

Licentious Topographies: Space and the Traumas of Colonial Subjectivity in Modern
Egypt

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Abstract

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This dissertation explores the history of the counterrevolutionary tradition that characterizes political dissidents as *licentious* and *failed* subjects. From a contemporary vantage point shaped by the predominance of this tradition in post 2011 Egyptian counterrevolutionary propaganda, this study provides a genealogy of this tradition that reveals its anchoring in Western philosophical-ideological interventions that trace themselves back to the ancient Greeks, in Western counterrevolutionary rhetoric that harks back to the French Revolution and is consolidated in the attacks on the Paris Commune, and in their deployment in colonial, anti-colonial, and postcolonial settings. Moving across the Egyptian, European, and colonial histories of these ideological and political traditions, this study charts various licentious topographies (the crowd, the political organization, the Satanist cult, the Orient) in which bad subjects are ensconced in accordance with the dominant ideologies of the State since the 19th century, and examines the figures, motifs, and topoi which constitute these bad subjects. In providing a history of the bad subject, the dissertation intervenes in the discussions surrounding subjectivity by positing that in addition to *identifying with* certain notions, ideals, and ideal images, proper subjectivity is also constituted through *identifying against* the bad egos and bad imagoes that constitute the bad subject. Paying special attention to the gendering and especially the racializing of the latter, the study exposes the subjective trauma effected by the colonial imposition of this ideological mode of identification.

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Acknowledgments

As I was heading from Cairo to New York to defend this dissertation, and after a seven-year residency in New York City, I was stopped by Homeland Security, questioned at length, and sent back to Egypt. Eventually, I was forced to defend this dissertation online. As I acknowledge everyone who made this manuscript and its defense possible, there is no escape acknowledging the kind of world we live in; a world wherein the realities of empire draw us to the imperial metropole (through the concentration of knowledge production in Western, especially North American, centres in my case) and yet put obstacles in the way of this imperial centripeting, or otherwise tokenize us, the centripetal subjects of the empire, as signs of how tolerant and welcoming the empire has been – a pretense Trumpism has started doing away with. As we acknowledge our lingering yet fleeting privilege as the subjects of the waning centripetal forces of empire, it is important to acknowledge those who never enjoyed this privilege; all the victims of the empire, whether in the Americas or all around the globe; all those who have been forcibly removed, dispossessed, expropriated, or exterminated; against whose plight ours seems like a privilege. Let us acknowledge the native land and the slave labor that were expropriated to create Columbia University (a settler entity which continues to dispossess the residents of Harlem), and by extension acknowledge our attachment to a settler society, even as some of us try our best not to be settlers. Let us then try not to be settlers by acknowledging the Lenape people on whose lands we stayed, and cherish the few moments of recognition in which we (as students and scholars, as residents of Manhattan, as members of the Palestine solidarity movement) stood in solidarity with

Native American peoples and their struggles. It is through these moments that I can claim any legitimacy concerning my sojourn in New York.

In a similar vein, as we acknowledge places, peoples, and struggles, let us acknowledge Tahrir Square and the events of 2011 that inspired this manuscript. I am wary of narratives that overglamorize or overromanticize the events of 2011, partly because these accounts do the struggle of the Egyptian people disservice by masking critique and glorifying defeat; and yet it is impossible not to stand in awe and admiration in front of the 18 days that put a halt to the rule of former Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and paralyzed the Egyptian State; even if this admiration is burdened with the knowledge that the movement was duped and defeated on its 19th day. It is impossible to think of the conception of this dissertation without remembering the endless hours we, Egyptians in the diaspora, spent compulsively poring over news, YouTube clips, satires, comedy shows, propaganda footage, and other source material pertaining to the uprising and its aftermath (sometimes to the detriment of our research, other times inspiring research projects, including this one). It was at one of these trances that I noticed the licentious motif in counterrevolutionary representations of the 2011 uprising, which then came to shape this dissertation project.

Of course musings, obsessions, trances, online rabbit holes, and political concernment do not a doctoral dissertation make. I would not have been able to transform any of this into research had it not been for the wonderful professors, friends, and interlocutors I was surrounded with. My largest debt, as far as my academic career and my writing go, is without doubt to my professor, mentor, ally, friend, and dissertation supervisor Joseph Massad. Intellectually, there are no words that could give Massad his due credit (except perhaps if I punctuate every sentence of

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Introduction

Conception

In Fall 2010, still uncertain of what ‘case study’ I was going to pursue, I started charting a doctoral research project on the State and subjectivity; I was planning to investigate the parallels between the late 19th century concept of the self—consolidated/explicated/critiqued by the Freudian psychoanalytic understanding of the psyche, and the modern nation state (through identifying the leader with the ego-ideal as per Freud’s *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, which has been central for modern theories of subjectivity from Louis Althusser’s “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus” to Ernesto Laclau’s *On Populist Reason*), and the ways whereby colonialism has universalized and perpetuated this self-state ensemble. Although some of these questions were carried over to this dissertation, I am not sure if a project of that sort would have progressed in any direction. Soon enough, the Egyptian uprising of 2011 broke out, leaving its permanent mark on the intellectual path and research questions of my graduate student cohort; there is not, perhaps, a single Egyptian student of the Humanities who did not at least toy with the idea of working on ‘the revolution’. Instead, I decided to work on the counterrevolution.

A curious feature of the counterrevolutionary discourse during and after the 18-day sit-in that ousted Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak (January-February 2011) was the characterization of Tahrir Square – or in broader and more abstract terms the sit-ins, the protests, the ‘revolution’— as a licentious space: a space of bad hygiene, immoral behavior, intoxication, and illicit (almost public) sex. These claims were famously and explicitly made by a second rate (though not unpopular) Egyptian comedic actor who stated on a sports television channel that, instead of the respectable space the Tahrir sit-in *should* have been, it had become,

under conditions of revolutionary chaos, a hotbed for immoral behavior ranging from dance to intoxication to “full-fledged sexual relations.”¹ Claims of the sort placed questions of moral behavior (with emphasis on intoxication and sex) at the centre of public political discourse, to the effect of eclipsing political and social questions. A trend of making similar claims was observable throughout the aftermath of the 2011 uprising, not only by pro-regime figures but also by members of the opposition. Various opposition factions used this discourse against one another, culminating in a war of sexual libel that unfolded in 2013 between the Muslim Brothers (then nominally in power through the elected president Muhammad Mursi, and camping in Rabi‘ah al-‘Adawiyyah Square to thwart an impending coup d’état) and the ‘secular’ opposition (camping in Tahrir Square to protest the rule of Muhammad Mursi and, wittingly or/and unwittingly, lending support to the impending coup). As I set out to explore the history behind such claims, I came upon a running theme in various forms of *media* not only in Egypt but also in Europe and the United States, that spanned the last century and a half, from the Paris Commune (1871) to Occupy Wall Street (2011), of maligning spaces of protest and other spaces that are imagined to evade the gaze and/or control of the state as spaces of license and degeneration. Such representations posited members of the crowds that inhabited and inhabit these spaces as bad, failed, and licentious subjects. My study of subjectivity proceeds through providing a history of these representations.

The counterrevolutionary depiction of the ‘revolutionary space’ as a space of failures, of the failure of state power to penetrate the social sphere, or conversely the failure of the ‘revolutionaries’ to submit to the power of the state, their failure to

¹ “Tal‘at Zakariyya: fi Maydan al-Tahrir Yujad ‘Ilaqat Jinsiyyah,” YouTube Video, 5:23, posted by

observe proper behavior and to inhabit proper subjectivity, ultimately the failure of subjectivation (both in terms of subjection to state power, and of becoming a proper subject through this subjection), resonated with the theoretical questions of State and subjectivity which I was initially interested in exploring. Subjectivity can be an elusive topic of study: how can one discern what constitutes a proper subject, how the State expects its proper subjects to act, and the kinds of spaces populated by proper subjects and/or engendering good subjectivity? When looking at subjectivity in moments of crisis, however, in moments when State officials and propagandists are anxious about the reach of State power, its ability to subject its citizens, and the kind of activity these bad/failed subjects engage in, one can begin to discern, by contrast, what good subjectivity entails, and in what kinds of spaces these good subjects live/are produced. In other words, this study looks at what is to be repressed, suppressed, abnegated, produced as licentious, or otherwise marked as bad or other, for the proper subject to emerge.

My departure from my earlier incomplete *theoretical musings* to my Egyptian case-study notwithstanding, the tension between the attempt to provide a global (and inadvertently and inevitably Eurocentric) history of the State and the subject, and the attempt to provide a Middle Eastern *case study*, persists through this project. I ask of my readers to bear the tension with me: it is not possible to provide a history of subjectivity in a postcolonial context in isolation from the history of the colonizer's forms of power and subjectivity – and vice versa. As I am examining these questions in the context of European colonialism and neocolonialism, the question of Europe's self-constitution through its colonial ventures and of the constitution of whiteness through racialization of all peoples around the globe becomes central. Two recurrent themes emerge in this regard: the suppression of the

collective for the individual subject to emerge (hence the centrality of the crowd to my analysis) and the repression and abnegation of various versions of the indigenous self for the modern subject modeled on the imago of Western colonial modernity, to emerge (perhaps rendering this study a footnote to the work of Frantz Fanon, but so is all postcolonial theory). These two themes are furthermore imbricated: I will show in Chapters 2 and 3 how individuality is the exclusive trait of whiteness, indeed that whiteness as such is imagined to be constituted through individuation, and how colonialism imagined the natives of the colony to live in a pre-individual collective state of being. Repressing the collective and repressing non-whites, therefore, are two integral parts of the same process of colonial subjectivation and individuation. This twofold repression is at the base of subjectivation both in the colony/postcolony (e.g. Egypt) and in the Western metropole, as I will show throughout this study (especially in Chapter 3).

A Reverse Study of Subjectivity

This is a study of subjectivity in reverse. A forward study of subjectivity would look at the kinds of model subjects that emerge in State and public discourse, would investigate the *ideal images/imagoes* and *ideal egos* (if the study wishes to take a psychoanalytic or Althusserian turn) through which good subjects identify/are interpellated, the kinds of spaces, social institutions, or *ideological state apparatuses*, that foster, engender, and produce good subjects, and the kind of good behavior which is the characteristic of every good subject. Instead, I study subjectivity through its failures, its shortcomings, the moments theories of subjectivity seem not to apply, interpellation in a fix, and subjectivity in crisis. (The word *seem* is operative here as

the success or failure of state interpellation is not at stake as much as the perception and representation thereof is concerned; as this is not an ethnography, I am not going to interview or observe subjects in real life to discern the extent to which they were successfully or *failurefully* interpellated). Instead of looking at model subjects, ideal egos, and ideal images/imagoes through which proper subjects are constituted, I look at bad subjects, subjects that fail to become proper subjects, or fail to uphold proper behavior. Instead of looking at proper spaces that could double as ideological state apparatuses, I look at spaces that escape and defy, or are imagined to escape and defy, the State's power to surveill and regiment, spaces that harbor all kinds of licentious behavior and host and further foster all kinds of bad, failed, and licentious subjects. It is only in the final chapter that I turn my attention to the proper spaces and to the proper subjects they produce.

Spaces and Subjects

This dissertation approaches subjectivity via space: it studies bad subjects via licentious spaces (Chapters 1-4) and contrasts them to good subjects via proper spaces (Chapter 5). While the term *proper spaces*, in the context of this study, can be easily replaced by *ideological state apparatuses* (in Chapter 5 I study the family, an ideological state apparatus *par excellence*, and the army, a repressive state apparatus which is studied here in its ideological capacity, as models of *proper spaces*), licentious spaces are the spaces that fail to produce proper state subjects (thus producing bad, failed, and licentious subjects), or conversely they are the spaces which the State fails to appropriate and mobilize in the process of producing and interpellating proper subjects (something the original Althusserian framework did not account for). This study moves from the nature of these spaces (through a diachronic

study of 19th, 20th, and 21st century representations), to the ways in which they are imagined and conceived (their *topoi*, how they are imagined to escape the state gaze, thus mixing subversive political activities with moral license) to how they are defined/cast-out as licentious as part of the process by which the modern State defines, organizes, surveys/surveills, and controls space.

Modern states, as we learn from Timothy Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt*, are predicated on a modernist epistemology, or *metaphysics*, which defines and organizes space, as part of its larger *weltanschauung* that only perceives the world as an exhibition which is or *should* be organized according to a *plan*.² Licentious spaces, in my conception, are spaces that stand in opposition to or defy this epistemic and metaphysical organization and regimentation (hence the importance of the crowd as a quintessential licentious space, opposed to the state-defined and regimented spaces of work, of public/state-run and private institutions, of the domestic, etc.). This organization and definition of space, in addition to being modern, is *essentially colonial*, as Mitchell shows throughout *Colonising Egypt*,³ thus revealing how the Western colonization of Egypt was integral to the state-building project. Indeed, my account will strive to reveal the colonial nature of the process of defining space and organizing it into that which is proper and licentious, from the adoption of Western conceptions through which the licentious space is imagined and constructed (Chapters 1 and 2), to how colonialism played a vital role, nay shaped, the way whereby the

² Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

³ Mitchell summarizes this argument at the outset of the preface (of the paperback edition) noting that: "forms of power based on re-ordering of space and the surveillance and control of its occupants were by nature colonising in method," x, and that "[t]he colonising process was to introduce the kind of order now found lacking—the effect of structure that was to provide not only a new disciplinary power but also the novel ontology of representation," xv. I will revisit Mitchell's conception of this colonial order of representation towards the end of Chapter 2.

State organized and defined space (Chapters 3-5). Proper spaces are themselves products, one way or another, of the colonial process (not necessarily through creating colonial structures *ex nihilo*, but rather by transforming indigenous structures along colonial lines, the transformation of the family, revisited in Chapter 5, is a case in point). The reverse is also true; as the State attempts to modernize space along Western-colonial lines, the spaces that are left out of this process, i.e. spaces that remain, one way or another, unmodern, anti-modern, and/or indigenous, become cast out as licentious.

My account, however, will also pay attention to some of the attempts, made in the fields of state politics, journalism and public culture, to reverse or subvert this colonial conception/organization of space, showing how many (though not all) of them re-produce the same colonialist assumptions they seek to respond to or reverse. After examining subjectivity via space (and colonialism via space and subjectivity), the dissertation will seek to answer the following question: what is the outcome of a mode of subjectivation predicated on a colonizing process, one that redefines spaces along colonial lines, promotes colonially-created ideal images, and invites, nay forces, national subjects to identify with them, while abnegating spaces and extant versions of the self that resist this colonization? The short answer is indeed the Fanonian understanding of colonial trauma (which throughout this study I will also refer to as colonial neurosis, the Fanonian trauma, and Fanonian neurosis),⁴ namely, a split between the conception of the self and the ideal image on which subjectivity is

⁴ I will use the term *trauma* when my aim is to highlight the traumatic effect of the split in the ego between one that is indigenous and abnegated and one that is colonial and upheld (but never fully approximated). I will use the term *neurosis* when my aim is to highlight the neurotic manifestations of this trauma. Since this is not a study in psychoanalysis, I will not try to further distinguish between trauma and neurosis.

predicated, a trauma imbued with colonial violence.⁵ This is not to argue that the experience in postcolonial Egypt is the same as the experience in colonial Algeria or in Martinique. As far as the colonized are concerned, the Fanonian colonial trauma is universal but its experience is specific. One of the goals of this study, perhaps its ultimate goal, is to examine, via the study of space and subjectivity, some of the articulations and etiologies of the Fanonian colonial trauma in modern Egypt.

Licentious Spaces, Licentious Subjects

So far I have been throwing around the term ‘licentious space’ in the abstract. It is necessary, for the purpose of this introduction, to outline what I mean by licentious spaces and the subjects that inhabit them/are produced by them.

⁵ This explication of the colonial trauma runs throughout *Black Skin White Masks*, and can be read as its main argument. Here I am focusing particularly on the psychoanalytic moments in the text where Fanon uses psychoanalytic theory to explain how the imago of the white becomes the Other against which one (the non-white) is assessed and recognized or misrecognized. This appears early on in *Black Skin* when Fanon discusses the manifestations of an abandonment neurosis in a colonial/postcolonial context; see Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008), 57. Describing Jean Veneuse, the Antillean protagonist of René Maran’s novel *Un Homme Pareil Aux Autres* who in turn describes himself as “the black man they have shaped in their image,” (qtd. in p. 46) Fanon notes: “He’s a searcher. He is searching for serenity and permission in the eyes of the white man- for Jean Veneuse is ‘the Other’.” Fanon then goes on to quote Germaine Guex’s explication of how the ‘abandonment neurotic’ tries to make up for the trauma of abandonment by constantly trying to be ‘the Other.’” Although Veneuse’s experience is specific to the subjects of abandonment neurosis who were abandoned by their mothers in their childhood (something that Fanon acknowledges on p.61), I propose here to expand Fanon’s explication by positing the colonizing country (specifically France), in the mind of its colonial subject who seek assimilation rather than independence, as the abandoning mother of her colony: *she* cast herself as the loving mother of her colonies yet refused to *recognize* them as her full children and abandoned them in all sorts—and in the case of her darker colored and less assimilable subjects, she had already abandoned them by birthing them black. Indeed, Fanon describes a traumatic experience of rejection (reminiscent, I would say, of maternal abandonment) which the colonized subjects who seek assimilation go through once they realize that the colonizer with whom they were forced to identify will never accept them (see for example pp. 73- 74). The psychoanalytic explication of the colonial trauma in terms of the split of the self into an abnegated version of the self on the one side, and the Other, modeled on whiteness, which the colonized subject is forced to try to be, on the other side, resurfaces in Fanon’s chapter on “The Black Man and Psychology,” (120- 184) and “The Black Man and Recognition,” (185- 197).

As far as this study is concerned, the licentious space is the space that escapes state discipline, surveillance, and regimentation. The licentious subject is the subject inhabiting this space and is produced by/through it. The licentious subject thus escapes norms of proper behavior sanctioned by the dominant ideology and which produce the proper subject. While this may explain what these terms mean in the context of this study, it does not fully explain why I use the term *licentious*. Beyond the catchiness of the term (which I admit is one of the factors behind my choice), I chose the term licentious for its capacity to cover a number of disparate – though not unrelated— notions, which I call forth in my analysis. First, the term *licentious* refers to the state of license imagined to take place once state sanction, discipline, and surveillance are in suspension. The term licentious – in a semantic stretch I took *license* to perform—refers, for the purpose of this study, not only to the license taken by the occupants of the licentious space, but also to the license taken by the state to enact various kinds of violence –ranging from the symbolic to the physical, and from sexual violence to outright massacres, against the occupants of these spaces. To that effect, the licentious space is comparable to the camp in Giorgio Agamben’s conceptualization of the suspension of life by a mode of power that produces biological life as a political question.⁶ Indeed, in various examples throughout this study, Giorgio Agamben’s notion of the *homo sacer* as a subject consecrated to death will prove useful in conceptualizing the licentious subject and the forms of violation this subject is *subjected* to. Despite the importance of Agamben’s work in conceiving this project, a major drawback in Agamben’s concept of *homo sacer* (which prevents me from using the term throughout this study as synonymous or congruent with the

⁶ See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Danielle Heller-Roazen, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), and *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

licentious subject) is its decentring of how race and gender work in the production of a subject consecrated to death.⁷ Even if we accept with Agamben that modern biopower turns everyone into potential *hominus sacri*,⁸ the figure of Europe's racial other is essential in casting European populations for violation (e.g. the racialization of European Jews as non-European as prelude to the Holocaust, or the racialization of the French revolutionary crowd as akin to Arabs and Native Americans to justify counterrevolutionary violence as I will show in Chapter 3). More sensitive to the racialized and gendered dynamics, and more attune to my conception of the licentious subject, is the *precarious*, *violable*, and *ungrievable* in the work of Judith Butler, especially in *Precarious Life* and *Bodies that Matter* (Butler's terminology, especially concerning the *violable* and the *ungrievable* will be used in Chapter 2 when licentious representations are clearly used to suspend the value of life. In this context I will also add the term *uncountable* to describe the state of suspension/dissolution of individuality into the collective, which serve to render its subject *ungrievable* through their *uncountability*). The term *licentious*, furthermore registers and alludes to a number of theoretical interventions from which this study benefits. It brings forth the feminist dissection of the distinction, foundational to both the ancient Greek and modern epistemai, between the body as feminine and *licentious vis-à-vis* the

⁷ Here I am noting a *decentring* rather than a total absence or oblivion as Agamben makes various cursory gestures towards the gendering and the racialization of *bare life*. The gendering of power as active-masculine and of the body in the hold of this power as feminine/feminized/penetrated can be read into Agamben's association between the sovereign's power over life and death and the father as a life giver; Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 87- 88. A similar association (with more emphasis on the body as subjugated to sadomasochistic dominance and power as phallic, but less on the masculine/feminine dichotomy) appears on pp. 134- 135. Similarly, race is not completely absent from Agamben's analysis as he shows how the figure of the *muselman* played a role at the limits of bare life; 184- 187. These examples notwithstanding, the larger role racialization and gendering play in producing *homo sacer* or *bare life*, remains missing from Agamben's theorization.

⁸ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 114- 115. See also 119- 188 for how the camp becomes a universal paradigm for the potential suspension of life by the biopolitical authorities.

masculine mind that transcends the body and its licentiousness.⁹ Both the body as the realm of licentiousness and the feminization of the licentious are themes that recur in our archive and will be useful to our subsequent analysis. Along with its gendered overtone, the term licentious indexes a civilizational (culturalist and racist) discourse on the permissive, sensual, and licentious Orient (or more broadly, non-white and therefore savage geographies/topographies) as opposed to the disciplined and restrained Occident (a dichotomy that corresponds to that between the licentious feminine body and the rational masculine mind). In a memorable passage, Fanon summarized this discourse on the sexual licentiousness of the primitive and attributed it to the white man's projection of his repressed unconscious desires onto the licentious primitive (who happens to remind the white man of an imagined earlier stage in his developmental path). Fanon notes: "The civilized man retains an irrational nostalgia for the extraordinary times of sexual *licentiousness*,¹⁰ orgies, unpunished rapes, and unrepressed incest" (emphasis added).¹¹ My understanding of the licentious as a concept that operates along a civilizational grid is informed by Joseph Massad's explication, in *Desiring Arabs*, of how the question of license versus restraint came to dominate the civilizational discourse surrounding representations of Arab culture, in a manner that internalizes conservative and colonial Western (especially Victorian) biases and assumptions.¹² The licentious subject, following these conceptions, is the subject that falls through the sieves of the mesh of modernization/ideological

⁹ For a concise dissection and deconstruction of this dichotomy, see Adriana Cavarero, *Stately Bodies: Literature, Philosophy, and the Question of Gender*, trans. Robert de Lucca and Deanna Shemek, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), viii.

¹⁰ *Licence sexuelle* in the French original; Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs*, (Paris: Seuil, 1952), 133.

¹¹ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 143.

¹² See Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), esp. 15.

subjectivation; it brings together a femininity/feminization/failed masculinity and an indigeneity which colonial modernity aimed to transcend. Finally, I use the term licentious for its ability to amass a number of Arabic terms that recur in the archive, many of which will be used throughout this study (many of them in the original). Among the Arabic terms that could be translated into *licentious* are *ibahi* (which comes from the verb *abaha*, to permit or give license to, *ibahi* can thus be translated as *permissive* or *licentious*) and *mutahattik* (a term that refers to moral licentiousness but literally means dilapidated or falling apart, perhaps a reference to the break of restraint, or the degeneration of the body that is associated with moral degeneration. The verb *hataka* - from which *tahattuk* is derived- can mean to break, transgress, or violate, perhaps *tahattuk* can be read thus as a reference to violability of the licentious body). More importantly, licentiousness in terms of the setting loose of restrictions can be easily translated into the Arabic word *infilat*, a term that was used in 2011 to describe the situation in Egypt following the withdrawal of State functions in the aftermath of the January uprising. Licentiousness can also be translated to *inhilal*, a term that recurs, from the 19th to the 21st centuries, in discourses on revolution and opposition, and which can, depending on the context within which it is invoked, refer to moral and/or biological degeneration.

The Bad, the Failed, and the Licentious

This study works with three interrelated concepts; licentious, failed, and bad subjects. At times I use these terms interchangeably, as they refer to different (sometimes overlapping) aspects of the same phenomenon. For the purpose of this introduction, however, it is necessary to explain what these different aspects are, and highlight their similarities, differences, and how each of them serves to explicate findings from the archive.

The licentious subject, like the space that produces him or her, is the subject exhibiting license, and thus giving the State license to violate him or her through various modes of violence. He, but more commonly she, embodies the licentiousness explained in the previous section: licentiousness qua degeneration, licentiousness qua femininity/feminization/failed masculinity, licentiousness qua violability, licentiousness qua racial otherness (with whiteness setting the frame of reference).¹³ Of course the characterization here is less about what certain persons do and more about how they are imagined and represented, how they exist as subjects in discourse.

The failed subject is not even properly a subject; it fails to form as a subject, and exists in a precarious pre-subject condition.¹⁴ In her reading of Althusser, Judith Butler posits that the “bad subject” within an Althusserian conception of subjectivity, “tends toward the oxymoronic,” for “[t]o be bad is not yet to be a subject, not yet to have acquitted oneself of the allegation of guilt.”¹⁵ This oxymoronic not-yet-subject will be at the center of our analysis. Indeed, this failed subject is commonplace in the Egyptian and Arab postcolonial archives. In *Desiring Arabs*, Joseph Massad notes how various works of fiction “narrate the difficulties facing the emergence of the postcolonial modern Arab male subject as self-sustaining, self-respecting, rational,

¹³ The licentious subject, through its failures and its embodiment of what is improper may call to mind Julia Kristeva’s abject, as laid out in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon Roudiez, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), esp. 1- 31. My formulation of the licentious has indeed benefited from Judith Butler’s reformulation of Kristeva’s abject, especially in *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limitations of Sex*, (New York: Routledge, 2011). When the bad/failed subject is presented with an aura of abjection, especially when this abjection relates to the licentious female body, I will use the term abject. I take issue, however, with Kristeva’s conception of the abject for its obliviousness to the role colonialism and racism (two projects with which Kristeva herself is complicit) have played in producing the abject. In Chapter 3 I will show how, for the feminine body to be abject in various discourses (from the counterrevolutionary polemics against the Paris Commune to Hollywood) it needed first to be projected to racially other, usually Oriental, territories.

¹⁴ Hence, again, the intersection with Kristeva’s abject.

¹⁵ Judith Butler, *Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 119.

autonomous, because masculine, man. [‘Alaa’] al-Aswani’s novel [*The Ya ‘qubian Building*] will insist ... that the postcolonial male subject is *stillborn* and that the only kind of subject that emerges through colonial and postcolonial violence (physical, social, economic, and epistemic) is the degenerate, the corrupt, and the sexual deviant”¹⁶ (emphasis in original). My search for licentious and failed subjects can be viewed as further elaboration on this passage (indeed the degenerate and the sexual deviant reappear throughout this study, usually with the racialized and civilizational underpinnings with which *Desiring Arabs* is primarily concerned).¹⁷ It is important here to note how colonial violence (sustained and perpetuated by the postcolonial state through economic dependency, through political clientelism, and through upholding Western models of subjectivity) is responsible for the *stillborn* status of, for *aborting*, the postcolonial subject.

The failed subject, however, *fails* to capture all the manifestations of *bad subjects* in the discourse I am set to examine. In addition to subjects that *fail* to approximate good and proper subjectivity, there are subjects that *deviate* from such models and therefore attain a model of bad subjectivity. There seems to be, therefore, a bad model, a bad ego-ideal, a set of bad imagoes, through which bad subjects are characterized and interpellated as bad. This study will reveal how, more often than not, this model of bad subjectivity is based on Europe’s racial other,¹⁸ sometimes

¹⁶ Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 389.

¹⁷ *Desiring Arabs* is indeed a book on Social Darwinism rather than on sexuality as such (as declared in its introduction). The discourse on sexuality which the book studies/critiques only appears as symptomatic of modern/colonial racial and civilizational anxieties and of how Social Darwinism came to dominate Arabic discourses on sexuality.

¹⁸ My invocation of ‘Europe’ does not exclude white North America. As a study of colonialism, this dissertation views white North Americans as European colonial settlers in Native American lands. Hence, the Native American will appear side by side the Arab in conceiving the bad subject.

specifically the Arab. In Chapters 1 and 3, we will see how the late 19th century French royalist mouthpiece, the *Gazette de France* used the figure of ‘Arabi (based on a corruption of the name of the Egyptian leader Ahmad ‘Urabi and a racial/civilizational stereotyping and caricaturizing of his character) to construct the bad subjectivity of both its French and its Egyptian adversaries. This was not an isolated instance. The Arab and the Muslim have continued to provide models of bad subjectivity until our very day, as I show in Chapter 3.

For Egyptian publics *subjected* to and subjectified by a postcolonial state that subscribes to colonial models and who are interpellated by the international media (i.e. the ideological state apparatuses of US imperialism), as much as by an Egyptian media open to international influences, this meant that a certain image of the self (even when idealized) is cast for abnegation, abjection, and repression, while a distant image of the idealized white (male) subject is cast for identification; Egyptians can aspire to but never become this image.¹⁹ Hence the importance of colonial violence in the conception of Massad’s *stillborn* subject, and the larger significance of *Desiring Arabs* as an exposition of how physical and epistemic colonial violence led Arab authors to adopt a civilizational discourse predicated on their abnegation. The Fanonian neurosis that pervades the postcolonial condition and forces the colonial/postcolonial subject to yearn for an image of the colonizer he or she is never allowed to attain, also produces a stereotypical image of the native through which the State interpellates its enemies – whether in the colonial/postcolonial State or in the European metropolis.

¹⁹ This is obviously close to Homi Bhabha’s conception of *white but not quite* (a conception that is indebted to Fanon in many ways), see for example Homi Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” in *The Location of Culture*, (New York: Routledge, 1994), 121-131. I prefer, however, the Fanonian formulation of trauma and neurosis, as it captures and registers colonial violence in ways that Homi Bhabha’s formulation does not.

Subjectivity and Subjects

So far I have brought together the production of subjects, their subjection, subjectivation and interpellation. While these words may seem to belong to different schools of thought (*production* and *subjectivation* are generally thought of as Foucauldian, while interpellation, subjectivity, and the subject are clearly Althusserian), I use them simultaneously, though not interchangeably. First, the conception of subject formation: this study assumes that a subject is produced since, or prior to, birth through various modes of power (mostly connected to the State and the spaces sanctioned by it, its *ideological apparatuses* to gesture to the Althusserian conception of subjectivity). This process of subject formation results in the ability of the State to name, identify, and call forth its subjects, in other words, to interpellate them (to invoke, once more, the Althusserian lexicon). Subjectivation, as far as this study is concerned, refers to the whole process of subject formation, the various relationships to power, that makes one subject. Interpellation, on the other hand, refers to the moment when a subject is defined as such or called forth as a subject by the State. This is not only the end product of subjectivation but also an integral part of it; interpellation, according to Althusser, happens before even an individual is born and takes place throughout the life of the subject- not only when he or she is hailed by the policeman.²⁰ When using the term *subjection* I simply refer to the act of subjecting

²⁰ See for example Althusser's formulation of how one is "always already" a subject; Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus," 117- 120. On p.119 Althusser notes:

That an individual is always-already a subject, even before he is born, is nevertheless the plain reality, accessible to everyone and not a paradox at all. Freud shows that individuals are always 'abstract' with respect to the subjects they always-already are, simply by noting the ideological ritual that surrounds the expectations of 'birth', that 'happy event'.

oneself to or being subjected by the hold of power, something that relates to but fails to exhaust the notion of subjectivation.²¹

In a similar vein, throughout this study I will use the terms ideology (used mostly in the Althusserian sense, as explicated in his foundational essay “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”) and discourse (mostly in the Foucauldian sense, as the overall system of gestures, speech, speech-acts, representations, images, etc. which is conditioned by power relations and which dictates material existence) liberally. This, again, is not to be seen as a mere slippage from the Althusserian to the Foucauldian, nor an attempt to find the academic Holy Grail, the missing link between Althusser and Foucault. Discourse (as a field of symbolic and semiotic exchange and their underlying power relations), in the context of this study, can be thought of as one of the ways in which ideology materializes, or conversely a field of interactions, of *power relations* and *force confrontations* (to go back to the Foucauldian formulation), which can be usurped and appropriated by the dominant ideology. My purpose here is not to establish whether ideology produces or

Everyone knows how much and in what way an unborn child is expected. Which amounts to saying, very prosaically, if we agree to drop the ‘sentiments’, i.e. the forms of family ideology (paternal/maternal conjugal/fraternal) in which the unborn child is expected: it is certain in advance that it will bear its Father’s Name, and will therefore have an identity and be irreplaceable. Before its birth, the child is therefore always-already a subject, appointed as a subject in and by the specific familial ideological configuration in which it is ‘expected’ once it has been conceived. I hardly need add that this familial ideological configuration is, in its uniqueness, highly structured, and that it is in this implacable and more or less ‘pathological’ (presupposing that any meaning can be assigned to that term) structure that the former subject to-be will have to ‘find’ ‘its’ place, i.e. ‘become’ the sexual subject (boy or girl) which it already is in advance. It is clear that this ideological constraint and pre-appointment, and all the rituals of rearing and then education in the family, have some relationship with what Freud studied in the forms of the pre-genital and genital ‘stages’ of sexuality, i.e. in the ‘grip’ of what Freud registered by its effects as being the unconscious.

Cf. Judith Butler, *Psychic Life of Power*, 106- 131.

²¹ For a critical survey of the various accounts of subjection and subjectivity, see Judith Butler, *Psychic Life of Power*. For her critical revision of Althusser’s notions of subjection and interpellation see pp. 106- 131.

appropriates discourse (for that matter, it can simultaneously do both). My purpose is rather to argue that there is a hierarchical ideological structure behind power relations, even in the instances when these power relations *come from everywhere*.— Even in Foucault’s formulation of power that comes from everywhere, the possibility of an end structure, a hierarchy of power relations, is accounted for, but instead of this hierarchy being “given at the outset,” it constitutes “the terminal forms power takes,” according to Foucault.²² Here I brush aside the question of whether these hierarchies are given at the outset or are terminal forms— once again, as far as this study is concerned, it may be both. To use a typical Althusserian example, the act of recognizing someone on the street, greeting them, performing the salutation ritual, be it the handshake or any other type of ritual,²³ is discourse. The predisposition to do so, which in turn is sustained by the ritual, is ideology. Similarly, genuflection and supplication (to use Althusser’s re-reading of the philosophy of Blaise Pascal)²⁴ is discourse, but the Catholic faith, both cause and effect of this ritual, is ideology. This last example also goes to show how, in Althusser’s thought, discourse/ritual/practice can shape and/or sustain ideology, and not only vice versa.

It is perhaps already clear that my understanding of subjectivity is anchored in an Althusserian-Lacanian framework; and by this I do not mean a framework that mixes the theories of Lacan with Althusser, but rather one that builds on the (mis)conception of Lacanian psychology in the writings of Althusser. My understanding of Althusser’s project is that it aimed at achieving a leap from Marxist

²² Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, v.1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley, (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 92.

²³ See Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus,” 117.

²⁴ See Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus,” 113- 114.

analysis of relations of production and the ideologies that sustain and re-produce them, to Lacanian-Freudian psychoanalysis; for, after all, what are imagoes (the ideal images that set off and sustain identification, starting with the famous mirror image) and ideal egos if not ideological tools through which subjects are interpellated from childhood, beginning with the mirror image that is the materialization of and anchor for the ideology of the individual,²⁵ to the various on-screen imagoes Hollywood and other ideological state apparatuses bombard us with from birth to death?²⁶ The ideological role of imago and ideal ego runs throughout Althusser's analysis, but is perhaps most evident in the moment of identification between subject and Subject. For ideology to work, according to Althusser, it has to construct a Subject at its center, with which the subject identifies.²⁷ This subject-Subject relationship corresponds to that of the subject-imago and subject-ego ideal in Lacanian-Freudian psychoanalysis.²⁸ It is telling that when discussing this relationship, Althusser refers

²⁵ In fact, Althusser posits the self-contained individual as an ideological myth fabricated by bourgeois society; "The ideology of man as whose *unity* is ensured or crowned by consciousness is not just any fragmentary ideology, it is simply *the philosophical form of bourgeois ideology* that has dominated history for centuries and that ... still reigns over large sectors of idealist philosophy and constitutes the implicit philosophy of psychology, morality, and even political economy" (emphases in original); Louis Althusser, "On Marx and Freud," in *Writings on Psychoanalysis*, ed. Olivier Corpet and François Matheron, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 114. Althusser credits Freud with dismantling this myth (perhaps making Freud a Marxist despite himself); *ibid.*

²⁶ For how critical film theory understands film as an ideological apparatus, and for the ideological role the cinematic image plays as an *imago* through which ideology interpellates its subjects, see Bill Nicholas, *Ideology and the Image*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), see esp. 32- 36 for a brief overview of the Lacanian-Althusserian framework used by critical film theory.

²⁷ I am indebted to Elizabeth Povinelli for highlighting the importance of the subject-Subject relation for Althusserian theory. Otherwise I could have missed its importance, buried as it is in the final pages of Althusser's essay as part of the example of Christian ideology.

²⁸ Of course a lot has been said and written about the limitations of the Althusserian application of Lacanian psychoanalysis; see for example Madlen Dolar, "Beyond Interpellation," *Qui Parle* 6, no.2 (Spring/Summer 1993): 75- 96, and Butler's critique of Althusser via Dolar in *Psychic Life of power*, 120- 129. My purpose here is not to establish the extent to which Althusser was able to render Lacanian psychoanalysis faithfully, less so the critical potentials of psychoanalysis beyond an Althusserian theory, but rather the deployment of the Althusserian-Lacanian understanding of

to the image of God, *imago Dei*, from which psychoanalysis and media studies borrow the term *imago* (and hence, throughout this study, when I refer to *imago*, or *image*, unless I am referring to an image in the literal sense, the reference is to this loose psychoanalytical, Althusserian-Lacanian conception of the image and the role it plays in interpellation).²⁹ Just like humans, in Christian ideology, are made to believe they are created in the image of God, the subject, in Althusser's explication of ideological subjectivation, is forced to identify with the *imago* of the Subject. Althusser shows, through a brief rereading of the crucifixion drama (a reading reminiscent of Hegel's,³⁰ in spite of all the attempts by Althusser to contend that Hegel is irrelevant for a structural Marxist analysis),³¹ God becomes a Subject not only for subjects to identify with but also to aspire to re-enter (Jesus through resurrection, believers through reuniting with God on the day of judgment), recalling

ideology (of which I provide my own unfaithful rendering) to illuminate the subjectivation via space in the context of this study.

²⁹ Again one of my acts of unfaithfulness towards psychoanalysis and to media studies is how I also use the term *image* to refer to the textual conjuring of mental imagery, whereas in a faithful rendering of Lacanian psychoanalysis the image would belong exclusively to the semiotic/imaginary order while the textual pertains mainly to the symbolic. My excuse for this unfaithfulness is that even (or especially) in the Lacanian framework the semiotic is seldom (if ever) perceived in isolation from the symbolic and vice versa. For the same purpose, I will take the liberty of conflating *ideal ego* with *ego ideal*; whereas in Lacanian psychoanalysis the ideal ego is semiotic while the ego ideal is symbolic, the conjuncture of mental imagery through both symbolic and semiotic representations constitutes the stake of my analysis, thus rendering irrelevant the distinction between the two concepts.

³⁰ Hegel's narration of the crucifixion drama, which will be used in our analysis of the rise of the individual subject in Chapter 2, can be found in Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. Miller, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 128.

³¹ See Althusser, "Lenin before Hegel," in *Lenin and Philosophy*, 71- 84. The dismissal of the relevance of Hegel for the late Marx runs throughout the work of Althusser, as evident, for example, in the collection of essays in *For Marx*. The argument is perhaps made most forcefully in his essay "On the Materialist Dialectic" in *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster, (New York: Verso, 1965), 127- 184. To be fair to Althusser, in a footnote one page after the re-telling of the crucifixion drama as an ideological ruse, Althusser gives credit to Hegel's theorization while qualifying it as ideological: "Hegel is (knowingly) an admirable 'theoretician' of ideology insofar as he is a 'theoretician' of Universal Recognition who unfortunately ends up in the ideology of Absolute knowledge," Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus," 123n22. Indeed, Althusser's conception of the uppercase Subject can be read as turning the Hegelian Subject into an ideological fiction, and a ruse through which interpellation proceeds.

the relationship between the mirror image and the subject in Lacanian psychoanalysis.

The following passage gestures towards the Lacanian mirror stage (or a revised version thereof) though it does not explicitly reference it:

We observe that the structure of all ideology, interpellating individuals as subjects in the name of a Unique and Absolute Subject is *specular*, i.e. a mirror-structure, and *doubly* specular: this mirror duplication is constitutive of ideology and ensures its functioning. Which means that all ideology is *centred*, that the Absolute Subject occupies the unique place of the Centre, and interpellates around it the infinity of individuals into subjects in a double mirror-connexion such that it *subjects* the subjects to the Subject, while giving them in the Subject in which each subject can contemplate its own image (present and future) the *guarantee* that this really concerns them and Him, and that since everything takes place in the Family (the Holy Family: the Family is in essence Holy), ‘God will *recognize* his own in it’, i.e. those who have recognized God, and have recognized themselves in Him, will be saved³² (all emphases in original).

Gestures towards the Freudian-Lacanian destination of the Althusserian project are made throughout Althusser’s writings, especially his essay on Freud and Lacan,³³ but all these attempts came to a halt; to use the words of Althusser himself:

The only thing that I can tell you with some certainty... is that I stopped short (quite clearly) before the question that interests you about the “relations” between ideology (or concrete ideological formations) and the unconscious. I have said that there must be some relation there, but at the same time I forbade myself from inventing it considering that it was for me a problem provisionally without solution ... And naturally in refusing to go any further, I refused to follow those well-known figures who had attempted to go further, such as [Wilhelm] Reich or others. The place where I went the furthest must be in the final notes for the article “Freud and Lacan,” but there too, in the articles on state ideological apparatuses, there is a limit that has not been crossed. Thus, when you level at me “the question” “How do you see a conceptual elaboration between the unconscious and ideology?” I can only reply that I don’t see it. If Freud were alive (and thought today what he thought during his lifetime) and you were able to ask him, “How do you see the elaboration of the relation between biology and the unconscious?” he would more or less tell you what he wrote, namely, that there is surely a relation, but that he did not see how to elaborate it conceptually. Every question does not necessarily imply an answer.³⁴

My aim, of course, is not to leap where Althusser “stopped short” (though, I admit, my initial graduate student hubris was leading me in that direction, until I was humbled by the archive). My purpose, however – perhaps paralleling Althusser’s own

³² Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus,” 122.

³³ Althusser, “Freud and Lacan,” in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 133- 150.

³⁴ Qtd. In Olivier Corpet and François Matheron's introduction to Louis Althusser’s collection of essays titled *Writings on Psychoanalysis: Freud and Lacan*, 4-5.

failure to make the leap and my own reluctance thereof, as well as the failure of the Egyptian ‘revolution’ - is to study the moments where the Althusserian-Lacanian structures of interpellation fail, and how these failures produce their own set of bad imagoes and bad subjects.

Ideology, Impulsive Cultural Imposition, and the Colonial/Postcolonial Condition

My deployment of an Althusserian-Lacanian understanding of ideology and subjectivity, however, *fails* to remain faithful to Althusser’s original framework. One element that is not explicated (though not entirely missing) in Althusser’s conception of subjection, but which is important for this study, is the limitation of this mode of identification. There is always a Subject the subject is invited to identify with but never allowed to fully emulate: the king in medieval Christendom, God in anthropomorphic Western Christianity, the military commander in a fascist society, ‘Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi for a contemporary Egyptian, the colonizer for the colonized (hence the relevance of the Fanonian framework as a corrective to Althusser’s, even as the former predates the latter).³⁵ In addition, this study introduces and explores bad imagoes and bad egos that get in the way of interpellation, something Althusser never accounted for.

³⁵ I say not entirely missing because the radical loss one suffers after identification with the mirror image in Lacanian theory, and the lack one experiences as a result, aspiring but never attaining the fullness of the initial imago, can be used to account for this distance between the Subject and the subject (and is indeed at the base of Fanon’s conception of colonial trauma). Similarly, when Althusser posits that there has to be a Subject who interpellates subjects at the center of ideology, and while Althusser clearly speaks of emulation (the family, for example, emulates the holy family), he is not necessarily arguing for full identification. The God metaphor in Althusser suggests that, while subjects are invited to identify with the Subject, there is always a lack in identification, always a distance between subject and Subject, an aspiration to unite one day. This remains specific to Western anthropomorphic Christianity (and perhaps to Catholicism), as other conceptions of Christianity as well as other religions (monotheistic or polytheistic) do not necessarily construct this resemblance between God and human (human is not created in the image of God in other religions), and their versions of heaven do not necessarily imply a unity with the anthropomorphic divine.

Frantz Fanon, on the other hand, explained what Althusser did not account for. In the course of *Black Skin White Masks* two sets of imagoes appear (manifesting themselves in two *Others*). One is modeled on the white man, and starts with the Lacanian mirror image with which the white man identifies, and with which the non-whites are forced to mis-recognize themselves (until this identification is shattered through the experience of denied-recognition by the colonizer, in Fanon's explication). The other is the image of the non-white, always to be abhorred and distanced, as if serving as the antithesis to or the undoing of the Lacanian mirror image, the other to Lacan's Other. To this effect Fanon revises the Lacanian formulation, exposing its limitations in a colonial/postcolonial setting. Fanon notes:

On the basis of Lacan's concept of the *mirror stage* it would be certainly worthwhile investigating to what extent the imago that the young white boy constructs of his fellow man undergoes an imaginary aggression with the appearance of the black man. Once we have understood the process described by Lacan, there is no longer any doubt that the true 'Other' for the white man is and remains the black man, and vice versa. For the white man, however, 'the Other' is perceived as a bodily image, absolutely as the non ego, i.e. The unidentifiable, the unassimilable (emphasis in original).³⁶

In opposition to this mode of subjectivation, through which the white (ideally male) subject simultaneously identifies *his* own mirror image and rejects its non-white other, the non-white (the Antillean in Fanon's explication) identifies not with the actual mirror image but instead with an imago produced through *imaginations* conditioned by dominant whiteness: "It might be argued that if the white man elaborates an imago of his fellow man, the same should be the case for the Antillean, since it is based on a visual perception. But we would be forgetting that in the Antilles perception always occurs on the level of the imagination."³⁷ Hence, the colonized often confuse themselves for whites, always see themselves as whiter than the other

³⁶ Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 139n25.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

colonized/non-white populations, despite their actual mirror image, until the reality of colonialism confronts them with their own otherness.³⁸

I depart from this Fanonian formulation in two ways. First, my concern is not only with how the non-white comes to idealize the white imago while abnegating an imago predicated on the non-white's self-image, but also how this non-white bad imago, through its repudiation, plays a role in producing and interpellating the good subject as its other (which is already hinted at but not fully accounted for in Fanon's explication as evident the above quoted passage). This point becomes central to my argument in Chapter 3, when I trace the appearance of the savage and the Oriental in the representations of the European metropolitan crowd. Second, while in Fanon's conception the Antillean's identification with the white imago is only shattered at the encounter with the white man (in the colony or the metropole, but typically the latter), In Egypt the workings of colonialism and the articulations of the colonial trauma take a different course. In Chapter 4 I will argue that in an Egyptian culture conditioned by colonial education and colonial media, and thus a colonial omnipresence even in the absence of actual metropolitan subjects, any Egyptian is interpellated through identification with the white imago while at the same time being reminded of his or her distance from this imago. Unlike Fanon's Antillean, the Egyptian in my explication does not need to set foot in the metropole or to encounter actual white persons or metropolitan subjects in order to experience the self "in the third person."³⁹ This entails the conceptualization of the ideology of the modern Egyptian State (even

³⁸ See for example *ibid.*, 126.

³⁹ For Fanon's formulation of experiencing the self in the third person, see Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 90.

after official ‘decolonization’) as a colonial ideology,⁴⁰ or tracing the effects of colonialism in this ideology—itsself the logical extension of the now commonplace conceptualization of the national(ist) postcolonial state as a continuation, one way or another, of colonialism, an argument that started as a prophecy by Fanon⁴¹ and was largely taken up by area studies and postcolonial theory. In concluding his study of postcolonial Indian nationalism titled *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?*, Partha Chatterjee shows how the realities of global capital, which have not escaped the “metropolitan capitalist dominance,” wherein capitalism masks itself as or continuously co-opts reason, have also dictated an epistemological/ideological colonial nature of the nationalism underlying the postcolonial state.⁴² Thus, “[t]he political success of nationalism in ending colonial rule,” according to Chatterjee, offers only “a false resolution which carries the marks of its own fragility.”⁴³ The tensions underlying this imposition and this fragility “often appear as fervently anti-modern, anti-Western strands of politics,” according to Chatterjee.⁴⁴ This characterization, though based on Chatterjee’s observations concerning India, *seems* (and here again it is more central to my study how things

⁴⁰ This argument also extends to Egypt’s pre-colonial “State” (i.e. Egypt under the primordial state structure built by Muhammad ‘Ali and his dynasty). In *Colonising Egypt*, Timothy Mitchell shows how the nation building effort was in essence colonizing, and how in Egypt it was imbued with colonial conceptions of space, of organization, and of meaning even before the British troops set foot in Egypt; Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

⁴¹ See for example Fanon’s essay titled “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness,” where he explains this prophecy through the limitations of nationalism but also through global economic relations of dependency, in Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philox, (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 97- 144.

⁴² Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 168. See also Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), esp. 220- 239.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 169.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*.

seem than how they *are*) to represent faithfully the Islamist organizations in Egypt and elsewhere. Indeed the Islamists will appear in our analysis among the figures of the licentious subjects, but even beyond the Islamists and beyond *strands of politics*, my analysis will concern itself with how the licentious is imagined in opposition to modernity embodied within the State. Here I am looking at the picture painted by Chatterjee from the other side: not the emergence of dissidents as anti-modern, but their representation and production, in state ideology and public discourse, as anti-modern, and how this anti-modern version is *identified against*, whereas a modern version of the self, coming from abroad and circulating through colonial channels, is forcefully *identified with*.

Fanon characterizes the psychic effects of the colonized's forced identification with the colonizer, and the subsequent othering from oneself, as *an impulsive cultural imposition*.⁴⁵ This unique conception, which Fanon posits to counter the Jungian conception of a collective unconscious, is akin to Althusser's concept of ideology; both signify the weight of the dominant culture in dictating certain modes of subjectivation and identification (largely read through a psychoanalytic Freudian-Lacanian lens). Thus, I will use the term *cultural imposition* to supplement, and sometimes supplant, the Althusserian notion of ideology, especially when referring to ideological effects that are exercised through colonial power relations. Consistent with my earlier argument that the forced identification with the colonizer happens not only in the typical colonial context but also in a nationalist post/neo-colonial context, I treat this *impulsive cultural imposition* as a dominant ideological effect in both colonial and postcolonial settings.

⁴⁵ Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 167.

My study proceeds through exploring the psychic and subjective effects of this colonial nature of the nationalist state. Through this process of *cultural imposition*, identities have been produced along colonial epistemological and ontological lines (as per Massad's *Desiring Arabs*), space has been defined and organized along colonial lines (as per Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt*), and anti-modern versions of the indigenous self have emerged in antithesis to the nation(alist) State (as per Partha Chatterjee's concluding remarks in *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World*). In the course of my analysis I will explore how the self was experienced in opposition to the identities that were produced, how various versions of this self were produced as anti-modern and by extension as anti-State, ultimately as licentious, and how the colonial definition and discursive organization of space engendered and sustained these psychic and subjective effects.

The Archive and the Postcolonial Condition

The above theoretical sketch was largely influenced by this study's archive. In fact, through my archival research, I was engaged in a conscious and deliberate effort to suspend theory. This was not only in search for theoretical novelty (itself a legitimate motivation for a dissertation project), but also a postcolonial precaution. To impose a theoretical framework devised in and for Europe onto a country from (for the lack of a better term) the Arab world, is to add intellectual insult to colonial injury. Yet, eschewing Western theory and European history when studying Egypt would be to pretend that colonialism never happened, and therefore miss the paramount impact of colonialism on Egyptian history, on modes of subjectivity in modern Egypt, and on the very form and structure of the Egyptian polity. Egypt, a loosely defined geography

that was an Ottoman domain until the onset of modern colonialism (and remained one in the thought of Egyptian nationalists at least until the severance of its ties to its Ottoman suzerain by British colonialism in 1914), had its first encounter with modern colonialism with the Napoleonic invasion of 1798. The so-called *French campaign* aggressively stifled the intellectual life in the country especially through its targeting of the leading local scholarly/cultural institute, al-Azhar. This targeting took the form of the cooption of al-Azhar scholars at the onset of the invasion, and the massacring of its students when they rose against the occupiers in 1798 and 1800. In 1801 the French were defeated by a British-Ottoman coalition and in the ensuing years an ambitious Ottoman Albanian general, Muhammad ‘Ali, rose to power, eventually becoming the province’s viceroy in 1805. Haunted by memories of defeat and inaugurating a new Egyptian polity into a world structured by colonial relations, Egypt’s ambitious ruler/founder relied on French experts to design policies, institutions, and urban spaces. Educational institutions modeled on their French (and to a lesser extent on their English) counterparts were introduced and soon eclipsed al-Azhar (to name one example relevant for the rest of our analysis). French colonialism was soon replaced, however, by British colonialism and in 1882 Britain invaded the country and turned it into a British *protectorate* (though initially only unofficially so). In 1914, fearing that the Egyptians would side with their Ottoman *caliphate*, Britain severed Egypt’s Ottoman ties, inventing Egypt for the first time as an entity separate from the Islamic caliphate (this also coincided with the official declaration of Egypt as a British protectorate by the British authorities). Though Egypt gained nominal independence from Britain in 1936, British troops remained in the country and British colonial officials continued to meddle in the affairs of the country. In 1952 a junta of nationalist army officers, naming themselves the *free officers*, staged a *coup d’état*

(later dubbed a revolution), whereby they deposed King Faruq (the last of the Muhammad 'Ali dynasty) and abolished the monarchy. In 1954 the strong man of the free officers, Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir, became Egypt's second president, and negotiated a British withdrawal (which was not taken into full effect until 1956 when three colonial powers, Britain, France, and Israel, staged a failed *tripartite aggression* against Egypt, leading to the effective British withdrawal and a new era of Egyptian anti-colonial politics). Nasir's regime attempted to maneuver the (im)possibilities of conducting nationalist anti-colonial politics through institutions that were inherited from colonialism, in a world shaped by the supremacy of the US and the USSR. These anti-colonial politics received a blow when Egypt was militarily defeated by the forces of colonialism and imperialism (Israel supported by the United States) in the 1967 war, and later came to a complete halt with the death of Nasir in 1970. Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat, the third Egyptian president, foresaw a different role of Egypt in the service of, rather than in opposition to, modern colonialism and US imperialism. Although Sadat was able to conduct a limited war and gain a limited victory against the forces of imperialism in 1973, his politics marked a shift from the anti-colonial stances of his forerunner. Starting 1973, Sadat pursued a peaceful resolution with Israel, which culminated in his visit to Occupied Palestine in 1977, the Camp David Accords in 1978, and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979. This was part of a policy of realignment with US imperial interests which also entailed the opening up of the country to international capital; in 1977 this became known as the policy of *infitah*, or *opening* (also commonly referred to as *the open door policy*). In 1981 Sadat was assassinated by a group of army officers who belonged to a hardline Islamist organization (which cited the services he rendered to imperialism as one of the reasons behind his assassination), but his pro-colonial project survived.

Muhammad Husni Mubarak, the country's fourth president, carried out his forerunners policies until he was ousted in the aftermath of the 2011 uprising; in fact the growing opposition to Mubarak's rule was born in the context of the anti-colonial struggle; it was the Egyptian solidarity movement with the second Palestinian intifadah (2000-2002) and the Egyptian movement in opposition to the US war on Iraq (2003) that raised openly, perhaps for the first time, the slogan 'down with Mubarak!' Post-Mubarak, Egyptian rulers did little, or nothing, to reverse their predecessor's pro-colonial policies. This is especially the case with the current president 'Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi, who came to power through a military *coup d'état* in 2013 and who makes up for missing legitimacy through courting Western/imperialist support (for example by tightening the siege on Gaza, and by spending huge sums of money on gratuitous arms deals with Western powers-cum-arms dealers, in addition to conducting a foreign policy subservient to US and Saudi Arabian designs). In addition, al-Sisi was the first to inaugurate colonial ideology as explicit presidential discourse. In October 2017, after conducting an arms deal with the French government al-Sisi declared, in a shared press conference with French President Emmanuel Macron, in response to a question about the status of *human rights* in Egypt (and after looking at his French counterpart while repeating the question and stuttering, as if asking the white man in power for an answer): "we are not in Europe, with its intellectual, cultural, civilizational, and human progress; we are in a different region." We see, therefore, that the history of Western colonialism is inseparable from Egyptian history, that it was indeed Western colonialism that created the conditions of possibility for the existence of Egypt as a separate entity, that colonial institutions remained part of the Egyptian postcolonial state, and that Egyptian political history remains imbricated with colonialism until our very day. In terms of theory, this meant

that the Saidian and especially the Fanonian are as important to this study as the Althusserian-Lacanian. In terms of archive, this means that, for a history of the licentious spaces and subjects in Egypt, the Western archive is as important as the Egyptian.

Many of the disciplines, bodies of knowledge, and discourses that defined subjectivity and space since the late 19th century and through the 21st were developed in response to, crystallized around, or coincided with the Paris Commune. For an Arabic readership, the Commune was their first encounter with a discourse on the crowd (mainly through the popular Istanbul-based Arabic newspaper, *al-Jawa'ib*). The Paris Commune would become an important recurring moment for the subsequent account throughout this study. In Chapters 1 and 3, I will further explain the relevance and centrality of the Commune to the emergence of a discourse on bad subjects, licentious spaces, and the crowd, and the intersection of the discourse on the Commune with colonial networks of power, whether in terms of exporting the nascent European bourgeois discourse to the colony, or the ways whereby the anti-Commune rhetoric made use of colonial and Orientalist tropes in producing the communards as bad subjects.

The relevance of the Western archive to this study, however, is not limited to the Paris Commune. The Western archive on crowd and revolution and the Western conceptions of space and subjectivity came to shape Egyptian discourse through colonial (epistemic and physical) violence; in Chapter 3, I explain how two paradigmatic European texts on the crowd, namely Gustave LeBon's *The Crowd* and Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, came to be landmarks of the Egyptian cultural sphere, and how they acted alongside physical colonial violence. Shunning the Western archive in the name of finding an indigenous archive would be to analyze the

symptoms while ignoring the trauma that produced them. In Chapter 2 I offer a rebuttal to the hypothetical question of why I would seek the origins of the Egyptian licentious spaces in Western topoi (like the Dionysian orgy) rather than in Islamic history. Colonialism, moreover, has shaped the conceptions of space in Europe, and therefore the “Oriental” archive is relevant to Europe as much as the “Western” archive is relevant to Egypt.

This preoccupation with colonialism has in many ways shaped the periodization of this study. I chose to look at the roots of the discourse on space and the subject in the late 19th century; a time the Egyptian landscape was being transformed along colonial lines before it fell to complete military occupation and colonial dominance by Britain in 1882. Other factors, however, have shaped this periodization. A more thorough explanation of this dissertation’s periodization is necessary, given the diachronic nature of the subsequent account and its frequent time lapses or its zooming-out over episodes of time.

Periodization and Temporality

The purview of this study spans two centuries. Covering the history of Egypt from (roughly) 1805 (when the modern Egyptian polity was created by the Ottoman Albanian general Muhammad ‘Ali) to 2017 (when this manuscript is being finalized) or 2011 (the year when the events this study sets to explore took place) is impossible within the context of one dissertation or the course of one doctoral degree. For this purpose, this study focuses on two defining moments in Egyptian history, the turn of the 19th/20th century, and the turn of the 20th/21st century; all other historical moments will be revisited, when necessary, in the form of a survey.

The turn of the 19th/20th century, as mentioned earlier, is a crucial time for studying the role of colonialism in Egypt. It was the time when Egypt was officially occupied by Britain. It was also a time that witnessed two large anti-colonial revolts in 1881/82 and 1919 respectively. The former, the ‘Urabi revolt, will be of particular importance for this study. In 1881, at the onset of the reign of Khedive Tawfiq, Egyptian army colonel Ahmad ‘Urabi and a group of Egyptian soldiers started a reformist movement whereby they demanded better rights for Egyptian-born officers within the army, better pay and rights within the army, and a set of constitutional rights outside. Events escalated as the colonial powers, suspicious of Egyptian soldiers and wary of granting Egyptians any constitutional or liberal rights, sided with the old guard and the Khedive. The insistence of colonial powers to control the Egyptian budget ran against the nationalist and constitutional aspirations of the ‘Urabists and their allies, who wanted to subject the Egyptian budget to parliamentary supervision. Eventually, in the summer of 1882, the British fleet laid siege to and bombed Alexandria, starting 72 years of military occupation. The siege and the bombardment led to confrontations between Alexandrian locals and the foreign merchants/settlers (conceived, perhaps rightly, as clients of the colonizing force and its invading army). The 1882 archive thus inaugurates the first appearance of the Egyptian crowd in discourse. The archive of the ‘Urabi revolt also inaugurates one of the earliest articulations of Egyptian nationalism. The second wave of Egyptian nationalism would also appear during the turn of the 19th/20th century at the hands of the nationalist leader Mustafa Kamil and the two organs he created, *al-Liwa‘* newspaper and the National Party. While these two waves had their differences (the subsequent account would reveal the contempt with which Mustafa Kamil and his cohort viewed ‘Urabi), they shared deep Ottoman loyalties, probably reflecting the

sentiments of the larger Egyptian populace at the time. The emergence of Egyptian nationalism under conditions of Ottoman loyalty, and, especially since 1882, under anxieties concerning the fate of Egypt's Ottoman allegiance and to the fate of the Ottoman Sultanate⁴⁶ and the Muslim Caliphate, provides a rich archive for studying the emergence of Egyptian subjectivity in crisis.

This sense of crisis, and the ensuing need to sustain and reinstate the notions of self and State through discourse, gives this moment precedence over other possible moments wherein the beginning of an Egyptian polity can be studied (like, for example, the inauguration of Muhammad 'Ali's reign in the early 19th century). Furthermore, this was the time that witnessed the proliferation of the Egyptian Arabic press. This makes the late 19th century more suited to the study of ideology and discourse than the early 19th century, when the press was limited, and not intended for wide circulation – let alone for an Egyptian readership for that matter, and was mainly published in Ottoman Turkish. Thus, when dealing with the events of the 'Urabi revolt, for example, as the first instance of an emergence of a discourse on the Egyptian crowd, it is not to argue that there were no instances of confrontation between masses of people and state power before that moment; indeed there were peasant revolts under the rule of Muhammad 'Ali, demonstrations of Cairenes championing Muhammad 'Ali and opposing the Ottoman Viceroy Khurshid Pasha preceding 'Ali's appointment, and bloody confrontations between Cairene crowds and

⁴⁶ While academic literature in English usually refers to an *Ottoman Empire*, there are not any terms suggestive of empire in the Arabic archive I consulted. Regardless of whether the Ottoman Sultanate was in fact an *empire* (a question that necessitates a different set of tools and methods than the ones offered by this study), the fact remains that its Arab subjects in Egypt largely did not refer to, or conceive it as such. Instead, the Ottoman sultanate is *al-Dawlah* (roughly: the State), *al-Dawlah al-'Aliyyah* (roughly the High/Supreme State), *al-Saltanah* (the sultanate), *al-Bab al-'Ali* (the Sublime Porte), and *dawlat al-Khilafah* (the Caliphate). Throughout this study I will use the more neutral term *Sultanate*, except when I am referring to the Egyptians' perception of the Ottoman Sultanate as their caliphate.

the French army during “the French Campaign.” None of these events, however, created a popular discourse on the crowd intended for mass consumption: newspapers, as just mentioned, were neither printed in Arabic nor intended for mass circulation during these periods- and the same goes for ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti’s classic historiography of the French invasion, which mentioned the details of the Cairo revolts against the French and the rise of the Cairenes in support of Muhammad ‘Ali, but which did not aspire to mass circulation, written at a time before the widespread availability of the printing press in Egypt.

It was only the ‘Urabi revolt, coinciding with the age of print press and the spread of journalism, that achieved this status. The revolt also coincided with the rise of the bourgeois sciences, modern counterrevolutionary discourse, and the discourse on the crowd, in the aftermath of the Paris Commune as mentioned earlier (in Chapters 1 and 3, I will discuss how the Commune shaped the understanding of and the response to the ‘Urabi revolt by various Arab and European observers, to the point of declaring ‘Urabi himself as a communard, both by sympathetic French leftists and hostile French conservatives). It is also a time when the discourse on evolution was consolidated, and the discourse on degeneration emerged,⁴⁷ thus producing the successful subject as evolved and the failed subject as degenerate (almost always with racial overtones, a point I further explore throughout this study, especially in Chapter 1). It was at this time, moreover, when ideas of a national body, national vitality, and conversely national disease and degeneration took hold of nationalistic discourses

⁴⁷The discourse on degeneration was consolidated in 1892 by Max Nordau (whose theories were central for both Nazism and Zionism), but gestures towards degeneration and a degenerate type were circulated throughout the 19th century. In Chapter 3 I will revisit some of the pre-Nordau conceptions of degeneration, how they related to the crowd and to the Commune, and how they were referenced in the Arabic discourse on the Commune. In addition, in Chapter 1 I will show how degeneration played a significant role in 19th century conceptions of the crowd and revolution, as well as in the polemics surrounding the ‘Urabi revolt.

(thus lending support to the notions that the State is the custodian of national health, that licentious spaces are spaces of sickness and degeneration, and that the bad subject is a form of social disease). All these reasons contributed to my decision to focus on the late 19th/early 20th century as a crucial moment in Egyptian history.

The turn of the 20th/21st century is equally interesting. It is the time that led up to the uprising of 2011. Many of the tropes, themes, topoi, and discursive arsenal of the 2011 counterrevolutionary discourse were synthesized and put to the test then. It also witnessed many challenges to the Egyptian regime, around which a discourse on the licentious space and the bad subject emerged. In the 1980s and especially the 1990s, the Egyptian State was engaged in a confrontation on all levels with armed (and unarmed) Islamist groups. Around the same time, the State⁴⁸ was depicting itself as the custodian of national morality, and was casting the licentious youth as the target of the State's moralizing discourse— and sometimes as the enemy of the

⁴⁸ It may seem that there is a conflation between State and regime here. Was the confrontation between the Islamists and the regime or the Islamists and the State as such? It is difficult to answer this question within the purview of this study, but we can provide a few pointers. First the confrontation was between not only the Islamists and the people in power, but between the Islamists and state institutions, including the police, the media, 'independent' propagandists and intellectuals, and state-owned economic sphere (let alone, at some points, the very conception of the modern State). A point that will recur throughout this study is how some Islamist groups refrained from taking up arms and merely withdrew from society and from the official economy, which in itself was understood by state officials and propagandists as a threat. Similarly, the refusal of some Islamist organization to partake of state marriage was understood in insurrectionary light and was construed by propagandists as among the Islamists' gravest crimes. It seems that the understanding on both sides was of a confrontation between the Islamists and the State as such, to the extent that the organization of the Revolutionary Socialists came up, in the early 1990s, with the slogan "sometimes on the side of the Islamists, always against the State," (itself a paraphrase of Chris Harman's directive that "Where the Islamists are in opposition, our rule should be, 'with the Islamists sometimes, with the state never,'" in *The Prophet and the Proletariat*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/harman/1994/xx/islam.htm>). More broadly, beyond the context of the confrontations with the Islamists, this study will make reference to the *State* rather than the *regime* since the study is of the various institutions that sustain the regime rather than the regime as such. These will include the media, the family, and various propagandists who are not necessarily part of the regime but are its supporters nevertheless. This is consistent with the Althusserian understanding of the State as comprising, in addition to the ruling class, repressive and ideological state apparatuses. Only when referring to propagandists/supporters can the terms *state* and *regime* be used interchangeably: they are regime propagandists in the sense that they work for the regime, but they are state propagandists as in they constitute the propaganda apparatus of the State.

State's values. The conflation between the licentious youth and political activists, sometimes even the licentious youth and the Islamists specifically, in the discourse of the regime's propagandists, was commonplace (a point I will explore repeatedly throughout this study, especially in Chapters 1 and 2).

In 1996-97 the scandal of the so-called Satanists erupted: *Ruz al-Yusuf* (the same propaganda magazine that spearheaded the campaign against the Islamists) alleged that heavy metal music clubs were a mask for a satanic cult, triggering a wave of police arrests (which *Ruz al-Yusuf* later criticized). For a few months in 1997, the Egyptian public sphere was dominated by the Satanists' scandal. The Satanists became the epitome of the *licentious type* and their emergence in print brought together the discursive tools developed against the licentious youth with the discursive tools developed against the Islamists. This kinship-in-bad-subjectivity between the Islamists and the Satanists will be examined in Chapter 2. The alliance, or kinship, between political activists (Islamist or otherwise), and the licentious youth (Satanist or not), would also appear in public discourse, especially in cinematic production, in the 1990s and also in the first decade of the 21st century, setting the blueprint for the counterrevolutionary propaganda of 2011.

Finally, the 1990s were marked by a number of anxieties that were mostly associated with globalization: anxiety about the family, anxiety about national sovereignty (especially in the aftermath of the Iraq war and in anticipation of the invasion of Iraq which would take place a decade later), and anxiety about sexuality and its relation to personal and national health – especially in the aftermath of the AIDS pandemic, which placed the question of venereal diseases on the public

agenda.⁴⁹ All these anxieties had a role to play, one way or another, in the elaboration of licentious spaces and subjects.

Before proceeding from this discussion of periodization to a closer discussion of the archive, I have to concede that the two episodes I chose as my focus points fit too neatly with the standardized turn of time in accordance with the Gregorian calendar. Instead of viewing this neat-fitting choice as a concession to the hegemony of the Gregorian calendar— or the standardization of time more broadly— I invite my readers to consider it as an acknowledgment of the hegemonic effect of standardized time and the Gregorian calendar on the authors and players I am reading. In both turns of the century, authors and political figures were exhibiting an awareness of this temporal threshold, sometimes with messianic anticipation and/or apocalyptic urgency.

The turn of the 19th/20th Gregorian centuries coincided with the turn of the 13th/14th Hijri centuries; the Gregorian year 1882, which witnessed the ‘Urabi revolt and the British invasion, coincided with the Hijri year of 1299. This temporality, though arbitrary, led many political players and authors to view the events with anticipation for an impending, messianic/apocalyptic change. For example Egyptian newspapers would invoke a prophetic tradition stating that God sends to the Muslim ummah “at the head of every 100 years” someone to rejuvenate its faith. This saying was interpreted, in different contexts and by different authors, as referring to ‘Urabi and to Sultan ‘Abdul Hamid (the Ottoman Sultan from 1876 to 1909, venerated by the

⁴⁹ In the 1980s and 1990s the Egyptian media went through an AIDS scare, evident in Ministry of Health sponsored advertisements warning against HIV, and in films like *al-Hubb wa al-Ru‘b* (*Love and Horror*, 1991) in which all the characters end up contracting HIV. AIDS will also appear as the foreign-imported tragic destiny of the licentious youth in the film *Disco Disco* (1993).

two waves of early Egyptian nationalism as their caliph, at least until he was ousted by the Young Turks movement).

In the 1990s the world witnessed a similar anticipation, sometimes messianic, others apocalyptic; let us not forget how computer scientists in the “West” adopted an apocalyptic turn and prophesied an electronic apocalypse at the start of the year 2000. The Egyptian archive I consulted for the purpose of this study shows a similar apocalyptic/messianic anxiety; on the one hand there was the apocalyptic anxiety about AIDS as a millennial disease, about the demise of the family in an age of globalization, and the overall anxiety of not being able to keep up with, not being able to ‘enter’ the new century (a point that unfortunately falls out of the scope of this study, though related to the conception of the indigenous subject as lagging in development, and thus as failed and/or degenerate). Standard time, in its Hijri and especially its Gregorian versions, was thus part of the ideological worlds that shaped the archives I consult and the authors I read. As a result, the decision to focus on the two turns of century, even if conceding to Gregorian hegemony, is justifiable in a study concerned with ideology.

Archive and Method

As evident from the exposition above, this study employs an eclectic archive, ranging from written texts to visual representations, and from news reports to works of fiction. Every episode of history dictates its own archive. For example, in the late 19th century, newspapers were founded and many leading Egyptian thinkers took up journalistic writing as a means of expression and dissemination of ideas; to mention just one example, in 1881 the leading intellectual of the time ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim

turned to journalism and issued a landmark newspaper, *al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit*.⁵⁰ In the summer of the same year, al-Nadim became involved with the ‘Urabi revolt – eventually becoming its main orator, propagandist, and spokesperson. Al-Nadim then changed his newspaper’s title to *al-Ta’if* (the Roamer), a publication that came to an untimely end when the British forces invaded the country and silenced the nationalist press.⁵¹ Al-Nadim himself was forced into hiding, only to come back in the 1890s with a new publication, *al-Ustadh* (meaning the master, the teacher, and/or the educator, revealing the educational role al-Nadim envisioned for journalism). Al-Nadim was not a singular example, at the time there were other pro-‘Urabi publications, most notably *al-Mufid*, anti-‘Urabi ones (including *al-Burhan*) and a number of turncoats (including *al-Mahrusah* and *Misr*). The second wave of Egyptian

⁵⁰ Although the title is simple and verges on the vernacular, it is difficult to offer an adequate translation. The second half is easier to translate: *al-tabkit* clearly refers to chastise and castigation, usually with a sense of vindication on the side of the castigator. The first half, however, is elusive. In modern colloquial Egyptian, *tankit* refers to mockery or to telling jokes, and indeed it has been commonly perceived and translated to mean sarcasm and mockery in the context of this title. This is rooted in an understanding of al-Nadim as a satirist and the understanding of the publication as one that is satirical and comical, a newspaper of *jokes and reproach*. The problem with this interpretation, however, is that throughout its short tenure, the newspaper published no jokes and had little (if any) comical content. *Tankit* thus may have meant something different in that context. Although *nuktaḥ* (from which *tankit* is derived) refers to jokes in modern standard Arabic, it occurred in late 19th century Egyptian writings to mean something’s or someone’s point or point of view. This usage may have been derived from the Persian *nukṭé/nukteh* which means a (metaphorical) point or a point of view (in turn derived from the Arabic *nuqtah*, which means a point, literal or metaphorical). This meaning is more attune to the gist of al-Nadim’s publication, which *made points* through stories, dialogues, and parables. A more accurate (though less literal) translation would thus be *Making Points and Chastise* or simply *Parables and Lessons*. To avoid the need to repeat this explanation every time I cite the newspaper, the title will simply be transliterated from Arabic every time it is referenced. For the sake of consistency I will do the same with all Arabic titles, which will be cited in Arabic in the footnotes or in the text, while providing a translation of the title when relevant or necessary.

⁵¹ After being the victim of British colonialism, *al-Ta’if* became the victim of postcolonial bureaucracy. *Al-Ta’if*’s collection at the Egyptian Archive (*Dar al-Kutub*) has gone missing (which to my knowledge is the only surviving public collection of the newspaper, as no collections exist at the British Library, the Bibliothèque National de France {BNF}, or the Library of Congress). On various occasions I received two contradictory explanations: that copies of the publication are in a malfunctioning shelf which has not been open for years, and that the copies have been destroyed by wear and tear (and that they have been sent for reconstruction). Fortunately I was able to find a few surviving issues at Dar al-Kutub as part of a collection of newspapers pertaining to the ‘Urabi revolt. The larger collection, however, remains missing. This is the reason why my analysis of the ‘Urabist discourse relies on the other ‘Urabist mouthpiece, *al-Mufid* (which roughly means *the Edifier* or *the Informative*, and can in a different context mean *the Beneficial*).

nationalism followed suit; in 1900 the nationalist leader Mustafa Kamil established the newspaper *al-Liwa'*, from which the National Party emerged (in a curious case where the mouthpiece predated the party). Thus, newspapers of this era represent a most suitable medium for studying the articulations of identity, self, and nation, and the subjective relation between Egyptians and the State that rules them and the space they inhabit.⁵²

In the subsequent years, newspapers would not cease to be important. However, in the early 20th century, other forms of fiction writing would appear and provide a suitable medium for testing the dissemination of ideological notions beyond news reports and political analysis (a role that would be played by cinema later in the 20th century). In the second decade of the 20th century, especially during and after WWI, the British authorities imposed martial law on the country and censorship on its press. This measure does not diminish the importance of journalism for studying the ideological notions of the time; on the contrary, it is important to discern what the British authorities wanted said— and for that purpose newspaper reports will be read alongside official British correspondence and reports. The dissemination of certain notions beyond British and pro-British discourse, or the shortage thereof, can be tested through examining protest songs and other forms of artistic production— a musical play emerging from the tradition of protest songs will be examined in Chapter 5 as part of a search for the moments of emergence of militarism in Egyptian anti-colonial revolutionary discourse (an emergence that would be later appropriated by Statist and counterrevolutionary discourse).

⁵² For the role of the printing press and journalism in fomenting a national ethos, inventing nationalism, and *imagining the community*, See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (London: Verso, 2006), 22- 36, 63- 65, 74- 82.

In the late 20th century and through what elapsed of the 21st, cinema and television became prominent ideological tools, and thus most suitable media for the study of subjectivity (since, once more, this study follows the Althusserian assumption that subjectivity is a materialization of ideology). The scope and length of this dissertation does not allow for the study of relevant television series and advertisements. Instead, I will look at films and, when relevant, television interviews with celebrities – the surface apolitical nature (surface because deep down everything is political) of mainstream cinema and celebrity talk-shows allows for a chance to study ideology beyond political rhetoric (and here I say rhetoric instead of discourse because even if they are apolitical in rhetoric, mainstream cinema and television cannot be thought of in isolation from political discourse). If the licentious revolutionary appears even in commercial films not intended (solely) as political propaganda, and even in a talk show by Tal‘at Zakariyya, a comedic actor with little involvement in politics (and on a sports channel, in a talk show hosted by a former football player),⁵³ then one can show the proliferation of a dominant ideology beyond direct state command or the party-line of the regime. In fact, governmental directives and official regime statements are less likely to be a suitable medium for the study of the ideological notions I aim to explore and interrogate; a media spokesman of the

⁵³ One thing that remains uncovered in this study is the relationship between sports, particularly football, and ideology— something Althusser gestured towards in his “Ideology and State Apparatus” (96, 105, 113), but remains generally understudied. National sports, especially football, have played a significant role in Egyptian politics, from the fiasco of the match with Algeria (2009) that escalated into clashes between football fans of both countries in the streets of Cairo and al-Khartoum, and almost led to a diplomatic crisis, to the involvement of leagues of football fans (the *ultras*) in protest politics and the appearance of former football players as regime propagandists, opposition figures, or Muslim Brothers’ unofficial spokespersons. Organized sports in general can be thought of as one of the most effective ideological state apparatuses, from their ability to engender and normalize an ideology of competitiveness (essential to the working of capitalism) to their ability to interpellate their viewers as national(ist) subjects cheering for “their” team and coming to tears when their national anthem is played. One of the few analyses of sports in terms of ideology in a postcolonial Arab context that I am aware of appears in Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 255- 258.

government or an army general are less likely to make statements about revolutionaries engaging in illicit sexual affairs in sit-ins (though an unnamed army general, who is thought by many observers to be none other than current Egyptian president ‘Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi, made a statement to this effect when declaring, in defense of subjecting a number of female activists to virginity tests, that these women “are neither like your daughters nor like mine”).⁵⁴ These claims are more likely made by propagandists, some of whom work in cinema and television (like Tal‘at Zakariyya), others in the field of journalism (especially *Akhbar al-Yawm* and *Ruz al-Yusuf*, two unapologetically pro-regime publications on which this study heavily relies).

This eclecticism also applies to the European archive I am using. Newspaper reports, government documents, and works of political propaganda will be read side by side works of literature—and occasionally cinematic and television representations. Amongst the works of literature I will read, Charles Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities* is of paramount importance. It is simultaneously a paradigmatic 19th century text on the crowd and the threat it poses to proper spaces (especially the domestic) and a landmark of Egyptian culture (a point I further explain, with special attention to the underlying colonial violence, in Chapter 3). It is also the first Dickens

⁵⁴ For the actual interview where this statement was made, on the condition of anonymity, see Shahira Amin, “Egyptian General Admits ‘Virginity Checks’ Conducted on Protesters,” *CNN*, 31/5/2011, <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/05/30/egypt.virginity.tests/index.html>. The anonymous general also declared “We didn’t want them to say we had sexually assaulted or raped them, so we wanted to prove that they weren’t virgins in the first place.” A month later, then-General ‘Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi made an eerily similar statement; in a meeting with Amnesty International’s Secretary General, al-Sisi claimed the virginity tests were a measure to protect the army against allegations of rape; “Egypt: Military Pledges to Stop ‘Virginity Tests’,” *Amnesty International Press Release*, 27/6/2011, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2011/06/egypt-military-pledges-stop-forced-virginity-tests/>.

novel to be translated into Arabic and is perhaps one of Dickens' most popular works among Arab readers.⁵⁵ It surfaced many times in Egyptian pro-State and counterrevolutionary rhetorics as a cautionary note against revolutionary excess. This role was inaugurated by its translation into Arabic by Muhammad al-Siba'i (an operative of cultural colonialism and an agent of *cultural imposition*, as I will show in Chapter 3), who denounced both the French Revolution and Egyptian culture in his preface to the translation. Al-Siba'i thus effaced any ambiguity the *Tale* showed towards the revolutionary crowd and instead mobilized it for a blatantly counterrevolutionary agenda, a role the *Tale* would return to play in post-2011 Egyptian pro-regime rhetorics, whereby the so-called "lessons of the French Revolution" would be invoked to warn against revolutionary justice and revolutionary excesses. This was the case, for example, with *al-Ahram* columnist Hazim 'Abd al-Rahman's article "Nurid Muhakamatan la Intiqaman" (We Want a Trial, Not Vengeance). This article opens by dramatically invoking the *Tale's* malign representation of revolutionary women as vengeful: "We all remember the story of Lady Vengeance (*al-sayyidah intiqam*) in *A Tale of Two Cities*, which tells the story of the Revolution. Everyone thought she was knitting table-cloths, while she was recording the names of the perpetrators of injustice."⁵⁶ (Obviously, not all of us remember her, but those who do, remember that her name was Therese Defarge not Lady Vengeance. The Vengeance was her aide.) The article then moves to oppose justice to vengeance, calling for pursuing the former and shunning the latter when trying Mubarak. The article quickly moves, however, from calling for a fair trial for Mubarak to issuing a plea for sympathy with him: the author reminds his readers that

⁵⁵ See Nur Sherif, *Dickens in Arabic (1912- 1970)*, (Beirut: Beirut Arab University, 1974).

⁵⁶ Hazim Abd al-Rahman, "Nurid Muhakamah la intiqaman," *Al-Ahram*, 17/4/2011, <http://ahram.org.eg/archive/505/2011/4/16/4/73177/219.aspx>

there is a “silent majority” still sympathetic to the former president, and characterizes their sympathy as “humane” and “noble.” Although ‘Abd al-Rahman is displacing sympathy with Mubarak to unnamed others – the “silent majority”- instead of proclaiming it as his own, he concludes the first segment of his article by enumerating the reasons why one should sympathize with Mubarak. *A Tale of Two Cities* here is invoked to caution against revolutionary justice, yet as a pretext for sympathy with the *ancien régime* (in spite of Dickens’ lack of sympathy towards the French *ancien régime*, which he blamed for the excesses of the Revolution).

Perhaps the clearest invocation of the *Tale* as a lesson comes from Ayman al-Jundi’s *Al-Misri al-Yawm* article “likay la tatakarrar qissat madinatayn”⁵⁷ (So that *A Tale of Two Cities* would not be Repeated). While crediting Egyptians with a gentle spirit that inoculated them against the revolutionary terror France went through, al-Jundi finds it important to learn the lessons of the *Tale*, “the tale of revolution when it deviates from the path of reform, and of the drive to vengeance when let loose/left without restraint حين يُطلق لها العنان. This is the lesson we should learn so that *A Tale of Two Cities* not be repeated in our beloved Egypt.” Before jumping to this conclusion, al-Jundi paints the picture of the riffraff and the vulgar (*ri‘a’* and *ghawgha’*) shedding blood, spreading chaos, inciting and perpetrating acts of violence, and forming their committees that put people on trial and punish them on a whim. This description of Revolutionary terrors zeroes in on Dickens’ depiction of the September Massacre and makes it a “nightly incursion” in which the “*ghawgha’ min al-wataniyyin*” (roughly the vulgar patriots, or the vulgar among the patriots) massacre prisoners upon suspicion and “attack the houses of those accused of Reaction (*al-raj‘iyyah*), whom

⁵⁷ Ayman al-Jindy, “likay la tatakarrar qissat madinatayn,” *al-Misri al-Yawm*, 12/4/2011, <http://www.almasyalyoum.com/news/details/206095>.

they slaughter while singing and dancing.” (We see here an orgiastic representation of revolutionary violence, consistent with the orgiastic representations in the *Tale* and the wider theme of orgiastic representations that we will explore throughout this study). A cursory reference to the *Tale* was also provided by ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Sa‘id (who was a member of Mubarak’s entourage of journalists and a vehement supporter of his policies but was able to rebrand himself as neutral during the downfall of the president) in an essay titled “Min al-Qahirah: Charles Dickens” [From Cairo: Charles Dickens].⁵⁸ Sa‘id starts off his essay by quoting the famous opening passage of the *Tale* “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times ...” and then uses it to describe the ambiguity of revolutionary times (as if to justify his own ambiguity towards both the revolution and the dictator whom he previously served). Although Sa‘id’s article fails to engage with the *Tale* on any level beyond quoting its opening passage, the ambiguity/ambivalence of the passage (it was simultaneously the best of times and the worst of times), which in the novel foreshadows Dickens’ ambivalence towards the Revolution, becomes an alibi for Sa‘id’s own ambivalence. After cryptic and (morally and representationally) ambiguous references to the *Tale* and to revolution (“vigorous and young– *‘atiyyah fatiyyah*- facing the future with her mind and heart, while the present calls like the Siren – *al-naddahah*- to where no one goes, away from the past that throws its heavy weight on a looming and glooming present” – whatever all this is supposed to mean) Sa‘id concludes that there is a “historical responsibility” to make the right choice at the times of revolution – but never tells us what his *historically responsible* choice is. When not invoked as a counterrevolutionary pedagogical tool, the *Tale* appears –in Egyptian discourse- as an

⁵⁸ ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Sa‘id, “Min al-Qahirah: Charles Dickens,” *al-Ahram*, 13/8/2011, <http://ahram.org.eg/archive/623/2011/8/12/11/95011/219.aspx>.

alibi for morally ambiguous positions taken by serial turn-coats who neither want to antagonize the public nor to confront the authorities (which perhaps is truest to the ambiguity of the novel towards the French Revolution). Counterrevolutionary invocations of the *Tale* continued to appear as late as 2014 when *Dot Misr* (a counterrevolutionary online media outlet created by ‘Abd Allah Kamal, who would resurface as a regime propagandist throughout our study) published an article titled “Ghazl al-Sayyidah Difarj” [Madame Defarge’s knitting] wherein the author warns against revolutionary excesses and revolutionaries who do not know where to stop⁵⁹ (this comes in 2014, at a time when putschists and Sisi apologists thought it was time for upheaval and agitation to stop). Therefore, *A Tale of Two Cities* is as relevant to studying post-2011 Egyptian ideologies and discourse the same way it is relevant for studying 19th century Victorian and European notions of revolution and the Crowd. To that effect, reading the *Tale* alongside the European and Egyptian archives helps us explore 19th century European notions of the crowd and revolution and trace their travel to the Egyptian cultural and political spheres, as well as the colonial channels that ensured their persistence.

In all these examples, in both the Egyptian/Arabic and the European archives, I read together a disparate range and genres of sources, written in different styles, intended for different audiences, some of them fiction, while others are intended to be factual (a point I take with a grain of salt; regime propagandists are not always honest or realistic in their representations/fabrications, as some of the examples given throughout this study will show, especially in Chapter 2). This generic eclecticism, especially the blurring of the boundaries between fact and fiction

⁵⁹ “Ghazl al-Sayyidah Defarge,” *Dot Misr* 1/12/2014, <http://www.dotmsr.com/details/142024/> غزل السيدة ديفارج.

(or between literary fiction and state propaganda fiction), is merited by the

Althusserian conception of ideology as an *imaginary* relationship to the *real world*. In

his foundational essay on Ideology, Althusser notes:

Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. We commonly call religious ideology, ethical ideology, legal ideology, political ideology, etc., so many 'world outlooks'. Of course, assuming that we do not live one of those ideologies as the truth (e.g. 'believe' in God, Duty, justice, etc.... [ellipsis in original]), we admit that the ideology we are discussing from a critical point of view, examining it as the ethnologist examines the myths of a 'primitive society', that these 'world outlooks' are largely imaginary, i.e. do not 'correspond to reality'.

However, while admitting that they do not correspond to reality, i.e. that they constitute an illusion, we admit that they do make allusion to reality, and that they need to be 'interpreted' to discover the reality of the world behind their imaginary representation of that world (ideology = *illusion/allusion*).⁶⁰ (all emphases in original)

Ideology, ideological representation (or, one may simply say, representation, as all representations are ideological) therefore, is a fiction, yet a fiction anchored in reality – or in a set of realities; not only in the reality of the *thing* being (mis)represented, but also in the realities of power that shape the thing, its conception/misconception, and its mode of representation. It is this fiction, this *illusion/allusion* that I am interested in, be the sources I read (nominally) factual or fictive. It matters little whether the account on the sexual proclivities of political activists in Tahrir Square and other sit-ins in Egypt and elsewhere rested on factual reality or was entirely fictional. What is at stake, as far as this study is concerned, is the ideological work this depiction performs and/or exposes, the relationship of *illusion/allusion* that produces these claims as objects of public discourse, that adds political salience to this claim, and that rests on and further reinforces a set of state ideologies (the bourgeois ideology of the family that looks with moral suspicion on any convention, celibate let alone sexual, outside of the bounds of the family, or any social formations, kinship structures, or even familial arrangements that do not match the model of the bourgeois

⁶⁰ Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus," 109- 110.

nuclear monogamous family- a point I further explore in Chapter 5, the ideology of work that looks with suspicion and dismisses as wasteful, playful, and disruptive, any convention outside the spaces of work, the military ideology that looks down on civilians as licentious, feminine, and lacking in discipline, etc.). In other words, I examine accounts of political protest and other spaces that escape the State's gaze in the Egyptian and European archives, regardless of whether they were intended as fact or fiction, "as the ethnologist examines the myths of 'primitive society', [assuming] that these 'world outlooks' are largely imaginary, i.e. do not 'correspond to reality'," while "[admitting] that they do make allusion to reality."⁶¹

This is not to say that the distinction between genres, especially between the factual and the fictive, is completely irrelevant. In fact, in order to establish the dominance of a certain ideology or a certain mode of ideological representation, it is important to show how the same pattern of ideological representation can be observed across genres. Only then we can argue that the ideology in question is pervasive, hegemonic, and dominant; that it dominates both our perception of what is real and our imagination of what is unreal or only relatively real, that it comes out in imagination and fiction, as much as it shapes reporting on reality. That the licentious revolutionary comes out in journalistic reports (in Arabic, English, and French, ranging from the sensationalist {e.g. Ruz al-Yusuf} to the more serious {e.g. *Akhbar al-Yawm* and *al-Jawa'ib*}, and spanning the 19th to the 21st century) in the speeches of army generals, in films, and in commentaries by second rate comedic actors-cum-propagandists appearing on sports talk shows, in colonial reports and 19th century counterrevolutionary propaganda, as well as in works of fiction, is testament to how

⁶¹ Ibid.

the licentious revolutionary is an effect of a dominant ideology or a set of dominant ideologies that persist across time and are able to materialize in disparate and generically distinct discourses.

Thematic Mappings

This study starts off with the question of what/who are the bad subjects and what are the spaces that produce them. Throughout this study, the crowd (especially the revolutionary crowd) along with other spaces of protest will recur as the natural habitat of the licentious subject and the quintessential licentious space. This dissertation, however, is not a study of the crowd per se, but rather a search for licentious, failed, and bad subjects in spaces that evade the State's gaze or lack its sanction. Chapter 1 pursues the question of what happens, according to statist representations, when the power of the State to survey/surveill and discipline collapses, weakens, or is evaded. Opposed to the metaphysics of the State, or the *metaphysics of modernity* (as per Timothy Mitchell's formulation) which are embodied in the modern State, there is a metaphysics of disorder, of perversion, of things that the State should have otherwise restrained going astray, of moral and biological degeneration, of chaos and licentiousness. In the Arabic archive, these physical and metaphysical conceptions of chaos were coded in terms like *infilat* (setting loose, letting go of bounds, a term which also gives the sense of a deterioration) *inqilab* (overturning), *inhilal* (coming undone, dissolution, degeneration) and *fawda* (chaos). Chapter 1 examines the appearance of these terms, with special attention to the various connotations of degeneration leading up to sexual chaos— and thus revisits the representation of the 2011 Tahrir Square sit-in as a scene of utter sexual chaos. Chapter 2 uses these representations of sexual chaos to theorize the licentious space through 19th century appropriations of the Dionysian

orgy (through taking up and revising Ernst Curtius' concept of the *literary topos*). Just like sit-ins and other licentious spaces, the Dionysian orgy constituted a space that escaped the public gaze and was therefore suspected of all sorts of license, from dance and intoxication to illicit sex. The explicit and implicit recurrence of the orgy (and its successor, the Satanic ritual)⁶² in the archive (both the colonial and the Egyptian postcolonial, as well as other counterrevolutionary discourses in 20th century Euro-America) suggests that a modern reimagining of the Dionysian orgy by colonial and counterrevolutionary ideologists shaped the conception of licentious space. Furthermore, the orgy represented a collective in which individuality dissolves, causing not only regression to a pre-individual (and thus pre-civilizational) phase, but also further defiance of the State's gaze, bent to count its subjects. In that effect, the orgy is like the crowd, offering the same challenge to a State that interpellates its subjects as individuals. This similarity explains the common conflation of crowds with orgies in various 19th and 20th century representations. Chapter 2 closes with a discussion of the orgy and the crowd. This discussion also shows how both the crowd and the orgy were always projected onto the Orient.

The search for bad subjects in the licentious spaces they inhabit uncovers the Social Darwinist basis inherent in the formation of the modern subject (already coded in Freud's appropriation of Ernst Haeckel's notion that "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny"), thus placing colonialism at the centre of this study. In Chapter 1, the degeneration of the subject along biological, racial, and civilizational lines appears as a recurrent attribute of the licentious space and subject. In Chapters 1 and 3 the Arab (alongside a number of Europe's racial others, most notably the sexual savage)

⁶² The ways whereby the Satanic ritual inherited the Dionysian orgy will also be explained in Chapter 2.

appears as a model of bad subjectivity, used both in the colony and the metropole.

Chapter 2, although not dealing with race, argues that the use of the topos of the orgy in Egypt was an effect of a colonial process, or of *impulsive cultural impositions* that erased earlier less voyeuristic modes of power. This chapter also shows how “Oriental mysteries” have consistently played a part in the imagining of licentious spaces, whether in the imagining of the Dionysian orgy as an Oriental mystery, or in imagining the Orient as a space beyond representation and order (which places the Orient in the same category as the crowd). Chapter 3 discusses how European colonialism produced the concept of licentious space, not only in Egypt or the colony more broadly, but also in the metropole. It explores how the process of cultural colonialism produced a discursive revolving door through which Europe’s racial others (including the Muslim and the Arab) were subsumed into Europe’s notion of its metropolitan licentious crowd, while projecting its licentious crowds and its notions of licentiousness onto the colonies (including Egypt). The Egyptian discourse on the licentious crowd was thus largely shaped under colonial conditions that already mapped the Egyptian onto the abnegated and the licentious. Chapter 4 examines the discursive effects of this psychic trauma, which posits a certain version of the self as the licentious other. It explores how Arab and especially Egyptian representations of licentious space, even (especially) the ones that aim to reverse the Orientalist trope of a sensual and licentious Orient by depicting the licentious space as essentially Western or Westernized, ultimately re-produce the colonial biases they seek to subvert. It will also examine how the Nasserist discourse on the masses was able to subvert some of the modernist/colonialist conceptions of the licentious space while abiding by others. Ultimately notions of licentious versus proper space, even in the Nasserist rhetoric, accepted a Western organization of space that consecrates modern

and colonial institutions, especially the family and the army, as the proper spaces *par excellence*.

Chapter 5 examines these proper spaces. It starts with an account of the family as a colonial institution that was presented as a model for good spaces and an incubator of good subjectivity. The modern family (nuclear, bourgeois, monogamous, and most importantly officially registered) does not only enjoy state sanction but also submits mating and procreating habits to the attention of the biopolitical State through marriage contracts and birth certificates. Similarly the army, though having a more fraught history with colonialism than the family, is shown to be an institution modeled on, among other things, the colonial army, and thus one that played a central role in universalizing Western modes of subjectivity. This chapter concludes with a discussion of how the family and the army (amongst other modern institutions, or *ideological state apparatuses*) worked together to promote an Oedipal and particularly Western mode of subjectivation. Chapter 5 and the conclusion examine what this colonial definition of space and subjectivity entails for the Egyptian subject, what it means for the colonized to be subjectivated through an ideology (and an ideological organization and division of space) that not only idealizes the colonizer but also abnegates the colonized (the short answer is, obviously, a Fanonian trauma).

