., *Nationalizing Empires*, 4.
[30] Hourani was close to such a formulation in *Arabic Thought*, ch. 4.
[31] Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean*, 94–134.

Mediating the empire is the work of patriotism. Mediation occurs in order to preserve the precarious position of elite individuals between the center and the province and to avoid violence. As we shall see, patriotism within Egypt entailed a special pact between elites and the governor. The khedives also supported the Ottoman Arabic networks as part of their larger imperial game. Thus not only the imperial core but elite provincial interests—and the factual power of these local elites—contributed to the development of empire-compatible patriotic ideas in Arabic.

Nation-ness and Islam: Non-Colonial Time?

Since the Ottomans increasingly represented the empire as the Sunni caliphate in the nineteenth century, one has to account for the co-existence of patriotic ideas and Muslim loyalty.[32] Why was there no major clash between these collective principles—nation-ness and revelation—until the twentieth century? This question can be illuminated by the problem of time.

Benedict Anderson explains the origins of nationalism through the loss of a religion-based politics and the loss of the dynastic realm in eighteenth-century Europe. Emptied, measurable, clock-time became filled with the idea of the nation, "a cultural artifact," as Anderson describes it, and this singular form of the imagined community was used in other territories as well.[33] On Barak brings an original counter-argument. He shows that anticolonial nationalism in British-occupied Egypt was "predicated on rejecting and subverting" the supposedly universal empty, homogenous time by employing "counter-tempos."[34] Thus he points out that Anderson's model worked exactly the opposite way in colonial Egypt: nationalism resisted empty time.

While these applications of Walter Benjamin's theory about time on nationalism are important, I argue that there was patriotism before (anticolonial) nationalism in the Ottoman Empire and specifically in its Egyptian province. This patriotism relied on a particularly complex structure of revelation-based and nation-based practices.

Cracks in the supernatural architecture of the temporal world could occur without major eruptions because the worldly power was still a Muslim one. Avner Wishnitzer argues that Ottoman temporal culture became a domain of competing social roles and that "ruptures" occurred in the Muslim time-divine order continuum in the nineteenth century.[35]

[32] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, 17.
[33] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 26.
[34] Barak, *On Time*, 83.
[35] Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks, Alla Turca*, 8.

Nation-ness and revelation-based practices co-existed because Muslim governments approved the patriotic ideas and older social practices could transmute into new ones. There was an indigenous, modernizing power structure in which nation-ness co-mingled with revelation-based practices in the context of informal European imperialism and gunboat diplomacy. The assumption of this book is that this situation is different from direct European colonialism. Egypt is not India.

Patriotism in Arabic

There is also a conceptual problem of translation from Arabic sources. *Waṭaniyya* in the nineteenth century has rarely been translated as "patriotism."[36] Bernard Lewis has repeatedly suggested that patriotism, understood in English as the "calm loyalty of free men to the country of their birth," had less appeal to Arabs than nationalism.[37] Since the interwar years *waṭaniyya* and *qawmiyya* have often been interchangeable words in spoken Arabic; Adeed Dawisha prefers to translate *waṭaniyya* in twentieth-century Egypt as "state nationalism."[38] Eliezer Tauber warns that the distinction between nationalism and patriotism is entirely European and cannot be applied to Arabic thought before the First World War; yet he neither defines these concepts nor proposes a solution.[39] The distinction, in casual historical parlance, is indeed based on (western) European examples (and has a specific resonance in English).

The classical Arabic use of the "homeland" (*waṭan*) was a subjective literary topos of loss, grief, and desire whose "affective structure," as Yaseen Noorani shows, was transformed in the nineteenth century into a political summons to solidarity.[40] In this book, we shall follow some of the main features of this transformation. A number of neologisms and phrases appeared to accompany this change such as "patriot" (*waṭanī*), "the sons of the homeland" (*abnāʾ al-waṭan*), or "patriotic service" (*khidma waṭaniyya*). The very same Arabic words were often used in Ottoman Turkish, too. Like the German concept of *Heimat*,[41] the exact territorial meaning of homeland remained fluid in late Ottoman Arabic texts. Its reference point was clearest in Egypt where the Nile Valley was a well-defined unit and where the governors attempted to attach themselves to the homeland. "Border" was not yet a concept connected to the

[36] One of the rare examples: Duri, *The Historical Formation*, 155–161, in Lawrence Conrad's translation.

[37] Lewis, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 71–98.

[38] Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism*, 98, 101.

[39] Tauber, *The Emergence*, 245.

[40] Noorani, "Estrangement," 25.

[41] Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials*; Blickle, *Heimat*.

identification between individual and territory. Earlier than the idea of freedom, the idea of homeland in Arabic became politicized by the mid-nineteenth century.[42]

As we shall see, Arabness was an idea only belatedly connected to the mental category of *waṭan* in khedivial Egypt. The idea of Arabness as a moral principle and linguistic quality served as a common ground between elites. The pages that follow will reveal that intellectuals and powerful figures in late Ottoman Egypt attempted to use patriotism, as in Europe and the United States, for various political ends.

Patriotism as a Methodological Problem

How can one access an ideology of this sort, which traveled between sites and mediated competing scales of belonging and rule? And how can we access its experience? For, patriotism was a communal experience as well as an ideology. In tracing the life of ideas, one cannot limit oneself to searching libraries for printed materials. Ernest C. Dawn suggests that the ideological origins of pan-Arabism are to be found in a limited number of texts; others challenge this view.[43] This book dissects the very making of such texts in a historical anthropology and social history based on the extensive use of archival and nonarchival sources.

Memory: The Making of Modern Muslim Aesthetics

The use of aesthetics as a technique of power was characteristic of Europe from Louis XIV to Nazi Germany. But its use was not limited to Europe. The makers of patriotism in Egypt were highly educated Muslim intellectuals who made an effort to translate the power of the khedives. They were keenly aware of the difficulty of using the patriotic idea in a caliphate. They turned to Muslim memory (and, by this gesture, invented it in a novel form) to experiment with new textual and visual aesthetic forms and to explore potential resources for patriotic identification. The textual domain contained the genres of Arab-Islamic-Ottoman poetry and history-writing. Medieval Muslim political discourse used poetry, history, tales, proverbs, and theological treatises in order to address matters of justice and the relationship between ruler and ruled.[44] The petition, as

[42] Abu-'Uksa, *Freedom in the Arab World*, 13.

[43] Al-Azmeh, "Nationalism and the Arabs"; Dawn, "From Ottomanism to Arabism," 397; Khalidi, "Ottomanism and Arabism," in his *Origins of Arab Nationalism*; Watenpaugh, *Being Modern*, 7.

[44] Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship*, 43, 73, 79.

a specific political-aesthetic genre characterized by flowery praise of the ruler, was a legitimate means of political communication in the Ottoman domains. Praise could manipulate official discourse.[45] This repertory of political aesthetics continued into the nineteenth century.

Medieval texts, their themes, and vocabulary, and their very appearance were creatively reused and reinvented in the emerging *printed* public sphere (books and journals).[46] Through this aestheticization of philology was finally Arabness articulated in public texts. Print became a carefully controlled aesthetic and material feature of the Ottoman public sphere, accompanied by new flags, rituals, clothing, eating habits, medical practices, and new laws.[47] Patriotic ideas arrived with and through this transformation of the sensorium of the life-world. The discursive side of this transformation was characterized by dialectical continuity with older Muslim grammars of power. The making of modern Muslim memory through print aesthetics entailed that history should become the core narrative shape of patriotism.