Final Notes on Terminology Transliteration and Citation

Throughout this study, many Arabic terms will appear, in their original form, not only as empirical samples but also as conceptual and theoretical tools. My insistence on theorizing through Arabic terms is not to be seen as an attempt to render the Arabic archive, and the Arabic concepts and terms found in it, distant, inaccessible, or *exotic*. I am not even arguing that only Arabic terms are relevant for the Arabic archive;

although I attempt to theorize the archive on its own terms, my analysis will show that European concepts (like civilization and degeneration) dominated Arab- or at least Egyptian thought, at least since the late 19th century (to various degrees and with various levels of internalization). Instead, my purpose is to invoke the richness of these Arabic terms and the array of concepts they cover. Despite this richness, throughout the 19th-21st centuries, these terms were mobilized in a manner that rendered Arabic modern discourse a mimicry or derivative of (and in rare cases a response to) Western discourses. Even then, nevertheless, the Arabic terms can better refer to the specific articulation of colonial concepts within an Arab context. The term *inhilal*, for example, brings together the breaking loose of state bounds with the concepts of biological and moral degeneration (concepts that are interrelated in the colonial episteme) in ways the term degeneration does not. In addition, sometimes the Arabic translations, through their rich semantic valence, signify layers of meaning that are implicit though not semantically registered in the English and French terms. The term *inqilab* (which was used to translate upheaval and revolution among other terms, and which in modern Arabic means a *coup d'état*), for example, especially in its usage in late 19th century texts, signifies an overturning of an upright order of things under revolutionary chaos, a feature that belongs to 19th century Western conceptions of the State but is not clearly captured by any of the English terms used (unless we understand *revolution* as literally *overturning*). My usage of Arabic terms is therefore not different from the usage of German terms in explications of Hegelian thought or the usage of French terms in explications of structuralist thought. While some of the Arabic terms I use were coined in the 19th century as translations of English and French terms, studying the Arabic term registers the circulation of the meanings associated with such terms. Finally, my insistence on theorizing through

Arabic terms stems from my rejection of the notion that European languages are *research* languages while Arabic is an *archive* language. If this inadvertently or inevitably adds a layer of inaccessibility to these terms and the archive they come from, so be it.

For the Arabic terms I will be using the transliteration system used by the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies (IJMES)* with slight modifications—for example the terminal *◌* and *◌* will be transliterated as *ah* rather than *a*— a grave phonetic mistake with grave consequences in terms of prosody which *IJMES* insists on ignoring. When a term is circulated in its vernacular Egyptian form, I will provide transliteration in both the fusha and the colloquial. Arabic terms will only be italicized when referenced as terms— consistent with the italicization of words used as terms as per the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Lengthy quotations and block quotes will be provided in the original Arabic script. Given the richness of the Arabic language and the type of sources I will use (which include poetry, *belle-lettre*, satire, cartoons, etc.), it will be impossible to provide an accurate translation of all Arabic quotations. When an exact translation is not possible, I will paraphrase the text as part of my analysis. The same method will be followed with French citations.

Consistent with the *Chicago Manual's* recommendations concerning classical English poetry, all poems (English, Arabic, and French) will only be cited in text through providing their title. Publication details will only be provided when the discussion pertains to the specific details of the print edition.

All citations from Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* refer to the Dover edition, in a departure from the standard practice in Dickensian and English Literature studies to cite the Oxford edition. This is for the very practical reason that the Dover

edition was the one readily available for purchase while I was working on this dissertation. Other than that, citations from the *Tale* will follow the standard practice of citing the book number, followed by chapter, followed by page number, with interceding dots.

Chapter 1

The State and Its Discontents: The Mythologies of Order and Chaos

This study posits that modern political conceptions of the State entrust the latter with Order, with restraining what should be restrained, and with repressing what/who should be repressed, all of which are mystified under the guise of the comfort and security of the members of society. Conversely, political dissent, revolt, revolution, and activities that are perceived to challenge the State one way or another, are produced in dominant ideologies as the eruption of disorder, chaos, and licentiousness. This chapter will mostly strive to explore the latter, though an overview of the former is *in order*.

The triumph of this conception of the State was played out in two inseparable battlegrounds, one theoretical, the other practical-material. In the first battleground, a litany of ideological discourses venerating the State, positing it as the custodian of the natural order of things, and entrusting it with the wellbeing of its subjects, was produced, circulated, and canonized as political theory. The second battlefront was the material: the material events through which the State identified its enemies, subjected them to disciplinary practices and/or to sheer violence, and stressed its presence at their expense. This battleground comprised (at least) two battlefronts: one against revolutions, uprisings, and revolts in the European metropole, in other words the battle to subdue, contain, and repress the metropolitan crowd; the other against the colonies. To refer to this battleground as material, acknowledging the material events around which these battles were fought and articulated, is not to deny the discursive aspect of these battles. In addition to political theories which were involved in and/or shaped by the confrontations between revolution and counterrevolution, these

confrontations engendered various discursive effects: novels (like Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, which deals with the French Revolution but is written in the aftermath of the 1848 revolutions), bodies of knowledge on the crowd (like Gustave LeBon's *The Crowd*, written in the aftermath of – and largely as a response to– the Paris Commune of 1871),⁶³ and scientific discourses on deviance, insanity, and gender (most notably surrounding the Paris Commune, coinciding with the rise of bourgeois sciences, as I will show throughout this chapter and in Chapter 3), effects which outlived the respective events in which they were anchored.

The two battlegrounds, the theoretical and the material, were of course inseparable (indeed the Althusserian formulation to which this study subscribes acknowledges the materiality of ideology);⁶⁴ indeed my separation of the material and the theoretical through the metaphor of battlegrounds has its limitations. Theories in general, political theories in particular, and especially theories of the State are not suspended in a vacuum: they are articulated through events which simultaneously shape and are shaped by them (and here I deal with political theory as inseparable from, yet irreducible to, the discourse surrounding the material political and social events they were associated with).⁶⁵ For the purpose of this dissertation, and as far as

⁶³ Gustave LeBon, *The Crowd*. All subsequent citations will refer to the 2007 version edited by Robert Nye: LeBon, *The Crowd*, ed. Robert Nye, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007). For how the career and oeuvre of LeBon, especially *The Crowd*, were situated in a world largely conditioned by the Commune and its aftermath, and how *The Crowd* was more specifically in many ways a response to the Commune, see Robert Nye, *The Origins of Crowd Psychology: Gustave LeBon and the Crisis of Mass Democracy in the Third Republic*, (London: Sage Publications, 1975).

⁶⁴ Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus," 112- 115.

⁶⁵ It is important here to note how Althusser envisioned the role of political theory as something that adjoins philosophy and practice (echoing Antonio Gramsci's appellation of Marxist theory as *the theory of praxis*), and how he argued that ideology is indeed material and plays a role as a material force; see Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus," 112- 115, 124- 126, *On the*

Egyptian Statist and counterrevolutionary discourses are concerned, the series of material events to which the discourse, theories, and ideologies of the State were anchored included the French Revolution (the counterrevolutionary representation thereof largely available to an Egyptian audience through Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*) the Paris Commune (an important moment, as I will show throughout this study, in the rise of the discourses, ideologies, and bodies of knowledge surrounding the State and subjectivity, and an event which presented the Arabic readership, in Egypt and elsewhere, with the first mass-mediated encounter with crowd and revolution, mainly through the Istanbul based *al-Jawa'ib* newspaper), the 'Urabi revolt (the first Egyptian experience in revolt in the age of crowds, or in other words the first Egyptian mass mobilization to be mass-mediated, thus producing the first discourse on the Egyptian crowd, and also an event which marked the birth of the first wave of Egyptian nationalism, and ultimately an apt occasion for counterrevolutionary authors and forces – Arab and European- to deploy the discursive tools that were developed as a response to the Commune in considering the Egyptian crowd), the ensuing British occupation, the 1919 revolt, the Mubarak regime's confrontations with the Islamists and other licentious *internal others* (most notably the Satanists) in the 1990s, and of course the confrontations between the Egyptian State and the opposition in the early 2000s, culminating in the 2011 showdown and later in the 2013 coup d'état.

Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus, trans. G. M. Goshgarian, (New York: Verso, 2014), 131- 134,162- 163. See also his appropriation of the concept of *overdetermination* (which he borrows from Freudian psychoanalysis to a different effect) to supplement the *dialectical* reading of Marx as well as to supplement Marx's notion of "determination in the last instance by the economy" in "Contradiction and Overdetermination," in *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster, (London: Verso, 2005), 49- 79, esp. 74, and his revision of the *materialist dialectic* in which he elaborates on theory as filling the gap between philosophy and practice and gestures towards the materiality of ideology in "On the Materialist Dialectic," in *For Marx*, 124- 184.

Since this chapter aims to understand what happens, according to the ideological conception of the State which fixes the latter as the upholder of Order, when this State is challenged, I will first examine briefly what the State is imagined to hold in place, and how Order is coded and/or entrusted with the State. This necessitates an overview of some of the dominant theories-cum-ideologies of the State.

As the Ethnologist Examines the Myths of a 'Primitive Society': A Brief Survey of the Mythologies of the State

In the introduction, I have invoked Althusser's argument that to study ideology "from a critical point of view" one needs to approach ideological beliefs the way one would myths, thus exposing the relationship of allusion/illusion they bear to the world they represent and the relations of power that produce them. For our study this means considering theories of the State as mythologies. In this light, I will start this chapter by exploring a number of theories of the State, specifically those that reify, venerate, or champion the State or sovereign power, as mythologies, exposing the running mythologeme of order (or Order, in the absolute) as something that is embodied within the State. As I am dealing with the State as a modern structure that was imposed through colonial modernity, and given the constraints of space, my account will deal with Western theories of the State, bracketing the question of whether there were alternative genealogies that were part of the production of the modern State in Egypt. By establishing the mythologeme of order, in theories/ideological representations/mythologies of the State, I will lay the groundwork for exploring the kinds of *disorder* and *chaos* that are produced through these mythologies (and through the ideological offensive waged by the State, counterrevolution, and their ideologues,

ideologists, and propagandists) as the telos of revolt, revolution, or any other form of evading, challenging, or eschewing the gaze of the State.

The first ideologist-mythologist of the State, or at least the first among the ones canonized as theorists and political philosophers, is, without a doubt, Plato.⁶⁶ For Plato, government can only be good and true when a strict hierarchy is followed: the guardians; the people of wisdom, at the top, followed by auxiliaries, the people of higher passions (like courage and enthusiasm) who are suitable for military training and who could put their passions to good use under the rule of the guardians, and then finally the common people, (sometimes called artisans, husbandmen or producers, depending on the translation) whose base desires need to be subjected to the control of the rationality of the guardians, via the military prowess of the auxiliaries. This topology of power codes class and political hierarchy as a natural order of things, and further mystifies it as a reflection of a natural and metaphysical order: a natural hierarchy of the immaterial *forms*, which needs to be faithfully reenacted in the material world.

This Platonic conception of political order as reflective of a general metaphysical *order of things* was later synthesized (by Muslim and medieval Christian philosophers-cum-ideologists alike) into the neo-Platonic notion of the Great Chain of Being: a strict hierarchy of the metaphysical and physical orders, with God atop the metaphysical order, and the king atop the physical-political order. Breach of sovereign power, according to this theory/ideology/mythology, is a breach of the natural (physical and metaphysical) order of things, and is likely to lead to

⁶⁶ For how Plato simultaneously produced an ideology for the Athenian aristocracy yet exposed the contingency of ideology as a set of *noble lies*, see Althusser, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism*, 180.

various natural and supranatural perversions; this conception was most lucidly presented in the writings of William Shakespeare, where the usurpation of political power led to wild storms in *King Lear*, and in *Macbeth* to storms and to owls *hawking* and preying on falcons (mirroring the reversal of the order of things when Macbeth killed Duncan and usurped his throne), to horses simultaneously rebelling against the authority of men (paralleling the rebellion of subservient men against their naturally ordained sovereign) and practicing cannibalism (paralleling the perversion of Macbeth killing his own kin).⁶⁷ Five or six centuries later, propagandists and ideologists of the State and counterrevolution have not deviated far (or sometimes, at

⁶⁷ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 2.4:

Old Man

'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

ROSS

And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange and certain—
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

Old Man

'Tis said they eat each other.

ROSS

They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes
That look'd upon't.

all) from these conceptions. The discourse on fire spreading at moments of political chaos, which, as I will show, has been a salient and persistent feature of representations of revolution, from the Paris Commune to the 2011 uprising, recapitulates the notion that a breach of political order results in natural and supra-natural perversions. The Egyptian State will echo this conception of Order by inventing effeminate men, manly women, sexual deviants, and Islamists as perversions of nature and/or degenerate forms of life that only surface when the State's gaze is averted, and by representing the sit-in of January-February 2011 as populated by such figures.

In the sixteenth century, these metaphysical conceptions of Order were supplanted (though only partially and temporarily) by materialist and practical conceptions that preserved the coding of order into sovereign power (or what could be considered as primordial forms of the State): this is indeed the case with the theories of Thomas Hobbes. While Hobbes shunned – one could even say dispelled or strove to dispel- the metaphysical and religious foregroundings and justifications of sovereign power, he provided more material and practical justifications for authority.⁶⁸ More importantly, Hobbes preserved the dichotomy of order and chaos, both conceived in practical and material terms, rather than in the earlier metaphysical ones (which makes submitting to this power more urgent: what is at stake for Hobbes is no longer the metaphysical and mystical harmony of things, but the subject's own comfort, security, and life). For Hobbes, sovereignty, the Leviathan, or what we call in this context the primordial State, served to end “the warre of everyman against

⁶⁸ It is also noteworthy that Hobbes, his materialism notwithstanding, represented the State through the figure of a mythological creature, the *Leviathan*.

everyman.”⁶⁹ Disorder, which predates and continues to underlie and haunt sovereign power, and is imminent in its collapse, is a general state of torment in which “life of man [is] solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.”⁷⁰ By coding this state of disorder as a *state of nature*, Hobbes registered the emerging dichotomy of culture versus nature, and marked the inauguration of the entrustment of the former to the State. In addition, by using the “savage people in many places of America” as an exemplar to the state of nature, Hobbes fixed to political theory the relegation of Europe’s racial others – along with the very concept of disorder— to a backwards stage that is closer to nature, and that the modern European State was thought to surpass. For Hobbes, political disorder is Native American—or more broadly, savage. Later representations (which I will examine throughout this study) did not depart from this Hobbesian understanding. Any time the power of the State is challenged, the inherent risk in such a challenge is the reversion not only to a state of chaos and strife, but also to a lower evolutionary stage closer to nature, and to the warring tribes of America, Africa, and Arabia.

We have, therefore, two intersecting trends: One is metaphysical, wherein the State is predicated on and upholds a natural, physical and metaphysical order of things, the breach thereof leads to all forms of natural and supra-natural perversities; the other is material, wherein the State prevents a general state of war and strife, and therefore any breach of State power will lead to people reverting back to war, killing, pillaging, and raping one another. Notions of disenchantment and progress (themselves equally mythological as the theories-mythologies we are discussing) may

⁶⁹ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil*, Ch.13.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

lead us to think that the metaphysical aspect of the State was dealt the fatal blow by Hobbes, never to return. Nothing, however, can be further from the truth. Western political thought entered the 19th century with a revamped version of the theories of divine right of government, of political power as fixed into a metaphysical order, and of the State as “the march of God in the world.” This was clearly the thought of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the thinker who set the intellectual tone for the 19th century (at least until Marx overturned his philosophy).

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel tells the story of the mystical being he calls *Spirit*, and how it comes to know itself – in a way the history of the divine coming to realize itself in the human subject and vice versa, a fable for the Althusserian mode of (mis)recognition between subject and Subject, elevated to the level of an *absolute truth*.⁷¹ Throughout the *Phenomenology*, nevertheless, Hegel does not tell us what this Spirit is, or, if we interpret the Spirit to be a divine being, what the vehicle of recognition between this divine and the human is – though hints are dropped in his section on the *terror*, which ambiguously tells the story of the French Revolution. In this section, titled “Absolute Freedom and Terror,” Hegel relates the story of how the Spirit aimed to supersede individual consciousness for the sake of a collective *general will*. The Spirit, however, was only able to supersede the individual through a blood bath, thus bringing its own destruction (which has commonly been read as an allusion to the Reign of Terror and its downfall),⁷² only for the individual

⁷¹ As noted in the introduction, Althusser viewed Hegel as the “admirable ‘theoretician’ of Universal Recognition who unfortunately ends up in the ideology of Absolute Knowledge,” Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus,” 123n22. The same note is re-produced twice in Althusser’s posthumous work *On the Reproduction of Capital*, 197n31 and 268n22.

⁷² See Jurgen Stolzenberg, “Hegel’s Critique of Enlightenment in ‘The Struggle of the Enlightenment with Superstition,’” in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth Westphal, (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2009), 190- 208, esp. 203- 204.

to come back now loaded with the universal. Through this individual subject coming back to individuality while loaded and seasoned with the experience of the universal (i.e. through what sublates the French Revolution, in other words through the Napoleonic State) the Spirit came a step closer to knowing itself.⁷³ Only in the *Phenomenology's* sequel, the *Philosophy of Right*, does Hegel clarify that by providing the history of the Spirit, he was providing a history of the State. Hegel notes:

The state as a completed reality is the ethical whole and the actualization of freedom. It is the absolute purpose of reason that freedom should be actualized. The state is the spirit, which abides in the world and there realizes itself consciously; while in nature it is realized only as the other of itself or the sleeping spirit. Only when it is present on consciousness, knowing itself as an existing object, is it the state. In thinking of freedom we must not take our departure from individuality or the individual's self-consciousness. Let man be aware of it or not, this essence realizes itself as an independent power, in which particular persons are only phases. The state is the march of God in the world; its ground or cause is the power of reason realizing itself as will⁷⁴ (emphases added).

This passage is key for deciphering Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Now that we know that "[t]he state is the spirit" we can justify our earlier interpretation of the *terror* in Hegel as the French Revolutionary Terror, and the Spirit that comes out of this Terror knowing itself as the post-French Revolution, (i.e. the Napoleonic) State. We can now comprehend Alexandre Kojève's interpretation of the *Phenomenology* as the history of the rise of the modern nation State, an ode to the Napoleonic state and a prophecy for its triumph (a prophecy that was fulfilled as Hegel was finishing the *Phenomenology*, when Hegel's hometown of Jena was conquered by Napoleon).⁷⁵

⁷³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 355- 363.

⁷⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. S.W. Dyde, (Kitchener: Batoche Books Ltd., 2001), 197.

⁷⁵ Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. James Nichols Jr., (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980). See also Benedict Anderson's (somehow sarcastic) reference to Napoleon and his role in spreading the modern state

Hegel's *perfect* and *self-conscious Man*, standing at the precipice of Absolute Knowledge (thus conquering the world both materially and ideologically, both subjectively and objectively) is, according to the Kojèvean reading, the conqueror and the philosopher combined, or, to put it in more cynical terms, Napoleon if he hires Hegel as an advisor.⁷⁶

The metaphysical fanfare of Hegel's theories was later *routinized* into more *rational* and *disenchanted* theories of the State; clearly in Max Weber's early 20th century proclamation of the state to be "a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory" (emphasis in original).⁷⁷ The statement can be read as positive or normative, a simple empirical observation that "if no social institutions existed which knew the use of violence, then the concept of 'state' would be eliminated," or an ideological upholding of the State as "the sole source of the 'right' to use violence." Yet, even if we read Weber's statement as positivist and empirical,⁷⁸ and even if we brush aside empirical data which trouble or put in question Weber's *empirical* proposition (which states at the time of Weber's famous speech – 1919- did in fact successfully monopolize physical force or lay an exclusive claim to the legality of exercising violence?) a statist ideology is at play: through a performative tautology, Weber

model through territorial conquest, as "Hegel's 'secretary of the World-Spirit,'" Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 48. It is worth noting that a Napoleonic invasion served the same purpose in conceiving an Egyptian polity as I briefly suggested in the Introduction. Napoleon acting as "Hegel's 'secretary of World-Spirit'" can thus be identified as one of the earliest moments of the *cultural imposition* of the modern nation state not only in Egypt but also in parts of what later became Europe (Spain, for example).

⁷⁶ See Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 70.

⁷⁷ Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" in *The Vocation Lectures*, ed. David Owen and Tracy Strong, trans. Rodney Livingstone, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004), 33.

⁷⁸ This is not to argue in any way that the empirical can be conceived outside of the ideological; see Althusser, *For Marx*, 137- 158, 193- 198.

produces violence that is not practiced or sanctioned by the State as illegitimate. This dichotomy that places legitimate violence on the side of the State and illegitimate violence on the side of non-state actors persists in the global discourse on terrorism and insurgency, including its Egyptian subsidiary; the army demolishing homes in Sinai is practicing legitimate violence, while terror attacks by Sinai based Islamist insurgents are illegitimate, not only from a legal viewpoint but also from the viewpoint of media representations, the same way a US or Israeli missile is legitimate while a bomb by an insurgent organization (Islamist or otherwise) is *terrorism*.⁷⁹ Or, to take the discussion back to the case of Egyptian counterrevolutionary discourse, the police and the army brutally suppressing or slaughtering demonstrators (like they did in the massacre of Rabi‘ah al-‘Adawiyyah in 2013) are carrying out their prerogative as agents of order and of its legitimate violence, while protestors engaged in arson or in exchanging fire with the police are criminals committing illegitimate acts of violence.

In fact, the State’s monopoly over legitimate violence is but an index of the larger state monopoly over legitimacy as such. The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century marked the moment of the consolidation of the (Western) model of the State that recognizes legitimate property, legitimate marriage contracts and birth certificates (to mention an example that will recur throughout this study), legitimate scientific certifications and academic degrees (through producing the educational institution as a state apparatus or a state-sanctioned apparatus), etc. In his famous 1986 lecture on “Social Space and Symbolic Power,” French sociologist

⁷⁹ Of course the global media proved ready to make an exception for Syria: whereas state brutality is vehemently denounced by various media outlets (rightly so), violence of the opposition (as long as the perpetrating party is not ISIS), is usually glossed over: a cynical *tactical polyvalence of discourse* that exceeds what Foucault accounted for when he coined the expression.

and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu summarized this notion through a reformulation of the Weberian idiom: “one may generalize,” Bourdieu noted, “Weber’s well known formula and see in the state the holder of the monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence. Or, more precisely, the state is a referee, albeit a powerful one, in struggles over this monopoly.”⁸⁰ Unlike Weber, however, Bourdieu was quick to note the contingency and frailty of this monopoly: “*there are always in any society*” Bourdieu noted with emphasis in the original transcription of his lecture, “*conflicts between symbolic powers that aim at imposing the vision of legitimate divisions.*”⁸¹ The late 19th and early 20th century also marked the universalization and *imposition* of this model, through colonialism, which we will revisit throughout this study.

We see therefore a trend, from Plato to Weber and beyond, in associating the State with the natural and metaphysical order of things, with the comfort and security of its members, with legitimacy and with defining what is legitimate and what is not. The conceptions thereof have ranged from the metaphysical (like Plato’s and Hegel’s) to the fiduciary (like Hobbes’ and Weber’s, the latter’s mystifying tautology and appeal to the metaphysical and mythological concept of the *legitimate* notwithstanding).

This mythological conception of the State was coded, especially in the 19th century, in the term Order, which conjured at once the notions of political *order* and the natural *order* of things – and which also became the name of Europe’s quintessential counterrevolutionary party, the Party of *Order*, representing the claims of the Bourbons and the Orleans against those of the Revolution and the Republic.

⁸⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, “Social Space and Symbolic Power,” *Social Theory* 7, no.1 (Spring, 1989): 22.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

Beyond the claims of the defeated monarchy, *Order* was consistently attributed to what lied on the side of the State. During the armed confrontations preceding the downfall of the Paris Commune, for example, the army of Versailles was referred to as the *army of order* (in a manner that anticipated the Weberian formulation: only the army of the State-cum-counterrevolution, with its legitimacy over the use of force, is an agent of order).⁸² Consistent with this appellation, the powers of the State, of counterrevolution, or of Versailles in the case of the Commune, were presented as bringing peace and order, while the rebels bringing destruction and anarchy/chaos (and were produced and represented through a panoply of perversions including degeneration, hysteria, and insanity/pyromania).

In Arabic, in the late 19th century, this mystifying notion of Order was commonly referred to using the yet more mystifying term *Rahah* (lit. *comfort*). The term was used, for example by the ‘Urabist press, which tried to claim that, under the ‘Urabi government, things were *in order* (or, to be literal, *in comfort*).⁸³ It was used in the same context by Istanbul-based detractors of ‘Urabi, arguing for an absence of order-qua-comfort that could only be restored through a direct Ottoman military intervention.⁸⁴ Order-as-comfort therefore is the prerogative of the agency wherein

⁸² See for example Francisque Sarcey, “Les Aliénistes,” *Le Gaulois*, 28/5/1871, 1.

⁸³ See for example *al-Mufid*, 10 Sha‘ban 1299, 26/6/1882, 4, *al-Mufid* 17 Sha‘ban 1299, 3/6/1882, 1, and *al-Mufid*, 20 Sha‘ban 1299, 16/6/1882, 3.

⁸⁴ *Al-Jawa‘ib*, 17 Ramadan 1299, 1/8/1871. It is important to note that the ‘Urabi movement, at least as far as its rhetoric was concerned, was in no way anti-Ottoman. *Al-Jawa‘ib’s* opposition of Ottoman-borne order-comfort to the ‘Urabist lack thereof, is therefore a fabricated opposition which unfaithfully renders the ‘Urabist position. Explaining the motivations and political significance of this fake opposition would require a complex analysis of the political situation which would distract us from our analysis at hand. It suffices to say that, in my opinion, *al-Jawa‘ib’s* editor in chief was trying to lobby the Sublime Porte to intervene on the side of the British forces. Although I do not plan to explain this argument further within the confines of this study, it will become more justifiable once we explore the pro-colonial and pro-British (epistemic, political, and financial) affiliations of *al-Jawa‘ib’s* editor in chief in Chapter 3.

the State's monopoly over legitimate force (again in anticipation of Weber) is embodied. By using *comfort* as a signifier of *Order*, the emergent modern Arabic discourse reveals something that was already implicit in Western Statist discourse: namely that political order instills a general state of harmony that results in the general comfort of society (clearly an ideological concept conflating the comfort of society with that of its ruling classes). *Rahah* is indeed the opposite of a life that is *nasty, poore, brutish, and short*. Although the term *raha* was soon replaced by the sterner signifier *nizam*,⁸⁵ the conception of the State as the custodian of order-quasi-comfort, and of revolution and rebellion as a breach of this order and that comfort, persists. Counterrevolutionary depictions of the uprising of 2011, reduced the events to prison break-outs, looting, arson, the obstruction of traffic, the delay of public works, the inability to cash salaries and other payments, to shop, to go to work, to send children to schools, to buy food, in other words, an all-encompassing state of *discomfort*. Mythologies of the State have thus consistently mystified State power as Order, and confused the latter with comfort. In the subsequent sections we will not examine *order*, *comfort*, or *raha* but rather their discontents.

The Signifiers of Disorder

Disorder, on the other side, acquired a number of signifiers including *infilat* (looseness, letting loose, which was sometimes used to depict the events of 2011, imagined as the letting loose of people and things that should have otherwise been

⁸⁵ *Nizam* literally means order, arrangement, regime, system, etc. In Ottoman Turkish – and modern day Persian- *nizam* means *the military*. Classically the term referred to verse or writing in verse. It also referred to the arrangement of parts to create a whole, especially the arrangement of gemstones and other decorative materials in a necklace. The term is rarely used in these last two meanings anymore. For a discussion of the military ideologies whereby the term *nizam* came to replace *raha* see Chapter 5 of this study.

restrained by the State), *fawda* (chaos/anarchy), *thawrah* (which in the 19th century meant excitement and invoked a certain lack of restraint, before it later came to mean revolution), *hayaj/hayajan* (which like *thawrah* signified a state of excitement), *fitnah* (sedition, discord, confusion, strife), *inqilab* (the overturning of things, before it came to mean coup d'état), and *inhilal* (becoming loose, coming undone, dissolution, degeneration, decadence).

Among the discontents of *rahah*, at least two terms (*thawrah* and *hayaj/hayajan*) signify a state of excitement, excess, and lack of restraint (thus in a way anticipating *infilat*). It is also interesting that these two terms, in a certain context, can acquire sexual connotations. This is especially the case with the term *hayaj/hayajan*, which, in the contemporary Egyptian vernacular (and a number of other Arabic colloquials), mostly refers to sexual excitement and arousal, or functions as a tongue-in-cheek reference thereof. It is as if sexual chaos as the telos of political dissent (something this study aims to dissect) is already coded in the terminology used. In a similar manner, the terms *infilat* and *inhilal* may in a certain context suggest moral *looseness* and moral *degeneration*. While I argue throughout this chapter that the association between revolution and political chaos on the one side, and moral looseness and sexual chaos on the other, is an ideological association rather than one that is semantic or that has always already been coded in language, it is useful to think of how terminology lent support to this ideological association, and how the coding of the withering or collapse of State power in terms that may in other contexts suggest looseness, falling apart, or the collapse of restraint, suggests a 19th century understanding of the State as that which puts things, peoples, and passions *in order*.

The terms *inqilab* and *inhilal* both signify through negation a normal or natural order that is preserved by the State and is otherwise being overturned or taken apart. These two terms appeared early on in Arabic representations of revolution and revolt; they begin to appear in the 1871 coverage of the Paris Commune by the Istanbul-based *al-Jawa'ib* newspaper, which was one of the most important newspapers of the time, widely read and referenced by other newspapers, and enjoying the patronage of the Egyptian Khedives Isma'il and Tawfiq, of the Ottoman Sultan at some points, and of the British government at others.⁸⁶ Its owner and editor in chief, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, was a leading intellectual figure at the time. In addition to his journalistic career, al-Shidyaq was a professional translator (whose translation of the bible was rejected by the mostly foreign European and Euro-American protestant missionaries in Syria because of how it attempted to mimic the eloquence of the Qur'an), and a *belle-lettrist*, whose avant-garde fictionalized autobiography *al-Saq 'ala al-Saq fi ma Huwa al-Faryaq* is sometimes credited of being the first Arabic novel. He is also credited with coining modern Arabic expressions such as *bakhirah* (for steam ship) and, more importantly for the context of this study, both *shuyu'iyah* (communism) and *ishtirakiyyah* (socialism). The appearance of certain terminology in his coverage, therefore, cannot be taken as haphazard or inconsequential.

⁸⁶ For the significance and importance of *al-Jawa'ib* newspaper see Muhammad al-Matwi, *al-Tariq ila al-Hadathah wa al-Tahdith fi l'lam al-Jawa'ib lil Shidyaq, 1861-1884: Dirasah wa Mukhtarat*, (Tunis: Dar Suhun lil Nashr wa al-Tawzi', 2011). For an analysis of the intellectual path of its founder and editor in chief, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, with emphasis on the role the newspaper played, see 'Imad al-Sulh, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq: 'Atharuh wa 'Asruh*, (Beirut: Sharikat al-Matbu'at lil Tawzi' wa al-Nashr, 1987) and Radwa 'Ashur, *al-Hadathah al-Mumkinah: al-Shidyaq wa al-Saq 'ala al-Saq, al-Riwayah al al-'ula fi al-'Adab al-'Arabi al-Hadith* (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2009). *Al-Jawa'ib's* role in Egyptian polemics as well as its role in colonial *cultural imposition* will be elaborated later in this study (in this chapter as well as in Chapter 3).

In 1871, during the events of the Paris Commune, *al-Jawa'ib* provided a comprehensive coverage,⁸⁷ not only through translating English and French news reports, but also through a number of editorials written by al-Shidyaq, often denouncing the alleged excesses and transgressions of the rebels. A decade later, when the events of the 'Urabi revolt unfolded (1881- 1882) *al-Jawa'ib* offered an equally comprehensive (and sometimes equally counterrevolutionary) coverage of the events. At that later point in time, *al-Jawa'ib* was run by Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq's son and protégé, Salim, though literary critics believe that al-Shidyaq Sr. continued to supervise the work of his son.⁸⁸ During the events of the 'Urabi revolt, as our analysis will show, *al-Jawa'ib* replicated many motifs of the anti-Commune propaganda and deployed them against the 'Urabi revolt.⁸⁹ Our examination of the occurrence of the terms *inqilab* and *inhilal* will therefore start with (but will not be limited to) tracing their emergence in *al-Jawa'ib's* coverage of the two revolts.

Inqilab: the Upright Order of Things and its Overturning

“that a man in good clothes should be going to prison, was no more remarkable than that a labourer in working clothes should be going to work” (Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 3.1.196)

“Looking at the Jury and the turbulent audience, he might have thought that the usual order of things was reversed, and that the felons were trying the honest men. The lowest, cruelest, and worst populace of a city, never without its quantity of low, cruel, and bad, were directing the scene.” (Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 3.6.219)

⁸⁷ The only other Arabic newspaper that reported on the Commune, as far as I am aware, is the Beirut based *al-Jinan*. Its coverage however lacked the comprehensiveness and depth which characterized *al-Jawa'ib's* coverage.

⁸⁸ Al-Sulh, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq*, 102. Al-Sulh suggests that the reports authored by Salim were in fact written or edited by Ahmad Faris or one of his assistants.

⁸⁹ Other examples of how motifs, rhetorical devices, and tropes that were used against the Commune were replicated in *al-Jawa'ib's* anti-'Urabi propaganda will be provided later in this chapter (see for example the discussion of the representations of arson in both revolts, in the section on “the threshold of fire”) and in Chapter 3.

In the late 19th century and through the early 20th, the term *inqilab* recurred as the signifier of unexpected change, upheaval, turmoil, etc.⁹⁰ It repeatedly appeared in Salim Faris al-Shidyaq's (highly unsympathetic) coverage of the 'Urabi revolt, where it signified the overturning of things to the worse.⁹¹ Around the same time the mouthpiece of the 'Urabist movement, *al-Mufid*⁹² saw English intervention as tantamount to *inqilab*.⁹³ The term would persist as the signifier of upheaval in the early 20th century: in Ahmad Fathi Zaghul's translation of Gustave LeBon's *The Crowd*, *inqilab* was used to translate terms like *great upheavals (al-inqilabat al-'azimah)*,⁹⁴ *political upheavals*,⁹⁵ and *terrible disturbances*.⁹⁶ The turning over of things upside down (i.e. their *inqilab*), presumes that there is a natural or normalized order that is being turned upside down, or turned inside out. What, then, does this

⁹⁰ The term *inqilab* only gained positive connotations after the Young Turks' *inqilab* in 1908. Before that, the term seldom appeared in positive light. The term in modern Persian means revolution, and is commonly used to refer to the 1979 revolution. Perhaps the positive light the term acquired in 1908 and its positive usage in Persian political polemics have led Orientalists with little knowledge of the Arabic language and who did not consult the Arabic archive to confuse *inqilab* for a positive term for *revolution*, see for example Ami Ayalon, "From Fitna to Thawra," *Studia Islamica* 66 (1987): 145- 174. The analysis above will expose the erroneous nature of the claims of Ayalon et al.: while the Persian word *inqilab* can have positive connotations, and while the word is borrowed from Arabic, modern Persian is not 19th century Arabic, as much as Ayalon and other Orientalists would like to think otherwise.

⁹¹ See *al-Jawa'ib*, 12 Sha'ban 1299, 27/6/1882, 1, 24 Ramadan 1299, 8/8/1882, 1.

⁹² See the methodological note in the introduction where I explain why I am relying on *al-Mufid* in lieu of the more important 'Urabist organ *al-Ta'if*.

⁹³ *al-Mufid*, 19 Safar 1299, 9/1/1882, 1.

⁹⁴ Ahmad Fathi Zaghul, *Ruh al-Ijtima'*, translation of *The Crowd* by Gustave LeBon, (Cairo: Matba'at al-Rahmaniyyah, 1921), 2.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

upright order look like, and what are the elements that are kept at its bottom and threaten it with an “overturning” if it were not kept in place by the government?

A closer look at the Arabic 19th century description of order and its *overturning* reveals this order to be of a much older pedigree, that of Plato’s. In their reports on 1871 and 1882, al-Shidyaq Sr. and Jr. respectively prescribed a hierarchy which implicitly invoked the Platonic order. In the hierarchy of the two Shidyas, at the top there is *ahl al-siyasah* (the people of government/of sound opinion, thus corresponding to Plato’s guardians),⁹⁷ then *al-hay’ah al ‘askariyyah* (the military establishment, thus corresponding to Plato’s auxiliaries) and finally *al-‘ammah* (the commoners) who when not restrained by the two former classes would run amok, spreading corrupt behavior and appropriating the wealth of the rich for their own.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Here al-Shidyaq (the father, but also the son after him) performs a cunning game with words to normalize this Platonic hierarchy. He constantly refers to the people in government as “ahl al-siyasah.” This can be a banal term simply meaning the people who happen to be in government, but can also mean the people worthy of government. By using the term *ahl al-siyasah* indiscriminately al-Shidyaq allows a constant slippage from the first meaning to the second. The ambiguity is also compounded by the various meanings the word *siyasah* can have: it means, among other things, politics, strategy, government, wise government, and sound opinion.

⁹⁸ See for example Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq’s description of the Paris Commune in *al-Jawa’ib*, 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, 1. In this account the people’s revolution and the siding of the army with the people rather than with the government leads to the total collapse of order. The lack of governmental repression would leave the way open for the commoners, according to al-Shidyaq, to follow their desires/derives (*shahawatihim*). Notice how *Shahawat* are placed with the masses while the restraint thereof with the government. This is a Platonic understanding of things that persists in many modern theories including Gustave LeBon’s (which in turn have influenced Freud’s, though with Freud this theory is thoroughly critiqued and revised). In the subsequent issue of *al-Jawa’ib* al-Shidyaq, again in the context of his coverage of the Paris Commune, would place evil (*al-sharr*) within the masses/commoners (*al-‘awam*) and invoke the necessity of a governmental restraint (*wazi’*) to prevent the excesses of the commoners: وإنما أقول هذا بناء على أن العوام مجبولون على الشر فإذا لم يكن لهم وازع من أهل السياسة فإنهم يجمعون في أهوائهم *Al-Jawa’ib*, 12 Muharram 1288, 2/4/1871, 1. See also Salim Faris’ insistence, during the early months of the ‘Urabi revolt, on the necessity of a harmony between government/the viceroy (*al-hay’ah al-malakiyyah*) and the military (*al-hay’ah al-‘askariyyah*) for the sake of the preservation of order; *al-Jawa’ib*, 17 Rabi’ al-Akhar 1299, 7/3/1882, 1. Al-Shidyaq jr. repeats the same logic during the escalation between ‘Urabi and the Khedive on 3 Ramadan 1299, 17/7/1882, 1: فقد قلنا غير مرة أنه إذا كانت الهيئة العسكرية بمصر تلائم الهيئة السياسية فلا يخشى وقوع ما يخل بالراحة والأمن. *Rahah*, therefore, is a result of the harmony between the government and the military. Finally, after the defeat of the ‘Urabi revolt, the occupation of the country by the British, and the reinstatement

This Platonic understanding of politics was shared by the ‘Urabi press, whose writers belonged to a cultural and social milieu familiar with Plato and his philosophy.⁹⁹ The ‘Urabist mouthpiece, *al-Mufid* appeared on 27 Jumada al-Thani 1299 (15/5/1882) with a Platonic editorial titled “*al-Ummah wa al-Wazi*,” (The nation/ummah and restraint). It starts by proclaiming it to be a “well-known fact” that there are three ranks (*maratib*) of *nufus* (selves/psyches/souls). These three types correspond closely to Plato’s: the first is *malakiyyah* (royal, kingly, stately, governmental), which enjoys the faculty of reason (*al-quwwah al-‘aqilah* or mental capabilities). The second is *asadiyyah* (lion-like) and enjoys the faculty of passion or anger (*al-quwwah al-ghadabiyyah*). The last is the animal-like or beastly (*bahimiyyah*),¹⁰⁰ which is characterized by the faculty of desire (*al quwwah al-shahawiyyah*).¹⁰¹ When the

of the Khedive by the occupying army, al-Shidyaq jr. sings the praises of *al-hay’ah al-siasiyah* over that of *al-hay’ah al-siasiyah*: فهذا هو الفرق في مصر حين كانت في أيدي هيئة عسكرية ثم صارت في أيدي هيئة سياسية. *Al-Jawa’ib*, 12 dhu al-qi’dah, 1299, 3/10/1882, 1.

⁹⁹ An interesting anecdote can help illustrate the centrality of Plato for the cultural sphere of the time and the familiarity of the milieu of the ‘Urabists with Plato. The minister of war in the 1876 reformist government led by Tawfiq himself (before he became Khedive and while he enjoyed close ties with the various thinkers and activists who later constituted the ‘Urabi movement) was a notable army officer named Hasan Aflatun (Arabic for Plato). Hasan Aflatun continued to be a public figure after his short-lived ministry and a street in al-Muhandisin district of Greater Cairo bears his name. The story goes that the original family name of Hasan Aflatun was al-Kashif, and that Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha, while going through the records of military students, noticed that the epithet Aflatun was added to the name of Hasan al-Kashif. He then inquired about the reason behind this appellation and was told that al-Kashif’s colleagues gave him this epithet due to his studious nature. The Pasha was amused and decided to officially bestow the Platonic appellation on al-Kashif and his descendants; see Mikkawy Sa’id, “Aflatun Family [English in original],” *al-Misri al-Yawm*, 24/5/2017, <http://www.almasyalyoum.com/news/details/1138842>

¹⁰⁰ The word *bahimiyyah* is derived from *bahim*, which commonly means beast. In this context, therefore, it refers to the beastly segment of the population (and of the self), characterized by beastly desires that eclipse rationality. The significance of the word, however, goes beyond this simple translation. *Bahim* also means ambiguous or lacking distinction. *Bahimiyyah* therefore represents a state of chaos and excess that needs a rational faculty to put restraint, rationality, and distinction into. In addition to it reappearing frequently towards the late 19th and early 20th century in contexts similar to the article cited above, the word has also been widely used as an Arabic translation for the Freudian id.

¹⁰¹ In addition to the Platonic typology, the terminology invokes the Great Chain of Being: the faculty of reason, the one that should rule supreme, defined as kingly or royal, and the faculty of passion, the

faculty of reason reigns supreme, this leads to *rahah* (comfort-order) and '*adl* (fairness, balance, justice). Following the other two faculties could prove disastrous. Passion may cause one's blood to boil with *thawrah* (excitement), leading one to exit from the world of humans to the realm of beasts.¹⁰² Following desires also leads to ruin, manifest in sickness in this world and punishment in the hereafter. Therefore, according to the editorial, *wazi*' (restraint, understood here as corresponding to the royal faculty of reason) is necessary, not only at the level of the individual, but also at the level of the ummah/nation.

We see in the late 19th century, therefore, the libidinal element (*shahawat* in al-Shidyaq,¹⁰³ *bahimiyyah* in *al-Mufid*) allocated to the masses, and the rational and restraining function allocated to the government. This is not dissimilar from how the discourse on the crowd emerged in Europe in the late 19th century, producing the crowd as the space of the irrational, the libidinal, and the unconscious.¹⁰⁴ This similarity is not surprising, given the Western sources on which al-Shidyaq relied (and given the Platonic origins of both European and Arab late nineteenth century discourses). The libidinal, irrational, and incendiary eruptions that we observe in contemporary counterrevolutionary depictions of revolt (and which were most evident in 2011 Egypt) do not depart from this Platonic understanding of government and psyche, or from the 19th century appropriations of it.

one that should reign over animalistic desires, termed lion-like (corresponding the supremacy of the lion over other animals in the Great Chain of Being.

¹⁰² Or lions; the word used is *siba'*, literally meaning lions but sometimes indicating beasts more generally. A distinction is made here between the lower beasts as *bahim* (more commonly used to refer to cattle) and the higher beasts as *siba'* (more commonly used to refer to lions and other carnivores). This may be seen as an echo of the Great Chain of Being where lions are held at the top of the 'animal kingdom'.

¹⁰³ See for example *al-Jawa'ib* 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, 1.

¹⁰⁴ LeBon does in fact describe the crowds as unconscious; LeBon, *The Crowd*, 38.

Tampering with this hierarchy leads not only to the overturning (*inqilab*) of the system but also to its total dissolution (*inhilal*). In *al-Jawa'ib*'s reports and editorials on the Commune, al-Shidyaq expressed his fear that the army's siding with the rebels and the absence of a government to restrain things would lead to "the total dissolution/degeneration of government"¹⁰⁵ وحينئذ تنحل الحكومة انحلالاً مطلقاً (which in turn would lead to the demise/decadence/withering of France: *indithar faransa*).¹⁰⁶

***Inhilal*: The Discourses of Looseness and Degeneration**

At a time when European counterrevolutionary thinkers were concerning themselves with decay, decadence, and degeneration (both as the metaphorical or literal outcome of revolt and as a condition borne by the crowds),¹⁰⁷ two terms that signify, one way or another, the three phenomena, i.e. the terms *inhilal* and *indithar*, appeared in al-Shidyaq's coverage of the Commune.¹⁰⁸ Given al-Shidyaq's encyclopedic knowledge of Western intellectual trends, his career as a linguist and a translator, and his writing strategy that aimed to emphasize the fine shades of meanings of terms and

¹⁰⁵ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, 1.

¹⁰⁶ *Al-Jawa'ib* 26 Muharram 1288, 16/4/1871, 3.

¹⁰⁷ This was especially the case for Gustave LeBon who dabbled in theories of degeneration before publishing his pseudo-scientific work on the crowd, and for whom the Paris Commune and the phenomenon of crowd politics more generally constituted a condition of national and biological degeneration; see Robert Nye, See Robert Nye, *The Origins of Crowd Psychology: Gustave LeBon and the Crisis of Mass Democracy in the Third Republic*, (London: Sage Publications, 1975), 7-16, 19-36; esp. 20-23. I will discuss how the crowd caused the literal biological degeneration of its members in the thought of LeBon when I discuss the figure of the sexual savage and how it operated in counterrevolutionary discourse.

¹⁰⁸ It also bears noting that the Commune was one of the triggers for LeBon's anxiety about the degeneration of France and its citizens; see *Ibid*. In Chapter 3 I will briefly examine how the Commune provided a point of anchorage (if not necessarily the spark) for discourses on degeneration, including those within the emerging field of criminology.

synonyms,¹⁰⁹ I do not take this concurrence to be accidental. Al-Shidyaq was, almost certainly, referencing the emerging European discourse on national, moral, and biological degeneration. This conjecture becomes more evident once we take into consideration that the outcome of this degeneration-dissolution in al-Shidyaq's report was the spread of *fasad*: corruption, or rot. Al-Shidyaq here provides a full *conceit* for the national body¹¹⁰ suffering from dissolution/degeneration at the hands of the rebels/the revolutionary crowd and for which revolution is a kind of corruption, rot, or disease, which can spread throughout the body. This brings to mind LeBon's characterization of the crowd as akin to *microbes* and *agents of decay* that hasten the dissolution of an already dead corpse (a motif which was central for producing revolutionaries and dissidents as *disease*, and as agents of decay).¹¹¹ Read this way, al-Shidyaq's passage (which anticipated LeBon's formulation), can be seen as an early introduction (for an Arabic readership) of the concept of the national body, of government or the State as that which holds that body together (akin to its immune system),¹¹² and of political dissent and political dissidents as *foreign bodies* or a *disease*.

¹⁰⁹ Al-Shidyaq explains this linguistic agenda in his preface to *al-Saq 'ala al-Saq*. See Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, *al-Saq 'ala al-Saq fima Huwa al-Fariyaq*, 2.

¹¹⁰ Throughout this study I will only use the term *conceit* (which I borrow from literary studies) when referring to an extended metaphor or to a group of metaphors working together, as in this instance where the metaphors of dissolution/degeneration and that of corruption/rot are working hand in hand.

¹¹¹ Gustave LeBon, *The Crowd*, 38.

¹¹² This understanding of the national body as a biological body, parties, groups, or individuals that threaten it as a disease, and the State as its immune system has been integral to the modern conceptions of the *biopolitical* state. This modern phenomenon of the national political-social body and how it treats its threats as disease were explicated by Michel Foucault in the final lecture of his 1975-1976 lecture series titled "society must be defended;" See Michel Foucault, "*Society Must be*

An alternative reading, however, is possible, which focuses on the moral rather than the biological. Indeed, both *degeneration/inhilal* and *corruption/fasad* can also be moral. In a related context, al-Shidyaq has surely characterized the Paris Commune with the spread of *fasad al-akhlaq* (moral corruption or the corruption of morals).¹¹³ Read this way, al-Shidyaq is introducing the conception of the revolutionary space as a space of moral *corruption* and *license*, i.e. as the space that produces its inhabitants/subjects as licentious. Yet, even moral licentiousness in the dominant ideologies of the 19th century was inseparable from notions of civilizational and biological degeneration. Read either way, therefore, *al-Jawa'ib*'s report can indeed be seen as inaugurating an Arabic discourse on revolution and the revolutionary space as spaces of moral and especially biological degeneration, and thus of the revolutionaries as degenerate. The subsequent account shows how the discourse on degeneration and disease was essential, since the late 19th century, for the production of the licentious subject and space, how the collapse from Order into disorder, discord, and chaos was also coded as a fall from Civilization and Evolution

Defended": *Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-76* trans. David Macey, (New York: Picador, 2003), 239- 263. The concept was since further explicated by a plethora of Foucauldian interlocutors, most notably Roberto Esposito in *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, trans. Timothy Campbell, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004) and especially in *Immunitas: The Protection and Negation of Life*, trans. Zakiya Hanafi, (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2011), and *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy* trans. Timothy Campbell, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008). More specific to Egypt, in addition to the examples I provide in the text above for the use of the logic of foreign bodies and parasitism to describe the threats to the national body, one early example of likening the nation to a body and likening its enemies to microbes comes in a translation of a French print advertisement for a medicinal tar product named Goudron Guyot. Published during the early months of WWI, the ad described the medicine as "the infantry of health." Just like the infantry kills "the enemies of the nation," the ad tells us, so does Goudron Guyot kill "all the harmful microbes, which are the enemies to our health and lives." *Al-Muqattam*, 20/10/1914, 8.

¹¹³ *Al-Jawa'ib* 22 Muharram 1288, 16/4/1871, 4.

to *degeneration* and *regression*, and how narratives of social and especially sexual chaos were inseparable from this discourse on degeneration.

Inhilal as National Degeneration¹¹⁴

From this point onwards, a discourse on the national body, its health, vitality, and life, or otherwise its sickness, death, and degeneration, became part of the Egyptian nationalist discourse. Against the national body, healthy or sick, existed the *foreign body*, the colonizers and their local stooges who infected the Egyptian and/or Ottoman national body. The thinkers of the first wave of Egyptian nationalism (who were part of the ‘Urabi revolt) resorted to disease (and especially venereal diseases,¹¹⁵ notably syphilis) as a sign of foreign *contagion*,¹¹⁶ personified the homeland (*al-watan*) as a

¹¹⁴ For the purpose of this section, I am grouping together biological degeneration (in its evolutionary sense) and the degeneration of the body in terms of its sickness and decay. In addition to the inter-relatedness of the two concepts, grouping them together is further justified by the fact that in Arabic the word *inhilal* signifies both.

¹¹⁵ For a larger discussion on how venereal diseases stand for degeneration in Egyptian discourse, and how this degeneration was sometimes perceived along Western civilizational lines, and sometimes as a reversal thereof, see Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 128, 207- 223.

¹¹⁶ See the parable provided by the Egyptian early nationalist thinker ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim in *al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit*, 4-5, in which a (male) Egyptian is afflicted by *the foreign/Western/Frankish disease (masab ifrinji)* as a result of indulging in hedonistic pleasures and giving in to the temptation of foreigners (for *al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit* references I use the continuous pagination used by al-Nadim, which ran through all the issues of the newspaper). For an analysis of the parable which explains how the *foreign disease* is indeed syphilis, see ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Sharaf, *al-Wahdah wa al-Tanawwu’ fi Tarikh al-Sihafah al-‘Arabiyyah*, (Cairo: al-Hay’ah al-‘Ammah lil Kitab, 2002), 137; this is not unlike the persistent characterization of syphilis in Europe as a foreign disease (a French disease for most of Europe, an Italian disease for the French); see Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 214. An example from the writings of al-Nadim is significant given the role he played in shaping the intellectual atmosphere of the first wave of Egyptian nationalism and of the ‘Urabi revolt, and his later role in bridging the gap between the first and the second waves of Egyptian nationalism. In addition to being one of the leading intellectuals of the time, and the founder of one of the earliest Egyptian newspapers, *al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit*, al-Nadim was one of the founders of the first wave of Egyptian nationalism and an active participant in the ‘Urabi revolt – commonly referred to as the orator of the revolt. As the ‘Urabi movement gained momentum, al-Nadim turned his newspaper into a mouthpiece for the movement and, at the behest of ‘Urabi who believed the mouthpiece of the movement should have had a sterner and more serious name, renamed it as *al-Ta’if*. After the revolt he was forced into ten years of hiding, and then to a year of exile. In 1892, with the ascent of ‘Abbas Hilmi II to the Khedival

sick man complaining about the symptoms of *his* economic dependence-qua-sickness,¹¹⁷ and argued that a sick body part needs to be isolated lest it infect the rest of the body.¹¹⁸ The second wave of Egyptian nationalism took this vitalist metaphor further, producing a discourse on the intruder/interloper who does not belong to the Egyptian-Ottoman national body and who tries to undermine national Egyptian and Ottoman interests from within, and for this purpose coined the term *dakhil* (intruder, outsider, interloper) and deployed it against its enemies of foreign descent or those accused of dubious foreign loyalties.¹¹⁹ The term itself persisted at least until 1961, when the Egyptian singer ‘Abd al-Halim Hafiz (the famed Egyptian singer who was the quintessential singer of nationalist songs in the Nasserist era) in a song that narrates the events of Egypt’s occupation and independence, lamented how “my mighty homeland, is governed by a Palace and an embassy, and for every interloper

throne, and his ambition to foster an alliance with Egyptian nationalists to counter the British influence, al-Nadim was pardoned and brought into Khedival tutelage. He then issued a new publication, *al-Ustadh*, which was less political than his other earlier publications, and in which he expressed a strong pro-Khedival sympathy and a timid anti-colonial sentiment. The latter part of the career of al-Nadim and his late publication had a strong influence on the second generation of Egyptian nationalists (who also emerged under Khedival patronage), especially on the second wave’s founder, Mustafa Kamil.

¹¹⁷ *Al-Mufid*, 22 Dhu al Hijjah 1298, 14/11/1881, 1.

¹¹⁸ *Al-Mufid* 1 Dhu al Hijjah 1298, 24/10/1881, 2-3.

¹¹⁹ See for example how a relationship of parasitism is constructed between the interloper (*dakhil*) and the host-land in Mustafa Kamil’s speech published in *al-Liwa’* 23/9/1900, 1. In addition to them being “a grave threat to Egypt and the Egyptians” (see *al-Liwa’* 12/2/1902, 1), the interlopers are also explicitly referred to as a disease (and also as a curse sent by God); “al-Khiyanah wa ma jara ‘ala al-Islam,” *al-Liwa’* 28/1/1901, 1. In “al-Ghuraba’ fi Misr: Misr Balad al-Ghara’ib wa al-Ghuraba’,” *al-Liwa’* 15/2/1903, 1, a distinction is made between good and loyal foreigners who act like medicine, and bad and treacherous foreigners who act like poison, disease, and an agent of inhilal of the body they afflict. Of the latter variant are Syrian-run pro-British newspapers like *al-Muqattam*. The same is also clearly spelled out in “al-Khiyanah wa ma Jara ‘ala al-Islam,” *al-Liwa’* 28/1/1901, 1. A telling anecdote appears in the biography of the Syrio-Egyptian musician Sami al-Shawwa. Mustafa Kamil, suspicious of Syrians but accepting that not all of them were *dukhala’* reportedly asked al-Shawwa upon meeting him whether he was a *dakhil*. Al-Shawwa responded: “No, Pasha, we are not intruders (*dukhala’*). We are nothing but Arab artists, struggling with our music for the sake of well-being/high status (*rif’ah*) of the Arabs.” See Ahmad al-Salihi, Mustafa Sa’id, and Nida’ Abu Murad, *Sami al-Shawwa, Amir al-Kaman: Hayatuh wa A’maluh*, (Beirut: Dar al-Saqi, 2015), 120.

[*dakhil*] in it there exists an office/administrative role [*idarah*], alongside inebriated armies of occupation.”¹²⁰

The post-colonial state preserved this discourse (although the term *dakhil* eventually lost currency). This was especially the case under the Mubarak regime, wherein the State, despite its complicity with neocolonialism and in search of a cover for this complicity, created a paranoid discourse about Western influence, in which foreigners (including tourists) were depicted as smugglers, Mossad and CIA agents, and as agents of disease.¹²¹ Recapitulating the trope of the venereal disease, which was used to represent the degenerative effect of foreign bodies and foreign influence as syphilis¹²² (and which was employed by the first wave of Egyptian nationalists and which has long been a recurrent motif for subversive foreign influence in nationalist

إزاي أوطاني الجبارة¹²⁰
محكومة بقصر ويسفارة
ولكل دخيل فيها إدارة

وجيوش محتلة ومخمورة.

“Dhikrayat,” (a song by ‘Abd al-Halim Hafiz, composed by Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhab and written by Ahmad Shafiq Kamil). This, of course, is not a marginal or anecdotal example. In addition to the popularity of the singer, the patriotic songs by ‘Abd al-Halim were an important part of the official state propaganda under Egyptian president Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir (1954- 1970). This particular song was filmed as a high production music video, featuring acted sequences and documentary footage.

¹²¹ See for example Hamdi Rizq and Usamah Salamah, “Rafah, Bawabat al-AIDS al-Sharqiyyah” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 2/7/1990, 26.

¹²² Even as it is eclipsed by AIDS, and even as it has become curable and almost extinct, Syphilis did not lose currency as a marker of Western degeneracy and excess in the 21st century. At the end of a series of spy mini-novels titled *Rajul al-Mustahil* (The Man of the Impossible, a series which instilled militarized nationalism in the minds of many of its young readers), syphilis resurfaced as a punishment for the enemies of Egypt. The main character, Adham Sabri, learns of the death of his sworn enemy (a Mossad agent responsible for the death of the main character’s father, and whose daughter, who also became a Mossad agent, is also a sworn enemy Adham’s but who also managed to seduce him and give birth to his child while he was suffering from amnesia) after a “struggle with a pernicious disease” that “devoured his whole nervous system, [causing] severe pain”; Nabil Faruq, *Rajul al-Mustahil*, al-Wada’ (issue 160), 106. This is clearly the description of the symptoms of Syphilis (before, that is, the discovery of penicillin), especially that it is mentioned as a divine punishment. Adham’s (and Egypt’s) enemy therefore can be thought of as leading a life of excess and sexual license that brought to him (in biological and divine terms) God’s punishment in the form of Syphilis.

discourses worldwide) and at the height, and the aftermath, of the AIDS pandemic,¹²³ foreign tourists were depicted as *smuggling in* and spreading AIDS¹²⁴ (it was not long until some of the extremist Islamist groups began to target unarmed tourists, citing the alleged role of these tourists in espionage and in spreading *lechery* and AIDS, a clear response to an incitement by State propaganda-paranoia).¹²⁵

Soon enough the same discourse, initially deployed against foreign colonial and neocolonial powers by anti-colonial nationalists and the postcolonial (albeit

¹²³ It is perhaps the ironic postcolonial vengeance, which the Egyptian media did not think of, that the same pandemic that was used by Western media to sustain a theory of the degeneration of the African savages, is used by an African post-colonial (though otherwise colonially complicit) regime as an index of foreign contagion. For how AIDS was perceived in Arab, especially Egyptian writings as a Western disease and a result of an immoral/degenerate Western way of life see Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 177, 212-213, 260. On how the discourse on AIDS in the Arab world (especially in Egypt) was incited by colonial cultural and institutional interventions, See Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 175, 206, 212-223, 241. On how something similar happened in South Africa, see Neville Hoad, "Between White Man's Burden and White Man's Disease: Tracking Lesbian and Gay Human Rights in South Africa," *GLQ* 5, no.4 (1999): 559-584.

¹²⁴ For example In a series of reports worthy of (third rate) spy novels, the Egyptian media told the story of a Western (in some reports Israeli) spy named Charles (though he assumed many names according to these reports) who was allegedly responsible for infecting Egyptian street children with AIDS; see "Charles Ya'ud Ma' al-AIDS Marrah 'Ukhra ila Misr," *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 8/12/1990, 14. See also Hamdi Rizq, "'Awdat Charles al-Mur'ib," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 172/1990, 16- 17. One cannot help noticing that the title of the article, 'Awdat Charles al-Mur'ib (roughly: The Return of Fearsome Charles) reads like a spy novel parody. Hamdi Rizq would later write (equally third rate) propaganda pieces in support for the military regime post-2013, some of which will be examined in the course of our analysis.

¹²⁵ For example, in an interview with the famous Egyptian journalist Hisham Mubarak, Tal'at Qassim (in the purported capacity of being the sole spokesperson of the armed group *al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyyah*) justified the *Jama'ah's* targeting of tourists as follows:

First, many tourists activities are forbidden, so the source of income for the state is forbidden...

Second, tourism in its present form is an abomination: it is means by which prostitution and AIDS are spread ... and it is a source of all manners of depravities, not to mention being a means of collecting information on the Islamic movement. For these reasons we believe tourism is an abomination that must be destroyed.

In "What Does the Gama'a Islamiyya Want? Tal'at Fu'ad Qasim, Interview with Hisham Mubarak," in *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report*, ed. Joel Benin and Joe Stork, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 321.

colonially complicit) State, was turned inwards against internal dissidents. It was used against the Islamists in the 1990s, and against the licentious revolutionaries in 2011.

In the 1980s and especially in the 1990s, the Egyptian State was locked in a confrontation with Islamist dissidents (some of them armed, others non-armed). During this confrontation (and as an excuse for the violent measures the State resorted to, which included torture and extra-judicial killings), State propaganda depicted the Islamists as *foreign bodies* through two representational strategies: the first focused on their *foreignness*— the foreignness of their shape and habits to that of the rest of the Egyptian society – and the foreignness of the interests they served. The second depicted them as disease. Both features were most evident in the propaganda pamphlet masquerading as an investigative report titled *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin* (A Terrorist in Training). The foreignness of terrorism was stressed in the afterword in which a ministry of interior official is quoted attributing terrorism to a foreign conspiracy: “the enemies of Egypt” noted the source, who was identified as the second in command at the ministry of interior, “know its [high] value ... and found no way to stab her in the heart except through her children.”¹²⁶ The disease-like nature of the Islamists was presented throughout the report, but clearly ventriloquized through an alleged repentant terrorist named ‘Adil ‘Abd al-Baqi, who enjoyed a moment of fame in the Egyptian media after his alleged confessions, and who proclaimed: “we are microbes/germs [*jarathim*], we are earth-worms [*didan al-ard*],”¹²⁷ and added two pages later that he felt he was living among germs and how by joining Islamist groups he felt like he carried “their scabies and the sickness of their thoughts [*al-jarab wa*

¹²⁶ Sabir Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, (Cairo: Dar Akhbar al-Yawm, 1994), 206.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 118

amrad afkarihim].”¹²⁸ Adjoining foreignness to disease worked, in the rhetoric and propaganda of the Egyptian State, to justify the *aggressive treatment* of terrorism (through police violence, arbitrary arrest, torture, etc.). The Egyptian minister of interior at the time, Zaki Badr (notorious for the extreme and violent measures his police force used against Islamists and other dissidents) expressed this logic in the most explicit of terms: In an interview with the state-run *Akhbar al-Yawm*. Badr proclaimed the Islamists to be akin to a tumor in the Egyptian national body, while likening police violence and arbitrary arrests to chemotherapy. Badr also acknowledged that this aggressive treatment may harm innocent civilians, but for him this was justifiable by extending the metaphor of chemotherapy, which might harm some of the healthy body organs but is administered nevertheless for the wellbeing of the body as a whole.¹²⁹

In a similar fashion, during the events of 2011, the demonstrators were represented in state propaganda as *foreign bodies*, both in the sense that the way they carried their bodies, groomed themselves, and behaved were foreign, and that they were contagious bodies that did not belong to the Egyptian body politic and that could therefore weaken it.¹³⁰ On occasion, calls to disperse the protests brutally were coded

¹²⁸ Ibid., 120- 121.

¹²⁹ *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 25/2/1989, 7.

¹³⁰ The allegations of the foreignness of the bodies of the Tahrir demonstrators in regime propaganda ranged from accusing them of serving foreign agendas, to allegations of Westernization, to outright accusations that the demonstrators are foreigners posing as Egyptians. Sometimes these categories will conflate. The long hair of one blogger/demonstrator, perhaps read as foreign, led the administrators of the facebook group *Ana Asif ya Rayyis* to identify his allegiances as foreign, and thus they attacked him and then handed him to the bureau of Egyptian Intelligence, which released him. In another incident thugs who participated in violence against the demonstrators justified their violence by thinking of the demonstrators as “a bunch of American University pansies.” The demonstrators then, by standing steadfast in front of the thug’s attack, proved not to be American University pansies but rather Egyptians with legitimate demands, which brought the thugs to shame, according to their testimonial. See Ali Abdel Mohsen, “Thug Life: Pro-Mubarak Bullies Break Their

as “sanitizing” space. The pro-Mubarak group *Ana Asif Ya Rayyis*, for example, posted the picture of a bottle of *Dettol* disinfectant, as if to suggest that this is the solution to the infectious agents in Tahrir Square.¹³¹ Another state propagandist, actress Samah Anwar, suggested setting the place on fire altogether, perhaps thinking of fire as a cleansing agent. Since the late 20th century therefore, with the discourse on AIDS, with Minister Zaki Badr’s justifications for arbitrary detention, with the abjection of Islamists and other dissidents as a form of disease, and especially with the anti-Tahrir pro-government discourse in 2011, we see the State associated/entrusted with the health of the nation. The withering thereof, the loosening (or inhilal) of its power, and the setting loose (infilat) of things from under its grip were therefore tantamount to disease and degeneration.

The history of dissent as disease and/or degeneration of the political body will become clearer once we discuss the historical association of crowds with degeneration, the emergence of the crowd-born(e) subject as a degenerate figure, how this discourse was articulated against, among other degenerate figures, the Arab (and at a certain moment in history, ‘Urabi as the quintessential ‘*Arabi*), and the emergence in these contexts of the figure of the racial degenerate and the sexual savage. All these discourses and figures would come together to produce the licentious space and the licentious subject in modern state ideology.

Silence,” *Egypt Independent*, 18/03/2011. <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/thug-life-pro-mubarak-bullies-break-their-silence>. The theme of the demonstrators as Westernized upper class pannies was already being promoted by mainstream media, see for example *Rami al-I’tisami*, film directed by Sami Rafi’, 2008.

¹³¹ *Ana Asif yaRayyis* Wall Photos: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%81-%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B3/194351220590149#!/photo.php?fbid=141890855881836&set=pu.127002740703981&type=1&theater>

We have thus far explored how the discourse on the national body has also produced the enemies of the State as agents of disease and degeneration, something we have traced back to LeBon's theory on the crowd and to the representations of the Paris Commune (and their translation into Arabic). Parallel to this trend was the closely related trend of depicting crowds and revolutions as spaces of degeneration. Here I am not solely referring to metaphorical moral and civilizational degeneration: crowds and revolutions were understood to cause the literal biological degenerations of their subjects.¹³² For LeBon (who had already published a pseudo-study on degeneration before venturing to pseudo-study crowds and other social phenomena),¹³³ crowds caused the withdrawal of brain functions, which left the body under the control of the lower nervous centres, thus turning their members into a lower evolutionary form¹³⁴ (hence LeBon's famous comparison of crowds and their members to the lower evolutionary forms consecrated as such by theories of evolution, namely women, children, and Europe's racial others).¹³⁵ This logic was anticipated in the aftermath of the Paris Commune, when the counterrevolutionary writer Francisque Sarcey famously attributed the 'insanity' of the Commune to a nervous shock to which women were more susceptible (and therefore more prone to being vicious or *ferocious* revolutionaries) due to their weaker evolutionary form that endowed them with weaker brains yet "livelier nerves."¹³⁶ In both examples, an

¹³² This was partly due to the discursive strategy which mutually mapped Europe's racial others (understood as lower evolutionary forms and therefore as degenerate or as equivalent to the degenerate) and its crowds onto one another, which I explore in Chapter 3.

¹³³ See Nye, *Origins of Crowd Psychology*, 22- 29.

¹³⁴ LeBon, *The Crowd*, 56.

¹³⁵ LeBon, *The Crowd*, 43-59.

¹³⁶ Francisque Sarcey, "Les Aliénistes," *Le Gaulois*, 28/5/1871.

evolutionary biological regression, articulated through the degenerate figure of the woman (among other degenerate figures in LeBon), is associated with crowds and their actions. I will now examine how the understanding of degeneration (articulated this time through the figure of the Arab as a racial savage) was produced by European colonial and counterrevolutionary observers during the ‘Urabi revolt and how this logic was eventually internalized by Egyptian thinkers (even of the nationalist and anti-colonial variety). I will then proceed to examine how in the 1990s this logic was used to produce the Islamist as a racial and sexual savage, before I move to exploring other forms of degeneration and how they informed statist and counterrevolutionary ideological representations in Egypt and elsewhere (culminating in the figure of the ribald, hysterical, and licentious woman who stands for degeneration and infects the revolutionary space with sexual licentiousness). As the bigger part of the subsequent account (in this chapter and the rest of the dissertation) deals with crowds and how they produce their subjects as degenerate and licentious (and also as perverse subjects who lack individuality and cannot be fully separated from the crowd that *bears* them),¹³⁷ I will refer to this perverse subject which is both *born* and *borne* by the crowd as *the crowd-born(e) subject*.

Crowd-born(e) ‘Arabi

The crowd-born(e) subject is therefore a degenerate subject who regresses to earlier evolutionary forms. In the late 19th century Ahmad ‘Urabi (or ‘Arabi, as the British and French media of the time dubbed him, a rendering that conflates him with/as all

¹³⁷ I will explore the perverse and lacking individuality of the crowd-born(e) subject, and the crowd as a space for the dissolution of individuality, in the next chapter.

Arabs) provided a convenient target. ‘Urabi/’Arabi was thoroughly racialized not only because he belonged to the racially other Egyptian crowd, but furthermore because of the misspelling of his name. By being ‘Arabi, ‘Urabi becomes the quintessential Arab; or conversely, because he was to them the quintessential Arab and the representative of an Arab crowd, the foreign media could only think of him as ‘Arabi. ‘Arabi through this appellation is a catchall figure and term for the Arab *crowd*. Furthermore, his association with rebellion, the insistence of the foreign media to represent his movement (including the army he led) as a licentious crowd or *émeute* rather than a proper army,¹³⁸ and the episodes of crowd violence which characterized his revolt (again some of which will be revisited in the course of this study), all turn ‘Urabi- as ‘Arabi- to a/the crowd-born(e) subject. The French Royalist mouthpiece, the *Gazette de France*, though not explicitly using the language of degeneration, presented ‘Urabi/‘Arabi as the quintessential crowd-born(e), civilizationally regressive and/or degenerate, subject. Though supposedly a military man, he stands not for the army with all its discipline and order, but for the *émeute* (rebellion, riot). In the *Gazette*’s caricaturistic report on ‘Urabi, describing the ‘Urabist crowd as presented by the *Journal des Debats* which is quoted in the *Gazette*, ‘Arabi, “toujours héroïque et désintéressé,” is only interested in promoting himself and his entourage undeservedly. One officer approaches ‘Arabi and exclaims “Vous ne vous rappelez donc pas que c’est moi qui ai tiré la barbe à M. Wilson, il y a trois ans?”” and ‘Arabi responds “Ah! C’est vrai ... vous avez tiré la barbe à M. Wilson, vous serez commandant.”” And another “vous m’excluez de l’avancement, mais c’est moi qui suis entré le premier au palais d’Abdin au mois de février?”” and ‘Arabi responds “Ah! Pardon, je l’avais oublié, vous serez colonel”” and then a third “Comment! Vous songez à me laisser

¹³⁸ See “Arabi-Gambetta – Gambetta-Bey,” *Gazette de France*, 8/4/1882, 1.

dans mon grade, mais n'est-ce pas moi qui ai déserté mon post quand on m'avait chargé de garder les abords du ministère de la guerre, le jour où vous deviez subir un jugement dont vos troupes vous ont hereusement délivré?" and 'Urabi responds "Vous avez raison, et pour ce service c'est bien le moins que je vous fasse général." These imagined dialogues not only present 'Arabi as someone who promotes his officers on a whim, without even corroborating their claims, but furthermore presents the acts based on which 'Arabi is promoting his officers as unruly acts worthy of a crowd and their *émeute*, rather than the acts of a proper army. The first is promoted for pulling the beard of the English ambassador, the second for leading the crowd into the viceroy's palace, and the third for deserting his post. What the caricaturistic report seems to present is a blaspheming of military discipline. This blasphemy, or what the report terms "comédie scandaleuse" goes on until "Tous les colonels sont devenus généraux, tous les lieutenants-colonels colonels, et ainsi de suite."

It is therefore an unruly crowd rather than an army that 'Arabi commands and stands for. The unruliness of this crowd is attributed to a civilizational lack; these officers, who were promoted for such acts of unruliness, warns the *Debats*, can neither read nor write. The civilizational bias (almost racialized, only recognizing the white man's culture as culture) can be appreciated if we take into consideration that among 'Urabi supporters were the leading Egyptian intellectuals of the time. The minister of defense the 'Urabi movement imposed on the Khedive was none other than the leading poet of the time Mahmud Sami al-Barudi. The political wing of the movement included some of the leading intellectuals of the time: 'Abd Allah al-Nadim, Hassan al-Shamsi, Muhammad 'Ubayd, and occasionally Muhammad 'Abduh, not to mention the Syrio-Egyptian intellectuals who supported the movement but later defected, including Adib Ishaq and Salim al-Naqqash. Perhaps some of the

members of the movement, especially the officers, did not speak English and French fluently, but they were educated in their languages and their systems of knowledge.¹³⁹ Indigenous languages and bodies of knowledge, however, are dismissed. It is in fact a cause of alarm that “L’armée ne doit être commandée que par des hommes dont la science se borne à connaître le Coran, et regarder Araby comme une sorte de prophète.” This civilizational element is highlighted, in the article of the *Gazette* by contrasting those who are being promoted to those whom ‘Urabi has denied promotion and who are graduates of schools run by Europeans.

On the one side, therefore, we see military discipline, the domain of the civilized,¹⁴⁰ and on the other side the mutiny/rebellion,¹⁴¹ thoroughly racialized as an oriental lack of order and discipline. Orientalist political caricature is moreover present in the depiction of ‘Arabi throughout the report; in addition to depicting him as a nepotistic despot who promotes unworthy officers on a whim, the description also highlights his fez, his being a Bey, and depicts him smoking a narghileh. When an Englishman asks ‘Arabi to promote a friend who is worthy of promotion (naturally, an Englishman will only recommend the worthy), ‘Arabi responds with (almost farcical) indignation (or, according to the article, *aplomb prodigieux*), commenting that he could not breach military order. The contradiction between ‘Arabi’s nepotism and loose military order, and his indignation at the Englishman’s recommendation, is an Orientalist caricature. Lest the Orientalism of the report be missed, the *Gazette*

¹³⁹ At one point *al-Mufid* decided to play the game of civilizational representations, coupled with Ottoman loyalty, and issued a short article on how Urabi’s household are educated in both Arabic and Turkish and how it is important to him that every member of his household can speak both languages; *al-Mufid*, 30/3/1882, 2.

¹⁴⁰ Military discipline as the antidote to licentiousness and the army as the other to the licentiousness of the crowd are discussed in Chapter 5.

¹⁴¹ *Émeute* in the French original.

describes ‘Urabi in another article (in which it follows up on the comparison between ‘Urabi and then French prime minister Léon Gambetta) as “chef de bandits et d’espèce de sauvage.”¹⁴² ‘Arabi, to the West, or at least to the French right wing represented by the *Gazette* and the liberal-centre represented by the *Journal des Debats*, was the convenient crowd-born(e) degenerate, standing for an unruly rebellion and carrying all the attributes of the degenerate racial other.¹⁴³ Whereas the royalist mouthpiece (the *Gazette de France*) depicted ‘Urabi through tropes of civilizational regression, the colonialist mouthpiece the *Courrier de France* used the language of biological degeneration, claiming that the description of ‘Urabi in English newspaper pointed towards a degenerate physiognomy.¹⁴⁴ In both cases, the perverse and failed subjectivity of ‘Arabi stood for/was consistent with the situation of *the Arabs* and the Arab crowd which produced this subjectivity.

¹⁴² “Arabi et Gambetta,” *Gazette de France*, 11/7/1882, 2.

¹⁴³ The point here is not only that ‘Urabi happened to be a crowd-born(e) racial other, but furthermore that ‘Arabi (the figure for ‘Urabi but also the Arab as such) constitutes the blueprint on which counterrevolutionary forces in Europe produced their own crowd-born(e) subjects. In Chapter 3 I will show how ‘Arabi was used to produce the bad subjectivity of Gambetta and Delescluze.

¹⁴⁴ See *al-Mufid*, 13 Rabi’ al-Awwal, 1299, 2/2/1882, 3. Unfortunately the pertinent issues of the *Courrier* were missing from the BNF and other archives I consulted. *Al-Mufid’s* response is important because it shows how degeneration enters Egyptian discourse through Western sources, and especially through the repudiation thereof. Furthermore, *al-Mufid* responds that the *Courrier* is confusing “wisdom” and “steadfastness” with “degeneration,” “foresight” with “resignation” and “resolve” with “weakness.” These confusions (or reversals) are interesting because they can be read in two ways. The lexicon used to describe ‘Urabi can be read as the exact opposite of what he is being accused for; the response can be paraphrased as “‘Urabi is not degenerate and weak, but rather strong and able in mind and body.” This would be a respond that rejects the accusations of degeneration without interrogating their premises. Another reading, however, may suggest that, in response to accusations of the degeneration and weakness of body, *al-Mufid* is stressing ‘Urabi’s strength of character and especially his self-restraint; all the terms that are used to convey strength in *al-Mufid’s* response can mean strength directed inwardly, against one’s own passions and desires. This way *al-Mufid* would be shifting the conversation from *inhilal* as ordained by biological evolutionism to *inhilal* as the letting loose of one’s own passions; this reading can be paraphrased as saying “since you do not understand (any longer) the value of restraint, you mistook ‘Urabi’s restraint for weakness.”

With the defeat of ‘Urabi some of these representations started to be accepted by the Arab media. ‘Urabi, in the Arab and Egyptian press of the time, started to look more and more like Europe’s ‘Arabi. Most notably in *al-Jawa’ib*, which was taking a pro-British turn towards the end of the 1882 confrontations between the ‘Urabists and the British army, ‘Urabi and his comrades appear as excessive, despotic, and irrational to the extent of mania, sometimes *pyromania*.¹⁴⁵ Later, the ambitious heir of Khedive Tawfiq, ‘Abbas Hilmi II, who sought an alliance with the nationalist movement to counter British colonial influence, launched a restoration project which patronized a number of the leading intellectuals: this did not only include Mustafa Kamil, the founder of *al-Liwa’* newspaper and the National Party (and thus in a way the founder of the second wave of Egyptian nationalism) but also the court poet Ahmad Shawqi (who also harbored Ottomanist and Egyptian nationalist sentiments, who sometimes contributed to *al-Liwa’*, and who was canonized as *Amir al-Shu’ara’* - a title which translates roughly as ‘the Prince/Commander/Lord of Poets’). This also included the Egyptian politician, intellectual, and historian ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi’i, a longtime member of the National Party who became, by virtue of his unprecedented multivolume historiography of Egypt and Egyptian national consciousness, the mythistorian of Egyptian nationalism. This group of nationalist-loyalist thinkers launched a multi-faceted campaign against ‘Urabi and his legacy, sometimes inadvertently repeating the colonial claims and unwittingly re-producing their civilizational biases which had produced ‘Urabi as civilizationally lagging and biologically degenerate. For example, Shawqi’s attack on ‘Urabi reproduces very closely the allegations of European media that ‘Urabi led and promoted an uneducated

¹⁴⁵ See for example the editorial on *Al-Jawa’ib*, 7 dhu l-Qi’dah, 1299, 19/9/1882. See also “Junun ‘Urabi” which was originally published in *al-I’tidal*, and reposted in *al-Jawa’ib* 14 Dhu al-Qi’dah, 1299, 26/9/1882, 4.

and uncivilized crowd who were not worthy of high military or political ranks.¹⁴⁶ Shawqi, who at other times expressed a clear anti-colonial sentiment, deemed this promotion of the unworthy an “Oriental blindness.”¹⁴⁷ In the same fashion, in the account of ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi‘i ‘Urabi’s weaknesses appear as distinctly indigenous/Oriental. His lack of proper Western military training, which al-Rafi‘i recognizes as one of his main weaknesses and causes for defeat, is repeatedly related to the traditional-religious education ‘Urabi had¹⁴⁸ (reminiscent of the discourse of the *Gazette*). To show the shortcomings of ‘Urabi, al-Rafi‘i quotes from the ‘eyewitness’ account by Alexander Broadley (a British lawyer and professional and published Orientalist, who posed as a ‘Urabi sympathizer), ultimately replicating all the British civilizational biases of Broadley. ‘Urabi’s weaknesses, cowardice, and unwarlike nature, according to Broadley via al-Rafi‘i, are all results of his peasant

وهذا الصدر أضيّق أن يحلّى .. وأن يسترجع الشأن الأجل¹⁴⁶
فلم يك للقتنا يوماً محلاً... ولا لقي الرصاص ولا السهاما

لقد ضاع الفخار على الخفير... وضاعت عنده نعم الأمير
أمن تحت السلاح إلى وزير... يسمى السيد البطل الهماما
عمى في الشرق كان ولا يزال... فما برحت معاليه تنال
ويبلغ شأوها الأقصى رجال... لهم في الجهل قدر لا يسامى
فخذ رتب المعالي أو فدعها... وإن شئت اشبرها أو شئت بعها
فإنك إن تنلها لا تضعها... وحاشا ترفع الرتب الطغاما

Ahmad Shawqi, *Sawt al-‘Izam*

عمى في الشرق كان ولا يزال.. فما برحت معاليه تنال¹⁴⁷
ويبلغ شأوها الأقصى رجال.. لهم في الجهل قدر لا يسامى

Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi‘i, *al-Thawrah al-‘Urabiyyah*, 556, 558, 560- 561.

background.¹⁴⁹ His physiognomy which shows no dignity, his slow and dormant movement and his peasant lack of military spirit, as well as his lack of proper military training, are all signs and causes of ‘Urabi’s failures as a revolutionary and military leader (according to al-Rafi‘i’s rendition of Broadley).¹⁵⁰ To make things worse, ‘Urabi, according to Broadley and al-Rafi‘i, spent the eve of the battle not engaging in military preparations but rather in prayers and obscure mystical practices,¹⁵¹ reminiscent of the *Gazette*’s taunting of the inept military leaders who only study the Qur’an. Although al-Rafi‘i does not accuse ‘Urabi of degeneration, he is clearly reproducing a civilizational discourse that places the native on the side of degeneration. ‘Urabi’s shortcomings are clearly those of the indigenous subject, and are opposed to the discipline, strength, and spirit of the civilized and warlike Western and urban subject. Similarly when *al-Liwa*’ would beseech its readers (which it identified as Easterners/Oriental) to learn the lessons of Western military prowess and the value the Westerners (identified as “progressed” nations) place on military advancement, they would oppose this Western civilizational lesson to a meekness they associate with Arabs in general and ‘Urabi in particular.¹⁵² Even in Egyptian nationalist media, ‘Urabi had become ‘Arabi. While the figure of ‘Urabi served to repudiate the charge of Arab(i) degeneration in the discourse of *al-Mufid*,¹⁵³ (i.e. in its response to the *Gazette*), the second generation of Egyptian nationalists used the

¹⁴⁹ Ibid 560- 51.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² “al-Sayfwa al-Qalam,” *Al-Liwa*’, 10/10/1901, 1.

¹⁵³ See *al-Mufid*, 13 Rabi’ al-Awwal, 1299, 2/2/1882, 3.

figure of ‘Urabi to promote a discourse on degeneration that reflects back on the national crowd and the national self as degenerate.

With the anti-‘Urabi nationalist discourse, therefore, and especially with al-Rafī‘i, we begin to see an Arab Egyptian acceptance of the colonial civilizational terms that the crowd-born(e) degenerate is Arab, Egyptian, or peasant.¹⁵⁴ The degeneracy of the native Arab/peasant and the ineptitude of indigenous systems of knowledge and education thus construct the realm of the improper, the unruly, and the licentious (blamed for the defeat and occupation).

The crowd-born(e) subject therefore emerges, in the late 19th century in Europe and the early 20th century in colonized Egypt, as a degenerate and a lower form of evolution. Degeneration in general, and crowd-born(e) degeneration in particular, cause the withering of rational faculties (expressed by LeBon in neurological terms; the brain gives way to lower nervous centres and outside nervous stimuli)¹⁵⁵ and therefore a regression to nature. It also causes a regression to lower evolutionary forms; in addition to the racial savages, these lower evolutionary forms include women and children. I will now explore how the figure of the racial savage played a role a century after ‘Urabi in producing the Islamist in the ideological imagination of the Egyptian State as sexual savage and ultimately a licentious subject. I will then move to exploring the themes of the regression to nature, to childhood, and to femininity, before I conclude by exploring representations of sexual chaos and how they condense these figures and the discourses that produce them.

¹⁵⁴For a larger history of the conceptions of degeneration in Arab, and especially Egyptian thought, and how it moved between accepting the Western charge of Arab degeneration and turning it back to the West, See Massad, *Desiring Arabs*.

¹⁵⁵ LeBon, *The Crowd*, 56.

Racial Degeneration and the Islamic Sexual Savage

Depictions of Islamists in the propaganda of the Egyptian state have often invoked the theme of sexual permissiveness. Although this may seem a paradox: that a religious organization or a group of religious organizations are considered sexually permissive and licentious, I will argue, after exploring the trope and its recurrence, that the figure of the sexually permissive Islamist terrorist and Islamist organization are connected to the larger themes of this chapter: that spaces that go against the State are produced as immoral and licentious, and that the Islamist is produced as a degenerate figure and therefore his or her sexual licentiousness is a form of civilizational/racial degeneracy and savagery.

This trend was started by Anwar al-Sadat who made allegations about the permissive sexual lives of the members of Islamist organizations in a 1981 presidential speech.¹⁵⁶ It thrived under Mubarak, especially during the confrontation with the Islamists in the 1990s: films, television series, and propaganda pamphlets depicted the inner lives of Islamist organizations as one of serial (usually undocumented by the State) marriages and/or adultery, and thus represented the Islamists through a panoply of perversities which mainly focused on polygamy (diachronic or synchronic for men, and diachronic for women).¹⁵⁷ Opposed to the stereotype of the polygamist (therefore over-sexed) Islamist, there was also the stereotype of the Islamist as a sexually frustrated voyeur, masturbator, rapist, and

¹⁵⁶ Ra'i al-Sadat fi al-Muzaharat," 4:52 YouTube Video, by "Muhammad Alaa," posted on 5 March 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8bQjyr8tPI>

¹⁵⁷ See for example Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 9-11, 20-26, 59, 86- 87. 176- 178, 183. The theme was also a staple of the television and cinematic representations of the Islamists under the Mubarak regime. This was the case, for example, with the television series *al-Khuru'j min al-Ma'zaq* wherein the Islamist financier was depicted as a perverse polygamist, and the television series *al-Wahm wa al-Silah* which focused on the undocumented marriages they performed. This theme will be further explored in Chapters 2 and 5.

failed heterosexual.¹⁵⁸ A noteworthy example is a report in which the newspaper accuses “the extremists” of running a prostitution ring of which the pimps are bearded and the prostitutes wear the niqab. The report is preceded by a preamble about the moral degeneracy (*inhilal akhlaqi*) and physical/carnal permissiveness (*al-tasayyub al-jasadi*) that characterize the Islamists.¹⁵⁹

This motif of the licentious and sexually permissive Islamist is also maintained by the present regime. The charge of running prostitution rings was repeated by the regime propagandist Dindirawi al-Hawwari, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *al-Yawm al-Sabi*. In addition to claiming that the Muslim Brothers ran prostitution rings (which doubled as hiding places for explosives), al-Hawwari charged that most of the global porn industry was run by the Muslim Brothers (which according to al-Hawwari was part of a Brotherhood conspiracy for global mind control, thus echoing Western, and especially American, anti-Semitism while

¹⁵⁸ For example in one of the first few scenes of ‘Adil Imam’s film *al-Irhabi* (The Terrorist, 1994), the main character, an Islamist terrorist, peeps at his attractive female neighbor while she is hanging her laundry. He then moves to doing pushups (as if to sublimate his sexual desire) but ends up fantasizing/dreaming about her seducing him. The terrorist, according to this depiction, is a voyeur and a failed heterosexual. Similarly in *Disco Disco* (1993) the Islamist/potential terrorist spies on his neighbor while she showers. Eventually he attempts to rape the main character, and finally he would attempt to kill his own sister for no apparent reason (perhaps to sublimate a deeply repressed incestuous desire? Or simply because this is what Islamists do?). In the political cartoons by Mustafa Hussein (which constituted an important part of Egyptian pop-culture of the 1990s), Islamists were commonly depicted as adding sexual perversity to violence. For example see Mustafa Hussein, “al-Fasiqah: Qissah Qasirah,” *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 19/12/1992, 7. In this cartoon bestiality is added to voyeurism; two Islamists are frustrated by how a domestic cat is cute (*ladhidhah*) and seductive (*muthirah lil ghara’iz*), especially as she stands by the window “seducing passengers.” The final sequence of the cartoon shows the two Islamists pointing their guns at the cat. The caricature and cartoon of the peeping Tom Islamist can, however, be seen as a critique of Islamist parties complicit with a voyeuristic system of state power that tries to expose (or out) everything to state gaze and judge it accordingly. At the end of the next chapter I will discuss this mode of voyeuristic power, its colonial roots, and how some Islamists fell victim to it while others collaborated.

¹⁵⁹ Sawsan al-Jayyar, “hal dabbar al-amn fadihat al-adab lil mutatarrifin?” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 20/6/1994, 78- 81. More examples from *Ruz al-Yusuf* and other propaganda outlets will be more closely examined in the next chapter.

substituting the Muslim Brothers for Jews).¹⁶⁰ Similarly, the Muslim Brothers' spaces of activism were depicted as sexually deviant. As this regime has inaugurated itself through the violent and bloody repression of the two sit-ins (in Rabi'ah al-'Adawiyyah and al-Nahdah Squares), which were protesting the 2013 coup d'état, the need of the regime's apologists and propagandists to justify the bloody event led them to circulate rumors about the deviant sexual practices that allegedly took place in these two sit-ins. For example, one month after the massacres of Rabi'ah and al-Nahdah, journalist, regime propagandist, and Sisi apologist Hamdi Rizq alleged that a licentious activity which he termed *jihad al-nikah*¹⁶¹ and whereby men have allegedly offered their female family members for the sexual satisfaction of the protesters, was widespread in the sit-ins (thus justifying the massacres after the fact). *Nikah al-Jihad* or *Jihad al-Nikah* is something that began as an online hoax by the Islamophobic supporters of the Syrian regime who claimed that an ambiguous form of mating was instituted by the extremist Islamist factions of the Syrian opposition

¹⁶⁰ Dandarwi al-Hawwari, "al-Mawaqi' al-Jinsiyah, ahammasadirtamwil al-ikhwan," *al-Yawm al-Sabi'*, 15/11/2014, <http://www.youm7.com/story/2014/11/15/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%85%D9%88%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86/1951917#.VGkcW9oaySM>

¹⁶¹ Nikah is one of the Arabic terms which can mean many things according to the context. Usually it means *legitimate coitus* or *marital intercourse* (as opposed to *sifah*, which usually refers to intercourse outside of marriage), though in other contexts it may mean *extra-marital intercourse* or simply *coitus/intercourse*. Sometimes it is also used to mean *nuptials* or *marriage* without necessarily referring to its consummation, but this is linguistically inaccurate, unless the reference is clearly made to *'aqd al-nikah* (roughly: the coital agreement).

(never explaining what this form of mating actually was), it is thus an index of a global discourse on the licentious and sexually perverse Islamist.¹⁶²

This motif may seem paradoxical. Here we have religious groups who are (at least perceived to be) fanatic and sexually conservative, but who are consistently depicted as sexually permissive and licentious. The production of the Islamist as licentious, I would argue, was possible because of two larger ideological trends. The first is the association between the politically subversive and the licentious: if they go against the State, then they must also go against morality, marriage, the family, etc. Second is the understanding of the Islamist as civilizationally and racially/biologically degenerate. As proper morality –including proper sexual code- become produced as civilizational prerogatives, and as the moral and sexual codes of a certain moment of Western civilization become canonized as *the* universal moral codes, subjects who fail (or are imagined to fail) to approximate these codes are produced as simultaneously degenerate and licentious.

The charge of polygamy clearly betrays a civilizational (and perhaps racial) disdain for indigenous, Islamic, and/or non-Western matrimonial practices and the upholding of bourgeois Western monogamy and the nuclear family as the exclusive proper practice. The panoply of Islamic/Islamist perversities also included voyeurism and exhibitionism (the insistence of the late Islamist leader ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Rahman to receive conjugal visits from his newlywed in his Egyptian prison triggered special disdain from propagandists who viewed these visits as a shameless act of indulgence

¹⁶² This discourse was covered, in the context of US war on terror, most brilliantly and sufficiently in Jasbir Puar’s, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), especially in her first chapter, titled “The Sexuality of Terrorism,” 37- 78.

and exhibitionism)¹⁶³—to the effect of sometimes producing them as simultaneously and paradoxically over-sexed and sex-starved (but in both cases of perverse sexuality). Both *perversions* were understood, under the civilizational episteme of the 19th century, which still governs modern and modernist ideologies (to various extents), as a result of degeneration (a degenerate hereditary predisposition causes them) and a further cause thereof (they exhaust the body, they waste the seed and block the *generation* of the race).¹⁶⁴

These representations (and even the paradox of depicting the Islamists as religious fanatics and sexually loose, and as simultaneously over-sexed and sex-deprived) can be explained as simply a part of the larger trend of depicting any space and any subject that goes against the State as licentious. In the next chapter, I will show how any space that was not under the gaze of the State was suspected of orgiastic license, and in Chapter 5 I will show how every rebellion against the State was imagined as a rebellion against marriage and the family and vice versa.

¹⁶³ This incident was recounted in detail in ‘Abd al-Baqi’s confessions which were related by Sabir Shawkat. ‘Abd al-Baqi noted how this incident had led him to *despise* [*yahtaqir*] ‘Abd al-Rahman. The licentious scenery is highlighted through describing the followers of ‘Abd al-Rahman who guarded the coital scene “each of them holding a piece of metal and ready to kill anyone who would object to the insane desires of their *shaykh*.” The Islamist here is produced as possessing an aggressive and insane lack of restraint, which the members of the entourage of Islamists are willing to fulfill at any cost, even if this meant killing other inmates. ‘Abd al-Baqi then goes on to relate how he still remembers the “dirty and obscene sounds” as if remembering “a scene from a lewd sexual film.” Shawkat then goes on to ask: “I wonder, what religion and what system of law approves what this blind shaykh has done?” Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 165.

¹⁶⁴ On the relationship between masturbation and degeneration see Hoad, “Wild(e) Men and Savages,” 62, 91, 93n41. For the relationship between homosexuality and degeneration, in addition to Hoad, “Wild(e) Men and Savages,” see also the discussion of the association between the homosexual and death in Judith Butler, “Sexual Inversions,” in *Foucault and the Critique of Institutions*, ed. John Caputo and Mark Yount, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 81- 100, Leo Bersani, “Is the Rectum a Grave?” *October* 43 (Winter, 1987): 197- 222, and Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblage*, 72. For how theories of evolution and degeneration shaped Arab discourse since the late 19th century see Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, esp. 207.

Nevertheless, with the Islamists there is an unmistakable civilizational and racial disdain. The licentious representations of the Islamists are anchored in their civilizational *failures*: their *failure* to approximate modern-Western monogamy, the modern-Western nuclear family, modern-Western sartorial codes, modern-Western morphologies, and modern-Western sexuality (hence over-sexing and sex-deprivation as two failures to approximate the Western mean).