Mikhail Bakhtin says that "time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh" in describing the way literary chronotopos—the time-space connection—works in the novel.[48] The embodiment of time is human flesh on stage. It was in the theater that ancient Arabia, Abbasid Baghdad, and Muslim Andalusia were presented in Arabic first—not as relics of the past, but as means for thinking about the problems of the present. These enlivened *chronotopoi* on stage became standardized in modern Arabic literature.[49] Historicized figures on stage helped the identification with new narratives of the present. Various techniques of surveillance secured the representation of these themes in a manner acceptable to the regime and the ruling groups. Thus historicized Muslim themes were experienced in various locations without being perceived as subversive of the established order.

The architects of patriotism constructed learned Arabic (*al-lugha al-ʿarabiyya al-fuṣḥā*) as a language to achieve a compromise and, in the Egyptian province, to talk to the khedive. They believed that such a language was the key to progress and Arab modernity. This was a language that carried history through the reuse of medieval texts. Most of the works I discuss in the pages that follow are now forgotten. They have been labeled as "neoclassicist literature" or anachronistically described as expressions of a "moral economy" against the colonial power.[50] In making

[45] Chalcraft, "Engaging the State," 304–305.

[46] Al-Bagdadi, *Vorgestellte Öffentlichkeit*; Schwartz, "Meaningful Mediums."

[47] Two crucial books would be soon published by Khaled Fahmy on medicine, and Omar Cheta on merchant law in 1860s Egypt.

[48] Bakhtin, "Forms of Time," 84.

[49] Granara, "Nostalgia, Arab Nationalism."

[50] Khouri, *Poetry and the Making*, 5–36; Noorani, *Culture and Hegemony*, ch. 2.

this argument, I will relegate some well-known nineteenth-century personages to the sideline while placing other, previously marginal figures in positions of prominence.

Audience and Nation

Patriotism is a communal experience—something that is learned in the company of others—as well as an ideology. There is a bidirectional flow between patriotic ideology and practice. Anderson's coinage "unisonality" speaks to this phenomenon. It refers to a sensorial technique of nation-ness in, for example, the experience of collective singing together.[51] I will show that what is regarded today as early patriotic Arabic poetry was in fact composed and set to music for soldiers to sing together. As in Persia, aural patriotism was inserted into the sensorium of nineteenth-century Egypt. [52]

Urbanism transformed the public grammar of the body. There is a relationship between the material transformation of cities, new forms of memory, being public, and new modes of collective experience. Spaces and technologies transformed the value of Arabic language, too. These novelties, by the very widening of what is "public," increased the potential of supervision.

Singing and listening are bodily experiences. The techniques of patriotism included the experience of *physically* being part of an audience. The "citizen audience" was a nineteenth-century global phenomenon.[53] This was made possible by new spaces where individuals could become an audience, for a moment becoming a microcosm of the imagined sons and daughters of the homeland. Theater buildings, café chantants, and bars supplied these spaces and stages. Not all of these were novel. Coffeehouses and public gardens were simultaneously old Islamic and new European spaces of community. In these old-new locations, patriotism became a physical, embodied experience for an audience that was both a target for the entertainment business and a target for ideological inculcation.[54] While in Alexandria and the main countryside cities private stages popped up, in Cairo the government created a number of playhouses for elite use, to which, later, less privileged groups also petitioned for access. This book also unearths the history of the Khedivial Opera House with an eye to how khedives, Arab impresarios, and Ottoman politicians and their audiences used it as a representative public space.

[51] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 145.
[52] Chehabi, "From Revolutionary Taṣnīf."
[53] Butsch, *The Citizen Audience*, 26.
[54] Abercrombie and Longhurst, *Audiences*, 37.