The degeneracy of the Islamists was semantically alluded to by the pro-regime *Ruz al-Yusuf* when it started, in the 1990s, to refer to the Muslim Brothers as the “disbanded/degenerate group” (*al-Jama‘ah al-Munhallah*).¹⁶⁵ While on the surface, the word *munhallah* means disbanded [by law], one cannot overlook the tongue-in-cheek reference to moral *inhilal*, especially when it comes from *Ruz al-Yusuf*. This came amid *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s campaign against the Islamists whereby it accused them, among many things, of moral degeneracy and sexual license and perversities. In addition, the lack of restraint, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and other perversities, which we encountered as associated with the Islamists, can be read as descriptions of *degenerate types*. More specifically, the Islamists were represented (at least in two of the significant works of propaganda under Mubarak, namely ‘Adil Imam’s film *al-Irhabi* and the journalistic/propaganda booklet *Irhabi Taht al-Tamrin*)

¹⁶⁵ One of the earlier instances of this epithet appears in the preface to the special news file on the Muslim brothers on 14/8/1995, 19. After the dissolution of the National Democratic Party in the aftermath of 2011, the Muslim Brothers’ press will take revenge by consistently referring to the party as “al-munhall.” See for example Ahmad Lakluk, “Mudir Markaz al-Ta’lim: hadhafna durusan tatahaddath ‘an injazat al-maklu’,” *al-Huriyyah wa al-‘Adalah*, 6/11/2011, 15, Ahmad Sha‘ban, “Rumuz al-Munhall Yakhtariqun Qasr al-Nil,” *al-Huriyyah wa al-‘Adalah*, 22/11/2011, 10, Jamal al-Dirwani, “Mas’ulat Safhat Imsik Fulul: Nafdah Rumuz al-Munhall wa al-Baqi ‘ala al-Jumhur,” 11/11/2011, 2. This is not to be seen as only exacting petty revenge or as making moral suggestions about the party. In addition to all that, the Brothers’ mouthpiece was waging a campaign warning against efforts by the defunct party of the Mubarak regime to incite chaos and push things into going out of control i.e. *inhilal* and *infilat*.

through two *perversions* which were traditionally understood as degenerate, namely masturbation and homosexuality. The figure of the Islamist-masturbator appears early on in ‘Adil Imam’s blockbuster film *al-Irhabi* (the Terrorist), wherein the terrorist, aroused by his female neighbor, engages in masturbatory pushups followed by actual masturbation. The Islamist as a homosexual appears at the end of ‘Abd al-Baqi’s testimony in Shawkat’s *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, as the condensation of Islamist perversities and the shocking sobering fact that would finally lead ‘Abd al-Baqi to repentance. After his ascent through Islamist organizations, ‘Abd al-Baqi realizes that their supreme commander (identified by the initials R.S.) is *afflicted with sexual deviance (musab bi al-shudhudh al-jinsi)*.¹⁶⁶ It was not, therefore, the killing, the looting, and the incitement of terror that turned ‘Abd al-Baqi away from Islamist organizations; sexual deviance/homosexuality was the ultimate terror that turned ‘Abd al-Baqi away.

Yet the discourse on the licentious Islamist copied the representations of the sexual savage/degenerate most faithfully when it came to adorned men and sexually predatory women. Darwinian ideologies (of the biological and social variants) believed that the evolution of men leads them to shun adornments and understood the beards of savages as adornments.¹⁶⁷ The Egyptian propaganda’s fixation on the beard of the Islamists can thus be read as echoing this logic. Women, on the other hand, evolve towards becoming sexually passive: only a female animal or savage would

¹⁶⁶ Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 189.

¹⁶⁷ Neville Hoad, “Wild(e) Men and Savages: The Homosexual and the Primitive in Darwin, Wilde, and Freud” (Doctoral Dissertation, Columbia University in the City of New York, 1998), 48- 49.

seek out her sexual partner, according to the Darwinian ideology.¹⁶⁸ Islamist women, in state propaganda, were depicted as sexually aggressive, seeking multiple partners, moving from one faction to another for the sake of switching partners, and sometimes raping their male comrades.¹⁶⁹

Regressing Back to Nature

After having zeroed in on the Islamist-qua-sexual savage as a degenerate figure, I want to now zoom out again to the larger theme of crowd-borne degeneration (which we have introduced earlier through LeBon's understanding of the withering of brain functions) by way of exploring the theme of regressing to nature. Indeed, representations of the crowd and especially crowd violence and/or revolution have narrated them through the trope of the force(s) of nature. This was most impressively performed in Charles Dickens' memorable description of the *storming* of the Bastille in *A Tale of Two Cities* whereby the revolutionary crowd was likened to various forces of nature including storms, and "the rising sea."¹⁷⁰ In addition to narrating a

¹⁶⁸ Hoad, "Wild(e) Men and Savages," 48- 49.

¹⁶⁹ Sabir Shawkats' *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin* is rife with such examples, many of which will be discussed in detail in subsequent sections and in the next chapter.

¹⁷⁰ 2.21.166. The subsequent chapters are titled "The Sea Still Rises" and "The Fire Rise." The title of Book the Third, which is set, in its entirety, in Revolutionary France and deals with Revolutionary events, is "The Track of the Storm." This conceit is foreshadowed earlier when a storm taking place outside the Manette home (where the main characters were gathered) becomes an omen for the French Revolution; 2.6.77-78. At the very end of the novel, Dickens proclaims the Terror to be "the natural birth" of the terrors of the *ancien régime*; 3.15.292. In addition, members of the revolutionary crowd are brought to compare their revolution to natural forces and phenomena. When Madame Defarge wanted to convey how unstoppable her revolutionary zeal and tenacity for revenge is, she exclaims "Then tell Wind and Fire where to stop, but don't tell me," 3.12.264. In an earlier pre-

regression or *degeneration* from culture to nature, the trope of the angry force of nature also recapitulates the now defunct Great Chain of Being. Let us remember that breach of the Chain always led to manifestations through the forces of nature. In *King Lear* nature showed its angry face, while in *Macbeth* it allowed for perversities it would not normally allow. Generally, when the trope of the forces of nature is used it invokes both the natural and the perverse: it shows the agitation of something that is otherwise calm (like water and wind), or the spread of something nature usually

revolutionary conversation in which they express their longing for the Revolution they await, Madame Defarge and her husband compare this Revolution to lightning not only in the sense that it strikes unexpectedly and inevitably but also in the sense that it takes time to foment before it finally strikes:

“It does not take a long time to strike a man with Lightning,” said Defarge.
“How long,” demanded madame, composedly, “does it take to make and store the lightning? Tell me.”
Defarge raised his head thoughtfully, as if there were something in that too.
“It does not take a long time,” said madame, “for an earthquake to swallow a town. Eh well! Tell me how long it takes to prepare the earthquake?”
“A long time, I suppose,” said Defarge.
“But when it is ready, it takes place, and grinds to pieces everything before it. In the meantime, it is always preparing, though it is not seen or heard. That is your consolation. Keep it.”
She tied a knot with flashing eyes, as if it throttled a foe.
“I tell thee,” said madame, extending her right hand, for emphasis, “that although it is a long time on the road, it is on the road and coming. I tell thee it never retreats, and never stops.”
(2.16.137)

Dickens here is countering the counterrevolutionary message that runs throughout his text with sympathy with the Parisian crowd; though the Revolution seemed to strike unexpectedly like a force of nature, it was in fact in the making through years of aristocratic repression. Dickens expresses this explicitly towards the end of the *Tale*: “And yet there is not in France with its rich variety of soil and climate, a blade, a leaf, a root, a spring, a peppercorn, which will grow to maturity under conditions more certain than those that have produced this horror. Crush humanity out of shape once more, under similar hammers, and it will twist itself into the same tortured forms. Sow the same seed of rapacious licence and oppression over again, and it will surely yield the same fruit according to its kind;” 3.15.288. The Revolution as a force of nature that has been in the forming under ancien régime oppression appears also in sympathetic accounts. For example in Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*, when the pastor, M. Bienvenue, questions a former “conventionnel” about the Terror, the conventionnel responds: “Un nuage s’est formé pendant quinze cents ans. Au bout de quinze siècles, il a crevé. Vous faites le procès au coup de tonnerre,” Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*, Editions la Bibliothèque Digitale. Kindle Edition, 22. And, of course in the musical version, revolution-mongering Enjolras fires, at the eve of the June Rebellion “one more day before the storm!” even though in this particular case he is very clearly, even as far as the novel and the musical are concerned, not referring to a spontaneous outbreak but a pre-planned (and as we find out later, very limited) operation.

contains (like fire). Dickens makes this more obvious when he alternates between the natural and the supernatural, between the storm and the rising sea and fire on one side, and the apocalypse and the teeth of the dragon on the other.¹⁷¹ The state, therefore, does not only hold civilization from regression to nature, it holds nature itself from becoming excessive or perverse.

Among the forces of nature that are used as metaphors for the crowd, fire seems to be the most common. It was used by Thomas Carlyle, for example, to represent the crowd *and* labor organizing.¹⁷² In many literary, journalistic, and other media representations, from the 1800s to the present, fire appears as the trope for the crowd and their modus operandi, as well as the metaphor and telos of revolt. Fire as the telos of political (seditious/incendiary) activism also recurred in the pro-Mubarak propaganda: an absurd television report warned the demonstrators and their families that there were ‘*anasir ithariyyah* (incendiary elements, elements of excitement, subversive elements, *agents provocateurs*) heading to Tahrir Square and holding “burning balls of fire” with which they aim to burn down the Square. Fire, as a

¹⁷¹The Revolutionary scene includes fighters emerging from the dragon’s teeth; 3.4.211, and bestial women (sometimes beasts of nature, others mythological beasts). The Revolutionary order and calendar are described as the “deluge of year one of Liberty – the deluge rising from below not falling from above, and with the windows of Heaven shut, not opened!” 3.4.211. One of the perversities of the Revolutionary regime seems to lie in confusing Revolution day with Judgment Day. For example, in his note cursing the lineage of the Evrémondes, Doctor Manette writes: “I, Alexandre Manette, unhappy prisoner ... denounce to the times when all these things shall be answered for;” 3.10.258. Clearly Alexandre Manette is referring to the Day of Judgment but the Revolutionary court takes it upon itself to have “these things ... answered for.” The musical version of *Les Misérables* similarly goes from the natural to the supernatural; the musical number in which Enjolras refers to the rebellion as a storm is concluded by Jean Valjean declaring “tomorrow is the judgment day” to which the chorus responds “tomorrow we’ll discover what the God in heaven has in store.”

¹⁷² See John Plotz, *The Crowd: British Literature and Public Politics*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 139-140. Plotz also offers an interesting analysis of how this metaphor serves to take agency and rationale away from workers’ organizations.

metonym and fetish¹⁷³ of the crowd extends to the level of obscuring other parts of the picture: who are these *incendiary elements* (we are not told if they are extremist revolutionaries, pro-government thugs, agents of foreign powers, mere arsonists and pyromaniacs; we are not even told if they were actual *persons* or if they were even human)? What are their motivations beyond mere arson? Are these burning balls of fire torches, Molotov cocktails? Are they going to burn down the demonstrators, their tents, or the buildings in the Square? Fire as a sign of uncontrollable destruction and of revolutionary insanity, indeed of a physical and metaphysical order of things gone awry through the shaking of political power, serves to obscure, eschew, or even deny motive, subjective details (producing its bearers not as subjects and persons but as mere *elements*) and even logic (the act of arson here in itself defies logic: if these *incendiary elements* were against the regime, then why were they invested in burning down the protest, and if they were pro-government thugs, then why is the State television warning against them. In addition, nothing is said about how these elements were able to hold ‘burning balls of fire’ in their hands). These pyromaniac *incendiary elements* who defy logic had their forerunners in the propaganda of the Mubarak regime prior to 2011. In 1989, in an editorial denouncing and condemning a worker’s strike that was ongoing in the Cairo industrial district, a staunch Mubarak propagandist, Ibrahim Si’dah, who then served as the director general and editor in chief of the State-run weekly newspaper *Akhbar al-Yawm*, alleged that subversive elements within this strike threatened to “open the gas containers and set the whole industrial district on fire.” This, according to Si’dah, necessitated the intervention of

¹⁷³ Indeed, we can observe here a move from metonymy to fetishism. Fire, the metonym of the crowd and revolution, becomes fetishized as something to which the whole revolution is reduced.

the police to put an end to the strike – we see here a distinction between the disorderly fire of the opposition and the orderly fire of the state, a common trope which will be further explored in this section. Later it turns out, according to Si‘dah, that the majority of workers did not support these incendiary tactics, and were committed instead to “law and work ethics.” It was only the incendiary/subversive elements, some of them communist, others Muslim Brothers, which harbored such threats and subversive tactics¹⁷⁴ (here the zeroing in on fire blurs or elides the distinction between Islamists and Communists, the same way it elided the subjectivity of the incendiary elements in 2011). In this report the Carlylean association of workers’ strikes with fire is taken to a literal extreme— with the fine distinction that for Carlyle it was the workers’ movement itself that was akin to fire, while for Si‘dah it is the subversive Islamist and Communist elements, who find a suitable medium for their arson in spaces of protest.

The protest as a suitable space and medium for incendiary and subversive elements to commit arson, along with fire as the telos of political protest, appears in a 2008 film which anticipated, in many ways, the counterrevolutionary propaganda of 2011, namely *Rami al-I’tisami*.¹⁷⁵ In this film, a sit-in started by irresponsible and

¹⁷⁴ See Ibrahim Si‘dah, “Ya ‘Ummal Misr Ittahu” [Worker’s of Egypt Unite], *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 5/8/1989, 1,8.

¹⁷⁵ For an analysis of how the film anticipates the 2011 counterrevolutionary discourse, see Walter Armbrust, “Dreaming of Counterrevolution: *Rami al-I’tisami* as the Pre-Negation of Protest,” *Cinema Journal* 52, no.1 (Fall 2012): 143- 148. Armbrust provides a summary of the political motifs, including counterrevolutionary ones, that appeared in the course of the film, concluding that:

the revolution can also be seen as an articulation of long-standing discourses. All the forces that contended for power in the revolutionary situation that prevailed throughout the year after January 25, 2011, were depicted in *Rami the Protestor*. Moreover, the film was not so much about an impending event as it was about the reaction to the event. *Rami* was a presumably unintended learner’s manual for reactionary rhetoric. (148)

naïve youth (naïve enough to tolerate an Islamist camp which grew on the outskirts of their sit-in) ultimately provides a medium for arson by Islamist extremists (of whom the only casualty is a police conscript from peasant background). The lesson that spaces of protest provide a suitable medium for arson and ultimately results in fire was taken to heart by the state discourse in the aftermath of the 2011 sit-in, not only as evident from the example of the *incendiary elements* who wanted to burn down the protest, but also in how various state and pro-State private media zeroed in on moments of conflagration and fixed them as the sole representative and inevitable telos of revolt (again a metonym becoming a fetish).

For a revolt that was sparked through the burning down of police stations and which witnessed the burning down of the ruling party headquarters, fire became a convenient sign and a convenient delegitimizing mechanism in the hands of its detractors. Later, the burning of the science academy (*al-majma' al-'ilmi*) became, in the pro-regime media, a living representation of what would happen to the country if the revolution were not promptly put down, calling for the slogan “Egypt is burning” or “masr bitithiriq.”¹⁷⁶ After they were elected and assumed power in 2012, the

¹⁷⁶ For a full coverage on the arson of the academy, see “Hariq al-Majma' al-'Ilmi,” *Al-Misri al-Yawm*, <http://www.almasyalyoum.com/news/tag/95213>. For a more fear mongering account see Jonathan Downs, “Hariq al-Majma' al-'Ilmi Karithah Kubra,” trans. Sarah 'Adil, *Hindawi*, 27/5/2015, <http://www.hindawi.org/safahat/69246149/>. In this report, the arsonists- who according one interviewee cannot be termed revolutionaries or Egyptians even- are cast out of civilization. Their war is against civilization and their goal is to tell the rest of the world that “Egypt has no place for knowledge.” On the other side stands civilization embodied in colonial knowledge: the report, much like the general public discourse in Egypt at the time, bewails the burning of a copy of *Description de L’Egypte*, a text written by the occupying French army at the turn of the 18th-19th century. For the original text of the translated article, see Johnathan Downs, “Johnathan Downs reports on the fire last December that caused extensive damage to one of Egypt’s most important collections of historical manuscripts,” *History Today* 62, no. 3 (March 2012), <http://www.historytoday.com/jonathan-downs/calamity-cairo>. It is also worth noting that, until this very day, we don’t know whether the arson was the work of political activists, rogue elements within the protest, regime sponsored agents provocateurs, or simply crossfire; see Rasha 'Awni, “Ba’d 3 sanawat min harq al-majma' al-'ilmi al kullmuttahamawa al-fa'ilmajhul,” *VetoGate*, 16/12/2014, <http://www.vetogate.com/1378973>. Unmistakable here is the theme of fire versus civilization, which we will explore shortly.

Muslim Brothers kept the same tradition alive. Their mouthpiece, *al-Hurriyyah wa al-‘Adalah*, used fire both as a trope for the protests against their government¹⁷⁷ and as an index of their incendiary tactics and aims.¹⁷⁸

The coupling of fire, literal and metaphorical, in contemporary Egypt with the crowd is hardly an innovation but harks back to a century of such deployment. The two most significant precedents that set the stage for such use are the Fire of Alexandria in 1882 and the Fire of Cairo in 1952.¹⁷⁹ In July 1882, and after 3 days of

¹⁷⁷ For example, see “Kayfa nutfi’ nar al-mu’tasimin?” *al-Hurriyyah wa al-‘Adalah*, 26/12/2011/ 10. The title offers the dramatic question “how do we quell the fire of the protesters?”

¹⁷⁸ For example the main headline on 26/1/2013, 3 reads “Muzaharat wa Hara’iq wa Qati’ Tariq” (Demonstrators, Arson and Thuggery/Traffic impediment/brigandry). On another occasion the newspaper contrasts the Muslim Brothers’ project (which is based on building) to the protesters project which is based on demolishing and burning; in “bina’, hadm, tazahur,” *al-Hurriyyah wa al-‘Adalah*, 26/1/2013, 1,3, 16. The use of Molotov cocktails by some protesters is used to highlight the incendiarism of the protests. See for example “24 miliyuniyyah: al ism: silmiyyah, wa al-fi’l: Moltov,” *al-Hurriyyah wa al-‘Adalah* 29/6/2013, 4 [it is the seventh page but for some reason it is labeled as page 4]. The article is published against the backdrop of a column of fire against which a protester is standing. It is not clear if the protester is kindling the fire or trying to escape it. Photographs depicting fire in the background or a burning object in the hands of the protesters were commonly displayed along with propaganda articles against the demonstrators; see for example “Harb al-Shawari’ fi al-Tahrir,” 19/12/2011, 7, “innahm yahriqun al-watan” [they are burning the homeland] 7/12/2013, 6. Sometimes the same page is punctuated by more than one photograph of fire; on 29/1/2013, 3, two images appear of protesters and fire, one on the left hand side and one at the bottom center: in the first a protester standing against a small fire is waving what seems to be a teargas canister, perhaps fired by the police and is being thrown by the protesters back at the police. In the second a masked protester is standing in front of a burning tire. The image of a masked protester kindling fire keeps reappearing; holding a lit Molotov cocktail on 11/12/2012, 16, and on the front page picture on 7/12/2012, 1 against the title “al-hiwar bil Molotov” (dialogue through Molotov). See also the drawing of a protester in a balaclava setting Egypt to fire using a bottle of Molotov cocktail taking most of the front page of 28/1/2013, 1. Photos of fire appear again in the center image on 26/1/2013, 1, and in the photo taking most of the front page on 25/11/2011 (fire conveniently appears twice in this photo, probably due to the person in the picture throwing a burning object, a Molotov cocktail most likely, during the taking of the photo). Interestingly, on 17/12/2011 two very similar images appear, on page one of a demonstrator holding a torched stick, and on page three of a demonstrator/journalist standing in a similar position to the one occupied by the arsonist/activist, while the place occupied by fire in the first image is occupied by the crowd in this one. It is as if *al-Huriya wa al-‘Adalah* is unwittingly revealing that fire is becoming a metaphor for/congruent with the incendiary crowd.

¹⁷⁹ In addition to fire’s appearance as a trope and telos of political activism in Mubarak propaganda pre-2011 (as shown earlier), fire also appeared as a sign of the irrationality and destructiveness of the non-urban crowd during the 1919 revolt; see “al-Hariq ‘Amdan,” *Misr*, 10/3/1919, 2. In this report the “saboteurs” set fire to the straw stored to power the steam engines which “the notables” would have used to travel. A distinction is drawn, therefore, between capital, and the crowd that burns it,

the British fleet's bombardment of the city, Alexandria caught fire. The British and their allies, however, saw no causal link between the bombardment and the fire. Instead, fire must have been the work of insidious and insane arsonists within 'Urabi's ranks. The *cultural imposition* of these biases on Arabic and Egyptian representations was quick to follow. The pro-British historian Salim al-Naqqash (a Syrian/Lebanese resident of Alexandria and an important cultural figure of the time) adopted wholesale the British version of the story: it was always the natives who were responsible for fires.¹⁸⁰ Against these incendiary native crowds, we see the British army busy extinguishing fires. This in turn serves as a trope for the order/chaos dichotomy. Order is always presented as standing on the side of the British army (which explains why its shells do not cause the burning of the city), while damage and fire is always on the side of the indigenous crowd. In fact even dynamite becomes a tool not for setting fire but rather for extinguishing it when in the hands of the British.¹⁸¹ In one of the rare incidents where we hear the details about a British shell striking a civilian target (in this case, a European hospital, since obviously indigenous losses are not

between the destructive fire of the crowd, and the technological combustion that powers the steam engine, and between the (lower class?) saboteurs associated in arson, and the notables associated with peaceful modern technology.

¹⁸⁰ At one point he explicitly proclaims the damage done by the British gunfire to be negligible, while blaming all damage on the natives, whom he identifies as *riffraff*: أما الأضرار التي تسببت عن إطلاق المدافع فلا تستحق الذكر وأما الخراب والتدمير فكان كله من عمل الرعاع فإنهم خربوا وأتلفوا كل ما لم يقدروا على حمله ونهبه.

Salim al-Naqqash, *Misr lil-Misriyyin*, v.5, (Alexandria, Matba'at al-Mahrusah, 1884), 78. All subsequent references of *Misr lil Misriyyin* will be to the same volume. It is unclear whether the damage done by British canons is negligible because it was small, or because it mainly targeted indigenous neighborhoods.

¹⁸¹ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil-Misriyyin* 76. Dynamite can indeed be used to extinguish fire, but this is in cases where there is an excess of incendiary material, like in an oil well fire. A few bottles of Kerosene brought in by crazy incendiaries do little to explain the British use of dynamite. To be fair to al-Naqqash and to British colonists, however, dynamite does not only appear as a tool to quell fire. It similarly appears as a tool to quell the native crowd (with little care given to the lives it would take, damage by British fire is negligible, as al-Naqqash told us). Curiously dynamite appears alongside hot water, pressurized water machines, stones and rocks to quell the native crowd; al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 97. These are the same tools that one would use to quell fire, once again revealing how fire and the incendiary crowd stand-in for one another.

worth mentioning) the shell conveniently finds its way to an unoccupied floor and rests there without exploding.¹⁸² Salim Faris al-Shidyaq, who was by then running his father's publication *al-Jawa'ib*, offers a more nuanced account but then falls back on the same biases. At first, he presents two contradictory stories: that the British bombs are the source of the fire, and that also the Alexandrian crowd itself is. At one point he tried to square the two stories: the British bombed the Muslim quarter, so the natives (*al-Ahali*) released the prisoners and burnt down the foreigners' quarter in retaliation.¹⁸³ Eventually al-Shidyaq made a total shift to the other side and stated that it was beyond doubt that it was 'Urabi and his comrades who had burnt the city.¹⁸⁴ Even when blaming the British, however, al-Shidyaq, as we will see, endows British shells with a rational faculty, a potential for restraint, which he denies the Alexandrian masses. He blames the commander of the British fleet not for bombing the city, but for bombing it in a harmful manner (as if there is any other way of bombing): "We hoped" writes al-Shidyaq Jr., "that Admiral Seymour had directed his bombs in a way that did not cause harm."¹⁸⁵ (Al-Shidyaq, al-Naqqash, and other pro-British propagandists of the time seem to be forerunners of the more contemporary discourse about "smart bombs").

These representations of fire recapitulate very closely the representations of the Paris Commune and especially the *semaine sanglante* in *al-Jawa'ib*. During Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq's coverage of the Paris Commune, he justified the

¹⁸² Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 90.

¹⁸³ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 3 Ramadan 1299, 19/7/1882, 1.

¹⁸⁴ *Al-Jawa'ib* 2 Safar 1300, 12/12/1882, 1.

¹⁸⁵ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 3 Ramadan 1299, 19/7/1882, 1.

bombardment by the forces of Versailles as the only means to restore order.¹⁸⁶ During the burning of Paris at the end of the *semaine sanglante*, he painted an elaborate picture of the communards planning to burn the city (solely out of malicious intent), preparing kerosene, creating a network of kerosene filled tunnels to burn the city, etc.,¹⁸⁷ whereas the Versailles army was shown, after its invasion of the city, to be busy attempting to extinguish fires¹⁸⁸ (alas, the communards did not give it a chance). The depiction of an elaborate Kerosene conspiracy is also obvious in *al-Jawa'ib*'s depiction of the Alexandrian rebels,¹⁸⁹ while the British army (in the discourse of al-Shidyahq Jr. and al-Naqqash) played the same fireman's role the Versailles army had played a decade earlier. The experience of the Commune was present in the mind of al-Shidyahq Jr. to the extent that he at one point alleged that the burning of Alexandria was the work of "the socialists who burnt the city of Paris" and who joined 'Urabi's ranks to find another city to burn.¹⁹⁰

We can see therefore how, on the one hand, fire was consistently on the side of the rebels, standing for their insanity and the chaos and destruction they spread. In the hand of the forces of order, fire, on the other hand, is controllable and can be a source of order itself. In such representations, it seems that 'Urabi is depicted as having inherited and Orientalized the Commune's insanity and pyromania. After

¹⁸⁶ For example see *al-Jawa'ib*, 3 Safar 1288, 23/4/1871, 1.

¹⁸⁷ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 27 Safar 1288, 17/5/1871, 1, and 20 Safar 1288, 10/5/1871, 2. The fire of Paris was also used by al-Shidyahq as a metaphor for the seditious rebellion (deemed *fitnah*). "The *fitnah*," according to al-Shidyahq, was "put out/extinguished but only after it burnt down a great part of the city," 18 *Rabi' al-Awwal*, 1288, 7/6/1871, 1.

¹⁸⁸ *Al-Jawa'ib* 9 *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1288, 28/5/1871, 3.

¹⁸⁹ *Al-Jawa'ib* 2 Safar 1300, 12/12/1882, 1.

¹⁹⁰ *Al-Jawa'ib* 7 *Dhu al-Qi'dah* 1299, 19/9/1882, 1.

‘Urabi’s defeat, *al-Jawa’ib* would allege that ‘Urabi was caught while trying to burn down Cairo; fire here can be seen as a trope for ‘Urabi’s insanity and excess, opposed to his own narrative of self-restraint whereby he surrendered so that the city would not be burnt down.¹⁹¹ *Al-Jawa’ib* would go further to allege that he was inciting the riffraff (ri‘a‘ al-nas) to burn the city; once again we see incendiarism, and ‘Urabi’s pyromania, as a metonym for the irrational and incendiary crowd and their revolt.¹⁹² Later during the trial of ‘Urabi, *al-Jawa’ib* would depict the contentment and elation ‘Urabi and his comrades expressed at the burning of Alexandria, as if they were pyromaniacs who merely reveled in the burning of the city. ‘Urabi’s responses to his interrogators, especially with regards to the burning of Alexandria, are described as “childlike.”¹⁹³ This link between the incendiary crowd, fire, and childhood is evidence of a state of regression from reason. What is linked to them, however, and which al-Shidyaq (perhaps) did not pay attention to, was the Oriental.

Given how the figure of ‘Urabi was saturated with the traits of his race as depicted in Western sources of the time (on which al-Shidyaq and al-Naqqash relied), we can therefore once again read a racial bias in the depictions of ‘Urabi as insane and childlike, especially within a colonialist discourse that denies racial others any rationality and likens them to children. The dichotomy, therefore, between the British

¹⁹¹ ‘Urabi, *Mudhakkirat al-Za’im Ahmad ‘Urabi*, 233.

¹⁹² *Al-Jawa’ib*, 7 dhu l-Qi’dah, 1299, 19/9/1882. Similarly, ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi’i, the historian associated with the second wave of Egyptian nationalism, would attribute the burning of the city to the ‘Urabists (even as he cites the counterstory which attributes the burning of the city to British bombardment). Though al-Rafi’i attributes to the ‘Urabists a semblance of logic; that they did so in order to impede the march of the British forces. This logic is quickly qualified as flawed: وكان هذا الحريق من الوجهة العسكرية عملا عقيما يدل على الجهل بالخطط الحربية 412. Al-Rafi’i’s charge of military ignorance is also civilizational, as he elsewhere shows the incompetence of ‘Urabi by contrasting his traditional education to the modern military education and discipline needed for a military and revolutionary leader.

¹⁹³ *Al-Jawa’ib* 2 Safar 1300, 12/12/1882, 1.

rational and precise canon shells and the native irrational and widespread fire is also a racialized one.¹⁹⁴ The racialization of the ‘Urabist fire corresponds to the gendering of the fire of the Commune and therefore affords us one of the many chances for reading the mapping of the savage and the feminine onto one another. When Paris caught fire, the European conservative media interpreted the fire as a wave of insanity of which women predominantly or exclusively partook. For that purpose they invented the figure of the incendiary woman, the *Pétroleuse*.¹⁹⁵ The savage fire of Alexandria and its childlike Oriental incendiaries did not need to be gendered, as their racialization sufficed. In both cases, controllable and precise (gun) power is the civilizational privilege of the white man.

In addition to playing with uncontrollable fire, the indigenous crowd is shown (in al-Naqqash’s¹⁹⁶ and in British¹⁹⁷ and French reports)¹⁹⁸ bludgeoning foreigners with *nabbut*s (traditional bats often carried by Egyptians of peasant

¹⁹⁴ It is true that in the Commune it was two European forces fighting one another, yet the European counterrevolutionary discourse deployed various rhetorical and discursive stratagems in order to render the communards civilizationally inferior (some of these are explored in Chapter 3). Ultimately, to be able to establish a dichotomy between rational and precise government gunfire and irrational widespread revolutionary fire, the European media invented female incendiaries; the *Pétroleuses*. It is as if in both Paris 1871 and Alexandria 1882 the counterrevolutionary discourse needed the figure of an *other* standing at a lower scale of the evolutionary ladder in order to blame her for incendiary insanity. There was no need, of course, to invent female incendiaries in the case of Alexandria as their racialization sufficed.

¹⁹⁵ For a discussion of the figure of the *Pétroleuse*, how she emerges, and what biases her figure betrays, see Gay Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris: Images of the Commune*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 159- 190. For an analysis of the *Pétroleuse* and how she stood for feminine hysterical and degenerate excess, see Janet Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies: Narratives of Hysteria in Nineteenth-Century France*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 211- 216. For a comprehensive study of the *Pétroleuse* and how she emerged in counterrevolutionary representations see Edith Thomas, *Les Pétroleuse*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1993).

¹⁹⁶ See for example al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 5.

¹⁹⁷ See for example “Enquiry into the murder of Alexander Pope, Inspector of Prisons, and seven British soldiers on 18 March 1919 while travelling by train from Assiut to Minieh [*sic*].” The National Archives, UK. FO 141/753/3, High Commission, Egypt, 28/03/1919, 8940/1, 2

¹⁹⁸ See for example “Commune au Caire,” *Gazette de France*, 17/6/1882, 1.

background) or cutting them to pieces through sharp objects, but seldom using firearms.¹⁹⁹ Even when they have guns, they tend to use their bayonets rather than their bullets. It is as if wielding gun-power is beyond their civilizational means. During the events of 1919, when Egyptian resistance groups used gunfire, British intelligence would venture that they must have got them through Greek and Armenian sources.²⁰⁰ It is as if firearms need to pass from the hands of white Europeans to the hands of lesser Europeans, and finally to the hands of the natives. The significance of fire as a trope for the crowd and the revolutionaries cannot be overstressed. It operates on a civilizational scale not only because it represents a regression from civilization to nature, but also because the mastery of fire, represents in itself an index of civilization.

Threshold of Fire

Fire seems to have been a recurrent mythologeme in the narrative of becoming human. In Greek mythology Prometheus, the creator of Man, would only make his creation complete by stealing fire from Zeus. Beyond ancient Greece, “The Modern Prometheus” (also incidentally the subtitle of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*) became an integral part of humanism (Prometheus created Man, he represented the search for knowledge) and romanticism (he represented a heroic transgression). The importance

¹⁹⁹ See for example “Correspondences Respecting the Riots at Alexandria on the 11th June 1882.” The National Archives, UK. FO 881/4741. While the image of natives clubbing, bludgeoning, or stabbing foreigners is repeated ad nauseam, the few incidents wherein armed soldiers appear as participating in the confrontations, they use the bayonets of their guns to stab the foreigners, instead of using the guns to shoot (1, 62), perhaps betraying an ignorance, according to the imagination of the British colonists who authored these reports, of the *proper* usage of these marvelous Western technologies. Two decades later, the anti-colonial *al-Liwa’* would cast aspersions concerning the English narrative of the Alexandria events, asking why, if the natives of Alexandria were as fanatical and savage as the British reports depicted them, would they only use sticks and bayonets and refrain from using firearms; *al-Liwa’* 11/8/1901, 1.

²⁰⁰ “Intelligence reports and notes on the political background to the nationalist riots of 1919 by Colonel F H Smith.” The National Archives, UK. FO 141/753/6.

of fire in the teleology of man becoming Man is preserved in our modern Darwinian mythology. Fire is imagined to be the first creation of the primitive man, thus establishing a threshold between man as animal and man as human. The incendiaries, whether Parisian women or Egyptian rebels, like the primitive man, are at the threshold of being/becoming Man; they can create fire but they cannot control it. It is only the white man, removed by millennia of civilizational leaps from the primitive man (leaps that women and primitive populations have obviously failed to keep up with), who can wield and control (gun)fire.

This threshold of fire is captured in Adrian Mitchell's brilliant anti-colonial retelling of Robinson Crusoe's tale.²⁰¹ A complacent Crusoe announces to Friday, after lighting a fire with matches: "White man magic, Friday! Science. S-c-i-e-n-c-e!" Later, after giving Friday a lesson on private property, a frustrated Crusoe brandishes his gun in Friday's face. Friday, who witnessed his tribesmen being killed by Crusoe's gun at the beginning of the film did not need explanation, but Crusoe found it necessary to proclaim: "Friday, this is mine. I put my strongest spells on guns. They will kill black men like Friday but will not hurt white men like Master" (this is probably meant as a commentary on the narrative hubris of the scene in which Crusoe meets Friday for the first time in Daniel Defoe's original, in which Crusoe demonstrates to Friday his ability to wield firearms and thus wins his submission). After they manage to kill the slave traders, Friday examines their dead bodies and asks: "Master, thought you said white man could not be killed by gun because of science-magic," and Crusoe responds "I laid that spell myself, Friday, but I can take it off when I like." (In Defoe's original Friday is only able to use firearms under the

²⁰¹ Adrian Mitchell, *Man Friday*, directed by Jack Gold (London: ITV Global Entertainment Ltd, 1975).

guidance of Crusoe). The English claims (eventually repeated by al-Shidyaq junior) that their precise bombardment could not have caused the conflagration of Alexandria (unlike the insane and uncontrollable indigenous fire which must have caused the conflagration), and the later amazement by English observers to find Egyptian partisans in possession of firearms (who must have attained them through Greek and Armenian proxies, according to these observers, as firearms have to move through a civilizational grid, from white men to lesser Europeans to savages) seem to belong to the same logic of Crusoe: they believed they laid their spell on firearms and that only a white man like themselves (or at least a lesser and contingent white, a Greek or Armenian) can take it off.

That the Egyptian crowd was standing at the threshold of fire, discovering it, playing with it, but not able to control it, is evident in one of the few available accounts on the Cairo Fire of 1952.²⁰² In Jean and Simonne Lacouture's *Egypt in Transition*, the first fire started when a crowd of nationalist youths confronted a drunken British soldier who was drinking outside a cabaret with a dancer. As the verbal exchange did not please the frenzied mob, they proceeded to burn the cabaret. To the rest of the crowd the fire "came as a revelation."²⁰³ They were clearly at a threshold of something they did not experience before. The description of arson in this account also rehearses the civilizational and racialized themes that have appeared

²⁰² Very scarce representations exist of the Cairo Fire. That newspapers went on strike the following day added to the silence, but even in Egyptian popular culture, the Cairo Fire is something everyone knows but no one talks about. There are always mystifying remarks about the English or the Palace perpetrating it, but rarely if ever a discussion of the actual events. Of the few representations that dare look directly at the Fire is Radwa 'Ashur's *Qit'ah min Urubbah*, (*al-Dar al-Bayda'*: al-Markaz al-Thaqafi al-'Arabi, 2003). Since, however, 'Ashur's late work belongs to a revolutionary tradition that shares nothing with the counterrevolutionary and statist discourse I attempt to explore here, I am not going to use her work. Instead, I will turn to the work of two foreign journalists who witnessed part of the events and tried to reconstruct the other part.

²⁰³ Jean Lacouture and Simone Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, trans. Francis Scarfe, (London: Methuen, 1958), 110.

throughout our discussion of revolt, the crowd, and fire. The frenzied crowd is irrational and inept to the extent of burning buildings while their own friends were still inside.²⁰⁴ They chanted *Allahu Akbar* as they engaged in this frenzy, in a curious mix of inebriation and religious hysteria:

In Tewfikieh Place, Alfi Street and Adli-Pasha Street the fires gave off a peculiar smell. In front of each bar the rioters had broken bottles of whisky, brandy and rum against the piled-up furniture, so that the smell of the fires would have gone to the head of an old sailor. Now the passer-by found himself in familiar territory, caught up and swept along in a human wave chanting the famous cry, Allahu Akbar! (There is none greater than God): the Moslem Brotherhood were going past.²⁰⁵

The civilizational disdain appears most clearly in a paragraph that blames “the mob, or the rather poor of Cairo;” a “hungry and idle mass of people” that is “ripe for any adventure,” “drunk with violence and with no one to hold them in check” “wallow[ing] in a collective crime.”²⁰⁶ This lower class, intoxicated, and irrational crowd had to have a racially savage referent. The authors then approvingly cite an article that appeared in an Egyptian francophone newspaper of the time, comparing the fire to the Native American Potlach. The Potlach is presented as an unexplainable frenzy practiced by an irrational people who engage in acts of self-destruction and then, once the frenzy is gone, seek medical help.²⁰⁷

The savage crowd is evident in the narrative and is made even more explicit through the comparison with the Native American Potlach. But there is also a clear element of depicting the crowd as a growing child, discovering a new game but eventually outgrowing it, or an adolescent discovering new abilities and new

²⁰⁴ Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 110

²⁰⁵ Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 111.

²⁰⁶ Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 121

²⁰⁷ Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 121-122

pleasures that are at first overflowing and uncontrollable. After all, the first fire is reported to have started in a moment of lust/jealousy by hot-headed youth when seeing a British soldier courting a dancer. The image of (partially) sublimated sexual frenzy, of hot-blooded youth, is delivered along with an air of religious extremism²⁰⁸ characteristic of adolescents and Orientals.²⁰⁹ The report then alternates (sometimes in a self-contradictory manner) between representing the fire as spread by the frenzied mob and between the allegations that one organization or another was behind it.²¹⁰ When the crowd is blamed, however, there are always civilizational overtones. The depiction of the crowd as a child who has found a new game, or an adolescent who has found new pleasures, and who are not going to stop is evident. Before telling us about the spread of fire beyond the first cabaret, Lacouture remarks: “Delirium broke out among the throng, who had discovered an exciting new game.”²¹¹ An officer who chose not to intervene commented saying “Let them play a bit.”²¹² The Cairene crowd discovering fire on January 26th 1952 did not only act like the primitive man discovering, yet not fully mastering, fire, but also like the adolescent discovering, yet not fully mastering, new pleasures. The threshold of fire, therefore, seems to function

²⁰⁸ “The first fire [appeared] to be unpolitical and no more than an outbreak of puritanical rage (so that it has been attributed to the Muslim Brothers and a similar organization called ‘the Young Men of Mohamed’).” Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 110.

²⁰⁹ Jean and Simonne Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 111.

²¹⁰ Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 105- 122.

²¹¹ Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 109. Interestingly enough the events were compared to the September Massacre; 110. The racialization of the September Massacre is something I explore in Chapter 3.

²¹² Lacouture, *Egypt in Transition*, 111.

both phylogenetically and ontogenetically²¹³; the child discovering new pleasures, the woman lacking the manly faculties of taming and disciplining fire, and the primitive populations, akin to the primitive man who just discovered fire but not yet able to put it to proper use, all stand together at its threshold. The crowd stands at the early stage

²¹³ To further how illustrate how modern culture produce the pubescent child as standing at the threshold of fire, we can take a quick look at Walt Disney's adaptations of *The Jungle Book*, the story of an Indian boy raised by wolves finding his way back to the "man village." In Walt Disney's 1967 adaptation of *The Jungle Book*, King Louis of the monkeys (who happens to be one of the few animals in the film that do not have an Indian-sounding name, but rather a French name that can pass as Southern African American, and who sings Jazz like a true Creole. The other exception to Indian names would be the Western names of the members of the horde of elephants, modeling itself on a British colonial brigade) asks Mowgli (the man-cub) to teach him how to make fire, so he could be like him. While Mowgli does not initially know how to make fire, his later mastery over fire enables him to defeat Shir Khan the Tiger and thus sets him on the path to his home village, i.e. to becoming fully human; *The Jungle Book*, directed by Wolfgang Reitherman (Burbank Ca: Walt Disney Productions, 1967). In the 2016 adaptation the threshold of fire becomes a broader and more explicit theme; the film becomes the story of Mowgli learning to use the "red flower." King Louis (in this version played black, and not ambiguously so like in the 1967 version) tells Mowgli that making the red flower is what makes him a man. The reason Mowgli didn't know this piece of information, according to King Louis, is that the rest of the animals have been hiding this knowledge from him; once he learns how to make fire, he'd be "at the top of the food chain" (of course, echoes of the Great Chain of Being are unmistakable here). Eventually Mowgli, in a Promethean moment, steals the "red flower" from the "Man village" but as he carries it through the jungle to confront Shir Khan he leaves a burning trail behind him that eventually starts a wildfire. Shocked by the newfound fear in the eyes of the other animals, Mowgli is struck by guilt and fear of what he has become, and as he realizes the fire he has so far 'spilled,' Shir Khan congratulates him for finally growing up and becoming a man. An adolescent, a brown person, and only recently a human (before that he was raised by wolves), Mowgli is still at the threshold of learning how to control fire, and is afraid of and guilty about this newfound power. Mowgli seems to be on the threshold of fire not only phylogenetically but also ontogenetically; becoming a man (in Shir Khan's joke but also in the drama he enacts) is not only about becoming human, it is about becoming a grown man. Fire can be seen here as the newfound and still uncontrollable virility which the adolescent and the racial savage share (Mowgli being both). The overflow and spilling of uncontrollable fire ("the red flower") can be seen to represent the overflow and pilling of uncontrollable ejaculate by the pubescent boy; fire here becomes a symbol of puberty, of a virility the growing boy has discovered but not yet learnt how to put to (re)productive use. While this might at first seem a stretch, Janet Beizer argues convincingly in her study of hysteria and femininity that the flow of fire and kerosene in the configuration of the *Pétroleuses* correspond to the uncontrollable flow/leakage of bodily fluids associated with femininity; see Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 207- 218. Since femininity and adolescence are understood to belong to coterminous or similar civilizational stages, we can apply Beizer's analysis of the *Pétroleuse's* spilling of fire to Mowgli's. Shir Khan's remark about Mowgli growing up and becoming a man can be understood therefore as a sexual joke. The (momentary) guilt Mowgli feels over leaving a thread of fire through the forest can be seen therefore as symbolizing the masturbating child's guilt over leaving a trace of ejaculate, and the disappointment in the eyes of his peers (including members of his family/wolf pack) corresponding to the family members' disappointment with the traces of the adolescent's masturbation. Like Mowgli, the Egyptian crowd on January 26th 1952 seems to be standing at the threshold of being Man both phylogenetically and ontogenetically.

of humanity, discovering fire but not yet able to master it (and at oriental religious zeal, and Native American self-mutilation rituals). The crowd also stands at an early stage of puberty, discovering new powers but not yet sure how to use it.

The recurrence of fire as a trope and telos of revolt, of the waning of state power, and of crowd-action, is not merely because of the visual potency of fire as a spectacle. It is rather because fire represents a certain civilizational threshold that humanity has passed, but that it may regress to in the absence of a state that upholds the normal order of things. Through the threshold of fire we can see how the degeneration/regression attributed to the crowd is not only racial and civilizational, it is also a regression to childhood as we saw with the adolescent crowd playing with fire in 1952 Cairo.²¹⁴ One can also bring the threshold of fire to testify on the crowds' regression to femininity (a salient point in crowd discourse). Racial primitives, children/adolescents, and especially nature were placed with femininity at the same category in the civilizational discourse of the 19th century. When Western newspapers invented the female incendiaries, the *Pétroleuses*, as the metonym for the Paris Commune and as responsible for the burning of Paris, they were testifying to this gendering of the crowd, of revolt, and of chaos.

Infantilizing The Revolutionary Crowd

A recurrent theme in the representations of the crowd is their infantilization.²¹⁵ This was inseparable from the ideology that produced crowds and political dissidents as

²¹⁴ And with Mowgli in *The Jungle Book*.

²¹⁵ Here I am grouping together two categories which work together in this context, and are produced together by the same developmentalist and evolutionist ideologies. The first is the category of the prepubescent child, the second of the pubescent. In the case of the former, representations

degenerate and understood childhood to ontogenetically recapitulate an earlier phylogenetic phase of evolution and civilizational development. This is already the case with the representations of the Cairo Fire and how the crowd at the threshold of fire acted like children and/or teenagers. This understanding of the crowd as infantile was also coded in LeBon's theory of the crowd, which posited that crowds acted like savages, women, and *children*. In the 2011 Egyptian public discourse, this infantilization took two forms. First there was the patronizing rhetoric about the 'pure youth' who despite their good intentions do not know what is best for the country and therefore need parental/governmental guidance. Second there was the licentious youth who were usually depicted in opposition to the parental (and more specifically paternal) authority which they shun, challenge, run away from, or otherwise lack. It is the history of this second trend that we will explore, though we will remain mindful of the first.

This trend has three historical trajectories showing less continuity than other histories and other phenomena explored in this study. In other words, there are three moments which we may deal with as inaugural: the colonial moment with its disdain to the national(ist) youth and its infantilization of the indigenous population, Sadat's infantilizing discourse wherein he posited himself as the father of the nation, and the production of activists (and/including Islamists and Islamist terrorists) as licentious youth under Mubarak in the years leading up to the 2011 uprising. In this section I will offer a brief survey of these three moments and then move to specific examples from 2011.

focus on the purity and naivety of the youth and the crowd which comprises them—along with the lack of developed brain functions and of sound judgment. The second focuses on the lust, uncontrolled and uncontrollable energy (which is usually though not exclusively manifest sexually), and rashness of these youth – which again is coupled with a lack of developed brain function and of sound judgment. Representations of the lustful youth were inseparable from representations of the sexual savage, at least in the context of Egypt, as my subsequent account will show.

The first inaugural moment is the moment of colonial disdain: consistent with the civilizing mission which European colonialism saw itself as fulfilling, the British authorities and British observers viewed the Egyptian people as children, their crowds as childish, and their youth activists as incompetent, uncivilized, ill-behaved, and vulgar. This was especially the case in 1919 when an anti-colonial uprising swept the country, with wide youth participation, which were characterized by a British journalist and traveler under the name of J. Jeffries as “a paedocratic regime.”²¹⁶ This *paedocracy* also entailed a *degeneration* or *regression to nature*, as this *paedocratic* crowd “indulged itself” in “silliness,” spat at the British officers, and “hiss[ed] at them in their most *naturalistic* tones” (emphasis added).²¹⁷ The *cultural imposition* of this infantilizing ideology was met with little success: against the British infantilization, Egyptian public discourse showed pride in its national(ist) youth and the crowd that comprises them.²¹⁸ By the time of the 1952 Free Officers coup d’état

²¹⁶ See the analysis of J. Jeffries reports and how they index the British colonial civilizational discourse which infantilizes the Egyptian crowd (along with extended quotes from the reports) in Wilson Jacob, *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870- 1940*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 95- 98. In J. Jeffries handwritten notes, the reference is to a *paidocratic* rather than a *paedocratic* regime; “Egyptian nationalist movement and anti-British resistance: Alexandria riots, strikes, demonstrations, looting, casualties, Milner Commission Report, Saad Pasha Zaghoul's stance,” The National Archives, UK. FO 141/780/1. Egypt Riots, Nationalist Movement, Milner Mission. 1919-1921 File 88/8. Not paginated. While this may have been a mere typo on the side of Jeffries, I think it is useful to think of crowd rule in terms of *paidocracy*, a term which effaces the distinction between *paidia* (pleasurable play, especially that of children) and *paideia* (also spelled as *paedia*, which refers to the education of children). Mob rule is thus the rule of children and of student activists, yet also the rule of pleasurable play over work ethics. Although this study will not allow for a close examination of the discourse on work, it is important to note how the licentious space was always imagined as inimical to work, and that it is in part this (*paidocratic*) upheaval (or *inqilab*) which puts play and pleasure over work that turns spaces of activism into licentious spaces.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ For the tension between the colonial disdain and the nationalist pride, see Jacob, 98. For more examples from 1919 in which the national press (despite of British censorship) celebrated the activist youth and insisted on their civility, arguing that any excesses may have come from the vulgar and ruffraff but not from the youth, most of which were university students, see “Muzaharat al-Talabah,” *Misr*, 11/3/1919, 2, “ma ‘alayna wa ma lana,” *Misr*, 20/3/1919, 1, “al-Muzaharat fi al-‘asimah,” *al-*

which brought in a nationalist regime, the 1954 termination of British occupation, and the concomitant ascent of the *free officer* Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir to power (1952) and to the presidency (1954), State discourse venerated rather than infantilized the national youth.²¹⁹ Indeed, one of the famous Nasserist mobilizational songs (sung by a group of the leading signers of the time, including ‘Abd al-Halim Hafiz) was titled [*Long*] *Live the Rising Generation* (‘*Ash al-Jil al-Sa‘id* lyrics by Hassan al-Sayyid, music by Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhab) and included a verse which explicitly saluted school and university students.

The infantilization of the crowd, the activist youth, and the nation as a whole was brought to full effect by the discourse of Egypt’s third president Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat. Al-Sadat’s reactionary project, which included an opening up of the country in the face of international capital (commonly known as the opening or the open door policy, *infītah*), an alliance with the US and with US imperialism, a peace treaty with Israel, and the deconstruction of Nasir’s (already rudimentary) public welfare network, also included a paternal/patriarchal/patronizing attitude towards the youth and the rest of the country. Sadat would often refer to himself as “kabir al-‘a’ilah” (the elder of the family). Clearly, this appellation infantilized the whole nation; Sadat used the language of filiation frequently (for example he used to refer to Himmat Mustafa, the famous radio presenter who regularly interviewed him, as “my daughter Himmat,” and to the army soldiers as “my boys”). Infantilization and filiation, however, were used with a special fierceness against political dissidents. For example, at a now-famous meeting with the representatives of the student body of

Akhbar, 10/3/1919, al-halah al-‘ammah,” *al-Akhbar*, 16/3/1919, 1. This was even the case in the pro-colonial *al-Muqattam*, see for example “*Akhbar al-Muzaharat*,” *al-Muqattam*, 18/3/1919, 2.

²¹⁹ Which paralleled a veneration rather than an abnegation of the crowd, something I return to in Chapters 4 and 5.

Cairo University, Sadat, challenged by an Islamist student called ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Abu al-Futuh (who would become a presidential candidate in the elections of 2012), fired back “You should know your place, for I am the elder of the family” (“ilzam makanak, ana kabir al-‘a’ilah”). In another incident he described the Islamist youth who opposed him as “awladi al-mugharrar bihim” (my deluded children).²²⁰

This trend continued under Mubarak. In his speech on February 2nd 2011 (in other words his penultimate speech as a president before he was deposed) Mubarak tried to address the protesters as children (his children, more particularly). Yet the rhetoric of Mubarak refrained from the explicitly patronizing language of his predecessor (and in lieu of Sadat’s “my children,” he more commonly addressed the Egyptian people as *al-ikhwah al-muwatinun* {brother citizens}, with which he opened his penultimate speech before he deployed patronizing tropes). It was in the media, however, and especially in popular culture, that the Egyptian dissidents were produced as irresponsible children and teenagers.

In the 1990s, the Islamists were the primary targets of such representation, adding sexual perversity to infantilism/pubescence. The youthful contingency of these

²²⁰ For example, al-Sadat’s famous September 1981 speech (in which he declared the September arrests and launched attacks on his opposition, left and right, and which turned out to be his last) showcases the infantilizing lexicon he used. See “Khitabal-Sadat al-Akhirwayahtawi al-daqa’iq al-oula al-mamnu’ah,” YouTube Video, 2:34:22, posted by “alohman99,” March 18, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scqMgJDDhm8>. The vernacular poet Ahmad Fu’ad Negm (Najm) brilliantly satirized Sadat’s infantilizing rhetoric in his poem *Bayan Ham*. In this poem the leader, Shahatah al-Mi’assil (a parody of Sadat) threatens the political activists using Sadat’s terminology, including his infantilizing lexicon which depicts political dissidents as novice kids, until he reaches the ultimatum: “this is socialist contempt which I cannot tolerate, and if he were my son I will not let him go without punishment.” ده حقد اشتر اكي انا ما قبلوش، ولو هو ابني انا ماعتقوش. The infantilizing rhetoric of the regime is also parodied in Negm’s poem *Waraqah min Malaf Qadiyyah*. The poem features an interrogation scene between a leftist activist and a prosecutor, in which the latter uses the language one would use with a sharp-tongued child (including calling the activist *ghalabawi*, meaning unnecessarily argumentative and cantankerous, a word which is usually used with children). The interrogation also touches upon the student sit-in (also in Tahrir, 1972) and while the prosecutor speaks about the demonstrators as children who do not know where their interest lies, the activist challenges him that their demands are well thought out and that they represent the rest of the population.

organizations was used to depict them as adolescents rebelling against State, societal, and especially parental authority.²²¹ They were also depicted as children who lacked any experience or deep understanding of religion.²²² In this ideology, parentalism meets and provides the cover for governmental discipline and brutality; state violence is only akin to parental disciplining, both of which are normalized under a parentalist-State discourse.²²³ The women were depicted as virginal yet lustful ingénues who were seduced by the system of easy and ephemeral marriages offered by the Islamist organizations,²²⁴ though at other times they were presented as possessing an aggressive and predatory sexuality as mentioned earlier. The men were commonly depicted through the figure of the adolescent/pubescent voyeur and masturbator. In the 1993 film *Disco Disco*, the Islamist appears as an adolescent discovering and unable to repress sexual pleasures, thus leading him to perversities: peeping on his neighbor showering and trying to rape the main female character. This ties to the motif of the Islamist-qua-sexual savage; we have already seen 'Adil Imam's *Terrorist* engaging in masturbatory fantasies after his failure to sublimate his sexual desires by doing pushups. In fact the whole project of Islamist violence was reduced in some state representations to a sublimation and perversion of the repressed sexual desire of

²²¹ At one point Hassan Abu Basha, the former minister of interior, characterized the Islamist organization of Shukri Mustafa as "hippies," see *akhbar al-Yawm*, 18/01/1992, 17. The organization of Shukri Mustafa, which was commonly referred to in the Egyptian media as Jama'at al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah (the organization of infidelization and emigration), consisted mainly of youth who abandoned their families and lived on their own in secluded societies (before they resorted to violence). The rebellion against parental authority as well as this withdrawal from society registered as "hippie" for Abu Basha.

²²² Salah Hafiz, for example, describes the members of these organizations as "ignorant boys" (sibyah jahalah); *Akhbar al-Yawm* 7/1/1989, 16.

²²³ 'Abd al-Salam Dawoud, "Isma' ya Bunai qabl an Adribak," [Listen, son, before I hit/shoot you], *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 14/1/1989, 8.

²²⁴ See Sawsan al-Jayyar, "Tatarruftaht al-Talab," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 25/4/1993, 27-31. See also Sabir Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 9.

Islamist adolescents, which contributed to representations of political violence as sexual chaos.²²⁵

In the 2000s, as the confrontation with the Islamists waned, and as the activist scene was being dominated by a more diverse crowd of youth who were diversified among Islamists, seculars, and others who did not subscribe to the Islamist-secular divide, mainstream media and State propaganda started to depict the activists as upper class, carefree, licentious youth. This mode of infantilization was presented forcefully in the film-cum-counterrevolutionary manual *Rami al-I'tisami*,²²⁶ (more accessible and wider in appeal than other more conventional forms of propaganda). The activist crowd is infantilized all throughout the film, not only by virtue of being depicted as spoiled children, but furthermore through repeatedly subjecting them to infantilizing chastisement by parental authorities.²²⁷ Their childish gullibility allowed the Islamists to set their own counterpart sit-in and eventually to burn the youth's sit-in and kill a police conscript in the process. In front of the burning sit-in and the dead body of the conscript, the Prime Minister talks down to the protesters, chastising them for what their naiveté and carelessness had led to (the government's role in inciting strife notwithstanding); he directs his rebuke in particular at the youth: "if you are the new generation, then a thousand alas! Your country does not deserve all this from you!"

²²⁵ In addition to the previous examples in which Islamist violence is presented hand in hand with Islamist masturbation/sexual repression and perversion, some commentators made the point more explicitly. See the special file on the psychology of terror in *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 7/1/1989, 4.

²²⁶ See my earlier discussion of the film in the section on fire. See also Armbrust's reading: Armbrust, "Dreaming of Counterrevolution," 143- 148.

²²⁷ After the Prime Minister dismisses them as "some sissy kids" (*habbet 'iyal farafir*) he holds a meeting with Rami and his father, in which his father mediates, trying to talk some sense into his son while assuring the minister that his son is "a good boy" who knows better than to continue with his sit-in.

(and then he casually refers to the fact that they, i.e. the government, may have made their share of mistakes as well).

In 2011, especially during and in the aftermath of the January-February sit-in, the infantile/pubescent licentiousness of the youth was depicted as straying away from the family, an escape from paternal authority, and a failure/refusal to (mis)recognize Mubarak as *the father*. Although all youth, men and women, and the Egyptian population as a whole, were subjected to this kind of discourse, young women were particularly targeted for this sort of chastisement. Female political participation was seen as breaking the *law of the father* not only in the metaphorical sense of challenging any presumed male monopoly over public space and politics, or in the sense of challenging patriarchy and a State whose claims to power are paternal and patriarchal, but also in the literal sense that a young female who attends demonstrations and possibly spends the night there must be breaking the predicaments of her father, or must lack a proper father/paternal authority to begin with. A most telling example came in an inflammatory speech given by Murtada Mansur, a sharp-tongued regime propagandist and the head of the Zamalik Sporting Club, one of the two most important and popular athletic clubs in the country whose football teams garner the largest audiences. Lamenting the ill-manners of the demonstrators in general, Mansur presents the parentless or ill-bred “girl” as synecdoche for the revolutionaries’ licentiousness. Addressing the young female activist (and through her, political activists and the whole “revolution”) Mansur exclaims: “girl, don’t you have parents to ask you where you are spending the night?” These ribald women misrecognize their own inept fathers in Mubarak, according to Mansur: “And to the girl holding a banner saying: ‘Leave, you pig!’ I say ‘[it is] your father [who] is a

pig!’ If your father had raised you well, he would have taught you not to address someone who is as old as your father this way.’²²⁸

Effeminate Crowds and Feminine Chaos

The figure of the ribald, hysterical, unrestrained, subversive, and licentious woman recurs throughout modern counterrevolutionary depictions of revolt, including those of the 2011 uprising, her gender often highlighted through contrast with the masculine figures of the father and/or the army man. Not unlike its Jordanian forerunner which canonized, as explicated by Massad in *Colonial Effects*, an Arab discourse on the effeminate freedom fighter in opposition to and confrontation with the manly army man²²⁹ (itself a replica of the European discourses on nationalism, romanticism, and gender, which Jordanian nationalism mimicked), Egyptian counterrevolution depicted the confrontation between the State and its opponents as the opposition/confrontation between the masculine and the effeminate. This was already the case with the example of the parent-less girl in Mansur’s defamatory notes, in which the licentious femininity of the young demonstrator is highlighted through the absent masculine figure of the father (with which the president is to be identified or {mis}recognized). The figure of the female activist as a licentious body also appeared as a tool within the anti-Islamist propaganda of the Mubarak regime. The serial marriages members of Islamist organizations (allegedly) practiced were used by regime propaganda to depict

²²⁸ “Murtada Mansur dudd Shabab al-thawrah” YouTube Video, 6:19, posted by “Mac Sharkawy,” February 14 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLljJOItII>. Mansur also made similar statements in a television interview, see “Murtada Mansur Yusharshih Qatar wa al-Qaradawi wa Mozah wa Qanat al-Jazirah,” YouTube Video, 6:30, posted by “Wadhaaa7 HD وضاح,” February 7 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7icvp0OVcfU&feature=related>

²²⁹ See Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan*, 207- 213.

the Islamist organizations as licentious spaces and the members, especially the women, as licentious bodies. This is something we have already introduced in the section on the sexual savage: Islamist women were depicted as possessing a predatory sexuality that is reminiscent of pre-civilizational savage women (congruent with the men's beards, reminiscent of the adorned and effeminate though virile savage men). As these representations will be explored in more detail in the next chapter, I will not explore them further here. The figure of the female activist as a licentious body available as a fair target for male desire and violation was presented to Egyptian mainstream culture more forcefully through the blockbuster film, *al-Safarah fi al-Imarah* (2005). Indeed, the sensationalization and sexualization of the bodies of protesters – especially the women- was better achieved through the medium of film, than of conventional propaganda. This is not only because the fictional nature of film frees its makers from some of the realistic constraints journalists and regime spokesperson are forced to abide by (indeed these constraints did not stop sexual libel by regime propagandists and state officials, as I show throughout this study), but more importantly because of the wider circulation of film, and how it adds visual and aural effects to the representations of licentiousness, which the conventional propagandist provides only in written or (monophonic) spoken form. In a memorable scene of the film, the protagonist (played by the famous Egyptian actor 'Adil Imam), a womanizer and a compulsive procurer of prostitutes, spots an attractive young female activist amid a demonstration, leading the chants while being carried on the shoulders of two of her male comrades (i.e. literally crowd-borne). The protagonist quickly joins the demonstration and the film cuts to a scene showing the protagonist carrying the female activist on his shoulders as he grabs and caresses her thighs. Then he makes a turn and walks away with the activist, who is entranced by her own political chants. It

takes her a while to realize what was unfolding, and as the protagonist attempts to convince her to “come home and take a shower” before going back to the demonstration, she refuses and insists on rejoining her comrades. As he follows her, she gets tear-gassed by the police and her colleagues attempt to rescue her. The protagonist walks in, fends off her colleagues, and grabs her body again and carries her to the café where he offers her a glass of water. Although we later learn that the licentiousness of the female demonstrator has limits (in the last scene she insists that the protagonist would marry her, to which he agrees), the scene of the protagonist carrying the female demonstrator and walking away with her (incidentally a shot of this scene is what is depicted on the posters advertising the film) affirms the conception of the protester’s crowd-born(e) body as a body that is both feminine and licentious.²³⁰ The same conception of the dissident body was re-produced by the

²³⁰ It is also worth noting that the subjectivation of the female activist in the film turns out to be perverse and incomplete. The name of the character is Dalia, the same name of the actress playing the role, as if there were no character, or only a transparent character lacking her own name and subjectivity and thus revealing the name and character of the actress behind the role (it is also noteworthy that there is nothing Brechtian or Perandelleian about the film, and therefore this transparency of character is in no way part of a technique of alienating the audience or tied to a philosophy of theatrical representation that problematizes the *mask* of the character). The family through which Dalia and her licentious body were produced and subjectivated appears as dysfunctional and their dysfunctional nature is likened to the working class and to Communist parties. Her family name is Shuhdi, which may be an allusion to Shuhdi ‘Atiyyah, an important figure of the Egyptian left who perished in a Nasserist prison (allegedly while chanting pro-Nasir slogans). Instead of the picture of the grandfather, the family hangs the picture of Karl Marx (whom the protagonist confuses for Dalia’s grandfather). Then the protagonist learns that the children had grown up while the parents were in prison, which leads him to the conclusion that this must have caused what he experiences as the dysfunctionality of the family. When objecting about their young child’s smelly foot, the father tells him that he has “always been” chastising his son about it. Then the father is chastised back, by the protagonist: “always been? What do you mean always been? You spent your life in prison, when did you get the chance to talk to him.” In other words, political activism is to be blamed for the licentiousness and for the failed subjectivity of the children. Those children were raised not by a family member but by “comrade-nanny ‘Atiyyat” who went to prison with the parents but was released earlier. Introducing the “comrade-nanny,” the mother boasts that the nanny’s parents were killed in a demonstration organized by the Communist Party and that she is “a true example of the *proletariat* [French in original].” Communist parents who look like (and descend from) Karl Marx, family ties that are severed by prison sentences, and a proletarian nanny who lost her parents to the communist cause: the family is (akin to) the political crowd. Dalia is not only *borne* by the political crowd, she is also *born* by the crowd-like family.

military police on the night of March 9th, 2011, in what became known as the “virginity tests” incident. On that night, the military police, aided by scores of thugs (identified by the state media and the ruling military council’s communiqués as “honorable citizens,” thus highlighting how the honorable citizen is produced in opposition to the licentious subjects of the sit-in), brutally broke a sit-in in Tahrir Square and abducted the activists to the nearby museum of antiquities. There, a(n unidentified) number of female activists were subjected to ‘virginity tests’ by a male army doctor, according to various reports which the army did not deny. In this example, the feminine, licentious, and suspiciously sexual body of the female activists stood for the uprising (as well as the licentious space it constituted), whereas the State and Order as such were present through the patriarchal ensemble of medicine and the military. The same dichotomy between the feminine body (hysterical and depraved), and the masculine forces of Order were re-enacted in pro-regime and pro-State representations of an incident in which Buthaynah Kamil, a female activist and famous journalist/television presenter (and a later presidential candidate), confronted a number of army soldiers about the virginity tests incident, warning them that the day would come when the transgressor would be held accountable for their transgressions. Kamil’s bravery and belief in a better future were turned, through pro-regime patriarchal representations, to signs of the feminine gone awry: this incident was posted on YouTube by pro-regime subscribers who chastised her for daring to challenge the army *men* and for allegedly attempting (yet failing) to approximate masculinity, describing her as *sha ‘nunah* (roughly, *hysterical*) and her act as *safalah*

(roughly, *depravity*).²³¹ For a number of pro-regime and pro-State viewers and observers, the uprising of 2011 was reduced to a confrontation between the manly/masculine agent of order (the president, the father, the army man) and the feminine agent of chaos and licentiousness (the ribald parentless girl, the promiscuous female activist or potential prostitute, the hysterical and ribald female activist challenging army soldiers).

This theme is consistent with the archive of 19th century European counterrevolution. In fact an account by Victor Hugo about the outbreak of the June uprising of 1848 narrated the onset of the uprising through a confrontation between the manly army man and the ribald and licentious women of the revolution in a manner that brings to mind our earlier examples from 2011 Egypt. In Victor Hugo's account, the *émeute* started by two "public whores," one after another, flashing the soldiers and speaking to them in a vulgar manner, before being pierced by army bullets. In his thought provoking analysis of the scene, literary scholar Neil Hertz points out how the two prostitutes stood for the *émeute herself*, its gendering in the feminine (already coded in the gendering of the term itself), and the obscenity of such an event.²³² To Hertz's analysis, I would like to add how the two prostitutes act as a foil for the masculinity of the army men and their phallic and piercing weaponry (or

²³¹ See for example the opposition of the manly army man to the hysterical woman in "Al-Sha'nunah al-Majnunah Buthaynah Kamil Tuhaddid wa Tatauwwa'ad Rijal al-Jaysh," ["The Crazy and Hysterical Buthaynah Kamil Warns and Threatens the Army men."] 0:52, YouTube Video, posted by "mariouma25," March 26 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLHetl8cG58>. See also "Buthaynah Kamil Ta'tadi bil Qawl 'ala Rijal al-Jaysh- Safalah," [Buthaynah Kamil Verbally Assaults the Army Men, Depravity,] 0:52, YouTube Video, posted by "rahma 100," on March 25th 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wI7lkRZGKd8>.

²³² Neil Hertz, "Medusa's Head : Male Hysteria under Political Pressure," *Representations* 4 (Autumn 1983), 28-30.

vice versa). Similarly phallic intervention was prescribed for the licentious-revolutionary feminine bodies in 2011 when the female activists were subjected to forced virginity tests. Although claiming any direct continuity between the two events would be ahistorical, an ideological formation that produced and continues to produce the licentious space as feminine and Order as masculine informs the two events.

But even beyond this confrontation between the army man and the licentious female revolutionary, 19th century counterrevolutionary literature persistently personified revolutionary excess as female. In his iconic counterrevolutionary treatise, *A Tale of Two Cities* (written almost a decade after the events of 1848), Dickens personalizes revolutionary terror and vengefulness in the figure of Madame Therese Defarge, and in her entourage of vengeful revolutionary women, especially her lieutenant, whom he names The Vengeance, and condenses in them a lineage of female monsters from the ancient Greek furies²³³ to their contemporary and metonymical female monster, *La Guillotine* (which is described as the incarnation of all the horrible monsters of history,²³⁴ and is clearly gendered as female throughout the text not only through *her* linguistic gendering but also by repeatedly referring to her as the *sharp female*).²³⁵ But Dickens only does so after distinguishing the vengefulness and revolutionary ferocity of the women (which he anchors in their gendered roles) from that of the men: “The men,” writes Dickens, “were terrible, in the bloody-minded anger with which they looked from windows; but, the women, were a sight to chill the boldest. From such household occupations as their bare

²³³ 3.22.172.

²³⁴ “All the devouring and insatiate Monsters imagined since imagination could record itself, are fused in the one realisation, Guillotine,” 2.15.228.

²³⁵ 3.1.195,196, 3.4.212, 3.5.215.

poverty yielded, from their children, from their aged and their sick crouching on the bare ground famished and naked, they ran out with streaming hair, urging one another, and themselves, to madness with the wildest cries and actions” (2.12.172).

Madame Defarge and her entourage condensed and reified a *type* that had been circulating at least since Carlyle’s *French Revolution*, that of the blood-thirsty revolutionary women who were drawn to the spectacle of the Guillotine, and who used to cheer the beheading and count the rolling heads while knitting (sometimes called *the furies of the Guillotine*, harking back to the ancient Greek mythological furies, sometimes the *tricoteuses*, in reference to their knitting). Due to the timeless and non-territorial nature of the circulation of Dickens’ novel (a masterpiece in many regards, its counterrevolutionary message notwithstanding), Madame Defarge served as a vector for the circulation of the type of the vengeful and unrestrained revolutionary woman beyond the context of the French Revolution or 19th century Europe. Indeed, she continued to haunt the minds of Egyptian counterrevolutionary propagandists, who continued to invoke her in the context of warning against revolutionary excesses, at least until 2014.²³⁶

The type of the subversive female, already in circulation through figures such as that of Madame Defarge and the tricoteuse and through appropriations of classical Greek mythological figures (like the furies, as mentioned above, but also the Amazons, Medusa, etc), gained even more prevalence during the Paris Commune (1871). The bourgeois bodies of knowledge that coincided with the Commune, as well as the wide female revolutionary participation during the insurrection, added to

²³⁶ See my discussion in the Introduction.

the momentum of the circulation of such representations.²³⁷ The *Pétroleuse* thus emerged at the end of the insurrection as the condensation of female insanity and excess.²³⁸ The hysterical, ribald, and licentious women of ‘the Egyptian revolution’ were therefore hardly a unique case or a precedent in counterrevolutionary representations.

Congruent with my overall argument that the State, in its various ideological-mythological conceptions, is perceived to hold the upright order of things, I will proceed by showing how this upright order of things, in many of its classical and modern incarnations, is predicated on purging, holding at bay, restraining, and/or containing the feminine, resulting in a conception of revolt and chaos as the breaking out and eruption of the otherwise contained and restrained feminine. I will then explore how this gendered conception of Order and chaos produced the licentious woman as the recurrent metonym to the licentious crowd, to the licentious revolution, and to the feminine chaos they engender.

Mythologies of the State have long associated the State and the rational with the masculine, and chaos with the feminine. This can be traced back to the classical Greek distinction between the body as the feminine realm of necessity, and the mind as the masculine realm of rationality²³⁹; the masculine was thus embodied within

²³⁷ For a comprehensive study of these representations see Gay Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*.

²³⁸ See my discussion in the section on the “Threshold of Fire.”

²³⁹ For an interesting summary and analysis of this distinction (which, despite its vigilance, at times universalizes this distinction beyond ancient Athens and beyond ancient Greek civilization), see Adriana Cavarero, *Stately Bodies*. Cavarero notes: “In thinking of the body as woman and woman as body, the polis founded upon the male synthesizes with a single idea everything it considers to be its dreaded *other*. The other then corresponds to whatever the polis has already liquidated and conquered. Rooted in the female, corporeality is represented as the prelogical stage of a life that is still a blind end in itself. It is thus the precinct of that animal immediacy—naturally unregulated,

politics, the polis, and ultimately the State, while the feminine was to be contained within the domestic or exiled to irrational and frenzied *events* or *happenings* that took place on the outskirts of the polis; e.g. the frenzies, or *orgies*, of Dionysus and other ecstatic gods. In their Dionysian form, these rituals were populated predominantly or exclusively by women,²⁴⁰ while in the Cybelean form –which in practice both predated and survived its Dionysian counterpart— it included male priests (*galli*) who castrated themselves as part of the ecstatic ritual.²⁴¹ During these rituals, the feminine (female and castrated) bodies of the initiates were possessed by the god, Dionysus, Demeter, or Cybele, depending on whose orgies and which eras we are dealing with.²⁴² Their spirits were understood to leave their bodies and unite with their god, thus rendering the ritual a literal *ecstasy*.²⁴³ The raving women in the Dionysian version of this ritual were given the significant name *the maenads*, which means the mad or raving women.²⁴⁴ The term would be used by Carlyle in reference to the

cannibalistic, and incestuous – from which the civilized community of men takes an unabridgeable distance of polar negation,” ix.

²⁴⁰ See for example Ross Kraemer, *Maenads, Martyrs, Matrons, Monastics: A Sourcebook on Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 7.

²⁴¹ See Felix Guirand, *Greek Mythology*, (London: Paul Hamlyn Limited, 1963), 103 and Lucke Roman and Monica Roman, *Encyclopedia of Greek and Roman Mythology*, (New York: Facts on File, 2010), s.v. “Cybele,” 122, for the various stories behind the castration of the Galli, the priests of Cybele, see s.v. “Attis,” 94, and Guirand, *Greek Mythology*, 104.

²⁴² For the *entheistic* nature of the orgies, whereby the worshipped deities possessed the bodies of the worshippers, see Michael Grant, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1962), 262.

²⁴³ See *ibid.* See also Linda Fierz-David, *Women's Dionysian Initiation: the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii*, (Dallas: Spring, 1988). For a reading of the Dionysian ecstasy beyond the actual Dionysian ritual see Michel Maffesoli, *The Shadow of Dionysus: A Contribution to the Sociology of the Orgy*, trans. Cindy Linse and Mary Palmquist, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993).

²⁴⁴ See for example Pierre Grimal, *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), s.v. “Maenads,” and Ross Kraemer, *Maenads, Martyrs, Matrons, Monastics*. For a robust analysis of the

women of the French Revolution²⁴⁵ and will from then on recur in counterrevolutionary representations of the Commune.²⁴⁶

These mad and raving women (especially in their classical Greek incarnation) constituted the other of the rational political subject, and the space they occupied²⁴⁷ and the ritual they performed constituted the limit of the state and its reason, sometimes their antithesis. In Euripides' *Bacchae*, the Dionysian orgy appears as the subversive antithesis of sovereign power; not mediated or mitigated by logic, the Dionysian frenzy ultimately results in the tearing down of the body of the King of

figure of the maenad in Greek antiquity see E. R. Dodds, "Maenadism in the *Bacchae*," *The Harvard Theological Review* 33, no.3 (July 1940): 155- 176.

²⁴⁵ Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution*, especially Book I, Chapter 7 (significantly titled "The Insurrection of Women."). For an analysis of the significance of Carlyle's invocation of the Maenad's and its influence on Dickens, see Lisa Robson, "The 'Angels' in Dickens's House: Representations of Women in *A Tale of Two Cities*," *Dalhousie Review*, 72, no. 3, (1992), 311- 333; see esp. 328- 331, 331n1. A (not very successful) attempt to analyze the significance of the maenads in Carlyle can be found in L.M. Findlay, "Maternity Must Forth: The Poetics of Gender in Carlyle's French Revolution" *Dalhousie Review* 66, no.1/2 (1986): 130-154.

²⁴⁶ For an analysis of the appearance of the maenads in Maxime Du Camp's counterrevolutionary book on the Commune titled *Les Convulsions de Paris* see Janet Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 209. See also Gay Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 51. Maenads appear as markers of the revolutionary crowd and its chaos-*anarchy* in popular culture until our very day— or at least as late as 2009; in an HBO US television series about vampires and other fantastical creatures (and one which we can group under the rubric of counterrevolution as it affirms racial stereotypes and vindicates securitization under the ruse of satirizing them), titled *True Blood*. A number of episodes of the show featured a maenad who initiated the town people into a massive orgy. This orgy would lead, among other things, to the storming of the police station and drawing the *anarchy* sign on its walls. In this particular example, it is not the revolutionary women who are depicted as maenads, but the maenads who inevitably turn into/recruit revolutionaries.

²⁴⁷ It also happened that the space outside the polis, wherein these rituals took place and which was constituted as something that exceeds the logic of the polis, was named the *chora* or *khora*; See Plato, *Timaeus*. There is a clear homology between *khora* and *choros*, from which we get the *chorus* and *khoreia* {dance}, both of which belonged to a Dionysian tradition and were performed as part of rituals that most likely developed from the Dionysian orgy and aimed to honor Dionysus. This *khora* has been repeatedly re-read and appropriated by contemporary critical theory. Julia Kristeva appropriated the term as signifying a pre-symbolic state of cognition predicated on identification with and imbeddedness in the maternal; see Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. Margaret Waller, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984) 25- 30. The ancient Greek *Khora* as the feminine space that exceeds the state and its masculine logic thus persists in critical theory as the feminine/maternal matrix of consciousness that predates and/or exceeds the masculine symbolic order. For a summary of all these concepts, see Ian Buchanan, *A Dictionary of Critical Theory*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), s.v. "Khora (Chora)." I thank Karim-Yassing Goessinger for brining the term *khora* and its various significations to my attention.

Thebes, Pentheus (who in a classical tragic act of hubris attempted to outlaw the ritual) by the hands of the raving women including his own mother Agave (thus serving the unrestrained justice of Dionysus who saw this fate as befitting Pentheus' hubris, and who wanted to punish both Pentheus and Agave for denying the divine ancestry of the god, who was born of the union between Zeus and Semele, Agave's sister. The orgy thus, though an irrational and unrestrained force, and although anti-political to the extent of tearing down the body of the king, is also a force of justice.²⁴⁸ It is a matter of tragic reckoning rather than abnegation and abjection. Later appropriations of the Dionysian ritual would depart from this pattern). In Virgil's *Aeneid* the Bacchic frenzy (the Roman version of the Greek Dionysian frenzy) appears as an anti-political ploy by the Latin women, at the behest of their Queen Amata, to thwart an imminent alliance between the Latins and the Trojans. Possessed by the female fury, Alecto, at the behest of the female goddess, Juno, Amata instigates the women into a fake Bacchic orgy and uses it as an alibi for hiding Lavinia, Amata's daughter who was to be wed to Aeneas and seal the Latin-Trojan alliance, in the woods, out of the polis, away from the male gaze.

The showdown between the subversive feminine elements that oppose, escape, or exceed masculine politics, in classical Greek representations, did not only appear in the form of the confrontation between the maenads and sovereign power; it appeared as clearly in the myth and tragedy of Antigone. While Creon, in the myth and the tragedy of Antigone, stood for the logic and rationale of the State, Antigone stood for the higher divine laws and for the affective and emotional bond that exceeds the logic of the State, and her defiance and steadfastness – which, along with Creon's

²⁴⁸ Comparable thus to revolutionary justice, at least as far as the latter is depicted by Dickens. Like Euripides' orgy, revolutionary justice is opposed to sovereign power, and is not mitigated by mercy or rationality; it aims to tear down the body of the king, and is executed by raving women.

hubris, brought both the downfall of Thebes and Creon and Antigone's own death—stood for a certain subversiveness with which the feminine is endowed. In Sophocles' *Antigone*, which can be read as critiquing rather than affirming this binary, or at least as taking the side, if partially, of the feminine and the subversive against the rational, sovereign, and masculine, the association between subversive chaos and Antigone, and more precisely the association between subversive chaos and Antigone's femininity is clear in the discourse of Creon who sees Antigone's defiance as unmanning him.²⁴⁹ In a memorable soliloquy Creon warns his son, Haemeon:

Anarchy

Show me a greater crime in all the earth!
She, she destroys cities, rips up houses,
Breaks the ranks of spearmen into headlong rout.
But the ones who last it out, the great mass of them
Owe their lives to discipline. Therefore
We must defend the *men* who live by *law*,
Never let some woman triumph over us.
Better to fall from power, if we fall must,
At the hands of a man – never be rated
Inferior to a woman, never.²⁵⁰

(emphases added)

The appliance of both the Dionysian and Antigonean motifs to represent a femininity that defies or subverts masculine State logic did not end with the demise of the ancient Greek civilization. Like many classical Greek motifs and themes, both the Dionysian orgy and Antigone were appropriated and re-invented by Western modernity. They both figure in Hegel's *Phenomenology* (which as shown in the introduction of this chapter, was the gospel for State-worship, setting the tone and the

²⁴⁹ See Judith Butler's commentary on the destabilization of gender in the confrontation between Antigone and Creon; Judith Butler, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 10.

²⁵⁰ Sophocles, *Antigone*, trans. Robert Fagles, 752-761.

intellectual course for much of the statist and counterrevolutionary thought that ensued) as feminine moments that were superseded as part of the march of the Spirit and its recognition of itself in the Subject (or in other words the development of the masculine rational State and the rise of the subjects it produces as proper and model subjects). The various ecstatic rituals we have grouped under the rubric of the Dionysian and Cybeleian orgies, involved a simultaneous pantheistic and entheistic elements: in addition to the ecstasy whereby the spirits of the worshippers unite with the divine, the spirit of the god (especially in the Dionysian version) was understood to spread through nature and especially through the fruits, wine, and flesh of animals that were consumed during these rituals. The orgy, especially for a modern thought obsessed with “civilizational progress” understood through a “nature vs. culture” schema, is placed in proximity to nature, a discursive space where women (and primitives) belonged. Experiencing this feminine nature through the Dionysian rituals (or what Hegel termed *Bacchic enthusiasm* and *Bacchic frenzy*)²⁵¹ was, for Hegel, an essential moment for the sake of achieving self-consciousness, yet one that still lacked the rational element of this consciousness: “Coming down from its pure essential nature and becoming an objective force of Nature and the expression of that force, it [self-consciousness, or the Spirit on its way to self-consciousness] is an outer existence for the ‘other’, for the self by which it is consumed.”²⁵² This moment that experiences the divine through devouring the fruits of nature is characterized, according to Hegel, by “the feminine principle of nourishment” whereas the other moment that awaits to be fulfilled is “a spiritual fermentation ... the masculine

²⁵¹ Hegel uses these two terms in Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 439 after two pages of a cryptic description of the Dionysian/Bacchic ritual.

²⁵² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 436.

principle, the self impelling force of self-conscious existence”²⁵³ (which a few paragraphs later he tells us is not achieved in the Dionysian orgy due to the lacking individual self-consciousness of the worshipped deities Ceres and Bacchus – in other words Demeter and Dionysus). This moment seems stuck in its feminine-maternal nature, the Spirit, according to Hegel, experiences its essence as “its silently nourishing substance” in a “silent maternal yearning.” Not only is the Spirit feminine, or stuck in femininity, in this stage, but so are her subjects (not fully the Subject yet): it now “roams about as a crowd of frenzied females, the untamed revelry of Nature in self-conscious form.”²⁵⁴

Like the orgy, Antigone, for Hegel, represented a feminine moment to be superseded by the Spirit— but this time involved directly in an antithetical relationship with masculine rational government, embodied in Creon, his rationale, and his laws. To serve this purpose, Hegel ahistorically and in opposition to Sophocles’ text reads Antigone as worshipping and standing for the laws of the household (so that Antigone can be appropriated as a primordial moment in the production of the domestic, whereas in Sophocles’ text Antigone speaks for the laws of the gods in their totality, and is accused by Creon of only worshipping the gods of death;²⁵⁵ there is no mention of the household or the domestic here).²⁵⁶ While both the Antigone and the Creon moments are superseded (after all Creon’s laws are not the rational laws of the Napoleonic State which Hegel championed, and which needed to

²⁵³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 436- 437.

²⁵⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 437.

²⁵⁵ *Antigone*, 877- 878.

²⁵⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 285- 289. See also Judith Butler’s commentary on Hegel’s reading of Antigone and on the ahistorical or anachronistic nature of this reading in Butler, *Antigone’s Claim*, 1-5.

sublate both Antigone's domestic and divine appeals as well as Creon's appeals to a State that has not yet got in contact with its rationale/rationality)²⁵⁷ – as evident by the tragic end both characters meet as well as the fall of Thebes due to their confrontation, we see Antigone as antithetical to even primordial forms of State, and we see her being forced (by Hegel's purposefully distorted reading of the Greek myth) to stand for the household, the family, and the domestic, thus reifying them as the feminine antithesis to the political.²⁵⁸

Hegel then notes how State and community, characterized by a manly nature and standing for the universal, “creates for itself in what it suppresses and what is at the same time essential to it an internal enemy – womankind in general.”²⁵⁹ *Womankind* then stands for the family, the particular, and the individual as opposed to the universal (i.e. the Spirit in its moment as a universal, before the Spirit becomes identified with its human –male- subject as the Hegelian drama unfolds). This realm of *womankind* and of the domestic need to be contained and suppressed for the community, the State, and the universal to survive: “The community, however, can only maintain itself by suppressing this spirit of individualism.”²⁶⁰ Judith Butler notes how, in Hegel's reading, the “threshold between kinship and the state” which Antigone marks “is not precisely an *Aufhebung*, for Antigone is surpassed without

²⁵⁷ See Joyce Hoy, “Hegel, Antigone, and Feminist Critique: The Spirit of Ancient Greece,” in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 172-198.

²⁵⁸ See Butler's problematization of the Hegelian insistence on making Antigone stand for kinship in Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 9-10.

²⁵⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 288.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

even being preserved when ethical order emerges” (emphasis in original).²⁶¹ Perhaps this precarious *Aufhebung* can be attributed to the containment of the feminine in the domestic, while Antigone is not preserved, the femininity that conditioned her impossibility was not to become part of the synthesis of the state but always kept as its internal other, held at bay through reviving and reinventing the domestic-political, and by extension the domestic-public binary. In the early 19th century, on the eve of the invention of the European bourgeois domestic (through various appropriations of the classical Greek domestic), of the Victorian hearth, the bourgeois nuclear family, and of the home as the proper domain and place for femininity and for women, Hegel, through a tortuous reading of Greek classics, was theorizing the identification of women with the realm of the family and their containment, their “suppression” by the rational masculine “community” (in what later became the 19th century realm of the domestic, one may add).

As we have introduced Hegel’s philosophy earlier on as an ideological theory and mythology of the State, and as we identified Hegel’s Spirit, at its moment of fulfilled self-consciousness, with the modern State, we can see then that for Hegel, the State is predicated on superseding the feminine embodied in the Antigonean and Dionysian moments. To that effect, Hegel’s appropriation of the two classical Greek motifs as the feminine antithesis to various stages of rational (masculine) state power was not suspended in a vacuum. Throughout the 19th century, to various extents and invoking various registers, both motif of the orgy (or the frenzied women of the orgy, the maenads, as we have previously shown) and that of Antigone recurred in counterrevolutionary, statist, and colonial discourses as the feminine or feminized

²⁶¹ Butler, *Antigone’s Claim*, 5.

tropes of political chaos and social mayhem. This antithesis between the State, or the order it embodies, and the two feminine moments of Antigone and the orgy were preserved in at least two incidents during the encounter between imperial Britain and Egypt, providing loci for the mapping of the feminine onto the primitive. In 1882 (in a favorable yet patronizing report on the Egyptian nationalist movement) *The Times* compared ‘Urabi, irrational, tenaciously subversive, and heeding divine laws, to Antigone; “Many of his expressions as to the eternity and immutability of God’s laws” the *Times* reporter noted, “reminded me very forcibly of the famous lines of Sophocles declaimed by Antigone on the same subject.”²⁶² Standing for an irrational rebellion that promises anarchy and uses religious slogans, and thoroughly racialized the same way Antigone is thoroughly gendered, ‘Arabi occupied the same position as Antigone and stands for the same feminine (and in this case racialized) chaos. A similarly racialized and gendered representation of rebellion came most clearly in a British intelligence report with regards to a violent resistance operation that took place in Upper Egypt in 1919 (during the national uprising that swept the country that year). The report highlighted the racialization and classing of the crowd as Egyptian peasants, also highlighting the traditional bats, the *nabbutts* which they held in hand and allegedly used to bludgeon their victims to death. It also highlighted the gendering of this crowd through focusing on the presence of women. Women seem to contribute a special ecstatic and orgiastic quality to the event. The report tells us that “Mob screamed with delight, women taking leading part in *orgy*” (emphasis added). It is telling that the *orgy* was mentioned in the report for the first time after the mention

²⁶² “The Crisis In Egypt,” *Times* [London, England] 23 Sept. 1881: 5. *The Times Digital Archive*. Web. 14 Nov. 2015.

of women, as if the feminine ushers in the orgiastic. Given the importance of Greek mythology to the British colonial imaginary (as seen in the *Times*' likening of 'Urabi to Antigone) and to the statist and counterrevolutionary imaginary in its totality (as evidenced by the appropriation of Antigone and the Dionysian orgy by Hegel and the recurrent reference to the maenads in counterrevolutionary literature), it is safe to assume that the women who rendered the event an *orgy* were on some level imagined to reincarnate the maenads. Indeed, like the maenads those were "minacle [*sic.*] women." After describing the revelry, the bloodbath, and the participation of the *minacle* women, the report commented "it seems to have been an indescribable orgy."²⁶³

The two British colonial invocations of the orgy and Antigone, while preserving the femininity of both tropes, de-essentialize this femininity and make it applicable to the racial other (male or female). This is particularly the case with the simile *The Times* drew between 'Urabi and Antigone: the Arab man is reminiscent, in his superstitious attachment to divine laws to an obstinate and irrational extreme, of Antigone and all the notions of subversive and chaotic femininity she conjures. It is important here to remember, once more, that for the Western press 'Urabi was 'Arabi, the quintessential Arab and the failed military/modern man who stands for the Arab *émeute*. The conflation of Antigone and 'Urabi thus exposes a deeper running conflation between the gender othering Antigone stands for and the racial other 'Arabi stands for. Similarly the report on the *indescribable orgy* turns the women of the orgy from its exclusive participants to its metonym and synecdoche – and thus offers the

²⁶³ "Enquiry into the murder of Alexander Pope, Inspector of Prisons, and seven British soldiers on 18 March 1919 while travelling by train from Assiut to Minieh [*sic.*]" The National Archives, UK. FO 141/753/3, High Commission, Egypt, 28/03/1919, 8940/1, 2. I will revisit this report in the next chapter to further show how it re-enacts the classical Greek *topos* of the Dionysian orgy.

rhetorical parallel to LeBon's assertion that crowds, even ones comprising men, have "feminine characteristics."²⁶⁴

This de-essentializing of femininity while preserving it as a discursive category, and especially this conflation between the feminine and the racial other, were *essential* for the deployment of femininity as a counterrevolutionary trope for revolution and chaos. Indeed the *degenerate* and the *hysterical*²⁶⁵ appear as the gendered and racialized²⁶⁶ categories through which crowd, revolt, and revolution are perceived. We have already encountered – through most of this chapter— how crowd and revolution were imagined as spaces of degeneration, how for LeBon the crowd effects the literal degeneration of its members. The understanding of women as lower evolutionary (and therefore degenerate) forms in the Darwinian ideology posits femininity as the telos or destination of this degeneration (or as one among many thereof), hence LeBon's gesture towards "feminine characteristics." Although LeBon does not tell us much about these *feminine characteristics*, and although he does not explicitly refer to hysteria, the latter figures prominently as the ultimate feminine characteristic of the crowd in his text. Contagion, to which LeBon attributes the

²⁶⁴ LeBon, *The Crowd*, 59. This transformation is concomitant with a transformation in the understanding of hysteria (from a uterine condition to a condition of femininity) which in turn transforms the understanding of femininity while preserving many of the biological biases now coded as social (or hormonal rather than uterine). The scope of this study does not allow a thorough exploration of this transformation. This transformation was summarized by Janet Beizer as follows: "As doctors shift from uterus to maternity, from female structure to function and, correlatively, social role, their attempts to delimit hysteria as female but not necessarily uterine complaint repeatedly turn into attempts to define femininity and female sexuality," Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 37.

²⁶⁵ On the role degeneration played in the conception of hysteria see Janet Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 244- 249.

²⁶⁶ On the racialization of hysteria see Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 50, see also Sander Gilman, "The Image of the Hysteric," in *Hysteria Beyond Freud*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 402-436.

impressionability of the crowd,²⁶⁷ is indeed a product of hysteria, or more specifically *hystero-epilepsy* as a body of knowledge, which presumed fits of hysterical epilepsy to be precipitated through *hysterical contagion*. Similarly, Francisque Sarcey, in his famous essay where he attributed the revolutionary insanity of the Communards (especially the women) to a mental shock, described this insanity as *folie contagieuse* and further compared this *contagious folly* to medieval waves of hysteria (which in turn recapitulated the Dionysian orgy).²⁶⁸ It is no surprise, then, that the *hysterical woman* became the metonym for the *hysterical crowd*.

The production of revolution, the revolutionary space, and the revolutionary crowd as licentious, since the 19th century, was inseparable from this *hystericization*. It is true that there is a longer history of suspecting spaces which evaded the official/political/male/masculine gaze as licentious (as evident in the life of the term *orgy* as well as the literature on the *orgy* since Greek antiquity).²⁶⁹ The 19th century understanding of hysteria, however, added an important element to the production of feminine bodies and by extension feminine spaces (including the female *émeute*) as licentious. By understanding hysteria not as the woman's uterus but rather her social and biological/physiological condition, the *sex* of the woman was transposed from her uterus to the totality of her social and physical existence.²⁷⁰ This is the process Michel Foucault famously described as "*A hystericization of women's bodies: a threefold*

²⁶⁷ LeBon, *The Crowd*, 50- 70, 146- 151, 160, 171, 199- 200.

²⁶⁸ Francisque Sarcey, "Les Aliénistes," *Le Gaulois*, 28/5/1871, 1. In the next chapter I will further discuss the various manifestation, incarnations, and appropriations of the orgy and briefly show how medieval hysteria inherited the orgy.

²⁶⁹ This point will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

²⁷⁰ See Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 37, and my earlier note engaging with Beizer's analysis of the transformation of hysteria from a body of knowledge related to the uterus to a field of debates related to femininity and feminine sexuality.

process whereby the feminine body was analyzed – qualified and disqualified—as being thoroughly saturated with sexuality” (emphasis in original).²⁷¹ Consistent with this process of *hystericization*, the presence of women (or indeed their predominance) in a space (e.g. the revolutionary space) became interpreted as the presence of sex. In Egypt we saw this both in fiction and in (propagandistic, ideological, though not intended as fictional) representations of reality. The licentiousness of the sit-in was highlighted, in *Rami al-I'tisami*, through various shots of the women walking in revealing clothes, working-out in tight sportswear and shorts, and sunbathing. This zooming in on women to highlight the licentiousness of the revolutionary space, along with its implicit assumption that the presence of women is/ushers the presence of sex, was re-enacted in the speech of Tal‘at Zakariyya wherein he accused the demonstrators of engaging in intoxication and sexual intercourse. It is noticeable how Zakariyya prefaced his orgiastic depiction of the sit-in by stressing the presence of women: Zakariyya did not mention that there are men and women—or boys and girls, but rather that there are women and men (and I assume it would be safe not to entertain the possibility of this being a feminist or chivalrous gesture on the part of Zakariyya). Even members of the “revolutionary camp” would be infected with this anxiety about feminine presence; when the football fans leagues (commonly known as the *Ultras*) organized a sit-in in April 2012, they made a decision to ban women from sleeping over or staying past 8 pm.²⁷²

²⁷¹ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality v.1*, 104.

²⁷² For more on the Ultras sit-in, see “Mu‘tasimu al-Altras Yada‘un Shurutan li Tawajud al-Fataiat Baynahum,” *Bidayah Hurrah*, http://www.freebdaih.com/2012/03/blog-post_4845.html. For an example of the critique leveled by feminist groups against this decision see Tahsin Bakr, “Al-‘Ittihad al-Nisa’i Yantaqid Man‘ al-Fatayat min al-Mabit fi l’tissam al ‘Altras,” *al-Misri al-Yawm*, 08/04/2012, <http://www.almasyalyoum.com/node/759356>. On how this subscribes to the same logic of the pro-state discourse that tries to delegitimize political activism and the presence of women in activist

We observe, therefore, the persistent association between subversive political activism by (hysterical) women on one side and sexual activity (read as licentious) on the other. This ideological bias was forcefully introduced during the Paris Commune, wherein sexual activity was considered evidence of subversive political activism and vice versa.²⁷³ The survival of this ideological bias to our very day and its *cultural imposition* on Egyptian discourse is evident in the virginity test's incident (2011): political activism led to suspicions of sexual license which (according to the regime's militaristic and masculinist/patriarchal ideologies) warranted a military-medical examination of the women's *sex*. In later statements by army generals the alleged lack of *virginity* (understood as an intact hymen, in opposition to all indigenous and Islamic traditions which never invoked the intactness of the hymen or even had a term for the hymen prior to colonial modernity) was used as evidence for the women's political subversiveness, and their subversive incendiarism (the presence of Molotov cocktails in their tents) as evidence to their sexual licentiousness and further justification for the forced tests.²⁷⁴ The same logic was evident in later allegations by a pro-Sisi propagandist that the Muslim Brothers operated whorehouses which doubled as hideouts for explosives.²⁷⁵ (And while a reader versed in the Foucauldian art of tracing discontinuity may be appalled by this temporal and geographic leap and

spaces, see Njlal' Bideir, "Al-Banat Aqua," *Al-Tahrir*, 31/03/2012.
<http://tahrirnews.com/%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AA/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A3%D9%82%D9%88%D9%89/>

²⁷³ See Gay Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 176- 177, 197, 209,

²⁷⁴ Shahira Amin, "Egyptian General Admits 'Virginity Checks'."

²⁷⁵ Dandarwi al-Hawwari, "al-Mawaqi' al-Jinsiyah, ahammasadirtamwil al-ikhwan," *al-Yawm al-Sabi'*, 15/11/2014,
<http://www.youm7.com/story/2014/11/15/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%85%D9%88%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86/1951917#.VGkcW9oaySM>

the set of continuities it registers, I contend that it is not the researcher's fault that counterrevolution, since its invention of hysteria and its appropriation of the orgy in the 19th century, has lacked any creativity and has since then been repeating itself, or that the colonial *cultural imposition* was successful to the extent that 21st century Egyptian counterrevolutionary discourse eerily resembles the anti-Commune discourse of 1871. The discontinuity to be marked here, however, is the almost complete absence of this form of gendering in Egyptian and Arabic discourse in 1882 and then its prevalence in modern times as an effect of its colonial *cultural imposition*).

Opposed to the success of the the *cultural imposition* of these Western discourses, bodies of knowledge, and ideologies through which masculinity and femininity – and by extension Order and chaos— were perceived in 2011 Egypt, a look at the earlier stages of Egyptian history reveals how this *imposition* has not always been successful.²⁷⁶ Al-Shidyaq's account of the Paris Commune, though reliant on European conservative sources, and although it otherwise played a role as a vehicle of colonial *cultural imposition*, largely avoided the misogyny of the discourse he was translating.²⁷⁷ Gendering is not entirely absent from al-Shidyaq's reports on the Commune; at one point, for example, he speaks of a drunken communard who (as if to emphasize his licentiousness) “wears a headgear like the one worn by women,”

²⁷⁶ This is not to argue in any way that pre-colonial Arabic and/or Islamic discourse was not gendered. It is to argue that the understanding of chaos as feminine through the lenses of *hysteria* and *degeneration* was absent before the invention of these terms and categories. It is true, nevertheless, that hysteria preceded modernity, and that Muslim scientists have played a crucial role in debunking the myth of the moving uterus and replacing it with the theory of the *vapors*, which in turn played a role in constituting the ideological and/or scientific understandings of hysteria in the 19th century and anticipated the scientific and ideological discourse on female sex hormones in the 20th and 21st century. The history of hysteria in Muslim sciences is therefore a larger question which cannot be covered within the confines of this study.

²⁷⁷ Perhaps consciously so, given the sources that argue that al-Shidyaq was an avant-la-lettre feminist; see for example Radwa 'Ashur, *al-Hadathah al-Mumkinah*, 55-60.

but these remain isolated incidents compared to their predominance in the European discourse of the time.²⁷⁸ Al-Shidyaq's coverage, for instance, does not mention the *Pétroleuses* at all. The incendiaries of Paris and their insanity, in al-Shidyaq, are gender-neutral.

During the 'Urabi revolt, neither the 'Urabi press nor its Egyptian and Arab opponents equated the feminine with the unruliness of the crowd. Even when women were used as the face of the crowd, they appeared as heroic rather than unruly.²⁷⁹ Against this (at least relative) absence of *feminization-qua-hystericization* at the turn of 19th-20th century, a full-fledged appearance of the hysterical woman as the metonym of the licentious crowd and/or the licentious dissident organization

²⁷⁸ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, 2. The reference is, most probably, to the Phrygian cap, a red headgear which French Revolutionaries have, since the French Revolution, confused with the Roman freedom cap (the *pileus*) and adopted as a revolutionary and republican symbol. The feminine nature of the Phrygian cap lies not in it being a women's headgear, but in it being originally associated with the cult of Cybele, as the Phrygian Goddess was tolerated in Rome. The cap was supposed to symbolize the castration of Cybele's male priests, the *galli*, during the ecstatic mysteries of the goddess. This was often brought up in polemics against the French revolutionaries both during the Revolution and the Commune. For a very informative discussion on the cap, its history, its usage in Revolutionary France, and the various gendered significations it may have held, see Neil Hertz, "Medusa's Head," 46.

²⁷⁹ For example in *al-Mufid* 30 Sha'ban 1299, 16/7/1882, 2 we see how the Alexandrian locals (*ahali al iskandariyyah*), full as they are with Islamic passion (*al-hamiyyah al-islamiyyah*), especially their youth, children, and women, are volunteering to service the batteries, undeterred by the British bombs (to the extent that when a missile passes near the head of any of them, they move their head to the other side and laugh). A woman volunteer is reported to be exceptionally courageous; running towards missiles that have hit the ground and covering them in dust before they explode. In an article titled "the Alexandrians" (4 Ramadan 1299, 20/7/1882) the editor-in chief of *al-Mufid*, Hasan al-Shamsi, tells us how the Alexandrians are heroic even when victimized; the introduction tellingly argues that they did indeed sacrifice themselves to defend the rest of the Egyptians. The face of this heroism and self-sacrifice is the face of women: the woman who is carrying three children, breastfeeding one of them (notice how there isn't a hint of indecency in public breastfeeding, only a sign of heroism). Then there is the woman who, in the heat of the bombardment, left her child at home and while weeping for her child she still repeats "may God make you victorious, 'Urabi" (i.e. even the woman who loses her mind and abandons her child, a common *hysterical* trope in various historiographies, of various events, is not *hystericized* in the 'Urabist ideology and discourse).

dominates Egyptian discourse under Mubarak, as seen in the examples from 2011 which were previously provided.

The feminization of the revolutionary space and crowd through their gendered metonymy furthermore served to produce the participant men as effeminate or feminine. Tahrir Square was in many ways a feminine space, both because of the presence of women, but more generally because the space was understood as a space of feminine excess (like LeBon's crowd); even the men in the Square act effeminately.²⁸⁰ The confrontation between the State (especially through its manly soldiery and police-*men*) and the demonstrators therefore took on a gendered schema. A stark example took place on May 15th 2011; while putting down a demonstration commemorating the Palestinian *Nakbah* near the Israeli embassy in Cairo, an army officer exclaimed to a male demonstrator with long hair: "so you think you will liberate Palestine wearing your hair like this?!" On the same day, an army officer, probably the same one, ordered the demonstrators to crawl down on the ground – a sign of humiliation, and then is reported to have told one of them "the [Israeli] flag will not go down, but your boxers will" (with a clear suggestion of sexual violation). A similarly gendered confrontation was articulated by pro-regime thugs who participated in the attack against the demonstrators on February 3rd-4th (which became commonly known as the Battle of the Camel) in a newspaper interview. One of two

²⁸⁰ For example the pro-Mubarak Facebook Group *Ana Asif Ya Rayyis* would publish an image from the sit-in featuring a male demonstrator with long hair and asking "is this how men look like?" "Ana Asif yaRayyis" Wall Photos: <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=127930617277860&set=a.127012047369717.21983.12702740703981&type=1&theater#!/photo.php?fbid=128203183917270&set=a.127012047369717.21983.127002740703981&type=1&theater&pid=170172&id=127002740703981>. Later this same demonstrator will be identified and attacked by the admins of this group based on his long hair. During the 18-day sit in there were also stories about how the first demonstrator to be detained and beaten up by the army (not the police) was held on account of his long hair (Personal Observation).

interviewed thugs, identified under the pseudonym ‘Abd al-Qadir, thought the pending attack was justifiable because the demonstrators were “a bunch of American University [in Cairo] pansies who’d run away at the first gunshot.”²⁸¹ The understanding of *pansies* as effeminate was made clearer by the interviewed thugs when they noticed the reversal of gendered roles at the end of the battle, wherein the ruling party member who recruited them “was running around screaming like a *little girl*, but he’s always been a coward” (emphasis added).²⁸² If the gendering was implicit in the discourse of the pro-regime thug, it was explicit in the speech of a pro-regime propagandist on national television. Posing as a repentant demonstrator, the unnamed propagandist declared that he and other respectable demonstrators did not want the regime to fall, “the opposite of regime (*nizam*) is chaos (*fawda*).” As for those who chose to remain in Tahrir Square, those who indeed champion chaos, they are “nothing but half-men, half-women,²⁸³ and people who are sexually deviant (homosexuals).”²⁸⁴ Chaos can only be endorsed by, or materialize through, failed subjects who embody the sexual chaos of the revolutionary space. The revolutionary space was thus understood as a space in which the feminine is in excess and the masculine is in shortage – to the effect that men are feminized (but also the feminine

²⁸¹ Ali Abdel Mohsen, “Thug Life: Pro-Mubarak Bullies Break Their Silence,” *al-Misr ial-Yawm*, 18/03/2011. <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/node/362243>.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ The terms used, *ansaf rigal (rijal)* and *ansaf harim* suggest that the men are not masculine and the women are not feminine.

²⁸⁴ “Al-telefizion al-Misri mu’ajir shakhs yashtim al-thuwar fi maydan al-tahrir,” YouTube Video, 3:46, posted by “Moshahda,” February 7 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rRBKXjUHRl>. In another part of the interview he described the people who remained in Tahrir Square as “cowards,” another epithet that can be read as gendered, though not explicitly so. We have already been exposed to the logic that when the state gaze is evaded sexual deviants (including effeminate passive homosexual men) appear: the range extends from passive male homosexuals finding sanctuary in *Rami al-I’tisami’s* sit-in to the representations of the Islamists as sexual savages-deviants.

excess exceeds what is expected of proper femininity, thus producing the women as half-women and sexual deviants).²⁸⁵ In the imagination, ideology, and discourse of the State and counterrevolution, therefore, the feminization-hystericization of the crowd was conducive to, or worked in tandem with, the production of the revolutionary space as that of utter sexual chaos. The uncontrollable presence of women (and thus of feminine sexuality, understood as the presence of sexuality or sex as such) lead to questionable sexual conduct, whereas the feminization of the space, in other words, the revolutionary space's escape from proper masculinity embodied in and sanctioned by the State, led to a situation where men acted like women and women like men. It was, indeed, *an indescribable orgy*.

Sexual Chaos as the Telos of Revolution

Parallel to the Weberian *routinization of legitimate physical force* into the State (and the State monopoly thereof), and integral to Bourdieu's *State monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence*, there existed, a *routinization* and *monopoly* of legitimate sexual practice, an organization of pleasure and reproduction, by the State.²⁸⁶ This started as

²⁸⁵ Members of the opposition were affected by this ideology and partook of this discourse. The *Ultras'* decision to ban female activists from sleeping over can be seen as an attempt to remedy this *feminine excess*. Similarly, the all-boy band Cairo Ke, who associated themselves with the revolution, seem to have thought of the state of the revolution as a feminine void that needed to be filled with the masculine. In their song Matlub Za'im (a leader is needed) they proclaimed that what this movement needed was a *dhakar* (a manly man, it is interesting that they did not use the term *rajul/ragil*, which may refer to the characteristics of manhood, but rather *dhakar*, which refers to virility, and which, in classical Arabic, may also mean male and also the male organ).

²⁸⁶ Michel Foucault alluded to this process (though without fully exploring it) in volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality*, esp. 115- 132. Furthermore, the definition of *natural*, *normal*, and *normalizing* erotic practices by the bodies of knowledge (which comprised the biopolitical State, or at least its scientific wing), and the production of other desires and practices as *deviant* and or *perverse*, (which Foucault deals with throughout volume 1, esp. 36- 74) is inseparable from the *routinization of sex*

a fantasy by Plato, who wished the State to decide who gets to reproduce and cover it up as *random selection* (a fantasy which was turned into science through the Darwinian ruse of *natural selection* and which materialized in Nazi Eugenics). In the 19th century, this organization of/monopoly over legitimate sexual practice was achieved through entrusting the State with sanctioning and/or recognizing marriages and divorces (along with the registration of the offspring).²⁸⁷

This process was also inseparable from the emergence of the ideology of *property*. This ideology understood every transaction, including conjugal transactions, in terms of property (which only the State can recognize or arbitrate, according to Bourdieu's reformulation of the Weberian idiom). Ideologies of State and counterrevolution thus saw an inevitable link between threats to private property (i.e. socialism) and threats to monogamy-understood-as-property (i.e. an *indescribable orgy*). Karl Marx articulated this phenomenon in clear and simple terms: "The bourgeois," writes Marx (and arguably Engels), "sees his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and, naturally, can come to no other conclusion that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women."²⁸⁸ Like Marx's *Bourgeois*, the British conservative newspaper, the *Standard*, when hearing that the "the instruments of production are to be exploited in common," – or in other words when faced with

which I describe above. For a rich exploration of the (violent) imposition of the modern State's definition of the natural and the perverse, and its (equally violent) organization of desires and erotic practices, in the context of the settler colonial State in North America and its physical and epistemic violence against Native Americans, along with a survey of the rhetorical and discursive Native American resistance to this imposition see Mark Rifkin, *The Erotics of Sovereignty: Queer Native Writing*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012).

²⁸⁷ The specific history of this routinization in Egypt will be briefly examined in Chapter 5.

²⁸⁸ Karl Marx (and Fredrich Engels?), *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 25. See also the discussion of the charge/libel of "the community of women" on pp. 25, 52. The provided pagination is based on the copy available through the online *Marxist archive*; <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>

the socialist contingent within the uprising of the Commune, “came to no other conclusion” that a *requisition* of women would follow. The *Standard* reporter wrote:

Nothing would be easier for them than to “requisition” the wealthy parts of the town which they occupy. They might help themselves to whatever they pleased, and even secure some of the wealthiest inhabitants of the wealthy quarters for the purpose of making them pay ransom; they might carry into effect some of the *most hideous of communistic* precepts which have been instilled into their minds. And treat the wives and daughters of the well to do bourgeois of the wealthy quarter with as little ceremony as their worldly possessions (emphasis added).²⁸⁹

As both the State and society were based, according to the bourgeois ideologies of the 19th century and beyond, on private property and on the organization of society into monogamous *nuclear* units which produced isolated individual subjects, the *spectre* of the dissolution of private property and of monogamy-qua-property entailed the dissolution/degeneration of the whole society; something which was already hinted at in al-Shidyaq’s usage of the term *inhilal* (degeneration/dissolution) in describing the effect of the abolishment of private property, and which will resurface in many of the examples below.

Charges of sexual chaos were thus mobilized against revolution and socialism. These charges were often coded through the term *orgy*, suggestive as it is of various forms of revelry including the sexual, and harking back to the ancient Greek tradition which counterrevolution and colonialism persistently appropriated. After all, the orgies of Cybele and Dionysus constituted egalitarian spaces where social distinction collapsed²⁹⁰ (hence the significance of the *orgy* as *indescribable*).

²⁸⁹ “Revolution in Paris,” *The Standard*, 29/3/1871, 1.

²⁹⁰ For how the orgies of Dionysus can be read as an egalitarian space where social and class distinction can be obliterated see E.R. Dodds, *The Bacchae*, xxvii. On how this was the case with the orgies of Cybele, and how the castration of the male priests may have served to signify this

The Commune, thus, was commonly referred to in counterrevolutionary media as an *orgy*—sometimes with explicit sexual connotations, other times with reference to revelry, which could be violent or sexual and in which social distinction and the very fabric of (capitalist) society is threatened.²⁹¹ For example, the *Standard* reporter describes the Commune, especially the festive mingling of the “The damsels of the environs, whose opinions and habits of life have fully prepared them for the advent of Communism” with the “patriots” as a “Republican orgy.”²⁹² More explicit in its sexual connotations was the usage of the term by *Le Gaulois*, which accused the Commune leader Louis Delescluze of turning the “mairie” into a “phalanstère” for the *Pétroleuses*²⁹³ who in turn engaged in a nightly “orgie habituelle” that would leave the

egalitarianism, see Neil Hertz, “Medusa’s Head,” 27-54. Hertz argues that this composite fear of castration and the dissolution of property and class distinction were mobilized against the Commune, especially with regards to the discourse around the Phrygian cap (which originally belonged to the initiates of Cybele.) One can make a connection, therefore, between this fear of socialism/castration/the orgies of Cybele, and the common usage of the term *orgy* in the anti-Commune discourse.

²⁹¹ In her study of the gendered representations of the Commune and its female contingent, *Unruly Women of Paris*, Gay Gullickson brings forth a number of the incidents in which the Commune was described as an orgy; see Gullickson, 3, 103, 207, 225: the first of these references associates orgy with unrestrained killing, as if the communard(e)s were consumed by a lust for killing which they could not repress. The second is a reference to “highborn and depraved women [who] wear masks and engage in hideous orgies” and therefore probably meant public sex – although once again we can see this as a moment in which sex and violence, especially revolutionary violence, are inseparable. The third reference is to “orgies involving stolen wine,” it is not clear here whether drinking stolen wine in itself constituted an orgy (after all Dionysus was the god of wine), or was prelude to engaging in an orgiastic (sexual or murderous) behavior. The final reference is to a woman who would seduce men into “nocturnal orgies” that would kill them; once again it is unclear if these men would die as a result of the insatiable sexual appetite of the revolutionary woman or if she adds killing to the menu. It is striking, however, that Gullickson refrains from discussing the significance of the orgy, even though her book is about gendered representations of unruliness, and even though she pays otherwise close attention to Greek mythological references.

²⁹² *The Standard*, “The Fete of the Commune,” 31/03/1871, 5.

²⁹³ Equally noteworthy here is how the *Pétroleuses* substitute for the maenads, and how their political subversiveness and insanity/pyromania is supplemented with representations of unbounded and uncontrollable sexuality.

place littered with waste sheets, women's underwear, undone beds, bottles with only dregs left, etc.²⁹⁴

We see therefore how revolutionary activity in general, and socialism in particular, were associated, at least since the Paris Commune, with sexual chaos and/or *the orgy* (which sometimes stood for sexual chaos, other times for revelry, and yet others for the ancient Greek ritual and its modern appropriations). It was indeed Western counterrevolutionary, and particularly anti-communist, propaganda which forcefully introduced (or rather *culturally imposed*) the trope of sexual chaos (both as a metaphor for revolution and as its inevitable telos) to an Egyptian audience.

To make this point we need to backtrack to 1882 and note the complete absence of sexual chaos in the representations of the 'Urabi revolt,²⁹⁵ as well as its (relative)²⁹⁶ absence from the archive of the second wave of Egyptian nationalism (i.e.

²⁹⁴ See Prosper-Olivier Lissagaray, *Histoire de la Commune de 1871*, (Paris: Librairie Dentu, [1876?]),

544- 545. It is also worth noting, since one of the aims of our study is to trace how European Statist and counterrevolutionary notions were mapped, projected, and imposed on Egypt, that Delescluze was later compared to 'Arabi, and that Lissagaray (the communard, historian of the Commune, and the author of the reference cited in this footnote) declared his unequivocal support to 'Urabi and proclaimed him *a man of the Commune*. See the discussion in Chapter 3.

²⁹⁵ Here I am bracketing allegations of rape, which were not prevalent though not completely absent, from the discourse of both sides. These sparse allegations of rape served to charge the alleged rapists with an unrestrained capacity for transgression, and did not construct a metaphor of sexual chaos. Furthermore, unlike allegations of rape in representations of the Commune or the 2011-2013 events in Egypt, allegations of rape in 1882 did not convey the dissolution of the social order and/or social distinction and were not tied to the collapse of government or to socialism.

²⁹⁶ While noting this absence, I am reluctant to mark it as complete given how foreign influence was sometimes narrated through the spread of prostitution and of debauchery as such (often vaguely defined). The closest *al-Liwa'* got to the trope of sexual chaos was when reporting on a workers strike in 1901. While *al-Liwa'* did not go as far as suggesting that the strike is a hotbed for licentious activities, it situated "the socialist spirit" behind the strike within the same category as *fiṣq* and *muwbiqat*. After depicting the strike as a space of imminent chaos akin to a spark that may turn into/ignite wildfire (thus echoing Carlyle on syndicalism and conflagration), *al-Liwa'* then identifies the agitators as socialist Europeans. The Europeans, according to this report, have so far succeeded in spreading in Egypt alcoholism, gambling, and *fiṣq* (lechery/depravity) and every *muwbiqah* (moral malady/calamity/abomination) so they decided to try their luck by spreading socialism as well. Here

that of *al-Liwa*). The trope of sexual chaos appeared, all of a sudden and in full force, during the events of 1919, while British observers were blaming Egyptian riots on Bolshevik agitation.²⁹⁷ In March 1919, the newspaper *Misr* published an article titled “al-balshafīyyah wa ruh al-ijtima’.”²⁹⁸ The article asserted that in nascent Soviet Russia women were treated as public property, and that any woman who turned 18 was forced to register with a “public office or market” to offer herself to whomever wanted her (and “her parents cannot object” warned the article). This was dangerous because, according to the article, it would “lead to the *inhilal* [degeneration] of *al-hay’ah al-ijtima’iyyah* [roughly society/social organization/ social structure].” This practice is furthermore dangerous because it brings us closer to the horizon of egalitarianism, equating between highborn and lowborn women. Finally, citing

we do not have a representation of socialist direct action as imbricated with or leading to moral depravity and/or chaos, but we see an association thereof. The effect of anti-Communist propaganda is unmistakable, as well as the attempt to reverse the Orientalist charge of a sensual and licentious Orient (a reversal which stays faithful to at least some of the ideological and epistemological underpinnings of that charge); “al-l’*tisab*,” *al-Liwa’*, 22/12/1901, 3.

²⁹⁷Ramzi Mikha’il, *al-Sihafah al-Misriyyah wa-Thawrat 1919*, (Cairo: al-Hay’ah al-Misriyyah al-‘Ammah lil Kitab), 108-110. This was especially the case when villages started declaring themselves independent republics, an act that reminded British observers of the Russian soviets (and perhaps the Commune). The reading of these peasant councils/republics as Bolshevik was a misreading according to Mikha’il who asserts that these independent republics served to preserve rather than challenge landed property; see *ibid*. One may add that another mischaracterization was the depiction of these secessions as chaotic moments of peasant riots, while in reality they were highly coordinated operations in which the peasants and the notables collaborated. It is also curious that the British memoranda alleged that the republic of Zifta flew the Ottoman flag. Perhaps this is indicative of how the threat in the early 20th century British colonial mind was simultaneously Oriental (or Islamic) and communist; a tradition kept alive by Hollywood and US counterinsurgency to our very day (as we will show in Chapter 3). A more simple explanation, however, could attribute the confusion to the red color of both the Soviet and the Ottoman flags.

²⁹⁸*Misr* 13/3/1919, 1. The title is clearly reminiscent of Ahmad Fathi Zaghul’s translation of LeBon’s *The Crowd as Ruh al-Ijtima’*. It is not clear if the title is meant to attribute a crowd mentality to Bolshevism, or if it is a reference to societal organization and structure that is threatened by Bolshevism. If the latter, then the usage of the term *ruh al-ijtima’* in this article contradicts with its usage in Zaghul’s title.

American eugenics,²⁹⁹ the article contends that such practice would lead to the *inhibit* (again one of the words that can mean degeneration/decadence) of human kind. The article concludes: “Bolshevism is but a disease with which the Russian Revolution was afflicted.” The curious appearance of anti-communist propaganda and the trope of sexual chaos, at a time of Egyptian insurgency and against a British suspicion of communistic string-pulling, and under the context of British censorship and control over the media, suggests that British counterinsurgency propaganda was behind these forms of representation.

A few months later, the pro-British Egyptian Grand Mufti Muhammad Bakhit issued a *fatwa* (religious opinion) denouncing Bolshevism in the harshest terms. This fatwa was *incited* by an Egyptian notable under the name of Sayyid Hassan Muhammad, who wrote a letter asking the Grand Mufti for his opinion concerning Bolshevism. Muhammad’s incitement was already loaded with representations of moral and sexual chaos, as well as with the presumptions of the dissolution of society as a result of this chaos. The letter (as appears in the archives of the British Foreign Office) reads:

What is your judgment concerning the ‘Way’ of the Bolsheviks which is spreading and doing harm everywhere these days? The chief points in their ‘way’ are: Anarchy, corruption, denial of religion, legalising the illegal (antinomianism), freedom from any creed at all, trespassing on the property of others and denying individual’s right to hold property, holding it to be allowable to every man to seize what he wishes from whomsoever he wishes, legalising the shedding of man’s blood, denial of rights of husband and wife and of the legitimacy of their children which they claim as property of the State, thus demolishing the fence guarding family life, no distinction between Halal and Haram, *every woman is the common property of each of them without any marriage-contract*, any woman attempting to defend her honour forfeits her life, *unmarried women are often forced to prostitution, and married women to be unfaithful to husbands and children*: in a word they allow everything that God’s Laws prohibit.³⁰⁰ (emphasis added)

²⁹⁹ Perhaps this also suggests that American anti-communist propaganda played an early role in shaping the counterrevolutionary discourse in Egypt or in pushing the motif of the socialist orgy. The article, however, does not cite enough sources for us to be able to develop this argument further.

³⁰⁰ “Bolshevism in Egypt: 1919- 1925,” The National Archives, UK. FO141/779/1, 1.

Bakhit tried to legitimate Muhammad's anti-Communist (orgiastic) presumptions both by denouncing communism in the strongest terms and by trying to anchor its orgiastic nature in a (false) genealogy that harks back the Magian faith and the teaching of the Zoroastrian reformer Mazdak (and thus Islamize anti-Communism as anti-Magian and anti-Zoroastrian). This attempt to indigenize/Islamize notwithstanding, the real incitement behind the fatwa, as well as the set of biases therein, were without a doubt a British colonial agency. A letter written by a British operative and addressed to A. W. Keown Boyd (then serving as the Director General of the European Department in the Egyptian Ministry of Interior, in other words the representative of the British occupation in the ministry) boasted:

I have been trying to work up some effective propaganda against bolshevism and supplying Beaman's [apparently the name of a British agent] Azhar friends with some of the details regarding Bolshevism recorded in the White Papers. This has led to the very satisfactory result of the issue of this Fetwa by the Grand Mufti. We are getting it produced in facsimile and will send copies all over the Moslem world.³⁰¹

The *fatwa* was duly translated to English, reprinted en masse, and widely distributed by the British authorities in Egypt and other colonies of the British Empire.³⁰² Although this anti-Bolshevik propaganda was initially resisted by an Egyptian public sphere receptive to socialism and sympathetic to the enemies of the British Empire,³⁰³ it indexed (along with the aforementioned newspaper report by *Misr* newspaper) a concerted effort by British imperialism and its clients to instill a discourse on what I term *the socialist orgy*. This attribution of sexual chaos to

³⁰¹ Ibid, 4.

³⁰² See *ibid*,

³⁰³ For example, a pamphlet signed by an entity which called itself *al-lajnah al-musta'jilah* (the hasty/urgent/ad hoc committee – of the Communist Party perhaps?) described this fatwa as “solicited by [Edmund] Allenby [the British High Commissioner] in the garbs of al-Sayyid Hasan [Muhammad]” *Ibid*, 98. The Public Records file also includes a plethora of pamphlets, newspaper articles, and reported conversations which show how the British-incited fatwa failed, or indeed backfired.

political dissent of the socialist variety will resurface in Muslim conservative circles during the Cold War. In a testimony that became famous within salafi circles (and is re-produced on various religious websites and Salafi online forums),³⁰⁴ the Kuwaiti sheikh Ahmad al-Qattan alleged that he used to be a communist, and that what turned him against communism was how another comrade praised a famous Egyptian socialist figure for inviting his guests to sleep with him and his wife on the same bed, and instructing his wife to sleep in the middle between him and his guest. The unnamed comrade then exclaimed how this was, in his opinion, the epitome of communism, thus triggering the repentance of al-Qattan.³⁰⁵ The elaborate representations of the socialist orgy as tantamount to the collapse of the whole social and gender order is missing, but the socialist orgy as the other of monogamy and the wrecker of bourgeois nuclear families is evident.

Another example, more explicit and comprehensive of what the socialist orgy stands for, and more relevant to the specific context of Egypt, comes in a 1996 short play, titled *Ziyarah lil Jannah wa al-Nar* (A Visit to Heaven and Hell), and written by Mustafa Mahmud, an important figure of Egyptian public culture especially in the later decades of the 20th century (and perhaps another repentant

³⁰⁴ Due to the nature of these sources, it is difficult to discern when exactly it was written and when it became popular. The testimony references the revolution of Dhufar (a socialist armed insurrection that broke out in the southern province of the Sultanate of Oman in the 1960s and which was brutally put down through an Iranian armed intervention in 1973) which suggests that the testimony was initially written in the 1960s or early 70s. Through the 1980s and 1990s Ahmad al-Qattan became known as an Islamic preacher and orator.

³⁰⁵ Ahmad al-Qattan, "Tawbat al-shaykh Ahmad al-Qattan," in *al-'A'idun ila Allah: Majmu'ah min Qisas al-Ta'ibin min Mashahir wa 'Ulama' wa Du'ah wa Ghayrihim Yarwunaha bi Anfusihim*, ed. Muhammad ibn Abdul Aziz al-Masnad, (no publication facts). The testimony can be found on various websites and online fora, which demonstrates its fame to which I alluded in the text above. See for example <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http://saaid.net/gesah/96.doc>, <http://articles.islamweb.net/media/index.php?page=article&lang=A&id=152571>, <http://www.maghress.com/attajdid/18372>

communist).³⁰⁶ Although he doomed himself to mediocrity in his last years, Mustafa Mahmud is no marginal figure in Egyptian culture. Early in his career he was known for his inventive and sometimes controversial novellas. His *al-‘Ankabut* (the spider) toyed with the limits of human neuroscience, the theme of addiction and the idea of reincarnation, and achieved high acclaim to the extent that it was made into a television series. Later Mahmud endorsed a Sufi version of Islam and wrote a number of argumentative and dialectical texts wherein he argued for belief against disbelief (perhaps against his earlier atheistic/agnostic self). His simple and convincing style and his grasp over modern sciences and spiritual philosophies (both Sufi and Brahman) won him great popularity among a younger audience troubled by the questions of being, creation, and the existence of a deity. His books *Rihlati min al-shakk ila al-yaqin* (my journey from suspicion/agnosticism to belief) and *Hiwar ma ‘Sadiqi al-Mulhid* (a dialogue/discussion with my atheist friend) remain best-sellers to this very day. In the 1970s Mahmud started preparing and presenting a weekly television program titled *al-‘Ilm wa al-Iman* (Science and Faith), which was also the slogan Sadat picked for his regime (*dawlat al-‘Ilm wa al-Iman*, lit. The State of Science and Faith). The show enjoyed great appeal and continued to broadcast until 1997. In addition to being an icon of Egyptian public (and pop) culture, Mahmud was

³⁰⁶ Mustafa Mahmud’s history with socialism and Marxism is a matter of speculation. While he was generally perceived by the Egyptian public as a repentant communist, Mahmud himself presents two contradictory stories. In his autobiographical work *Rihlati min al-Shakk ila al-Yaqin* he claims to have endorsed an eclectic creed of scientific materialism and Brahman Sufism; Mustafa Mahmud, *Rihlati min al-shakk ila al-Yaqin*, (Cairo, Dar al-Ma‘arif, [1976?]), 9- 17. In an interview conducted by al-Misri al Yawm and published posthumously, Mahmud admits a short-lived flirting with Marxism. However, in this version, it was Marxism that flirted with Mahmud, not the other way round: after having published a novel, Egyptian socialist writers celebrated his work as a model of socialist literature, only to turn against him once the fad of “socialist realism” took over; Mustafa Mahmud, interview by Sayyid al Hirani and Muhammad al-Siba’i, “al-Misri-al-Yawm tanshur mudhakkirat al-Mufakkir al-Kabir Dr. Mustafa Mahmud al-lati sajjalaha qabl wafatih: al-halaqah al-ula, bidhrat al-shakk,” *al-Misri al-Yawm*, 15/12/2009, <http://today.almasryalyoum.com/article2.aspx?ArticleID=236777>.

a well-known philanthropist. A famous mosque he built and which is named after him occupies a central location in al-Muhandisin neighborhood of Greater Cairo. The area where the mosque falls is known as “the Mustafa Mahmud Square” (coincidentally it was at the Mustafa Mahmud Square that the regime supporters gathered in 2011 in a counterdemonstration against the ongoing uprising, and who eventually marched on Tahrir Square to put an end to the uprising, culminating in what became known as “the Battle of the Camel.” Murtada Mansur’s previously cited statements about the ribald and parentless women of Tahrir Square were given at the Muhammad Mahmud Square). The mosque also includes a highly functional and free of charge medical centre. A play by Mustafa Mahmud, therefore, is not marginal to Egyptian pop-culture, not least in the 1990s. The presence of the motif of the socialist orgy in a play by Mahmud (serialized on the pages of a popular newspaper), both indexed and secured the motif’s presence at the center of Egyptian popular culture in the 1990s.

Ziyarah lil Jannah wa al-Nar (A Visit to Heaven and Hell), was first serialized through the popular *al-Ahram* newspaper, and then published in book form bearing its title and showcasing other writings by Mahmud. While the play attracted some controversy through its Sufi motifs, its description of the afterlife, and its assignment of people to places in Heaven and Hell (a motif that was not foreign to Arabic literature, given how it appeared in the 11th century in Abu al-‘Ala’ al-Ma‘arri’s *Risalat al-Ghufran*, which was most likely the inspiration behind Mahmud’s text), the core of the play, or at least the Hell section of the play, is anti-Communist propaganda. Descending through Hell, the main character encounters, in addition to Satan, the historic leaders of socialism, who are eventually deemed more worthy of the lowest holes of Hell than Satan himself. In a telling dialogue Satan challenges Karl Marx (in the presence of Lenin and Stalin): “You have sent to outer

space tens of satellites that broadcast, to all television devices, all the ten positions of the sexual act.”³⁰⁷ One may be forgiven for being perplexed by how satellite television and satellite porn channels, a quintessential capitalist industry, are attributed to Communism,³⁰⁸ until one reaches the final scenes and realizes that the worthiest of the lowest hole of hell is not Satan, Marx, Lenin, or Stalin, but Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, and that the worst sin is not socialism but chaos/anarchy.³⁰⁹ If the broadcast of the sexual act (all ten positions of it) is a marker of sexual chaos, then sexual chaos here, like the other examples of the socialist orgy, serves to provide a trope, a symptom, and a further cause for social chaos. The socialist satellite pornographic orgy is only a prelude for to real orgy: the total dissolution of society.

Mustafa Mahmud’s socialist, anarchist, and Satanist orgy exposes another running theme in the narration of political and social chaos as sexual. The orgy here is a trope (or telos, if we want to read it literally) for the social chaos that will result from the abolishing of (all and especially class) hierarchy and social distinction. The fear of the collapse of social distinction has always animated the fear of the orgy: scholars of Classics have already suggested that this was the case with Pentheus,³¹⁰ as

³⁰⁷ Mustafa Mahmud, *Ziyarah lil Jannah wa al-Nar*, 53.

³⁰⁸ While this can be explained away by stating that Satan here was proving that humans in general are worse than the devil, and that the materialist modern human civilization has done more damage than any devil could cause, it is telling that Mahmud chose Marx to be the addressee of this statement, and the representative of decadent human materialism.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 67 - 83.

³¹⁰ Dodds, *The Bacchae*, xxvii.

well as with the Roman suspicion of the orgies of Cybele.³¹¹ Modern invocations of the orgy did not depart from this same fear.³¹² *The Standard's* fear of the Commune orgy, al-Shidyq's fear of a total moral and social degeneration/the coming undone of the social/ *inhilal* as a result of socialism, and *Misr's* fear that socialism leads to orgiastic practices that undermine the family and with it the whole social structure can be read as belonging to the same trend. Mubarak's propagandists simply picked this already available discursive tool and weaponized it against dissidents (some of whom were professed socialists, therefore already belonging to the orgiastic space of socialist and sexual chaos.)

The motif of political activism as sexual chaos was picked up and mobilized against political dissidents, before 2011, in *Rami al-I'tisami*. In the film, the whole sit-in starts as an attempt by Rami to sublimate his unfulfilled sexual desires (Rami who lost his phone could no longer get in contact with his habitual lower class prostitute, so he started the sit-in in the hope of impressing and seducing another woman). Throughout the film, the gathering of youth away from paternal and State authority becomes an alibi for sexual or almost sexual license: evident in scenes of dance parties, scenes of scantily clad women being stared at by men, scenes in which effeminate— read as homosexual— men gather together, scenes in which women suggest to their male counterparts that they should spend the night in the sit-in, a scene in which Rami attempts to seduce a female colleague in his tent, and yet another scene in which he attempts to rape a lower class woman after convincing her to come clean his tent for a day's wage. More importantly, the encounter between classes, the (incomplete and temporary) dissolution of class distinction, is itself sexualized. This

³¹¹ Hertz, "Medusa's Head," 44.

³¹² See *ibid.*

is evident in the attempted-rape scene but also evident when the lower class crowd seeks to join the sit-in. Rami, who is presented throughout the film as a man with a special taste for lower class women, welcomes the merging of classes, to the dismay of his jealous female colleague who objects that strict segregation should be observed “lest things melt into one another” (an expression conveying chaos and lack of distinction in Egyptian dialect). Rami, lustfully eyeing a woman among the lower class crowd, responds in a suggestive tone “I wish they melt into one another.” The mayhem and class indistinction that form the crowd are understood by Rami, as well as by many pro-regime propagandists and counterrevolutionary observers, as sexual chaos.

Depictions of the Tahrir Square sit-in as a space of sexual chaos therefore belonged to a longer history of depicting socialism and/or political activism as social, moral, and sexual chaos. It was this ideological trend that shaped, or was used as a pretext, when the army abducted the women participating in the March 9th 2011 sit-in and forced them to undergo virginity tests. It was the same ideological trend which shaped the justifications offered by the unnamed army general (probably al-Sisi). After exclaiming that these women “were not like your daughter or mine” the unnamed general continued: “These were girls who had camped out in tents with male protesters in Tahrir Square, and we found in the tents Molotov cocktails and (drugs).”³¹³ Indeed subversive activism is tantamount to sexual license and chaos, which merits Statist and military examination and regimentation. It was also the same ideological trend that was reflected in Tal‘at Zakariyya’s allegations that “full-fledged

³¹³ Shahira Amin, “Egyptian General Admits ‘Virginity Checks’.”

sexual relations” were taking place in Tahrir.³¹⁴ Where other propagandists saw sexual chaos, Muhammad Hassan (a preacher with questionable credentials who was promoted by the Egyptian state media and who has returned the favor by acting as a puppet-propagandist) saw a sexual apocalypse. Giving a speech from the holy site of Mount ‘Arafat while (allegedly) performing the Muslim ritual of *hajj* (roughly *pilgrimage*), in 2012 while Egypt was under the rule of the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), Hassan saw an opportune moment to deliver religious propaganda from *hijaz* to the ruling SCAF in Egypt. In the middle of his speech, Hassan fired: “those who accuse the army of treason want our country to turn into a state of *chaos* [stressing every syllable of the Arabic word, *fawda*, especially its last syllable]” and then added in a high pitch: “By God, I swear by God on Mount ‘Arafat, by God, and then again by God, if they break the army like they broke the police, by God no one of us in Egypt will be safe in his own bedroom.” Hassan then moved to reminiscing about the events of 2011 “they broke the police and we saw what happened: security deterioration/looseness [*infilat*] in broad daylight, kidnap in broad daylight, rape in broad daylight.” All revolutionary scenarios, it seems, lead to rape or sexual chaos.³¹⁵

In many of the representations of sexual chaos, nevertheless, there is something more than simply the translation of socialism into an egalitarian sexual chaos which threatens the fabric of society. In addition to this presumption, there is also the presumption that what happens beyond the gaze of the State is simultaneously

³¹⁴ “Tal‘at Zakariyya: fi Maydan al-Tahrir Yujad ‘Ilaqat Jinsiyyah,” YouTube Video, 5:23, posted by “sambo ali,” February 10, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZVnHsUIqW8>

³¹⁵ “Muhammad Hassan Yunafiq al-Majlis al-‘Askari,” YouTube Video, 2:15, posted by “Asem Desoky,” February 26th, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGVrO8PTuko>.

subversive and sexual, or that it is simultaneously politically and morally subversive. In fact the suspicion of what transpires, is hatched, is plotted, or is produced, beyond the gaze of the State, runs through many of the examples of disorder and chaos which were presented throughout this chapter. It is as if the gaze of the State is normalizing, and what evades, escapes, challenges, or eschews it becomes perverse, degenerate, and licentious. In the next chapter I will use the trope (and *topos*) of the orgy (taking up and revising Ernst Curtius' notion of the *literary topos*) to examine this suspicion of what lays beyond the gaze of the State.

Chapter 2

The Dance of Dionysus: The Topos of the Orgy in Egyptian Pro-State Discourse

stories of our women leaving home to frisk

in mock ecstasies among the thickets on the mountain,

dancing, in honor of the latest divinity,

a certain Dionysus, whoever he may be!

In their midst stand bowls brimming with wine.

And then, one by one, the women wander off

to hidden nooks where they serve the lusts of men.

Priestesses of Bacchus they claim they are,

*but it's really Aphrodite they adore. (Pentheus, in Euripides' *Bacchae*)*

There were drums, toots, dancing, and drugs, girls, and boys, and full sexual relations

(Tal'at Zakariyya describing the scene in Tahrir.)

The Orgy as a Topos

In the previous chapter we explored how, within the ideological representations/mythologies of the State, political dissent and social chaos are commonly narrated as sexual chaos—when Tal'at Zakariyya characterized the events in Tahrir Square as “drums, dance, toots . . . and full-fledged sexual relations” he was merely summing up a discourse and an ideological set of representational practices that emerged from politicians, army men, regime propagandists, and even religious scholars and Islamist activists. We have also shown how the *orgy* (a term with a

certain polysemic valence, a signifier with a range of significations ranging from the ancient Greek ecstatic ritual associated with Dionysus and other gods, to its modern meaning as a state of mayhem or revelry of a violent and/or sexual nature) operated within these representations of sexual chaos. In this chapter I will show how, in both counterrevolutionary archives of Egypt and Europe, the *orgy* (inseparable from its classical Greek referent) operated as not only a metaphor, or a trope, for political, social, and sexual chaos, but beyond that as a *topos* which shaped and conditioned representations of crowds and revolutions. This enquiry will shed more light on the normalizing gaze of the State which suspects anything that escapes or evades it to be licentious, subversive, chaotic, sexual, and *orgiastic* (an understanding coded within the very polysemic nature of the term *orgy* as well as its history since Greek antiquity). It will also show how this gaze has a specific Western history anchored in specifically Western modes of power, whereas what escapes this gaze and becomes thus orgiastic has always been referred to the Oriental (thus contributing to the mutual mapping of the licentious and the Oriental, or the licentious and Europe's racial other more broadly).

Though I am clearly arguing for a history of recurrence, the history I am about to explore is not in any way a history of continuity. I have already shown how the figure of the frenzied woman (even when referred to as a *maenad*), did not always reference the same phenomena: whereas in Greek mythology the maenads referenced literal ecstasy (and not hysteria, which in this period was tied to the uterus not the soul) in modern times the frenzied woman/maenad came to reference a group of bodies of knowledge through which femininity is constituted—most notably hysteria. I have also gestured towards how the *orgy's* association with the natural and the maternal lent itself, in its modern appropriations, to narratives of degeneration that

were absent from the ancient Greek understanding of the orgy. In this chapter I will also show how, though the orgy had always been associated with the Oriental, the significance of this Oriental irreversibly changed through the paradigms of Social Darwinism and through epistemologies/metaphysics of the modern which produce the Oriental as that which escapes signification.

For this purpose, before proceeding with my analysis, I need to revisit, unpack, trouble, and redefine the literary concept of the *topos*, a concept already imbricated in a European ideology that fabricates a continuity between ancient Greece and post-Enlightenment Europe and thus contributes to the same European exceptionalism that constituted the 19th century colonialist discourse. For the purpose of this chapter – and this study more generally, I use the term *topos* to refer to a number of motifs or themes that recur side by side to create an argument or a metaphor. Here I am making an arbitrary distinction between *topos* and *motif*, only reserving the former term for the arguments or metaphors that are constructed through various motifs. Linguistically the two terms (*topos* and *motif*) can be treated as synonymous.³¹⁶ In literary studies, on the other hand, the term *topos* (which in ancient Greek meant *a place*) originally referred to verbal and argumentative conventions, but was later extended (through the concept of *koinoi topoi*, or *commonplace*) to “include standard metaphors and ‘topics’.”³¹⁷ This usage was taken up and further elaborated by the famous German scholar of literature and classics, Ernst Curtius, who defined

³¹⁶ According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* a *topos* is :“a traditional motif or theme (in a literary composition); a rhetorical commonplace, a literary convention or formula.” According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, *topos* is “An older term for a motif commonly found in literary works, or for a stock device of rhetoric,” s.v. “Topos.”

³¹⁷ *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, s.v. “Topos.”

the *topos* as “established schemes of thought, extended metaphors, standardized passages of description, and the like.”³¹⁸

It is Ernst Curtius’ conception of the *topos* that I want to simultaneously take up and take issue with. In this conception, the *topos* becomes “a unifying element,” congruent with Curtius’ agenda of inventing a continuity of Western literature that extends from antiquity, to the medieval ages, to modern times. In his review of Ernst Curtius’ *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, Classics scholar L.R Lind noted that for Ernst, “European literature” (whether Classic, Medieval, Renaissance, or modern) constitutes a “historical whole” which defies its division into eras or periods.³¹⁹ This myth of continuity (which is central to the mythistory of Europe as an eternal entity that hails from or inherits Greek antiquity) is central to Curtius’ conception of the *topos*. Lind notes that, for Curtius, “much of Renaissance and later European literature cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of that literature’s relation to Medieval Latin rhetoric in the use of commonplaces, metaphors, turns of phrase, or, to employ the term Curtius prefers, *topoi*, many of which go back to the Greeks, although many also are Medieval in origin” (emphasis in original).³²⁰ On the one hand, what I am arguing is not very different from Lind’s rendition of Curtius’ argument: understanding the modern recurrence of the *orgy* cannot be fully achieved without understanding of the set of “commonplaces, metaphors, turns of phrase, or...[as] Curtius prefers, *topoi* [which] go back to the [ancient] Greeks.” On the other hand, I do not attribute this recurrence or the necessity

³¹⁸ Qtd. in *ibid.*

³¹⁹ L.R. Lind, review of *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* by Ernst Curtius, *The Classical Weekly* 44, no.14 (April 2, 1951): 220.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

of tracing the *topoi* back to their Greek origins to a wholistic nature of Western culture, but rather to the continuous appropriations which invent/fabricate Europe as a wholistic geographic and cultural trans-historic entity. These appropriations, inventions, and fabrications are indeed ideological, and hence I suggest understanding the *topos* as an ideological device through which Europe has imagined/represented/invented itself. Here I propose a new shade of meaning to Althusser's notion that "ideology has no history"³²¹ – at once modifying, or unfaithfully rendering, Curtius' concept of *topos* and Althusser's concept of an ideology with no history. While for Althusser, an ideology with no history means that ideology is not the exclusive feature of a certain stage of capitalism but rather an integral part of how relations of production are re-produced and therefore an integral part of the class struggle at any point in time, the shade of meaning I want to introduce (which is not entirely alien to Althusser's conception of ideology) is that ideologies deny their histories/historicity and present themselves as eternal and trans-historical (otherwise they would be acknowledging their own essence as ideology, something only Marxist ideology dares to venture, according to Althusser). The concept of *topos* in Curtius' formulation can thus be approached as an ideological device that sustains the ideology of Europe (in other words the ideology that produces Europe as an entity, a task inseparable from Orientalism, which was both predicated on and integral to the conception of the Occident, or Europe, as a wholistic unit. Later in this chapter I will show how modern appropriations of the *orgy* have worked as part of appropriating and re-inventing ancient Greek Orientalism as modern Orientalism). This device works not only through arguments of a wholistic continuity made by literary scholars but more importantly by the continuous (re)appropriation

³²¹ Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus," 107- 109.

and reinvention of ‘tradition’. Colonialist and counterrevolutionary forces of 19th century Europe saw themselves as the rightful heirs, via the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, to the Greek civilization and therefore (consciously and unconsciously) re-produced classical Greek motifs, or *topoi*, including the orgy. Throughout this chapter I will show how the *topos* of the orgy operated as an ideological device and was *culturally imposed* on Egypt as an ideological effect. The appropriation of the topos of the orgy by post-Enlightenment Europe as well as its implicit imposition on Egyptian culture, was a feature of a voyeuristic State which suspects all that it cannot see and paradoxically produces what it does not know as licentious.

Indeed, the resurgence of the orgy can be explained, if partially, through the classical Greek orgy’s resonance with a number of modern or resurgent phenomena. These phenomena included modern patriarchy and the gendering of spaces (itself based, if partially, on a resurgence of the ancient Greek gendering of spaces) evident in the recurrence of the figure of the maenads even as their referent shifted from ecstasy to hysteria. They also included modern Orientalism. Finally and most importantly for the purpose of this chapter, the classical Greek orgy resonated with the voyeuristic State, its suspicion of what evades it, and its projection of sexual suspicions and fantasies onto this orgiastic space.

The Orgiastic Paradox: *It seems to have been and indescribable Orgy*

A curious paradox appeared in Zakariyya’s statements about the licentiousness of the Tahrir Square sit-in. Throughout his interview, Zakariyya expressed his anxiety about how *we* (a *we* which I read as signifying the State and public gaze, and an

interpellating *we* that produces a community embodied within the State and others the dissidents and their orgiastic space) could not ascertain the nature of the events that took place within the sit-in (let alone ascertain who was there: “Muslim Brothers or otherwise, only God knows”).³²² Despite (or because) of this assertion of ignorance, Zakariyya seemed certain not only of the licentious nature of the event but also of the specific details of the licentious behavior that took place (it is noteworthy that Zakariyya did not simply claim that Tahrir Square had become a hotbed of sexual relations, but he went further to characterize these sexual relations as *full* or *full-fledged* – *kamilah*.) The same paradox of knowing yet not knowing, or knowing by virtue of not knowing, is present in the 1919 British report that characterized the violent event in Upper Egypt as an *indescribable orgy*. In the 1919 report, the event is only *describable* as *indescribable*, as if its very indescribability produces the condition of its describability (the paradox is compounded by how the term *orgy* refers to something that is indescribable, as I am about to show, creating an infinite loop of something that is describable as indescribable and indescribable as indescribable).

Although this paradox acquires a new significance with the modern State and its ability to monitor, survey, and surveil its subjects, the paradox already existed in classical Greek representations of the orgy. The soliloquy of Pentheus quoted in the epigraph of this chapter betrays a similar paradox. Even though Pentheus, until his death at the hands of the maenads, is ignorant of what the orgy is or what kind of rituals it comprises, he insists throughout the play (and especially in the quoted monologue) that the orgy is subversive, licentious, and sexual. In fact, Zakariyya’s

³²² “Tal’at Zakariyya: fi Maydan al-Tahrir Yujad ‘Ilaqat Jinsiyyah,” YouTube Video, 5:23, posted by “sambo ali,” February 10, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZVnHsUlqW8>

remarks seem as if they were an echo of Pentheus' words: in both cases, the ritual that takes place away from the gaze of the State must be of a licentious and sexual nature, and the participants in this ritual (especially the women, who are the exclusive participants in Pentheus' case, but who need to be highlighted and mentioned before the men in Zakariyya's case) are undoubtedly using this ritual as a cover-up for licentious and sexual behavior. This paradox characterized the ancient Greek understanding of the orgy, governed the transformation of the term from a signifier of a religious rite to a signifier of licentious and sexual behavior, and is therefore generative of the polysemy that characterizes the term.

The first definition of the term orgy in *The Oxford English Dictionary* is:

Secret rites or ceremonies practised in the worship of various gods of Greek and Roman mythology; *esp.* those practices connected with the festivals in honour of Dionysus or Bacchus, or the festival itself, which was celebrated with extravagant dancing, singing, drinking, etc.³²³

It is important, therefore, for the definition of the orgies that they were *secret*, hidden from the gaze of the public, of the men, and of the State; hence literature on the ancient Greek orgies has often referred to them as *mysteries*.³²⁴ Yet it is

³²³ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Orgy."

³²⁴ On the mysterious nature of the orgies, and how they defied societal (male) gaze and thus posed a challenge to observers and commentators, see Ross Kraemer, *Maenads, Martyrs, Matrons, Monastics*, 7. For a historical account of the various forms the Dionysian ritual took, which consistently refers to the rituals as *the mysteries*, see Rosemarie Taylor-Perry, *The God who Comes: Dionysian Mysteries Revisited*, (New York: Algora Publishing, 2003). In addition, an ancient villa near Pompeii, with frescos depicting what is commonly believed to be an initiation into a Dionysian cult, is commonly referred to as *The Villa of Mysteries*. For an attempt to discern the initiation process and the nature of the Dionysian *mystery* through reading the fresco, see Linda Fierz-David, *Women's Dionysian Initiation: the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii*—see especially page 33 on the "ineffable" nature of the *mystery*. Hegel in turn referred to the Dionysian orgies as "the mystery of bread and wine" and connects it to the Christian communion; Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 438. See also how Edward Said refers to the Dionysian orgies as mysteries in a manner that connects them to the *Asiatic mysteries* and *mysteries of the Orient* in Orientalist thought, a point which I will take up later in my analysis; Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 56- 57.

because/despite of this mysterious nature of the ritual that it was suspected of being revelry (of animal and/or human sacrifice, of feasting/cannibalism, of intoxication, and, most importantly, of illicit sex). It is from this suspicion that the term *orgy* came to signify not only secret religious practices but also revelries and licentiousness³²⁵ (something we have already seen in the logic of Pentheus). This has led to the second dictionary definition of the orgy as “An occasion of feasting or revelry, esp. one characterized by excessive drinking and indiscriminate sexual activity. Now freq.: spec. an occasion of group sexual activity”³²⁶(a meaning invoked in Zakariyya’s speech), and to the third definition as “In extended use: an occasion of excessive indulgence in any activity, attitude, condition, etc.; an excessive or extravagant display of something”³²⁷ (a meaning invoked in the 1919 report). Indeed the classical Greek fear of the orgy did not only manifest itself through sexual suspicions. Representations of the orgy included allegations of animal and human sacrifice (sometimes the sacrifice of infants, signifying a fear of a femininity that could become infanticidal if not properly contained/regimented in the domestic. We see an element of this theme in the *Bacchae*. Pentheus, though not an infant, is ultimately torn to pieces by his own mother who, struck by Dionysian madness, mistook him for a wild animal). The brutality of the maenads was often emphasized through tearing up their sacrifice with their bare hands, which is something the 1919 report faithfully re-enacted, depicting how “brutes” who included “*minacle* women” tore down the limbs of one of their British victims. The Dionysian orgies were also understood to have

³²⁵ See William Arrowsmith’s preface to his translation of the *Bacchae*; William Arrowsmith, “Introduction to the *Bacchae*,” in *Euripides V: Electra, The Phoenician Women, The Bacchae*, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959), 144.

³²⁶ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “Orgy.”

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

included the consumption of the flesh and blood of their sacrificial animal or human—again something that was faithfully re-enacted in the 1919 report that claimed that the “brutes” drank the blood gushing from the torn limbs of the British officer. The orgiastic paradox therefore produced the orgies not only as sexual revelries but also as violent revelries, revelries of blood and cannibalism, something that persisted in modern appropriations of the orgy.

In the rest of this chapter I will proceed to show how this orgiastic paradox operated in Egyptian pro-State representations of spaces which eluded the State gaze (be they spaces of protest, Heavy Metal parties and alleged cults of Satanism, or crowds and secret organizations), and how narratives of sexual chaos and ultimately of licentious spaces of a sexual nature are produced under the context of this paradox. Although I have already introduced the orgy as a counterrevolutionary trope in the previous Chapter, I am yet to dissect the logic of its operation (i.e. what I have so far termed *the orgiastic paradox*) beyond a mere sensationalist tool to discredit the enemies of the regime. It also bears noting that not all the examples of orgiastic representations provided in the previous chapter faithfully re-enacted the topos of the orgy or exhibited the orgiastic paradox. The socialist-Bolshevik orgy was not an affair hidden from the gaze of the State and the public. On the contrary, it was sponsored by the Soviet State and made public (through public state-run whore houses according to *Misr* newspaper or through Marxist-Leninist-Bakuninist satellite channels according to Mustafa Mahmud). Yet the orgy of socialism is an orgy of a collapse of distinction (let us not forget that the real menace in Mahmud’s play was anarchism and the collapse of Order, and the real villain Bakunin, and that *Misr*’s fear of the Socialist orgy was not only moral, it was also a fear of the collapse of social distinction to the effect that highborn women would be equal to lowborn prostitutes, which would lead

to the total collapse of the social order or *al-hay'ah al-ijtima'iyah*). This collapse of distinction was already part of what constituted the fear of the orgy for ancient Greece as well as for 19th century counterrevolutionary observers who appropriated the topos. This collapse of distinction, furthermore, poses a challenge to the gaze of the State, which would no longer be able to distinguish the individual members of this orgy.

My subsequent analysis will thus cover two themes: first I will deal with the orgy as something that evades the gaze of the State, providing examples that followed faithfully the topos of the orgy as set by the Greek tradition, while paying a special attention to the history of appropriations and *cultural impositions* that made this topos available to the Egyptian State. I will end my discussion of this theme by exploring the Western specificity and the Orientalist nature of this topos and of the state-gaze on which it is predicated. I will then move to discussing the orgy as a collapse of distinction, showing how the crowd as such, even if not insurrectionary or rioting, and even when convening in public and under the gaze of the State, is constituted along certain appropriations of the topos of the orgy. I will conclude the discussion of this theme by discussing the Orient as that which escapes signification, and thus as the discursive equivalent to the orgy and the crowd.

The Satanist Orgy

It should not come as a surprise that the accounts of the Egyptian Satanists which we are about to explore would re-enact faithfully many of the Dionysian motifs. The modern conception of Satanic rituals³²⁸ re-enacted the Dionysian orgy in many ways.

³²⁸ Here I deliberately use the term *Satanic* because the rituals were understood to involve Satan himself, (in medieval lore as well as in many representations of the *Satanic* ritual, a *communion* with

Indeed, scholars of mythology, of medieval lore, and of Gender Studies have commonly perceived the medieval European cults of witchcraft and the Satanic rituals they were accused of observing to be the direct heir of the Dionysian ritual, substituting the hysterical witches for the frenzied maenads.³²⁹ Just like the women of the orgy, the witches were thought of as holding frenzied, irrational, and suspiciously sexual rituals, out in nature, away from the public, social, and masculine gaze. The Devil, whom the witches worshipped, and with whom they formed bonds and had sexual intercourse, also inherited the figure of Dionysus³³⁰ in many ways, most

Satan is imagined, reminiscent of the communion of the maenads with Dionysus). It is also worth noting that the alleged Satanists were commonly referred to in *Ruz al-Yusuf* and other Egyptian media outlets as “the *Satanics*” (transliterated in Arabic). In some reports the words was mistransliterated as *soutienics* (a revealing Freudian slip that was widely ridiculed by many of its readers).

³²⁹ On how the cults of witchcraft inherited the Dionysian cult, see I.M Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession*, (London: Routledge, 2003). See also Janet Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 5. It is also worth noting that one of the latest mentions of the orgy in film (outside the genre of porn, that is) comes in *The Blood Orgy of the She Devils* (1973). In the film the orgy is a satanic ritual performed by witches (identified as she-devils), and to which the devil himself is summoned (though in Dionysian drag). The purpose of the summoning was to assassinate the ambassador of Rhodesia, at the behest of an ambiguously Eastern European/Russian agency. The orgy in the film therefore derives from the socialist orgy and anticipates terrorism as an orgiastic sphere. It furthermore opposes the orgiastic to the white normative subject. The ambassador of a White supremacist settler colonial state, the representative of whiteness in Africa, becomes the target for orgiastic terror. On the side of the orgy all the enemies of the proper white subject are stacked: communism, the feminine, voodoo magic, an ambiguously Arab aide serving the she-devils, etc.

³³⁰ For how Dionysus became the god of the witches and ultimately associated with or sublated into the devil, see Linda Fierz-David, *Women’s Dionysian Initiation*, 19. See also Margaret Murray, *The God of the Witches* and Rosemarie Taylor-Perry, *The God who Comes*, 14. It was not only Satan, however, who inherited Dionysus. In fact, Jesus Christ also inherited some Dionysian aspects; see Fierz David, *Women’s Dionysian initiation*, 20. Christian communion is a direct descendent of the Dionysian orgy: in the orgies the maenads were believed to eat their god, either directly or indirectly through the descent of the god into the wine, fruits, meat of animals, and sometimes flesh of humans, that were sacrificed and consumed during the orgy. Hegel has famously used this similarity to argue for the sublation of the *Bacchic Frenzy* into the Christian communion; *Phenomenology*, 438. One way to read this paradoxical association of Dionysus with both Jesus and Satan is to argue that in Greek mythology Dionysus was a god capable of both good and evil; in the *Bacchae* we see his wrathful (albeit just) side; see Arrowsmith, “Introduction to the *Bacchae*” for more details. Christianity, which inherited the Platonic notion of a god that is pure good, needed therefore to distill Dionysus into two different figures, a good god (or his son) and a supreme evil being. Christian anti-Semitic and Islamophobic conceptions that the god of Judaism and Islam is wrathful, unlike the loving Christian god, can be traced back to the failure of Christianity to inherit Dionysus without splitting him into a God and a Beast. See Taylor Perry, *The God who Comes*, 14, for how the Dionysian elements that were not successfully assimilated into Christianity were thus produced as *adversarial* or *Satanic* (playing on the Hebrew etymology of the term *Satan*).

specifically by inheriting his goat-like figure.³³¹ The same way the maenads sacrificed animals, and sometimes humans (babies according to some accounts)³³² to Dionysus, the witches sacrificed unbaptized babies to the Devil.³³³ Similarly, other blood rituals associated with medieval witchcraft and Satan worship (spilling, smearing, and drinking) can be seen as replicating the consumption of blood in the orgies. It matters little, as far as this study is concerned, whether the enemies of the Church had excavated a pagan ritual and used it to escape and challenge church authority, or if the Church on the other hand excavated the ritual to discredit its own enemies and paganism simultaneously (or if the recurrence pertains to a deeper buried connection between ideology and the unconscious, which neither Althusser nor I could venture to explain, as pointed out in the Introduction).

In a similar fashion, modern representations of Satanism have thus resuscitated the Dionysian motif(s) (by way of witchcraft). In the 1980s conservative media in Europe and North America (both in the US and Canada) excavated the Satanic rituals of witchcraft and used them to induce a *Satanic scare* (also commonly

³³¹ In European medieval lore, as well as in American puritan beliefs, the devil looked like/was associated with/had the ability to possess goats and black goats more specifically. Dionysus was also associated with goats and sometimes revealed himself in the shape of/through possessing a goat. This is where the term *tragedy*, originally a Dionysian ritual, came from, literally meaning *a goat song*. The image of the goat-like black Satan in communion with the witches was immortalized by two haunting paintings by Francisco Goya: *The Witches' Sabbath* (1798) and *The Witches' Sabbath or the Great He-Goat* (circa 1823). The "Baphomet," which the church accused the Knights Templar and later the witches of worshipping, inherited the shape of Dionysus, though the term itself may have been an etymological corruption of Mahomet (Muhammad).

³³² According to Felix Guirand this was one of the earliest forms the Dionysian festivals took; Felix Guirand, *Greek Mythology*, 109. For more on the consumption of flesh and blood in the orgy see Michael Grant, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, 262.

³³³ For an interesting visual survey of all the elements of witchcraft/Satan worship in the American puritan imagination, which largely replicated the medieval European, see *The Witches' Sabbath [Witch]: A New England Folktale*, Directed by Robert Eggers, A24 Studio, 2016. The film, focused on a girl accused of sacrificing her unbaptized brother to the devil, ends in a scene of a hysterical dance of naked women in the woods, as if replicating the Dionysian orgy. Black goats also turn out to be a good medium for satanic possession in the film.

referred to as the *Satanic panic*).³³⁴ This was contaminant with the rise of Reaganism and Thatcherism and the intensification of the use of conservative and Christian rhetoric at the height of the Cold War and in *reaction* to the sexual revolution and the AIDS pandemic (among other things). This could be either read as the right-wing conservative ideology creating its own foil, or *adversary*, as targets and fulcra for its discourse and finding in its Christian archive a useful discursive tool. It could be also read as youth rebelling against the hold of conservative power and thus having a recourse in the Satanic ritual. Either way, Egypt and Lebanon (both particularly open to the effect of global media and its *cultural imposition*) had their own versions of the Satanic scare, as an aftershock to the 1980s Western Satanic scare, in the 1990s.

In the Fall of 1996 and through 1997 *Ruz al-Yusuf*, a popular Egyptian magazine that has long acted as the sensationalist mouthpiece of the State and the regime, and which was at the same time spearheading a number of regime-sponsored campaigns including the one against Islamists³³⁵ and the one against non-conventional matrimonies,³³⁶ fabricated/uncovered a Satanist scandal that would dominate Egyptian public discourse for most of 1997.

³³⁴ For an account (that is not intended to be academic) of the *Satanic panic* which traces the phenomenon beyond allegations of devil worship and into various outlets of popular culture (including film and novels), and which at times ridicules the phenomenon and pokes fun at the conservative discourse that produced it, see Kier-La Janisse and Paul Corupe eds., *Satanic Panic: Pop-Cultural Paranoia in the 1980s*, ed. Kier-La Janisse and Paul Corupe, ([London?]: FAB Press, 2016).

³³⁵ Examples from *Ruz al-Yusuf's* characterizations of Islamists, which were part of the Mubarak regime's campaign against Islamist organizations and the State's effort to produce its opponents as licentious subjects, were already given in chapter 1. A later section in this chapter will be dedicated to the orgiastic representations of Islamist organizations, focusing on *Ruz al-Yusuf* along with few other mouthpieces of the regime.

³³⁶ I will discuss this point in Chapter 5.

In 1996, *Ruz al-Yusuf* claimed that there were clubs for devil worship³³⁷ throughout Egypt and that Heavy Metal concerts were nothing but a cover-up for satanic rituals (a claim that would be picked up by other media, and eventually by the police, which by early 1997 began to arrest alleged Satanists).³³⁸ This came about a year after *Ruz al-Yusuf* rehearsed the orgy through heavily reporting on a scandal in which a married couple filmed group sex parties in their home, and in which the orgy qua group sex figured strongly as the other of monogamy and the wrecker of the monogamous family.³³⁹ While these earlier rehearsals of the orgy were merely sensationalist depictions of group sex (and conservative appeals to strengthen the family, weakened as it is by the orgy), the Satanist orgy in *Ruz al-Yusuf* revisited all the incarnations of the orgy, from the Dionysian ritual to sex parties. It also exhibited the same anxiety concerning spaces that evade the public gaze of the State and society, though this time these spaces were not socialist or politically active, but rather the carouse spaces populated by upper class youth closed off, through class privilege, to State and public access.³⁴⁰

³³⁷ While the magazine used the term *'ibadat al-shaytan* (devil worship), it insisted that the members did not really worship the devil and that the satanic music and rituals were merely a game.

³³⁸ 'Abd Allah Kamal, "nadi 'ibadat al-shaytan fi Misr," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 11/11/1996, 77-79.

³³⁹ See "hafli jins jama'i fi misr al-jadidah," 18/12/1995, 70- 71, Wa'il al-Ibrahisi, "batalat hafalat al-jins al-jama'i tatahadath li awal marrah," 25/12/1995, 69- 73, and "mahkamat misr al-jadidah anhat qadiyat shara'it al-jins al-jama'i," 5/2/1996, 78- 79.

³⁴⁰ 'Abd Allah Kamal, the journalist who started the scandal, prefaced his first report on what he called "the devil worship club" by highlighting its mysterious nature; at one point it was even a mystery for the initiates themselves, according to Kamal. Eventually the initiates realized they were *soutienics* [sic.] but they remained a mystery for "us." The *us* here may refer to the magazine staff, the readers of this article, the grown-ups, or the society at large; but most probably the latter – at all rates it functions like Zakariyya's interpellating *we* which produces a public gaze alongside the state's and others what lies beyond this gaze as orgiastic. Explaining why they remained a mystery, Kamal stated that the satanic rituals "took place in a very private society, among the children of the rich, in places many [of us] cannot [even] come close to." 'Abd Allah Kamal, "Nadi 'Ibadat al-Shaytan fi Misr," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 11/11/1996, 77. Also the nature of the satanic rituals as a mystery to the parents and the grow-

In its coverage of the scandal, *Ruz al-Yusuf* replicated the Dionysian themes that characterized the orgy and the cults and rituals of witchcraft, sometimes directly quoting Western media or “the internet.” That the Dionysian motifs came to Egypt by way of Western media and more importantly by way of the conservative discourse that characterized the capitalist/Western bloc in the 1980s speaks to the *cultural imposition*, adoption, and adaptation inherent in the application of the topos of the orgy. In the subsequent subsections I identify three Dionysian motifs and trace their recurrence in *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s coverage of the Satanists' scandal. These motifs are the blood ritual (including animal sacrifice and the consumption of blood), the frenzied dance (or dance and frenzy, which also include depictions of ecstasy and intoxication), and licentious sexual behavior (including real or simulated group-sex).

1- An Orgy of Blood

Like the ancient Greek representations of the orgy and its medieval and 1980s Western appropriations, blood-rituals comprised an integral and recurrent feature of the larger Satanic/orgiastic ritual. This was evident starting from the first report on Egyptian Satanists. In his ‘report’ which set off the scandal, ‘Abd Allah Kamal (a *Ruz al-Yusuf* reporter who in 2005 became its editor in chief, soon after he joined the *political committee* of the ruling party in 2003, and who doubled as a staunch Mubarak propagandist and later as a Sisi apologist) identified the slaughter of cats and mice “to the beats of black music” as among the most prominent Satanic rites; this was highlighted in the flash points constituting a sub-heading in his report,³⁴¹ and then

up public, hinted at in the previous reference, was explicitly laid out by Kamal in “al-Muharridun fi firashihim, wa al-dahaya fi al-niyabah,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 27/1/1997, 83.

³⁴¹ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Nadi ‘Ibadat al-Shaytan fi Misr,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 11/11/1996, 77.

re-stressed in the main text.³⁴² At first, the blood ritual on the pages of *Ruz al-Yusuf* only involved mutilating the bodies of animals and using the blood to write “bizarre statements” on walls.³⁴³ Soon, however, *Ruz al-Yusuf* would move to describing more intense blood rituals. An alleged letter from a mother of a Satanist claimed that her son and his friends sat in a circle, and while chanting “bizarre songs” they would slaughter a dog or a cat and then drink its blood, and that, at one point, the mother walked in on them and saw their bodies smeared with animal blood.³⁴⁴ Another report alleged that, amidst the frenzied dance, the participants would pass around a glass full of blood and would drink from it and smear their bodies with it. Another account (coming in the form of a confession-letter-to-the-editor from a former member of a satanic cult) suggested that to be initiated into the cult, a member was presented with *a full glass of blood* to drink.³⁴⁵ This report is significantly titled “shurb al-damm wa hurriyyat al-ra’i” (Drinking blood and the freedom of opinion). In addition to presenting a ritual that is outlandish and shocking to the sensibilities of the larger audience, the spilling and consumption of blood (both in the Dionysian orgy and the Satanic ritual, and most clearly in the 1919 *indescribable orgy*) can be seen as a sign of a certain kind of excess achieved when the participants reach a certain frenzy. Depictions of ecstasy and frenzy are therefore not unrelated to depictions of blood rituals.

2- Dance and Frenzy

³⁴² Ibid, 79. The text here adds birds to the cats and mice mentioned in the subheading.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Ma’sat Umm wa ‘Ibdat al-Shaytan,” *Ruz al-Yusuf* 30/12/1996, 50,

³⁴⁵ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “I’tirafat bil fax li atba’ ‘ibadat al shaytan: shurb al-damm wa hurriyyat al ra’i,” *Ruz al Yusuf*, 9/12/1996, 72- 75.

Much like the blood ritual, various depictions of dance, frenzy, and ecstasy recurred as a Satanic and orgiastic ritual (from the raving maenads, to the hysterical witches' dances in the wilderness as Satan possesses them, to modern Satanists who danced in Heavy Metal parties). In *Ruz al-Yusuf's* reports on the Satanists, dance recurrently appeared as a frenzied, intoxicated, hysterical, and sexual phenomenon.

Reporting on a video of one of the parties (most probably procured through the police, which was by then investigating the case and pressing charges), *Ruz al-Yusuf's* Maysa' Nuh presents an image of utter frenzy: the dancers "were dancing to Black Metal music, and shaking their heads, frantically/violently from back to front and from front to back, jumping, dancing in circles, hands on shoulders." Then Nuh moves from frenzy to intoxication: "While dancing, they were taking drugs, including marijuana and hashish, the level of excitement/frenzy (*darajat al infi'al*) rising with the loud/rowdy music until some of them fell unconscious." Other dancers, according to the report, "took off their tops and started dancing in a *hysterical*³⁴⁶ manner."³⁴⁷ Many other reports equally highlighted intoxication (through both alcohol and drugs) whether as a prelude to frenzied dance or as part of the Satanic ritual.³⁴⁸ In addition to

³⁴⁶ Transliterated in original.

³⁴⁷ Many other reports highlighted intoxication (through both alcohol and drugs) whether as a prelude to frenzied dance or as part of the satanic ritual.; see Maysa Nuh, "Nusus al-Aghani al-Sawda' wa Waqa'i' al-Hafalat al-Sirriyyah," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 27/1/1997, 79.

³⁴⁸ For an elaborate description of intoxication in the context of Satanic parties, see 'Abd Allah Kamal, "I'tirafat bil fax li atba' 'ibadat al shaytan: shurb al-damm wa hurriyyat al ra'l," *Ruz al Yusuf*, 9/12/1996, 73. 'Abd Allah Kamal also presents a description of drug-induced ecstasy (to the effect of speaking in tongues) in "Nadi 'ibadat al-Shaytan fi Misr," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 11/11/1996, 79. In "wa abna' al-mashahir saqatu Aydan" Wa'il al-Ibrashi quotes a Satanist "organizer" confessing to the police that in Satanic parties "everything was permitted: alcohol, sex, or drugs," 27/1/1997, 81. The organizer, or the police officer fabricating the confessions, was closely observing the topos of the orgy, and anticipating the words of Tal'at Zakariyya. For allegations that Satanism is associated with substance abuse see 'Abd Allah Kamal, Dusuqi Sa'id, and Jihan 'Askar, "Tahqiq fi thalathat 'awasim: shi'arat 'ibadat al shaytan 'ala judran manshiyyat al bakri," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 18/11/1996, 83 (which ascribes the

frenzy and ecstasy, the description here brings forth two phenomena that inherited the Dionysian orgy, namely hysteria³⁴⁹ and convulsion.³⁵⁰ Hysteria (using the Arabic transliteration of the Greek term) also appeared many times in the coverage.³⁵¹ The convulsing Satanist, falling unconscious after a fit of hysterical/epileptic dance also recurs through the coverage.³⁵²

The dance is also described in sexual terms, or as leading to sexual relations.

In one of its earliest reports on the Satanists, *Ruz al-Yusuf* mentioned (with no

intake of hallucinogens to “some of” the Satanists), and ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Hafalat ‘ibadat al-shaytan fi al-Zamalik!” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 25/11/1996, 96, 97, 99

³⁴⁹ Although in ancient Greece hysteria on the one side, and convulsion, ecstasy, and the orgy on the other side belonged to two different spheres of knowledge (the former belonging to Hippocratic medicine, the latter to mythology) and two different etiologies (the former related to the uterus, the latter to the soul leaving the body to unite with the divine and the divine possessing the body, sometimes through maenads), in medieval times both were assimilated into one another. The cults of witchcraft would simultaneously inherit the rituals and symbols of Dionysian rituals and be described as fits of hysteria. See I. M Lewis, *Ecstatic Religions*, especially pp 81-91. For how this association lead to the modern concept of hysteria, less anchored in the uterus and contaminated with leftovers from the convulsion, see Foucault *Psychiatric Power*, trans. Graham Burchell, (New York: Picador, 2008), 123, 136- 139, 310 and *Abnormal*, trans. Graham Burchell, (New York: Picador, 2003), 223.

³⁵⁰ Before Jansenist fanatics convulsed at St Médard, cults of witchcraft and devil worship, as well as demonic possessions, were considered the sites of convulsions (one may add revolutionary circles if we consider Maxime Du Camp’s *Les Convulsions de Paris*, though this was definitely after the *convulsionnaires de st médard*). This possession/convulsion inherits the Dionysian ecstasy/possession (which is described in the previous footnote). For a brief history of post-enlightenment possession and convulsion see Foucault, *Abnormal*, 201- 227.

³⁵¹ In addition to the previous example, see Kamal, “Haflat ‘ibadat al-shaytan fi al-Zamalik!” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 25/11/1996, 98- 99. In this article, concerts themselves seem to be a life-threatening licentious space. According to the article, music, dance, and lights can affect the pulse, the breath, and, more dangerously, the sex hormones. This imbalance, according to the article, can cause mass hysteria and death. In the same article, it is alleged that during a concert in Beirut (it does not reveal what kind of concert or when it took place) the audience entered a state of mass hysteria, which necessitated the use of hoses (by the police?) to disperse them. It is also noticeable here how hysteria belongs to the same category as crowd riots; the hysterical concert audience requires riot control in the form of water-hoses. There is also the association between hysteria, crowd control, and fire, fundamental to crowd control technologies that use pressurized water to quell the three. This of course assuming that the hoses described in *Ruz al-Yusuf*’s article were brought in to spray the hysterical audience with water, not to beat them up, the article does not tell us which (either way, both lashing and water-spraying were 19th century methods of treating hysteria whereas pressurized water, as shown earlier, is the weapon used against the discursively coterminous threats of fire and crowds).

³⁵² Kamal, “Haflat ‘ibadat al-shaytan fi al-Zamalik!” Later when the magazine shifted from instigating the police against the Satanists to criticizing the police for arresting them, it criticize the police for confusing a fit of epilepsy, which one of the defendants suffered from, with Satanic rituals; Wa’il al-Ibrahisi, “limadha lam tattahimuhum al-Niyabah bil qatl al-‘amd,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, , 3/2/1997, 85.

context) something it terms “hot/het bangs” (from the description, they clearly mean head banging) as a form of frenzied dance. Then, again without providing any context, the article moves to describing what it terms “slam dance” (which allegedly the “aficionados of this music game engage in.” It is not clear if by “this music game” they mean heavy metal, head banging, or Satanism). According to the article, slam dance is: “a dance in which bodies bump into one another, and is engaged in when these people reach a state of ecstasy under the effect of music, and when things get messy.”³⁵³ Another article described the “obscene positions” of some of the intoxicated girls on the dance floor in another Satanist party³⁵⁴ (which brings forth the image of the maenads – the mania of the maenads here is only understood as sexual, which is not different from Pentheus’ interpretation of the orgy). The nexus of ecstasy and sex within which the frenzied dance of the Satanists exists is clear in the choice of the word *nashwah* (ecstasy) to describe the state under which “slam dance” takes place.³⁵⁵ The same article provided clearer sexual suggestions when it described the merging of the bodies of the dancers when they “slam danced”; and left no room for speculation by explicitly referring to the dance of the Satanists as a “sexual dance.”³⁵⁶

³⁵³ Abd Allah Kamal, Dessuqi Sa’id, and Jihan ‘Askar, “Tahqiq fi thalathat ‘awasim: shi’arat ‘ibadat al shaytan ‘ala judran manshiyat al bakri,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 18/11/1996, 80. The term used for messiness in the article is “yakhtalit al habil bil nabil” a term that usually signifies wartime chaos (comparable to the English term hurly-burly) but can also signify the merging of things that otherwise do not mix, and the resulting state of mayhem in which one party cannot be distinguished from the other. The description here suggests either a battlefield or an orgy.

³⁵⁴ Kamal, “I’tirafat bil fax li atba’ ‘ibadat al shaytan,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 9/12/1996, 73.

³⁵⁵ *Nashwah* means a state of happiness or ecstasy, and which could, in certain contexts, also mean orgasm. In that sense it is similar to the French word *jouissance*, which means to play, to enjoy, or to orgasm, and which in Lacanian psychoanalysis means to experience a state of ecstasy comparable, according to Lacan, simultaneously to experiencing divinity and to the female orgasm. I refrained from using *jouissance* as a translation to avoid heavy handed usage of Lacanian diction. I chose the word *ecstasy*, on the other hand, because it fits with the Dionysian context. I hope I have provided enough evidence in the text to warrant the Dionysian reading.

³⁵⁶ For Kamal, “I’tirafat bil fax li atba’ ‘ibadat al shaytan,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 9/12/1996, 74.

Satanic sexual dances, however, can sometimes go further and simulate group sex. In one of her “investigative reports,” Maysa’ Nuh described a woman “standing between two men, [one] from the front and [one] from the back, like a sandwich, [bodies] embracing and hands intertwining.”³⁵⁷

3- *Weird Sex and Sexual Chaos*

In addition to frenzied and sexual dance (which sometimes simulates group sex), the charge of illicit sexual intercourse³⁵⁸ and group sex during the Satanic parties/rituals was also ever-present. In fact it was one of the official charges on which the alleged Satanists faced arrest and interrogation.³⁵⁹ In addition, non-normative sexual practices were always at the root of *Ruz al-Yusuf’s* representations of Satanic cults and creeds, whether in Egypt or elsewhere. Egyptian Satanists were accused of engaging in “weird sex” (*al-jins al-gharib*)³⁶⁰ and in the rape of the living³⁶¹ and the dead.³⁶² The report also investigated/invented foreign origins of Satanism and imbued them with

³⁵⁷ For example in Maysa Nuh, “Nusus al-Aghani al-Sawda’ wa Waqa’i’ al-Hafalat al-Sirriyyah,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 27/1/1997, 79.

³⁵⁸ Charge of sexual license started from the very beginning of the scandal. In the report that started the whole thing, ‘Abd Allah Kamal, amidst describing the roots of Satanism in Heavy Metal and of Heavy Metal in Rock, pointed out that the first party was a “hotbed (*marta’an*) for sex and drugs.” ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Nadi ‘Ibadat al-Shaytan fi Misr,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 11/11/1996, 78. We are not told, however, what kind of first this party was: was it the first satanic party? The first party of Heavy Metal in Egypt? The first rock concert?

³⁵⁹ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Ma’sat Umm wa ‘Ibdat al-Shaytan,” *Ruz al-Yusuf* 30/12/1996, 51.

³⁶⁰ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Ma’sat Umm wa ‘Ibdat al-Shaytan,” *Ruz al-Yusuf* 30/12/1996, 49.

³⁶¹ The members of a bourgeois satanic cult will try to rape the wife of the porter who guards the house of one of the cult members (despite her ugliness, the report tells us). The porter does not retaliate but waits until the owner of the house returns from her travel (a one month conference, the article tells us) to complain to her against the rowdy behavior of her son and the other cult members.

³⁶² Commiserate with the later characterization of the Salafis as necrophiliacs through the rumor of mudaja’at al wada’.

non-normative sexual chaos. Among these apocryphal origins is the Yazidi religion—which is largely conceived to comprise devil worship. In *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s reports, the Yazidis in line with *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s editorial policy, are charged with various forms of sexual license. According to the article, a Yazidi adulteress is forgiven if her partner in adultery is Yazidi. Furthermore, when a Yazidi couple are faced with parental resistance, the man could allegedly kidnap the woman to “one of the villages” where they could get married “with no mahr or sadaq [the alimony paid by the husband to the wife in order to officiate the marriage]” (which is significant given how *Ruz al-Yusuf* at the time was obsessed with the threat of non-normative marriages).³⁶³

Another important source for Satanism, according to the same article, is “an American man named Anton Szandor [LaVey]” who founded “a ‘church’ for Satan,” in which animals are sacrificed “and the basest forms of sex [*ahatt anwa’ al-jins*] are performed”³⁶⁴ (one is left to wonder what these most lowly and base forms of sex are and whether they are among the ten positions of the sexual act which constituted Mustafa Mahmud’s Satanist-Marxist orgy).

Representations of sexual chaos in the context of the Satanic orgy were not limited to allegations of sexual intercourse. Sexual chaos was also narrated in terms of sexual indistinction (much like the ancient Greek representations of the orgies of Dionysus and Cybele and the 19th century counterrevolutionary representations of revolutions as orgies in which the distinction between the sexes is blurred, and in anticipation of the orgy in Tahrir Square in 2011 in which men would become

³⁶³ See Chapter 5 of this study.

³⁶⁴ Ibid, 82. The examples of satanic sexual license presented by the article do not end there. They also include a Satanist French woman named Amelie who believed she should “do what she wants and engage in unrestrained sex” (and who would later commit suicide) and a German man who ended up in prison after a series of sexual assaults “in the name of his religious [satanic?] beliefs;” *ibid*, 83.

feminized). In the Satanic orgies of 1996, not only were the sexes mingling (and merging) freely, but it was furthermore sometimes difficult to tell the men and the women apart. Men with long hair and wearing makeup served as a target for such representations,³⁶⁵ in the same manner as the orgies of Dionysus featured the effeminate god with long curls, (and also in the same manner the Tahrir orgy a decade and a half later would feature men with effeminate long hair and dubious loyalties).

What we see in *Ruz al-Yusuf's* reports on the Satanists, therefore, is the coming together (or the *cultural imposition* or importation) of the various Dionysian motifs. We are no longer dealing exclusively with the orgiastic paradox of knowing yet/by virtue of not knowing. This paradox is indeed present (and the gap between the known and the unknown is filled and/or elided through the fantasies/investigative reports of *Ruz al-Yusuf's* journalists as well as the police investigations-fabrications they relied on). In addition to this paradox, we also see other motifs that constituted the Dionysian topos – many of them coming via the modern appropriations of the Satanic ritual, which in turn inherited the orgy: ecstatic dance and intoxication, blood rituals, and of course group-sex (or the simulation thereof). While it inherited the motif of sexual chaos as the index and/or telos of escaping the normative gaze of the State, the society, and the parents, the scandal of the Satanists synthesized this motif into a full-fledged Dionysian topos, making it available for propagandists and regime

³⁶⁵ In 'Abd Allah Kamal, "Hafalat 'Ibadat al-Shaytan fi al-Zamalik," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 25/11/1996, 96, Kamal describes how the men had long hair and makeup on "which may not be strange, among those people" (again those people as something different from the rest of the national body, like the microbes/foreign bodies we encountered in the last chapter. Also, by "those people" *Ruz al-Yusuf* may have meant to refer to an effeminate upper class or an effeminate West which the Westernized upper class emulates). The caption underneath a picture (from an alleged satanic party/ritual) on *Ruz al-Yusuf* 3/2/1997, 57 sums up this sexual indistinction; it reads "girl, and boy, long hair, no difference."

apologists (many of whom were the same people who fabricated/uncovered the Satanists' scandal)³⁶⁶ who would use it later against protesters and 'revolutionaries'.

To illustrate how *Ruz al-Yusuf's* coverage/fabrication of the scandal of the Satanists placed at the centre of Egyptian public discourse a topos that was later weaponized against political dissidents, we can compare two scenes, one from *Ruz al-Yusuf's* coverage of the Satanist parties (based on the alleged confessions of a repentant Satanist procured by the police), and one from 2011 Tahrir Square (through the alleged confessions of a repentant 'revolutionary' made on public television). The 2011 scene seems as if it were a faithful reenactment (*mutatis mutandis*) of its 1997 Satanist forerunner. In both versions, the scenes are supposed to be narrated by a repentant eyewitness; a disillusioned Satanist in the first and a disillusioned activist in the second (the confessional of the repentant as witness can be seen here as revealing an anxiety concerning what averts the gaze of the voyeuristic State, an attempt to penetrate the orgy-qua-mystery). In the first, however, the confessions of the disillusioned activist are relayed by *Ruz al-Yusuf's* journalist Wa'il al-Ibrashi, while in the second the disillusioned activist is given air-time on state-run television to speak directly to the public.³⁶⁷ In its Satanist take, the scene featured a partygoer (the later

³⁶⁶ The most obvious example is 'Abd Allah Kamal himself, who started the scandal. In the 2000s Kamal re-emerged as a staunch regime supporter and a harsh critic of the opposition against Mubarak. He became the editor in chief of *Ruz al-Yusuf* in 2005, only two years after joining the political committee of the National Democratic Party (2003)- the same committee presided-over by Mubarak's son, Jamal. In 2007 he Kamal was appointed by Mubarak as a member of the Consultation Council (the non-legislative branch of the parliament, incidentally the same body which appoints editors in chief of *national* newspapers, and which had appointed Kamal two years earlier). After the downfall of Mubarak Kamal remained a supporter of the military regime and an apologist for al-Sisi until his timely death in 2014.

³⁶⁷ "Muhammad 'Adil Ahmad Ahmad [sic.] al-Mutazahirin, Akhbar Misr." YouTube Video, 20:54, posted by "mrmichaeltawfeak," February 6, 2011. The video is no longer available on YouTube but can be accessed through Webarchive, https://web.archive.org/web/20110329011045/http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqEfeYQ_FIM

disillusioned Satanist), entering the licentious space of the Satanist party, and greeted by an organizer. The organizer then asked the later-disillusioned Satanist if he had had any drugs. When the disillusioned Satanist declared he did not have any, the organizer responded by reassuring him that he could procure drugs for him.³⁶⁸ The absurdity of the organizer asking for drugs while he himself is the source (or connected to the source) is left unresolved; the purpose is not to provide a coherent story but to offer a caricature of licentiousness. It is the repeated and exaggerated mention of narcotics that is at stake, not the plot. In the Tahrir Square version, the disillusioned activist, named Muhammad ‘Adil, relates that upon entering Tahrir Square he was greeted by an Islamist organizer, who was identified as a representative of “The Commander of the Islamist group” (*Amir al-Jama‘ah*). The Islamist then asked ‘Adil whether he had had hashish on him. As ‘Adil declared that he had had no hashish on him, the Islamist assured him that he could obtain some from the *Amir*. Once again the absurdity/caricature/farce of the person asking for drugs being the procurer is left unresolved. It may be that Muhammad ‘Adil used to read *Ruz al-Yusuf* in the 1990s and was repeating, consciously or unconsciously, what he had read there. It may furthermore be, if we adopt a more cynical attitude, that the same person or apparatus that fabricated the Satanist confessions in 1996-97 were also responsible for fabricating testimonies like ‘Adil’s in 2011. It is more (or equally) likely, however, that there was a(n ideological) topos that weighed heavily on the discourse; one that produced/es any space that tried to evade societal/state/parental gaze as an orgy and

³⁶⁸ For the story of the Satanist organizer asking the witness for drugs and then offering him some, see Abd Allah Kamal, “I’tirafat bil fax li atba’ ‘ibadat al shaytan: shurb al-damm wa hurriyyat al ra’i,” *Ruz al Yusuf*, 9/12/1996, 73.

its inhabitants as orgiastic licentious subjects, and made these subjects speak the same lines, be they Satanists or Islamists.

On the Curious Kinship between Satanists and Islamists

It is curious that the Islamist, in our last example, replaces the Satanist; of course another unresolved absurdity in ‘Adil’s account is that the Islamist is the procurer of drugs, that the supreme source of hashish is indeed the *Amir*, the Commander of the Islamist Group. Perhaps ‘Adil took to heart the alliance between the licentious subject and the Islamist, or perhaps he was also retelling, in addition to the Satanist scene, the scene of the licentious alliance observed in *Rami al-I’tisami*, while blurring the lines between the Islamist camp and the licentious youth’s camp.

But the interchangeability of the Islamist and the Satanist is not restricted to this re-enactment. Throughout its coverage of the Satanic scandal, *Ruz al-Yusuf* presented the Islamists and the Satanists as two faces of the same coin, the two poles of extremism. A recurrent theme in *Ruz al-Yusuf*’s reports was that while Islamist extremism/terrorism represented the extremism of the poor, Satanism represented the extremism of the rich.³⁶⁹ When the police started arresting the Satanists, the magazine provided extensive coverage under the main heading “Satanism, the Other Face of Extremism.”³⁷⁰ Among the articles lined up under this heading is a report by Wa’il al-Ibrashi on the arrests, re-producing the same terms that were used in police reports on

³⁶⁹ See for example see ‘Abd Allah Kamal, Dessuqi Sa’id, and Jihan ‘Askar, “Tahqiq fi thalathat ‘awasim: shi’arat ‘ibadat al shaytan ‘ala judran manshiyat al bakri,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 18/11/1996, 79 and ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Hafalat ‘ibadat al-shaytan fi al-Zamalik!” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 25/11/1996, 97.

³⁷⁰ “‘Ibadat al-Shaytan al-Wajh al-Akhar lil Tatarruf,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 27/1/1997, 78. This was presented as the main heading under which many reports on the Satanists were lined up, pp. 78-85.

the Islamists; the ministry of interior, according to al-Ibrashi “was forced” to arrest “in haste” the members of the “deviant jama‘ah” (clearly the language of police circulars).³⁷¹ The defendants, according to the report (citing, though claiming to paraphrase rather than quote, interrogations held by the Office of State Security Investigations), tried, in the course of the police interrogations, to “justify their joining of the jama‘ah”³⁷² (indimamihim lil-jama‘ah, again a phrase commonly used with Islamist organizations).³⁷³ The kinship between the Islamist and the Satanist was taken further by ‘Abd Allah Kamal; playing off the stereotype of the clueless extremist youth swinging between the two poles of extremism, Kamal presents the story of the same person who once joined an Islamist organization and then a Satanist cult.³⁷⁴ Another story presented by Kamal is of a Satanist who hailed from a Muslim Brothers family.³⁷⁵ The Satanists, therefore, do not only come from dysfunctional families but also from Islamist ones.³⁷⁶

This kinship between the Islamist and the Satanist re-enacts the alliance between the licentious subject and the Islamist. It thus speaks to (or indexes) a larger

³⁷¹ Wa’il al-Ibrashi, “wa abna’ al-mashahir saqatu Aydan,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 27/1/1997, 81.

³⁷² *Ibid*, 82.

³⁷³ One week later, al-Ibrashi criticized the police for using against the Satanists the same language it used against Islamist organizations; Wa’il al-Ibrahsi, “limadha lam tattahimuhum al-Niyabah bil qatl al-‘amd,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 3/2/1997, 59. Either al-Ibrashi was being disingenuous, being oblivious to what he had written, or was blindly copying police reports, presenting them as his own coverage (and then criticizing police reports, but not his own coverage, a week later).

³⁷⁴ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “al-Muharridun fi firashihim, wa al-dahaya fi al-niyabah,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 27/1/1997, 84.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 85.

³⁷⁶ The kinship between the Islamist and the Satanist also owes to the fact that they belonged to the same dysfunctional family. *Ruz al-Yusuf*, *Akhbar al-Yawm*, and the experts they brought to give their expert opinion, would simultaneously cite the dysfunctional family as the root of Satanism and Islamic extremism. This is a point I return to in Chapter 5.

set of ideological representations and/or propaganda (sometimes masquerading as investigative reports) in which the Islamists were produced as licentious subjects and the Islamist organizations (especially if underground) as orgiastic. The usage of the topos of the orgy against the Islamist thus constitutes an important step towards its usage against political dissidents (of the Islamist and secular varieties) in and post-2011. If the coverage of the Satanic scandal placed the topos of the orgy at the centre of Egyptian public discourse, the propaganda against Islamist organizations (peaking around the same time, on the pages and screens of the same media outlets) weaponized the topos against the enemies of the regime.

The Islamist Mystery and the Orgy of Underground Organizations

The representations of the Islamists, especially in 1990s Egypt, were prolific and merit a study on their own. This section, therefore, will not attempt to exhaust all representations of Islamists; it will rather explore (some of) the representations that follow the topos of the orgy. For the purpose of this section, I am basing my analysis mainly on a number of propaganda pieces masquerading as serious journalism. The first of these propaganda pieces—and the most important for the purpose of this section, is the book titled *Irhabi Taht al-Tamrin* (A Terrorist in Training) which I introduced in the previous chapter. The book consists of a collection of articles previously published in the state-run *Akhbar al-Hawadith*. The author is *Akhbar al-Hawadith* journalist Sabir Shawkat, who claims to have infiltrated Islamist organizations (by simply growing a beard and wearing a tunic or a *jilbab*), and had the newspaper's photographer following him, which apparently raised little suspicion. The larger part of the book is a series of interviews with and articles about the *repentant terrorist* 'Adil 'Abd al-Baqi, whom I also introduced in chapter 1.

In addition to this book, I will be using as my second main source the magazine *Ruz al-Yusuf*, which enjoyed wide circulation at the time and which at one point spearheaded the campaign against Islamist organizations, as it was actively reporting on the Satanic scandal simultaneously. It is also important to note here that *Ruz al-Yusuf* often bases its investigative reports on police reports. Sometimes it openly cites police reports, interrogations, and alleged confessions, while at other times it is clear from the language and context that it is either citing police reports or that its journalists are engaged in interrogating prisoners themselves. This blurring of the line between police investigations and journalistic reports makes it difficult to establish whether what we are dealing with is State-sponsored propaganda and fabrication, forced confessions, or mere facts. The same dilemma arises when reading ‘Abd al-Baqi’s confessions: was he a repentant terrorist, a police spy, or someone looking for fame and stardom? And, must we believe Shawkat when he claims that he was able to infiltrate Islamist organizations simply by growing his beard a little? Instead of trying to separate fact from fiction, my purpose here is to trace the logic that produces a story and allows its circulation, regardless of whether the story itself is factual or not.