Nineteenth-century Arabic theater was a creative innovation that combined old-new Arabic music, poetry, and European acting techniques. Until the 1880s, dominantly Christian Arab impresarios organized troupes while Muslim and Jewish playwrights were active from early on. Similar to the Calcutta musical theater,[55] Arabic music and, specifically, Egyptian singers were crucial in accompanying prose acting on stage.[56] There is a connection between music and collective identity, sound and memory, as Merih Erol shows on the music practices of Orthodox Greeks in late Ottoman Istanbul.[57] From the very beginning of modern Arabic theater in the 1840s, as Ilham Khuri-Makdisi has argued, the bringing of theatrical performers and audiences together had the potential of turning the theater into "a potentially subversive institution."[58] In my interpretation, however, Arabic musical theater was primarily a semibourgeois genre designed to *stabilize* society, even as the genre enabled public discussion of issues relating to justice and solidarity. In khedivial Egypt, this mimetic-acoustic art joined older methods of talking to the sovereign (for instance, Arabic poetry) and, through this talk, established a temporal collectivity. European technologies of the public space and sphere were immediately instrumentalized by intellectuals in an attempt to influence the khedivial regime.

Overview of the Book

Arab Patriotism is composed of three sections. Part I, "The Making of the Khedivate," tackles the paradox of power in the Ottoman Egyptian province. This section focuses on the way the local elites needed to come to terms with the position of Mehmed Ali as a hereditary Ottoman governor and understand this rank in the language of Muslim politics. We shall see how the patriotic idea served a means to negotiate with his successors and for military indoctrination during the Crimean war (1853–1856). We then turn to the Ottoman image of his grandson, Ismail and Ismail's mother Hoşyar (d. 1886) who designed a fundamental, double *compromise* with the rural elites and the Ottoman center in the form of the khedivate. However, Ismail decided that the Ottoman face of Egypt had to be hidden. New public spaces were erected such as the Khedivial Opera House. It was here that Giuseppe Verdi's opera *Aida* premiered in 1871. Far from a simple manifestation of European cultural imperialism,

[55] Chatterjee, *The Black Hole of Empire*, 232.
[56] Sadgrove, "Early Arabic Musical Theatre."
[57] Erol, *Greek Orthodox Music,* 12–13.
[58] Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean*, 72–75.

the premiere symbolized the khedivial instrumentalization of European culture through a new political aesthetics.

Part II, "A Garden With Mellow Fruits of Refinement," deals with the question: what is the khedivate? Or, whose is the khedivate? The "gentle revolution," as I call the period between the late 1860s and the mid-1870s, created Arabness as a quality of public patriotism through adjusting language to space. Muslim intellectuals brought *fuṣḥā* Arabic and moral images of being an Arab as a common platform between Ottomans and locals in the khedivate. This civic ideology of Muslim power was largely concerned with education and reform as connected to khedivial power, through a revivalist historicized discourse. As in Russia, the learned came to regard theater as an instrument of public education and refinement, not unlike the schools. But foreign control over Egyptian finances brought unintended consequences. The army and social groups revolted in 1882 in the name of the sultan, and Ismail's son Tevfik (r. 1879–1892) could retain his position only with British help.

Part III, "The Reinvention of the Khedivate," is about the khedivial regime after the British occupation. While Ottomanism became "essentially an instrumentality to the realization of Egypt-centered goals,"[59] this final section describes how patriotism functioned in the restoration, and, I argue, *reinvention* of khedivial power after 1882. After the survey of the relationship between law and public space through the examples of theaters in Egypt, the book concludes between the mosque and the opera. The last chapter reveals the formation of the mixed patriotic-colonial elite through a historical sociology of public codes of elite honor. We discover how the young khedive, Abbas Hilmi II (r. 1892–1914) functioned as a pole of imagined Ottoman-Egyptian sovereignty against the British in the 1890s in the eyes of the young politician, later national icon, Muṣṭafā Kāmil (1874–1908). The story ends before his break with the ruler, as patriotism in late Ottoman Egypt under occupation sang its swan song. It soon gave way to a different ideology: mass Egyptian nationalism struggling for independence against the British.

[59] Jankowski, "Ottomanism and Arabism," 239.

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