Though not always a rave (the somber dress code and solemn religiosity of Islamists offered some, though not total, deterrent against such representations), the construction of the Islamist threat followed very closely the topos of the orgy; these groups, by virtue of being underground, of withdrawing from society, of *hiding* behind the beard and the veil, and in underground networks,³⁷⁷ evaded the official

³⁷⁷ That the members of Islamist groups “hide in caves” and “take cover under the beard and the veil” comes too often in these reports. See for example Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 9, 11, 26, 35, 157, and 172. The representations of the Islamist organizations, especially in Shawkat’s account, feature a similar paradox to the one we saw in the logic of Pentheus, the 1919 British report, and Zakariyya:

gaze, and were hence perceived as subversive. This extended even to groups that did not advocate armed struggle against the state. As with other cases of hidden, orgiastic, and licentious spaces, the subversiveness of Islamist organizations readily lent itself to representations of sexual licentiousness.

In various pro-regime accounts, Islamist groups were dangerous (even the ones who did not take up arms) because they operated an autonomous system of economic and social exchange. Before and beyond armed struggle, the threat of these groups is manifest in their opaque social system, including an opaque economy that resists integration within the larger national economy (hence the predominance of the figure of the street vendor as the quintessential Islamist³⁷⁸) and an opaque system of sexual pairing (marriage contracts that are officiated by the group or their leader but not officially registered,³⁷⁹ thus evading the power of the state to regulate and recognize legitimate sexual practice, and without seeking to have birth certificates issued for the offspring, thus evading the power of the state to count its subjects³⁸⁰).

that we do not know what is there yet we have a clear account of it, that we are describing the indescribable. Shawkat resolves this paradox with little modesty: by writing about the Islamists he is decoding a mystery comparable to the mystery of microbes (notice the abjection), or that of the universe and the laws of physics. Shawkat then proclaims himself to be akin to Alexander Fleming, Galileo Galilei, and Isaac Newton, all at once; Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 107. He furthermore proclaims the coming out of 'Adel abd al-Baqi as a repentant terrorist to be akin to the apple that fell on Newton. Perhaps the only similarity between the two is that with both we do not know what part is reality and what part is fiction.

³⁷⁸See Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 9. The understanding was that the Islamists would become street vendors so as not to take part in the interest based state economy. It is also important to note the class aspect: that the Islamist belongs to a lower or a lower middle class, and to a non-productive strata of that class. This will be important in understanding how state propagandists would conceive of the Islamists' turn away from the modern family as the insurrection of the lower class against the family as a class privilege, and of the upper class recruits as the victims of this lower class conspiracy against the family. I will return to this point in Chapter 5.

³⁷⁹ Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 20-21, 26, 86-87.

³⁸⁰ I am using the term subjects rather than citizens because I find it questionable whether children born without official papers would be considered citizens. If we understand subjectivity as embedded within ideology and within the materiality of ideology (in other words, within an Althusserian

In his bizarre investigative report (or propaganda pamphlet), *Irhabi Taht al-Tamrin*, Sabir Shawkat proclaims the undocumented marriages to be the hardest thing on him “ashadd al-umur qaswatan ‘ala nafsi”³⁸¹ (harder, therefore, than the murder, the looting, and the armed confrontations with the police). Evading the power of the State to regulate and recognize sexual practice, these arrangements have led to serial marriages, not only for the men, but, (the horror!), for the women.³⁸² The situation, therefore, was not only that of a community of women (like the socialist orgy) but rather one of female polyandry. The police could not prosecute these polygamous women, according to Shawkat, because of these groups’ eschewing having official papers (a symptom of their evasion of the state and societal gaze). It seems that the women’s serial marriages and polyandry were what was at stake for Shawkat. Explaining why he chose to write a book outing the *mysteries* of the Islamist organizations, Shawkat proclaimed that hiding the facts would be of no use “when the Merciful God asks us: what did you do when you knew of the wife who ran away from her husband, and then married another man, then another, and yet another, without [observing] *al-‘iddah al-shar‘iyyah* [the waiting period a woman should observe between husbands according to Islamic law] ... [all this taking place] under

framework of subjectivity) we can conceive of these children as subjects in the sense that ideology creates a place for every individual to be subjectivated and interpellated even before they are born. There is, of course, a point to be made about the attempt of the members of these groups to escape institutional state subjectivation through various tactics including not registering their marriages and their offspring. Here I am not interested in studying these groups but rather their representations and the set of ideological biases that represent/produce them in state and pro-state media. While it is irrelevant for this study to establish the extent to which the members of these groups were able to escape institutional state subjectivation or evade the state gaze, what is important is the anxiety in pro-state media regarding this alleged escape and evasion, and how it contributes to understandings of failed and bad subjectivities.

³⁸¹ Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 21.

³⁸² See for example Shawkat *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 21-22.

the curtain/veil (“sitar”) of the rightful religion?”³⁸³ Only after dwelling on these sexual abominations did Shawkat move to mentioning the killing and looting in which some of these groups were involved, but kept always returning to their non-normative sexual practices and their dangerous and licentious women. We are therefore in a territory that combines the fear of the orgy-qua-mystery, the sexual narration of that mystery as something that troubles monogamy and allows for polyandry, and the anxiety about the ability of polyandry to shake the foundations of society.

Sexual chaos is represented not only as one of the features of the Islamist mystery, or as a trope through which it is narrated, but furthermore as the telos of the hidden activities within this mystery. Unregulated underground economic activities, in Shawkat’s account, ultimately led to underground unregulated sexual practices. This is obvious in a story about a certain group that worked in smuggling goods (because, according to Shawkat’s representation of their beliefs, they believed paying custom duty lacked religious sanction)- under the leadership of a certain *shaykh Jum‘ah*, identified as part of the cadre of al-Jihad within al-Jama‘ah al-Islamiyyah.³⁸⁴ Another member of the group, identified as ‘Abd al-Nasir, convinced his wife to help him with his smuggling, only to find out that she had disappeared. Then, one Ramadan night, after the *tarawih* prayers, ‘Abd al-Nasir heard rumors that his wife was at shaykh Jum‘ah’s house. He and his *brethren* then broke into shaykh Jum‘ah’s

³⁸³Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 106. The influence of the Christian confessional is unmistakable.

³⁸⁴ Which to anyone who studied Islamic organizations sounds like a joke, since al-Jihad and al-Jama‘ah have been rival organizations since their foundational split in 1981.

house, to find “the veiled sister” in her nightgown, lying next to the “pious shaykh,” with bottles of alcohol surrounding them.³⁸⁵

In addition to representing promiscuity as the outcome (or telos) of clandestine activities, the story (especially in this last scene) reveals an anxiety about predatory female desire and what it could do behind the veil (the metaphorical veil of the underground organization, the mystery, and the literal veil female members of Islamist organizations wear when in public). Predatory and unashamed feminine desire was further emphasized when Shawkat narrated the ensuing police investigations. Questioned by the police about her promiscuity and polyandry, the woman unashamedly responds: “I fell in love with him, sir.”³⁸⁶ It furthermore turns out that the woman had married shaykh Jum‘ah through a customary (‘urfi) contract, adding polyandry to promiscuity. The promiscuous woman whose desire is unleashed underneath the mystery of underground networks and from behind the mystery of the veil continued to reappear in Shawkat’s account. In one of ‘Abd al-Baqi’s confessions, an Islamist woman was said to have drugged him in order to have her way with him. After realizing what had happened while unconscious, ‘Abd al-Baqi was furious, not only due to religious reasons, but furthermore due to the violation of monogamy: “I had known no women other than my wife, the mother of my children, to whom I have granted all my manly passions, and who is, as far as I am concerned, the best woman.”³⁸⁷ Though still not a rave, the Islamist organization is now looking more and more like the Dionysian ritual. In the eyes of state propagandists, the piety of the Islamists is merely a cover for licentious behavior and for fulfilling their

³⁸⁵ Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 86.

³⁸⁶ عشقته يا بيه. Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 87.

³⁸⁷ qtd. in Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 177.

perverse sexual desires; they pretend to worship the new god but it is Aphrodite they worship, just like the Bacchantes of Thebes were in the eyes of Pentheus.³⁸⁸ Furthermore, what they engage in looks more like a socialist orgy to the point that sexual chaos is presented as the other of monogamy and therefore a threat to the bourgeois nuclear family.

These orgiastic representations of Islamist organizations did not abstain from including depictions of group sex. In one example an *Amir* declares his wife to be an apostate and therefore “[sexually] violable” (*mustabahah*) by all the members of the group. The report does not then tell us if “all the members of the group” would “violate” her one-by-one or all at once, but it tells us that the verdict was enforced.³⁸⁹ A more salacious description of the Islamist orgy comes from *Ruz al-Yusuf*. Citing police reports on an Alexandria based Islamist organization,³⁹⁰ *Ruz al-Yusuf* uncovers that this group does not only steal and pillage, they are also engaged in another kind of licentious activity that the reporter finds more shocking: namely “zina” (adultery) and liwat (lit. sodomy, or, more commonly, male to male sexual practice). The religious shaykh of this group (not to be confused with its Amir, apparently this group separates *profane* power from sacred power) is described (by the article, quoting the alleged confessions of a group member) as *fasiq* (lecherous/depraved) *shahwani*

³⁸⁸ See epigraph.

³⁸⁹ Shawkat, *Irhabi Taht al-Tamrin*, 102. One may also note here that in this particular example the topos of the orgy is reversed in one aspect. Unlike the other orgies accounted for previously in this chapter, which were places for feminine desire to run amok and in which women can violate other creatures –including men (as in the punishment of Pentheus), in this example it is a hypermasculine space in which the men violate the woman.

³⁹⁰ Karim Subhi, “Shudhudh Jinsi fi Tanzim Mutatarrif,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 20/5/1996, 76-78.

(lustful) *liwati* (sodomite, male-lover, homosexual³⁹¹), *munharif* (deviant) *harami* (thief), *farran* (baker[??]) and *hatik al-a'rad* (violator of [other people's] honor, rapist). He is never at ease (*la yahda' lahu bal*) unless he is flanked by two women on either side. His lewd practices included kidnapping and raping "unarmed soldiers," and violating/debauching (*ya'tadi 'ala*) the group's *Amir*. After the death of the shaykh, the sexual intrigues of the Amir himself moved in turn to the two sons of the late shaykh (it is unclear here whether the two sons substituted for their father, or were paying for their father's *violations*). This "disease," according to the article and the alleged confessions it is based on, is widespread throughout the organization: the men have sexual intercourse amongst themselves while the wives of the Amir watch. These wives, in turn, are forced to "engage in debauchery" (*mumarasat al-fahsha'*) while the Amir watches.³⁹² The Islamist orgy, in these representations, begins to look less like the Dionysian orgy and more like a porn film (perhaps even resembling one of the fantasized Satanist-Marxist satellite TV orgies featuring the sexual act "in all its ten positions," which Mustafa Mahmud had pointed out).

The representations of Islamist organizations, therefore, followed the topos of the orgy in many ways: the orgy qua the subversive and potentially licentious

³⁹¹ Though the description of male to male sexual activity in this article and others in *Ruz al-Yusuf* falls closely to the discourse on homosexuality – especially in its 19th and early 20th century phase in which homosexuality was a disease- the description departs from *homosexuality* as an epistemological category in a number of ways. In this article, for example, the *liwati* Islamist also shows excessive lust for women. Same sex desire and practice here do not rest on an assumption of the exclusivity of desire the way homosexuality does. Instead, it is presented as one of many symptoms of sexual excess (perhaps more like sodomy than homosexuality). In a different article and in a different context a *Ruz al-Yusuf* editor insists that, since same sex practice is rejected by societal norms and "all religions" and since it is "scientifically proven to be a disease," the terms *shadh* (deviant) or "at least" *liwat* (sodomy) are more appropriate than the term *mithli* (homosexual); see the editors comment on Muna Sami, "Ta'liqat 'ala al-shudhudh fi al-Jami'ah al-Amrikiyyah," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 24/6/1996, 62- 63.

³⁹² Once again we see the stereotype of the Islamist voyeur, this time safely extending his gaze under the protection of the Islamist mystery. This image brings us closer and closer to Orientalist imagery of the *Harem*, the veil, and the Muslim pervert. I thank Max Shmookler for bringing this to my attention.

mystery, the orgy qua feminine space (or space for feminine chaos to be unleashed), the orgy as the other of monogamy, which threatens to shake the foundations of the family and society as such, and the orgy as group sex. This worked along with *Ruz al-Yusuf's* reports on the Satanists (which came out around the same time these reports were circulated, and through the same outlets) to produce and impose the topos of the orgy as a convenient rhetorical strategy at the hands of the State. This weaponized topos came in handy, as far as the regime and its propagandists were concerned, at the moment of revolt: It was left to Tal'at Zakariyya, and other regime propagandists to pick up this weaponized topos from the 1990s and re-aim it at Tahrir Square in 2011.

The *Mystery of the Niqab and the Orgy behind the Veil*

Consistent with the orgy as a mystery that unfolds beyond the official gaze, the motif of the Islamist orgy always revealed an anxiety about something that was occurring behind a curtain or a veil. This was sometimes used metaphorically; like when Shawkat lists the (mostly sexual) abominations the Islamists commit behind the veil or curtain ("*sitar*") of Islam.³⁹³ At other points it was used literally – the veil, the niqab or hijab that covers parts of or the whole bodies of the female Islamists, and which triggers the anxiety and fear of pro-state observers. Similarly, Islamist men were depicted as hiding, behind the beard, under the jilbab, and in the guise of religiosity and piety. Sometimes they go as far as hiding by undergoing plastic surgery to change their features.³⁹⁴ Not only are these terrorist bodies members of a

³⁹³ Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 106.

³⁹⁴ See Karim Subhi, "Irhabiyyun fi ziyarah lil *coiffeur*" *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 10/10/1994, 52- 55.

threatening and licentious orgy, but also each of these bodies is a microcosmic orgy in itself.

There is, therefore, a fear of masks, a *metamfiezomaiophobia* that works hand in hand with the fear of the orgy. This was and continues to be the case with the Dionysian orgy. In fact, the orgy and the mask have a common history, and the fear of one is connected to the fear of the other. The participants in the Dionysian ritual were believed to have worn masks (perhaps to further emphasize their lack of distinction, or to separate between their daily persona and their orgiastic one). Dionysus himself appears at the beginning of the *Bacchae* wearing a smiling mask.³⁹⁵ There is something uncanny about the smile on the mask, worn by the wrathful god about to tear his enemies to pieces. Perhaps coulrophobia, which was later perpetrated by the Hollywood horror genre of murderous clowns and then later by conservative anxiety about V masks (with the serene smile of Guy Fawkes), started with the smile of Dionysus.

This same fear that there was something behind the mask that one could not clearly read, and that this thing lurking behind the mask could be seditious and destructive, was always evident in the rhetoric about the “Islamic” mask (the beard and the niqab, especially the latter). When in power, the Muslim Brothers exhibited the same *metamfiezomaiophobia*. In one of its reports on the disguised chaos the anarchists and other activists were about to unleash, the Muslim Brothers’ mouthpiece *al-Hurriyyah wa al-‘Adalah* warned of bearded and niqabi *agents provocateurs* who

³⁹⁵ It is worth noting, however, that in Greek tragedy everyone wore a mask. It is curious, however, that Euripides, or one of his later translators or editors, felt the need to tell us that Dionysus is wearing a mask, perhaps to incite some kind of curiosity mixed with fear. The fact that everyone in Greek tragedy wore a mask, however, does not take us away from the Dionysian mask. The tragedy is first and foremost a Dionysian ritual; a *goat song* aimed to celebrate the goat god. It most likely evolved from the orgy, perhaps under the auspices of Athenian moderation and rationality.

would commit acts of violence and sabotage in order to lay the blame on Islamists.³⁹⁶ On the eve of an organized protest against their rule, the Muslim Brothers' mouthpiece, *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah*, mongered fear against the seditious and insidious (anarchist-socialist) plot taking place under cover. Especially fearful for *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah* was the "Black Bloc,"³⁹⁷ supposedly an anarchist group whose members hid their faces with balaclavas. The real terror as far as *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah* was concerned, however, was the V mask.

Like Dionysus at the beginning of the *Bacchae*, the anarchist terrorist V (from *V for Vendetta*) promises to unleash destruction from behind the serene smile of the Guy Fawkes mask he wears. Worn by anarchists and other activists in various places in the world (including in Egypt, predominantly since the events of 2011), the propagandists of the Muslim Brothers found the mask ominous. The mask provided a cover, according to *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah*, to the incendiary elements who would wreak havoc and terror.³⁹⁸ In fact the first thing *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah* mentioned about the V mask was the smile of Guy Fawkes; it described the mask as featuring "a smiling man who looks like a clown." The coulrophobia that started with the smile on the Dionysian mask was therefore carried on to the V mask and ended up in Egypt, where the Muslim Brothers expressed fear of the mask of an English

³⁹⁶ Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah, "Qina' Bandetta [sic.] Yaqud Fawda 25 Yanayir," *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah*, 21/1/2012, 3.

³⁹⁷ See for example the headline on 28/1/2013, 1: "al-Black Bloc Tuwasil Jara'imiha" (The Black Bloc Continues its Crimes). In the background there is a coloured drawing, taking most of the page, of a masked Black Bloc member holding a Molotov cocktail and setting fire to Egypt (represented as the map drawing of Egypt painted in the colors of the Egyptian flag). See also the cartoons on 24/6/2013, 14, where the mask is doubled: a masked Black-Bloc member emerges from underneath a *tamarrud* mask.

³⁹⁸ Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah, "Qina' Bandetta [sic.] Yaqud Fawda 25 Yanayir," *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah*, 21/1/2012, 1, 3.

Catholic fundamentalist smiling like a clown, while the anarchist terrorist behind the mask threatens (like Dionysus at the beginning of the *Bacchae*, and the clown in horror films) to unleash chaos and destruction.

Al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah's fear of masks also reenacted other episodes of the orgy in Egypt; the activists' obsession with V masks is compared by the ikhwan mouthpiece to the obsession of upper-class kids with black outfits during the Satanic craze. Furthermore, when providing a pseudo-genealogy of the V mask, *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah* described the creed of Guy Fawkes (which it confused with anarchist ideology³⁹⁹) as *madhhab shaytani*: a diabolical/satanic creed. While some of these specific examples may be coincidental, it remains that the fear of what was hidden behind the mask, the curtain, or the veil was present even in the discourse of an Islamist party that was previously and continued to be the target of this very discourse. It is clear that what hides itself behind a curtain, a face-veil, or a smiling mask, must be chaotic and terrorizing.

The anxiety concerning the body behind the veil (and, to a lesser extent, the body behind the mask) betrays, in many of the above examples (though not in *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah*) an anxiety about a licentious, feminine or feminized, body behind the veil/mask. The feminization/femininity of the body behind the veil is self-evident, yet even the disguise of the male Islamists, at least on one occasion, was presented as effeminate. A report by *Ruz al-Yusuf* on terrorist disguises points out how male Islamists would sometimes solicit the help of barbers and makeup artists, and at other times would go as far as undergoing plastic surgery, to disguise

³⁹⁹ To be fair to *al-Hurriyyah wa al-'Adalah*, this confusion is triggered by the anarchist appropriation of the figure of Guy Fawkes.

themselves and hide from the authorities.⁴⁰⁰ The language used suggests an effeminacy of the camouflage, especially when substituting the term *hallaq* (barber) with the term *coiffeur* (transliterated in Arabic), which in Egypt is usually used to refer to women's hair stylists (and in some cases the hair stylists catering to the – effeminate?- male members of the upper class). The suggestion of effeminacy is further enforced by the fact that the common Arabic term for plastic surgeons is *jarrahi tajmil* (lit. beautification surgeons)- as if the terrorists, through makeup and beauty surgery, are “coyly primping,” just like Pentheus was said to be under the effect of Dionysus. Feminization is not merely a circumstantial symptom of language, though. In a cartoon that ran alongside the article, a terrorist behind the niqab enters a “surgery and beauty [sic.] clinic” as a masculine figure (identified by hairy legs and lack of body curves) and exits as a feminine figure (identified by an ample bosom and buttocks).⁴⁰¹

These representational patterns and strategies always expose the sexual fantasies surrounding the female body behind the niqab. In the two examples of the licentious female Islamists we encountered in Shawkat's work– the woman who seduces/rapes ‘Abd al-Baqi and the polygamous woman who cheats on her husband with shaykh Jum‘ah— Shawkat's narration highlights the niqab and the woman's emergence from behind the niqab; there is almost a state of shock in seeing women emerging from behind the niqab as sexual beings⁴⁰² (and in both examples they

⁴⁰⁰ Karim Subhi, “Irhabiyun fi ziyarah lil coiffeur” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 10/10/1994, 52- 55.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 53

⁴⁰² The same motif is also observed in *Rami al-I'tisami*. A woman in a niqab goes to visit the Islamists' camp, and then as the woman slowly lifts her veil, she turns out to be the seductress with whom Rami is in love, who has been wearing low cut shirts throughout the film, and who is responsible for turning the sit-in into a licentious space by promising the protesters all forms of luxury in return to an

emerge in revealing nightgowns, a curious fixation on the part of Shawkat). Whereas the journalist speaks in specific examples, the repentant terrorist speaks in generalizations. In his official confessional, ‘Abd al-Baqi summarized the discourse on the licentious behind the niqab when he warned the larger public of “prostitution/whoredom behind the niqab” (“*da‘arah taht al-niqab*”).⁴⁰³

This theme of a licentious *mystery* that hides behind the niqab was repeated in many ways (even beyond anti-Islamist propaganda) on the pages of the sensationalist *Ruz al-Yusuf*. When commenting on a prostitution scandal in which members of Islamist groups were implicated,⁴⁰⁴ *Ruz Al-Yusuf*'s reporter exclaims that “the niqab has become a *sitar* [curtain] that hides forbidden and illegitimate [haram] pregnancy, as the extremists have turned from violence to sex.”⁴⁰⁵ The niqab therefore acts as a physical cover for the orgy: covering its switch between its two phases of

entrance fee. As she emerges from under the niqab in the tent of *Amir al-Jama‘ah* she also unleashes chaos and strife. The purpose of her visit turns out to be inciting strife between the various neighboring camps, which will trigger the burning of the other camps by the Islamists.

⁴⁰³ Ibrahim Mansur, “‘Adil ‘Abd al-Baqi, Ashhar Ta‘ib fi ‘Am 1994: Nadam ‘Ala ma Fa‘alahu wa Hadhara mimma sa Yaf‘aluhu al-Akharun,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 26/12/1994, 67.

⁴⁰⁴ The story, according to *Ruz al-Yusuf* (which is no stranger to state-sponsored fabrications) is that an 18-year-old woman had an affair with a bearded pharmacist (whom, according to the report, she did not love but felt comfortable with). Eventually the woman got pregnant and ran away from her father’s house (to the house of an enigmatic person, only identified under the name of *al-ustadh*). A similar incident recurred between her younger sister and a member of *al-jama‘ah al-Islamiyyah* (it seems that a beard-fetish runs in the family, if we are to believe the report, which is clearly based on the police investigations-fabrications). The younger sister also got pregnant and her lover convinced her to wear a niqab to hide her pregnancy. According to the report, this was enough to hide the pregnancy even from the girl’s own father, who lived with her in the same house (allegedly because she always went out early and did not come back except when everyone was asleep). Eventually the two women were forced (by the first girl’s lover) into prostitution. It also turns out, according to the report (whether *Ruz Al-Yusuf*'s report or the police report on which it is most probably based) that the first woman’s lover, who forced the two women into prostitution, had seduced many other women in order to “convert them to Islam.” Sawsan al-Jayyar, “fadihat al-Adab lil Mutatarrifin,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 78-81. The story (or the semblance thereof, one could not comment without noting the inconsistencies) followed the same topos of the orgy we saw in Shawkat. The title and the introduction focus on the niqab, which highlights both the nature of the orgy as a *veiled* ritual – a mystery – and the orgiastic nature of the niqab, providing cover for prostitution and teen pregnancies.

⁴⁰⁵ Sawsan al-Jayyar, “fadihat al-Adab lil Mutatarrifin,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 78.

violence and sexual excess. In the title of another article, it is the hijab, rather than the niqab, that covers (and simultaneously marks) a sexual and licentious space/body: “T‘tirafat Zawjah Muhajjabah: 3 a‘wam fi al-haram” (the confessions of a veiled wife: three years in sin). The article, however, has nothing to do either with the hijab or with sin. It is about a woman who discovers, years after her husband’s passing, that her husband had divorced her in absentia shortly after the marriage but never informed her (which in reality and outside the sensationalism of the story would render the divorce void in Islamic jurisprudence). The veil and sin were added for the sake of sensationalism.

This anxiety about the veil is clearly a colonial *cultural imposition* in which the modernist/secular Western is internalized: here I am not making an argument for the authenticity of the veil or unveiling as a secular/modern/Western(ized) phenomenon (such claims lie beyond the purview of my study), but rather referring to how *unveiling* (both in a metaphorical and literal sense) was integral to the European colonial project. In his powerful account on French colonization and Algerian resistance, Fanon recounts how the drive of French colonizers and the French State to colonize Algeria with their gaze as much as with their troops fueled a project of unveiling: the literal unveiling of Algerian women in this context is but an index of the larger project of the colonizer to unveil the country *he* colonized (hence the significant title of Fanon’s essay, *l’Algérie se dévoile*, or “Algeria Unveiled”).⁴⁰⁶ The colonizer, intent on producing the colonized country as an object of *his* knowledge and a target of his gaze was faced with hidden spaces, epitomized by the face-veil: “Hiding the face is also disguising a secret; it is also creating a world of mystery, of

⁴⁰⁶ Fanon, “Algeria Unveiled,” in *A Dying Colonialism*, (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 35- 68.

the hidden.”⁴⁰⁷ Fanon contextualizes the emergent double of fascination and anxiety, or fascination and horror, within a distinctly European patriarchy/misogyny that is inseparable from colonialism, and which aims at possessing the body of the colonized woman as much as that of the colonized country: “In a confused way, the European experiences his relation with the Algerian woman at a highly complex level. There is in it the will to bring this woman within his reach, to make her a possible object of possession.”⁴⁰⁸ (This fascination with the body behind the veil and this obsession with possessing it persist in modern global popular culture and are evident in the genre of veil pornography, which is something this study is not prepared to discuss). Through this fascination-horror the woman behind the veil is produced (by the French colonizers in Fanon’s explication, and much like ‘Abd al-Baqi’s *whore behind the veil*), as “hypocritical, perverse, and even a veritable nymphomaniac.”⁴⁰⁹

The discourse on the veil and on the Islamist orgy thus internalizes the colonial gaze⁴¹⁰ and replicates the 19th century Orientalist fascination with and fear of the sensual Orient, the Arab/Turkish seductress, and the Harem, especially the latter, which remained obstinate in the face of the Western/liberal/colonial gaze (at least

⁴⁰⁷ Fanon, “Algeria Unveiled,” 43.

⁴⁰⁸ Fanon, “Algeria Unveiled,” 43- 44.

⁴⁰⁹ Fanon, “Algeria Unveiled,” 46.

⁴¹⁰ Although the Algerian colonial experience is not necessarily the same as the Egyptian, the colonization of Egypt by the British has been understood by Egyptian nationalists as a form of (literal or metaphorical) unveiling. For example, Ahmad Shawqi, in one of his anti-‘Urabi poems, Shawqi associated occupation with unveiling when he exclaimed (in reference to the British and their local stooges):

يريدون النساء بلا حجاب... ونحن اليوم أولى بالحجاب

until space was reorganized along colonial lines).⁴¹¹ It also replicates the modern (particularly French) Orientalist fear of the veil as a security threat. According to the Mubarak propagandists of the 1990s, as well as to the veil-phobic sectors of the West, the niqab may hide weapons, explosive belts, or sensual bodies behind it; objects of fear and fascination that need to be brought under the scrutiny of the public gaze.

More generally, the association between the Islamist organizations and the orgy reveals a civilizational anxiety that underlies the official public gaze. The Islamists and their organizations are depicted as belonging to a lagging phase of civilization and evolution, which Egypt should have surpassed, and which the regulatory power of the state, the upholder of the civilizational and evolutionary order, as explained in the previous chapter, is bound to stem. Because they exist in orgies that by default escape the state's gaze, the Islamists' abomination continues to exist, despite the civilizing and evolutionary imperative of the state. It is telling that when Zakariyya was listing the various abominations that were being committed in Tahrir Square by virtue of *our* lack of knowledge of what was unfolding in Tahrir Square, he listed the "Muslim Brothers, and others; only God knows!" The Islamist therefore is an abomination that only emerges once the state averts its gaze. It is even more telling how the Islamists, and especially the licentious depictions thereof, are modeled on the representations of the sexual savage. In the previous chapter, we mentioned how the beards of the Islamist men, the predatory sexuality of Islamist women, and their non-normative sexual practices, including polygamy, belong to the

⁴¹¹ For a discussion of the role of the colonial gaze in forming modern Egypt see Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), esp. 1- 62. For how the Harem constituted an obstacle to the colonial gaze which frustrated English colonial officials, Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 46.

realm of sexual savagery, according to a Darwinian ideology. This chapter has provided even more evidence to support this argument.

This account of course is complicated by the figures of Westernized licentious elites participating in the orgies of Tahrir Square and in Satanic cults, thus belonging to a sphere of an orgiastic Western culture that defies the indigenous and national gaze. The very notion, however, of a State gaze that is entitled to penetrate the social sphere, and the notion of the spaces that defy this gaze as an orgiastic threat, belong, as I am about to show, to a history that is Christian, Western, liberal, and largely colonial.

The orgy and the Gaze

The modern appropriations of the topos of the orgy are predicated on the public (liberal) gaze. What the State and society see and recognize becomes normalized. What lies beyond, what evades this gaze, is orgiastic.⁴¹² This is symptomatic of an ideology that is afraid of what is hidden; an ideology which prescribes the *coming out* of what is hidden for it to be *normalized* and accepted.⁴¹³ This liberal ideology of coming out is, in many ways, the direct heir of the Christian Confessional.⁴¹⁴ Modern institutions that seek to produce the ‘truth’ about their subjects rely on the same

⁴¹² Once again, I am in no way claiming that the Tahrir sit-in evaded the public gaze in any way; the openness of the space to the public, to television cameras, and to police spies is a testament to the contrary. My argument, however, is based on how state propagandists imagined Tahrir to be a space evading state and public gaze, and hence constituted it as an orgy, just as they did with the Islamists and the Satanists two decades earlier.

⁴¹³ Obviously, the *coming out* of one’s sexual identity is one of the many hidden truths the modern liberal gaze assumes and seeks to reveal; my analysis here is clearly influenced by Joseph Massad’s *Desiring Arabs*, especially his discussion of the way modern Arabic fiction adopted the coming out teleology that belonged to a different cultural setting; Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 335- 414.

⁴¹⁴ Evidently, this assumption is influenced by Michel Foucault’s discussion of the confession throughout his *History of Sexuality*, v.1.

confessional, be they psychiatric, medical, or penal institutions.⁴¹⁵ The predominance of the genre of repentant confessionals in producing the discourse on (and in some cases, the cure to) the orgy, whether in the case of the repentant Islamists, repentant Satanists, or repentant revolutionaries,⁴¹⁶ is a testament to how the Christian Confessional has pervaded Egyptian discourse.

The logic of the Confessional is obvious when Shawkat justifies giving an account of what is hidden. Shawkat frames his account/confessional as an account to be given in front of “the Merciful God,” and justifies this outing by stating that silence would not please Him.⁴¹⁷ The very notion of giving an account before God, and of remedying sins by confessing them, is foreign to Islam and belongs to Christianity as well as its modern-secular appropriations. The logic of the Confessional (and its non-Islamic and distinctly Christian dimension) is even more evident in ‘Abd al-Baqi’s account. Supposedly a pious Muslim whose innocence was corrupted by the seduction of looting and bloodshed by Islamist organizations, and of illicit sexual relations by Islamist women, ‘Abd al-Baqi’s show of repentance is to give a public account of them. This is a clear violation of the Islamic predicament that one should not broadcast one’s own sins, lest he or she add the sin of broadcasting to those sins already committed.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵ Again, an argument based on the work of Foucault, especially *The History of Sexuality v.1* and *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

⁴¹⁶ I am indebted to Mariam Aboughazi for bringing this point to my attention.

⁴¹⁷ Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 106.

⁴¹⁸ The canonical hadith on the matter goes as follows:
كل أمتي معافى إلا المجاهرين، وإن من المجاهرة أن يعمل الرجل بالليل عملاً، ثم يصبح وقد ستره الله عليه فيقول: يا فلان عملت البارحة كذا كذا، وقد بات يستره ربه ويصبح يكشف ستر الله عنه.

It is worth noting that some of the alleged Satanists, against the insistence of TV presenters, refused

This confessional streak aside, my point is not to say that Islamic history is void of orgiastic representations. Taking a glance at the canons of early Arabic/Islamic literature (like for example the 4th Hijri/10th Gregorian Century, eloquent and salacious collection of anecdotes and rumors connected to famous lines of poetry, entitled *al-Aghani* by Abu al-Faraj al-Asfahani⁴¹⁹ or *Alf Laylah wa Laylah*,⁴²⁰ to name two notable examples) would reveal how too common the motif of orgiastic revelries was. These representations, however, were never coupled with a fear of what was hidden, or with the predicament of having to reveal what lies behind the veil.⁴²¹ A famous story that involves an *orgy* in early Islamic history reveals a topos that runs in complete opposition to the topos of the *orgy* as explicated throughout this study. In this story,⁴²² ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, while serving as Caliph, walks in on an *orgy* (an *orgy* of drinking in some versions of the story, and of

to give accounts of their activities on public television so as not to commit the added sin of “*al-mujaharah bil dhanb*.”

⁴¹⁹ The book’s title literally means *the songs*. It started as a project by court musician Abu Ishaq al-Mawsili- at the behest of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, to describe and document music and melodies to which famous lines of poetry were sung. When al-Mawsili died the project was passed on to al-Asfahani who was less interested in music and more interested in gossip. Instead of becoming the foundational text of Arabo-Islamic musicology (as Harun al-Rashid initially intended), the book became the founding exemplar for the genre of narration through anecdotes.

⁴²⁰ Which is inaccurately translated as *The Arabian Nights* and *A Thousand and One Nights*. A more accurate translation would be *Thousands and Thousands of Nights* or *A Thousand Night and Night, Night after Night*, or simply *Endless Nights*.

⁴²¹ For example, in *al-Aghani*, the licentiousness that take place beyond the public gaze is revealed in a celebratory air that seeks to intrigue its readers through scandal. Presented as sources for and anecdotes to the famous poems of the time, the scandalous stories are never denounced, which is one reason why modern conservative commentators are not at ease with *al-Aghani*. That there is a scandalous life beyond the public gaze is not presented as a sign of hypocrisy; just an interesting anecdote that supplements the study of poetry and music. In addition, the critics of *al-Aghani* seem to be upset with the *outing* of what was hidden. Even the conservative critics of the text, therefore, are not interested in the coming out of what is hidden, but rather in keeping it hidden.

⁴²² Obviously my purpose here is neither to authenticate nor question the story. Whether true or not, this story acts as a *foundational myth* for the operation of power within an Islamic system of governance.

drinking and possible sex in others).⁴²³ ‘Umar, the firm and resolute strongman of the Caliphate, wanted to punish the participants whom he had caught *in flagrante delicto*. Instead of submitting to punishment, however, the participants challenged ‘Umar for his violation of three Qur’anic predicaments in his seeking to punish them: not to spy on others, not to break into homes without the permission of the owners, and to only enter houses through the front door. In both versions of the story, ‘Umar obliges and departs from the scene. While at first this story may seem to suggest that the topos of the orgy is also present in Arab-Islamic lore before the colonial age, on closer examination, the story serves the exact opposite purpose: that what is hidden should remain hidden, sexual and moral anxieties notwithstanding. This is consistent with the Islamic imperative of not giving account of one’s sins, and not to wield charges of adultery unless the act is public enough that four witnesses could authenticate having seen the act of coitus itself (falling short of four people’s authentication, the wielder of such charges is subject to punishment for libel, regardless of whether the act itself took place or not). In the modern appropriations of the topos of the orgy,⁴²⁴ what is opaque to power, what evades its gaze, is a matter of suspicion and concern. For an Islamic mode of power, however, as the story of ‘Umar and the orgy tells us, what is opaque to power is none of power’s concern.

⁴²³ For a collection of the various versions of the story see al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Din, *al-Nass wa al-Ijtihad*, 346, in *Shi’ah Web*, http://www.shiaweb.org/books/nas_ejtehad/pa45.html

⁴²⁴ My insistence here on the modern appropriations of the orgy is for two reasons. First, it is beyond my knowledge and beyond the purpose of this study whether the topos of the orgy in ancient Greece was predicated on a gaze similar to the modern liberal public gaze. Second, the Greek Dionysian orgy predated Christianity, which I am using here for the genealogy of the Confessional and the coming out teleology and imperative. It is worth noting, however, that the orgy was assimilated in retrospect into a history of Christianity by Hegel; producing the orgy as an early and underdeveloped step of conceiving the divine, anticipating yet falling short of the conception of the divine through Jesus. I explain this point elsewhere in this study.

The topos of the orgy in 20th and 21st century Egypt, therefore, exhibits the symptoms of an anxiety about what is hidden that belongs to a history of Christianity, Western institutions, and Western liberalism, rather than to any indigenous tradition.⁴²⁵ It is telling that, during the wave of protests against President Muhammad Mursi, supporters of the latter would resort to the same logic: that the President's opponents (labeled as secular and immoral) were taking refuge in protest tents in order to engage in drug abuse and illicit sex. Even the Islamists were calling for the revealing of, and were making claims about, what was hidden; something that would subject them under strict adherence to Shari'ah to 80 lashes, an adherence they claim to promote. One of Mursi's supporters went as far as claiming that vaginal cleansers and unused condoms were found at the site of the protest, using these paraphernalia to paint an image of licentiousness for the sit-in.⁴²⁶ This *forensic* logic, of excavating evidence (false evidence in this case) instead of waiting for the act to be public in order for it to be punishable reveals the extent to which anxiety about what was hidden and the impetus to expose and denounce it became pervasive. Of course,

⁴²⁵ It is true that there is an indigenous Coptic confessional; indeed it was Coptic monasticism that invented the ritual of *penance* in the first place. The confessional, however, is less central to the Coptic faith than it is to the Catholic; while mandatory for the clergy, for lay people it is not mandatory and is only important in determining who can attend the Eucharist. Furthermore it is less hierarchized and can be initiated by believers during prayers in the absence of a priest (though its completion requires the presence of a priest). Finally, unlike the Catholic confessional, Coptic penance is less about the coming out of the sin and more about the sinner examining the various aspects of his or her life that may be conducive to sin. While all this befits the Foucauldian conceptualization of the various *technologies of the self*, it does not fit the role the Catholic Confessional played in the genealogy of the modern-secular Confessional. I am indebted to Karim Malak for explaining to me the difference between the Catholic and the Coptic confessionals and the role penance played in Coptic history and contemporary Coptic practice.

⁴²⁶ As many of these statements were made on "Islamist" and Salafist television channels which were closed after the 2013 coup d'état, many of the recordings were lost. Some footages were preserved along with sarcastic commentary by the Egyptian satirist Basim Yusuf in the 4th episode of season 2 of his comedy show *al-Barnamij* (or, in Cairene Egyptian, *al-Bernameg*), which aired on July 15th 2013. For a full recording of the episode see "al-Barnamij- al-Halaqah 4 Kamilah," YouTube Video, 1:00:11, posted by "Albernameg," July 15th 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdoqZ9WnhEk&t=2363s>

within a proper forensic logic, an unused condom does not prove anything. In an Islamic system of governance adhering to Shari‘ah jurisprudence, however, even a used condom (with DNA traces of both partners) would not suffice to merit punishment for an act that was meant to be hidden.

In addition to its distinctly Western and Christian history, this gaze has also been a colonial gaze that fueled colonialism’s project: invading the colony with the colonial gaze preceded and went hand in hand with military colonization, often providing it with pretext and/or achievements (it is no coincidence that the French occupation of Egypt 1798-1801 produced a *Description de L’Égypte*). We have already introduced in our above discussion on the veil how Fanon analyzed French colonialism in terms of the invading French gaze that produced the female body under the veil (and with it other spaces to which the colonizer did not have access) as a target for the colonizing gaze and an object of possession. The colonizing gaze was also integral to the colonization of Egypt: in his study of the epistemologies of colonization Timothy Mitchell shows how both modernity and colonialism were predicated on an epistemology and a metaphysics that attempt to order and make sense of the world (as if it were an exhibition).⁴²⁷ The colonization of Egypt, thus, proceeded through a process of reorganization of spaces to make them legible to the nascent State (although Mitchell’s book is more concerned with organization and less with the gaze, I propose, for the purpose of this dissertation, to focus on the implicit gaze in Mitchell’s analysis). Mitchell summarizes this process in his introductory note:

[M]odel villages were intended to organise and make legible the life of ordinary Egyptians, introducing an architecture that would make even women and their

⁴²⁷ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*.

families visible to the ‘observation of the police’. The new, open streets of modern Cairo and other Egyptian towns embodied a similar principle of visibility and observation, the principle of the exhibition.⁴²⁸

Like the French colonial gaze which obsessed over and expressed anxiety about what is hidden, the gaze that colonized Egypt (which was simultaneously British, French, and Egyptian) experienced frustrations with social spaces and marital formations which escaped its purview – and which this gaze produced through Orientalist fascination and horror as *the Harem*, In response, the colonizing gaze proceeded to destroy these social formations⁴²⁹ and to devise plans to open up these spaces, including an unfulfilled plan to develop “model village” which opens up all spaces and bodies for this gaze.⁴³⁰

We can therefore begin to see how using the logic of the orgy by state propagandists entailed the adoption of a gaze that is distinctly Western: a gaze that has a distinctly Christian genealogy related to the Confessional, and is one of the many things modern liberalism and the modern state inherit from Christianity. The anxiety about the spaces this gaze fails to access was enacted at the onset of modern colonialism through anxiety about the Harem, which in a way replaced the orgy as the place (and topos) of mystery and license. This Western-colonial anxiety about oriental mysteries was re-enacted, in the late 20th century, against the Islamists, produced as the other through the same civilizational discourse that once produced the Orient as

⁴²⁸ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, xv.

⁴²⁹ I return to this point in chapter 5.

⁴³⁰ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 46- 47. In a different though not unrelated context, Native Studies scholar Andrea Smith notes how the colonial (violent and non-consensual) gaze which produces its targets as objects of knowledge has played an integral role in the colonization and genocide of the Americas. Smith finds this violent and non-consensual gaze to be akin to rape and belongs to an arsenal of tactics of sexual violence that were used to conquer and discipline native populations; see Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, (Cambridge MA: South End Press, 2005), esp. 133.

the abnegated other. In the 21st century, a similar anxiety would be animated against the political dissidents in Tahrir Square (and although this anxiety was not always marshaled with the orientalist overtones that accompanied the colonial anxiety with regards the ‘Harem’ or the modern State’s anxiety with regards the Islamists, we cannot overlook the Orientalist history of this anxiety). This history, furthermore, goes even further back than the moment in which the Harem replaced the orgy. It even goes back farther than modern Orientalism. The orgy, even in its original Greek manifestation, always belonged to the other, to the Orient.

The Oriental Orgy

Whether in Greek antiquity or in its modern renditions, the orgy has always been an Orientalist trope. Dionysus himself (at least according to one of his many stories of origin) hails from Oriental ancestry. While his ancestry from the father’s side is clearly Olympian, his mother, Semele, is the daughter of the Phoenician Cadmus who comes from Sidon (the present day South Lebanese town of Saida.)⁴³¹ Ancestry of the god aside, the Dionysian religion and the ecstasy of the Dionysian orgies were believed to belong to the East, not to Greece.⁴³² Even in Greek mythology, Dionysus is believed to have been wandering in the East where he learned his ecstasies (the

⁴³¹Born to an Olympian father and a Phoenician/Southern Lebanese mother, Dionysus is akin to the Christian Jesus, born to a divine father and an Aramaic/Palestinian mother.

⁴³² This is clear throughout Euripides’ *Bacchae*. The play starts with Dionysus’ arrival to Thebes after his journeys in Asia, accompanied by the Asian maenads. Throughout the play Pentheus is expressing doubt towards this foreigner who is preaching a new religion with mysterious rituals. For how this foreign and Asiatic nature of Dionysus and his rituals contributed to his sensuality and effeminacy, see Guirand, *Greek Mythology*, 112.

most common version is that he was initiated into Cybele's orgies by Cybele herself⁴³³ in Phrygia after wandering through Egypt and Syria,⁴³⁴ but another version, presented in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, sends the wandering god to India instead). Dionysus then returns to Greece as "the god of orgiastic delirium who came from the Orient."⁴³⁵ In *The Bacchae*, we see Dionysus returning to Thebes with an army of Asian maenads (or bacchantes). Towards the end of the play, the fall of Thebes seems to be an Oriental conspiracy by the Oriental god and his Asian female followers: while the Theban maenads were struck by intoxicating madness to the effect of tearing asunder the body of Pentheus while oblivious to the fact, the Asian maenads kept their sobriety and commented in a clear-headed cold-hearted manner, almost with *schadenfreude* – or *epicuricity*, as we are in Greek territory- on the tragic events.⁴³⁶

When the orgy resurfaced in the 19th century counterrevolutionary discourse, the counterrevolutionary observers were horrified at the Phrygian cap that signified the orgies of Cybele and the castration of priests. Part of the horror, furthermore, was "that [the Phrygian cap] is an Asian headgear; that liberty never dwelt in those lands;

⁴³³ Cybele herself represented both the Oriental and the maternal: See Grimal, *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, 118, "Cybele": "The principal goddess of Phrygia, often called 'the Mother of the Gods', or 'the Great Mother': she governed the whole of Nature and was, in fact, the personification of Nature's powers of growth." She was later associated with Rhea, Zeus's mother.

⁴³⁴ Guirand, *Greek Mythology*, 111, Grimal, *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, 138- 139, "Dionysus," (pseudo-)Apollodorus, *The Library of Greek Mythology* trans. Keith Aldrich. Book III, 33 (pp. 61- 62).

⁴³⁵ Guirand, *Greek Mythology*, 113.

⁴³⁶ Euripides, *The Bacchae*, 1153-1168. See also the dialogue between the Asian maenads and Agave (and the taunting tone of the former, along with their almost sadistic delight in Agave's obliviousness to the fact that she just killed her own son and is holding his head on a pike) in the subsequent lines (1169-1214). For the difference between the sobriety of the Asian Bacchantes and the procession of the Theban maenads see Arrowsmith, "Introduction to *the Bacchae*," 151- 152. Cf. Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 56- 57.

that even the Asiatic section of Greece was unable to conserve its own liberty.”⁴³⁷ The orgy therefore is one of the tropes that modern Orientalism inherits and appropriates from the classical Greek perspective on the Orient.⁴³⁸ What is new here, under the Darwinian ideology of our modern times, is that the orgy became a sign not only of the Oriental other, but furthermore of degeneration and civilizational/evolutionary regression,⁴³⁹ or that the degeneration of the orgy is now to be taken literally, its

⁴³⁷ Qtd. In Hertz, “Medusa’s Head,” 46 (the words are by the French artist Esprit-Antoine Gibelin).

⁴³⁸ In fact, in his explanation of classical Greek Orientalism, Edward Said uses Euripides’ *Bacchae* which, according to Said, connects Dionysus to “the strangely threatening excesses of Oriental mysteries;” see Said, *Orientalism*, 56- 57. After commenting on how *The Bacchae* would draw a line between East and West, locating rationality in the West, and the threatening irrationality and *mystery* in the east, Sa’id concludes: “Hereafter Oriental mysteries will be taken seriously, not least because they challenge the rational Western mind to new exercises of its enduring ambition to power;” Said, *Orientalism*, 57. It is noteworthy, however, how Said confuses the Asian maenads (who keep their sobriety and seem complicit with Dionysus in inflicting the tragic fate on Pentheus and Thebes) with the Theban maenads who are consumed by Dionysian madness and are oblivious to their deed. Another confusion Said makes is between hysteria and ecstasy; in other words, Said anachronistically projects the conjoining of hysteria and ecstasy/convulsion which we described in Chapter 1, to Greek antiquity when the two phenomena were completely distinct, the first belonging to Hippocratic medicine and pertaining to the movement of the uterus, the second belonging to religious cults and pertaining to the spiritual unity with the divine.

⁴³⁹ Even before this evolutionary teleology was coded in biological and racial terms, Hegel presented the Dionysian orgy (or the “Bacchic frenzy” as he called it) as the primitive phase of subjectivity through the divine, the mature phase only comes in with subjectivity through Jesus Christ. To reach its maturation, the “mystery of flesh and blood” (meaning the orgy, in which the spirit of the god is consumed through the flesh and blood of devoured animals) needs to become “the mystery of bread and wine” (meaning the Christian communion). The gods of the orgies, Dionysus and Demeter (or Bacchus and Ceres, for Hegel insists on the Roman rather than Greek names) also stand at the back of the evolutionary line while Jesus (and perhaps Apollo) stands at the front: gods like Dionysus and Demeter lack an “individuality [that] includes as an essential moment self-consciousness as such,” which “the other, strictly higher, gods” (like Apollo? Prometheus? Jesus?) possess. “Therefore, Spirit has not yet sacrificed itself as *self-conscious* Spirit to self-consciousness, and the mystery of bread and wine is not yet the mystery of flesh and blood;” emphasis in original, Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 438. That the depiction of Jesus as divine subsumed elements from Dionysus or that the Christian communion re-enacted some elements of the Dionysian orgy are not necessarily civilizational claims. What Hegel does here, however, is embedding these claims in an avant-la-lettre Darwinian schema, connecting them in an evolutionary teleology that ends with Jesus. It is also important to note how Hegel associates individual self-consciousness with proper subjectivity and with the gods through which proper subjectivity is achieved, while the lesser gods lack individual self-consciousness like the orgies that worship them. This will be important when we discuss the orgy as a trope for the crowd. The collective therefore is a lagging phase of individual development, while identifying Jesus Christ is a step forward in becoming individual and subject. It lies beyond the purpose of this study to establish the extent to which the 19th century European observers who used the orgy as a topos or trope for crowd and revolution were buying into this Hegelian-Christian teleology, but it is telling that

association with nature, which we commented on in chapter 1, becomes a marker of a regression from the evolutionary path from nature to culture.

This is evident in how the orgy became *anthropologized*. Starting the 19th century, the topos of the orgy became part of the construction of the primitive and the savage space as a space that defies order, a space of sexual chaos and savagery, but also a cathartic space that escapes the repression of civilization.⁴⁴⁰ Commenting on how anthropology produces the figure of the sexual savage, and thus produces the sexual savage's space as a space of sexual chaos and catharsis which lends itself to modern gay appropriations, Neville Hoad notes how in the work of anthropologist Tobias Schneebaum: "the deeper into the jungle you go, the more things start to look like a sex club ... [with] disturbingly sexualized description of cannibalism."⁴⁴¹ Hoad (via Schneebaum) is clearly describing the Dionysian topos: to see these anthropological fantasies we need to go to the jungle (i.e. into nature, like the

the Egyptian propagandists were using for the enemies of the state a trope/topos that, in the hands of Hegel, constituted a lagging phase of a Christian teleology.

⁴⁴⁰ Even in apolitical representations the orgy remains racialized and Orientalized. *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend* concludes its entry on the "orgia" with a bizarre remark: Today its sacred and even its dance connotations have vanished, except when applied to the ecstatic dance rites of contemporary tribes, or the debauchery following on these rites under the influence of sacramental intoxicants. Thus the former category, the ecstatic dance of the West Indies, the Indian peyote (*hikuli*) cults, and the second category, the *tesguinadas* of the Mexican Tarahumaras." (emphasis in original, v.2, s.v. "orgia"). It is as if the path of civilization in the West has moved away from the orgy, which only belonged to an ancient past, whereas the path of civilization in other places of the world, lagging as it is compared to its paradigmatic Western counterpart, was not able to surpass the orgy, thus preserving orgiastic rituals which remind the West of its ancient Greek past. Similarly, Michael Grant, in his *Myths of the Greeks and Romans* connects the orgy to "periodic mass-waves of neurotic, often quasi-religious hysteria." In addition to the confusion, or anachronistic conjoinment, of hysteria and orgy, Grant displaces this quasi-religious (and pseudo-hysterical) ecstasy into the Orient: to Rumi, Dervishes, and some mystical sect he discovered in Algeria, which, according to Grant, devours raw sheep as part of their mystical rituals (284). Grant, who is supposedly analyzing Greek and Roman mythology, and who mentions in passing only one American convulsionist sect, felt the need to place the Bacchae within a mystical and sensual orient (even though the ecstasy – which he confuses for hysteria- of the Dionysian orgy seems more at home with American fundamentalist and hysterical sects which imagine, through ecstatic rituals, a oneness with a divine that "speaks in tongues" through them).

⁴⁴¹ Hoad, "Wild(e) Men and Savages," 69n21.

maenads who went to the woods and the mountains), we also go *deep* (i.e. beyond the civilized gaze of the modern State). Once we are in this orgiastic space, beyond civilization and its gaze, things “start to look like a sex club” (i.e. an orgy in its modern meaning as a sexual party) in which sexual behavior is disturbingly mixed with cannibalism (like the Dionysian ritual and its Satanic descendants). Here Hoad’s analysis of how the orgiastic space is produced through anthropological fantasies as a cathartic space and as a space that belongs to a lagging phase of civilizational development clearly echoes Fanon’s note that “The civilized man retains an irrational nostalgia for the extraordinary times of sexual licentiousness, orgies, unpunished rapes, and unrepressed incest.”⁴⁴² Indeed, in *Black Skin White Masks* Fanon notes this association between the black and/or non-white qua savage on the one side and the orgy (along with *black magic* and other *primitive* rituals) on the other, while exposing the psychic effect of the *cultural imposition* of this association on the non-white. In his impassioned commentary on the anthropological text *La Vie Sexuelle en Afrique Noire* Fanon exclaims:

I am walking on hot coals. Sheets of water threaten my soul on fire. These rites make me think twice. Black magic! Orgies,⁴⁴³ Sabbaths,⁴⁴⁴ pagan ceremonies gris-gris. Coitus is an occasion to invoke the family gods. It is a sacred act, pure and absolute, bringing invisible forces into action ... From every direction I am assaulted by the obscenity of the dances and propositions.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴² Fanon, *Black Skins White Masks*, 143.

⁴⁴³ Also *orgies* in the original French text; Fanon, *Peau Noire Masque Blanc*, 101.

⁴⁴⁴ It is not entirely clear to me whether Fanon here is commenting on Europe’s association of Judaism (especially in its orthodox form) with primitivity or if he is referring to the Sabbath of witches, thus commenting on the connection between witchcraft on the one side and primitivity and the orgy on the other. I find the latter more likely, given how the cults of witchcraft and their Satanic rituals inherited the orgy.

⁴⁴⁵ Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 105.

The new significations the Oriental orgy acquired can also be traced in the Orientalist production of the *Harem* (also a cathartic space, arguably one that was more coveted by Occidentals than the savage cathartic spaces of black Africa), which did not only represent the Oriental other, it represented decadence and degeneration that are to be understood literally, as lagging phases in social and biological development. We just saw how this was also the case with the mysteries of Islamist organizations, standing for a degenerate version of the self which civilization (and the State that upholds it) should have surpassed.

The orgy therefore does not depart from the themes of degeneration and regression that constitute the metaphysics of chaos as imagined by the mythologies of the State (and laid out in the previous chapter). It represents, at least in its modern manifestation/appropriations a regression to the feminine, to nature, and to the evolutionary inferior racial other. It represents, furthermore, the degeneration of the subject, the dissolution of the individual into a collective; the maenads (and other participants if any) join in a collective in which distinction is abolished, and in which the spirits collectively unite with the divine, and intruders like Pentheus (or Mr. Pope, the English officer in the 1919 indescribable orgy) literally lose bodily integrity and experience the dissolution not only of their individualities but furthermore their physical bodies. This dissolution, from the individual into the collective, was also read along civilizational lines starting in the late 19th century. In the coming sections, I will further explore what the orgy entailed in terms of the dissolution of individuality, how it became a trope (sometimes topos) for the crowd as such, and how other orgiastic/mysterious/underground organizations became the surrogate of the crowd.

Of Crowds and Orgies

Our analysis so far has touched upon but not yet fully explored the similarity between the orgy and the crowd. Both the orgy and the crowd represent the threat of the dissolution of individuality.⁴⁴⁶ Throughout the previous analysis we have encountered many examples of this loss (or fear of loss) in the context of the orgy. We observed the loss of individuality most clearly in the fate of Pentheus; first he was struck by Dionysian madness that resulted in him losing his individual consciousness, and later he lost his bodily integrity through being torn to pieces by the maenads. A similar fear—of losing one’s individuality, one’s consciousness, one’s very bodily integrity—runs through representations of the crowd.

⁴⁴⁶ The understanding of the orgy as a state of collective consciousness antithetical to and predating individual consciousness is central to the 19th century European theory of subjectivity. Hegel uses the *Bacchic frenzy* (i.e. the classical Roman appellation of the Dionysian orgy) as an earlier stage of consciousness where consciousness is collective, and from which the subject needed to walk away and become individual. Even in Hegel, therefore, the orgy was an early collective stage of consciousness akin to the crowd (though in a slightly different reading the orgy can be seen as predating the crowd: as the orgy matures, as it develops a more distinct and understandable voice, it becomes the chorus of the Greek tragedy, which in a way is the representative of the crowd on stage, and then against the chorus an individual voice starts emerging. The proximity of the crowd to the orgy is still evident in this reading, though the latter becomes less conscious, less rational, and more out of body); see Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 436- 438. For an attempt to revisit the Dionysian orgy as an alternative to individualized subjectivity see Michel Maffesoli, *The Shadow of Dionysus: A Contribution to the Sociology of the Orgy*, trans. Cindy Linse and Marky Palmquist, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993). For ecstasy (though not the Dionysian orgy) as a tool to trouble the myth of the self-contained individual subject, see Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 17- 39. The main difference between Maffesoli and Butler is that while Butler’s usage of the notion ecstasy aims to expose and destabilize the myth of the self-contained individual, Maffesoli proposes the “Dionysian paradigm” as means for “the surpassing of individualism” (xi), bracketing the question of interrogating what he calls “principle of individuation” (2). Whereas Maffesoli’s use of the notion of ecstasy (or ex-stasis) to illuminate the significance of the orgy is insightful, the overall analysis is not free of Social Darwinist overtones. The orgy is posited as a space of “organic solidarity” of the past that a linear progression of time has departed from. To return to this organic solidarity, contemporary tribal practices (like the ghotul ritual of the Mauria tribe in India) are appropriated (5).

We have also encountered at least one clear example in which the crowd is described as an orgy; indeed, the fear of the crowd coincided with the fear of the orgy, namely, in the 1919 report on the *indescribable orgy*. The insurrectionary crowd is represented in this report as an amorphous collective, the ambiguity of which is highlighted by the unintelligible voices it emits (the *luluwing*, or ululation of the women). Just like Pentheus, British individuals who encountered this crowd-orgy were doomed to lose not only their individual consciousness but also their very bodily integrity (like the aforementioned officer). The 1919 *indescribable orgy* is part of a long tradition of associating crowds with orgies, whether implicitly or explicitly. This tradition has manifested not only in counterrevolutionary propaganda (like, for example, Carlyle's invocation of the orgy through the figure of the maenads) but also in poetry about the metropolitan crowd (such as Baudelaire's *Les Foules* in which the crowds are described as an *ineffable orgie*) or even in philosophic treatises like Hegel's *Phenomenology* (in which *Bacchic frenzy* appears as a pre-individual stage of consciousness, the same stage which crowds regress to in 19th century thought).⁴⁴⁷

In the previous sections we have explored how insidious and subversive activities (carried by the insurrectionary crowd, by secret organizations, or by irresponsible youth) constituted an orgy. In this section, I am proposing something slightly different. In addition to the mystery and the out of body revelry that render crowd action an orgy, the crowd is also an orgy to the effect that it is a collective whereby individuality disappears. Observers imbued with the liberal ideology of individuality fear the crowd for two interrelated reasons: they fear the collective of bodies within which they cannot identify individual members, and they fear that they

⁴⁴⁷ See *ibid.*

themselves are going to be subsumed by this collective body (either by losing their minds and becoming themselves part of the crowd, or by being assaulted, killed, or torn asunder by the crowd).

To make this argument, I will first show how the crowds have appeared as a threat (or sometimes antithesis) to individuals and individuality. I will illustrate this theme through a reading of volume 5 of Salim al-Naqqash's *Misr lil Misriyyin*, which deals with the events of Alexandria during the British invasion of 1882 almost exclusively from the point of view of its European residents, and that is unapologetically sympathetic to the occupiers, and which I treat as an example of late 19th century Egyptian discourse on the crowd and an index of European, especially British, influences on this discourse. I will then show how this same fear runs through (or was informed by) British representations: I will first take a look at foreign (predominantly British) reports on 1882 to explore the encounter between the crowd and the individual, paying special attention to the set of privileges that endow certain people with individuality while insisting to treat others as an uncountable collective. Although these biases take an explicit racial turn when applied to Egypt, they were also at work in depicting crowds in the metropole. Through a number of primary and secondary sources on the crowd, I will show how the fear of the dissolution of individuality also runs through 19th century European representations of the European crowd. My examples will consciously mix representations of revolutionary crowds with representations of pacific crowds, in order to show how it is not only the revelry of the revolutionary crowd that is orgiastic, but rather that any collective body, even if peaceful, is an orgy according to a late 19th century European understanding of crowds and orgies. This is the reason why throughout my analysis I use the term *crowd* rather than *mob*. It is not only the rioting mob that the 19th century bourgeois

feared, but also any collective in which individual distinction is lost. This fear of the loss of distinction is not unrelated to the orgy-qua-sexual chaos/group sex. I will show how, in various examples (from 19th century European literature as well as from late 19th century Egypt), that the threat of the crowd to individuality is sometimes narrated through a sexual trope. I will then revisit the orgy as a mystery, arguing that the crowd, by virtue of its lack of individual distinction, defies the public-official gaze which perceives it as an orgy-qua-mystery. This analysis of the crowd in terms of the orgy-as-mystery will also aim to throw light on the special kinship between the crowd and the secret organization (which also aims to defy the public-official gaze and which is sometimes depicted as an anti-individualist collective). I will finally revisit the orgy as an Oriental mystery, showing how 19th century European thought posited both the Orient and the orgy as mysteries that defy signification. This analysis will pave the way for the next chapter in which I discuss how Egyptian representations of the crowd have internalized some European racial biases of the 19th century, but also how these racial biases had shaped European representations of the crowd in the metropole.

Who Gets to be Counted in 1882? The Western Individual and the Arab Crowd

In Salim al-Naqqash's *Misr lil Misriyyin*, the Egyptian crowd always appears as a collective, threatening, unintelligible mayhem that lacks individual consciousness, or individual distinction. This collective always poses a threat to individuals,⁴⁴⁸ who are

⁴⁴⁸ If these depictions begin to look like a Zombie apocalypse, it is because the Zombie genre has the same colonial and anti-crowd roots. Zombies, which came to represent the loss of individual consciousness within masses and the fear that the mass/crowd can deprive one of his or her own individual consciousness, turning him or her into one of them, are a product of the US colonial anxiety with regards to the Haitian crowd and Caribbean anti-colonial revolts, at the onset of the US

mostly foreigners or “Christians” according to al-Naqqash. These Western-Christian-individuals are surrounded and besieged by the indigenous collective. In one report, quoting a foreign consul, al-Naqqash shows us this siege through the eyes of the Western individuals contemplating how to deal with this collective that besieges them (though in reality it was the British fleet that was besieging the Alexandrian shore). In the subsequent examples from al-Naqqash’s representations and other reports on the events, two themes are evident, both of which interrelated, and both of which are relevant to this chapter and the next. First there is the theme of the collective versus the individual, which privileges the latter and disenfranchises the former to the extent of normalizing the violence by the latter against the former. While individuals have motives, personal stories, personal tragedies, and loved ones to protect or grieve, the collective lacks any specific attribute to merit identification or sympathy – they are not even countable, as the subsequent examples, from al-Naqqash and other reports, will show. Individuals have legitimate fears, worthy of articulation, explanation, and sympathy by the narrators/authors. These narrations allow for the transformation of these fears from intangible emotions to legitimate security tools.⁴⁴⁹ Crowds on the other side have passions that are scarcely explained, let alone justified. They are not entitled to the same fear that individuals are allowed, even as a foreign army was besieging, bombarding, and invading their lands, and even as they were facing

occupation of Haiti—from which the figure of the Zombie is appropriated; see Jamie Russel, *Book of the Dead: The Complete History of Zombie Cinema*, (Godalming: FAB Press, 2005), esp. 9- 17. The zombies and the Egyptian crowd are similar not only because of the shared history of colonization; even Haiti was haunted by the orient in the American imaginary (Indeed one of the earliest American books {1933} on Haitian culture is titled *Black Bagdad: The Arabian Nights Adventures of a Marine Captain in Haiti*) and the Zombie genre continues to betray Orientalist and racist anxieties that are not exclusively directed against Haiti and the Caribbean; see *ibid*, 15-7, 28. More broadly, the Zombie came to stand for crowds and revolt; *ibid* 28. For various reasons (including the importance of Greek mythology in the British colonial imaginary and the predominance of orgiastic references in the archives I consulted) I decided to approach the revolutionary crowd through the orgy rather than the zombie apocalypse. Had this study been focused on American mass culture, perhaps the Zombie apocalypse would have been as relevant as the orgy.

⁴⁴⁹ I thank Hanine Hassan for this point.

(usually unarmed or armed with sticks and rocks) the gunfire of the scared individuals. The second evident theme is the racialization of this opposition- it is already obvious how the above biases fit neatly with colonialist biases against indigenous populations, and the account we are dealing with is first and foremost one of an encounter between a colonizing force (armies and settlers) and an indigenous population. European Christians exist as individuals, while indigenous populations exist as crowds. The justification and normalization of violence is thus racialized.

From the beginning of and throughout al-Naqqash's volume 5 (the volume dedicated to the events of 1882 especially in Alexandria) the events are narrated through the point of view of the foreigners (sometimes identified by al-Naqqash as *ajanib*, lit. foreigners, and sometimes as Christians). Unsure when this indigenous mass would decide to swoop in or what kind of damage it would decide to inflict, the foreigners contemplated how they would fortify themselves and how they would fend off this mass (by means of boiling water, pressurized water, rocks, dynamite, and fire-arms, the contemplation was about the technicalities of the weaponry while the harm it would cause was left out as irrelevant).⁴⁵⁰ In another example, a boisterous lower class crowd gathered, and they walked around creating a ruckus; the more they continued to walk, the more people joined them. This particular crowd turned out to be harmless, but later the same day (and on the same page) another indigenous crowd appeared and tried to break into a locked door to kill everyone inside a house (we are not told whose house it was, but from the context we can infer that it was owned by some of the European individuals identified by al-Naqqash as Christian).⁴⁵¹

⁴⁵⁰ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 97.

⁴⁵¹ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 142.

The indigenous crowd is always referred to generically as *ri 'a'* (riffraff), *asafil* (the base and lowly), or, when using a language that is less derogatory, *al-wataniyyin* (the locals, the indigenous) and *al-Muslimin*. In the following paragraph in which al-Naqqash describes the scene in Alexandria on the eve of the invasion, outlining the foreigners' fear of "al-ahali" (lit. the residents, the locals), the inexplicable hatred and lust for vengeance of the natives are recounted from the point of view of the foreigners:

وأحس الأجانب بالملاحظة والمراقبة وأن سفلة القوم من الأهالي وجميع رجال الجهادية أو أكثرهم أصبحوا قساة في تصرفاتهم يغلظون معاملة الناس ويستبدون بأمورهم استنثارا يمشون في الشوارع عجباً واستكباراً يمتنون الرفيع ويستخدمون الوضع وإذا أرادوا مالا يستحسنون نفروا أو لقوا من لا يعتد بهم تعاضوا وشمخوا تشعر وأنهم يريدون بهم شراً ويتوقعون أقل حادث ينذرون به إلى الوقيعة وإبراز مكونات صدورهم انتقاماً ممن توهموهم أعداء لهم وأخصاماً.⁴⁵² تعني بهم الأجانب الأوروبيين.

This paragraph does not stop at laying out the vengefulness, hatred, and evil harbored by the natives; it also tells us how their conception of the foreigners as their enemies was a mere illusion. The indigenous crowds, thus, act upon illusions rather than motives- or in other words, their motives are turned into illusions by colonialist discourse. The dismissal of the motives of the indigenous rebels is also evident in al-Naqqash's description of the 'Urabiist contemplation to block the Suez Canal. From a practical and a strategic viewpoint, a local army blocking an international waterway in the face of an invading army is a rational act that may impede the invasion (and could have changed the course of the events had 'Urabi had the courage to do it). For al-Naqqash, however, such a decision cannot be motivated by any sentiment other than contempt and vengefulness towards the English. Al-Naqqash comments:

⁴⁵²Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 4.

وكان الموسيو دي لسبس قد سلك في الأمر إزاء عرابي مسلكا كان حميد العاقبة فإنه وقى به التريعة من شر
العرابيين بأن تظاهر بالانحياز إليهم وشدة المقت للانكليز ولولا ذلك لأمر عرابي بردم التريعة تشفيا وانتقاما⁴⁵³.

In the above phrase, ‘Urabi’s unexplainable contempt is highlighted through the use of the terms *tashafiyyan* (roughly gloatingly, or with schadenfreude) and *intiqaman* (vengefully). Had Ferdinand de Lesseps not been resourceful enough to trick ‘Urabi by pretending to side with him, according to al-Naqqash, ‘Urabi would have blocked the Suez Canal “gloatingly and vengefully” or “with schadenfreude and vengeance.” The two terms are extraneous and superfluous; they add nothing to the narrative, yet they are important to foreclose any rational motives on the part of ‘Urabi. It is not that ‘Urabi would have blocked the Canal, (God forbid!) for strategic purposes, for the purpose of hampering foreign invasion, or for the fulfillment of a nationalistic or patriotic ethos, but for base gloating/schadenfreude and vengeance, in other words for blind hatred. ‘Urabi’s blind hate is compounded by his naivety, and both are contrasted to Ferdinand de Lesseps’ foresight and resourcefulness for pretending to side with the ‘Urabists in order to thwart their intentions to block the Suez Canal.

Consistent with its lack of motive and rationale, the indigenous crowd seldom speaks in proper words in al-Naqqash’s account. Instead, it emits noise. Various descriptions of the noise the crowd emits index the ambiguous and unexplainable threat the crowd carries, or, when imminent threat is absent, the nuisance it constitutes to individual observers. In one example a passerby relates how, as soon as he got out of his house, he was confronted by the raucous presence of the riffraff and the

⁴⁵³Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 151.

“screaming of women and the gathering of people.”⁴⁵⁴ Unintelligible noise clearly indexes in this account the simultaneous gendering and classing of the crowd. In another example the ululation of the women becomes indexical of the irrational euphoria of the crowd (irrational because the crowd seemed to be celebrating what they thought was an Egyptian victory, only for it to turn out that Egyptian fortresses had just been overwhelmed by the British).⁴⁵⁵ Unintelligible noise, rather than words, language, discernible speech, or other types of sounds that do not constitute the same threat and nuisance, is thus a sign of a collective, non-discernible and threatening body whose very existence is a threat, an affront, or in the best cases a nuisance (much like the noise it emits). In addition to reinforcing the depiction of the crowd as a non-discernible collective, the crowd-as-noise affirms the privileging of the Christian and English individual over the indigenous crowd: the indigenous crowd is reduced to a nuisance, a sound without a human subject uttering it, one without proper meaning, subtext, or motivation. On the other side, the Western individual holds the privilege of being annoyed by this sound, and hence *his* prerogative and right to silence it.

These representational strategies serve to render violence against the indigenous crowd harmless (there are no individuals to be harmed, only an ambiguous collective) and justifiable (one is not blamed when attempting to neutralize a threat, or

⁴⁵⁴ ولم أتجاوز البيت حتى رأيت البلدة تضج بالغوغاء وصراخ النساء وتجمع الناس في الأزقة al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 140. The expression used for the “noisy presence” of the riffraff is *tadujj*, which signifies that the riffraff themselves are the noise of the city. The noise therefore functions both as a metaphor for the riffraff (and the nuisance they constitute) as well as a literal reference to the sounds they make, the “screaming of women and people” included. See also the noisy crowd (and how their noise becomes in itself a threat) in the testimony cited in *ibid*, 142.

⁴⁵⁵ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 105.

shutting off noise). Because this mass obscures its individual members (to the extent that they seldom have names, social positions, or a distinct comprehensible voice), shooting at this mass is normalized; it is not a shooting at individual persons who may be grieved. While fear and alarm are not the prerogative of the locals (who are not even thought of as individuals), the foreigners are justified in stockpiling arms in *self-defense* (or more literally, to quell evil: “li daf‘ al-sharr”) and to fire at the unarmed crowd if necessary.⁴⁵⁶ These representations thus produce on one side, the individual (Western-Christian, who is implicitly a member of the upper or merchant class), and, opposed to this individual, on the other side, are the collective, ruffian, indigenous, and Muslim crowd. The former is endowed with the privilege of feeling threatened, and with the faculties of self-defense and the contemplation thereof. The latter is both uncountable and *ungrievable*, if we can borrow Judith Butler’s lexicon.⁴⁵⁷ Members of the Egyptian crowd become only countable as dead bodies, but even then it is not important (or worth the effort) to give an accurate body count; al-Naqqash reports nonchalantly that Egyptian casualties might have been 350 or 2000, immediately after he provides a detailed account of the fallen British soldiers and the number of casualties and injuries suffered aboard every British battleship.⁴⁵⁸

Opposed to this collective, uncountable, and unintelligible mass that constitutes the indigenous crowd, the Western residents of Alexandria and the

⁴⁵⁶ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 5-8.

⁴⁵⁷ For Judith Butler’s conception of the *ungrievable*, see Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, (New York: Verso, 2004) and *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable*, (New York: Verso, 2009). Like Butler’s *ungrievable* subject, the Alexandrian crowd is produced as *ungrievable* through a failure of subjectivity. Of course the image of individuals shooting at an uncountable and *ungrievable* crowd brings forth the *Zombie Apocalypse* cinematic genre, but also the *Classical Western* genre, in which individual cowboys shoot and kill an uncountable and *ungrievable* amount of Indian bodies.

⁴⁵⁸ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 91.

members of the invading forces are given names, professions and social status, families,⁴⁵⁹ and are enumerated as individuals.⁴⁶⁰ Rather than street-dwellers or originating in the wilderness, they inhabit homes,⁴⁶¹ churches,⁴⁶² banks,⁴⁶³ and hospitals⁴⁶⁴ (all surrounded and threatened by the indigenous crowd, the invading British bombardment notwithstanding).

Al-Naqqash's text reproduces very closely the biases of European discourse on the crowd and expectedly relies on Western and predominantly British sources for

⁴⁵⁹ See for example the enumeration of the families of the European victims (against an absence of any mention of the Egyptian victims, let alone their families) on page 143.

⁴⁶⁰ For example on page 124 he enumerates the names of the Greek residents who allegedly defended the ministry of justice against the fire of the 'Urabists. On page 137 he gives examples of the names of the British fallen soldiers while he only reports on the losses on the Egyptian side as "huge losses" (he does count the Egyptian prisoners of war, nevertheless. It seems British carceral power produces them as countable).

⁴⁶¹ A telling example is the one mentioned previously, wherein the Egyptian crowd tries to break through a sealed door; al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 142. The binary is obvious here, between the secluded individual in the house(hold), and the crowd outside.

⁴⁶² See for example al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 78. Here the Greeks are seen defending their homes, consulate, church, and patriarchate, against the Egyptian crowd. See also 109- 110 where the church becomes a refuge for the foreign individuals from the native destruction.

⁴⁶³ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 105, 106, 124, 146. In these examples the Bank appears as both a place worth defending, and a place that hosts and conceals Western individuals (who defend it while hiding in it, according to the example on page 124). The binary of the crowd versus the bank can also be read into *A Tale of Two Cities* where the bank provides a refuge to the main characters against the horrors of the French crowd – and at one point provides a surrogate embassy for the French aristocracy in London while their State is overthrown by the crowd.

⁴⁶⁴ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 68; in this example one of the *mashayikh*(the scholars/students of religion) steals a rifle from a *jihadi* (soldier) and fires at the Greek hospital (where people are hiding from the crowd). The bearded Muslim man as an anti-modern force of destruction vis-à-vis the modern Western secular institution seems to have predated Mubarak's 1990s propaganda (and the US war on terror for the matter). Moreover, it is noticeable here that in the few cases where the primitive man is allowed the use of firearms, he has to be otherwise perversely produced as other (bearded, Muslim, firing at hospitals).

his account. His representational schema follows closely that of official and journalistic British reports on the events of 1882.⁴⁶⁵

The same imagery that al-Naqqash presents is evident in the British Foreign Office's "Correspondences Respecting the Riots at Alexandria on the 11th June, 1882."⁴⁶⁶ These correspondences included memoranda sent by the British consulate in Alexandria to the Foreign Office, letters from foreign residents of Alexandria filing for compensation,⁴⁶⁷ as well as the testimonies given in front of the "Commission of Inquiry into the Events of June 11, 1882." The correspondences start with the account given by Mr. Cockson, the British Consul in Alexandria, of how he was "pursued by howling Arabs."⁴⁶⁸ From there on, the same themes al-Naqqash uses are repeated; the indigenous crowd (described as Arabs) spreads, increases in number, overflows, threateningly brandish their nabbuts (but rarely firearms, the threshold of fire still applies), and attempt to break into shops, houses, and sealed doors. In almost all of

⁴⁶⁵ These themes are evident in *The Standard's* coverage of the events. For example on 12/06/1882, 5, *The Standard* reports:

Alexandria has to-day been the scene of a very serious riot. The hostile natives, assembling in a large body, attacked the European inhabitants, and killed and wounded several ... Some of them sought shelter in the French Consulate, and the rioters thereupon proceeded thither and made hostile demonstrations outside the house.

⁴⁶⁶ "Correspondences Respecting the Riots at Alexandria On the 11th June 1882," The National Archives, UK. FO 881/4741.

⁴⁶⁷ The British occupation authorities decided to make the Egyptian government pay indemnity for the foreign residents who reported being harmed during the Alexandria riots. This might have led to the exaggeration of the reports of Western losses and the exclusive focus on them to the extent that the events were made to seem like a unilateral attack by the violent natives against peaceful Europeans. By the end of this document, a number of Western nations and Western nationals are competing for a share of the compensation, and all throughout Western residents reported damages they suffered for the sake of receiving compensation. For more on the indemnity claims and the process of compensation see "Correspondence Respecting Indemnity Claims Arising out of the Alexandria Riots and Subsequent Events," The National Archives, UK. FO 633/49.

⁴⁶⁸ "Correspondences Respecting the Riots at Alexandria," 1.

the examples, they do so without showing any signs of rationality or of any form of individual consciousness; scarcely, if ever, does the account offer any explanation as to *why* they were doing so (except, of course, for base inexplicable and blind hatred towards the foreigners). As with al-Naqqash, the crowd *howls* and screams but rarely speaks. There are very few examples of this crowd actually saying something, but even when they do, their speech was always rendered in translation into one variation or another of “let’s kill the Christians.” In one of these examples, what is reported to be said is in fact “mawitou [sic.]” which means “kill him,” but the translation renders it “kill the Christians.”⁴⁶⁹ In another example, a member of the crowd was purported to have yelled “Ya Muslimin issidouni nimowitou en-Nasára.”⁴⁷⁰ This is clearly faux Arabic (and sounds more like an incorrect rendering of something said in classical Arabic and not in the colloquial of the period) but the gist is still about Muslims killing Christians. When it speaks, the crowd only declares its intent to kill Christians, and it does so not in proper words, not in an intelligible, but rather in faux, Arabic. In yet another example a member of the crowd was reported to have yelled at the Europeans “ha, ya, nozara,” an unintelligible rendering of Arabic.⁴⁷¹ Fluent in faux Arabic, the European eyewitness understood this as a threat (perhaps if asked what “ha ya nozara” meant, European witnesses would readily answer “kill the Christians.” Perhaps all faux Arabic phrases translate to “kill the Christians”). The threatening collective nature of the crowd, its lack of distinction, is therefore symptomized in its lack of a distinct intelligible voice. This unintelligible voice must be threatening, and must be, in one way or another, a death threat.

⁴⁶⁹Ibid, 23.

⁴⁷⁰Ibid, 23.

⁴⁷¹Ibid, 18.

The amorphousness of the mass that constitutes the crowd is not only evident in the crowd's lack of language. Like with al-Naqqash, the British report on the Alexandria events also depicts the Egyptian crowd as uncountable. The numbers of members of smaller crowds are often given in estimates, while with larger crowds the description merely emphasizes how they surround their helpless European victims. Although in some cases this narrative of European victimhood is troubled by reports of Europeans throwing rocks and "roofing stones" back at the Egyptians, and sometimes shooting at them, this is usually posited as in self-defense.⁴⁷² On the first page of the report we encounter how "[t]he Europeans fled to their houses, and from there began a very lively fire on the Arabs with revolvers."⁴⁷³ The shooting therefore is posited as defensive in nature; only after they *fled* did they shoot at the Arabs, and the European fire in that regards is *lively* rather than *deadly* (which one would generally expect of gunfire).⁴⁷⁴ In the hands of the Europeans, fire is lively, while in the hands of the savages who stand at the threshold of fire, fire can only become arson, leading to the burning of the city. The report then goes on to tell us "the Europeans with their revolvers killed a certain number of Arabs, but nothing in proportion to the Europeans killed."⁴⁷⁵ Even when *certain*, the number is not definite, or not worth enumerating. My suggestion here is not to read this sentence as claiming the number of the Egyptian casualties to be small (after all the estimates of death tolls during these events all point to higher Egyptian casualties) but that any number of Arabs killed would have been "nothing in proportion to the Europeans killed." The

⁴⁷² See for example *ibid*, 22, 29, 39.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid*, 1.

⁴⁷⁴ This representational strategy also takes up and builds on the association between fire-power and civilization, which we explored in Chapter 1.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 1.

uncountability of the Arabs (as a crowd as well as dead bodies in this example) only serves to further emphasize that the value of their lives is “nothing in proportion to the Europeans.”

Opposed to these uncountable Arabs, an exact account of Europeans, living or dead, is given. The opposition between the uncountable Egyptian crowd and the countable European individuals is evident in a report on an attack against a hotel. A foreign eyewitness, after describing Egyptian crowds as consisting of “quantities of Arabs,” a “great number of Arabs,” and “about half-a-dozen boys and three or four men,”⁴⁷⁶ moves to provide a detailed account of every European killed and the place where they were killed. As opposed to the “three or four” Arabs, the number of Europeans killed was definitely five. It was not enough to report that they were killed near the hotel at around the same time (this would have perhaps turned them into a crowd). Instead, we are told that three were killed “close to the spot and two more further off.” The details of the manner and time of death are also important: “They were not all killed on the spot; I saw one man move for long afterwards.”⁴⁷⁷ Once again this can be read as a keen attempt not to turn the killed Europeans into a crowd that dies simultaneously, but as individuals dying at distinct times, and as grievable subjects whose time and manner of death are worthy of recounting in as much detail as possible (if we learn anything from Agamben it is that there is also subjectivity in death, and that the hour of death is important for a modern mode of power).⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid, 3.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid, 4.

⁴⁷⁸ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, esp. 160 - 166.

Individuality as White Privilege

The race of the crowd is highlighted by how it howls and speaks in a faux Arabic that could only be interpreted as a threat. Sometimes the race of the crowd is emphasized further: in one of the British reports, an eyewitness noted: “our carriage was entirely surrounded by Barbarens [sic.], Saïdis, and negroes;”⁴⁷⁹ this, of course, in addition to all the reports highlighting the Arab and Muslim nature of the crowd (whether in the British reports or in al-Naqqash’s book). This insistence on the race of the crowd, and to oppose the racially savage crowd to civilized Western individuals, ties to a Western theory of subjectivity that views individuality as a (Western) civilizational achievement and therefore the prerogative and privilege of the civilized white man. All other populations, according to this system of representation, exist as collectives that lack proper individuality. This trend (still evident in contemporary cinematic representations⁴⁸⁰) has shaped 19th and early 20th century theories of subjectivity from Hegel⁴⁸¹ to LeBon and Freud.⁴⁸² What is remarkable in the above examples, however,

⁴⁷⁹ “Correspondences Respecting the Riots at Alexandria,” 29.

⁴⁸⁰ Of course there is the ever-present image of the Native American crowd versus the individual cowboy in Classical Westerns. More recently, there is the common cinematic encounter between the American (or sometimes Israeli) individual soldier and the collective threatening Arab crowd. For example, in *Team America: World Police* (2004), the Arabs are always a threatening collective that often speaks in gibberish/faux Arabic. In the Israeli film, *Waltz With Bashir* (2008), the Israeli individual soldier tormented with guilt over his killing of Arabs during the second Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and recollecting his memories (constituting his *history of identifications* that produce him as the subject he is, if we borrow from a psychoanalytic theory of subjectivity and take it beyond memories of childhood), Arabs exist as a lurking ambiguous threat. The only identifiable element within this threatening racial crowd is the child aiming RPGs at the Israelis (hence the infantile/pubescent crowd) and the (hysterical) woman screaming (hence the feminine crowd).

⁴⁸¹ I am making this claim not only based on the stark Eurocentrism of the *Phenomenology*, nor on his oft-cited remark that Africa had no history (after all Egypt was an exception, according to Hegel). I am basing my claim on how individual subjectivity, according to Hegel, has to pass through identification with Jesus, and is therefore the exclusive privilege of Christian civilization. For the subject to identify himself (and here I am consciously using a gendered language to parallel Hegel’s male centric logic) as the absolute, he needs to realize how the human and the divine, or the Idea and the Subject, the Father and the Son, have always been one, and this is made possible through the story of the son of God, his crucifixion, and his reunion with the divine; Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 453- 478. For Hegel, this

is how *native informants* were brought in to testify to the exclusive Western nature of individuality and racialized nature of the crowd. The eyewitness who reportedly identified the members of the crowd as *barbareens* (i.e. Nubians), *Saidis* (i.e. peasant upper Egyptians), and negroes, was in fact the Egyptian-born Mohamed Aly, who was identified by the report as a “janissary” at the Italian Consulate. It is not clear if by *janissary* the report was referring to Aly’s origins (in that case his insistence on highlighting the race of the crowd can be seen as an attempt to distance his own race and class from those constituting the Egyptian crowd) or was merely being Orientalist in characterizing a native who worked as an armed guard (in that case his insistence on highlighting the race of the crowd can be seen as an act of identification with the Europeans he worked for and an attempt to distance himself, on a civilizational if not a racial scale, from the indigenous crowd). The racial characterization of the crowd was therefore ventriloquized/internalized by Mohammad Aly, the *native informant*, appearing in front of the British “Commission of Inquiry.” The same ventriloquism is also evident in the discourse of al-Naqqash. As early as page 5 of the volume on the

universal history of Subject is a history of individuality, and it starts by walking away from the orgy (or the Bacchic frenzy, the “crowd of frenzied women)- via the chorus of Greek tragedy; see 410- 452, especially Hegel’s cryptic treatment of the Dionysian orgy (or “Bacchic frenzy”) in 437- 439. This move replaces the identification with orgiastic gods who lack proper individual consciousness (like Dionysus, or Bacchus in the Roman rendition which Hegel subscribes to) with identification with “gods whose individuality includes as an essential moment self-consciousness as such” (perhaps like Jesus). The “mystery of bread and wine” (i.e. the Dionysian orgy) becomes the “mystery of flesh and blood” (i.e. the Christian communion); 438. Christianity, therefore, or at least a history of Christian civilization, is necessary to move away from the orgy as a collective mode of being and a collective religion, towards the proper individual subject (one can even say that the orgy which represented

Oriental alterity to the ancient Greeks was now assimilated to a historical schema that is Social Darwinist *avant-la-lettre*). This discussion supports my earlier argument that the Egyptian authors who denounced the crowd as orgiastic were partaking of a specifically Western/Christian history of subjectivation. This is most clearly the case with al-Naqqash who insisted on identifying the crowd as Muslim and Western individuals as Christian, an insistence that could easily be characterized as Hegelian (regardless of whether al-Naqqash was conscious of his Hegelian biases or merely ventriloquizing the dominant sectarian and racialized Western discourse).

⁴⁸² For an interesting analysis of how both LeBon and Freud treated individuality as a Western achievement, see Celia Brickman, *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind: Race and Subjectivity in Psychoanalysis*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 90- 102.

Alexandria events, al-Naqqash identifies the members of the crowd as Muslims, Saidis, Sudanese, and Bedouins. In keeping with European classist depictions of the crowd, al-Naqqash also adds a clear classist element to describe the crowd as the lowly and the riffraff, and identified some of them as porters and donkey-drivers:

فما شعر في المدينة إلا وجماهير المسلمين من سفلة القوم ورعاعهم بين صعيدي وسوداني وبدوي
ومنهم الحامرة والحمالون وأمثالهم يهجمون فرادى وأزواجا وجماعات وأفواجا على من لقوه في طريقهم من
الأجانب كبيرا كان أو صغيرا كهلا أو فتى.⁴⁸³

This is not to argue, however, that it is only the Arab, savage, or non-European crowd that is characterized by a lack of individuality. In fact, in the next section, I propose that the description of the Alexandrian crowd, especially in relation to the loss of individuality, copies the description of the metropolitan crowds in 19th century European literature. While this may seem paradoxical (and while racist discourse should not always be expected to be consistent), one could read the racialist descriptions of the 1882 crowds as stating that, when residing within proper Western spaces, like homes (i.e. the domestic, opposed not only to the crowd but also to other arrangements of habitation which were being erased by the advent of colonialism), banks, and shops (owned by a foreigner merchant class and their local clients), are produced as proper individuals. One may add here churches as per al-Naqqash, though we should be careful not to make al-Naqqash's mistake of reducing the 'Christians' to the 'foreigners' and thus erasing indigenous Christians and native churches, Coptic and otherwise.

When dwelling outside of these proper Western spaces, dwellers become a threatening, ambiguous, and howling collective.⁴⁸⁴ During the colonial encounter, the

⁴⁸³ Al-Naqqash, *Misr lil Misriyyin*, 5.

racialization of these spaces is heightened and the picture is drawn in exclusive terms of the Arab crowd inhabiting the streets versus Western homes and individuals.

Whereas when dealing with crowds in Europe, racial themes are less evident (though not entirely absent),⁴⁸⁵ loss of individuality, the presence of an ambiguous threatening collective, and of a howling crowd are all commonplace. The imagery in al-Naqqash and in the British reports on the events of 1882 is in many ways informed by their European predecessors, dealing with metropolitan European crowds (especially in London and Paris). In the next section I take a closer look at some of these metropolitan accounts, in order to better understand the 19th century European conception of the crowd.

“Dissolution of Sensoria”

For many 19th century European, especially English, writers, the crowd represented a challenge to individuality that inspired both terror and fascination. In his study of the representations of the crowd in 19th century English literature, Victorian literature scholar John Plotz reads a “dissolution of sensoria” that takes place upon William

⁴⁸⁴ One may even take this argument further and claim that, when embodied within proper Western spaces even Arabs can become more individual, and more like the Westerners, as evident by the few cases wherein Arab Egyptians appear in al-Naqqash as individuals by virtue of them belonging to Western spaces and dwelling among Westerners, like the Egyptian native informant who worked as a “janissary” for the Italian embassy. The whole project of modernization, of adopting a Western organization of space, of dwelling between the domestic (as defined by Western modernity) and official spaces (as defined by the modern State, itself a colonial creation) can be seen as an attempt to ascend in civilization and distance oneself from the indigenous crowd. Conversely, one could say that when dwelling outside of their proper Western spaces, Westerners degenerate into a collective state of being akin to the racial crowd. This is evidently the case in LeBon, who reads the formation of a crowd as tantamount to degenerating to the status of racial savages and women (as discussed in chapter 1).

⁴⁸⁵ In the next chapter I will discuss the usage of racial themes and tropes in depicting the European crowd. This is a topic we have already broached through the discussion of the oriental orgy.

Wordsworth's encounter with the crowd.⁴⁸⁶ In the same vein, Saree Makdisi (also reading Wordsworth) characterizes the uncertainty at the encounter with the crowd as a "crisis of subjectivity."⁴⁸⁷ The crowd, therefore, even in the metropolis, and even before it turns into a rioting mob, poses a challenge to one's consciousness, one's senses and ability to understand, a *dissolution of sensoria*, a *crisis of subjectivity*. This

⁴⁸⁶Plotz, *The Crowd*, 16. Here Plotz is mainly dealing with William Wordsworth's *Prelude*, but also alluding to Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. The passage from Wordsworth on which Plotz bases his analysis reads:

How often in the overflowing streets
Have I gone forwards with the crowd, and said
Unto myself, "The face of every one
That passes by me is a mystery."
Thus have I looked, nor ceased to look, oppressed
By thoughts of what, and whither, when and how,
Until the shapes before my eyes became
A second-sight procession, such as glides
Over still mountains, or appears in dreams,
And all the ballast of familiar life –
The present, and the past, hope, fear, all stays,
All laws of acting, thinking, speaking man—
Went from me, neither knowing me, nor known

Plotz then argues that the way Wordsworth treated the crowd in the *Prelude* set the tone for later representations of the crowd in English and more broadly European literature (including Baudelaire, Plotz also mentions Carlyle, the teacher of Dickens); *ibid*, 17.

⁴⁸⁷Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 38:

In Book VII [of Wordsworth's *Prelude*] London finally degenerates ... into an experience of terror ... terror not only due to a sensation of imminent 'objective' danger from the crowd (the constant fear of that possibility of 'half the city' breaking out, 'Full of one passion, vengeance, rage or fear') but also due to the lack of perspective and temporal- and hence narrative stability and clarity; in other words a crisis of subjectivity.

fear (and fascination) of losing one's senses, of having one's individual subjectivity lost to/in the crowd, is perhaps what Baudelaire was also referring to when he described the crowd as an "ineffable orgie." Baudelaire then explains this "ineffable orgie" as: "cette sainte prostitution de l'âme qui se donne tout entière, poésie et charité, à l'imprévu qui se montre, à l'inconnu qui passe." The sexual connotations aside, Baudelaire is describing a loss of oneself to unknown members of the crowd.⁴⁸⁸ (In the hands of LeBon, this loss of individual consciousness was deprived of its poetry and turned into pseudo-science.)

This dissolution of sensoria and all the terror (and, to an extent, the fascination) at the encounter with the crowd are evident, in perhaps more concrete terms, in Dickens' description of the Parisian crowd in *A Tale of Two Cities*. In his famous description of the onset of the revolution and the storming of the Bastille, the dissolution of sensoria can be read in Dickens' eschewing of grammatical structuring and his use of sentence fragments, as if language itself dissolves at the encounter with this 'living sea' that is the revolutionary crowd.⁴⁸⁹ Towards the end of the scene, a Bastille governor finds himself "encompass[ed]" by a "howling universe of passion,"⁴⁹⁰ (just like the howling crowd in Alexandria, even though this crowd speaks the officer's language) and this howling crowd would take that "grim old officer" captive, would take him through the streets, subject him to a "long-gathering rain of stabs and blows" until he fell dead, and then proceeded to decapitate him

⁴⁸⁸ See also the discussion of the poem and its relationship to other works of literature concerning the crowd in Plotz, *The Crowd*, 18- 19.

⁴⁸⁹ Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 2.21.164-167.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 169.

posthumously.⁴⁹¹ The same threat which the European residents experienced and al-Naqqash reported, namely that a howling universe is surrounding them and is about to put an end to their life, existence, and bodily integrity, was faced by the Bastille officer (and by extension the individual) confronting the Parisian crowd. The fear is then realized. Not only does the officer fall dead, but also the crowd makes a point of ripping his body apart even though he was already dead. This encounter between the individual and an unintelligible yet threatening crowd is repeated throughout the *Tale*, even when the crowd is peaceful. The echoes of the footsteps of the London crowd become an omen to the French Revolution and to how the Revolution would transform the family-lives of these characters.⁴⁹² The echoes of the footsteps perhaps represent the anonymity of the crowd: they are not distinguishable from one another, it is not certain from whence they came and where they were headed, hence their threatening nature. The Parisian crowd dancing the revolutionary dance, the Carmagnole, around Lucie Manette (the female protagonist and the representative of Victorian⁴⁹³ femininity in the novel), induces a fit of terror.⁴⁹⁴ The crowd is therefore unintelligible; it is experienced as a howling universe, footstep-echoes, and dances. The reports on the Alexandria crowd, and al-Naqqash's translation/appropriation, clearly follow a theme in English fiction. They were sometimes narrated through the trope of the orgy but always showed something in common with it: the dissolution of

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid*, 169- 170.

⁴⁹² *Ibid*, 2.6.69-78. The chapter is significantly titled "Hundreds of People." The chapter in which the French Revolution takes place is titled "Echoing Footsteps," in reference to the footsteps of the "Hundreds of People" chapter.

⁴⁹³ Lucie Manette is Victorian inasmuch as Dickens made her the embodiment of what Victorian femininity is like. Technically she is not Victorian: she belongs to the Regency rather than Victorian period. Nor is she fully English, her father is the French Doctor Alexander Manette, though her mother and her upbringing are English.

⁴⁹⁴ Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 3.5.213-217.

the individual into a collective, the imminent disintegration/ripping asunder of individuals who confront or fall prey to it, and its very unintelligibility.

The Orgy and the Sexual Narration of the Disintegration of the Individual

At the beginning of this chapter we have discussed how the topos of the orgy resonated with the recurrent trope of sexual chaos. As we switched from the *orgiastic paradox* which produces the hidden as (sexually) licentious to the orgy as a trope for the dissolution of individuality, we have shown many representations of this dissolution, yet the sexual narration of this dissolution has so far been missing from our analysis. Indeed, just as sexual threat (and promise) is imminent in the orgy-qua-mystery or the *orgiastic paradox*, the dissolution of individuality within the crowd-qua-orgy was also recurrently narrated as a sexual threat; the violation of the individual integrity of the body narrated as the sexual violation of the body.⁴⁹⁵ The sexual connotations are hard to miss in Baudelaire. The orgy to which Baudelaire likens the crowd is most likely the Dionysian orgy: the crowd-orgy in Baudelaire is characterized by “ecstatic mysteries/mysterious ecstasies” (*mystérieuses ivresse*) and by a “universal communion.” Yet the crowd-orgy is also sexual, only known to “he who easily weds the crowd” (*Celui-là qui épouse facilement la foule*). The crowd-orgy is then described in terms that invoke the loss of self, the dissolution of

⁴⁹⁵ Once again, it is important here to keep in mind Judith Butler’s analysis of how the repudiation of bodily and subjective vulnerability (sexual and otherwise) supports the myth of a self-embodied subject; Butler, *Undoing Gender*. It is not surprising then that the dissolution of this self-embodiment (in the context of crowds and orgies) returns the body to its essential vulnerability- or in a way exposes a vulnerability that had always been there, lying under the myth of integrity and embodiment. This return to/exposure of vulnerability can only be understood, by a liberal ideology of individuality, as a threat. It also bears noting how Michael Maffesoli connects the sexual connotations of the orgy (to which he assimilates other contemporary non-monogamous practices) to the orgy as a transcendence of an individual embodiment which modernity imposes; Maffesoli, *The Shadow of Dionysus*.

individuality, yet maintaining the sexual metaphor; the loss of self in the crowd-orgy is a “sacred prostitution of the soul, that gives itself in all entirety, poetry and charity ... to the stranger/unknown who passes by” (*sainte prostitution de l’âme qui se donne tout entière, poésie et charité, ... à l’inconnu qui passe*). Of course Baudelaire’s is a narrative of fascination rather than terror. The sexual fear of the crowd-orgy, on the other hand, is evident in the Carmagnole scene from *A Tale of Two Cities*. Lucie’s terror at the Carmagnole is delivered with an air of sexual chaos: “Men and women danced together, women danced together, men danced together, as hazard had brought them together” (3.5.216). The men are dancing like women and the men and women are dancing promiscuously without separation (or even proper pairing) as in an orgy (which led Dickens scholars to believe this scene is influenced by Carlyle’s invocation of the maenads,⁴⁹⁶ though to my knowledge none of them tried to explore the significance of the orgy). Clearly what the fictional Lucie Manette, like many of the non-fictional bourgeois and individual observers of the crowd, finds threatening is the collective ambiguity and mayhem of the crowd. But in addition, it seems there is a certain fear of her own undoing as a bourgeois individual subject by that crowd. First, this dancing crowd-orgy stands between her and her husband’s cell in La Force prison; the crowd-orgy therefore is breaking the domestic unit in which Lucie’s individuality is enclosed (consistent with the breaking of her family by revolutionary justice, which put her husband in prison based on his aristocratic descent). But in addition to the breaking of the family, one could read Lucie’s fear of the sexual chaos of the crowd-orgy as a fear that she will be sexually violated by the crowd. If the men and women of the crowd-orgy are dancing “as hazard had brought them together” then Lucie, the bourgeois observer, did not know when she would be touched (and

⁴⁹⁶ See Lisa Robson, “The ‘Angels’ in Dickens’ House,” 311- 333.

molested?) by this haphazard crowd. This fear of sexual violation by the crowd-orgy is evident in the title of the chapter: “The Wood-sawyer.” The title already represents sexual threat: wood as a (Freudian) phallic symbol, the working class cutting virility of the wood-sawyer, and even the suggestion of castration in cutting wood. The wood-sawyer, however, only appears twice in the chapter; he appears amongst the crowd dancing the Carmagnole but also appears earlier molesting Lucie and her daughter (also named Lucie) with questions (to which Little Lucie is never sure if she should answer) as they try to stand peacefully in front of La Force prison to momentarily unite their household (as if interfering with his wood and saw, his working class virility and ability to castrate, into the bourgeois domestic, but also threatening bourgeois and aristocratic bodies as he compares his saw to the Guillotine).⁴⁹⁷ The wood-sawyer therefore is the stranger among the crowd, always a threat to the domestic, always a potential sexual threat to little girls and their mothers; he is the index of how the crowd’s threat to individual subjectivity is also a sexual threat.⁴⁹⁸

Egyptian thinkers have understood the crowd as a sexual threat since the late 19th century (i.e. since the emergence of a discourse on the crowd). A lengthy didactic dialogue by the Egyptian intellectual and the ‘Urabi revolt orator ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, appearing in 1892, clearly depicts crowds in which individual distinctions blur as a sexual threat to respectable women. In this dialogue a woman warns another against going out to where certain Sufi rituals (al-hadrah) are supposed to be taking place. Of course al-Nadim was concerned with Shafi‘i orthodoxy and the heterodoxy

⁴⁹⁷ Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 3.5.213- 214.

⁴⁹⁸ Lucie, however, whose name means the bringer of light, does not seem easily cuttable. As light she seems to transcend the base matter that constitutes wood and the wood-cutter; even her daughter is named little-light. I thank Joseph Massad for this point.

of Sufi practices repulsed him,⁴⁹⁹ but the dialogue is more concerned with the obscenity of the Sufi crowd than its sacrilege. A woman who goes to these events, according to the dialogue, would expose herself to lewd men who dance like women, who sport curls like women, men who distribute flowers to flirt with the ladies, who distribute candy to the children to flirt with the mothers, those who would verbally and physically harass the women, and those who are drunk and may be moved by their drunkenness to touch the women.⁵⁰⁰ The dancing crowd around women, the men dancing like women, the strangers molesting children and their mothers, and the strangers in the crowd as potential sexual threat to respectable women are all reminiscent of the Carmagnole scene and therefore of orgiastic representations of the crowd in English literature.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ One may note here the parallels between the Sufi ritual in question, namely the *hadrah*, and the Dionysian orgy. *Hadrah* literally means presence, and it literally refers to the presence of the spirits of saints. Along with this meeting of spirits, *hadrah* may involve the elevation of the spirit of the worshippers to unite with the divine or the possession of the body of the worshipper by the divine, sometimes leading to convulsions (that is, a practice that replicates many aspects of the Dionysian orgy, in which souls unite with Dionysus and bodies are possessed by him). This state of ecstasy/convulsion is mocked by al-Nadim's description of the fake worshipper: يتفتف ويريل ويبرجم ويقولوا عليه واخذه الحال; al-Nadim, *al-Ustadh*, 397; All *al-Ustadh* references are made to the collected two volumes (compiled and edited by 'Abd Allah al-Nadim's brother, 'Abd al-Fattah al-Nadim) and titled *al-A'mal al-Kamilah li Majallat al-Ustadh*, (Cairo: Dar al-Kutubkhanah, 1985). Like its 1882 forerunner, the tenure of *al-Ustadh* spanned less than a year, making it unnecessary to establish the exact dates of publication. In another report al-Nadim tells a story of someone who fakes a *hadrah* in order to bite off and devour the ear of his opponent (though the ecstasy is fake, the out of body violence and cannibalism are real); al-Nadim, *al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit*, 226. There is clearly a Dionysiac element here, even in the absence of the full Dionysian topos. To trouble any facile mapping of the Dionysian cult and Sufi practices, it is important to remember that Sufi *orders* are strictly hierarchical, sometimes patriarchal. This runs contrary to the fall of distinction and the egalitarianism perceived in the Dionysian orgy. In fact Sufi orders inherit from Greek thought the Platonic element as much as/more than it inherits the Dionysiac. Any further discussion, however, necessitates more knowledge of the various schools of Sufi thought, which I do not claim to possess.

⁵⁰⁰ 'Abd Allah al-Nadim, *Al-Ustadh*, v. 1, 396- 398.

⁵⁰¹ Unlike other references to *A Tale of Two Cities* where I strongly suggest a direct link between Dickens' novel and Egyptian representations, I see no direct link in this particular example. Al-Nadim's article is dated 1892, two full decades before the translation of the *Tale* into Arabic. It is also unlikely

It is important here to note not only the similarities but also the differences with the orgy. Like with the Dionysian orgy and with Pentheus' fear thereof; the hadrah is presented as a space where the men are feminized and the women are sexually threatened. Like Dionysus, who was a threat to women because of his curls and effeminate attitude according to Pentheus, the men of the hadrah are dangerous to the women. The lewd men of the hadrah are more like Dionysus than the maenads, at least as far as seduction goes- though their effeminacy can be seen as reminiscent of the castrated priests of Cybele. Unlike the orgy, however, the hadrah is not a women's ritual: the fear is not of the women who participate, but that the women who go to watch may be assaulted by the participants. Although the presence of women highlights the licentiousness of the space (mainly by providing this licentiousness with a target to harass and assault), the licentiousness of the space is not imputed to women or their presence. Still there is a certain effeminacy to the practice and its participants, one that creates an atmosphere of gendered and sexual chaos reminiscent of the orgy. This is most evident in the ensuing lines:

إلا هما غوازي أنا عارفة يختي الرقص دا اتعلموه فين ولا لما يميلوا على بعض ويبوسوا بعض ودا

يلف من ورا دا ودا يقصع وسطه زي الخول ودا يقوم ودا يقعد ماتقوليش الا تياترة⁵⁰²

that al-Nadim was a consumer of English literature; unlike other intellectuals of the time al-Nadim did not make any clear references to English literature or to English sources in his writings. Even in the absence of a direct link, it seems that the understanding of the crowd as lewd, potentially drunk, potentially ecstatic, and potentially a sexual predator against upper class women, which belonged squarely to English representations, started appearing in Egypt and the writings of al-Nadim. Here I admit there is a missing link which my research was not able to uncover; though the link may be not in discourse – where I looked- but in the transformation of urban spaces that led to the rise of the same phenomenon in London and Cairo and the same scathing representations thereof.

⁵⁰²Al-Nadim, *al-Ustadh*, 397. It is curious that the theatrical appears here as the telos of the orgy, as if, like Zakariyya, al-Nadim is recapitulating the history of the Dionysian practice from the orgy to the theatre/tragedy.

The men's behavior in the hadrah is suggestive both of effeminacy and of a sexual laxness; men kiss one another and go/turn around each other, standing behind one another, etc.; they are dancing like professional female dancers, ghawazi, but also like professional male dancers, "khawal" (a term that in the 20th century will come to mean an effeminate man, a penetratee, or a— usually passive— homosexual and would become a popular epithet not unlike the English "faggot").

At the end of the dialogue, the opinion of a sheikh is sought, and the sheikh denounces the hadrah in a manner reminiscent of Pentheus' denunciation of the orgy (*mutatis mutandis*). The sheikh objects that the true dhikr (roughly, praising God) belongs in the mosques and not out where people dance to be seen (especially by women). While true worshippers may shut their eyes and cry for the fear of God, according to the sheikh, those fake worshippers dance while eyeing the women. The sheikh then moves to describing how these fake worshippers engage in fake or drug-induced ecstasies only to get the attention of the women or to trick people into giving them their money.⁵⁰³ Just like the maenads in Pentheus' discourse, these men engaged in "mock ecstasies" as an alibi for their lewd behavior. Remarkable here is the role of al-Nadim in indigenizing modernist anxieties (which parallel the Western colonial and Victorian anxieties described throughout this chapter) by anchoring them in notions of selfhood, to an understanding of orthodox Islam.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰³ *Ibid*, 397- 398.

⁵⁰⁴ This of course is not to argue that Islamic orthodoxy is not a modern phenomenon. In fact, al-Nadim's disdain towards heterodox Sufi practices, which echoes the disdain of his contemporary, Muhammad 'Abduh, and parallels/anticipates the anti-Sufi attitude which began to emerge around the same time among modernist Muslims, is a distinctly modern phenomenon: a modern invention of Islamic tradition- if one is to apply Eric Hobsbawm's and Terence Ranger's argument in the context of Islamic tradition. My argument here is that, while Islamic orthodoxy articulated by al-Nadim is modern, and while the disdain towards certain Sufi practices is part of a modernist anxiety concerning anti- or pre-modern practices, al-Nadim's rhetoric successfully codes these modernist anxieties in a

Al-Nadim's dialogue, therefore, is initially not about the crowd as such; it is about the space where certain heterodox practices, which already had their affinities with the orgy, including ecstasies or the simulation thereof, are performed, and which al-Nadim viewed with suspicion. By the end of the dialogue, however, al-Nadim's warning against these types of spaces extends to all sorts of publics; the take away advice is for women to avoid crowds in general, better yet not to go out at all. The catastrophe, according to the sheikh in al-Nadim's dialogue, is the woman who coquettishly walks in the streets (*timshi tit'ajib*) so that the men would see her.⁵⁰⁵ This understanding that the crowd is no place for a lady would be repeated in 2011 in the regime apologists' justification of violence against women demonstrators by wondering why they were there in the first place. It would also be repeated by the Muslim Brothers' warning that female activists who participate in the Tahrir Square demonstrations protesting President Mursi's rule in 2013 would lay themselves open to various forms of sexual assault by the Tahrir crowd. There is a difference, however, between al-Nadim's understanding of the crowd as a place that constitutes a threat to women, and the 2011 counterrevolutionary understanding that feminine presence is what constitutes a threat of the crowd.

Here the orgy, or the motif of sexual chaos, does not narrate the dissolution of political order, political dissent, or the evasion of the State's gaze the same way we saw in earlier examples. Instead, sexual violation in these examples narrates the dissolution of bodily integrity into the collective (the crowd, the *hadrah*). In the

language of classical or "true" Islam. If we read the formulations of subjectivity encountered throughout this study as attempts to invent a tradition, then al-Nadim would be the most successful inventor of tradition we have encountered so far. For the concept of the modern invention of tradition see Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁵⁰⁵ Al-Nadim, *al-Ustadh*, 398- 399.

Carmagnole scene Lucie fears the Parisians not because they no longer have a government to deter them from violating her and her daughter (to do so they would need to denounce her to the Committee of Public Safety and march her to the Guillotine- also it is important to note that in the *Tale* Dickens attributed rape not to the revolutionary crowd but rather to the brutal aristocracy. Although Lucie's fears can indeed be read as sexual, Dickens does not vindicate those fears, nor does he situate this fear within the context of a lack of government or the evasion of the state gaze), but rather because they form a threatening collective, a crowd, and dance around her. Similarly the false Sufis who would expose bourgeois women to lewdness and to sexual harassment were not secretly plotting an insurrection. They were threatening, however, because the rules of the collective space did not allow for respecting the individuality and integrity of the bodies of women.

And yet in both cases there is an evasion of the State's gaze, even if it is articulated differently from the examples we encountered earlier. By forming a crowd, by engaging in ecstatic celebratory dance or esoteric ecstatic religious rituals, or simply by being a collective, the Carmagnole dancers and the (fake) Sufi worshippers constitute a space that is opaque to the gaze, scrutiny, and surveillance of the State.

The Mystery Revisited: Hiding in the Crowd

"The face of every one
That passes by me is a mystery."
(from William Wordsworth's *Prelude*)

The crowd, therefore, shares many of the attributes of the orgy. Like the orgy, the crowd represents a state of lack of distinction in which the individuality dissolves. This lack of distinction and dissolution of individuality are sometimes narrated in terms of the same sexual chaos that is attributed to the orgy, and it incites the same sexual fears. Yet the orgy and the crowd are different in one important way: the orgy, as discussed across this study, is a mystery, something that is hidden from the official and public gaze and is therefore suspect. The crowd, on the other hand (even when described as a mystery by fascinated or terrified poets like Baudelaire and Wordsworth), is public by default. In this section I argue that the crowd, though public, defies the public-official gaze in ways similar to the orgy.

Instead of the Dionysian mystery that occurs away from the city-(and) state, the crowd is an orgy that happens within the field of vision of the public gaze (except of course when the crowd decides to stress its own autonomy and constructs its own sit-in, as the case was with the Tahrir Square orgy). But even the crowd as public orgy is not discernible to the public eye. The conglomeration and condensation of bodies in one space (which triggers the fear of the loss of individual boundaries and the sexualization of this loss) to the extent of blurring the boundaries between these bodies creates a certain opaqueness in the face of the public's and the State's gaze, a certain anonymity (as if everyone is wearing the mask, just like for Wordsworth every face in the crowd is a mystery). Individuals who wish to hide can walk safely within the opaque space constituted by the density of bodies.⁵⁰⁶ The crowd therefore is an orgy not only because of how one is lost to the collective (and how this loss is

⁵⁰⁶ See Plotz, *The Crowd*, 18- 19.

potentially or suspiciously sexual), but also because, by virtue of this loss, the crowd becomes a mystery, even if a public one.

This orgiastic-mysterious nature of the crowd produces a special affinity, nay complicity, with the secret or militant organization (itself orgiastic-mysterious, as we saw with the mystery of Islamist organizations). The first operates underground and strives to evade the gaze of the state, the second evades the gaze of the state through its human density, sometimes acting as the very *underground* within which the secret organization operates and/or hides its members. In *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, for example, the crowd (generically referred to as al-ziham) seems to be the secret organization's surrogate, or accomplice, in hiding militants from the public gaze. In one incident 'Adil 'Abd al-Baqi reports on how a terrorist, wanted by the police, was simply "hiding/submerged within the crowd" (mundassan wasat al-ziham).⁵⁰⁷ In another, he reports that members of the Shawqiyyin organization who were wanted and pursued by the police everywhere were simply hiding in the crowd in broad daylight.⁵⁰⁸ This affinity between the crowd and the militant organization, their complicity in hiding their respective and each other's' members, should not come as a surprise; "The former may be likened to water, the latter to the fish who inhabit it" to use the words of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, (in a phrase that summarizes his mastery over militancy

⁵⁰⁷Shawkat, *Irhabi Taht al-Tamrin*, 140. On the next page 'Abd al-Baqi reports on getting lost within the *Jama'at*, 141. The secret organizations, the *Jama'at*, can hide its members within the crowd or act itself like the crowd within which one could hide. The affinity will be made clearer when we discuss how the term *Jama'ah* that was used in the late 20th century to describe the secret organization, was used in the early 20th century as the official translation of LeBon's *The Crowd*.

⁵⁰⁸Shawkat, *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*, 150: "كان الإخوة الشوقيون الهاربون منتشرين والأمن يبحث عنهم في جميع أنحاء مصر، ولكنني كنت ألتقي بهم في عز الظهر وسط زحام الناس في الميادين والشوارع."

and crowd mobilization).⁵⁰⁹ The crowd as a convenient medium for the members of the secret organization to stay underground was acknowledged, in a different context, in a film interview by members of the 1970s US militant group whose very name is suggestive of the evasion of state gaze: The Weather Underground Organization (set against footage of a moving crowd).⁵¹⁰ The career of ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim himself can serve here as an empirical anecdote to supplement such representations of the crowd as a space of hiding. Nadim himself was an orator responsible for managing the Alexandrian crowds in the service of the ‘Urabi revolt. After the defeat of the revolt, he spent years hiding within the crowd.⁵¹¹

In some representations, the affinity between the crowd and the secret organization goes beyond the hiding of militants within the crowd, to the secret organization adopting a modus operandi reminiscent of the crowd and the anonymity it affords. Charles Dickens has famously caricatured the Jacobin club (which was, basically, the crowd-organization) as a *jacquerie*⁵¹² within which everyone is named Jacques. Anonymity, the collapse of individual distinction, becomes a symptom of revolutionary chaos and of the rule of the crowd. But even before the Revolution imposed a regime that supersedes the individual, the synonymity/anonymity of the members of the *jacquerie* proved useful in confusing police spies- and thus effectively

⁵⁰⁹ Mao Tse-tung, *On Guerilla Warfare*, Chapter 6, <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/1937/guerrilla-warfare/ch06.htm>

⁵¹⁰ *Weather Underground* (2002).

⁵¹¹ I thank Hans Jensen for bringing this point to my attention. Ironically, al-Nadim will come out of his hiding adopting civilizational and middle class conservative biases against the crowds with which he shared a special affinity earlier— as shown in the example of his didactic dialogue on the *hadrah*.

⁵¹² *Jacqueries* are 14th and 15th century peasant revolts in rural France. Dickens uses the term anachronistically in reference to the secret organization that plots the revolution – most probably as an indirect reference to the Jacobin Club.

evading the gaze of the aristocratic state;⁵¹³ perhaps Dickens understood, avant-la-lettre, the Althusserian mode of power through which the state needs to assign a unique name and a unique social position for its subjects to hail them. For the state to be able to hail its subjects, they must be first interpellated as individuals.⁵¹⁴ When subjects are hidden, unidentifiable, anonymous, or interchangeable, then a cog, or *dispositif*,⁵¹⁵ in the machinery of interpellation is not working. Unlike the policeman who shouts “hey you” in Althusser’s example, the police spy stands confused in front of the jacquerie, not able to identify who exactly of its members is Jacques, and like the police spy in Dickens (but unlike the hailing police man in Althusser), Egyptian

⁵¹³ See the interaction between Earnest Defarge and the spy John Barsad; Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* 2.16.13. John Barsad, suspecting something insidious, tries to identify Earnest Defarge as Jacques, and Defarge acts oblivious. Unlike having a distinct name through which the state can “interpellate” its subjects, the codename Jacques does not only make the subjects interchangeable, but also makes them less recognizable, and allows them to shed their *Jacqueness* when need be.

⁵¹⁴ Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus,” 85- 126.

⁵¹⁵ I am deliberately using this term in an Althusserian context despite its association with a Foucauldian lexicon. First the difference between an *appareil* and a *dispositif* is that the former refers to an overall system (usually translated as apparatus) and the latter refers to the specific device (though sometimes translators prefer to use apparatus rather than device as a translation). Clearly, Althusser, interested in ideologies and continuous systems of power that privilege the ruling classes thinks of the overall workings of apparatuses while Foucault, interested in a fragmented and discontinuous reading of power thinks of dispositifs. However, in Althusser’s seminal “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus”; the “subject endowed with [I would add individual] consciousness” turns out to be “the absolutely ideological ‘conceptual’ device (*dispositif*);” Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus,” 113. I do not treat this lexical overlap between Althusser and Foucault as coincidental. That the individual subject is a cog in the machinery of power, that power individualizes its subjects to work on them as individuals, is one of the many commonalities between the Althusserian and Foucauldian frameworks. Although later in his career Foucault would turn away from individualizing modes of power, in *Discipline and Punish* he deals with a power that is clearly individualizing, one that prescribes a set place and position for its subjects and needs this set place and position in order to function. In his preface to Deleuze and Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus* Foucault warned against individualism, cautioning that to face a power that individualizes one needs not face it as individual; Michel Foucault, “Preface to *Anti-Oedipus*,” in *Power*, ed. James Faubion, trans. Robert Hurley et al., (New York: The New Press, 2000), 106- 110. More specifically Foucault cautions: “The individual is the product of power. What is needed is to ‘de-individualize’,” *ibid*, 109. Foucault’s vision for de-individualizing seems close to Dickens’ jacquerie – but also the orgy: “The group must not be the organic bond uniting hierarchized individuals, but a constant generator of de-individualization,” *ibid*. The fear of losing one’s individuality in the crowd can therefore be seen as to mark the triumph of an ideology, or a mode of power (depending on whether we go with the Althusserian or Foucauldian) that operates through individuation.

authorities, police forces, and spies were not able to identify the members of al-Shawqiyin just because they donned masks of anonymity (like the masks that rendered every face in the London crowd a mystery to Wordsworth) by simply hiding in the crowd.

This Dickensian caricature of the jacquerie is repeated in the Egyptian regime's propaganda against Islamist organizations. In a way, the Islamist organization is always a jacquerie in which all the members hide under something that masks their identity and renders them all the same: this is the beard and the jilbab for the men, and especially the niqab for the women. *Ruz al-Yusuf's* caricatures depicting Islamist women show what we can term 'a jacquerie of the niqab' in which all the members are interchangeable and the same.⁵¹⁶ The Dickensian jacquerie is repeated very closely in Shawkat's *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*. In one of the absurd moments in the text, Shawkat tells his readers of an Islamist organization that did away with proper names and instead bestowed on all its members the name 'Abd Allah.'⁵¹⁷ Since 'Abd Allah simply means "the worshipper of God," this appellation evades any attempt at

⁵¹⁶ For example see the cartoons on 26/2/1996, 54-55. In one cartoon a man (in modern attire) asks the father of his niqabi bride to exchange her with her younger sister. In another one a woman in niqab is running after a man who seemingly sexually assaulted her, and the man exclaims "excuse me, I thought you were my wife."

⁵¹⁷ Shawkat, *Irhabitaht al-Tamrin*, 162- 163. Given the widespread popularity of *A Tale of Two Cities* in Egypt and the position it occupied in official education, it is not far-fetched that Shawkat – or the leaders of this caricaturistic organization if we are to believe Shawkat- was or were influenced by the *Tale* in creating an organization whose members are interchangeable. Shawkat, however, adds Egyptian comedy to Dickens' British humor. In a scene reminiscent of Egyptian comedy theatre, Shawkat tells us that if we ask a member of that group about his name he would answer "my name is 'Abd Allah," and if you ask him what do you do for work he would say "I work as 'Abd Allah;" *ibid*, 163.

distinction or recognition: any Muslim is in essence ‘*Abd Allah*’⁵¹⁸ (or any Muslim male ‘*Abd Allah*, any Muslim female *Amat Allah*).

Both the crowd and the secret organization/ Jama‘ah are therefore mysteries that lend themselves to orgiastic representations. They are both hidden spaces, and therefore one is the surrogate of the other. This affinity sometimes goes as far as depicting the secret organization as a space in which the individual is lost to the collective, just like the crowd (and the orgy, for the matter); the jacquerie in Dickens, the jacquerie of the niqab in *Ruz al Yusuf*, and the jacquerie of ‘*Ibad Allah* (pl. of ‘*Abd Allah*) in Shawkat. The affinity between the Islamic secret organization and the crowd is also semantic. The Islamic organization, especially in regime caricature, is often referred to as *al-Jama‘ah*. The term originally meant the group or the collective (and in a certain Sunni Islamic discourse referred to the collective will of the Muslim ummah), but would be used at the beginning of the 20th century to denote the crowd in its LeBonian manifestation (and was used in this manner by Ahmad Fathi Zaghlul in his translation of LeBon’s *The Crowd*, which we will further discuss in the next section). Al-Jama‘ah, therefore, like the crowd, is a space where individual members merge to form a collective. The crowd and the jama‘ah are both depicted as mysteries that obscure their individual members, sometimes to the extent of effecting a total loss of individuality. The jama‘ah (after its transformation from its early 20th century meaning of something normative to something abnegated), the crowd, and the orgy therefore have something inherent in common: the dissolution of individuality into a collective to the extent that the individual is no longer distinguishable; depictions of

⁵¹⁸ A similar effect can be observed through ‘Urabi’s appellation as ‘Arabi. The racialized crowd to which ‘Urabi belongs renders any of its members ‘Arabi.

mystery, license, and chaos can be seen as outcomes of this dissolution into the collective.

In the next chapter I will move from the crowd-as-orgy to the crowd as such, exploring how the crowd emerges in Egyptian discourse as an improper and licentious space amidst a colonizing process that redefines space along Western-bourgeois-colonial lines (the same colonial process that transformed *al-jama'ah* from the embodiment of the normative will of the ummah to the abnegated crowd and later to an Islamist caricature). But before moving from the crowd-as-orgy to the crowd as such (and to pave the way to understanding the colonial process that defines and redefines space), I want to bring the crowd back, through a different lens, to the orgy-as-mystery, and as an oriental mystery more specifically.

The Crowd, the Oriental Mystery, and the World-as-Exhibition

The new lens I want to introduce here is Timothy Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt*. The colonizing process, which Mitchell reads as inherent to the modes of modern disciplinary power,⁵¹⁹ rests on an epistemology that abstracts a plan from the real, yet one that only conceives of the real through a plan or representation. Mitchell terms this epistemology, this almost paradoxical movement of abstracting a representation from the real yet only conceiving the real through its representation, the "metaphysics of modernity." This epistemology and these metaphysics manifested themselves clearly, according to Mitchell, in the Great Exhibition where the whole world was

⁵¹⁹ "[F]orms of power based on re-ordering of space and the surveillance and control of its occupants were by nature colonising in method," Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, x.

rendered into a representation easily navigated through an actual printed plan.⁵²⁰ But the Great Exhibition is itself an index of the larger epistemology that sees the world as an exhibition; a space organized through a plan and made available for legibility by the gazing subject.⁵²¹ Voyagers to the Orient, who were simultaneously (and somehow paradoxically) expecting to see the thing beyond the exhibit yet expecting it to be organized according to the principles of the world-as-exhibition were then perplexed by a reality, or a thing, unmediated by a plan. They found no representation that would render the real real or abstract meaning thereof, and to them this rendered the thing void of meaning⁵²² (perhaps an “indescribable orgy,” one may add?). From then on, the colonization of the Orient, and of Egypt specifically, proceeded through imposing a plan, an order, and therefore meaning, on this plan-less Oriental thing that defies order and escapes meaning.⁵²³ In the next chapter I will move to how this ordering of space created some spaces as orderly while others (which to an extent escaped the planning and organization, especially the division of spaces to proper public and domestic spaces) as licentious.

What I want to add to Mitchell’s analysis here is that the crowd, as a disorganized and undisciplined collective, corresponds to the order-less and therefore meaningless thing in Mitchell’s analysis. In fact, although Mitchell’s analysis is not concerned with the crowd as such, there are various hints and gestures throughout the text to the crowd as the other of the modes and institutions of discipline that inscribe order and meaning. This is perhaps clearest when Mitchell shows how the Great

⁵²⁰Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 1-10.

⁵²¹ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 10- 13.

⁵²² Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 21- 33.

⁵²³In a way, this is the main argument of *Colonising Egypt*.

Exhibition was thought of as domesticating the crowd: the insidious crowds of 1848 were turned, by the power of the Exhibition, into disciplined and orderly spectators in 1851.⁵²⁴ The Exhibition is not the only disciplinary institution that orders the crowd into something else. Military discipline (which was conceived as the other and antidote to the crowds by LeBon,⁵²⁵ and which in Mitchell's analysis appears as providing one of the models of discipline that were taken beyond the army to other institutions and to social organization at large) also appears as the other of the crowd. Compared to modern militarism, older forms of warfare "seem[ed] like the foolish clashing of *mere crowds*"⁵²⁶ (emphasis added). The Ottoman generals, Mitchell tells us, took note of how outdated troops that have not learned modern military discipline "when in the presence of the enemy, do not remain drawn up in a line, but stand *confusedly* and *promiscuously* like a *crowd* in a place of diversion" (emphases added).⁵²⁷ But the opposition between the crowd and the modes of discipline that produce an ordered and meaningful world-as-exhibition do not only lie in the example of the 1851 Great Exhibition or the semantic opposition of mere crowds to modern militaries. There is a deeper opposition that is inherent in the very nature of the world-as-exhibition epistemology. The world-as-exhibition separates, according to Mitchell, not only representation from reality, but furthermore the spectator, the gazing subject, from the representation (and hence from the real thing being observed).⁵²⁸ Not only the Great Exhibition and the army, but also all institutions of modern discipline

⁵²⁴Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 20.

⁵²⁵ See Robert Nye, *Origins of Crowd Psychology*, 123- 147. I return to this discussion in Chapter 5.

⁵²⁶Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 37.

⁵²⁷Qtd. in Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 38.

⁵²⁸Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 9.

produce “the modern individual, constructed as an isolated, disciplined, receptive, and industrious political subject.”⁵²⁹ This is the individual we have posited as the other of the crowd throughout this section, the individual that risks total disintegration in the crowd-orgy.

We can think of the crowd therefore as the other, or one of the others, of the world-as-exhibition; the crowd is a disorderly space that defies representation (hence only describable as an indescribable orgy) and therefore a space of the loss of meaning. The “dissolution of sensoria” Plotz noted, or the “crisis of subjectivity” noted by Makdisi, can therefore be understood as this loss of any means to render the *thing* intelligible. It can also be understood in terms of the collapse of the series of separations the epistemology of the world as exhibition is predicated on. As a space that defies order, representation, and meaning, the series of separations between the thing and its representation, and representation and the gazing subject, is no longer possible, leading to the dissolution of the faculties of comprehension of the subject, a *dissolution of sensoria*, along with the dissolution of the subject as such. We keep coming back to the fate of Pentheus, as the outcome of his experiencing the crowd; now, the “metaphysics of modernity” endow it with more epistemological and symbolic significance.

The crowd, then, can be seen as a space beyond representation and signification, beyond what is known in Lacanian psychoanalysis as the symbolic order. Throughout this chapter, the crowd has appeared ululating, howling, and threatening in faux Arabic, but seldom speaking in a proper language. While the Lacanian reading is culturally specific (primarily to 20th century Europe) and while

⁵²⁹Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, xi.

the howling and luluing descriptions come mainly from British reports, there is still merit in applying this lens to Egypt. First, the colonial reports on the crowd were part of the Egyptian cultural world (through translations like the one offered by al-Naqqash for example but also through the ensuing transformation of the Egyptian polity and society by the authors of these colonial reports). Second, it is important to recall from chapter 1 how the term *bahimiyyah* stood for the undisciplined, uncivilized, and libidinal element, which late 19th century thinkers associated with the crowd, and that this term also refers to a dissolution of signification and to the absence of the faculty of speech. I am not suggesting, of course, that Lacan's analysis neatly fits late 19th century representations or that the authors of the colonial reports and the late 19th century Arab authors using the term *bahimiyyah* were all avant-la-lettre Lacanians. What I am suggesting, instead, is that in the late 19th century, through representations of the crowd as something beyond signification, a howling mass, an indescribable orgy, and through using a term like *bahimiyyah* which combines together the notions of ambiguity, lack of speech, and the libidinal uncivilized element (also the Freudian id in early translations of Freud), a Lacanian world was made possible. The value of bringing the Lacanian lens here is that it brings to a new light the femininity and childishness of the crowd.

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, acquiring the faculty of speech, entering the symbolic, is initiated through the father's prohibition, and therefore through the complex process of identifying with and fearing the father. The symbolic order therefore is paternal and masculine, and the phallus becomes the universal signifier. A withdrawal from signification is therefore a regression from the law of the father, and a loss of the phallus. Femininity of the crowd can be then understood as a regression from the symbolic order into a pre-symbolic, pre-oedipal, submerging in and merging

with the maternal⁵³⁰ (thus simultaneously the infantile and the feminine). This space, which lacks meaning and signification, threatens to effect a similar regression from the symbolic on its observers; Plotz's dissolution of sensoria can therefore be thought of as the dissolution of the symbolic order and the regression to the pre-oedipal maternal and infantilized spaces.⁵³¹ The fear of the orgy and the crowd (and the crowd-as-orgy) can therefore be understood as a fear of dissolution into the maternal, a fear of being engulfed by the mother⁵³² (evident in speculations about how the early

⁵³⁰ The maternal as a pre-oedipal stage that lacks distinction, and from which the subject separates itself and fears to fall back to is a running theme in Freudian psychoanalysis, highlighted by some Freudian theorists and downplayed by others. My analysis here is mainly based on Celia Brickman's reading and revision of Freud in *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind*, esp.108- 130. The maternal, according to Brickman, is "seen retrospectively as the site of a dreaded but enthralling fusion of subject and object," 108. From this supposition, Brickman proceeds (taking up Julia Kristeva's notion of the abject, itself based on a revision of Freud and Lacan) to show how the maternal, along with the feminine, represents a regression to a state of indistinction, against which the subject devises defense mechanisms of repudiation, disgust, and abjection; hence the abjection of the feminine (a point I simultaneously take up and challenge in the next chapter). Adding the work of Jessica Benjamin to her reading of Freud and Lacan via Kristeva, Brickman shows how the maternal/feminine is not only a source of disgust and abjection but also fear: "behind the oedipal truce" Brickman notes, "lurks the dread of the pre-oedipal mother." Taking after Benjamin, Brickman formulates this fear of pre-oedipal maternal indistinction as "the fear of the more dangerous immersion with the merger-threatening mother," 123. Since we are in the context of discussing the crowd-orgy in relation to the maternal (and to Kristeva's conception of the presymbolic embeddedness in the maternal and the post-symbolic repudiation thereof), it is important to remember how in Kristeva's analysis the maternal, or more specifically the semiotic, pre-symbolic, embeddedness in the maternal, corresponded to the *chora* (i.e. the place of the orgy); Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, 25- 30.

⁵³¹ One can read the passage from Wordsworth's *Prelude* (with which Plotz opened his analysis of the crowd in English literature and the *dissolution of sensoria* it effects, and which I quoted in an earlier footnote) in a similar manner. As a result of the experience with the crowd "All Laws of acting, thinking, speaking man – / went from me, neither knowing me, nor known." The collapse of meaning and of the laws that govern meaning (laws of acting, thinking, and speaking) is evident. But there is also a suggestion of the regression from the laws of signification—what in Freudian-Lacanian psychoanalysis will be called the law of the father. The crowd which escapes the laws of signification also withdraws its observer/victims away from these laws. But these laws are not simply the laws of acting, thinking, and speaking, they are the laws of acting, thinking, speaking *man* (interestingly, not Man in the uppercase). This withdrawal from signification can therefore be read as either a regression to childhood (recalling the analysis of the crowd as an infantile/pubescent space presented in Chapter 1) or as castration (resonating with the analysis above, as well as the analysis of the crowd as a feminine space in Chapter 1).

⁵³² The "dread of being killed (devoured?) by the mother" was suggested by Freud in his essay on "Female Sexuality." In Freud's essay, the notion is not elaborated further. Nor is it presented as a universal condition, but rather as pre-condition of femininity. Through Jessica Benjamin's and Madelon Sprengnether's revision, Celia Brickman refurbishes this fear of being devoured by the

forms of the orgy included the killing and devouring of a human child, but also in the fate of Pentheus, torn to pieces by the hands of his own mother). It can also be understood as a fear of castration (literalized by the practice of castrating Cybele's male priests in her orgies). The fate of Pentheus, in addition to standing for the fear of being devoured by the mother, can be read as a fear of castration (displaced onto the dismembering of the body), but also as a fear of the regression to a fragmented body. Again, this is not to suggest that the orgy has always carried Lacanian significations, sometimes *avant-la-lettre*. It is to argue that the orgy and the crowd, especially the

mother into a more gender neutral role compared to the one it played in Freud's cursory remark. Brickman locates this fear of being devoured by the mother (which she also formulates as the fear of the "merger-threatening mother") at the base of subjectivity and of the fear and repudiation of the maternal and by extension the feminine; Celia Brickman, *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind*, 123. I find Brickman's reformulation particularly useful in theorizing the fear of the orgy and the crowd, not only because they are feminine spaces that represent a threatening "merger" (along with a series of parallel regressions, to nature, to the maternal, to the pre-subject), but also because in the Dionysian orgy Pentheus is torn to pieces by the hands of his own mother. Even beyond the example of the Dionysian orgy, women who belong to and metonymically stand for the revolutionary crowd are presented with an air of infanticide. Infanticide appears as one of the devices through which the Versailles forces tarnished the women of the Commune; Guy Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 113. But the fear of infanticide and more specifically of being devoured by the mother runs deeper than one cursory example of Versailles propaganda. In her analysis of the *Pétroleuse*, Gullickson notes "She was [in bourgeois discourse, that is] an evil mother, capable of killing her children ... She embodied the message that men could expect anarchy and destruction if women escaped the home and the bonds of civilization and were allowed to give rein to their very worst instincts. Freed women, they revealed, would ... devour their (male) children, and destroy civilization," 223. Another example that is relevant to our study is Madame Defarge of *A Tale of Two Cities*, who proudly proclaims she is knitting shrouds (whereas good mothers and women whose femininity is refined through bourgeois domesticity would knit swaddles for their babies); 2.15.133. She is also intent on killing not only aristocrats and their associates (including their wives) but also their infant children, including little Lucie, the daughter of the main female character of the novel. Revolution and the crowd are therefore represented by infanticidal women, mirroring the feminine/maternal nature of the crowd and threat of indistinction they present. Though it may be important, as a side note, to acknowledge that infanticide is not exclusively related to crowd and revolution. Madame Defarge's infanticide mirrors not only the maternal merger-threatening crowd which she belongs to, but also mirrors Lady Macbeth who would love the "babe that milks [her]" but would "Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums/And dashed his brains out;" *Macbeth*, 1.7.58- 59. For more on the parallels between Madame Defarge and Lady Macbeth see Harold Bloom, *Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities*, (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987) 9-10, and Andrew Sanders, *The Companion to A Tale of Two Cities*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 161. For a reading of the fear/fantasy of infanticide in English literature (through the lens of Lady Macbeth) see Stephanie Chamberlain, "Fantasizing Infanticide: Lady Macbeth and the Murdering Mother in Early Modern England," *College Literature* 32, no.3 (summer 2005): 72- 91. The infanticidal mother, therefore, was already a trope in English literature that was then picked by counterrevolutionary propaganda (perhaps aware, consciously or unconsciously, of the parallel between the untamed and non-bourgeois femininity of the infanticidal mother and that of the revolutionary crowd). All these examples serve to elaborate the salience of Brickman's highlighting and revision of the Freudian notion of the fear of being killed *and* devoured by the mother, even beyond the context of the crowd and the orgy.

crowd as orgy, acquire new significations in a Lacanian (and Freudian/Oedipal) world in which the symbolic order is masculine.

This fall from signification is also a fall from the modern,⁵³³ from what Timothy Mitchell terms the “metaphysics of modernity.” (Hence, superimposing a Lacanian analysis on Mitchell’s work may help reveal the intersection of race and gender, and how the crowd falls at this intersection between the primitive and the feminine, a point elaborated by feminist scholars and to which I will pay close attention in the next chapter).⁵³⁴ Experiencing the real thing without representation, without a plan to impose meaning, was the experience of the Orient. There is therefore something in common between crowds and orgies on the one side and the Orient on the other, something deeply Oriental about the crowd and the orgy. Once again, the metaphysics of modernity, the epistemology of the world-as-exhibition, endows oriental mysteries with a novel significance. Oriental mysteries no longer signify a suspiciously exotic and sensual Orient, but furthermore they come to signify this Oriental lack of ordering and meaning, now that we are beyond the bounds of the Western and modern world-as-exhibition. It is not surprising then that the first accounts on the encounter between the British colonial forces and Egypt (which also came to constitute one of the earliest Egyptian accounts on the crowd) feature Western individuals threatened by collective, disorderly, and threatening crowds, which fail to offer meaning, but instead are howling and luluing.

⁵³³ On how the phallus does not only stand for masculinity but also for modernity see Brickman, *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind*, 104, 109, 111. See also Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 68.

⁵³⁴ For an elaboration which synthesizes the work of many feminist scholars (including Gayle Rubin, Jessica Benjamin, and Judith Butler) and which builds on and exposes the racial and gendered biases in the works of LeBon and Freud (at points through a Lacanian lens), see Celia Brickman, *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind*, esp. 102- 130.

It was not only the crowd in Alexandria, however, that was experienced as an Oriental threat that defies legibility by Western epistemologies; we have already seen how even the metropolitan crowd (especially in Paris) was an Oriental mystery, a howling universe reminiscent of the howling Arabs surrounding Western individuals. In the next chapter I will take a closer look at this affinity: representations of the crowd in Egypt were shaped by colonialism and therefore rehearsed Europe's biases against its own crowds. However, at the outset, the descriptions of the crowd in Europe were also shaped by colonialism and placed the crowds in the same discursive space as the racial other.

Chapter 3: Colonial Revolving Doors

Through most of the 19th century, and especially with the turn of the 19th/20th century and the British occupation of Egypt, a new conception of space and of the organization thereof was introduced to/imposed on Egypt. This discursive/ideological organization of space led to an imposition of what in the dominant European bourgeois ideologies were considered proper spaces: State institutions, the domestic, spaces of official work, to name a few; a veritable *cultural imposition* befitting Fanon's conceptualization of the term. This organization of space, however, was already predicated on subsuming Europe's racial others (and frequently more specifically the Muslim, the Arab, and the Turk) into what it perceived as improper and licentious. This chapter traces this movement of the discourse on the crowd (as an exemplary licentious space) between the colony and the metropole. This chapter, as well as the next, though more concerned (as far as its archive and empirical data go) with space and less with subjective traumas, explores the Fanonian trauma by way of space.

But before proceeding with my analysis, I first need to explain: why the crowd? Why is the crowd useful as a term and a discursive category? Why is it being used as an exemplar of licentious spaces? And why am I choosing to read certain Arabic texts under the rubric of the discourse on the crowd, even as many of them had no specific or uniform term to denote the phenomenon Europe called the crowd? Establishing how the crowd as a term and a discursive and analytic category is useful for studying licentious spaces in Egypt will further help us construct the argument of how the European discourse on the crowd largely shaped, or was mapped onto, its

Egyptian counterpart.

Why the Crowd?

Why the crowd and not the mob? For the purposes of this study, it is the crowd because this is the term that was deployed in the English sources, obviously, including the English translation of Gustave LeBon's *Psychologie des Foules*, although in a number of secondary texts the terms *crowd* and *mob* readily collapse into one another. In LeBon's book, the aggregate of people that are under scrutiny are not necessarily engaging in riots, destruction, and other kinds of behavior that would fall under the general definition of a mob.⁵³⁵ What LeBon presumed to study was the state of mind of people who aggregated in a collective, even before they engaged in riots, destruction, and mob-like activity; as far as LeBon was concerned, any aggregate of people had the tendency to riot, and any crowd potentially a mob.⁵³⁶ This understanding of the crowd as always potentially a riot, a mob, is evident in many of

⁵³⁵ For example, Chapter 1 of LeBon's text opens with this statement on the nature of the phenomenon LeBon called 'the crowds' (or *les foules*):

In its ordinary sense the word 'crowd' means a gathering of individuals of whatever nationality, profession, or sex, and whatever be the chances that have brought them together. From the psychological point of view the expression 'crowd' assumes quite a different signification. Under certain given circumstances, and only under those circumstances, an agglomeration of men presents new characteristics very different from those of the individuals composing it. The sentiments and ideas of all the persons in the gathering take one and the same direction, and their conscious personality vanishes. A collective mind is formed, doubtless transitory, but presenting very clearly defined characteristics. The gathering has thus become what, in the absence of a better expression, I will call an organised crowd, or, if the term is considered preferable, a psychological crowd. It forms a single being, and is subjected to the law *of the mental unity of crowds*. (emphasis in original)

LeBon, *The Crowd*, 43-44.

⁵³⁶ See *ibid.*

the classical works of English literature (including ones that would later become relevant to colonial and postcolonial Egypt as I will show throughout this chapter). This is the case, for example, in Wordsworth's *Prelude*, where the crowd always carries a threat of chaos.⁵³⁷ The mob/riot potentiality, imminent within the crowd, is even more evident in Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*; the echoes of the footsteps of the London crowd, going about their own business, are enough reason for Lucie Manette, the representative of the bourgeois domestic and of Victorian femininity, to "shudder"⁵³⁸; which also goes to show the opposition between the crowd and the proper spaces of domesticity.⁵³⁹ In an ensuing dialogue between Lucie Manette and Sydney Carton (who enjoyed a special kinship with the crowd as will be shown later in this chapter), the echo of the footsteps of the London crowd is decided to be an omen for a more ferocious crowd that is about to walk into their lives (i.e. the crowd of the French Revolution).⁵⁴⁰ This ferocious potentiality of the crowd is realized when the French Revolution takes place, and the Parisian crowd walks uninvited into the lives of the bourgeois characters of the novel. It is perhaps this potentiality of the crowd to become a mob and a riot at any time that LeBon examined

⁵³⁷ In his study of the representations of crowd in 19th century English literature, John Plotz deals with Wordsworth's *Prelude* as exemplary of 19th century English and European literature on the crowd. For a thorough analysis of the crowd in Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Wordsworth's own position as an author and a wanderer in relation to the crowd, and the terrors and fascinations the crowds induce, see Plotz, *The Crowd*, 15- 42 (interestingly, Plotz's account ends with a brief discussion of *A Tale of Two Cities*). In a similar vein, Saree Makdisi shows how the crowd in Wordsworth is a threat because it is always ready to turn into a mob, in *Romantic Imperialism*, 28- 30.

⁵³⁸ Although the novel is set in Regency, and not Victorian England, I treat the social norms of the novel as representative of the time it was written rather than the time it was set in. Dickens himself proclaimed this intention at the end of the opening passage in which he declares "the period" (also the title of the first chapter) in which the novel is set to be "far like the present period," Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 1.1.1.

⁵³⁹ Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 2.6.77.

⁵⁴⁰ Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 2.6.77-78.

in *Psychologie des Foules*, hence the preferred use of *the crowd* as a translation over *the mob*.

It is this unruly potentiality in the crowd that makes the crowd the primary object of analysis for this chapter. These potentialities can also be read on symbolic and epistemic levels; the unruliness of the crowd is evident not only in its wont to riot, but in its evasion of the State's power to regiment spaces; it defies individuation as we saw in chapter 2, it threatens the domestic as we see in the example of *A Tale of Two Cities* (in a way, the tale of the uninvited march of the Parisian crowd into the lives of the members of Lucie Manette's household), and it is inimical to work and to other proper forms of publics as we will see throughout this chapter and the next. The space the crowd occupies, comprises, and constitutes⁵⁴¹ is thus an exemplary licentious space to the effect that it is neither the domestic nor the proper public, but rather a space that threatens both and defies the very dividing line between the domestic and the public.

The crowd in Arabic

The question of *why the crowd* becomes more complex and contentious once we are dealing with Arabic discourse. Many of the late 19th century texts I choose to read as texts on the crowd did not have a term for this phenomenon. Instead, they commonly resorted to terms like *al-'awam* (commoners), *al-safalah/siflah* (the lowly or base people), and *al-ri'a'* (riffraff). Why, then, choose to read these texts as treatises on the crowd? Am I not imposing a Western term and discursive category on Arabic texts?

⁵⁴¹ I treat crowds here as constitutive of the spaces they occupy, hence my occasional slippage from crowd to space.

First, I choose to read these texts as constituent parts of the discourse on the crowd because they share with their European counterparts the understanding of the crowd as the lower class/ lowly crowd (until LeBon revised the notion and posited that all crowds acted like their lowliest elements, regardless of their actual class or educational constitution). Second, I have already shown how in the writings of someone like al-Naqqash, we have the same notions of the loss of individuality into a howling and threatening collective that characterize the European discourse on the crowd, even in the absence of an Arabic term for the phenomenon. In other examples, however, we need pay attention to the similarities and differences between Arabic discourse and European discourse as well as the discursive formations that contributed to them. Al-Shidyaq, for example, did not adopt the discourse on the crowd *in toto* but engaged many of the discursive formations and bodies of knowledge that shaped the European discourse on the crowd (including, as I am about to show, discourses on criminality and criminology, as well as the pre-Nordau discourse on degeneration). It is important here to remember, however, that what is at stake for this chapter is not the crowd per se but licentious space more generally. While the crowd is treated throughout this study as constituting the quintessential licentious space, my analysis here will take the liberty to move from the crowd to other licentious spaces as they appear in discourse.

Colonization in Real Time: Crowd Discourse in Arabic in the late 19th Century

Two authors who reproduced Western discourse on the crowd in Arabic as it was emerging in the West (and before the translation of *A Tale of Two Cities* or Le Bon's writing of *The Crowd*) were Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq (especially in his reports on the Paris Commune) and Salim al-Naqqash (in his writings on the Alexandria riots of 1882). These real-time translations and paraphrases of Western commentaries on the

crowd show how the emergence of a discourse on the crowd in Egypt, even if colonially defined, was almost coterminous with its emergence in Europe (a few days after the fact in the case of al-Shidyah and two years after the fact in the case of al-Naqqash). In the previous chapter we have introduced how al-Naqqash, throughout volume 5 of *Misr lil Misriyyin*, adopted, translated into Arabic, and introduced to an Egyptian audience, British (mis/pre)conceptions of the crowd in a way that mixed racial biases against the indigenous crowd with the individual-liberal fear of ambiguous collectives. In al-Naqqash's representations as well as in British reports at the time, the proper Western spaces in which proper modern individuals were embodied (banks, churches, hospitals, and households) were opposed to the licentious and largely indigenous spaces of the crowd.⁵⁴² Nothing more need be said about al-Naqqash here but it is useful to remember the significance of *Misr lil Misriyyin*. It was one of the early incidences of the emergence of a discourse on the Egyptian crowd (that is, if we bracket the appearance of the masses in the historiography of al-Jabarti as belonging to a different discourse, and their appearance in Ottoman and Egyptian governmental documents prior to 1882 as not generative of an Egyptian discourse on the crowd, given how these documents were in Ottoman Turkish rather than Arabic, and were never intended for wide circulation). Furthermore, *Misr lil Misriyyin* seems to have constituted a significant landmark of the Egyptian cultural landscape, significant enough to warrant a response by 'Urabi in his diaries.⁵⁴³

⁵⁴² See the discussion in the previous chapter.

⁵⁴³ 'Urabi's references and responses to al-Naqqash in his diaries are abundant, for example see Ahmad 'Urabi, *Mudhakkirat al-Za'im Ahmad 'Urabi: Kashf al-Sitar 'an SIRR al-Asrar fi al-Nahdah al-Misriyyah al-Mashhurah bil Thawrah al-'Urabiyyah*, v.2 ed. 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Jami'i, (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub wa al Watha'iq, 2005), 650- 654, 688. See also the editor's note on 'Urabi's need to respond to al-Naqqash, v.1, 497; al-Jami'i, the Egyptian historian who edited this version of *kashf al-sitar*, reads the diary as largely a response to al-Naqqash, and reads an implicit reference to al-Naqqash in 'Urabi's

An earlier, and much more complex, encounter between an Egyptian readership and the phenomenon of the crowd took place through the reports of *al-Jawa'ib*, the newspaper run by Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, on the Paris Commune. To better understand the emergence of an Arabic discourse on the crowd, its engagement with the emergent discourses in the West, and the complex workings of colonialism in transforming Arabic discourse (sometimes through local agency, as the case was with al-Shidyaq), a closer look at *al-Jawa'ib's* reports on the Commune is necessary.

The Commune in Arabic: the Case of *al-Jawa'ib*

Unlike al-Naqqash and his English sources, al-Shidyaq's reports do not present a clear depiction of a collective wherein individualities are dissolved. This may tempt one to say that the theories and the set of representations that constituted the discourse on the crowd were still in formation in 1871 and that al-Naqqash, writing in 1882 (and later LeBon, writing in 1895), was deploying it after it had formed. While such reading is not entirely inaccurate, we must remember that the depiction of the crowd as a collective that subsumes and supersedes the individual was already present prior to 1871; whether in Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) or even in Hegel's *Phenomenology* (1807) (not to mention the early Greek foreshadowings thereof). The crowd as a dissolving collective, therefore, was already available as a rhetorical device. Al-Shidyaq, however, did not deploy it.

Why then, in the absence of the motif of the crowd as a collective wherein individuals dissolve, do I treat al-Shidyaq's reports on the Commune as partaking of

own contextualization of the diaries as a response to those who "wrote [only] to support their bias, even if nothing was further from the truth."

the discourse on the crowd? Is it not enough to leave it at what it was in chapter 1; a discourse on the physics and metaphysics of chaos, on the disruption of the natural order of things, on the overturning (*inqilab*) of an upright (Platonic) hierarchy that otherwise functions to preserve order (*rahaḥ*) both in its political and metaphysical senses?

There are two reasons why I treat al-Shidyaq's reports on the Commune as partaking of the discourse on the crowd. First, even in the Platonic origins of the ideology of an upright natural-political order, there is a fear of the crowd. The Platonic anxiety about overturning the political-natural hierarchical order is a fear that the mob will become the rulers. *The Republic* in a way is a polemic against Athenian direct democracy, in other words, *mob rule*.⁵⁴⁴ To use the words of J.S. McClelland, "Everything Plato has to say about democracy applies to the crowd, and everything Plato has to say about the crowd applies to democracy."⁵⁴⁵ Although this is still not the crowd of the 19th century, the crowd that cancels individuality, that shapes urban landscapes, and that is a mass mediated phenomenon produced in discourse, Plato's mob can be seen as a discursive formation that foreshadowed and was later used in the bodies of knowledge that produced the crowd in the 19th century. In fact, a close reading of the reports of al-Shidyaq on the Commune helps us to trace the mapping of Plato's philosophy onto the 19th century emergent discourse on the crowd.

The second reason I am treating al-Shidyaq's reports as relating to the crowd is that these reports engaged with emergent bodies of knowledge and theories that, although not directly dealing with the crowd, were in conversation with and in many

⁵⁴⁴ For a reading of Plato's philosophy as vocalizing the ideology of the Athenian ruling class, see Louis Althusser, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism*, 13-14, 180.

⁵⁴⁵ J.S. McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob from Plato to Canetti*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 37.

ways shaped the discourse on the crowd. These include theories of criminality, the nature of crime, crime psychology, and degeneration.⁵⁴⁶

Remnants of Plato

Platonic ideology is not unrelated to the 19th century discourse on the crowd. The very notion that crowds occupy a space of license can be traced to the Platonic hierarchy wherein the commoners, characterized by base and basic desires, need to be restrained through the higher faculties of the guardians and the auxiliaries.⁵⁴⁷ This Platonic concept re-emerged in Western theory on the crowd, especially in the aftermath of the Commune. This was especially the case with the writings of Hyppolite Taine, who viewed the crowds, and the revolutionary crowd more specifically, as a space where people escape from societal repression, which otherwise keeps them civilized.⁵⁴⁸ The same notions also re-emerged in al-Shidyaq's writings on the Commune; al-Shidyaq, as shown in chapter 1, was not only fearful of how the rebels (*al-'usah*) could overturn the upright order of things, but also how the commoners (*al-'awam*) were prone to evil and to following their base desires. Allowing commoners to follow their desires (especially the desire to redistribute wealth) could lead, according to al-Shidyaq, to the total dissolution (*inhalal*) of government.⁵⁴⁹ Al-Shidyaq's writings therefore subscribed to and inherited a Platonic pyramid, one that is predicated on

⁵⁴⁶ For how these theories influenced and shaped the intellectual career of Gustave LeBon and his theories on the crowd, see Robert Nye, *The Origins of Crowd Psychology*, esp. 7- 38.

⁵⁴⁷ See the discussion in Chapter 1.

⁵⁴⁸ For a brief analysis of the work of Taine, how it was influenced by Plato, and how it influenced later conceptualizations of the crowd, see J.S. McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob From Plato to Canetti*, 127- 154. It is also worth noting here the influence of Taine on LeBon, who did not fail to cite the latter repeatedly in his *Crowd* (also see *ibid*).

⁵⁴⁹ See the discussion in Chapter 1.

repressing the commoners, their desires, and their proneness to evil. All this may be read into Plato's original hierarchy (and al-Shidyaq's writings can hence be read as exemplary of the mapping of Platonic thought onto the 19th century discourse on the crowd and rebellion), but one thing al-Shidyaq adds is a fierce anti-socialist rhetoric. Many a time during the insurrection of the Commune, al-Shidyaq explicitly denounced the doctrine of *musharakah*⁵⁵⁰ (lit. *sharing*; here al-Shidyaq used the term to mean *socialism*. Later al-Shidyaq would coin the term *ishtirakiyyah* from the same root. *Ishtirakiyyah* remains the Arabic standard word for socialism until our very day),⁵⁵¹ which he characterized as *al-fikr al-dhamim* (roughly: the thought worthy of disparagement).⁵⁵² Indeed, al-Shidyaq's fear of the unleashing of the commoners was

⁵⁵⁰ For example in his editorial dated 8 Muharram 1299, 29/3/1871, al-Shidyaq proclaims "إني... من أشد " المنكرين على هؤلاء العتاة تواطؤهم على مشاركة الأغنياء في أموالهم وأملاكهم (roughly: "I am ... one who denounces most the collaborative intent of these extremists/transgressors to share {using the term *musharakah*} the wealth and property of the rich."). On his next editorial (12 Muharram 1288, 2/4/1871), al-Shidyaq moves from denouncing socialism to giving counterinsurgency, anti-socialist, advice: "وعندي أن السياسة تقتضي أن جميع الدول تساعد حكومة فرنسا على قهر أصحاب هذا المذهب أعني مشاركة الأغنياء في أملاكهم مخافة أن السياسة تقتضي أن جميع الدول تساعد حكومة فرنسا على قهر أصحاب هذا المذهب أعني مشاركة الأغنياء في أملاكهم مخافة أن التسري عدواها إلى مملكتها." Because of the high register of Arabic al-Shidyaq uses, it is almost impossible to provide an adequate English translation of this passage. What he says is that he finds it of proper judgment that other states should help France in putting down/repressing the socialist (identified as "those who hold this doctrine, I mean the doctrine of partaking{*musharakat*} with the rich in their property"), lest other countries be "infected." Later al-Shidyaq would go on to accuse the "red republicans" (a code word he used for the socialists and the communards more generally throughout the coverage) of tarnishing the image of republicanism in general; 6 Safar 1288, 26/4/1871, 1. Not only was al-Shidyaq against socialism, but he also accused anyone who abstained from work or objected to any of the decisions of the (French) government to be stirring a socialist revolt; 6 Safar 1288, 26/4/1871, 2. These examples of al-Shidyaq's anti-Socialist rhetoric are necessary to rectify the common misconception in the secondary literature on al-Shidyaq claiming that the latter was a socialist; cf. Fawwaz Trabulsi and 'Aziz al-'Azmah, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq*, (London: Dar Riad al-Rayyis, 1995), esp. 19- 20, 28- 32. Trabulsi and 'Azmah claim that al-Shidyaq must have been a socialist because he arrived in Paris the same year the *Communist Manifesto* was published and because he met with Alphonse de Lamartine (the same Lamartine, mind you, who famously rejected the red flag in the name of patriotism). 'Azmah and Trabulsi then pass their verdict based on these two pieces of trivia: "Did al-Shidyaq come across socialist writings during his residence in England? It would be hard to conclude that he had not. At any rate, extant evidence points towards him embracing socialism during his Paris residency." Against this suspect evidence provided by Trabulsi and 'Azmah, we have al-Shidyaq's own proclamations against socialism, in addition to the larger counterrevolutionary purpose his writings served during the Commune, and the anti-'Urabi revolt agenda the writings of his son and disciple served.

⁵⁵¹ See the discussion in 'Imad al-Sulh, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidiyaq*, 149- 152.

⁵⁵² *Al-Jawa'ib* 12 Muharram 1288, 2/4/1871, 1.

a fear of socialism: it is the redistribution of wealth by the commoners in the case of revolutionary success that would lead to the total *inhilal* of government (as shown in chapter 1). Although the fear of the dissolution of individual distinction, which we encountered with al-Naqqash and Dickens, is still not evident in al-Shidyaq, there is clearly the fear of the collapse of social distinction, that the commoners (the crowd/the lower classes/the socialists) will do away with class distinction (thus turning everyone into members of the crowd/the lower classes/the commoners). This same fear was echoed again in the reports of *al-Jawa'ib* on the 'Urabi revolt, in which 'Urabi was accused of attempting to confiscate and redistribute the wealth and property of the rich.⁵⁵³

What al-Shidyaq was presenting to an Arabic readership, therefore, was a counterrevolutionary/anti-socialist message, with recourse to a Platonic/neo-Platonic ideology, which served to simultaneously support and cover the anti-socialist component.⁵⁵⁴ Platonic ideology on its own, however, was not enough: a mystifying upright order of things was not enough to sustain the status quo at a time when various bodies of knowledge, including bourgeois sciences, were emerging. These sciences themselves, however, sublated Platonic ideology and continued to serve the same counterrevolutionary role. Many of these sciences and bodies of knowledge coincided with the Commune, and thus provided abundant discursive material for counterrevolutionary ideology. Indeed, this relationship between these bodies of

⁵⁵³ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 8 Shawwal 1299, 22/8/1882, 3.

⁵⁵⁴ We can of course read Plato's philosophy (as per Louis Althusser's prescription) as representative of the ideology of the Athenian aristocracy; Louis Althusser, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism*, 13-14, 180. Plato's philosophy can be thought of therefore as having always been operating to prevent an uprising by the lower classes – whose subdued state is naturalized by Plato's theory of government. According to that reading, al-Shidyaq would be bringing out an element that had always been imminent in the Platonic ideology.

knowledge and counterrevolutionary ideology can be mapped on the pages of *al-Jawa'ib*. This was most notably the case with theories of crime and how they informed and were supported by the depiction of political activism as a crime and the revolutionary as essentially evil.

The Commune and the Quintessence of Crime

The emergence of the *communard* as a purely evil subject is anchored in, or references, a number of theories about the quintessence of crime, that emerged around or coincided with the Commune. The first is the theory of the criminal crowd, developed by Gabriel Tarde in response to the Commune, and later revised by LeBon.⁵⁵⁵ The second is the theory of the born criminal and the criminal-degenerate type, developed by Cesar Lombroso (a theory which he famously applied to the “anarchists” of his time, in his famous essay “Physiognomy of the Anarchists”).⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵⁵ While agreeing with Tarde on characterizing the crowds of the French Revolution, 1848, and the Commune as criminal crowds, LeBon contested Tarde’s argument that these crowds were essentially criminal and instead posited the withdrawal of brain functions in crowd settings and the power of suggestion and contagion within the crowd as an explanation for the acquired criminality of these crowds; see LeBon, *The Crowd*, 55-79, 183-188.

⁵⁵⁶ For Cesare Lombroso’s theory of the “born criminal” see Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies*, (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1911). For how Lombroso believed the “anarchists” (a term under which he grouped the *communards* with political activists elsewhere, including later American anarchists) exhibited a “criminal type” see Lombroso, “Illustrative Studies in Criminal Anthropology. III. The Physiognomy of the Anarchists,” in *The Monist* 1, no.3 (April, 1891): 336- 343. Although Lombroso’s career can be read, at least in part, as a reaction to the Commune, and although Lombroso’s inquiries started on the same fateful year of 1871, Lombroso’s inquiries were triggered not by the Commune but by a pure interest in criminals, what motivates them, and how to identify them. This is one example that shows how the Commune coincided with the rise of bourgeois sciences, and how the defeat of the Commune allowed the crystallization of these sciences into a counterrevolutionary discourse. This is why I am careful to say that the counterrevolutionary discourse *crystallized around* (but was not initiated by) the Commune and its defeat. Also it is important to note, in the context of the discussion above, that al-Shidyaq did not refer to the physiognomy of the *communards*. The reason I am relating al-Shidyaq to Lombroso here is that both were seeking the origins of crime in the inherently evil nature of the criminal/political activist. It is important to note here the fundamental difference between Taine, who sought crowd criminality in

Consistent with these theories, al-Shidyaq located crime within the very nature of the communards and thus produced them as inherently criminal and evil, not only by suggesting that commoners were created evil, but also by using terms like *lafif min al fujjar wa al ashrrar*⁵⁵⁷ (roughly: a bunch of wanton evildoers), *shayatin al ins*⁵⁵⁸ (human devils/the Satans of humankind), and *al-ashrar, bal al shayatin* (villains, nay devils/demons).⁵⁵⁹ We see al-Shidyaq bringing two disparate elements here: classical Islamic terminology along with the 19th century discourse on the inherent evil nature of the criminal. The term *shayatin al ins*, for example, comes directly from the Qur'an. In its original Qur'anic invocation, it denotes how certain human beings can deceive or tempt their fellow humans to commit sins the same way devils do. Al-Shidyaq, however, did not use the term in the context of the dissemination of revolutionary propaganda—which would have been consistent with its meaning in its original Qur'anic context. On the contrary, he used it in the context of claiming that the crimes of the communards were never matched by any other humans. The *human-devil* is thus translocated from a discourse on temptation (which allows for both good and evil to coexist within human nature, or allows for the corruption of good human nature through satanic and human temptation) to a discourse on the inherent evil nature of criminals and political activists. While belonging to the Qur'anic lexicon, the term *shayatin al-ins* in al-Shidyaq works in a manner consistent with, perhaps even as a reference to, a 19th century Western debate on crime, criminology, and the

the social conditions in which crowds are formed, and Lombroso who sought crime in the very biological being of the criminal. Al-Shidyaq, who was writing before these two authors, and who eschewed the question of the etiology of *crime* and *evil*, placed himself at the intersection between the two trends.

⁵⁵⁷ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 27 Safar 1288, 17/5/1871, 1.

⁵⁵⁸ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 18 Rabi' al-Awwal 1288, 7/6/1871, 1.

⁵⁵⁹ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 9 Rabi' al-Awwal 1288, 28/5/1871, 1.

evil nature of the criminal (and the political activist/anarchist as a political criminal) – the same debate that coincided with, crystallized around, and gained momentum after the Commune and as a result of it.

Eschewing Motives: The Commune and Hysterical Contagion

By producing them as pure evil and by referring their rebellion to their evil nature, al-Shidyaq foreclosed any possibility of conscious motivations (save the evil motivations to plunder and burn). Here al-Shidyaq was once again plugging into one of the major debates in Western social thought of the time, perhaps the debate around which the whole discipline of criminology evolved, namely the question of the crime without a motive. The question of motive posed a paradox to 19th century legal theory: if there were an explainable motive, it would mean that the criminal had had a reason to commit the crime, which puts the crime's punishability into question. On the other hand, if the crime had no motive at all, then there would be no reason to be examined, no account to be given, no rational subject to be held accountable and punished for the crime, and once again the machinery of justice and punishment would be in a fix. In a way, the whole question of criminology, of seeking crime in the nature of the criminal, was born out of, or at least tethered to, this paradox.⁵⁶⁰ With the Commune, nevertheless, the search for motive was a little bit more complicated, or perhaps disingenuous. Counterrevolutionary commentators could not acknowledge the

⁵⁶⁰ I admit that this is an oversimplified account for how the question of motive figured in late 19th century legal theory. For a detailed account see Michel Foucault, *Abnormal*. Motive as the contested territory between judiciary and psychiatric institutions and the motiveless crime as playing a role in demarcating the territories of both are extant throughout the lectures, but the questions of motive, crime, and the crime with no motive come most clearly in lectures five and six, pp. 109- 166. Foucault also summarizes this debate in his lecture on "The Dangerous Individual"; Michel Foucault, "About the Concept of the 'Dangerous Individual' in Nineteenth-Century Legal Psychiatry," in *Power*, 176-200.

motives of the insurrectionary crowd or legitimize socialism as a valid rational and political motive. *The Standard* reporter captured this logic in his triumphant denunciation of the Commune: “There has not been a political idea from the beginning to the end of this insurrection. It was a purely Socialist movement.”⁵⁶¹ The same logic was observed with how the fire of Paris was attributed to the communards and deprived of any symbolic or strategic purpose, thus contributing to the referral of mass action to insanity and the reduction of the crowd to their lowest impulses and basest desires (as shown in Chapter 1).

The reports by al-Shidyaq are symptomatic of the same paradox between the existence of motive and lack thereof. From the very beginning, al-Shidyaq gives the communards a very clear motive: they want to redistribute the wealth of the rich amongst themselves.⁵⁶² This motive, however, is continually obfuscated through al-Shidyaq’s insistence on the pure evilness of the communards (and again this obfuscation of motives reaches its peak with the depiction of the incendiaries, not only did they burn Paris down out of pure evil and insanity, but then they moved to other cities to set them afire).⁵⁶³ Al-Shidyaq’s obfuscation of motives, including the very motives suggested in his own earlier reports, is evident at his bafflement at the news that *shaghab* (riot) might spread to England: “فيا ليت شعري ما الذي رآه الإنكليز من صلاح الحكومة الجمهورية حتى صار يخشى من شغبهم.”⁵⁶⁴ After wondering what good the English have seen in republican government for them to join in a riot, al-Shidyaq

⁵⁶¹ “The Fighting in Paris,” *The Standard* 29/5/1871, 5.

⁵⁶² This is a recurrent theme throughout his coverage of the events of the Commune. It is explicitly stated, for example, in his editorials on 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, and 26 Muharram 1288, 16/4/1871.

⁵⁶³ *Al-Jawa’ib* 7 Dhu al-Qi’dah 1299, 19/9/1882, 1. See also the discussion in Chapter 1.

⁵⁶⁴ *Al-Jawa’ib*, 6 Safar 1288, 26/4/1871, 1.

expresses his fear that the *fitnah* of Paris would spread, but it would spread in the form of a *fasad* (corruption, rot). In Chapter 1, we have explored how *fasad*, and the passages in which al-Shidyaq warns against the spread of the *fasad* of revolution, make an association between sickness/rot on the one side and revolt/the revolutionary crowd on the other. Related to this trope of sickness is the spread of revolutionary ideas as *contagion*. As revolution, the crowd, and especially the revolutionary crowd are deprived of motive or rationality, the spread of ideas through rational intercourse is precluded; the only way for these ideas to spread is through (hysterical) contagion.⁵⁶⁵ This understanding of the spread of revolutionary ideas among the crowd in the form of contagion, which would be later taken up by Taine and later LeBon (and would be sublated by Freud into a theory of identification and bondage in *Group Psychology*), constituted one of the salient features of the anti-Commune propaganda. In his famous polemic against the Commune, Francisque Sarcey referred to the rebellion as *folie contagieuse*.⁵⁶⁶ Al-Shidyaq recapitulates this discourse

⁵⁶⁵ LeBon and Taine referred to *contagion* rather than *hysterical contagion* but their reference is clearly borrowed from the lexicon of 19th century hysteria. The idea that certain actions, moods, sentiments, or symptoms (with no physical etiology) can be contagious to people who are susceptible to outside influence was at the root of the 19th century understanding of hysteria. Hysterio-epilepsy and other symptoms of hysteria were thus believed to have been precipitated by *hysterical contagion*. The crowd, accordingly, can be read as corresponding to the hysterical woman, and its impressionability (which makes it susceptible to influence through contagion) parallel to the impressionability 19th century episteme attributed to women (which made them in turn susceptible to hysteria). See my discussion of hysteria and its role in producing the licentious crowd and the subversive and chaotic feminine in Chapter 1.

⁵⁶⁶ Francisque Sarcey, "Les Aliénistes," *Le Gaulois*, 28/5/1871, 1. Again the logic of hysteria pervades throughout Sarcey's essay. Female revolutionary action, especially incendiarism, is compared by Sarcey to a medieval hysteria. In addition, the argument that the female revolutionaries were more susceptible to *la folie contagieuse* because of their less developed brains and thus their livelier nerves (which could in turn be seen as a benchmark for LeBon's more gender neutral understanding of the degeneration of brain functions in crowd situations) foreshadows an early 20th century understanding of hysteria, whereby hysteria is caused by the general weakness of the nervous system compared to other systems of the body, which predisposes them to be affected by external traumas; see Juliet Mitchell, *Mad Men and Medusas: Reclaiming Hysteria*, (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 14.

through his depiction of the spread of revolutionary ideas despite their lack of logic, and through his usage of terms like *fasad* and *'adwa*⁵⁶⁷ (lit. contagion).

Crowd Inebriation

To the motifs of irrationality/insanity and the hysterical spread of revolutionary ideas through contagion, al-Shidyaq added the trope of drunkenness. The irrationality and the base lusts that motivate the revolutionary crowd are explicitly likened by al-Shidyaq to intoxication, and the gunfire of the government to the sobering cure:

“فالظاهر أن حب النهب والسلب قد أسكرهم فلا يفيقون منه إلا بعد أن تصب نيران المدافع على

رؤوسهم.”⁵⁶⁸ (Also noticeable here is how the gunfire of the forces of order is not a cause of damage but rather the cure, consistent with our argument on the threshold of fire in Chapter 1).

We have come full circle, therefore, to the now familiar trope of the licentious crowd. The insanity of the crowd and their lowly lusts (for stealing and pillage in the previous quote) are captured in the metaphor of intoxication. This metaphor is made possible through the motif of the drunken crowd in 19th century literature. This motif sometimes worked metaphorically, as in the previous quote: regardless of whether the members of the crowd were in fact sober or drunk, their behavior, as a group, is one of intoxication and inebriation. The same motif sometimes worked literally: the crowd consists of drunkards, and revolutionary chaos allows for drunkards to take their bacchanals (or orgies) to the streets. This is most evident in the following passage, in which al-Shidyaq referenced the *Standard's* reporter in Paris:

⁵⁶⁷ For example in *al-Jawa'ib* 12 Muharram 1288, 2/4/1871, 1. See also the discussion in Chapter 1.

⁵⁶⁸ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 12 Safar 1288, 2/5/1871, 4.

حكى كاتب الستاندرد المقيم في باريس أنه رأى ذات ليلة جماعة نحو الخمسين وكانوا طائفين عند
الباستيل وهم سكارى ومنهم من كان على رأسه برنيطة تشبه برنيطة النساء ومنهم من كان يغني وآخر يقهقه
وآخر يرقص⁵⁶⁹

In this quote a number of familiar themes are invoked; first we are dealing with a large number of people, about fifty, who are roaming the Bastille. We know therefore, from the beginning, that we are dealing with a large moving collective: a crowd. They are drunk, thus invoking the motif of the drunken masses. Some of them wore a cap similar to the one worn by women; it is not a wild guess to assume this was the Phrygian cap. In addition to this cap's oblique references to castration, the orgy, and the goddess Cybele, the very statement that some of the members of the crowd were wearing caps that "resemble women's caps" serves to gender the crowd in ways we have been familiar with through Chapters 1 and 2. It is important however to remember that al-Shidyaq only gendered the Commune sparingly, as explained in Chapter 1; revolutionary chaos, insanity, and evil were gender neutral in most of al-Shidyaq's depictions, but the gendering appears, if unwittingly, when translating from the *Standard*. The licentious representations (which one could also read as effeminate) continue: they were singing, giggling, and dancing (one may be left to wonder here whether they also engaged in "full-fledged sexual relations" like Zakariyya's Tahrir, and as the *Standard* and other counterrevolutionary outlets repeatedly suggested).

Colonial Turns

Whereas I am not suggesting here any comprehensive continuity between al-Shidyaq's writings and the counterrevolutionary discourse of 2011 (but rather a series

⁵⁶⁹ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, 2.

of continuities and discontinuities), the above account shows how the Commune and the debates that surrounded or coincided with it shaped some of the discursive tools, strategies, and bodies of knowledge that later came to shape the 20th and 21st centuries' counterrevolutionary discourse. The writings of al-Shidyaq, were part of this cultural milieu, and therefore acted as an agent of transforming Arabic discourse along Western, bourgeois, counterrevolutionary, and colonial lines, rendering it receptive to the themes of the licentious crowd.

It is important, however, not to reduce al-Shidyaq's intellectual career to a mere echo of these theories. Chronologically, his writings predated Taine, Tarde, and Lombroso (let alone LeBon). In addition, while he was referencing the debates that were later consolidated into theory by these theorists, his ability to code these debates in Islamic terminology suggests that what he was doing was beyond providing a mere echo. It is also important, on the other hand, not to credit al-Shidyaq with arriving at these theories before European theorists, but to locate his writings within the network of bourgeois and colonial knowledge that emerged in 19th century North-Western Europe and its colonies and found a moment of articulation and support in the Commune and its defeat. Indeed, al-Shidyaq was a product of the relations of knowledge, production, and circulation that produced these discourses and ideologies (or, to put it in cliché terms, he was *a man of his time*). One may note here how financial relations privileged the circulation of counterrevolutionary notions: more specifically, they privileged the circulation of newspapers like the *Standard* and the *Gaulois* with their fierce anti-Commune rhetoric (as opposed, for example, to newspapers like *La Sociale* and *Le Père Duchesne*, which were not backed by sufficient capital to reach Istanbul and the Arabic reading world). Part of this economic and epistemic worlds, al-Shidyaq was neither the victim of these power

relations nor their author, but merely a subject of the ideologies and power relations of the time, and his writings their effect. Al-Shidyaq's partaking of these discourses was nevertheless unique in two opposing ways. The rich engagement al-Shidyaq showed towards Western theories and intellectual trends, along with a creative invocation of the Islamic lexicon reveals a certain (limited) agency over discourse (in the Foucauldian sense wherein one may be able to manipulate power relations but not exit the matrix that comprises them). And while there are incidents where al-Shidyaq's writings aimed to reverse colonial notions and colonial hierarchies,⁵⁷⁰ al-Shidyaq's agency was, as I am about to show, largely colonial.

Let us first examine the colonial transformation of discourse in the hands of al-Shidyaq. Despite al-Shidyaq's usage of classical Arabic terms with Islamic resonance, he used them in ways that transformed their meaning along colonial lines. In that sense, his terms sublimate the original Arabic terms in ways congruent with European colonial modernity. Al-Shidyaq was clearly turning terms from the Islamic and classical Arabic lexicon into signifiers of European bourgeois discursive formations: terms like *'awam* and *shayatin al-ins* are dislocated from their earlier significations and contexts (or from the language games to which they belonged, if we are to borrow a Wittgensteinian term) and are transformed into signifiers of the revolutionary classes and elements as they feature in European bourgeois and counterrevolutionary fears. The transformation of discourse and its political application along colonial lines is further evident in al-Shidyaq's use of the term *fitnah*. The term, which can be translated, depending on the context, as sedition, strife, confusion, hardship, or temptation, is loaded with Islamic and historical significances.

⁵⁷⁰ I explore an example thereof in the next chapter.

Many verses of the Qur'an and reported utterances by the Prophet warn against *fitnah*, be it political and social strife, or personal temptation by earthly pleasures, by the devil, or by other human beings. Despite its rich range of referents, the term *fitnah* does not encompass the wide variety of understandings of political strife and violence present in classical Islamic jurisprudence and historiography; while battles of what became known in Western historiography as the first Islamic Civil War have been characterized in Sunni Islamic historiography as *al-fitnah al-kubra*, the revolt of al-Husayn and the various shi'a and khawarij⁵⁷¹ revolts, as well as the Abbasid takeover of power from the Umayyads, were not commonly characterized as *fitnah*. In the mid-19th century another author responsible for transforming Arabic and Islamic terms along colonial lines, Rifa'ah Rafi' al-Tahtawi (the student of the prominent Azhari collaborator with the French occupation forces, Hasan al-'Attar)⁵⁷² used the term *fitnah* to signify any form of political revolt,⁵⁷³ thus fixing political revolt as seditious, malicious, and anti-Islamic, while erasing other Arabic/Islamic terms that could refer to revolt with more ambiguity or richer valence. Perhaps al-Tahtawi, who was a mere mu'adhdhin (someone who performs the call to prayer) before he rose to fame through his inferiority-complex-infused writings on Paris, had been ignorant of the rich Arabic lexicon denoting political strife and revolt, an excuse we cannot make for

⁵⁷¹ Al-Khawarij (also referred to in English sources as Kharijites) are an insurgent early Islamic sect. They were responsible for the killing of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (the fourth caliph and the prophet's cousin) and were responsible for many armed insurrections during the Umayyad reign.

⁵⁷² On the role of Hasan al-'Attar as al-Tahtawi's mentor and the solicitor of his *Takhliṣ al-Ibriz fī Talkhiṣ Bariz* (Extracting Gold in Summarizing Paris), see Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 21.

⁵⁷³ For example see Rifa'ah al-Tahtawi, *Takhliṣ al-Ibriz fī Talkhiṣ Bariz*, (Cairo: Mu'asasat Hindawi lil-Ta'lim wa al-Thaqafah, 2011), 113, 173, 215, 229, 232, 236, 238, 239, 241, 245, 249.

the belle-lettrist Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq.⁵⁷⁴ Regardless, however, of their intentions, fixing political revolt as *fitnah* at the hands of al-Tahtawi and al-Shidyaq served not only counterrevolutionary purposes, but also colonialist and imperialist ones, as even anti-colonial revolts came to be denounced as *fitnah* (contrary to the Islamic religious discourse from which the term *fitnah* is borrowed, and whereby rising against an invader would be a religious duty). In the reports of *al-Jawa'ib* during the Commune, the term *fitnah* was used not only in reference to the events in Paris (which may have appeared to an observer with no stakes in what had been going on as a mere *fitnah*) but also in reference to the simultaneous uprising in Algeria.⁵⁷⁵ Al-Shidyaq therefore instrumentalized the term *fitnah*, along with its religious overtones, for a colonial project, thus exposing the interconnectedness of the colonial discursive transformation with the imperial political agenda. Al-Shidyaq does not stop at denouncing the anti-colonial uprising as *fitnah*, but goes on to give reason after reason for the Algerians not to rebel against colonial authorities, and to *advise* the people of Algeria to “fight the French through pleas not weapons.”⁵⁷⁶ The rationale al-Shidyaq provides for such advice is that the strength of France is not going to wither away any time soon, and

⁵⁷⁴ Perhaps the term *khuruj* (literally *going out*), with its diachronic ambiguity throughout Islamic history—sometimes meaning *going out* to fight in the name of God, other times meaning to *go out* against the rightful ruler, would have been a more appropriate term to use in this context – let alone *jihād*, the term commonly used for soldiery throughout the 19th century.

⁵⁷⁵ *Al-Jawa'ib* 5 Rabi' al-Awwal, 1288, 24/5/1871, 1. In fact, if one is to restore *fitnah* to its classical Qur'anic invocation, then it would be al-Shidyaq, not the Algerian rebels, who is falling into a position of *fitnah* by claiming that fighting against the enemy causes *fitnah*, according to verse 9:49 of the Qur'an, "ومنهم من يقول ائذن لي ولا تفتني ألا في الفتنة سقطوا وإن جهنم لمحيطة بالكافرين."

⁵⁷⁶ *Al-Jawa'ib* 5 Rabi' al-Awwal, 1288, 24/5/1871, 1. Al-Shidyaq uses the term “*bil-talab la bil-silah*.” Another transformation of referents to suit colonial aims is evident here. While the term *talab* can mean plea (which it clearly does in this sentence), in the context of Islamic jurisprudence it also means pursuing the enemy through armed struggle. For a pre-modern (for the lack of a better term) reader, the sentence would have read “by armed struggle, not by armed struggle.” For *talab* to be reduced to peaceful plea it had to be taken out of its Islamic context, in a way disarmed, to serve al-Shidyaq's pacifist pro-colonial agenda.

those who see in the Commune a chance to rebel against colonial yoke will be made to pay the price later. Behind the parity with which al-Shidyaq coats his language, we can see here a sense of inferiority, an a priori acceptance of defeat, let alone a stench of collaborationism.

Al-Shidyaq therefore combines a discourse on *fitnah* (bastardized from its Islamic origins) with a discourse on docility-as-rationality. The uprising against the French is both *fitnah* and an irrational act that defies sober calculations. The same rationale will later be used by his son, Salim Faris al-Shidyaq, through the same outlet (and most probably under the tutelage of Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq himself) along with a number of pro-colonial Alexandria- and Beirut-based newspapers, to denounce the ‘Urabi revolt. For example, an article titled “Junun ‘Urabi” (‘Urabi’s insanity) was published by the Alexandria based *al-I’tidal*⁵⁷⁷ and republished by a number of newspapers including *al-Jawa’ib*.⁵⁷⁸ The only signs of ‘Urabi’s insanity presented by this article, nevertheless, are his disobedience to the rulers (the viceroy of Egypt and the Ottoman Sultan) and his alleged delusions that he could defeat the British army. Once again we see rationality being cast alongside political authority and especially colonial power, and irrationality, to the extent of insanity, on the side of the insurrectionary crowd (as the case was with the communards) and on the side of those who think they can defeat the colonizers (as the case was with the Algerians, worthy of the patronizing advice proffered by al-Shidyaq). As al-Shidyaq sought to do with

⁵⁷⁷ *I’tidal* literally means balance or moderation. The title of the newspaper itself indexes the value of moderation and restraint (in other words the Greek golden mean) in Arab 19th century thought. This is relevant here because of how moderation is associated with rationality, order, and docility. Rising against the government, or the colonial forces, on the other side, is irrational, disorderly, and extreme. In the charge of *junun* (madness, insanity) addressed to ‘Urabi, there is an implicit charge of extremism.

⁵⁷⁸ *Al-Jawa’ib* 14 Dhu al-Qi’dah 1299, 26/9/1882, 4.

his advice to the Algerians, this article combines a discourse on docility-as-rationality with Islamic coding. The Islamic appeal is made through the appeal to the figure of the ‘Commander of the faithful’ (i.e. The caliph, in other words the Ottoman Sultan ‘Abd al- Hamid), ‘Urabi’s disobedience to whom is tantamount to a transgression against Islam. Yet the sole act of disobedience perpetrated by ‘Urabi, as per the article, was his insistence on fortifying Alexandrian shores against the invading army, when the Khedive and the Sultan had commanded otherwise. The conception of docility the article is promoting, despite its Islamic garb, is novel. In any school of Islamic jurisprudence, as well as in the thought of ‘Urabi and his comrades, taking up arms to defend the city against an occupying army is a religious duty, and failing to do so is to fall short on one of the commandments of Islam.⁵⁷⁹ *Al-I’tidal* and *al-Jawa’ib* along with partaking of a discourse on docility qua sanity, were engaging in an effort to transform Islamic discourse in the service of colonial powers, and thus code resistance to the occupation as disobedience to the caliph, while erasing the militant tradition of Islam that would make resistance a duty.

This transformation was not only taking place on epistemic levels, it was also taking place at the very practical level of mobilizing this discourse to dissuade the public from resisting colonialism, turning resistance into an irrational act, an act of insanity, that, according to the transformed discourse, is depicted as rebellious against the Caliphate and against Islam itself. Al-Shidyaq Sr. and Jr. were therefore facilitating in their writings and their deployment of European discourses on the crowd and on authority not only the colonization of discourse but also the

⁵⁷⁹ See for example ‘Urabi, *Mudhakkirat al-Za’im Ahmad ‘Urabi*, v.2, 688- 689. Indeed ‘Urabi and his comrades viewed their defense of the city as an Islamic duty. While they professed allegiance to the Caliph, they also made clear that surrendering the city to the invaders is the one Caliphal commandment they cannot obey, for its violation of Islamic commandments.

colonization of Arab/Muslim lands. Al-Shidyaq Jr.'s celebratory note after the British occupation of Cairo leaves little doubt as to where his sympathies lay:

جميع التلغرافات الواردة هذه المرّة ... تبشرنا بأن المسألة المصريّة قد انتهت على أحسن حال وأتم منوال؛ فإن جميع عساكر عرابي فشلوا في عدّة مواقع ... وانهزموا وتشتتوا كل مشتت بعد أن تركوا جميع مدافعهم وذخائرهم في ميدان القتال ... فتيسر لعساكر الإنكليز أن يضبطوا جميع السواحل والاستحكامات بل تبوأوا أيضا القاهرة على هيئتهم وطمانينتهم .⁵⁸⁰

These sympathies were in no way innocent. They come at a time when Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq was believed to have been on British payroll,⁵⁸¹ a fact he cared little to deny. When confronted by a French Count about the allegations of his being a British spy, al-Shidyaq responded “I wish I were.”⁵⁸² The allegations came also after al-

⁵⁸⁰ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 7 dhi al-Qi'dah 1299, 19/9/1882, 1.

⁵⁸¹ 'Imad al-Sulh, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq: Atharuh wa 'Asruh*, 123- 124, Muhammad al-Matwi, *al-Tariq ila al-Hadathah wa al-Tahdith fi l'Ilam al-Jawa'ib lil Shidyaq, 1861- 1884*, 20. Trabulsi and 'Azmah also acknowledge this fact, though they try to euphemize it as *tanwi' masadir al-tamwil* (diversifying the sources of fundings); Trabulsi and 'Azmah, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq*, 23. As anyone who is familiar with the language of the Palestinian and Lebanese left of the 1970s (to which Trabulsi once belonged) could tell, “diversifying the sources of funding” used to be a code term for receiving money from dictators – usually Saddam Husayn and Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi. The usage of the same term in the context of receiving money from colonial powers is curious and difficult to explain: moral judgments aside, the Palestinian and Lebanese left; bound in a prisoners' dilemma with and repeatedly betrayed by their closest allies, the Egyptian regime (before the latter completely defected to the other camp in 1977) and the Syrian regime (unwilling to burn bridges with the Palestinian and Lebanese left but willing to support the opposing right wing Lebanese coalition when interests dictated so, as it did in 1976), had enough realist political reasons to make common cause with Saddam and Qadhafi, especially when the larger goal was fighting Zionism and imperialism. It is curious that Trabulsi, who took part in making these calculations in his capacity as the second in command of the Lebanese Organization of Communist Action at the onset of the Lebanese Civil War, sees it as comparable to serving British imperialism.

⁵⁸² Al-Sulh, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq*, 123. Here is the full quote, as reported by al-Sulh, for the sake of fairness:

بودي لو كنت جاسوسا إذا لكنت لا أكلف أحدا بشيء فإن جاسوس الإنكليز يستغني بوظيفته عن أن يتصل بأحد إلى نوال إريه .

Shidyaq had already rendered services to British imperialism by using his newspaper to pacify Indian Muslims under British colonial rule. Muhammad ‘Abduh (who was al-Shidyaq’s contemporary, and who would later play his share in serving British imperialism) went as far as accusing al-Shidyaq of serving English interests for twenty years.⁵⁸³ According to ‘Abduh, al-Shidyaq mainly served British interests by masking them as the interests of the Ottoman sultanate/caliphate;⁵⁸⁴ this is in a way what we see him doing in his reports on the ‘Urabi revolt, coding imperialism in Islamic terms, and coding the surrender to British imperial expansion in terms of obedience to the Caliph. In fact *al-Jawa’ib*’s masking of British interests as Ottoman served the fatal blow to the ‘Urabi revolt. Perhaps the last service *al-Jawa’ib* rendered to the British in that context was publishing the Ottoman decree declaring ‘Urabi a rebel, which weakened ‘Urabi’s morale and swayed his public support.⁵⁸⁵ In that regard, *al-Jawa’ib* was complicit in the military and institutional colonization of Egypt, as much as it was responsible for the colonization of Arabic discourse.

Projecting the Metropole: ‘Urabi and the Commune through Colonial Channels

Though the statement may be interpreted as a denial of the charge, it betrays a colonized mindset whereby British patronage is superior (or not as bad as) other (local) patronages.

⁵⁸³ ‘Imad al-Sulh, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq*, 123.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁵ ‘Urabi, *Mudhakkirat al-Za’im Ahmad ‘Urabi*, v.2684- 685 (see also the editor’s notes on these two pages, which explain the impact of publicizing this decree), 688- 689. ‘Urabi’s depiction seems to suggest (though does not explicitly claim) that there was a coordinated effort between *al-Jawa’ib* and a number of Egyptian collaborators with the British (including the Speaker of Parliament Sultan Pasha) who started distributing copies of *al-Jawa’ib* en masse. Tunisian literary critic and media historian Muhammad al-Matwi goes as far as arguing that *al-Jawa’ib* published the decree at the behest of the British ambassador in Egypt; al-Matwi, *al-Tariq ila al-Hadathah wa al-Tahdith fi l’lam al-Jawa’ib*, 39.

Now we can posit that the role of *al-Jawa'ib* was, beyond any doubt, to function as a colonial pathway. *Al-Jawa'ib* sought successfully to transform extant Arabic discourses along colonial lines and to instrumentalize this transformed discourse to facilitate military colonization. Through this colonial pathway (and others), European bourgeois bodies of knowledge and counterrevolutionary discourses (which happened to coincide and crystallize around the Paris Commune) infiltrated Arabic discourses and were directed against Arab insurrectionary and anti-colonial actors. More specifically, through this channel, the Commune was mapped onto the 'Urabi revolt; it is no coincidence that the above analysis started with the former and ended with the latter. In fact, the discourse devised against the Commune was used, *mutatis mutandis*, by *al-Jawa'ib* and other media outlets, against the 'Urabi revolt. The libel of socialism, (understandably) a staple of the anti-Commune discourse, was used in the same manner against 'Urabi.⁵⁸⁶ The same goes for the allegations of incendiarism, as already shown in Chapter 1. The same presumption that the fire of order is precise and the fire of the crowd is contagious, chaotic, and destructive marked both events. In its coverage of the 'Urabi revolt, *al-Jawa'ib* drew a picture of a kerosene conspiracy very similar to the one that was drawn (by European newspapers and copied by *al-Jawa'ib*) for the fire of the Commune, down to using the same term, *zayt al-hajar* (*petroleum*, lit. *rock oil* or *fossil oil*), for the incendiary material allegedly used by the conspirators.⁵⁸⁷ In both cases arson is attributed to crowd-born(e) insanity: we see 'Urabi rousing the riffraff to start the fire, and we see him and one of his lieutenants showing contentment when Alexandria caught fire- and we see 'Urabi's

⁵⁸⁶ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 8 Shawwal 1299, 22/8/1882, and *Al-Watan*, 6 dhu al-Qi'dah 1299, 19/9/1882, 1.

⁵⁸⁷ See *Al-Jawa'ib* 7 Dhu al-Qi'dah 1299, 19/9/1882, 1.

defense that the city caught fire because of British bombardment dismissed as childish insanity (as presented in Chapter 1).

While using the same representations of insanity that were used against the Communards, al-Shidyaq (Jr.) was unable to use the same representations of pure evil. Perhaps this is due to the fact that al-Shidyaq, even while playing a pro-colonial role, could not depict to a predominantly Arab-Muslim readership their compatriots who were engaged in an anti-colonial struggle against a foreign and non-Muslim empire as pure evil. Instead of mapping the communards' pure evil onto the 'Urabists, *al-Jawa'ib* brought in actual communards to serve this mapping; it alleged that the burning of Alexandria was the work of former communards and simultaneously blamed 'Urabis for "sully[ing] his ranks with the socialists who burnt Paris" and the former communards for using the 'Urabis regime as a tool for realizing their "diabolical intentions."⁵⁸⁸ After enumerating the transgressions of 'Urabis (including the burning of Alexandria), al-Shidyaq concluded: "and as if all this were not enough, he sullied his ranks with the French socialists who burnt the city of Paris in 1871 and were thus expelled, for those evil-doers/bandits [*ashqiya'*],⁵⁸⁹ after being banished from all the corners of the earth, found no outlet for their diabolic intents other than the 'Urabis government."⁵⁹⁰ These 'Urabist communards literalized the mapping of the Parisian insurrectionary crowd, of the Paris Commune, onto the 'Urabis revolt, and the insanity and pure evil of the former onto the latter.

⁵⁸⁸ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 7 dhu al-Qi'dah 1299, 1.

⁵⁸⁹ The term *ashqiya'* (sing. *shaqiyy*) is significant: by the 20th century the term will be used to describe bandits, vagrants, and other outlaws. The term, however, comes from *shaqa'* which means toil, misfortune, and/or wretchedness. In its classical Islamic usage, *shaqiyy* is someone who is doomed to hell. Once again we see with al-Shidyaq the transformation of an Islamic term to serve a disciplinary purpose along statist and colonial lines.

⁵⁹⁰ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 7 dhu al-Qi'dah 1299, 20/9/1882, 1.

Al-Jawa'ib was not the only Arabic newspaper that drew explicit similarities between the Commune and the 'Urabi revolt. Another newspaper that followed its lead was the Egyptian *al-Watan*. A staunch supporter of 'Urabi during his rise, *al-Watan* maintained the same staunchness in denouncing 'Urabi during his downfall. In addition to using the socialist libel (with its possible oblique reference to the Commune) against 'Urabi,⁵⁹¹ *al-Watan* made a number of explicit associations between 'Urabi and the communards; its denunciation opened with an explicit reference to Parisian revolutionary terror (an image that could have come from representations of the Commune or the Reign of Terror).⁵⁹² As if to apologize for their earlier support for 'Urabi, they accused him of intimidating everyone into supporting him “just like the revolutionaries of Paris” who prosecuted and persecuted their adversaries and “slaughtered” anyone who showed any kind of disagreement with them (even by merely refusing to wear their uniforms, emblems, and Phrygian caps):

وكانوا يلقون القبض على كل من كان في صدورهم منه حزازات أو من لم يشرب من سموم مشربهم ولم يتظاهر باتباع مذهبهم فكان مثلهم كمثل أهل ثورة باريس الذين كانوا يذبحون من لم يتزياً بزيهم ولم يلبس سمتهم ولم يضع على رأسه علامتهم فنبذوا العقل والدين ولم يتقوا رب العالمين.⁵⁹³

One page later, *al-Watan* moved to a yet more direct reference to the Paris Commune.

The 'Urabists' decision to take down the statues of the former Egyptian viceroy

⁵⁹¹ *Al-Watan*, 6 dhu al-Qi'dah 1299, 19/9/1882, 1

⁵⁹² Of course the Terror was also present in the polemics surrounding the Commune. The unpopular decision by the Commune to institute a “Committee for Public Safety” (the same name of the committee that served to purge the enemies of the revolution, during what became known as the Reign of Terror) created the fear that the Commune was going to reinstate *the Terror*. Not only was this used in counterrevolutionary propaganda, but it also caused the defection of many of the revolution's sympathizers. It is of little relevance here whether *al-Watan* et al. were making a direct reference to the Reign of Terror or making reference to the Terror via the Commune. What matters is that European conceptions of the revolutionary crowd were making their way to Arabic discourse and were used to define the indigenous crowd and the anti-colonial insurrection.

⁵⁹³ *Al-Watan*, 6 dhu al-Qi'dah 1299, 19/9/1882, 1.

Ibrahim Pasha and the Lions of Qasr al-Nil bridge is comparable, according to *al-Watan*, to how the communards took down the statue of Napoleon (most probably in reference to the Vendôme Column) “and other monuments that are considered historic masterpieces.” It is as if “‘Urabi and his transgressive/tyrannical (*taghi*) party have not learnt from history except emulating the mongers of grave discords (*ahl al-fitan al-wakhimah*) and their disparaged acts.”⁵⁹⁴ The decision to take down the statues was attributed by *al-Watan* not only to revolutionary emulation but also to religious fanaticism: people who posed as (religious) scholars, according to *al-Watan*, had advised ‘Urabi that he would not win if he did not take down the statues. This was one of many incidents in which revolutionary terror and Islamic fanaticism were associated with one another.

The ‘Urabist transgressions, according to *al-Watan*, came not only from a place of revolutionary emulation and Islamic fanaticism, but also from a place of primitive savagery: what they did was not even surpassed by the most savage of Barbarians (*awhash al-umam al-mutabarbirah*).⁵⁹⁵ Perhaps this betrays how both revolution and religious fanaticism, or revolution and Islam, were understood to belong together in a stage of savage primitivity. We are back to the Social Darwinism of the metaphysics of chaos, of the crowd and the political disorder they create as regression, degeneration even, from the path of civilization and evolution. By associating the ‘Urabi revolt with savage primitivity *al-Watan* was following the lead of European observers who thought of the crowds and their rule in terms of regression and degeneration, and who found in the ‘Urabi, or ‘*Arabi*, revolt a suitable savage and degenerate medium to project their own crowds and revolts onto. In fact by

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid, 2.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid, 1.

comparing the ‘Urabi revolt to the Commune, *al-Jawa’ib* and *al-Watan* were following the same trend evident in European newspapers (especially the *Gazette de France* and the *Standard*). A closer look at these newspapers does not only reveal the European biases echoed by *al-Jawa’ib* and *al-Watan*, but more importantly reveals the circularity of mobility between the colony and the metropole, of the discourse that produces the crowd.

1882: Paris in the Orient and the *Commune au Caire*

Under the set of *cultural impositions* described above, the events of Egypt in 1881-1882 were juxtaposed, by European observers and their Arab clients, to earlier insurrectionary moments in the European metropolises, especially Paris. Egypt at that point in time fell at the intersection of a number of colonial fantasies/imaginaries: a target for Orientalist fantasies and colonial policies (including an impending military occupation), and an African Ottoman domain (perhaps the position Egypt occupied in the Western imaginary was exemplified by the description of the Egyptian crowd in British reports as consisting of Arabs, Upper Egyptians or “Saidis”, Berbers i.e. Nubians, and negroes, which we encountered in the previous chapter). The Egypt of 1881-1882 was therefore a space that represented to Europe an intersection of its others, and therefore a convenient space to which the savagery of its own crowds could be projected. This projection also allowed European and pro-European observers to understand the events through a Western frame of reference; if the Orient, especially at times of insurrection, is anarchic and escapes meaning, then it can only be understood through the anarchy and violence of the Terror and the Commune. This

was evident, for example, in how the *Standard* used terms like *anarchy*⁵⁹⁶ and *incendiarism*,⁵⁹⁷ in its coverage of the events; both these terms belonged to the anti-Commune lexicon and could be read as an indirect reference to the Commune. Less oblique was the *Standard*'s reference to the French Revolution: many a time the situation was explicitly described as a "Reign of Terror."⁵⁹⁸ In addition the *Standard* English newspaper often used the French term *émeute* in reference to the events in Cairo and Alexandria, perhaps to suggest that there is something particularly French, resonating with recent episodes of French history, in the revolt.⁵⁹⁹ The reference to the Commune, nonetheless, was made more explicitly and abundantly by the French Royalist mouthpiece, the *Gazette de France*.

Describing the 'Urabist ascent to power, the *Gazette* referred to the situation dramatically as "La Commune au Caire."⁶⁰⁰ This comes after the newspaper's earlier

⁵⁹⁶ *The Standard*, 7/1/1882, 5, 20/6/1882, 5, 27/7/1882, 4.

⁵⁹⁷ *The Standard*, 18/7/1882, 5 and 17/8/1882, 5.

⁵⁹⁸ For example on 20/6/1882, 5, 29/6/1882, and 5, 18/7/1882, 5.

⁵⁹⁹ *The Standard*, 24/6/1882, 5, 26/6/1882, 5. In addition to its resonance with French history, the term *émeute*, grammatically feminine, serves to gender the uprising as such; see Neil Hertz, "Medusa's Head," 29, 33. See also my discussion in Chapter 1.

⁶⁰⁰ *Gazette de France*, 17/6/1882, 1. The comparison was not only drawn by counterrevolutionary forces. The same article quotes at length from an article by Prosper-Olivier Lissagaray, French socialist and historian of the Commune, published in his newspaper *La Bataille*. Lissagaray celebrates the 'Urabi movement as revolutionary by comparing it to the Commune, and by comparing its enemies to the enemies of the Commune; the Khedive is Thiers and Alexandria is Versailles, according to Lissagaray. Lissagaray's description shares some of his adversaries' Orientalism, though his manifests as a fascination with the Orient. The revolutionary potentials of the 'Urabi movement seems to surpass those of the Commune (after all he is citing a history of defeat to argue for the revolutionary promise of the present) because it is the Orient: "n'oublions pas que nous sommes en Orient, et qu'Arabi, le revolte, a fait d'excellentes études au college El-Azhar, qui vaut bien toutes nos universités bourgeoise." While this sentence may be read as sarcastic (and indeed, the *Gazette* is quoting it for the purpose of sarcasm), the context of Lissagaray's quotes suggests otherwise. Orientalist fascination aside, Lissagaray exhibits a sharp (one may say *avant la lettre* Althusserian) understanding of education as an ideological tool, and the bourgeois university as an ideological state apparatus. El-Azhar, therefore (and by extension the Orient) seems to surpass the European

comparison of Ahmad ‘Urabi (or *Arabi*) to Léon Gambetta⁶⁰¹ and of the events in Egypt to the revolutionary moment preceding the Commune (as seen in Chapter 1). After comparing the ‘Urabi government to Gambetta’s, the *Gazette* concluded in an equally dramatic tone – which logically and chronologically anticipates the *Commune au Caire*: “C’est exactement la reproduction de la dictature de 1870.”⁶⁰² In both articles, in addition to comparing the Commune, the revolutionary upheaval and democratic-republican buildup that preceded it, and any hint of democracy or republicanism to the ‘Urabi revolt, the *Gazette* builds ‘Arabi as a racialized, quintessentially Arab/savage figure (as shown in Chapter 1) and compares him to Gambetta (dubbed as Bey, to further highlight his similarity to Arabi) and to the Commune leader Louis Delescluze (dubbed by the *Gazette* as *Pacha*).

This mapping of Europe’s revolutionary crowd onto Egypt’s and the *cultural imposition* of Europe’s counterrevolutionary conceptions of crowd and revolution on Egypt continued beyond the Commune and the ‘Urabi revolt. Before we return to the Commune and ‘Urabi in order to examine the other side of the colonial revolving door, we need to examine how Egyptians came to understand their own crowds through European counterrevolutionary terms, indeed how European counterrevolution became an Egyptian ideology.

bourgeois university inasmuch as its education, unlike its Western bourgeois counterpart, does not undermine the cause of revolution and liberation. This is evidently not separate from the 19th century Orientalism that imagines the Orient to be a space of liberation; only the forbidden pleasure here is the success of revolution rather than illicit sexual liaisons (though the two, or at least the representation thereof, are never mutually exclusive, as this study shows). For another example of French socialist declarations of solidarity with ‘Urabi, see the pamphlet titled “Le Soldat de la liberté” re-produced in *Gazette de France* 8/7/1882, 2.

⁶⁰¹ Of course Léon Gambetta was not a communard, not even remotely a sympathizer with revolutionary causes. If anything, he fled Paris at the eve of the uprising. It is clear, however, that the *Gazette* is projecting all its enemies into one space that is simultaneously a revolutionary space and an Oriental one.

⁶⁰² *Gazette de France*, 8/4/1882, 1. See the full discussion of the article in Chapter 1.

Examples from the writings of al-Shidyaq and al-Naqqash and anti-‘Urabi newspaper reports by *al-Watan* have already given us an idea of how this cultural imposition started, yet an important episode which our analysis cannot ignore is the early 20th century. By the beginning of the 20th century a discourse on the crowd began to emerge among Egyptians (this is the time, after all, when both *A Tale of Two Cities* and *The Crowd* were translated), but even then, and even until our very day no term survives as the sole signifier and the accepted translation for the *crowd*. In his translation of LeBon’s text, Ahmad Fathi Zaghlul used the term jama‘ah/jama‘at (which I treat as an effort of colonial transformation, transforming jama‘ah from an exalted to a repudiated term). This term did not survive and was replaced by a plethora of terms, including *al-jamahir* (commonly translated as *the public* or the *masses*) and *al-malayin* (literally the millions), two terms that were classically invoked to exalt rather than abnegate the masses. This faltering between terms, and between traditions that abnegate the crowd and traditions that valorize them, can be seen to represent the limitedness of the success of the imposition of the Western division of space and with it the Western discourse on the crowd and the other licentious spaces, a sign of contention between the dominance of a colonial discourse (along with a colonial definition and organization of space) and the failure thereof. Beginning with the 1882 British occupation of Egypt and through the following few decades, Britain was engaged in a process of transforming Egyptian bureaucracy, Egyptian institutions, and the Egyptian cultural and social landscape. This also meant that the set of biases, which produced the crowd as abnegated, racially other, and savage, and privileged the individual, the family, and other modern/Christian institutions over the crowd, were introduced to the Egyptian political and cultural spheres (a process we already observed with the work of Salim al-Naqqash, through

which the English abnegation of the crowd and the indigenous population was introduced to Egyptian readership). A colonial redistribution of space, or of the representation thereof, indeed of space in ideology, was in effect. This study will not be able to trace the changes of laws pertaining to public space, or the novel urban planning policies introduced by the English (or by the technical vanguard of colonization a few decades before the occupation).⁶⁰³ Instead, I will address the ideological aspect of this transformation/reorganization that can be traced in the Egyptian afterlife of the two texts that I have so far dealt with as paradigmatic 19th century European texts on the crowd – namely LeBon’s *The Crowd* and Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities*. The former was translated in 1909 by Ahmad Fathi Zaghlul, and the latter in 1912 by Muhammad al-Siba‘i (who also translated Carlyle’s *The French Revolution*). Both the translation of *The Crowd* and that of *A Tale of Two Cities*, as well as the careers of their respective translators, were enmeshed in the colonial relations that brought these texts, and their underlying ideological biases, to Egypt in the first place.

Translating the Crowd

Ahmad Fathi Zaghlul was himself a colonial official. He was one of the judges who presided over the notorious Dinshway tribunal which, in 1906, issued harsh sentences, including five executions by hanging, for Egyptian peasants accused of assaulting British soldiers. One may even be tempted (though, I admit, with little

⁶⁰³ See Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, esp. 34- 62.

proof) to look at the harsh sentences issued by the tribunal for the peasants as anchored in the new redistribution of space that privileges the urban and the urbanite and repudiates the rural and peasant,⁶⁰⁴ and thus as part of an effort to erase non-modern, non-urban, improper indigenous spaces. This is congruent with the elitist ideology of LeBon, but also with the racialist and racist biases underlying LeBon's text and at work in its Arabic translation.

Zaghlul's translation of *The Crowd* was titled *Ruh al-Ijtima'*. To denote the crowd, he used the Arabic term *jama'ah* and its plural, *jama'at*. The use of the term *jama'ah* is indexical of a transformation of local discourses to accommodate colonial concepts. Previously *al-Jama'ah* was a normative concept, representing the consensus of the Muslim ummah. All of a sudden *al-Jama'ah* became something to look down upon. It became LeBon's crowd, worthy of denunciation and contempt. This transformation indexes not only a change in meaning nor a turning away from Islamic concepts to a European elitism, but furthermore the adoption of the same Social Darwinist notions that were used to colonize Egypt; let us not forget how LeBon referred the crowds to the discursive civilizational category of Europe's racial others, including the Arabs- a point I addressed repeatedly and will revisit throughout this chapter. Zaghlul's usage of the term *jama'ah* to translate *the crowd* thus affirms LeBon's civilizational mapping, as if to signal to his Arabic readership that their earlier sense of community and polity (the *jama'ah* on which the legitimacy of the caliphate is predicated) is none other than the abnegated crowd. This and other translations by Zaghlul, read and referenced even by his political anti-colonial

⁶⁰⁴ This is comparable for the repudiation of the Bedouin for the sake of the modern urban spaces and subjects to emerge as part of the process of colonizing/modernizing/inventing Jordan; Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 51- 78, 100- 162.

adversaries,⁶⁰⁵ were thus part of the ideological campaign to transform along colonial lines the conception of space, and with it the conception of the self, in modern/colonial Egypt.⁶⁰⁶

The Egyptian afterlife of Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* is not much different. *A Tale of Two Cities*, which I have so far been using as emblematic of Victorian literature on the crowd, was the first of Dickens' novels to be translated into Arabic. Since then it has enjoyed a central privileged position in Egyptian public culture.⁶⁰⁷ In addition to being a widely read, debated, and referenced text in Egypt, it also served as an integral part of the Egyptian official public school curriculum (itself modeled on the British school system), and film versions of the novel were frequently broadcast by Egyptian state television. It was also reportedly on Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir's list of favorite books⁶⁰⁸ and the reason why he was reluctant to use revolutionary terror against the *ancien régime*.⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰⁵ For example see the curious incident wherein Zaghlul's translation of Jeremy Bentham's *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* was used to champion a transformation of marriage practice along colonial (and to a large extent Christian) lines by the anti-colonial, pan-Islamist *al-Liwa'*, 14/1/1904, 1. This essay will be examined in more detail in Chapter 5.

⁶⁰⁶ For more on the translations offered by Zaghlul, their wide reception, and their relationship to the colonization of space, and the colonial episteme more generally (including his acknowledgement of the inferiority of Egyptians compared to the English) see Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 110- 111, 122- 123. For more on the place of his translation of LeBon within the overall process of transforming/colonizing space see *ibid*, 122- 125.

⁶⁰⁷ See Sherif, *Dickens in Arabic*.

⁶⁰⁸ Huda 'Abd al-Nasir, "al-Sirah al-Dhatyiyah: Sirah Tarikhiyyah lil Ra'is Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir," <http://nasser.bibalex.org/common/pictures01-%20sira.htm>

⁶⁰⁹ Nasir reportedly cited the *Tale*, and confused it with "the lessons of the French Revolution" when the Revolutionary Council demanded the execution of King Faruq. Nasir summarized this lesson as "blood only leads to more blood" - perhaps another English literary reference ("blood will have blood," William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 3.4). This conversation appears in Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal's *Li Misr la li 'Abd al-Nasir*, (Cairo: Mu'asasat al-Ahram lil-Nashr wa al-Tawzi', 1999), 68. It later also appeared in the biopic *Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir* (1999) directed by Anwar Qawadri.

If the *Tale* showed some ambiguity towards the crowd and their cause (up until they resorted to terror, a nuance Nasir seems to have understood well), al-Siba‘i’s preface to the Arabic translation would efface this ambiguity and highlight the anti-crowd, counterrevolutionary message of the novel. The French Revolution, in al-Siba‘i’s description, becomes:

الثورة التي عظم أمرها وجل خطبها واتسع فتقها واستفحل شرها وطار شررها واعضل داؤها
وعزدواؤها⁶¹⁰

The Revolution, therefore, is a breach, a cause of evil, an uncontrollable spark, and a sickness with no medicine. Later on the same page, al-Siba‘i describes the events of the Revolution as *ahwal* (roughly, horrors/terrors, in Zaghlul’s translation of LeBon, *ahwal*’s singular, *hawl*, is used as a translation for “the Terror”) and *faza‘i* (roughly *atrocities*, here used also to denote *terror*. The reign of terror is referred to as ‘*ahd al faza‘i*’ - also translatable as *the era of atrocities*). The members of the Revolutionary Convention are described as رجال أغرار لا تدبير لهم ولا حنكة⁶¹¹ (roughly: *novice men/ingénues with no resourcefulness or experience*), a description that invokes, in addition to the infantile/pubescent (they are men, but they are *novice men/ingénues*) nature of the Terror/crowd-rule, the hierarchical order of things and its overturning, its *inqilab*, in revolutionary times and when crowds rule; *ingénues* who themselves need guidance now have a say in government under revolutionary democracy. As for the leaders of the Revolutionary Convention, they were identified

⁶¹⁰ Muhammad al-Siba‘i, introduction to *Qissat al-Madinatayn*, by Charles Dickens, (Cairo: Matba‘at al-Taquaddum, [1912?]), 43.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid*, 47.

as ⁶¹²مارات السفاح ودانتون وروبسبير أغلظ الناس قلوباً (Marat the cutthroat and Danton and Robespierre, the most coarse/cruel of heart among men). Then, when moving to the depiction of the Reign of Terror (which allegedly turned France into one big massacre, according to al-Siba‘i), Robespierre is described as a bloodthirsty monster⁶¹³ always howling for more blood even as the gore of his victims is still dripping from his mouth:

وهذا هو المسمى "عهد الفظائع" وفيه أصبحت فرنسا مذبحاً عظيماً فلقد ذبح في مدة شهر ونصف 1400 أسير ولم تشف دماؤهم غليل روبسبير فكان يعوي يطلب الري وفمه مخضب بنجيع القتلى.⁶¹⁴

We can therefore begin to see the role *The Crowd* and the *Tale* helped introduce the Carlylean/LeBonian trend of abnegating the crowd into an Egyptian cultural sphere (concomitant with the role they played in their original European milieu). More importantly, we see how the two translations and the careers of the translators served *the cultural imposition* of colonial notions and biases (especially given the asymmetric conditions of power under which these translations were produced and released). Of course the reception and afterlife of these two texts in Egypt are a much larger matter than was addressed by the exposition above. My purpose here is not to

⁶¹² Ibid, 48.

⁶¹³ It is important to note here how representations of the revolutionary as a monster, and of the French Revolutionary crowd as monstrous, acted as an anchor for the late 18th to 19th century discourse on crime, which in turn lent support to the discourse on criminal crowds and on the crowd as such (or at least on the intellectual world from which LeBon drew his conception of the crowd). According to Michel Foucault, two conceptions of ‘the monster’, or two monstrous figures, emerged surrounding the French Revolution: the “monster from above” in revolutionary depictions of a monstrous royalty (especially with regards to representations of Marie Antoinette) and the “monster from below” in counterrevolutionary representations of crowd-violence, especially that of the September Massacre and later the Reign of Terror; Foucault, *Abnormal*, 98-101. Foucault then concludes: “I would add that these two figures of the monster- the monster from below and the monster from above ... are important because in the nineteenth century we find them at the very heart of the juridico-medical theme of the monster,” *Abnormal*, 101.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, 49.

provide that kind of history, but to flag two texts, which were already emblematic of and influential on the discourse on the crowd in Europe, as texts that played a role in shaping Egyptian conceptions of the crowd (and which continue to do so, if we take into account the continued invocation of the *Tale* post 2011⁶¹⁵ — Dickens had more luck, and indeed much more talent, than LeBon, but one can also say that the novel as genre remains much more popular than sociological treatises). These translations, the translations of the two foundational treatises on the crowd but also the larger effort of translating the discourse on the crowd and on the organization of space, operated under conditions of asymmetric power relations. They were introduced at a time of British military and administrative dominance, at a time when various indigenous institutions were replaced by institutions modeled on their British and French counterparts (and in many cases run by foreigners), and when the whole Egyptian landscape was being transformed along colonial lines. These translations, therefore, can be viewed as representing the cultural and ideological dimension of the colonization project. This would have been true even had the translators (al-Siba‘i and Zaghlul) been unaware of the colonial process they were participating in. The truth, however, is that neither of them had any qualms about the colonial role they played and of which they were conscious, nor with the asymmetric power relations and inferiority complexes they were promoting. While Zaghlul, the colonial functionary and Dinshwai judge, assented to Egyptian inferiority in his preface to his translation of Edmond Demolins’ *À Quoi Tient La Supériorité des Anglo Saxons*,⁶¹⁶ al-Siba‘i prefaced his translation of the *Tale* with a statement of acquiescence in that inferiority coupled with a tragic proclamation of a civilizing mission. On the first page of the

⁶¹⁵ See Introduction.

⁶¹⁶ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 111.

preface al-Siba‘i proclaims his efforts in translation– along with the efforts of his publisher, as

بذور فضل لن نفتر عن بثها رغما من جذب هذه التربة ويبس ذلك القرى ومن انقطاع كل أمل من
رؤية غرس أيدينا يانعا يبسم لنا نواره وتشرئب لنا ثماره. بل حسبنا من ذلك يقيننا أنه سيكون يوم ينفخ الله الروح
في رمة هذه الأمة ويحول هذا القبر الذي يسميه الناس مصر بلدا تلقى فيه أناسا أحياء ويعقلون لا نباتات في
صور أناس كل ما يفعلون هو أنهم ينمون ويموتون بل أنصاب يصنعون ويحطمون حتى إذا فعل الله بالشعب
الميت ذلك أشرفت لبذورنا المدفونة شمس إحساس وشعور ونديت حولها تربة بر ورحمة وسقطت فوقها أنداء
أحياء ورقة فزكت لها أصول وطالت أفرع ورفعت لها نضرة وأينعت ثمرة. فحسبنا يقيننا بذلك و يقين الأريب
عيان وثقة اللبيب وجدان⁶¹⁷

The proclamation is tragic because it starts with declaring the Egyptian (intellectual) soil barren, and any hope for its restoration lost. Despite this predestined tragic fate, al-Siba‘i avows to keep attempting to plant his intellectual seeds– and he contradicts his earlier tragic statement by prophesying a future in which God would *breathe life* into “this corpse of a nation.” These statements may be contradictory in meaning but are consistent in their commitment to the colonial project. The desolation he observes is an acknowledgment of inferiority (Egyptians who live and die as mere “plants”), and the hope is a statement of a colonizing-civilizing mission, meriting its characterization by literary critic Shaden Tageldin as “essentially colonialist.”⁶¹⁸ Tageldin remarks: “Thus his [al-Siba‘i’s] determination to introduce, through Dickens and other masters of English literature, ‘seeds of superiority’ into ‘this grave that people call Egypt’ resonates eerily with the designs of British colonial

⁶¹⁷ Al-Siba‘i, Introduction to *Qissat al-Madinatayn*, 1.

⁶¹⁸ Shaden Tageldin, *Disarming Words: Empire and the Seduction of Translation*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 157.

pedagogy.”⁶¹⁹ According to Tageldin, this statement meant that al-Siba‘i not only saw the situation of Egypt as that of an “indigenous stasis” but furthermore that the only way to “breathe life” into Egypt is through British cultural imperialism.⁶²⁰ The theme of degeneration once more appears. Indeed, the translator’s preface ascribes degeneration to this Egypt, its cultural soil barren, its people dead. There is an unmistakable coincidence here between degenerate Egypt and the the degenerate crowd, a coincidence that reveals how the crowd (or the licentious spaces more broadly) and Egypt (or the Orient/colony more broadly) were together produced as degenerate spaces, in need of reclamation by the colonial State.

These two 19th century paradigmatic texts on the crowds, therefore came to influence the Egyptian cultural landscape through colonial channels, and their afterlife in Egypt remained entangled with that very colonialism. Both translations, implicitly and explicitly, abnegated and repudiated Egypt and its culture, imposing a British/Western superiority, as if to relegate Egypt to the same category of the crowd they abnegate (after all, both translators were members of an elite that viewed itself in the image– or imago- of their colonizer, and looked down on the indigenous crowd in Egypt both for its indigeneity and for being a crowd).⁶²¹

The Orient in Paris

⁶¹⁹ Tageldin, *Disarming Words*, 158.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶²¹ For the elite anxiety about the emergence of an Egyptian ‘public’ see Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 114- 127.

This abnegation of Egypt and its indigenous population-qua-crowd, along with their production as the discursive equivalents of the European abnegated crowd, was not solely achieved by intellectuals who acted as agents of colonization and who suffered from colonial inferiority complexes. It was already coded in Europe's understanding of its own crowd. The *cultural imposition* and *colonial trauma* I am discussing throughout this study are therefore not only predicated on how the European understandings of the crowd were imposed on Egypt through colonial relations, or to a specific moment of self-doubt and/or self-abnegation by defeated Egyptian intellectuals, but are deeper running. They pertain to the fact that this ideological understanding of the crowd *always already* modeled the European crowd on Europe's racial other. We can now turn to the other side of the revolving door, in other words to how Egypt, the Orient, and/or the colony was mapped into Europe's conception of its own crowd.

When the *Gazette de France* compared 'Urabi to (or made 'Arabi of) the Commune, Delescluze, Gambetta, and the Republic, it was not only forcing the figure of 'Arabi to stand for or be modeled on its internal enemies (read as failures). It was also Orientalizing the Commune, revolution, democracy, and the Republic. What we observe in these comparisons, in describing Gambetta as Bey and Delescluze as Pacha, is not only the use of communards and opportunist republicans as a lens through which 'Urabi and his comrades should be understood and defamed. In addition, we see how the Commune, the Republic, and Democracy, Gambetta, and Delescluze, are Orientalized/Arabized through the figure of 'Arabi and the Arab rebellion he leads. The discourse of the *Gazette* can therefore be seen as emblematic of the larger colonial discourse which did not only understand the events in the Orient and/or the colonies in terms of earlier European (especially French) rebellions, but

also subsumed the Orient, the colony, and racial savagery into Europe's own crowd and their rebellion – a part of a larger process in which Europe (and later North America) projected its unruly element onto its others, especially its Muslim other,⁶²² which both predated⁶²³ and outlasted⁶²⁴ the 19th century. This mutual mapping is evident in the titles of two essays of the *Gazette*: “Arabi-Gambetta – Gambetta-Bey” and “La Commune au Caire.” This is especially the case with the former; it is as if the title performs the circular motion between the colony and the metropole entailed by this mutual mapping: ‘Arabi, the Arab, representing Arab rebellion and Arab unruliness, and then Gambetta (the democrat, the Opportunist Republican, associated by the *Gazette* with a revolutionary legacy he was never part of), then Gambetta again, then the Bey (the Orient again); the libel goes back and forth between the bad

⁶²² See the discussion in Joseph Massad, *Islam in Liberalism*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015).

⁶²³ Let us not forget that, long before Victorian anxieties about the crowd, the Paris Commune, and the modern colonial encounter, an assimilated Moor serving as a Venetian General in Venice's colonial war in Cyprus chastised his drunk and brawling soldiers saying: “Are we turned Turks? And to ourselves do that Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?” (William Shakespeare, *Othello*, 2.3). Perhaps even before the modern colonial encounter both mutiny at home and the Oriental/Muslim enemy (the “Ottomites”) represented the imbricated unruly others of Western civilization. For the significance of “turning Turk” in that context (a significance that is not devoid of sexual insinuations, along other patterns of unruliness) along with an expansive elaboration on the pre-colonial English anxiety about the Muslim/Turk/Arab other, see Daniel Vitkus, “Turning Turk in Othello: The Conversion and Damnation of the Moor,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48, no.2 (Summer, 1997): 145 -176.

⁶²⁴ This projection of the unruly aspect to the Oriental/Islamic/Arab persists in pop-culture imagery of the Muslim terrorist, the Muslim polygamist, and the rich depraved prince from the Arabian/Persian Gulf, and in focusing on incidents of sexual harassment where the perpetrators are suspected to be Arab as the only possible incidents of sexual harassment. A British drama-comedy brilliantly parodied this projection of unruly behavior onto Arabs in the finale of its second season: a father of a deceased adolescent pretends to be perplexed by the behavior of his son's delinquent friends, and a friend of his, putting on an English gentleman attitude and an English upper-class accent explains: “ASBO [anti-social-behavior-order] culture, or Arabs, it's one of the As.” Later in the same episode the friends of the deceased adolescent, who were banned from attending his funeral, end up having a eulogy for their friend by the side of the official funeral, and at the end of their eulogy they celebrate the life of their late friend by setting off fireworks. A scandalized woman attending the official funeral wonders who these people are and the same gentleman responds, abruptly and conclusively “Arabs.” *Skins* season 2, episode 10.

European subject and the savage. At its beginning, the article proclaims “Araby-Bey est un Araby-Gambetta qui porte le fez.” Is this supposed to be a denunciation of ‘Urabi or Gambetta? Perhaps both. While the former is clearer, there is a suggestion here that Gambetta lends himself to Orientalist tropes, creating in the mind of the reader the image of Gambetta as a Bey in a fez. This becomes even clearer when the *Gazette* responds to *al-Mufid*’s assertion that ‘Urabi is a better leader than Gambetta. The *Gazette* was willing to concede that ‘Arabi might be better than Gambetta, its main concern was that Gambetta was comparable to ‘Arabi (whom the former treats as a chief of bandits and of a savage species, but other republicans treat as a soldier of liberty and a man of the Commune) and ends up being placed underneath him.⁶²⁵ The structure of the article itself keeps the circularity of the title: it keeps going back and forth from denouncing ‘Urabi to denouncing Gambetta, as if each is a worthy slur for the other, and as if the ‘Urabi revolt were a chance to settle scores with both. The same loop of reference is observed between the ‘Urabi revolt and the Paris Commune in the article titled “La Commune au Caire.” The *Gazette* proclaims: “Le Caire a sa Commune, tout comme Paris,” and that “Arabi-Pacha copie Delescluze Pacha”

⁶²⁵ *Gazette de France*, on 11/7/1882, 2:

M. Gambetta comparé à Arabi et mis au-dessous de lui.

Au fond la comparaison n’est pas hors de propos et l’on peut soutenir la prééminence du chef de la “révolution” égyptienne.

Il n’y a pas que les Arabes qui aient tenté le parallèle.

On l’a fait à Paris et on a conclu de même. M. Gambetta et ses amis traitent, il est vrai, Arabi de CHEF DE BANDITS et D’ESPÈCE DE SAUVAGE. Mais M. Rochefort voit en lui le CHEF DE LA DÉMOCRATIE ÉGYPTIENNE; il l’a salué SOLDAT DE LA LIBERTÉ; une feuille plus intransigeante encore que l’Intransigeant a cru retrouver dans Arabi un homme la Commune.

Il est clair que, pour une très grande fraction du parti républicain, la comparaison n’est pas à l’avantage de M. Gambetta que l’on met bien au-dessous d’Arabi-pacha.

(ellipsis in original). Once again, it is not only that ‘Arabi’s bad and Oriental subjectivity is reminiscent of Louis Delescluze but also that the latter lends himself to Oriental tropes and appropriations. The figure of ‘Arabi, therefore, does not Orientalize Delescluze’s ex nihilo. Rather it affirms the already Oriental nature of the bad subjectivity of “Delescluze Pacha.” Thus, it is not only that the ‘Urabi revolt should only be understood through the lens of the Commune and the French Revolution, but also that the Commune and, to a lesser extent, the French Revolution, were to be understood as the savagery and terror of the Orient and the colonies settling in or coming to haunt the metropole.

Through a panoply of racial others, among which the Muslim and the Arab stand prominently, counterrevolutionary representations of the Commune and the French Revolution consistently utilized tropes of racial savagery. Implicitly and explicitly, the racial other (Arab, Muslim, Turk, Native American, African, and Berber) was the maligning frame, the bad subject, within which revolution and revolutionaries were conceived. This is already the case with the previously cited discourse on revolution and degeneration: the racial other belonged to a lagging stage of evolution akin to that of degeneration, in the colonial thought of the 19th century. Therefore, even the ‘degenerate type’ is a species that is kin to the racial savage; the criminal, and by extension the revolutionary, or, in Lombroso’s characterization, the *anarchist*, regresses to the racial savage, consistent with the crime/rebellion that affronts the State, the upholder of civilization.

As the Commune was being defeated, the *Standard* articulated the logic that, through rising against the State, and through committing acts of political violence (even worse than political crimes, according to the report), the communards affronted

Western civilization (coded as Christendom) and placed themselves in the same category with racial/non-Christian savages:

The crime, which those who commit it call tyrannicide, is a political crime; and a far less atrocious crime than those of the Parisian traitors. It is murder; but murder which in the eyes of *heathen nations* partook of the nature of war or of justice, and which even *Christian men*, when once they allow themselves to forsake *the moral code of Christendom* and shake off the yoke of public sentiment and moral instinct, may easily persuade themselves and others ... to consider it justifiable. (emphases added)⁶²⁶

The insurrection, or any sympathy with its perpetrators, is thus seen as forsaking “the moral code of Christendom,” and thus the communards, though originally Christian, do not only walk out of the Christian religion, but also of the bounds of Western Christian civilization (Christendom) and its “moral code.” This on its own may invite us to think of the longtime enemy of Christendom, Islam (or in the context of the 19th century, the Turks). The passage does not only ambiguously cast the communards out of the moral code of Christendom (which would have been explicable in terms of the anti-clerical zeal of the communards and the atheistic materialism of Communism) but more specifically associates them with “heathen nations” (and again one could think of Indians, Africans, Native Americans, and/or Turks/Arabs/Muslims).

The racial savagery of the Commune, according to the *Standard's* reporter, was contagious, anyone who remotely sympathized with them or granted them asylum would “pass for barbarian.” An earlier passage of the same article reads as follows:

Must we not pass for barbarians, insensible alike to artistic treasures and to moral distinction, if we accord to the incendiaries of Paris the same privileges we gave to the martyrs of Italian unity and the soldiers of Hungarian independence? The victorious and vengeful tyrants of each successive dynasty, Legitimist, Elective, Republican, have in turn reviled us as the enemies of civilisation and of order for according a welcome to their hunted foes; shall we not deserve that epithet at the hands of impartial history if we shelter from the retribution they have deserved these worse than pirates- these wretches, who are, without exaggeration or metaphor, *hostis humani generis* in virtue of the acts which have robbed mankind of so much

⁶²⁶*The Standard*, 29/5/1871, 4.

the accumulated glories of civilisation and art – which have destroyed the Tuileries and the ministerial offices, and which aimed at destroying the Louvre and the Sorbonne? (emphasis in original)

More layers of the racial and civilizational conceit start to unravel in this passage: part of what casts the communards and those who sympathize with them outside Western civilization/the moral code of Christendom, is how they (allegedly) destroyed buildings that symbolized state power and Western civilization simultaneously (through uncivilized, untamed, and imprecise fire as shown in Chapter 1). These acts place the communards in a *precarious* category outside statehood and state protection, the category of pirates and *hostis humani generis*.

But even in comparing the communards to pirates and *hostis humani generis*, the *Standard's* reporter is projecting onto them a space that is not only outside the bounds of the state but also a space that is racially other and ambiguously Muslim: the figure of the pirate in the English imaginary – and by extension, one may add, that of the *hostis humani generis*, was already racialized not only through it falling outside of Europe, and out of state-bounded civilization, but also through England's experience with the "Barbary Pirates."⁶²⁷ The reference to pirates and *hostis humani generis* can therefore be read as a lingering echo of a 14th-15th century terror that is Oriental, Ottoman, Muslim, and Berber – one may even note how the term *Barbary* is derived from Barbar (Berber) the same way Araby/Arabi is derived from Arab.

This is not to say, of course, that the experience of the Barbary pirates necessarily defined Europe's counterrevolutionary discourse, or that 15th century European history can sufficiently explain its 19th century history. It is to say, however, that the Muslim and Oriental other prominently figured in the Western panoply of

⁶²⁷ See Vitkus, "Turning Turk in Othello," 147, 151- 152, 161- 165.

others that played a role in Europe's own understanding of itself (as Christendom was becoming Europe, let alone the obvious role it played as Christendom's other), and that were at the disposal of European thinkers and propagandists to characterize their internal others and produce their own bad subjects (just like the concept of Christendom, even after it was supplanted by Europe, was at the disposal of the *Standard's* reporter as a marker of identity). "Islam is at the heart of liberalism, at the heart of Europe; it was there at the moment of the birth of liberalism and the birth of Europe,"⁶²⁸ says the opening passage of Joseph Massad's *Islam in Liberalism*. Islam was, indeed, there in the 14th-15th century (through the experience with the Barbary pirates, with the Ottomans, let alone with Muslim Spain), and remained there, as Europe's external other against which Europe's self is defined and to which its internal others are projected, in the 19th century.

This relationship between Islam and Europe (and Islam and Europe's dominant ideologies, including liberalism, and the liberal-conservatism that shaped the 19th century European discourse and to which many of the authors we are reading subscribed, especially Dickens and LeBon) can be observed in the trajectory of the term "terror" which came to characterize the rule of the crowd, the Reign of Terror (and to a lesser extent the Commune, compared by its detractors to the Reign of Terror especially as it instated a Committee of Public Safety modeled on its Jacobin forerunner). It is easy to read the racialist and Orientalist significance of the term backwards, and to project the "Muslim terrorist" of Hollywood and US counterinsurgency back in time to the Reign of Terror, but even a chronological reading of the history of the term would reveal how the Muslim stood at the centre of its emergence. Europe's terror, or indeed its *terroure*, before the modern spelling of the

⁶²⁸ Joseph Massad, *Islam in Liberalism*, 1.

term was standardized, before US counterinsurgency and before the Reign of Terror, was Muslim *terror*. Through the 17th century the term “the present terrour of the world” referred to the Ottoman “empire” after the English Historian Richard Knolles coined the term and used it in the memorable opening passage of his *Generall Historie of the Turkes*: “the glorious empire of the Turkes, the present terrour of the world.” This term rapidly came to currency, according to cultural historian Anders Ingram, “by the mid-seventeenth century this phrase was in common usage. In particular, its use to describe the Ottoman Turks became ubiquitous to the point of cliché.”⁶²⁹

The Reign of Terror, therefore, both succeeds and precedes Muslim terror. We cannot claim with certainty, however, whether the Jacobins who used the term *terror* or the later historians and observers who characterized the revolutionary government as a *reign of terror* had Ottoman terror in mind (once again, neither 17th century nor 20th and 21st century Western histories can sufficiently explain an 18th-19th century phenomenon). What we know for certain, however, is that European

⁶²⁹ Anders Ingram, “English Literature on the Ottoman Turks in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” (PhD diss., Durham University, 2009), 2, http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/86/1/full_thesis.pdf. See also Anders Ingram, “The glorious empire of the Turkes, the present terrour of the world’: Richard Knolles’ *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603) and the background to an early modern commonplace,” in *Explorations in Cultural History*, D. Smith and H. Philsooph, eds., (Aberdeen: BPR Publishers, 2010), 197-216. A number of authors have analysed the usage of the term and read it in the context of fraught English-Ottoman relations and the set of biases that characterized early English Orientalism, see for example Vitkus, “Turning Turk in Othello,” 150-151. See also Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning, Islam in English Drama, 1579-1624*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2010), 17, 74- 86. Ingram however warns that the expression did not always serve to denounce the Ottomans. While there is an unmistakable undertone of racial horror, describing the Ottoman “Empire” as the “present terrour of the world,” according to Ingram, also served to depict the sultanate as God’s punishment to Christian nations that have deviated from Christianity. My wish here is not to resolve this debate, which falls beyond my area of expertise let alone the scope of this study. My aim, however, is to note the racial undertones of the term (which Ingram problematizes but does not deny), along with the racial undertones the 19th century echoes of the term may have carried.

notions of good governance developed themselves against the stereotypes and misconceptions of Oriental and Ottoman despotism⁶³⁰ (something we observed earlier with how the *Gazette de France* depicted both *dictatorship* and *democracy*, which appeared in the discourse of the *Gazette* as two conflated categories of bad governance, both equally befitting the descriptions of the Commune and the Republic, were readily projected onto the figure of ‘Arabi as an Oriental despot). Both the Revolutionary government of 1793 (commonly referred to as the Reign of Terror) and its detractors distanced themselves from, juxtaposed their respective mode of government against, and accused the other party of emulating Oriental despotism, until, that is, the Revolutionary government, faced by the intolerance and animosity of the old European regimes, made common cause with the Ottomans as the enemy of their enemy, and chose to side with the Ottoman sultanate during its war with Austria.⁶³¹ If the Revolutionary government was ambiguous towards the Orient and its despotism, some of its detractors were clear about the Muslim nature of the *Terror*. Comte de Volney (who later became the Orientalist advisor to Napoleon)⁶³² saw in the ideology of Robespierre “une doctrine renouvelée d’Omar.” For Comte de Volney, the Terror prescribed “[f]raternité ou la mort, c’est-a-dire: pense comme moi

⁶³⁰ Massad, *Islam in Liberalism*, esp. 2, 12- 13, 14- 109.

⁶³¹ Yves Benot, “Révolution Française et ‘Despotisme Turc’,” in *La Revolution Française et le Monde Arabo-Musulman: Colloque International Tunis 9-11 Novembre 1989*, edited by Hédia Khadhar, (Tunis: Alif, 1991), 223- 229.

⁶³² For the role Comte de Volney played at the intersection of Orientalist and counterrevolutionary discourses see Govand Azeez, "The Oriental Rebel in Western History," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 37.2(summer 2015), 250- 251.

ou je te tue; ce qui est littéralement la profession de foi d'un mohamétan.”⁶³³ One can thus add Robespierre to the West's litany of (real and imaginary) Muslim terrorists.

Heavy representational baggage, therefore, governed the appearance of Islam, the Orient, and the Ottoman in European discourse in the 19th century (as much as today) – not all of which related to the colonial experience. This representational baggage sustained the continuous projection of the crowds, their defiance of meaning and signification, their rebellion, revolt, and crimes, and their government, in short their *terror* (not only the terror of Jacobin government and of crowd violence, but also the terror of the loss of meaning and dissolution of individuality) onto the Orient – among other racially other territories. The crowds, their revolts, and their government belong to this predominantly (though not exclusively) Oriental space of racial othering: they exist “outside the moral code of Christendom,” they are like (Barbary) pirates and *hostis humani generis*, their rule is comparable to Muslim terror and Oriental despotism, and are effectively *Mohamétan*.

In the 19th century, after the modern State became the upholder of civilization and evolution as such, these representations served to cast the crowd (which falls outside the State's regimentation of space and definition of space) and revolt/revolution (which challenges this very state) as simultaneously degenerate and Oriental (two categories that overlapped once the evolutionary episteme of the 19th century took over). In that sense, we can read the role played by the pirates in the *Standard* report as that of a proxy; likening the communards (who rise against the state and therefore against Western civilization) to pirates serves to cast them outside

⁶³³ Qtd. in Yves Benot, “Révolution Française et ‘Despotisme Turc’,” in *La Revolution Française et le Monde Arabo-Musulman: Colloque International Tunis 9-11 Novembre 1989*, edited by Hédia Khadhar, (Tunis: Alif, 1991), 228.

state-bound civilization. The pirate metaphor, in turn, through the memory of the Barbary pirates, takes the communards to the degenerate and racially other territory of Berbers – and through them to Islam and Africa, simultaneously, to the Oriental and the racial savage, to the Orient and the colony.

A similar role was played by the metaphor of the desert, to which revolution and the crowd (as such, before even becoming a revolutionary crowd) were commonly likened. The desert, like piracy, exists outside of Europe, and stands in antithetical relationship to Europe's civilization. Furthermore, it is a racially other, sometimes Oriental, territory, roamed by degenerate Bedouins, Berber, Arabs, and Muslims. I will now turn to the usage of the desert (and sometimes more specifically the Sahara) in representations of crowd and revolution.

The Sahara of Paris

Commenting on how the representations of the crowd in 19th century European literature combined fascination with terror, John Plotz notes:

to be among such crowds is like being among *non-Christians*, perhaps even closer to being in *a desert*. One might usefully compare such texts to Baudelaire's prose poem "Les Foules" (c.1860), which ends by comparing the "*intoxicating mysteries*" of the crowd to those felt by "founders of *colonies*, the pastors of people, *missionary priests exiled to the ends of the earth*."⁶³⁴ (emphases added.)

The experience of the crowd, even before the crowd takes up arms and becomes a Paris Commune or a Reign of Terror, is akin to "non-Christian" territories, or, to being among "heathen nations," to exiting "the moral codes of Christendom." Plotz does not follow the racial representations of the crowd further than that – which is

⁶³⁴ Plotz, *The Crowd*, 18. I have already analyzed Baudelaire's poem and the reference to the crowd as an orgy in a previous chapter.

curious given the otherwise vigilant and erudite nature of his account. Particularly intriguing in this passage is the unexplained reference to the desert. It is not clear whether the Brandeis professor was consciously making an argument that the image of the desert recurs, with racial overtones pointing in the direction of Jews (who were lost in the desert for four decades) and Arabs (who are its constant inhabitants) alike, in representing the crowd, or simply using the desert as an *exotic* metaphor. The desert as the racialized metaphor for the crowd is recurrent, however, and can be observed in LeBon. The very opening sentence of *The Crowd* proclaims the foundation of an “Arabian [sic] Empire” and “the fall of the Roman Empire” to be “great upheavals” comparable to “the age of the crowd.”⁶³⁵ In this representation, we have on the one side Rome, standing for Civilization and the West, and on the other side the Arabs and upheaval⁶³⁶ (and one may add the Barbarians that destroyed Roman civilization). Arabs (and therefore by extension upheaval and the crowds) are then referred back to the desert; after detailing the primitiveness of the crowds, LeBon points out how the lack of reason behind their action is the same lack of reason that enabled an Arab civilization to emerge: “improbable too that a few bands of Arabs, emerging from their deserts, should conquer the greater part of the old Græco-Roman

⁶³⁵ LeBon, *The Crowd*, 33. In this opening statement the “age of the crowds,” that is, the age of republicanism, democracy, the Commune, and the French Revolution, is comparable to the rise of Islam and of an Arab empire. LeBon’s logic, therefore, is not very different from the *Gazette de France* which insisted on associating these phenomena (perhaps to the exception of the last one) with the Arabs, the Orient, and adherence to the Qur’an and to the teachings of prophets.

⁶³⁶ It is also important to note how for LeBon, much like for the *Gazette*, phenomena of the crowd, revolution, and the Commune represented degeneration. Placing Arabness alongside these phenomena exposes the racialized element of this discourse; how it viewed degeneration as Arab and Arabness as degenerate. *Upheaval* in this context can be understood as the coming up of the degeneration that should otherwise be suppressed and/or surpassed. This can be seen as one of the incidents in which *inhilal* and *inqilab* come together, as per the discussion in Chapter 1.

world, and establish an empire greater than that of Alexander.”⁶³⁷ To the dichotomy between Rome, civilization, and the West on the one side, and Arabs, crowds, and upheaval on the other, LeBon adds the desert to the side of the latter.

The desert as the (Arab) antithesis to civilization and the prelude to colonization was important to 19th century colonialist ideologies: 19th century colonialism was often coded as a mission to reclaim the wasteland, thus juxtaposing the Western civilized topography to its *Saharan* other. Similarly in the discourse on the crowd we have the desert, the antithesis of civilization, a topography foreign to the West, desolate, chaotic, and racially other, as a space comparable to one occupied by the crowd, or as a space to which they belong. Even before LeBon, the trope of the desert appeared in Thomas Carlyle’s *The French Revolution*. Trying to account for the “half-frantic” nature of the revolutionary ardor against the internal and external enemies of the revolution, Carlyle writes:

Let the Reader conceive well these two cardinal movements; and what side-currents and endless vortexes might depend on these. He shall judge too, whether, in such sudden wreckage of all old Authorities, such a pair of cardinal movements, half-frantic in themselves, could be of soft nature? As in dry *Sahara*, when the winds waken, and lift and winnow the *immensity of sand!* The air itself (Travellers say) is a dim sand-air; and dim looming through it, the wonderfulest uncertain colonnades of Sand-Pillars rush whirling from this side and from that, like so many mad Spinning-Dervishes, of a hundred feet in stature; and dance their huge Desert-waltz there!—⁶³⁸ (emphases added).

Opposed to order (read civilization) therefore there is the desert-waltz, the immensity of sand, and the Spinning-Dervishes; though in the next passage Carlyle will

⁶³⁷ LeBon, *The Crowd*, 137. Though to be fair, LeBon here does not juxtapose Arabic/Islamic civilization to its Western/Roman other like he did in the introduction, but rather groups the rise of an Arab empire with other improbable events that shaped Western history like the rise of Christianity and of Bonapartism.

⁶³⁸ Carlyle, Thomas, *The French Revolution*, 275-276.

acknowledge that in these movements “there is order, or the beginning of order,” – the same developmentalist civilizational schema we observe with LeBon and others. Revolution, which challenges the state, the upholder of (Western) civilization, takes France out of civilization (where there is order) into a primitive stage where there is “the beginning of order.” It diverges from the civilizational march of France into the less calculated “desert-waltz,” reduces its civilization (including its architecture)⁶³⁹ into desert-sand. It ultimately takes France out of Europe and into the Sahara.

The geographic and discursive locations of the Sahara are particularly significant for our study. Literally meaning the desert(s) in Arabic, the term *Sahara* indexes racial and linguistic otherness while signifying *the desert*. Its geographic position in North Africa (along with its discursive position as an Arab desert) brings together two categories that I have so far treated as the same: the Orient and Africa—and by extension the Orient and the colony. Although the Orient, Africa, and the colony were not necessarily the same for 19th century Europe, the set of biases that produced each often intersected. With the Sahara we have a space that is Oriental (an Ottoman domain with an Arab name and a predominantly Arab-Muslim population), that is part of Africa, and that is a target to British and French colonization— also incidentally a space to which Egypt belongs, both geographically and discursively. It is telling therefore, that Carlyle depicted revolutionary France as a space that combines the Orient, Africa, the colony, and the desert. Carlyle’s student, Charles Dickens, followed suit in *A Tale of Two Cities* (in which he cited Carlyle as “the most trustworthy witness”)⁶⁴⁰; through a set of racially charged images, tropes, and metaphors, Dickens referred the *savagery* of the revolutionary crowd to the Orient, to

⁶³⁹ See *ibid*, 261.

⁶⁴⁰ Charles Dickens, “Preface to the First Edition,” *A Tale of Two Cities*, iv.

Africa, and to Native America (a colony but also an Orient in the European imagination). Dickens here was important not only because of his relevance for an Egyptian readership. LeBon, Comte de Volney, and even Carlyle were Orientalists by profession (which in itself is telling, that the authors we encountered as exemplary of the West's counterrevolutionary discourse happened to also be Orientalists, a testament to the role of Orientalism in shaping Europe's counterrevolutionary discourse and defining its sense of self). It would be expected of them to compare what they saw in Europe to the Orient they studied and wrote professionally about. Dickens, however, despite harboring Orientalist biases, was not an Orientalist by training or profession (except in the capacity that everyone at his time had internalized Orientalist ideologies) and did not write about Arab, Muslim, or Ottoman domains. Through Dickens, therefore, I will show how a paradigmatic European text on the crowd and revolution (i.e. *A Tale of Two Cities*), that is not written by a professional Orientalist, was still haunted by the racial other, the colony, and the Orient (and this will help us better appreciate how the abnegation of the Egyptian indigenous culture in al-Siba'i's preface mirrored, if inadvertently, an abnegation of the non-European in the original text). With Dickens, however, we will find the Muslim/Arab to be less prominent, and other racial others (mainly African and Native American *savages*) more so.

A Ferocity Worthy of Abyssinia and Ashantee

Although *A Tale of Two Cities* takes place between the two metropolises of the time, London and Paris, the text is rife with imagery from the colonies and the Orient. The savagery of the revolutionary crowd, which mirrors the savagery of the *ancien régime*

and serves as a warning for the English ruling classes, is constantly referred to as the savagery of the racial other. Let us for example examine this brief scene, taking place at the margins of the September Massacre: “The grindstone had a double handle, and, turning at it madly were two men, whose faces, as *their long hair flapped back* when the whirlings [plural in original] of the grindstone brought their faces up, were *more horrible and cruel* than the visages of the *wildest savages* in their most *barbarous* disguise,” (3.2.203, emphases added). Given the context in which Dickens was writing (England’s recent involvement in colonial wars in North America, and the persistence of the figure of the Native American as a threat and as a trope for the depiction of revolutionary threats)⁶⁴¹ the scene of *the wildest savages* prepared for battle in their “most barbarous disguise” (war paint) as “their long hair flapped back” is not likely to be racially innocent; it is the savage of the Americas with his “long hair flapped back” and “most barbarous disguise” on his face that is being invoked.⁶⁴² Like Native American warriors, these revolutionary savages smeared their faces with “[f]alse eyebrows and false moustaches” and like them they were “glaring with beastly excitement.” Comparing the revolutionary savages to the Native Savages is a step towards rendering them legitimate targets for murder (or genocide) by the civilized “beholders”: after describing their “frenzied eyes,” Dickens concludes: “eyes which any unbrutalized beholder would have given twenty years of his life, to petrify with a well-directed gun.” Dickens’ fantasy of sacrificing two decades of his life to take down savages by a well-directed gun starts to eerily resemble a cowboy scene of

⁶⁴¹ For example the women of the Commune were compared to Mohican fighters, see Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 100.

⁶⁴² For examples of how, in Dickens’ non-fictional writings, the word “savage” (much like its general usage at the time) was a racial term, sometimes with a genocidal bent, see Priti Joshi, “Mutiny Echoes: India, Britons, and Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities*,” *Nineteenth Century Literature* 62, no.1 (June 2007): 69.

the Classical Western genre. It seems that Dickens, who harbored genocidal fantasies against Indians,⁶⁴³ needed to turn the revolutionaries into native savages in order to cast them as fair targets of genocide.⁶⁴⁴ If this may seem like an over-reading on our part, Dickens' description of the scene at Temple Bar, as we will see, leaves little room for speculation.

Early in the *Tale* the ultimate terror is projected onto the colonies; when describing the view from inside Tellson's Bank, the scene of severed heads on pikes in Temple Bar, gazing back at whoever is looking out of Tellson's windows, is pronounced to be of "insensate brutality and ferocity worthy of Abyssinia or Ashantee."⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴³ For Dickens' fantasies of genocide against Indians, and of partaking of one, see Joshi, "Mutiny Echoes," 94: Dickens wrote (in a letter quoted by Joshi), in the wake of the Indian uprising: "I wish I were Commander in Chief in India. . . . I should do my utmost to exterminate the Race upon whom the stain of the late cruelties rested . . . to blot it out of mankind and raze it off the face of the Earth." Dickens' zeal for genocide can also be read into Charles Darnay's admiration for George Washington (the genocidal war criminal responsible for the Iroquois genocide and known by the Native people of America as village destroyer) which is declared early on in the *Tale*; 2.3.54.

⁶⁴⁴ Secondary literature on the *Tale* has typically missed the genocidal overtones of this passage – along with a trend to downplay Dickens' demonizing of the revolutionary crowd. One source, however, that manages to locate this passage within a counterrevolutionary and colonial-genocidal ideology is Jeremy Tambling, *Dickens, Violence, and the Modern State: Dreams of the Scaffold*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 143- 144. Tambling provides an interesting reading that correlates Dickens' description of the September massacre with his genocidal fantasies with regards to India, labeling both as "proto-fascist." The main difference between Tambling's reading and mine is that Tambling reads the racialized imagery of the described scene as a reference to India (proper) not (*Indian*) America. This is a minor divergence, however, since both belonged to the same imaginary and discursive space in the mind of the colonist. It is also worth noting that Dickens' fantasy to apply violence of genocidal scale against the revolutionaries was already fulfilled by Marquis de Lafayette (the disciple of the genocidal George Washington) in the Champs de Mars massacre- which the *Tale* avoids by conveniently having the characters of the novel arrive in Paris in September 1792. Lafayette may have embodied the Dickensian fantasy, learning in North America, from the founding fathers of the United States, the genocidal art of "petrify[ing]" the "wildest [native] savages" of America by means of "a well-directed gun," then applying it to the "wildest [revolutionary] savages" of Paris.

⁶⁴⁵ 2.1.39. There is an interesting (most probably unconscious) slippage here: it is not clear whether the exhibition of the heads of the executed is what invokes the brutality and ferocity of Abyssinia and Ashantee, and therefore it is the tribes of Africa that practice the severing and exhibition of heads, or it is the severed heads that are reminiscent, in their dead gaze, of the brutality and ferocity of Abyssinia and Ashantee, and in that case the tribes of Africa would not be perpetrators but victims of

In a novel dealing with the motif of decapitation and the Guillotine, one that ends with the decapitation of one of its main characters, this reference, early on in the novel, (the seventh of the 45 chapters constituting the novel, and the first chapter of the second book, or “Book the Second”) serves to foreshadow the decapitation that would take place later. The severed heads at Temple Bar would be reflected again in the decapitation of the (already dead) Bastille officer,⁶⁴⁶ the “gory heads on pikes” after the storming of the Bastille,⁶⁴⁷ the head of Faullon (Faulon) de Doué displayed on a pike with grass stuffed into his mouth,⁶⁴⁸ the uncanny sight of red caps on pikes,⁶⁴⁹ and of course the heads severed by the Guillotine. The first of many decapitations to come, the scene at Temple Bar foreshadows these later decapitations and display of heads, yet to refer to the “brutality and ferocity” of all these beheadings, all the turmoil that would take place in France, to the “brutality and ferocity” of Africa and the colonies.

the severing of heads—perhaps by the white colonizer. Before one jumps into assuming a progressive agenda on Dickens’ part (which some enthusiastic critics have jumped into in the past), one should recognize how “worthy” is a keyword here. Even if we read the metaphor to mean that the racial other, the colonized, is the beheaded not the beheader, the passage would mean that only the savages of the colonies are *worthy* of beheading, but not the English convicts. This is consistent with Charles Darnay’s (and perhaps Dickens’ own) admiration of the genocidal George Washington, and Dickens’ own fantasies of genocide in India. For an analysis that situates this passage in the aftermath of the Ashanti war (in which the leader of the Ashanti allegedly drank blood out of the skull of a British colonial chief), but fails to interrogate its colonial and racist overtones, see Colin Jones, Josephine McDonagh, and Jon Mee, “Introduction: *A Tale of Two Cities in Context*,” in *Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities and the French Revolution*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 11. In their attempt to rescue Dickens from his counterrevolutionary biases, Jones et al. present this reference to the Ashanti uprising as a progressive critique of the English elite while missing its racial (and blatantly racist) bias.

⁶⁴⁶ 2.21.169.

⁶⁴⁷ 2.21.170.

⁶⁴⁸ 2.22.173.

⁶⁴⁹ 3.6.220.

Furthermore, the scene can be understood as part of the criticism/warning Dickens directs against the English upper class of financiers and bankers, embodied in the fictional Tellson's Bank (which overlooks Temple Bar).⁶⁵⁰ Part of the message of the *Tale* was that the English ruling class had to mend its ways or else it would meet the fate of its French counterpart,⁶⁵¹ that the brutality of the French Revolution was comparable to the brutality of the *ancien régime*, and that the English ruling class, if it did not check itself, may be comparable to the *ancien régime* and the French Revolution in brutality.⁶⁵² This brutality and ferocity they all share or run the risk of sharing, does not belong to England or France or Europe, but to Abyssinia and Ashantee.⁶⁵³ Though the novel is about the French Reign of Terror (invoked at some points as a warning to the English upper classes), the ultimate *terror* belongs not to revolutionary France but to the racial other.

⁶⁵⁰ For how the *Tale* can be read as a criticism (albeit at times a timid one) of segments of the English upper class, see Cates Baldrige, "Alternatives to Bourgeois Individualism in *A Tale of Two Cities*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 30, no. 4 (Autumn, 1990): 641- 644 (on p. 644 Baldrige specifically focuses on the passage about the severed heads at Temple Bar, but pays no attention to its racial overtones), and James Brown, *Dickens: Novelist in the Marketplace*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1982). See also Albert Hutter, "Nation and Generation in *A Tale of Two Cities*," in *Critical Essays on Charles Dickens's A Tale of Two Cities*, ed. Michael Cotsell, (New York: G.K. Hall & Co., 1998), 89- 110.

⁶⁵¹ See George Orwell, *Dickens, Dali and Others: Studies in Popular Culture*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963 c.1946). 12- 16.

⁶⁵² On the parallels between Tellson's bank and the decapitation scene in front of it on one side and the French *ancien régime* and Revolution on the other, see Baldrige, "Alternatives to Bourgeois Individualism in *A Tale of Two Cities*," 643- 644.

⁶⁵³ In her study of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Priti Joshi shows how Dickens was in the habit of projecting his civilizational fears onto oriental territories. According to Joshi, Dickens belonged to "that Orientalist tradition of displacing guilt about one's darkest desires onto an Other," Joshi, "Mutiny Echoes," 73. In an incident where lost British sailors in the Arctic were reported to have practiced cannibalism, a horrified Dickens stipulated that it must have been the Inuit people who practiced this kind of horror; see Joshi, "Mutiny Echoes," 69. This incident served as the backdrop of *Frozen Deep* which Dickens commissioned and later described as the blueprint for the plot of *A Tale of Two Cities*; Joshi, "Mutiny Echoes," 72.

A Tale of Two Cities, therefore, like many other counterrevolutionary texts of the time (including Carlyle's *The French Revolution* and the reports by the *Standard*, and LeBon's *The Crowd*), was haunted by the racial other. Europe's recent experience in the colonies, the experience of the masses of people beyond its control, and especially the experience of anti-colonial rebellion, determined how Europe, its bourgeoisie, and its counterrevolutionary intellectuals understood their own crowds.⁶⁵⁴ This was especially the case with *A Tale of Two Cities*, haunted by the recent memories of the Ashanti war the Native American wars, as well as the more recent memory of the Indian uprising.⁶⁵⁵ With these recent memories of colonial encounters and a mastery over vivid imagery, Dickens elucidated a trend that ran in the counterrevolutionary literature of the time: that the rule of the crowd, the upheaval they cause, are tantamount to the rise of Europe's racial other. This is consistent with, perhaps predicated upon, the general European colonial understanding of individuality as a Western achievement.

If in the colonial imagination of the 19th century, Oriental and other savage populations exist as collectives (or crowds for the matter) while Westerners exist as individuals or as members of institutions that produce individuals (a status that is only preserved through State power and the gaze of the State), then forming a crowd in the West Orientalizes the West, or takes it on a path of degeneration towards savagery. The crowd, therefore, is *always already* savage, sometimes *always already* Arab (even before the metropolitan crowd was projected onto the colony). In the next

⁶⁵⁴ For how the material realities of imperialism produced a racially diverse crowd in the metropole (especially in London), donning culturally diverse artifacts, leading to racialized perceptions of the crowd that mapped the crowd and the colony onto one another, see Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism*, esp. 23- 44.

⁶⁵⁵ For how the Indian rebellion haunted the *Tale*, see Priti Joshi, "Mutiny Echoes."

section I will examine various instances in which crowd-born(e) subjects and other figures that stood metonymically⁶⁵⁶ for the crowd were racialized (frequently as Muslim, Oriental, and/or Arab), starting by revisiting the figure of the crowd-born(e) ‘Arab(i).

Europe’s ‘Arabis and Carton the Jackal

‘Arabi, the degenerate Oriental despot who blasphemes military discipline was not merely a racial slur used to defame Ahmad ‘Urabi. ‘Arabi was furthermore a screen for the degeneracy Europe saw at home.⁶⁵⁷ ‘Arabi’s degeneracy, despotism, and lack of discipline also served, in the discourse of the *Gazette*, to Orientalize and defame the Commune, the republic, the left, and the opportunist republicans (all phenomena associated with the crowd in one way or another). Through their fez, their *narghileh*, their Oriental despotism, their Oriental aristocratic titles (Bey, Pacha), which seem less noble than the titles of European nobility for some reason, and their crowd-born(e) degeneracy, Delescluze (and with him the communards) and Gambetta (and with him the republic) were thus produced as ‘Arab(i)s. In fact, Ahmad ‘Urabi, Léon Gambetta, and Louis Delescluze were not the West’s only crowd-born(e) ‘Arabis. In various counterrevolutionary representations, figures that stand as metonymies for the crowd

⁶⁵⁶ I insist here that the representations of the abnegated crowd that I work with are metonymic and not iconographic. Because the crowd is abnegated, and because it defies signification, its sign needs to both *resemble* and be *associated with* it, it either belongs or shows close proximity to it. Iconography on the other hand transcends the materiality of what is being described and therefore serves to venerate rather than abnegate. When iconography is used, we are no longer dealing with the abnegated crowd but with something else. To illustrate, Marianne is not understood as a member of the crowd, but the Pétroleuse is.

⁶⁵⁷ Perhaps my insistence on separating ‘Arabi as a figure produced by Western media from Ahmad ‘Urabi takes us away from metonymy and closer to iconography. Because ‘Arabi is not intended as an icon, and because, even as I maintain a separation between ‘Arabi and ‘Urabi, the sign here (‘Arabi) cannot be completely disentangled from the signified (‘Urabi and the Arab crowd he leads) I still deal with ‘Arabi as a metonym rather than an icon.

were likened, explicitly or implicitly, to Arabs, Muslims, Turks or other Orientals. To show how the crowd-born(e) ‘Arabi predated Ahmad ‘Urabi (a point which will help us illustrate how the crowd was *always already* racialized), I will turn one more time to our established example, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and to the (almost) crowd-born(e) figure of Sydney Carton, who is racialized as ambiguously Arab and/or Oriental. Even when the figure who stands for the crowd, is not Arab, even when this figure is European, there persists a need to project that figure onto the Orient and produce him as ambiguously a racial other.

Sydney Carton, who mirrors the vices and degeneracies of the London and Paris crowds,⁶⁵⁸ though an English man, can be read in many ways as a racialized figure. In chapter 5 of Book 2 of the *Tale*, which is dedicated to the exposition of Carton’s character, we learn that one of his quirks was the habit of dampening a cloth and tying it around his head before setting to work⁶⁵⁹ (perhaps to prevent the excessive amounts of liquor he consumes from causing him a headache). This quirk effectively renders him an Arab/Indian lookalike⁶⁶⁰ (and lest the racial

⁶⁵⁸ Mainly through being a self-described vagabond, therefore belonging to the crowds and their licentious spaces. In addition, when the characters of the novel move to Revolutionary France, he is the only character who can interact with the crowd with impunity (other characters experience shock, horror, and even madness when they interact with the Parisian crowd). Furthermore, his predilection to excessive drinking mirrors the excessive drinking which the novel attributes to the French crowd, and which 19th century thought associated with the crowd and with the degeneration of the nation. For more on how Sydney Carton mirrors the crowd and his vices mirror theirs (especially with regards to drinking) see John Kucich, *Excess and Restraint in the Novels of Charles Dickens*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, c1981), 174. Kucich also suggests that the jackal, which is the epithet given to Carton, is supposed to bring forth the Jacques of the *jacquerie* and the revolution. While this may initially seem like an over-reading on the part of Kucich, the association makes more sense once we realize that one of the main characters of *Perils of Certain English Prisoners* (a short story that anticipates the *Tale* in many ways), was named Jack Carton.

⁶⁵⁹ 2.5.66.

⁶⁶⁰ As indicated earlier, the Indian uprising was a recent memory when the *Tale* was written and thus haunted the novel in many ways; see Priti Joshi, “Mutiny Echoes,” 48-87. Curiously, Joshi does not mention Sydney Carton’s turban, although she comments on the racialization of Madame Defarge

{mis}recognition be lost, Dickens later refers to it as a turban).⁶⁶¹ This turban serves to transform Sydney Carton's morphology from an almost handsome one, to one that Dickens describes as "hideous to behold."⁶⁶² Before Sydney Carton puts on the turban, and only a few lines before his turbaned looks are described as *hideous*, Carton compares himself to his lookalike, Charles Darnay, whom he identifies as "a rather handsome fellow": "I thought he was a rather handsome fellow, and I thought I should have been much the same sort of fellow, if I had had any luck." Wearing the turban following the uttering of these words marks Sydney Carton's descent, or degeneration, from the good (European) ego and imago epitomized in the rather handsome Charles Darnay, to the bad (Arab) ego and imago he embodies, and which put him in proximity to the crowd.

Just as Gambetta and Delescluze needed to turn into 'Arabis to reflect the degeneracy of democracy and crowd-rule, Sydney Carton needed to morph into a(n) 'Arabi to reflect the degeneracy of the crowd. In the light of this reading, all the vices, degradations, and degeneracies Carton embodies (which again mirror the vices, degradations and degeneracies of the crowd) need to be read as racial.

who wraps her shawl like a turban; 79. If Sydney Carton's turban is Indian, however, it does not foreclose the possibility that the figure of the Arab (or even the Turk) is also invoked; the figure of the Arab and the Muslim have haunted the European imaginary for a long time as shown in the discussion above. We cannot, thus, think of the Indian turban (whether Muslim or Sikh) in the context of English representations without thinking of the Oriental turban more broadly. It is also probable that the figures of the Indian and the Arab (and the Turk) readily collapsed into one another in the English imaginary and that the turban was one of the markers of this collapsed figure. For how the turban continues, through racial misrecognition that confuses the Arab and the Indian or the Muslim and the Sikh, to operate currently in US culture as a marker of racialized Oriental "queerness," see Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 166- 170.

⁶⁶¹ 2.11.105. It seems that in Sixteenth century England, "taking the turban" meant converting to Islam (especially if to appease the Barbary pirates); Vitkus, "Turning Turk in Othello," 165. Of course one should not make the mistake of assuming that a sixteenth century English phenomenon would explain a nineteenth century work of literature (else we will be doing onto *Occidental* culture what Orientalists do to Arab culture), but perhaps Dickens, who was well versed in older English literature, was echoing, consciously or unconsciously, the expression.

⁶⁶² 2.5.66

Throughout the novel, Sydney Carton is haunted by his impending death.⁶⁶³ This aura of death puts him in the same position of the degenerate; like the degenerate, Sydney Carton is “like someone who might have died all along.”⁶⁶⁴ Even the language Carton uses to describe himself is reminiscent of the language of degeneration. When confessing his love to Lucie Manette, Carton describes himself in terms of “degradation,” and “sink[ing] lower and be[ing] worse.”⁶⁶⁵ He is, according to his own description “self-flung away, wasted, drunken, poor creature of misuse.”⁶⁶⁶

This degradation and degeneration serve to place Carton in the same category as the sexual degenerate. Although we are told very little about his sexual life, the language used here resonates with the 19th century understandings of sexual degeneracy and the sexual savage.⁶⁶⁷ The way he describes himself (“self-flung away, wasted ... poor creature of misuse,” let alone “the life I lead, Miss Manette, is not conducive to health. What is to be expected of, or by, such profligates”)⁶⁶⁸ echoes the description of young men consumed by masturbation.⁶⁶⁹ It is also reminiscent of the

⁶⁶³ Isabelle Hervouet-Ferrar, “I am the Resurrection and the Life: Sydney Carton, ou les modalités du Retour d’une figure familière dans *A Tale of Two Cities*.” *Cahiers Victoriens et Édouardiens* 71 (Avril 2010): 287- 298.

⁶⁶⁴ 2.13.115.

⁶⁶⁵ 2.13.114.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁷ On how Victorian morality was predicated on the fear of the untamed sexualities of the colonies see Anne Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*, (Durham: Durham University Press, 1995).

⁶⁶⁸ 2.13.114-115.

⁶⁶⁹ For a thorough analysis of this discourse on masturbation, its Victorian and European puritanical origins, its occurrence in the Arab world, and its link to degeneration, see Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 132. For further analysis of how the “exhausted masturbator,” along with the homosexual and the sexual savage, is associated with degeneration, see Hoard, “Wild(e) Men and Savages,” 62.

description of the sexual degenerate who engages in same sex practice (at a time when homosexuality was being invented).⁶⁷⁰

In fact Carton can be read, in many ways, as homosexual/failed-heterosexual. One of the main subplots of the novel is Carton's heterosexual failure, his unrequited love for Lucie whom he loses to his look-alike Charles Darnay. In addition, his (probably homosocial/homoerotic) life of vagabondage and vice is presented as the other of the nuclear family and of monogamous heterosexual coupling.⁶⁷¹ These forms

⁶⁷⁰ For the conceptions of the male homosexual as a degenerate who carries his death throughout his life, thus, to use Butler's word, "always already dying" see Judith Butler, "Sexual Inversions," Leo Bersani, "Is the Rectum a Grave?" and Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblage*, 72. Although the AIDS pandemic gave serge to this destining-to-death, the understanding of the homosexual as degenerating and dying predated the 20th century. It was (maybe among other things) the racializing of the homosexual that provided the link between same sex practice and degeneration; see Hoad, "Wild(e) Men and Savages." Hoad furthermore provides a history for this discursive link as follows: "Moreover, post-abolition imperial cultural representations hypersexualizes blackness, particularly along the lines of simultaneously feminizing and hyperverilizing black men. The general lasciviousness of savages is a trope that cuts across genres and disciplines throughout the nineteenth century. Though marked by multiple ruptures and significant shifts and reversals, there is arguably an important strand of thinking beginning in Victorian anthropology and moving through psychoanalysis to current configurations. This approach views AIDS as a predominantly homosexual and African (and, in the U.S. context, Haitian) disease linking the homosexual and the savage, who are both required to represent promiscuous unbridled lust and are held to embody states of arrested development or degeneration." Neville Hoad, *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, and Globalization*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 56. Degeneration therefore is what prefigured and provided the discursive possibility for AIDS, located by the scientific mythology in Africa, to become the link between homosexuality and degeneration (moral and racial) and subsequently death.

⁶⁷¹ For example, instead of successfully courting Lucie Manette, Carton roams the streets surrounding her home (2.13.114). Carton is therefore a sexual pervert (a stalker in the language of our time), and a failed heterosexual who substitutes the streets for the spousal bed. Carton's vagabondage and other bad habits, therefore, constitute the other of heterosexual monogamy. His friend and boss Mr. Stryver contrasts their lifestyle of vagabondage and vice to heterosexual marriage and the monogamous nuclear family: "I have had enough of this style of life, with no other as a change from it; I feel that it is a pleasant thing for a man to have a home when he feels inclined to go to it." (3.11.108). There are many other instances of homoeroticism and suggested homosexuality that would need a closer reading of the novel and therefore fall beyond the scope of this study. To my knowledge, there has not been much literature interrogating the sexuality of Sydney Carton. One exception is Christine Krueger. "The Queer Heroism of a Man of Law in *A Tale of Two Cities*." *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies* 8, no.2 (Summer 2012), <http://www.ncgsjournal.com/issue82/krueger.htm> (while not paginated, the paragraphs in this article are marked by their numbers. Subsequent citations from this article will refer to paragraph instead of page numbers). Krueger understands Carton to be a "queer hero" (10). His queerness, according to

of sexual degeneration, the very understanding of these perversities as degeneracies, subsume the figure of the racial other (sometimes the African, sometimes the Native American, and sometimes the Arab/Turk) as sexual savages.⁶⁷²

Sydney Carton's degeneration is not only sexual; he is also a class-degenerate. He fails to adhere to proper work ethics (a failure that places him not only in the same category as the Parisian crowd, which is described in the novel as idle, but also among primitive populations, thought of as lazy or as unable to schedule their work properly by the civilizational-colonial episteme of the time. Like them, Carton is unable to schedule or organize work, working too much or too little, thus simultaneously lazy and overworked). His failure to abide by proper work ethics results in his subjugation to and exploitation by his friend and boss, Mr. Stryver (thus mirroring the subjugation of the colonized by the colonizer, and the exploitation of the working class by the capitalists, which in both cases is blamed on the idleness of the

Kreuger, is juxtaposed to "disciplines of professional masculinity" (10) as well as domesticity (13). While providing an original and insightful analysis, and while Kreuger is working with the category of queer, which is supposed to transcend the homo-hetero binary and to destabilize the fixing of identity to desire, Kreuger's analysis does not provide for a chance of overlap or an area in-between the heterosexual and the homosexual. She therefore attempts to deny any sexual or romantic quality to Sydney's love for Lucie; according to Kreuger, he loves her household, not her. This leads Kreuger to contradict herself; while trying to deprive Sydney's love of any sexual character, she describes the scene in which Sydney admits his love to Lucie as "the most erotically charged scene Dickens ever wrote" (19, which moves us to question Kreuger's familiarity with Dickens' oeuvre, and especially with the scenes of Louisa Gradgrind's seduction and her subsequent erotic collapse in *Hard Times*). By choosing not to read any opposite-sex desire in the character of Sydney Carton, Kreuger misses (or intentionally ignores) the final heterosexual redemption of Carton through the seamstress who sends Carton to the Guillotine with a(n erotic, heterosexual) kiss. Kreuger's analysis therefore forecloses the category of "failed heterosexual" and therefore fails to observe the role heterosexuality plays in becoming subject within the world of the novel. She furthermore misses how Carton (through his "queerness," to use the same language Kreuger is using) becomes expendable and that his (queer) heroism is only possible through this very expendability. While taking Kreuger's analysis into account, I propose the category of "failed heterosexual" to be more useful in reading the character of Sydney Carton than the category of "queer."

⁶⁷² On the racial basis and mappings of the homosexual-as-degenerate, see Neville Hoad, *African Intimacies*, esp. 5-9, 56. On how sodomy continues to be perceived through a racial lens in contemporary American discourse see Jasbir Puar *Terrorist Assemblages*, 132- 133. On how narratives of sexual perversity functioned within a civilizational discourse in and on the Arab world, see Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*.

subjugated and the exploited in modern dominant ideologies). His class failures are narrated through a zoological trope; just like the jackal hunts for the sake of the lion, Sydney Carton works for the sake of Mr. Stryver. Throughout Chapter 5 of Book II, Stryver is referred to as the lion and Carton the jackal. The jackal would resurface in 1871 through the discourse surrounding the Paris Commune: both the revolutionaries and the counterrevolutionaries would use the metaphor of the jackal to depict the savagery of the other side (and especially that of the women).⁶⁷³ The metaphor of the jackal therefore carried a significance that went beyond *A Tale of Two Cities*, and therefore merits our attention.

This metaphor carries curious Darwinistic overtones.⁶⁷⁴ The jackal occupied a bizarre position in the evolutionary thought of the time, one that resembled (and perhaps anticipated) degeneration: like the degenerate, the jackal was supposed to perish but somehow did not; it was, in the words of Charles Darwin “an animal not destined by nature to exist” and thus one that lives “carrying with it the provision for death.”⁶⁷⁵ Sydney Carton’s class degeneration, therefore, is also biological/zoological, placing him, once again, in discursive proximity to Orientals and other racial savages.

⁶⁷³ See Guy Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 1, 4, 47, 72.

⁶⁷⁴ Simon Petch, “The Business of the Barrister in *A Tale of Two Cities*,” *Criticism* 44, no.1 (Winter 2002): 27-42, 28.

⁶⁷⁵ Qtd. in *ibid.* Although Darwinian theory, in its original form, did not allow for reversal (i.e. degeneration), there seems to be, through the example of the jackal, creatures that belong to an earlier phase of evolution, and that were destined by nature to perish but, against all odds, did not. Instead of going extinct, these creatures continue to live carrying with them their “provisions of death.” This seems to be the case with Sydney Carton. Conceptualizing the position of the jackal in Darwinian theory (a position that is equivalent to and somehow anticipates that of degeneration) helps us to explain a recurrent contradiction in the evolutionary discourse on homosexuality. In its earlier homophobic form, the discourse on homosexuality produced the homosexual as someone who is simultaneously a degenerate (i.e. belonging to an earlier state of civilizational development, and therefore somehow closer to nature) yet at the same time unnatural. This contradiction is picked up, explicated, and used to implode the discourse on sexuality and civilization (and homosexuality and

This proximity is achieved, via the jackal, not only through the category of degeneration, but also through the racialization of the jackal in European and Orientalist imaginations. The jackal belongs to racially other discursive and geographic spaces. It is an animal not native to Europe. The very name of the animal comes from Persian etymology. In addition, an England obsessed with Egyptology would not have missed the association between the jackal and Anubis, the god of the underworld in Egyptian mythology (which was perhaps more than a cursory – conscious or unconscious- reference by Dickens as Sydney Carton is metaphorically dead and gets metaphorically resurrected towards the end of the novel). This possible association between Sydney Carton and Anubis brings Carton closer to ‘Arabi. This is not only because ‘Arabi and Anubis were both Egyptian figures. The association more importantly, is achieved by way of Antigone. Sydney Carton (who was destined to death from the start) was associated with the Oriental underworld and Oriental gods of death, the same way ‘Arabi was associated, via Antigone (who like Carton was destined to death from the start), to the Chthonic gods of death (whom Antigone worshipped exclusively, according to Creon’s accusations).⁶⁷⁶ It is curious here how death (in a way the equivalent of degeneration) provides a common ground for the Arab, the crowd-born(e), the feminine (more specifically the feminine that fails to be

degeneration) by Joseph Massad in his reading of *Misk al-Ghazal*; see Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 335- 348, esp. 339-341. In its later homophobic forms, the discourse on homosexuality posits the homosexual as simultaneously natural (citing evidence that same-sex practice exists among animals) and as a marker of civilization. Perhaps the contradictory position the homosexual inhabits in the evolutionary theory of sexuality, especially in its homophobic form, is the same position of the jackal: belonging to an earlier stage of evolution and destined by nature to perish, but continues to live not as something closer to nature but rather as an aberration of nature. This reading exposes how, in Darwinian ideology, Nature replaces God – the same way the Great Chain of Evolution replaces the Great Chain of Being. Nature, however, is not an omnipotent god, evident by creatures (jackals, homosexuals, and racial others) that continue to exist against Her will.

⁶⁷⁶ *Or she may learn at last, better late than never/What a waste of breath it is to worship Death. Antigone, 877- 878.*

contained in the domestic), and the animal (more specifically the animal which fails to keep up with Darwinian evolution).⁶⁷⁷ The jackal, through the Oriental Anubis, combines racial degeneration with death, the telos of the degenerate and of Sydney Carton (and foreshadows the latter's resurrection)—along with all the white man's others (including the Arab, the woman, and the animal).

Even beyond the contexts of Dickens and Victorian England, the jackal recurs in Western imagination as Arab, from Kafka's "Jackals and Arabs" to Carlos the Jackal,⁶⁷⁸ in both cases the proximity to Arabs turns one into a jackal: in the former it is a Mizrahi Jew and therefore effectively an Arab, and in the latter a South American member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). In fact, it seems that even before Carlos and even before Kafka, Orientalists have associated jackals with Arabs. In a quote which, according to Timothy Mitchell, represents what the Orientalist was expecting to see when visiting the Orient, a traveler to Egypt commented: "There they are; the same Arabs, camels, deserts, tombs and jackals that we journeyed with, rode on, traversed, dived into, and cursed respectively."⁶⁷⁹ The jackal then seems to be a staple of the Orient, something one expects to experience on a visit to Egypt without experiencing any sense of novelty. It seems to be as Egyptian as the tombs, as Arab as the deserts and camels, and as Oriental as the Arabs. But, just like in Darwinian evolution the jackal was marked as expendable or living beyond his time having overstayed his welcome in an evolved world, the jackal in the quote

⁶⁷⁷ For a thought provoking study of how mainstream white culture (with emphasis on 20th century and contemporary North America) relegates the non-white and the non-normative to a discursive position of death see Sharon Patricia Holland, *Raising the Dead: Readings of Death and (Black) Subjectivity*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

⁶⁷⁸ It was after all the British *Guardian*, rather than the PFLP or Carlos himself, that chose the alias *the Jackal*.

⁶⁷⁹ Qtd. in Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 30.

seems an expendable element of the Orient, a nuisance even. All the other Oriental elements offer a utilitarian value, but the jackal represents the Orient when it ceases to offer any value. The jackal, however, is not simply redundant, it is worthy of cursing; it represents therefore the abject, perhaps vicious, annoying, and/or terrifying, Arab element. It was only a matter of time, then, before an Arab or pro-Arab terrorist (the difference is irrelevant) would be christened a jackal. It just happened that this Arab terrorist was Latin American (perhaps a descendant of the erstwhile Arab rulers of Spain?). Carlos the Jackal, however, was not only a surrogate Arab,⁶⁸⁰ but also someone who comes from the deserts (of Jordan and South Yemen where the PFLP-External Operations trained) to unleash the terror and destruction of the desert/Orient onto the European city (and, of all European cities, Paris).⁶⁸¹ Carton the Jackal may therefore be read as anticipating Carlos the Jackal: both were not Arab but showed Arab attributes (an ethics characterized by a disdain for work, racial and sexual

⁶⁸⁰ The very nom-de-Guerre Carlos the Jackal represents this racial surrogateness (or solidarity if we are to use a language that is more generous and more politically charged). Whereas the Jackal epithet was given to him by the British *Independent* (implicating him racially, though it is also important to remember that the naming was triggered by a copy of *Days of the Jackal* the police found when raiding his hideout), the pseudonym Carlos was given to him by the PFLP as a stereotypical Latin American name. His real given name is Ilyitch – after Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin, which indexes the Marxist-Leninist context under which this alliance and solidarity took place. This nomenclature also represents Westerners' horror: the nightmare that the West's others would join together under a socialist umbrella and adopt a program of terror. This nightmare resurfaces in our analysis of the intersection of femininity and race later in this chapter.

⁶⁸¹ This of course is not to argue that each time a jackal is invoked the referent is Arab. After all, the nom-de-guerre the Jackal was given to Carlos by the *Independent* after a copy of Fredrick Forsyth's novel *Day of the Jackal* was found in Carlos' hideout. Unlike Carlos, Fredrick Forsyth's jackal did not work for an Arab liberation movement. On the contrary, he worked for a right wing French organization trying to punish De Gaulle for his recognition of Algerian independence. One could still, and this is an argument I am only presenting tentatively, read a channel of transference through animosity rather than solidarity. If the Jackal of the PFLP is associated with Arabs through solidarity and camaraderie, Forsyth's Jackal is associated with them through belligerence. It could also be read psychoanalytically as an unconscious stream of association on the part of the author: Algeria-Arabs-jackals-the Jackal. In addition, at the very end of the novel, we realize that the Jackal is of unknown origins. While at the beginning we are led to think he were an English man, at the end we realize we do not know where he is from or who he is—in fact one of the last things we hear the characters of the novel say is the British investigators wondering “who the hell was he?” This obviously does not make him Arab. It does, however, mean that he is from the unknown, from the void, like the Arabian desert, or the Sahara.

degeneration, and a turban for the former, Palestinian solidarity and terror in the case of the latter). Similarly, both were associated with the desert as the antithesis of the civilized city: the Sahara, which Paris is reduced to under revolutionary chaos in the case of the former (a metaphor Dickens must have been familiar with, as he cited “the philosophy of Mr. Carlyle's wonderful book [*The French Revolution*]” in his preface), and the PFLP-EO training camps in the latter. To the same effect, both are associated with revolutionary terror (which happens to threaten to sweep over Paris in both cases). Most importantly, both are associated with popular revolutionary movements that are only understandable to the Western bourgeoisie and its mainstream media and intellectuals through a racialized lens.

Through his turban, through his sexual degeneracy, and through the figure of the jackal, Sydney Carton is racialized as Arab- or more broadly as an Oriental and a savage. Through the example of Sydney Carton (or *Carton the Jackal*) we thus see how the Arab/Oriental functioned as Europe's bad imago, and how this bad imago functioned in producing bad crowd-born(e) subjectivity (thus working both at the collective level, the crowd, and at the individual level, though this individuality is always precarious and perverse). An English character and an English figure needed an Arab/Oriental imago to be produced as the bad subject and to stand (through this bad subjectivity) for the crowd. This example is particularly telling as it shows how this production of the crowd-born(e) bad subject as Arab predated Britain's encounter with Ahmad 'Urabi, and predated the Commune and the discourses on degeneration which were associated with it. It is also testament to the widespread ideological valence and resonance of the association between crowds and Arabs/Orientials: it comes in a text which enjoyed great popularity in Europe and beyond, and which was not an Orientalist text in the strict and/or professional or specialized sense. To further

establish the widespread nature of this ideological trend, I will now turn to the feminine figures who stood for the crowd and examine their racialization.

The Women who Stand for the Crowd and their Racialization

So far the figures that we have examined as metonyms for the crowd are male figures; yet all these figures are feminized.⁶⁸² ‘Arabi’s irrationality (which culminated in pyromania, as we saw in Chapter 1) inherits the irrationality of the *Pétroleuse* and for her gendered insanity substitutes racial insanity. His zeal and his appeal to divine law are comparable, according to the *Times*, to Antigone (arguably the West’s quintessential resurrected female revolutionary). Similarly Sydney Carton is feminized through his masculine failures, including his failure to abide by the work ethic, and his failure to lead a proper heterosexual life (also manifest through him losing the woman he loves). These figures, therefore, stand at the intersection of race and gender, where the racial other is also the gendered other.

The same could be said about the female metonymies of the crowd; female figures that stood for the insurrectionary crowd in the 19th century have been consistently, though sometimes ambiguously, racialized. Let us take a look, for example, at one of the most famous revolutionary women in the history of English literature, one who popularized the type of the *tricoteuse*, namely *A Tale of Two Cities*’ villain Madame Therese Defarge. Throughout the *Tale* Madame Defarge with her uncompromising revolutionary zeal, and her bent on exterminating the aristocracy

⁶⁸² To the exclusion, of course, of Carlos the Jackal, if we are to consider him as one of these figures. Popular culture has presented Carlos with an aura of hypermasculinity: that he is trigger happy and promiscuous. In most representations, however, he is surrounded by hysterical revolutionary women who stand for the feminine irrationality of the revolution. For a sensationalist, deeply racist, deeply misogynist, deeply anti-Arab, anti-Palestinian, and anti-Feminist visual depiction of Carlos and his entourage of hysterical and licentious female terrorists, see Oliver Assayas’s miniseries *Carlos* (2010).

and anyone remotely connected with it, stands for Jacobin Terror and for the Revolutionary crowd. It is telling, of course that Dickens chose to personify revolutionary zeal, terror, and vengeance through a female figure (yet a lower class/*menu peuple* female, one has to remember. Middle class femininity on the other hand is personified and glorified in the gentle and caring figure of Lucie –whose very name means “Light” – Manette). Yet, Madame Defarge is not presented without her own share of hinted racialization. Her rich dark hair (in contrast to the golden curls of Lucie Manette), her large earrings, and her heavily ringed hands bring forth the figure of a gypsy.⁶⁸³ Her name, moreover, brings to mind the Spanish Saint Teresa de Avila, whose grandfather was an Arab Jewish *marrano* condemned by the Inquisition. In addition, she is not properly Parisian; though born in Marquis Evrémont’s fiefdom in the Parisian countryside, the murder of her siblings by the Evrémontes led her to flee to the seashore where she was raised by fishermen.⁶⁸⁴ Growing by the seashore seems to have contributed to her Amazonian qualities: in the climactic moment where she was heading to kill Lucie and her child, Dickens describes her as “walking with the confident tread of such a character, and with the supple freedom of a woman who had habitually walked in her girlhood, bare-foot and bare-legged, on the brown sea-sand.”⁶⁸⁵ We are left to wonder, in what coastal territory did Madame Defarge acquire these Amazonian qualities? South of France (which was perhaps like other Southern

⁶⁸³ Joshi Priti notes: “Madame Defarge, with a ‘bright shawl’ wrapped around her head like a turban and large, gypsy, earrings, is Orientalized from the start, but becomes Indianized first when her ‘shadow’ falls ‘threatening and dark, on both the mother and the child’ and then she becomes a ‘tigress’ with the single minded obsession to destroy Lucie and her daughter. Both descriptions evoke Tenniel’s Tiger menacing the helpless woman and child,” Priti, “Mutiny Echoes,” 79. By Tenniel’s Tiger, Priti is referencing a cartoon she cited earlier, in which the Bengali Tiger, standing for the Indian uprising, is seen preying on a (presumably English) woman and her child; *ibid*, 63- 64.

⁶⁸⁴ 3.12.264.

⁶⁸⁵ 3.14.282.

European territories only precariously European, especially at a time when Frenchness was being invented)? Corsica? Spain? Italy? (territories that were ambiguously Oriental up to the 20th century and may still be in certain contexts)? Is she anachronistically transposed onto French Algeria? Or maybe the reference to “the supple freedom of a woman who had habitually walked in her girlhood, bare-foot and bare-legged, on the brown sea-sand” is not to be understood as a background story of Madame Defarge but as a metaphor: her “supple freedom” and her untamed and unrestrained bestial nature are similar to those of Oriental and Mediterranean girls who “walk bare-foot and bare-legged” on the “brown sea-sand.” Through her rich dark hair, her gypsy earrings, and her Mediterranean-Amazonian qualities, Madame Defarge, like the crowd she belongs to, leads, and metonymically represents, has the nature of a racial other, and is, in a way, the representative of the racial other, the Oriental, the savages, in Europe.

Madame Defarge was not the only female figure combining racial savagery to femininity and thus embodying the revolution and the crowd that partakes of it. Revolutionary women, particularly the women of the Commune, were often represented through a kaleidoscope of racial others. In addition to the racial undertones that remind us of the maenads (already explored in the previous chapter), these racial others included the Mohicans,⁶⁸⁶ the Amazons⁶⁸⁷ (another relic of

⁶⁸⁶ Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 100.

⁶⁸⁷ For example, see Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 86- 87, 101-104, 114-119, 221-226. The Amazons are a relic of classical Greek Orientalism, serving to project warrior femininity onto Libya and Persia. This is not to argue in any way that classical Greek Orientalism is the same as modern day Orientalism, or that there is a direct continuity between the two, but rather that modern Orientalism inherits, appropriates, and re-invents some of the aspects of its classical Greek counterpart. In the previous chapter we have shown, in agreement with Edward Said, how the Dionysian orgy was one of these aspects. Now we can add the Amazons—sometimes projected onto South America through the modern geographic appellation, other times to a loosely defined yet definitely other geography where women are warriors.

classical Greek Orientalism), and, most importantly for the purpose of this study, the Muslims/Arabs/Turks.

While depictions of racial otherness have bestowed on these women a certain primitive savagery, sometimes a warrior (*Amazonian*) femininity that ran contrary to the Victorian vogue of the time, the invocation of the Muslim/Arab/Turk added an element of *Oriental sensuality*, a *shadow of the Harem*, to the representations of these women; to that effect counterrevolutionary propaganda against revolutionary women did at least on one occasion uncover/fabricate a sensual background story for a female revolutionary that included an alleged four-year residency in a Harem.⁶⁸⁸ This study has rehearsed many times the association counterrevolutionary ideologies draw between sexual activity (especially women's) and political subversiveness, something that was particularly evident in the case of the Commune.⁶⁸⁹ In addition to the insinuation of an exoticism, sensuality, and sexual activity, the Harem represented the other of Europe's domestic,⁶⁹⁰ of the family and the mode of Christian bourgeois monogamy that sustained it. The reference to the Harem therefore placed the female revolutionaries along with their subversive sexual and political behavior outside "the moral code of Christendom."

Orientalization as the condition for the perverse sensuality, licentiousness, and abjection of the bodies of the female revolutionaries, is evident in a bizarre

⁶⁸⁸ Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 113.

⁶⁸⁹ See Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, esp. 209.

⁶⁹⁰ See Kenneth Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage: Family, Ideology, and Law in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Egypt*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2015), 20.

testimony on how the female revolutionaries who were shot dead were treated. The testimony states:

Quant aux femmes fusillées, on les traitait à peu près comme les malheureuses Arabes des tribus insurgées: après les avoir tuées, on les dépouillait, agonisantes encore, d'une partie de leurs vêtements, et quelquefois l'insulte allait plus loin, comme au bas du faubourg Montmartre et sur la place Vendôme, où des femmes furent laissées nues et souillées sur les trottoirs.⁶⁹¹

In her book on the representations of the women of the Commune, Gay Gullickson presents this passage as an example of the humiliation the female revolutionaries suffered. In Gullickson's translation, the passage appears as follows:

As for the women who were shot, they treated them almost like the poor Arabs of an insurgent tribe: after they had killed them, they stripped them, while they were still in their death throes, of part of their clothing. Sometimes they went further... [S]ome women were left naked and defiled on the sidewalks.⁶⁹²

It is telling that Gullickson, who is studying representations and tropes, did not stop at the "poor Arabs of an insurgent tribe" analogy, as if only the humiliation of white female bodies is troubling, but not the humiliation of Arab bodies – in the case of which the report would be adding insult to injury, comparing the killed women to abject Arabs. It is also telling how in her translation, Gullickson misses the gendering of the poor Arabs "les malheureuses Arabes"⁶⁹³ even though her study is mainly preoccupied with gender, as if her feminism could only accommodate Western women, while Arab women are elided through an ellipsis of translation.

This account and Gullickson's subsequent commentary are not only interesting because of what they reveal, but also what they fail to reveal. What does it

⁶⁹¹ Qtd. in George Jeanneret, *Paris Pendant la Commune Révolutionnaire de 1871*, (Neuchatel: Les Principaux Libraires, 1872), 250.

⁶⁹² Qtd. in Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 180.

⁶⁹³ I thank Hanine Hassan for this point.

mean to be treated like *les malheureuses Arabes des tribus insurgées*? It is equally telling that the original account would present such an analogy (which on its own does not make any sense) without any further explanation, and that Gullickson presents it without any attempt to explain, analyze, or problematize the statement and its underlying biases.

Perhaps what is elided (and self-evident for both the author of the original report and Gullickson to the extent that no explanation is needed), is the persistent stereotype of the maltreatment of Arab women (the same stereotype that helped fuel US colonial wars in the 21st century). The women in this example were shot, undressed, thrown on the sidewalks, and yet this does not begin to describe what the wretched Arab women go through; this treatment is only “almost like,” *à peu près comme*, what happens to Arab women.⁶⁹⁴ Once again, the lack of reflection in the original account and the lack of commentary in Gullickson suggest that both authors accept that the place for the maltreatment of women is the Arabian desert, that this treatment is *worthy*⁶⁹⁵ of tribal Arabs, or Arab tribal women, but certainly not Parisian revolutionaries (the opposition between civilization and the desert is also evident here, the former being the place for the mistreatment of women, the latter a place for respecting them).

While objecting to the treatment of female revolutionaries and their dead bodies by the forces of order, both reports ultimately partake of the same racial bias that was mobilized by counterrevolutionary forces against revolutionary women. They also reproduce the *domestic* biases of bourgeois ideologies; the women in the analogy

⁶⁹⁴ Again, I am indebted to Hanine Hassan for bringing this to my attention.

⁶⁹⁵ Just like, in Dickens, it is the tribes of Abyssinia and Ashanti that are worthy of beheading, not the English prisoners.

do not only become Arab, they become tribal Arabs. That the Arabs in the analogy are tribal Arabs suggests that they represent not only racial othering (and not only the Arabian desert as the other to civilization), but also a nomadic lifestyle inimical to sedentary urban life and,⁶⁹⁶ more importantly, to the domestic.⁶⁹⁷ Women who wander off the domestic (and join the insurgency) therefore become nomads (a state-of-being that is not fit for a lady), but not any nomads: they become *malheureuses Arabes des tribus insurgées*. In this wandering off the domestic, one could also note a class element that is missing from the original but that appears in Gullickson's translation: by being insurgents, the women become not only tribal and Arab, but also *poor* (after all they walk out of the domestic order of the bourgeoisie and to the streets and the insurgencies of the working and other lumpen classes)—that is, of course, if we choose to read the term *poor* in Gullickson's translation as referring to material poverty, not to general misfortune.

One thing remains missing, however, for the analogy to make sense: the perverse tribal Arab desire that disrobes women in “their death throes,” and the perverse and abject sexuality of the dead, naked, and defiled female body,⁶⁹⁸ a perversity and abjection that could only be Arab. The unspoken element of this

⁶⁹⁶ For how, in a postcolonial context, the urban emerges as the embodiment of proper subjectivity and the nomadic/Bedouin as its other, see the discussion in Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 105- 161.

⁶⁹⁷ Though oblivious to its racial/racist overtones, Gullickson comments on the use of the figure of the nomad and nomadic lifestyle, in opposition to the domestic, as a tool to malign the female revolutionaries; Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 177.

⁶⁹⁸ The element of sexual humiliation and abjection is unmistakable in both the account and its subsequent translation by Gullickson—who produces this account in the context of the sexual humiliation of the defeated revolutionaries. In both accounts rape is not mentioned, though somehow implied (if only symbolic rape by undressing the dead body, dumping it in the dirt, and leaving it out for the victorious gaze of the Versailles forces). The language used by Gullickson is more suggestive of rape: the term *defiled* can simply mean the bodies were soiled (*souillées*) but could also serve as a euphemism for rape. At all rates, the image is clearly that of sexual violence, one could even say rape, whether this violence/rape included sexual penetration or not.

conceit, the *present absence* if we are to borrow from Derrida, is the voyeuristic and necrophiliac⁶⁹⁹ Arab/Muslim (whom we already encountered in Chapters 1 and 2 when dealing with representations of Islamist terrorism). In other words, the Versailles forces did so to the bodies of women as if they (the Versailles) were Arab/Muslim, as if these women were Arab/Muslim, or as if they were doing so to please an Arab/Muslim onlooker, or as if the Versailles forces were themselves Tribal Arabs treating their women in the manner they deserve to be treated. Here we are clearly dealing with abjection; female bodies (though not female subjects, just the body, neither subject nor object)⁷⁰⁰ that are left, naked, defiled (perhaps even raped) postmortem. Yet to be abject, and to stand in their abjection for the revolutionary crowd (itself racialized and Orientalized), these female bodies had to be subjected/abjected to Arab/Muslim (voyeuristic-necrophiliac) perversity.

That the Versailles forces are akin to Arab tribes, that they treat the female revolutionaries the way Arab treat their women, is only one interpretation of the bizarre and obscure passage. Indeed, throughout the passage, the perpetrator of this

⁶⁹⁹ That sexual perversity is Arab and/or Islamic is something that will be internalized by many modernist and secularist Arab authors, and will play part in the production of the Islamist as a sexual savage (as seen in the two previous chapter). Islamic necrophilia, more specifically, was adopted and internalized by Egyptian and Tunisian liberals who fabricated the rumor that the Islamists in the parliaments of both countries proposed a law allowing a spouse to have “farewell intercourse” (*mudaj ‘at al-wada’*) with the body of their dead spouse before burial. For a recording of a segment of a session from the parliament of the Muslim Brothers (2012) in which an MP exposes how the whole concept was a hoax fabricated by Islamophobic propagandists, see “Qanun Mudaja’at al-Wada’ bi al-Sawt wa al-Surah,” YouTube Video, 2:35, posted by “ebn masr” June 10, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMzTVStnuR0> (it is also telling how the comments in Arabic below the video lament how Muslims “only think with their reproductive organs,” even though the video repudiates rather than affirms the rumor. Thinking with one’s genitalia is reminiscent of the discourse on the withering of the mind and the insurrection of other nervous system as part of crowd-born(e) and revolutionary degeneration). Once again what is at stake here is not whether the *fatwa* was true or not, whether Islam allows posthumous or post-mortem coitus or not, but rather how certain desires and practices are produced as perverse and how the savage, the Oriental, and the Muslim become identified with these perverse desires and practices.

⁷⁰⁰ On how the abject is neither subject nor object see Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 1-2.

Arab abjection is never identified. Nor are we told who are those tribal Arabs *insurg*ing against. An alternative reading would posit Versailles as akin to the authority the insurgent Arab tribes are rising against, and the treatment of the female revolutionaries as akin to the treatment this authority is ought to subject the women of the insurgent tribes to. The *insurgent Arab tribes* may belong to the Orientalist stereotype of perpetually warring Arab tribes, in that case Versailles's brutality would still be similar to Arab brutality. In a similar vein, these Arab tribes may be imagined as insurgent against the Ottoman authority, and thus Versailles brutality would be compared to Turkish brutality.⁷⁰¹ The insurgent Arab tribes, nevertheless, may have been the insurgent Arab tribes of Algeria, and the brutality and abject humiliation they received, in life and posthumously, is perpetrated by the colonial authorities. Read this way, the passage becomes not a critique of the colonial practices in Algeria, but rather a cautionary note that the brutality and abjection, which only the Arabs of Algeria are worthy of, and which should be exclusively reserved for them, was being domestically misdirected.⁷⁰² Through all these alternative readings, the Arab/Oriental is produced as the place of abjection and brutality, the legitimate or expected target of practices that brutalize and abject the body, and thus produce the brutalized and abjected bodies of the female revolutionaries as Arab and/or Oriental.

What we have here is not simply the mutual mapping of femininity and primitivity onto the same lagging phase of evolutionary development, elaborated by

⁷⁰¹ In that case the reporter can be seen as ventriloquizing Othello, asking "Are we turned Turks? And to ourselves do that/ Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?" The report can also be seen in that context as belonging to the tradition of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces accusing their adversaries of emulating Turkish despotism as discussed earlier.

⁷⁰² Which is comparable to our earlier reading of Dickens' assertion that beheading is "worthy of Abyssinia and Ashantee." Such brutality should be reserved for the racial other and practiced in the colony. The metropole is no place for such abject brutality.

feminist scholars and so far taken up by this study. In addition to civilizational anxieties that placed the primitive and the feminine together, something slightly different is taking place in these representations: for the feminine to be abject and licentious, it needed to be projected out of the domestic, far onto the colony and the Orient. When contained in the domestic (and here I am consciously invoking the double-meaning of the term), the feminine can be seen as respectable, proper, and civilized.⁷⁰³ The mapping of the feminine and the primitive/savage onto one another happens when the woman strays out of the domestic; and here there seems to be a slippery slope, coded within the very double meaning of the term domestic: when she walks out of the household,⁷⁰⁴ she is bound to walk far beyond the tame bounds of civilization, Europe, or Christendom. Or in more general terms, it is not that femininity as such is like Europe's others (the savages, the Native Americans, the Amazons, and the Arabs) but it is that femininity when untamed, unruly, is like/belongs to them.

⁷⁰³This is reminiscent of the opposition between Lucie Manette and Madame Defarge in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

⁷⁰⁴ On how the dangers of the revolutionary woman stems from her walking out of the household see Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 177, 213, 223. In fact this could also be read into the story of Madame Defarge: her ultimate excess, her tragic error that leads to her death, is walking out on her husband who represented a more rational and more compromising revolutionary voice. Janet Beizer provides a wider reading of how proper femininity was understood as sedentary and fixed to the domestic, and relates it to fixing the women into their place in the household (what she terms "their stability and containment") through pregnancy. Wandering, therefore becomes pathological, and hence the disease of femininity becomes the wandering womb (hysteria), in need to be stabilized through pregnancy; Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 58. Throughout her analysis Beizer connects the hysteria and the hysterical woman to other populations that were typically understood as wandering: in addition to educated women who wander out of the household we have a nomadic working class, Jews, vagabonds, etc. Beizer then brings this analysis to a revolutionary context, commenting on how the women of the Commune represented to counterrevolutionary observers, especially Maxime du Camp, the threat of women walking out on the domestic and thus "destroy[ing] the social fabric." Beizer notes "These are women out of place – at a time when ... even a single step could constitute transgression"; Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 210.

Female bodies rendered abject (abject as revolting and abject as not properly subject) through voyeuristic Muslim perversity (under conditions of revolutionary chaos) resurface prominently in the counterrevolutionary discourse on the Commune, namely in Maxime Du Camp's polemic *Les Convulsions de Paris* (a title that already gestured towards the body, its abjection, and its gendering as feminine given the gendered history of the notion of convulsion, which belongs to a panoply of notions that inherited the Dionysian orgy and produced 19th century hysteria). In the course of his anti-Commune propaganda, Du Camp engages in a tangential attack against the socialist painter Gustave Courbet, who was briefly affiliated with the Commune. Courbet's painting, *L'Origine du Monde*, notorious for its depiction of female genitals and still inviting controversy when publicly exhibited at present, falls under Du Camp's moralizing fire:

Pour plaire à un musulman qui payait ses fantaisies au poids de l'or . . . Courbet . . . fit un portrait de femme difficile à décrire. Dans le cabinet de toilette du personnage étranger, on voyait un petit tableau caché sous un voile vert. Lorsque l'on écartait le voile, on demeurait stupefait d'apercevoir une femme de grandeur naturelle, vue de face, émue et convulsée, remarquablement peinte, reproduite *con amore*, ainsi que disent les Italiens, et donnant le dernier mot du réalisme. Mais, par un inconcevable oubli, l'artisan qui avait copié son modèle d'après nature, avait négligé de représenter les pieds, les jambes, les cuisses, le ventre, les hanches, la poitrine, les mains, les bras, les épaules, le cou et la tête. L'homme qui, pour quelques écus, peut dégrader son métier jusqu'à l'abjection, est capable de tout.⁷⁰⁵

Once more we are clearly dealing with abjection, with an artist who “degrades his trade to abjection” for money (“pour quelques écus”) to use Du Camp's words. The abject nature of the painting is not only evident in its depiction of female genitalia (a site and sight of horror and disgust in 19th century Western ideologies as well as in contemporary misogynistic Western epistemai), but also in the *realist* nature of the painting, an immediacy with the real not mediated by representation, thus precluding

⁷⁰⁵ Qtd. in Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 221.

any conception of the painting as subject. Neither is it object; even the licentious female body, according to Du Camp's description, is cut, leaving only, and centering, the abject vagina. This mixture of sexual/feminine abjection and realist immediacy threatens the collapse of the whole symbolic order (in a manner that anticipates Lacanian psychoanalysis). According to Janet Beizer's analysis: "What constitutes for Du Camp the abject heart of this painting is ... not merely the female sex—which is all that remains on the canvas/page after he so coyly slashes the other body parts—but the positioning of female sexuality at the very core of symbolic systems, be they uncovered in aesthetic or political representations."⁷⁰⁶ The abject body in *L'Origine du Monde*, with "the female sex" at its centre, which is identified both by Courbet and Du Camp as "convulsing," (an identification that is "completely supplementary to the body painted in *L'Origine*, which shows not a trace of a convulsion; but it supplies, through a curious chiasmus, the convulsed body announced by the title of *Les Convulsions de Paris* and withheld by its text,"⁷⁰⁷ - and here I would add metonymy to Beizer's chiasmus. Although the nude partial body in the painting does not belong to the revolutionary crowd, i.e. is not a synecdoche of the crowd, it stands in relation to the crowd, convulsing like it does, and being painted by a member of the revolutionary crowd) stands for abject horror, licentiousness and depravity, and collapse of order under revolutionary chaos.

Yet for the female body to come to play this role of abject representation, it had to be produced as abject through perverse Muslim desire. This abject body had to be produced under the tutelage of "un musulman qui payait ses fantaisies au poids de l'or": thus under the tutelage of a perverse Muslim, who represents Oriental lack of

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid. See also the analysis in Hertz, "Medusa's Head," 34.

⁷⁰⁷ Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies*, 223.

restraint, he pays for his fantasies—which perhaps correspond to the Oriental fantasies harbored by the cultural milieu to which Du Camp belonged, and, as a true Oriental, this perverse Muslim pays not in money, not in silver (or *argents*), but in gold, *de l'or*; one could even read an unconscious etymological association between *or* and *orient*.⁷⁰⁸

What seems as offensive as the nudity (if not more) in Du Camp's account is that it was painted to please an Ottoman diplomat, a Muslim voyeur, and that it was hanging in the home of a foreigner, *personage étranger*- a kind of miscegenation the normal order of things would have prevented, but perhaps revolutionary chaos allowed for. Consistent with the Muslim/Oriental sensuality and perversity that produced the female body as abject, (and equally troublesome for Du Camp, it seems), the painting existed behind a *green veil*, invoking the modernist and colonialist anxiety about what lies beneath the veil, what escapes the gaze, be it a sensual female body or an indescribable orgy (one here is not to miss the significance of green as the color associated with Islam; the colonial anxiety/frustration about the Oriental feminine and sensual body hidden behind the veil of Islam is evident).

We may here push Maxime Du Camp's analogy further and venture that, if revolutionary chaos is akin to the rendering of (French) female bodies licentious through socialist and Muslim agencies, then order, embodied by the state, is imagined to prevent this trilateral miscegenation. In this light Du Camp is not different from the contemporary European Right, which calls for banning or restricting Muslim immigration on account that immigrants from Muslim countries sexually assault the

⁷⁰⁸Furthermore, though in his commentary on the passage Neil Hertz misses to comment on the significance of the Muslim in the metaphor, he – wittingly or unwittingly- captured the stereotype of the Muslim pervert/racial savage who lacks the civilizing faculty of restraint through translating *un musulman qui payait ses fantaisies au poids de l'or* to “a Muslim man who paid for his *whims* in gold” (Hertz, “Medusa's Head,” 34, emphasis added).

bodies of European women (which in the French context readily invokes white Marianne, a respectable white female figure that, if not defended by good French nationalists, might be veiled or otherwise violated or defiled by Muslim perverts). Nor is the “Muslim who paid for his fantasies/whims their weight in gold” or the present absent Arab tribal pervert in the previous example different from the alleged Muslim rapists of Cologne who appeared in the media accounts surrounding a surge of sexual assaults and other incidents of mob related violence in Germany on New Year’s Eve in 2016: media reports focused on one incident in Cologne and brought out alleged testimonies claiming that the perpetrators were dark skinned, looked Arab, or spoke in Arabic.⁷⁰⁹ If we were to subject these testimonies to forensic logic, a number of questions would arise: how is the dark skin of the perpetrators different from the skin of sun-tanned or darker Europeans, let alone other *darker* races? How does an Arab look like? And do the witnesses understand the Arabic language to be able to claim the mob spoke in Arabic? The logic of the reports, however, should be examined through the lenses of metaphor and ideology. As a group of people, a crowd, they are

⁷⁰⁹ For examples of the sensationalist reporting depicting a sexual outbreak by Arab-Muslim men from two British tabloids, see Gareth Davis, “Revealed: 1,200 Women were sexually assaulted by 2,000 men in German cities on New Year’s Eve,” *Mail Online*, 15/7/2016, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3684302/1-200-German-women-sexually-assaulted-New-Year-s-Eve-Cologne-elsewhere.html>, and Allan Hall, “New Year Rape Horror: Cologne New Year Gang Rapes Took Place Because ‘Drunk’ Untrained Migrants Were in Charge of Security and Simply Abandoned Their Posts,” *The Sun*, 29/12/2016, <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2494629/cologne-new-year-rape-drunk-migrants-were-security-abandoned-their-posts/>. As suggested by the title, this report takes the opposition between order and the licentious racialized crowd to a new level, claiming that the guards themselves were turned (through the hiring of migrants) into a licentious and ‘drunk’ racial crowd that, in place of discipline, walks away from its post. For a critique of the account, revealing how only four of 59 alleged attackers were Arab refugees, and interrogating the way the account became ideological and racist, see Nabila Ramdani, “Cologne Sex Assaults: Muslim Rape Myths Fit a neo-Nazi Agenda,” *Independent*, 13/2/2016, <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/cologne-sex-assaults-muslim-rape-myths-fit-a-neo-nazi-agenda-a6872566.html>. For a sobering analysis of how such racialized representations of misogyny and of sexual violence serve to undermine rather than promote women’s rights (including the rights of white European women), and which ties the ideological representations of the Cologne rape incident to a larger ideology which (against statistical evidence) assumes Muslim men to be more prone to partake of sexual assault or other forms of misogynistic behavior, see Sara Farris, “Racializing Sexism,” in *Salvage*, 14/1/2016, <http://salvage.zone/online-exclusive/racialising-sexism-is-no-good-for-women/>.

readily racialized, readily dark-skinned and ambiguously Arab, if we accept the argument made throughout this chapter and the last. Similarly, just like any crowd, the mob of Cologne howls in foreign languages (the *sine qua non* of rioting mobs, even the French crowd around the Bastille guard, as we may remember, were howling, despite having a shared language with the guard). Just like the crowd in Alexandria screamed (faux) Arabic phrases which the English observers did not comprehend but interpreted as a threat, the crowd of Cologne spoke in a language the eyewitnesses did not understand but readily interpreted as Arabic and as a sexual threat (it seems that howling faux Arabic is the official language of crowds, whether in Alexandria of 1882 or Cologne in 2016, and that this peculiar monosyllabic language has evolved from *kill the Christians* to *rape the women*). The sexual violence enacted forces a racialized metonymy between the women and the crowd- the women become literally if forcefully crowd-borne. The Cologne incident, therefore, is the latest of a series of historical incidents wherein the crowd is racialized as Arab and its metonymy becomes female bodies subjected to perverse Arab/Muslim abjection.

There is indeed evidence that the incident was fabricated or exaggerated, at least as far as depicting the aggressors as predominantly or exclusively Arab.⁷¹⁰ Yet even if this were not the case, what is at stake, as far as our analysis is concerned, is not the *real* but rather how the real is represented through *ideology* (in the Althusserian sense of the word as “the system of the ideas or representations which dominate the mind of ... a social group”).⁷¹¹ In other words, what interests us is their Althusserian illusion/allusion relationship to what they purport to describe. What is important for us here is ideological work this illusion/allusion performs. To reduce

⁷¹⁰ See *ibid.*

⁷¹¹ Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus,” 107.

incidents of violence to rape, and to reduce the crowd to Arab gang rapists, is to narrate chaos through a trope that is simultaneously sexualized, gendered, and racialized. The only difference, thus, between the accounts on the Cologne incident and the accounts on the Paris Commune is that the Orient that produced the rapists of Cologne is an Orient of restriction and repression to the point of sexual frustration, according to contemporary Orientalism, whereas the Orient that produced the “Muslim man who paid for his *whims* in gold” and the present absent necrophiliac voyeur during the downfall of the Commune, was an Orient of permissiveness and license to the extent of perversity.⁷¹² Yet both Orients produce a racialized and culturalized inability to restrain oneself— whether this is manifest in paying French socialists to render nude French bodies in drawing, or in Arab immigrants sexually harassing women in public (perhaps also with the complicity of European socialists). In both cases, the Muslim pervert, unable to practice self-restraint, *defiles* the bodies of European women.⁷¹³ The crowd that emerges at the withering of the State (in situations of insurrection) or the slightest sign thereof (through opening its borders to immigrants) is a racial terror, and the women that stand in any direct relation to this

⁷¹² For how the perversely permissive Orient was transformed, in Orientalist ideologies, systems of representations, and colonial practice, into a perversely repressive Orient (while preserving the epistemic and ideological underpinnings which produced the permissive Orient in the first place) see Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, esp. 1- 50. This is also inseparable from how the colonizer, or more specifically the white man, as per-Fanon’s explications, projects his unconscious fantasies onto the licentious racial other; see for example Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 142- 143.

⁷¹³ A similar bias can be traced in the discourse of a number of (though not all) Egyptian liberals and human rights activists who treat sexual harassment and assault (especially in the aftermath of 2011) as a distinctly Egyptian phenomenon (thus eliding the victimhood of the rape victims in Europe and America who are victimized by white Europeans, let alone the victims of rape and sexual torture at the hands of white colonialists whether in Palestine, Iraq, or Afghanistan). It will be difficult, within the frame of this study, to provide a thorough analysis of such discourse, especially as a considerable part of it took place on social media and day-to-day conversations.

crowd are referred to racially other (and in all the previous examples, Muslim) territories.⁷¹⁴

My purpose here is not to posit gendered abjection as always already racialized (more research is needed to establish this claim, though my research

⁷¹⁴ The three licentious elements, the Muslim, the revolutionary (or socialist), and the feminine, continue to reunite (in fiction as well as in reports that stand in an Althusserian illusion/allusion relationship to reality) to produce mutiny, chaos, and licentious (if not always abject) female bodies that stand for the crowd. This was most recently the case in Christopher Nolan's *Batman* trilogy. In the last film in the trilogy, *The Dark Night Rises* (2012) – which unapologetically plagiarizes from *A Tale of Two Cities*, the socialist (Bane) needed to ally himself with a seductress of Muslim descent (Talia Ras al-Ghoul) to wreak havoc in Gotham, under the pretext of socialist revolution. Of course Hollywood has no dearth of seductresses who are not always racially other, but the seductress standing for revolutionary chaos (one year after the Arab revolts) needed to be of Arab and Muslim origins and to carry an Arab last name ("head of the Ghoul"). In fact Talia Ras al-Ghoul sums up Oriental licentiousness in many ways - many of which are related to our subject of study here. Not only is she a temptress (a licentious feminine body) often using her sexual charms to seduce Batman and to cause strife (in the comics as well as in the film), she is also a descendant of an Oriental organization (ambiguously Arab, East Asian, and Muslim, all at once, perhaps modeled on the tenth century Assassins {*hashshashin*} sect), the League of Shadows, led by her Arab-Chinese father (Ras al-Ghoul, or *the Head of the Ghoul*). This oriental organization has much in common with LeBon's crowd: it works as an agent of decay that brings civilizations to a quick death once they are too corrupt to continue. For example, in *Batman Begins* (2005), Ras al-Ghoul, Talia's father, boasts about the role the League of Shadows played in destroying civilizations that reached their "pinnacle of decadence" (and on two different occasions, he speaks proudly of the role the League played in destroying Rome), and declares his intention to do the same to Gotham. The role Ras al-Ghoul envisions for the League of the Shadows is therefore the same role LeBon ascribes to the crowd: an agent of decay that speeds up the decomposition of already decaying bodies (a force which, like the League of Shadows, is associated with the fall of Western civilizations, specifically Rome, and that is identified with the rise of tribes in the Arabian peninsula, metaphorically in the case of LeBon, and literally in the case of Ras al-Ghoul who started his terroristic career in the Arabian peninsula before he moved it to China. In addition, Ras al-Ghoul speaks of the role the League of Shadows played in the fall of Constantinople. Clearly this refers to the fall Constantinople to the Ottomans, as if the League of the Shadow doubled as a pro-Ottoman special force; the League of Shadows thus seems to belong to the same category to which not only the crowd belonged, but also that to which belonged "the present terror of the world" along with the diplomat who commissioned *L'Origine*. Furthermore, like the crowd, the League of Shadows aims to spread anarchy and uses fire both as a metaphor and a literal tool; while Ras al-Ghoul uses fire as a metaphor throughout the film, his final plan to induce terror started with setting Bruce Wayne's mansion on fire. *Batman Begins*, directed by Christopher Nolan, Neutral Bay, NSW: Warner Bros, 2005. Talia Ras al-Ghoul therefore corresponds in many ways to the crowd-born(e) subject: she is born by a crowd-like Oriental organization that plays the same role in relation to civilization the crowd plays, and belongs to the same abject position where racial savagery and femininity meet, or where racial savagery produces the feminine body as violable, abject, and licentious. Insurrection, therefore, is referred (in the discourse on the Commune, especially in Du Camp's attack on Courbet, as well as in *Batman*) to the intersection between the Oriental racial other (Arab, Turk, Muslim) and femininity, or to be more specific, where Islam/Arabness/Turkness renders the feminine body licentious (and abject in the case of Du Camp's polemics): where feminine bodies are *defiled* postmortem and where revolutionary women seduce Batman as a prelude to betraying him and unleashing chaos on Gotham.

definitely points in that direction), nor to absolve mainstream/statist/counterrevolutionary Western culture of the 19th century and beyond of its sexism. Nor am I claiming that mainstream Western culture is only sexist when it is racist. My purpose, rather, is to show how the racialization of feminine bodies that stand for the crowd plays an essential role in their abjection, and subsequently in the counterrevolutionary, rightwing, mainstream, and Orientalist mobilizations of these abject bodies to (mis)represent the crowd. The examples I provided are not enough to preclude the possibility of non-racialized abject feminine bodies standing in for the crowd and serving a counterrevolutionary purpose; and yet the archive for this study shows a consistent racialization that serves as the *sine qua non* of the abject feminine or feminized bodies that stand in for the crowd. This archive, conversely, allows for the existence of respectable female figures when these figures are contained in Europe's domestic (usually in both meanings of the term): blonde Lucie Manette and white Marianne are cases in point.⁷¹⁵ Modeled on respectable bourgeois women and undetached from Victorian ideals of proper femininity, these figures are distanced from the licentiousness of the crowd (Lucie Manette through her fear of the crowd, Marianne through iconographic distancing) as well as from the licentiousness of the female body; they are transcendental mothers (who cast doubt on Julia Kristeva's association between abjection and repudiation of the maternal onto the other). Lucie [light, her very name suggests transcending the corporeal and its licentiousness/abjection] Manette is depicted as asexual while motherly, and Marianne is modeled on Athena, who does not only transcend human

⁷¹⁵ One of course may add Lady Liberty of Eugène Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People*, and Jeanne D'Arc, who can lead the masses and become a revered national symbol. Of course it is again important in this context that Jeanne D'Arc is not othered in any racial manner. Had she been remotely Arab (or more broadly racially other), she would have not been revered. Or, conversely, had she not been a revered national symbol, her representations would have most likely attempted to racialize and Orientalize her one way or another.

femininity through divinity, but furthermore transcends human sex through her virginity vow— a rare occurrence in Greek mythology. Respectable *domestic* females are threatened to be turned licentious and abject, however (and to become crowd-born(e) in the process), through the encounter with the racial other —especially the Muslim/Arab; we see this at present with the French invocation of Marianne in anti-immigrant rhetoric in France and we see it most evidently in the Cologne accounts.

We have, therefore, a body of knowledge that consistently refers the unruly and the abject to Arabness/Islam. This was true in 19th century counterrevolutionary representations as much as it is true in today's mainstream (pop) culture. Even the motif of the hysterical woman or the licentious feminine body standing in for the crowd and their transgressions, is often a racial motif, or is a gendered motif that is readily racialized for its counterrevolutionary purpose to be served. Perhaps counterrevolution, even in its gendered manifestations, has always been Orientalist.⁷¹⁶

⁷¹⁶ The theme of the intersections between Orientalism and counterrevolution has already been explored by Govand Azeez in "The Oriental Rebel in Western History," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 37, no.3 (summer 2015): 244- 263. Azeez's main argument is that Orientalism played a central role in cementing a counterrevolutionary discourse concerning the Middle East. My argument is that it played that role even beyond the Middle East, and that Orientalism is central for the Western counterrevolutionary discourse *tout court*. Unfortunately, the opposite is not always true. While socialism and revolution have in many instances transcended and/or challenged Western racism and Orientalism (the Commune, for example, featured one of the rare instances of collaboration between Algerian and French rebels, and the communards went on to support 'Urabi in their publications a decade later as shown above), at other times revolution and socialism retained the West's racism, Orientalism, and anti-Arabness (a case in point is the French Revolution's comparison of its enemies to Oriental despots which was presented earlier in my analysis, and which lasted until the Jacobin's made common cause with the Ottomans as the enemies of their enemies). Let us not forget that the Central Committee of the German Workmen's party, in its manifesto, celebrated and quoted by Karl Marx, objects to the Prussian occupation of France "in the interest of western civilization against eastern barbarism," Karl Marx, *Civil War in France*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1871/civil-war-france/ch02.htm>. The spectre of "Eastern barbarism," therefore, was already haunting the events in Europe, even haunting the spectre that was haunting Europe. Many (though not all) European and North American socialists preserve this left Orientalism/racism to our very day, from the US "hundred percent pro-Israel" Bernie Sanders to the French Laurence Rossignol who thinks veiled women are akin to "negroes who supported slavery." Pursuing this point further lies beyond the purview of this study.

Bringing Orientalist Counterrevolution (Back) to Egypt

This Orientalist counterrevolution, with all its anti-Arab biases, was inherited by Egyptian thinkers (most evidently al-Naqqash and Zaghlul) and was passed on to contemporary regime propagandists. Understanding the Egyptian conception and representation of the licentious space, therefore, especially in its counterrevolutionary renditions, cannot be attained without understanding the colonialist and Orientalist roots of their *cultural imposition*. Under relations of colonial (military, institutional, and cultural) dominance, Zaghlul was inviting his audience to read the Jama‘ah (which before that represented their sense of community and their normative social-political institution) as the abnegated crowd. He was also inviting them, along with LeBon, to look at the rise of their (cultural if not necessarily biological) ancestors, the Arabs, as an upheaval, opposed to the civilization represented by the Roman Empire. Adding insult to injury, upheaval was translated in this context as *inqilab*, as if to teach the readers their place at the bottom of the natural order of things. They were invited by al-Naqqash to see their compatriots as an ambiguous, non-individual, uncivilized, threatening, and expendable crowd, and to only see the world from a white European (sometimes Christian, a term al-Naqqash exclusively reserved for Europeans) vantage point. Finally, if read in a certain way, they were invited (by Dickens and al-Siba’i, for example)⁷¹⁷ to recognize themselves, or other racial others belonging to their same position in the colonial order of things, as the subjects of abnegation, contempt, horror, violence, and possibly genocide. These texts served/serve to produce its authors and readers as occupying a subject position that is

⁷¹⁷ And more recently by Hollywood, which indeed plays an undeniable role in interpellating global subjects in Egypt and elsewhere.

Western while inviting them to identify themselves as the abnegated other, effecting a trauma, a psychic split that is Fanonian par excellence.

This is not to say that Egyptian counterrevolutionary propaganda or the Egyptian representations of and discourses on the crowd and the licentious space were always a faithful or conscious repetition of the colonial rhetoric. Of course one can pinpoint instances of colonial mimicry, but one can also observe modifications, sometimes to the extent of reversing what is Oriental and what is Occidental. In 2011, for example, while regime propagandists were using the logic and the motifs that are the *cultural imposition* of the dominant Orientalist, colonialist and counterrevolutionary Western ideology, they were paradoxically accusing the ‘revolutionaries’ of being agents of the West. Like its Jordanian forerunner,⁷¹⁸ Egyptian counterrevolution depicted proper masculinity as national and male effeminacy as foreign. The irony, of course, is that it was Western notions of masculinity that were upheld as properly masculine and national, sometimes at the expense of earlier indigenous notions and performances of masculinity. A brief overview of this theme reveals the (conscious or unconscious) mapping of the indigenous (read as unruly) onto femininity (also read as unruly and licentious, especially when taking the form of male effeminacy) by Egyptian counterrevolutionary actors (corresponding to the mapping of licentious and abject femininity onto Europe’s racial other, as described above).

The long hair of male political activists was used by various counterrevolutionary observers as a mark of the ‘revolution’s’ unruliness and foreign allegiance. “Are you going to liberate Palestine while wearing your hair like this?” an

⁷¹⁸ See Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 207- 213.

Egyptian army officer reportedly challenged a male demonstrator with long hair in front of the Israeli embassy. A slippery slope from long hair, to effeminacy, to national failure appears in this taunting remark: because the male demonstrator wears his hair long he is effeminate, and because he is effeminate he cannot play a role in national liberation. Similarly, the administrators of the facebook group *Ana Asif ya Rayyis* posted pictures of male demonstrators with long hair to cast aspersions on their grooming, hygiene, and masculinity. The same slippery slope from long hair to failed national allegiance was observed when the administrators of the group abducted one of these male activists and handed him to the Bureau of Intelligence, on account of his alleged foreign allegiances.

Their nationalist appeal notwithstanding, the disdain these counterrevolutionary actors showed towards long hair belongs not to any indigenous tradition but rather to Victorian and conservative Western *cultural imposition*, as per the Fanonian formulation, in other words the rabid transformation of cultural notions along colonial lines. The coding of short hair as masculine and proper and of long hair as feminine and/or unruly belongs to Victorian and modern Western notions of propriety, (which resonated with the post-enlightenment appropriations of the Dionysian orgy given Dionysus' curls).⁷¹⁹ This reading of short has a masculine and

⁷¹⁹ Interestingly, the long hair of Dionysus appears in the discourse of Pentheus amidst the signs of the licentiousness and effeminacy of his cult; see Euripides, *The Bacchae*, lines 234- 239. While long hair did not always carry for the ancient Greeks the same gender *code* it carries in our modern times, the curls of Dionysus appear as one of his many sensual (if not effeminate) signs. It was Victorian England, however, that coded short hair as masculine and long hair as feminine (and sometimes as savage, given the long hair worn by non-European men encountered in the colonies—we have already seen how the long hair of the French revolutionaries served to mark them as Native American savages and as targets for genocide in Dickens' depiction of the September Massacre). Conservative America, in many ways the heir of Victorian England, inherited this reading of long hair on men as a sign of unruliness and effeminacy. This will be important in both the construction of the stereotype of the dirty hippie and in the hippie appropriation of the signs of unruliness. This is evident in the title of the iconic work of hippie counterculture: the musical *HAIR!* The musical owes its title to a musical number in which one of the male characters expresses his pride in his long hair to a scandalized

proper runs against various indigenous traditions of men wearing their hair long: not only did Bedouins in many parts of the Arab world traditionally wear their hair long (and some still do until our very day),⁷²⁰ but it is also widely accepted that the Prophet of Islam had long hair which he occasionally braided. While Egyptian conservatives (at least the ones who do not identify as secular) occasionally claim they are following the Sunnah of the Prophet, their aversion to long hair on men (which is technically part of Sunnah) suggests it is the Sunnah of Victorian England and modern America rather than that of the Prophet of Islam that they follow. The colonial-Victorian origins of the counterrevolutionaries' bias against men's long hair notwithstanding, it was this long hair that also moved them to accuse their victim of being an agent of Western powers.⁷²¹

Nevertheless, what is at stake is not one example here or there (no matter how prevalent and how conducive to acts of violence, like the case was with the example of long hair) whereby a colonial bias was indigenized or appropriated by the

passer-by. Long hair becomes a sign for resisting mainstream conservative culture, the US war on Vietnam, and the military draft. The musical ends on a shocking note when, against the protest of the other members of his 'tribe' who wanted him to dodge the draft, the main character appears in a shaved head ready to be sent to Vietnam.

⁷²⁰ For how the erasure of the Bedouin tradition of men's long hair played a role in the colonial efforts of the Jordanian (post)colonial State see Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 209 (it is this same erasure that allowed the depiction of the long-haired male Palestinian guerilla as effeminate, licentious, and foreign, while construing the Jordanian soldier with short hair and a Bedouin background as manly, proper, and national{ist}, according to Massad, see pp. 207- 213). What Massad noted about how this notion of proper masculine short hair (as opposed to the long hair that characterized Bedouins, including Bedouin soldiers, until the project of modernity cut their hair short) as an index of the transformation of notions of proper gender codes along Western-colonial lines holds true, mutatis mutandis, in our case: "Whereas ... Bedouin soldiers until the 1940s had long hair, which many among them wore in plaits, the Westernization of the Bedouin soldiers' notion of masculinity and femininity had been thorough. Long hair is now coded according to modern Western criteria as 'feminine', and it is then passed on as an 'authentic' Arab Bedouin judgment that is part of Bedouin 'heritage' and 'traditional' Bedouin notions of masculinity." Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 209.

⁷²¹ Of course inconsistency is not surprising here. One does not expect of regime thugs to be consistent, or to be well versed in Victorian notions of propriety and licentiousness, the Dionysian orgy, or the histories of long hair across Victorian and Islamic histories. This inconsistency, however, is a symptom of the Egyptian pro-State and counterrevolutionary discourse, and its attempt to appropriate certain aspects of its Western counterpart while reversing others.

postcolonial (and colonially complicit) State and directed against its dissidents. As far as our analysis is concerned, such examples are but an index, or a symptom, of a larger colonial trauma, the trauma of having to see oneself through the eyes of the colonizer, always in contrast to the ideal image set by the colonizer, or, to use Fanon's formulation, the trauma of an "image of one's body [that is] solely negating ... an image in the third person."⁷²² In the next chapter I will show how, even as many of the colonial biases were partly transformed, partly reversed, the deep epistemological and ideological biases persisted, and with them a colonial trauma and neurosis in which the image of the self had always been *negating*, abnegated, put in a hierarchized contrast to whiteness (or to a Eurocentric modernity and propriety), always *an image in the third person*.

⁷²² Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 90.

Chapter 4

The Self in the Third Person: The Spatial Articulations and Symptoms of the Fanonian Trauma

After having established the *revolving door* nature of the colonial mapping of space, which subsumes the racial savage, the Arab, the Muslim, in other words, various versions of the constructed Egyptian self, into Europe's unruly spaces and subjects and simultaneously imposes these thoroughly, if implicitly, racialized notions onto Egypt (and other colonies), I will now turn to the reception of and the response to these colonial notions. In other words, after establishing the *etiology* of the *Fanonian trauma* as far as conceptions of space are concerned, I will turn to the *symptoms* and *coping mechanisms*.

The *symptoms* and *coping mechanisms* that characterize the Egyptian experience of the Fanonian trauma will be sought in, among other things, writings by Egyptian nationalists and other intellectuals, translations of paradigmatic European texts, news reports, propaganda songs, presidential speeches, as well as visual and cinematic representations. As the case is with the rest of the study, the focus of this chapter is on the two defining moments of the late 19th/early 20th century and the late 20th/early 21st century. This chapter, however, will be mindful of two major shifts in Egyptian state ideology that affected the representations of the crowd, of spaces of political activism, and ultimately of proper and licentious spaces: the first is the Nasserist shift, a time when the crowd was no longer rendered licentious, and from which I will draw a number of examples. The second is Sadat's reversion (not to say *reaction*) to the licentious crowd, which did not only make a comeback, in full force, to State ideology, but was also significantly deployed in speeches delivered by the

president. Both these shifts are necessary to understand the post-2011 moment (especially the discourse surrounding the 2013 coup d'état).

The history of these developments is a history of inconsistencies, of continuities and discontinuities, of colonial mimicries and anti-colonial subversions. As we will see, these trends do not completely supplant one another; more often than not, they coexist in the same period and can be even traced in the writings of the same author (as I will show with al-Shidyaq and to a lesser extent with al-Nadim). One salient feature of this uneasy coexistence, however, (with few notable exceptions) is the failure to completely and radically subvert Western notions and their underlying assumptions even as they are being reversed.⁷²³

The history we are about to embark on, therefore, is part of the history of the Egyptian articulation of the self in response to the colonial *cultural imposition* (a response that sometimes mimics, sometimes opposes, but for the most part ultimately reproduces the underlying biases of, these *cultural impositions*). Throughout most of these responses, the set of assumptions, civilizational grids, and bodies of knowledge embedded in a *white gaze* continue to haunt, condition, and shape these responses. “In the Weltanschauung of a colonized people,” according to Fanon, “there is an impurity or a flaw that prohibits any ontological explanation.”⁷²⁴ The white gaze, according to

⁷²³ This argument is indeed similar to, congruent with, and dependent on Joseph Massad's argument in *Desiring Arabs*, especially in chapters 2 and 4, that the 20th and 21st centuries Arabic discourses on sexuality, both the ones that acquiesce in Western notions and biases and those that attempt to respond to or reverse them, are characterized by an internalization of the underlying epistemologies of a Western regime of sexuality, the ontologies this regime produces, and the moral and civilizational biases this regime is predicated on. In fact, Sayyid Qutb, who is discussed by Massad to illustrate the adoption of Western epistemologies of sexuality and notions of propriety even in a blatantly and explicitly anti-West discourse, will be discussed in a similar capacity in this section, paying special attention to the Social Darwinism of Qutb's sexual discourse and the appearance of the figure of the racial/sexual savage in his writings on America.

⁷²⁴ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 89- 90.

Fanon, interferes with the very ontology of the black man (and by extension the person of color, *mutatis mutandis*, I would add), which is then positioned in a hierarchized contrast to the ontology of the white man. Under these asymmetric psychic power relations (themselves conditioned by the asymmetry in military preponderance, economic relations, and ideological production) the person of color could therefore hardly escape the internalization of the white gaze and its ontological effects, always experiencing him or herself in reference/opposition to the white man: “The image of one’s body is solely negating. It’s an image in the third person.”⁷²⁵

The examples surveyed in this chapter rarely digress from this Fanonian articulation of the colonial trauma. Even when attempting to achieve a certain parity with the West, writers needed to achieve this parity through the approximation of Western norms, projecting licentiousness to other racial others (most notably Africans and Native Americans, and sometimes other Arabs). However, my analysis departs from Fanon’s in one important respect. Fanon attributes the white gaze and the ontological rupturing to a specific geographical experience, that of the Metropole, while the Antilles and the Antilleans remain relatively shielded from the white gaze as long as they are not subjected to a racial and cultural interaction with a white person. Per contra, I claim that, in Egypt, this ontological trauma takes place in perpetuum, regardless of the actual physical presence of white Western foreigners. I believe that this ontological trauma dispatches itself through three mechanisms that overlap and complement one another: the first one is through the education provided by colonial institutions built by Muhammad ‘Ali, further assimilated to the colonial model by the British occupation, and sustained in its colonial version (or a hybrid version thereof)

⁷²⁵ Ibid.

by the postcolonial state; the second one is through institutional memories of defeat in relation to British colonial rule – and later through institutional sets and memories of defeat and perceptions of inferiority vis-à-vis the superiority of Western powers and foreign capital (a perception which was at times augmented by the media to justify the regime’s complicity with Western powers), and finally through the media, the process of globalization, the political and cultural invasiveness of the Hollywoodian entertainment industry serving as the ideological state apparatuses of US imperialism. As such the Egyptian, since birth, is forced to simultaneously identify with the white man and see himself or herself as other through the white gaze. Unlike the Antilleans in Fanon’s analysis who identify with the white man with no ontological interruption as long as they stay in the Antilles, and only suffer the ontological rupture effected by the traumatizing experience with the white gaze once they set foot in the Metropole as their blackness is thereupon fixed, objectified, and reified; for a contemporary Arab both processes unfold simultaneously. What I describe here may seem contradictory: on the one side, the subject is being forced to identify with the white man through the three mechanisms mentioned above, while being consistently reminded that he is not white (and, in the case of women, that she is not a *he*). Indeed, this contradiction exists, and is at the centre of the colonial trauma. Since the birth of the colonial subject, he or she is never *himself*. “The young Antillean,” according to Fanon, “is a French child required to live every moment of his life with his white compatriots.”⁷²⁶ The young Arab, on the other hand, and perhaps the young member of any colonized population in the age of globalization/US imperialism, is a white child required to live in opposition to him or herself. The split is total.

⁷²⁶ Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 127.

As far as this study is concerned, a distinction needs to be made between three different stages: before British occupation, after British occupation, and the triumphant moment of US imperialism through globalization. In the first of these stages, despite the circulation (sometimes to the effect of dominance) of Western, modernist, and colonial notions, and despite their approximation by various authors, we do not encounter a complete internalization of colonial notions, nor a clear and unequivocal articulation of an inferiority complex (with the exception of a few authors who can be pinpointed as the cultural and political clients of imperialism, like the examples of al-Shidyaq, who despite his articulation of an inferiority complex vis-à-vis *Great Britain*, needed to imbue his language and analysis with a sense of parity). Or, if we want to put it in theoretical terms, the network of power relations, ideologies, or *cultural impositions* that characterize the colonial encounter were not sufficient to make a child see himself or herself through the white gaze. This condition was reflected in the proliferation of accounts that attacked Western foreigners and their norms, casting doubts and aspersions on their civilizational claims; even al-Shidyaq, who otherwise served as an agent of imperialism, produced such accounts, as I will show in this chapter. Although this ideological trend or orientation would not entirely disappear and is still observable to our very day, it would gradually be supplanted by other trends that show less parity and more acquiescence.

The second stage, the stage that followed the British occupation, is marked by the *progressive* (not in any linear civilizational form) adoption of British and European notions of civilization. The occupation's civilizing mission was adopted by Egyptian nationalists, who internalized the British civilizational disdain towards Egyptians and opted to claim the colonial and civilizational bourgeois values of the

Western occupier. (We have already seen how this was the case with both Ahmad Fathi Zaghlul and Muhammad al-Siba‘i. This chapter will showcase the implementation of this process of cultural reproduction in some of the representations of space and more particularly those of licentious space). The rupture between the first and the second stage marks the work of ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, producing ‘Urabist propaganda with a sense of parity with the West in the first stage and producing Social Darwinist essays on civilizing the Egyptians in order for them to regain⁷²⁷ their independence in the second. The Nasserist era could also be read as part (though one that is unique and peculiar in its deployment of anti-colonial rhetoric) of this stage, at least with regards to its recuperation of the crowd-qua-national mass. Through notions borrowed from Western socialism, Western romanticism, and Western militarism, Nasir’s discourse turned the licentious crowd into the respectable mass. Epistemologically, the rhetoric of this stage was conditioned by colonial institutions and colonial education, their nationalization by Nasir’s regime may have served to reverse their deployment but not to subvert their epistemologies.

The final stage is that of US imperialism, in which hardly anyone can escape the Hollywood mediated imago of the white man as the ideal image, and a plethora of Europe’s racial others (including the Arab, coming to the forefront after Reagan’s debacle in Lebanon, and slowly, though never completely, replacing the declining Soviet other) as the bad imago. In the context of Egypt, this coincided with, and directly followed, Sadat’s *infitah* (opening, open-door) policy. This policy made Egypt receptive to US *cultural imposition* in many ways: it opened the Egyptian media, especially its television, to US cultural products (including films of the

⁷²⁷ I am consciously using the term regain rather than gain since for most of the Egyptian nationalists of the late 19th and early 20th century Egypt was perceived as independent under Ottoman rule.

Western genre, which, invite their audience to identify with the ideal and idealized image of the genocidal white man, thus leaving Egyptian spectators at a dilemma of whether to identify with the Native Americans, who possess a dark skin similar to the Egyptians' own, and who are subjected to the same US war machine that targeted the Arabs, or to heed their interpellation by the ideological apparatus of film and identify with the cowboy).

In addition, to justify defecting to the Western-capitalist camp, Sadat's propaganda needed to depict the US triumph in the Cold War as inevitable, and therefore produced its own mythology of American supremacy at the expense of the Soviet model (something this study will not be able to further explore due to the confines of space and method). Alongside the Sadatist discourse on US supremacy, a virulent form of anti-Arabness characterized the speech of Sadat, his propagandists, and his cultural milieu (to justify Egypt's new alliance with Zionism and US imperialism, and to blame Egypt's earlier military defeats on "the Arabs"). While the scope and method of this study will not allow us to discuss the details of Sadat's anti-Arabness, it is important to note it as one of the factors that conditioned the Egyptian writers' self-abnegation, or abnegation of the Arab self, in the post-Sadat period.

Writings in this stage, in addition to their self-abnegation, were characterized not only by admiration of the West, but also by a *desire* for things Western; Western recognition, Western democracy, Western commodities, Western bodies, and, at moments in which the charge of Oriental licentiousness was turned back on the West, Western licentiousness. On the one hand, this opening up to US films, television series, and print publications, this promotion of US ideals, imagoes, and lifestyle, at the expense of indigenous/Arab imagoes and ideals and at the expense of non-

Western others⁷²⁸ led to the advance of the white imago as an ideal image and the non-white imago as the bad image. On the other hand, against a moral fabric that still sustained Islamic and other indigenous moral notions, yet supplanted them with 19th and early 20th century European, British, and particularly Victorian notions now passed as indigenous, and at a time when the West's civilizational claims were no longer made in terms of moral restraint but rather of liberation, US cultural productions provided ample material for depictions of a licentious West, which were taken up and re-produced, sometimes with a sense of moral horror, by Egyptian authors. But, as we will see through a litany of articles from *Ruz al-Yusuf*, these depictions of licentious West were always marked by an abnegation of the Arab self and an admiration/desire of the very licentious West that was being denounced.

While these stages are important to note, my analysis below will be mainly organized thematically rather than chronologically. Any periodization remains rough and schematic, and themes occasionally exist across stages. In the subsequent sections, I will first show how the colonial gaze persisted even in Arab and Egyptian accounts that aimed to reverse the set of biases implicit within this gaze. I will then show how various attempts to denounce the West as licentious ultimately assign blame to the West's dissident components and countercultures (which the West already produces as mirror images of its racial others). I will then interrupt the apparent continuity of this account through examining the discourse of the Nasserist era. The Nasserist rhetoric, though never completely subverting the colonial notions

⁷²⁸ This is not in any way to argue that Egypt was sealed against such influences or such cultural artifacts before Sadat's open door policy, but to argue that post-Sadat Egyptian mainstream and state-run media became more receptive to such cultural productions, and to note the decline of competitors starting Sadat's era (as opposed to Nasir's cultural apparatus promoting Soviet and *third world* art). Pursuing this point further requires a different archive and set of methods than the ones employed by this study.

and underlying epistemologies, succeeded in offering a richer engagement with these notions, especially inasmuch as it imagined/imaged the national crowd and the role of the military vis-à-vis this crowd. My account will conclude through tracing this crowd-military relationship in and beyond Nasir's era (ending with a brief discussion of the forms this relationship took during the prelude to and the aftermath of the 2013 military coup d'état). This account will also show how even when the colonialist and/or counterrevolutionary notions of the licentious indigenous crowd were avoided, the institutions which redeem the crowds or act as antidote for their licentiousness remained colonial institutions, modeled on their Western colonial counterparts and culturally and institutionally imposed on Egypt through the process of colonialism (these are, namely, the army as I show in this chapter and the next, and the family as I show in the next chapter).

Unfinished Anti-Colonial Reversals

The anti-colonial rhetoric, as early as the 'Urabi revolt, crafted responses to the colonial allegations of the unruliness of the Egyptian crowd, yet ones which expressed explicit and implicit civilizational anxieties that internalized, to varying extents, the civilizational biases of colonialism. In the face of a discourse on the unruliness of the Egyptians, as a people and as a crowd/mob, early Egyptian nationalists emphasized the civil and civilized nature of their supporters who constituted the indigenous crowd. A series of essays in *al-Mufid* emphasized the orderly, respectable, and heroic nature of the Alexandrians facing British bombardment, foreigners' sectarian

agitation, and eventually mass displacement.⁷²⁹ Similarly ‘Urabi, in his retelling of various key incidents of the revolt, insisted on the orderly and civil nature of his supporters. Various confrontations with the Khedive are prefaced by explaining how the crowd/soldiers showed utmost respect, even if this led to depictions of docility—sometimes evident in chanting the Khedival salute. This was especially the case in his depiction of the ‘Abdin Palace incident, wherein ‘Urabi recollects details of the military formations the demonstrators (who were mainly army soldiers) took and their orderly march to the Palace⁷³⁰ (downplaying the civilian contingent)—as if countering reports like the one from the *Gazette*, in which the army is represented as an unruly crowd, and the demonstration as an *émeute*. ‘Urabi, the leader of those men, showed even more discipline and restraint, to the extent of stepping down and sheathing his sword, while the men behind him refused to do so “as their patriotic blood was boiling in the furnaces of their hearts, and rage was evident on their faces.”⁷³¹ While these and other examples stressing the orderliness of the national crowd served to counter the contrary colonial allegations, they show an implicit agreement with the view that crowds, generally, are unruly, but *ours* are not. The ‘Urabi press occasionally preserved this dichotomy/distancing between order/government/troops/military-government on the one side and crowds on the other. Whereas in al-Naqqash’s historiography, the appearance of Egyptian soldiers was always a sign of threat and an omen of chaos, in the ‘Urabist *al-Ta’if* newspaper, they become a sign that the

⁷²⁹ *Al-Mufid*, 4 Ramadan 1299, 20/7/1882. See also *al-Mufid*, 30 Sha’ban 1299, 16/7/1882, 10 Sha’ban 1299, 26/6/1882, 4.

⁷³⁰ ‘Urabi, *Mudhakkirat al-Za’im Ahmad ‘Urabi*, 297- 300.

⁷³¹ *Ibid*, 299. One can easily map the Platonic fiction of good governance into ‘Urabi’s account: the officers, *the auxiliaries*, are full of passions that may be commendable if put under control by their *guardian* (a role ‘Urabi fancies for himself) who exhibits higher rational faculties and ability for restraint.

situation is under control. To that effect the ‘Urabi mouthpiece assures its readers that the Egyptian army is patrolling all neighborhoods, particularly those where Europeans and Syrians reside.⁷³² *Al-Ta’if* even went further and, while stressing that the situation was under control and that ‘Urabi supporters were orderly and civil, issued a warrant that anyone caught causing strife or sedition would be shot in accordance with martial law.⁷³³

As these writings belonged to the pre-British occupation stage, the stage when colonial *interpellation* and *cultural imposition* had not taken full hold, the colonial effect on the ‘Urabi press was not articulated in the form of an abnegation of the self or an inferiority complex vis-à-vis the West. Colonial notions, however, appear in the acceptance of the dominant European ideological perception of space, crowds, Order, and revolt-qua-chaos. As it went to extremes to prove the orderliness of the ‘Urabi movement, the ‘Urabi press ended up producing the same dichotomy between governmental and military order on one side and crowd-born(e) revolutionary chaos on the other, except that it cast itself on the side of the former. This reached the extent of wholesale identification with the forces of the counterrevolution; on the eve of the Alexandria confrontations, *al-Ta’if* ran a report about French politics, in which it declared its admiration for Adolf Thiers (the first president of the Third Republic, who crushed the Commune and massacred the communards), and praised him for having been able to unify the nation using “manifest firmness” (*al-hazm al-mubin*, which suggests an endorsement of the violent

⁷³² *Al-Ta’if*, date unavailable.

⁷³³ *Al-Ta’if*, 12 Ramadan 1299, 27/7/1882, 2.

measures Thiers resorted to for crushing the revolution).⁷³⁴ Little did the ‘Urabists know that a few months later they would be likened to the adversaries of Thiers, as various forms of *manifest firmness* would be used against them. Once again, while the article betrays an admiration for the French Republic and counterrevolution (both imbedded in a set of epistemologies that are inseparable from the colonial, not the least due to their mapping of the licentious onto the Oriental and savage as shown in the previous chapter), and while this admiration of things French is a clear symptom of the colonial trauma that was inaugurated through the French occupation of Egypt (1798- 1801), the article does not show any signs of abnegating the self. Its implicit hostility towards the communards (who were imagined by the counterrevolution as Oriental, savage, and Arab) was not translated as a hostility towards the Arab/Oriental/Muslim self on which these communards were modeled, owing – among other things—to the fact that the ‘Urabists were not yet materially in the position of the communards (and would not be until the bombing of Alexandria started in June 1882).

Once the Egyptian nationalists were materially and objectively put in the position of the Communards through British military occupation, the articulation of the colonial trauma differed and betrayed less self worth. A decade after the ‘Urabi revolt, al-Nadim (who had been in charge of ‘Urabist propaganda and was the editor in chief of *al-Ta’if*) reiterated his insistence on the orderliness of the national crowd, but this time with more emphasis on English-defined *civilization* and civilizational worth. In 1893, on the eve of the escalation between Egypt’s viceroy the Khedive ‘Abbas Hilmi II (who harbored anti-colonial and pro-Ottoman sentiments) and the

⁷³⁴ *Al-Ta’if*, 6/5/1882.

British, al-Nadim wrote an article whereby he called on Egyptians to demand their rights through *tazahurat adabiyyah*.⁷³⁵ The term *tazahurat* (sing. *tazahurah*) literally means an appearance, manifestation, or pretense. In modern Arabic, especially when used in the plural, it refers to political manifestations/demonstrations. From the context of the article, al-Nadim was most probably using the term *tazahurat* in the latter sense; he invokes the example of workers in England who went on strike and who “impressed the world with their deeds that witnessed no riot or flaw.”⁷³⁶ The term *adabiyyah* clearly refers to civilizational worth: *adab* (in addition to its modern usage to refer to *literature*, a translation that has been thoroughly criticized by *adab* scholars) means good behavior, discipline, and civilization.⁷³⁷ *Adab* as civilization is important in this context: throughout this article and others, al-Nadim had been stressing that if the purpose of the British occupation of Egypt had been to civilize the Egyptian, then the occupation had achieved its goals and it was time for it to leave. According to this logic, the Egyptians could get the British to leave by displaying their civilizational worth (here one could even drop the specific meaning of *tazahurat* as demonstrations and translate al-Nadim’s article as an appeal to the Egyptians to manifest themselves in a civilized manner). Not unrelated to this logic is the understanding of *adab* as discipline. Al-Nadim is calling on the Egyptians to go out in

⁷³⁵ Al-Nadim, *al-Ustadh*, 520; the full article runs through pp. 507- 533.

⁷³⁶ *Ibid*, 521. This is perhaps one of the earliest appearances of the term *tazahurat* in its modern sense, though it lies beyond the purpose of this study to establish whether it was al-Nadim who coined it as such.

⁷³⁷ In another article al-Nadim posits *Adab* as the other to and suppressor of *bahimiyyah* (*animality or bestialness*), al-Nadim, *al-Ustadh*, 506. *Adab* here can be understood as counterpart to Plato’s rationality, or to Freud’s superego. If the latter, then al-Nadim’s understanding of the civilizing process is not very different from Norbert Elias’, whereby the disciplinary faculty within the human psyche (*superego* in Freud, *adab* in Nadim) is an end result of the *civilizing process*. See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*, (Mass.: Blackwell, c. 2000), esp. 109.

demonstrations that are disciplined, featuring no “riots or flaws,” and that are thus able to “impress the world,” just like that of English workers. While al-Nadim’s ultimate purpose seems to be the exposure of British hypocrisy, claiming to civilize the country while occupying it for its own ulterior reasons, he ends up reproducing the colonial understanding of civilization-as-discipline and more particularly as colonial discipline; in this article as well as in previous ones he goes as far as crediting the English with teaching Egyptians important civilizational lessons, and with providing a margin of freedom that allows for civilizational growth.⁷³⁸ Even as he questions the West’s civilizational mission, al-Nadim subscribes to the logic that the people can demand their rights only once they have reached a certain civilizational stage, and accepts the colonial stage as the exclusive benchmark of civilization. He only disagrees with the claims of colonial discourse concerning the civilizational stage Egyptians were said to have reached at the time, but not with the logic of colonialism and its episteme of civilization.

This logic represents a step backwards from the discourse of the ‘Urabi revolt (and thus from al-Nadim’s earlier position as the orchestrator of ‘Urabist rhetoric),⁷³⁹ which insisted on the civilizational worth of Egyptians and other Ottomans in the face of a lack of civilizational worth on the part of the West, signaling an ideological defeat that paralleled the military defeat on the hands of

⁷³⁸ This argument is presented in its most obscene form in al-Nadim, *al-Ustadh*, 464, 520 see also 457-467, 507- 533.

⁷³⁹ Also a step backwards from al-Nadim’s earlier insistence on social and biological degeneration as Western maladies or *masab ifranji*. It is curious that al-Nadim, even when acquiescing in the Western claim of civilization, would still depict the licentious space as Western, and the Westerners as spreading prostitution, liquor, and other forms of license. Perhaps al-Nadim by the 1890s started to disentangle licentiousness from degeneration. Or perhaps in contrast with his revolutionary past, al-Nadim was in 1893 treading a delicate power balance between his patron, Khedive ‘Abbas Hilmi, and the British authorities, which forced him to contradict himself at times.

British imperialism. The defeat was also manifest in the acceptance (though tactical and aimed at exposing British hypocrisy) of the British definition of civilization as the frame of reference to which even nationalist authors appealed, and ultimately accepting the British (or more broadly Western/foreign) as the judge of whether Egyptians had achieved civilization or not. This was a salient feature of Egyptian public discourse that outlasted British colonization—the acceptance of the foreign, predominantly Western, gaze as the judge of Egyptians’ civilization and civility, and the constant need to submit civilizational credentials to the West (which was sustained, of course, by political and economic dependency relations with the West, especially under Sadat’s open door policy and its continuation under Mubarak’s, Mursi’s, and al-Sisi’s regimes, and whereby Egypt as a political and economic entity needed to prove itself to the colonial centers it aimed to serve).

After the uprising of 2011, in one of the rare moments of Egyptian state and capitalist sponsored propaganda flirted with, rather than abnegated, the crowd, quotes by foreign leaders and foreign news agencies about the civility and civilizational worth of Egyptian demonstrators (some real, some apocryphal) quickly became popular on Egyptian television channels, in Egyptian social media, and on billboards. Giant billboards through the highways entering and exiting Cairo International Airport reproduced these quotes with images of their (alleged) authors. As they turned the ‘revolution’ into an object of the foreign/white gaze, and despite the lip service they paid to the ‘revolution’, these billboards served the counterrevolutionary purpose of turning the 2011 uprising into an act for a foreign audience and legible through a white civilizational gaze. This is a clear symptom of what Fanon terms “a collapse of the ego,” when the colonized “stops behaving as an *actional* person. His actions are destined for ‘the Other’ (in the guise of the white man), since only ‘the Other’ can

enhance his status and give him self-esteem at the ethical level”⁷⁴⁰ (emphasis in original).

Another closely related trend, which successfully subverted the colonial gaze, though failed to problematize colonial civilizational assumptions themselves, was to hurl the charge of licentiousness back toward the West (including the Greeks and the Maltese, who, despite not being perceived as white or fully Western/European by Europe at the time, were conceived by Egyptians as part of the West – defined in opposition to the Ottoman Sultanate- and part of the Western colonial effort – given the way many of the Greeks and Maltese residents of Alexandria took the side of the British during the 1882 invasion). This sometimes took the form of blaming unruly behavior on Western residents of Egypt,⁷⁴¹ which was taken up and expanded by *al-Liwa’* (as we saw in its discourse on the *dakhil/interloper* in chapter 1).⁷⁴² At other

⁷⁴⁰ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 132.

⁷⁴¹ See for example *al-Mufid*, 27 Jumada al-Thani, 1299, 15/5/1882, 4, *al-Mufid* 17 Sha’ban 1299, 3/7/1882, 1 (in which a riot was started by a Maltese resident of Alexandria and by Alexandrian children). See also *ibid*, 3 (in which a riot was started by the scum {awbash} of the Maltese and the Greeks) and 20 Sha’ban 1299, 6/7/1882, 1. In these examples the class element is most evident; it is the canailles of the Maltese and the Greeks that are responsible for the Alexandria incident; termed “awbash al-maltiyah wa al-yunan.” The term *awbash* keeps reappearing throughout the article). The civilizational polemic is evident in the language used by *al-Mufid*. After reporting an incident in which a Greek assailed an indigenous Egyptian (min al-wataniyyin) the newspaper exclaims: فتعسا لهذا التوحش في زمن التمدن والحريّة

⁷⁴² In addition to the examples discussed in chapter 1, a relevant example for our discussion here comes in the context of *al-Liwa’*’s retelling of the 1882 Alexandria riots, emphasizing the role of foreign residents of Alexandria in instigating riots as a pretext for the British invasion. In this example foreigners are not merely *agents provocateurs*, but also agents of savagery. The article ends with a brilliant reversal of the colonial discourse on civilizational and savagery, interrogating the Western civilizational discourse and civilizing mission, and then reversing it so that the Westerner is the savage:

أهذه مدنيتكم أيها الغربيون التي تريدون أن تبتئوها في نفوسنا وتطبعوا عليها قلوبنا تبتلون الحق وتحقون الباطل وتشهرون علينا السلاح الأبيض وتطلقون علينا قذائف السلاح الناري وترجمونا [هكذا] بالحجارة وتقتلون مظهر قوتنا وتجرحون أكبر حاكم منا في أعظم ثغورنا ثم إذا خرجنا خروج المتفرج على محاسن هذه المدينة وفي أيدينا عصا اتخذناها زينة لا لنهش بها عن أنفسنا جعلتموها نباييت واتهمتمونا بالتحفز لقتل كل نزيل ورميتمونا بالتعصب الذميمة؟

times the invading army and its stooges (including Khedive Tawfiq, the viceroy during the ‘Urabi revolt and the British invasion) were the ones depicted as spreading chaos.⁷⁴³ Other times yet, this discourse took a more global outlook, comparing the civility of Egyptians and other Ottomans to the savagery and cruelty of Europeans (for Egyptian authors at the time the savagery of Europe was particularly evident in its treatment of its Jewish population, and the Russian pogroms were commonly cited as evidence of Europe’s savagery—notwithstanding the othering of the Russians by Europe itself).⁷⁴⁴

This account of Western savagery, opposed to Eastern/Muslim/Ottoman civilization and civility, can be easily seen in *al-Jawa’ib*’s reports on the Commune. By using a damning language to describe the Commune, its savagery, and the horrors of its socialism, al-Shidyaq may be seen as sending the charge of savagery back to

The anti-colonial reversals, however, subscribe to a clearly classist logic:

والسبب الحقيقي هو أن أغلب النزلاء في الإسكندرية في الإسكندرية من رعا القوم وسفلتهم الذين قصرت بهم وسائل الارتزاق عن طلب العيش إلا من المهام الصغيرة الحقيرة التي قل أن توجد إلا في الثغر .

al-Liwa’ 11/8/1901, 1.

⁷⁴³ See for example *al-Mufid* 17 Sha’ban 1299, 3/7/1882, and 4 Ramadan 1299, 20/7/1882, 1. In the first reference the British force is accused of stirring *hayajan* (riot, excitement) among foreigners. In the available record, it is not clear if the verb used is *sannahathum* (gave them a chance) or *sallahathum* (armed them). Either the British are accused of providing a chance for the foreigners of Alexandria to riot, or of directly arming them for the riot. In the second reference the Khedive is understood to be fostering chaos and therefore a warning is issued that anyone who fails to abide by the rules of the ‘Urabi government would be severely punished in accordance with martial law. The article concludes by copying a military order warning *al-sufaha’* (the deluded, ill-witted) that the government’s involvement in the military development does not sway it from maintaining order. The military order then vows to keep everyone’s safety and security, even of English residents of Egypt. The newspaper then moves to providing lustrous examples of an extreme order maintained by the government, including the story of a thief who stole a handbag from a foreign lady but who was caught by the police in an instant.

⁷⁴⁴ See for example *al-Mufid*, 10 Sha’ban 1299, 26/6/1882, 2. See also the essay on Russian Jews in *al-Mufid* 23 Jumada al-Thani, 1299, 11/5/1882, 2. See also al-Nadim, *al-Ustadh*, 442- 443.

Europe;⁷⁴⁵ the savage crowd, according to this reading of al-Shidyaq, belongs not to the Orient, not to the colonies, not to Native America or Africa, but to Europe proper, and to Paris, the so-called *capital of the nineteenth century*, out of all European cities. Early in his coverage of the Commune, al-Shidyaq points out (with an unmistakable mix of awe and vindication) the ‘*ajab* (wonder/irony/bemusement) in how the nation that “last year was a model in civilization and knowledge” was a year later suffering from turmoil.⁷⁴⁶ The implicit *schadenfreude* (not completely implicit if we take into consideration that ‘*ajab* comes from the same root as *a’jaba*, to *like*, though the term ‘*ajab* usually denotes awe and amazement rather than enjoyment) in this statement is made more explicit in the next page; these events, according to al-Shidyaq, were a sign that God wanted to punish the French for their imperial hubris:

فهذا يدل على أن الباري عز وجل إنما أراد أن يؤدب الفرنسيين على ما ارتكبوه سابقا من الطغيان
والتجبر إذ كانت دولتهم الإمبراطورية تتداخل في أمور سائر الدول وتحاول تدبير جميع الممالك فأصبحوا
عاجزين عن تدبير مملكتهم⁷⁴⁷

⁷⁴⁵ It is important here to note Radwa ‘Ashur’s very interesting and original reading of al-Shidyaq as an anti-colonial thinker; Radwa ‘Ashur, *al-Hadathah al-Mumkinah*. While one drawback of ‘Ashur’s text is the reliance on Trabulsi and ‘Azmah (who fabricate a socialist agenda for al-Shidyaq in order to reconcile their admiration for him with their professed socialist ideology), still, purging ‘Ashur’s text from the Trabulsi and ‘Azmah references would not change the reading much. On one side we have a very convincing reading, by ‘Ashur, about how the subtexts, epistemology, and narrative strategies of al-Shidyaq were anti-colonial, yet, on the other hand we have clear examples of collaboration with British colonialism. It is perhaps the case that al-Shidyaq was epistemologically anti-colonial though politically complicit with colonialism, just as Egyptian nationalists and anti-colonial activists in the early 20th century and beyond were politically anti-colonial though epistemologically complicit with colonialism, as shown by a plethora of authors. See for example Tamim al Barghouti, *The Umma and the Dawla: The Nation-State and the Arab Middle East* (London: Pluto Press, 2008) and Tamim al-Barghuthi, *al-Wataniyyah al-Alifah: al-Wafd wa Bina’ al-Dawlah al-Wataniyyah fi Dhill al-Isti’mar* (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub wa al-Watha’iq al-Qawmiyah, c2011). While Joseph Massad’s *Desiring Arabs* does not deal with Egyptian activists per se, it exposes how the internalization of Western-colonial notions of sexuality and their underlying epistemologies and ontologies are shared and internalized not only by liberals but also by Islamists and anti-colonial nationalists; Massad, *Desiring Arabs*.

⁷⁴⁶ *Al-Jawa’ib* 26 Muharram 1288, 16/4/1871, 1.

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 2.

Al-Shidyaq takes the Commune as an occasion to deny France's claim to everything it was supposed to pioneer, from civic ethics to democracy. In at least two of his editorials on the Commune, he set out to give the French a lesson in civic ethics, after lamenting how they fought among themselves and tore their homeland apart.⁷⁴⁸ In one of these editorials al-Shidyaq warned (his audience? the French?) that if the insurrection of the Commune continued, people would start to think of the French as “a chaotic people (*unas fawda*) that neither learn the lessons of their past nor plan for their future, and who are therefore only suited to be governed by force.”⁷⁴⁹ The French, thus, in the discourse of al-Shidyaq, became disorderly native savages who lacked a sense of history (they neither learn from their past nor plan for their future). Tyranny, therefore, was part of their culture—or so people would think, al-Shidyaq was careful to distance himself from the claims he made. In a similar manner, in a later editorial he exclaimed, in a remarkable expression of anti-colonial *schadenfreude*: “everyone now thinks that the Parisians can only be governed through coercion and suppression.”⁷⁵⁰ Here we clearly see the stereotype of Oriental despotism along with the charge of civilizational savagery being turned back against France, as a step towards turning these charges back against the West.

This charge of (French) savagery is generalized to the rest of the West through Europe's (alleged) complicity with the communards, made explicit through the readiness of some European countries to grant asylum to former communards. Al-Shidyaq mocks this decision, noting that European governments only exhibited a readiness to do so due to the intra-European conflicts that pitted them against France,

⁷⁴⁸*Al-Jawa'ib* 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, 1, 26 Muharram 1288, 16/4/1871, 1.

⁷⁴⁹*Al-Jawa'ib* 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, 1

⁷⁵⁰فإن كل إنسان يعتقد الآن بأن أهل باريس لا ينفقون إلا بالقهر والجبر *Al-Jawa'ib* 6 Safar 1288, 26/4/1871, 1.

wondering what kind of civilization allowed one to host saboteurs (*mufsidin*) who spread ruin (*kharab*), exclaiming that if this was what civilization looked like, then perhaps savagery was better: فإن يكن هذا يسمى تمدنا فأهلاً بالتوحش.⁷⁵¹ Al-Shidyaq here seems to echo closely the *Standard's* article about the communards being *hostis humani generis* and those who shelter them passing for *heathen nations* (which was perhaps among al-Shidyaq's sources, given the frequency with which he used to cite the *Standard*). Unlike the *Standard's* reporter, however, who saw civilization in Christendom and savagery outside of it, al-Shidyaq here was questioning the civilizational claim of Europe/Christendom as a whole. For the *Standard*, the referent for savagery is *heathen nations*, while for al-Shidyaq, the referent is Europe.

Revolutionary ruin and chaos are therefore forms of barbarism, yet a distinctly Western barbarism. To further establish this point, al-Shidyaq places chaos within a distinctly French grammar. Frustrated with the confusion and contradiction of news reports relating to the insurrection, al-Shidyaq locates this confusion within a French lack of *bayan* (eloquence/clarity/signification); after quoting one of the reports on the Commune, al-Shidyaq protests “this statement was in the passive voice in the original, for they are bereft of eloquence (*bayan*) and do not know the conditions under which the passive voice can replace the active.”⁷⁵² Al-Shidyaq's frustration with the French lack of *bayan/eloquence* continued and was generalized to Western, including British, media: after a lengthy paragraph about how the news was confusing and news sources unreliable, al-Shidyaq's frustration reached its peak:

⁷⁵¹ *Al-Jawa'ib*, 9 Rabi' al-Awwal 1288, 28/5/1871, 1.

⁷⁵² هذه العبارة أدبت في الأصل بالبناء للمجهول على عادتهم فإنهم بمعزل عن البيان ولا يدرون متى يقام المجهول مقام المعلوم *al-Jawa'ib* 26 Muharram 1288, 16/4/1871, 3.

ثم ليت شعري من يرسل هذه الأخبار من فرساي وباريس إلى روتر وشركائه أو إلى بورديلة وجماعته وما المراد بهذا التشويش والتخليط وهذا التهاتر الذي ملأوا به صحف الأخبار وكيف أن كُتَّاب هذه الصحف يفهمون منهم ما يلقونه من الأحاجي والمعجمات وإذا لم يفهموهم فكيف لا يلومونهم على ذلك سلمنا بأن الإفرنج لا يراعون الوصل في الكلام ولا العطف [ولا التقريع ولا الطباق؟] ولا التنسيق ولا التقديم والتأخير ولكن لم لا يستندون الفعل إلى فاعل له معلوم ويغنون الناس عن التأويل.⁷⁵³

At the end of this paragraph, al-Shidyaq once again places this confusion within a French grammar; he grants that the *ifrinj/ifranj* (lit. *the Franks*, a term that in modern Arabic may refer to Western foreigners in general, or more particularly to the French) are not well versed in rhetoric and that he should not expect them to write with eloquence “but why don’t they just refer the verb to a defined subject and spare people the speculation.” These are most probably references to the use of the French impersonal pronoun *on*, whereby the specific subject of the sentence remains obscured even though the sentence is phrased in the active voice.⁷⁵⁴ Once again this is a reversal of the charge of savagery. If for the colonizer the colonized speaks in gibberish or lacks the proper faculties of speech and signification (as we saw in the many examples where crowds *howl* in faux-Arabic), for al-Shidyaq it is the French—and through them the rest of the Europeans- who lack the faculty of *bayan*, of proper speech and signification.

⁷⁵³*Al-Jawa’ib* 3 Safar 1288, 23/4/1871, 1.

⁷⁵⁴Al-Shidyaq’s sentence can also be understood as expressing frustration with the use of the passive voice. I find it more likely that the reference here is to the French (im)personal pronoun “on” more so than to the passive voice in general. This is so for a number of reasons. First, here al-Shidyaq is clearly making a distinction between the French and his Arab readership, i.e. between French and Arabic, exposing the French’s lack of eloquence. What was being lamented, therefore, was probably something that was distinctly French, something the Arabic language does not share with French. Since Arabic grammar also has a passive voice (al-mabni lil majhul), then it was more likely that the sign of the French lack of eloquence is its impersonal pronoun “on.” Second, if we take al-Shidyaq’s sentence more literally, he is not frustrated with the *majhul* (i.e. the passive voice, or the unknown subject, as such) but in putting the *majhul* in the maqam (place) of the ma’lum (the known, or, grammatically speaking, the active subject). The frustration therefore is with a passive or unknown subject that occupies the place of the active/known subject: this description clearly fits the usage of the French personal pronoun “on.”

In another example Christianity itself falls under al-Shidyaq's attack. If the *Standard* had placed the communards and their sympathizers outside "the moral code of Christendom," al-Shidyaq, presaging Nietzsche's linking Christianity and socialism in his 1887 *Genealogy of Morals*, placed socialism itself in 1871 within the moral code of Christendom and the teachings of the Bible. Socialism, which he repeatedly denounced, is attributed to Christianity and more specifically to the New Testament – Chapters 4 and 5 of the Acts of the Apostles, especially the verse stating "but they shared everything they owned."⁷⁵⁵ Al-Shidyaq prefaces this fake genealogy of socialism with the caveat "Though I am not one to mock sects and religions..." This of course, is only to be read ironically; a significant part of al-Shidyaq's oeuvre is dedicated to mocking sects and religions (not only Christianity and Judaism, but also the way Islam, to which he converted, was practiced). What this preface is telling us, in al-Shidyaq's tongue-in-cheek style, is that what was to follow was an attack on socialism *and* Christianity, just like his regular attacks on religion which were referenced through their negation. After attributing socialism to Christianity, al-Shidyaq placed his polemic against Socialism within his larger attack on European civilization (or the lack thereof) by telling a (seemingly unrelated) story about a woman in London who was arrested for stealing, but was pardoned because she pleaded that it was her husband who ordered her to do so, and that the Holy Book commanded her to obey her husband.⁷⁵⁶ Al-Shidyaq's re-production of Europe's attacks on Islam and re-directing them to a Christian Europe was obvious in this example: it was not under the domain of Islam (or the Ottoman sultanate) that people

⁷⁵⁵ *Al-Jawa'ib* 8 Muharram 1288, 29/3/1871, 1. For further analysis of the *Apostles* reference in al-Shidyaq and how the verb *shared* is translated by al-Shidyaq as *mushtarakan*, thus making it compatible with *socialism* (*madhhab al-musharakah* or *al-ishtirak* in al-Shidyaq's writings of the time, and *ishtirakiyyah* in his later writings) see al-Sulh, *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq*, 151- 152.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

were religiously dogmatic, and that women had to blindly obey their husbands, but in London, and under the precepts of Christianity. Read this way, the story about the woman thief ceases to be unrelated to the polemic against socialism and the Commune, and appears as part of his expansive criticism of Western civilization and its Christian component. Al-Shidyaq found in the alleged savagery of the communards a chance to settle scores with Christianity (from which he had converted to Islam), the Maronite Church (which tortured his brother to death), the Protestant missionaries (who rejected his translation of the Bible), and the Christian component of Western civilization.

With al-Shidyaq, therefore, we see two opposite trends coexisting. We see, on the one hand, the acceptance and internalization of many of the Western notions, biases, in short, epistemai, and a wholesale adoption of a distinctly Western-bourgeois counterrevolutionary ideology that abhors socialism and abnegates the crowd. On the other hand, we see a reversal that is at times meticulous, in which the savage is not the Oriental, the Muslim, the Turk, or the Arab, but rather the Westerner, the European, and particularly the French. Despite this reversal, however, the end result of al-Shidyaq's intellectual effort was to facilitate French and especially British imperialism.

In the example of al-Shidyaq we see not only the depiction of the licentious crowd as a Western phenomenon, but furthermore a discourse on the licentious West *in toto*. In addition to the licentious crowd that stands for Europe's savagery, we see this licentiousness placed within French grammar, within Christianity, within European civilization, or, to use the words of the *Standard's* reporter, within "the moral code of Christendom." A similar trend (perhaps influenced by al-Shidyaq) soon emerged in Egypt. Anti-colonial writers (including al-Nadim, his capitulation to the

Western civilizational hierarchy notwithstanding, and Mustafa Kamil and his entourage writing in *al-Liwa'*) not only depicted the unruly crowd as a Western phenomenon but furthermore labeled various forms of licentiousness and public immorality as Western exports. Prostitution, gambling, alcoholism, narcotics, and wasteful expenditure were attributed by al-Nadim to foreign influence and colonial emulation.⁷⁵⁷ When *al-Liwa'* accused the foreigners of spreading alcoholism, narcotics, gambling, and socialism/labor activism (as seen in Chapter 1), it subscribed to that same logic. The association between Western licentiousness and Western-inspired political activism kept reappearing in Egyptian discourse up to *Rami al-I'tisami*; Rami and his comrades were Westernized elites enamored of Western exports (including a socially liberal lifestyle, gyms and nightclubs, facebook, and political activism). Similarly the licentious revolutionaries in the counterrevolutionary discourse of 2011 were Westernized elites carrying a Western agenda (signs of their Westernization in that discourse were abundant, from rumors that they were receiving free KFC meals, to the exclamation by a former pro-regime thug that he thought they were a “bunch of American University [in Cairo] pansies.”)⁷⁵⁸

The articulations of the licentious West, predominant as they were in Egyptian discourse, consistently betrayed signs of the Fanonian neurosis; if al-Shidyaq turned the charge of licentiousness back to the West while preserving some of the West's hegemonic assumptions which abnegated their own crowds and dissidents, Egyptian post-colonial authors would produced a discourse on the

⁷⁵⁷ See for example al-Nadim, *al-Ustadh*, 47, 65, and 510.

⁷⁵⁸ Ali Abdel Mohsen, “Thug Life: Pro-Mubarak Bullies Break Their Silence,” *al-Misri al-Yawm*, 18/03/2011. <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/node/362243>.

licentious West while preserving the West's abnegation of its racial others (sometimes closely re-producing Western anti-Arab tropes and stereotypes, other times using other *savages* as the markers of licentiousness), and sometimes implicitly admiring the licentious West as a cite of liberation.

Perhaps the most famous articulations of a licentious West came from the writings of the Islamist thinker Sayyid Qutb,⁷⁵⁹ where he characterized American society as immoral, sexually permissive, and hence degenerate.⁷⁶⁰ Striking in Qutb's sexual polemic is how he used not only the language of degeneration (*inhilal*) but also that of primitivism: the sexual unruliness of the American man made him a *primitive man*, according to Qutb.⁷⁶¹ This is clearly a response to and a reversal of Orientalist discourse that accused the Arab/Muslim/Oriental of being sexually permissive and therefore savage. This response, however, accepted the presumptions of Western civilizational discourse: there is a civilizational ladder marked by relative sexual orderliness (not to say prudence), but only the Muslim, rather than the secular

⁷⁵⁹ In 2015, amidst the war on the Muslim Brothers and other Islamist organizations by Sisi's regime, *Ruz al-Yusuf* revisited the sexual writings of Qutb, especially his remarks on American sexual mores, in order to provide an example of the Islamists' obsession with sex and to place them within a genealogy of Islamist sexual perversions; 'Ismat Nassar, "al-Ladhdhah al-Jinsiyyah fi Kitabat Sayyid Qutb," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 23/1/2015,

<http://www.rosaelyoussef.com/articles/12901/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%B0%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D9%82%D8%B7%D8%A8>. The genealogy continues, with less emphasis on the Muslim Brothers in Nassar, "al-Irhab wa al-Jins: min al-Hashshashin ila Da'ish wa Buku Haram," 4/2/2015, <http://www.rosaelyoussef.com/articles/12952/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%B3-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B4%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D9%88%D8%A8%D9%88%D9%83%D9%88-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%85>

⁷⁶⁰ Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 126.

⁷⁶¹ Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 125- 126. See also the quoted passages in Nassar, "al-Ladhdhah al-Jinsiyyah fi Kitabat Sayyid Qutb."

Westerner, occupies this high rung.⁷⁶² Qutb's response failed to interrogate the racial foregrounding of the concept of the sexual savage; one is left to wonder where the referent to primitiveness lies, and whether Qutb, by labeling American sexual mores as primitive, was placing American society in the same category with the sexual "savages" of Africa or even of Native America. Qutb was not alone in that regard, even if we bracket the appearance of the Islamist-as-sexual-savage which we encountered in chapters 1 and 2, the 'native savage', the African and to a lesser extent the Native American, appeared prominently in Egyptian representations as the embodiment of licentiousness and sexual savagery and as markers of a state of national deterioration and degeneration.⁷⁶³ The Fanonian neurosis here is articulated

⁷⁶² See the discussion in Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 123- 128.

⁷⁶³ See for example Joseph Massad's analysis of Sun'Allah Ibrahim's novel *Sharaf*, in *Desiring Arabs*, 377- 380. In *Sharaf*, through a set of racial/racist metaphors and a recurrent racist joke, the black African becomes a marker of sexual savagery/degeneracy (to which men degenerate through their anal rape), and of a state of national degeneration Egypt would descend to if it allowed its rape by international capital, according to Massad's reading of the novel. See also Massad's analysis of the appearance of both the Native American and the African as sexual savages yet as markers of sexual liberation rather than degeneration in the film *Hammam al-Malatili* as well as the appearance of an "unknown primitive chief or person" in the novel on which the film was based; Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 312. A curious example, in which the sophisticated yet licentious West and the primitive savage are mapped onto one another, appears in Ibrahim Mas'ud's (badly written, overtly nationalistic, and gratuitously sexual) spy novel *al-Tha'lab* (the Fox), which was serialized in *Akhbar al-Yawm* weekly newspaper in 1991. An outspoken supporter of Sadat and the peace treaty with Israel, Mas'ud needed to make up for Egypt's capitulation through fantasies of masculine dominance. The plot of the novel is dominated by the attempts of a female Mossad agent to seduce an Egyptian intelligence officer known by the pseudonym *the fox* (a sensationalist revision of the Orientalist trope of the masculine Occident and effeminate/feminine Orient yet one that fails to interrogate its gendered assumptions – let alone one that falls into admiring the Occident, even/especially when feminized). Eventually the Egyptian spy/officer walks in on the "strange and horrifying scene" of the scantily clad Mossad agent being whipped by "a human monster, of black skin, naked except for a piece of leather/skin (*jild*) that hides his pudendum." The primitivity of the black man is highlighted, therefore, not only through him being a "human monster" and a sadomasochistic sexual savage, but also through his primitive attire, which brings to mind the various imaginations of the primitive/first man. While this African savage is not introduced by name, his name slips at the very end of the episode (as if by a slip of the pen of the author or some unconscious assumption by the protagonist who walked in on the scene) and it turns out to be Adam (the sadomasochistic African savage is therefore not only a primitive man, he is the first man). The revenge fantasy, in which the African man whips the white (female) agent of settler colonialism is unmistakable (and not unrelated to the author's need to supplant Egypt's capitulation through sexual fantasies), yet soon reversed when the Mossad agents takes the whip and operate it "with an expert hand." Ibrahim Mas'ud, "al-Tha'lab," *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 2/11/1991, 7.

through projection: the Egyptian, always othered through the white gaze that conditions his or her very existence, can only become (comparatively) white through projecting otherness onto other racial others, especially ones of darker skin, and/or victims of genocidal and epistemic violence.⁷⁶⁴

If Qutb (and many other Egyptian authors) mapped licentiousness to the primitive, *Ruz al-Yusuf*, especially in the 1990s, mapped licentiousness to the futuristic age of globalization and to an advanced West. If Qutb et al. needed to project this licentiousness to other racial others and thus rescue the Egyptian self from their civilizational abnegation, *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s surface reversal of the charge of licentiousness preserved, in many ways, the abnegation of the Arab/Egyptian self and the figures of the sexually perverse Arab/Muslim (which we encountered in the previous chapter). The depictions of a licentious West were sometimes taken to absurd and extreme measures by *Ruz al-Yusuf* (always a good venue for researching such discourse, given how it served as the sensationalist voice of the regime— *Ruz al-Yusuf* also happened to be the venue which published Qutb's writings before his turn to political Islam). The reports of *Ruz al-Yusuf*, especially in the 1990s (at the onset of the age of globalization) drew an image of a licentious West wherein nudity and the potential of illicit sexual encounters lurk at every corner.

For example, in 1995, *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s reporter Ayman al-Tuhami issued a confessional titled “Tafasil Tajrubah Hayyah, 42 Shari‘ al-Jins fi New York,” (The

⁷⁶⁴ For an explication of this coping mechanism through an analysis of how the Antillean others the Senegalese, see Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 126. The difference remains, however, that for Fanon the Antillean others the Senegalese through color obliviousness; it is because the Antillean self-image is white that the Senegalese appears as the black other. Since this color obliviousness is not present, or at least not complete in Egypt – the Egyptian self-image is simultaneously white and non-white, perpetually othered from itself even in the absence of actual white people, the projection process is more complex, and the Egyptian appears as white only through contrast with the *darker* or *blacker*, rather than through obliviousness.

Details of a Live Experience: 42nd, the Sex Street of New York).⁷⁶⁵ In this confessional, al-Tuhami recounts a 1988 visit to New York where he had to struggle with the temptation to attend a live sex show at a sex shop on 42nd Street. Al-Tuhami described his struggle with the temptation and his sense of guilt when he succumbed, only to find that the woman performing the show was a male-to-female transsexual (the licentious West turns out to be an indescribable orgy where sex is performed live and wherein men and women cannot be distinguished). Al-Tuhami then informed his audience that, if instead of heading to 42nd street they turned to Broadway, they would find no naked women hassling them (advice that has been rendered more recently obsolete by the semi-naked performers, known as the *desnudas*, in star-spangled body paint at Times Square) and that they might end up seeing performances of ‘high art’ (for which he mistook the musical *Cats*) featuring no nudity (again, a piece of advice rendered obsolete every time a musical with nude scenes is put on stage). Here al-Tuhami, though subscribing to the propaganda that markets the modern West as a space for sexual liberation, is clearly (even if unconsciously) subverting the classical Orientalist fantasy of the Orient as a space for hidden and forbidden pleasures. It is in the United States and not in the Orient, and in a sex shop and not in a Harem, that forbidden voyeuristic pleasures are granted, condensing the sensual women and the effeminate boys of the Orient in one transsexual performer. The voyeur, however, is still Arab/Muslim, and so is his perverse desire (produced this time by a repressive, rather than permissive, East).

⁷⁶⁵ *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 6/3/1995, 47.

A few months later al-Tuhami wrote another informative essay on Paris titled “al-Hubb wa al-Jins ‘ala Arsifat Baris” (Love and Sex on the Sidewalks of Paris).⁷⁶⁶

A few of the lessons we learn about Paris from this article are: that in Paris love is one thing and sex is another, that Parisians are “well versed” in treading the difference between the two “the same way Americans are well versed in devouring Hamburgers,” and that when a Parisian woman smiles at a man, it is not always an invitation for sex, sometimes it is, sometimes it is not, but when it is, it is often conditional. To enjoy this unique trait of Parisian women (the ability to solicit sex and give conditional invitations to men?), tourists flock to Paris from everywhere “even from the US and Israel.” The article then moves to describe how Arab tourists are especially interested in sexual tourism (presumably unlike al-Tuhami who writes about the cultural attractions of New York and Paris?) and how many Parisian prostitutes are of Arab origins. Perhaps al-Tuhami is conflating— or *coupling*— once again, the licentious West with the Arab pervert, and is subscribing to the tradition of Orientalism that renders the bodies of European women licentious through perverse Muslim desire (as encountered in the previous chapter)—though/especially that many of these licentious Parisian bodies are also Arab. Once again even as the stereotype of the licentious and permissive Orient is being reverse, abjection and perversion remain Arab and/or Muslim.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 17/7/1995, 76- 77 A few months later yet another one of *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s reporters, one Ibrahim Khalil, wrote a report under the title “Sadmat Baris: al-Hubb wa al-Jins fi al-Shanzilizih,” [The Shock of Paris: Love and Sex in the Champs-Élysées] (*Ruz al-Yusuf*, 16/10/1995: it seems that 1995 was the year *Ruz al-Yusuf* discovered Paris as a sexual city and patented the creative use of the phrase *love and sex* in titles related to the city). The lessons drawn from this article can be paraphrased as: Paris at night is different from Paris in the morning, people have sexual intercourse in Paris, Parisians drink coffee and wine and eat fancy cheese, but also eat hamburgers and pizza, women wear miniskirts, French people are accurate and punctual, Peugeot is a French company, there are art galleries in Paris yet not enough space in *Ruz al-Yusuf* to cover them beyond a casual gesture.

On the same issue ‘Asim Hanafi (a satirist with a playful style, who did not attempt to hide his erotic confessions with professions of guilt or moral lessons the way al-Tuhami did) wrote, under the title “al-Tublis Ya Jama‘ah” [Topless, People!] a report on London’s Hyde Park and how, when it is sunny, everyone there goes topless, including one (female, it is important to note) informant with whom Hanafi conducted an extended interview.⁷⁶⁷ The licentious and the political come together in the report; the topless informant turns out to be an Irish IRA supporter who hates British colonialism and sympathizes with Arab causes, and the meeting ground is Hyde Park, which is associated in Arabic representations with its Speakers Corner and therefore represents a withdrawal of state censorship and surveillance.

The intersection between the sexual/licentious and the political(ly subversive) in Western territories (yet ones in which state surveillance retreats) appears more clearly in a short report on Ayman al-Zawahri (then an obscure Islamist leader with unknown whereabouts and before he rose to fame as the second in line in al-Qa‘idah after the attacks of 11/9/2001). The report, titled “Sirri lil Ghayah: Akhtar Umara’ al-Irhab” [Top Secret: the Most Dangerous among Terror Commanders] (4/12/1995) and written by Sawsan al-Jayyar,⁷⁶⁸ alleged that al-Zawahri had been living on the Swiss-French border along with his “pretty wife.” It is curious that to represent the terrorist’s hideout in the West, a female body is needed (and the gendered *body* is important in the representation, it is not just the wife, it is the *pretty* wife); the female body here can be read not only as a metonym to the terrorist organization (itself the crowd’s surrogate as shown repeatedly in this study) but also

⁷⁶⁷ ‘Asim Hanafi, “al-Tublis Ya Jama‘ah”, *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 17/7/1995, 56- 58.

⁷⁶⁸ This is the same Sawsan al-Jayyar who uncovered/fabricated/copied from police reports the scandal involving two sisters seduced by bearded men (who allegedly seduce women to convert them to Islam) and then forced into prostitution, which we encountered in Chapter 1.

an index of the licentious West, which allows the terrorist to hide and copulate in its licentious spaces (here the West clearly replaces the Arab-Muslim other in the racially charged metonymic relation between the crowd and the female body which was described earlier). It is important how al-Zawahri was imagined to live in a liminal space: a place on the border, neither Swiss nor French. The terrorist's hideout is in the West, but in a place that defines the limit of the Western (Nation-)State. I should note in this context that France promotes itself as a subject of the world's sexual fantasies, and that Switzerland promotes itself as a haven where dissidents, millionaires, and secret bank accounts can hide from the gaze of other states. The terrorist's hideout thus exists on the border of two already lax and permissive systems of sovereignty, and where political and sexual laxity intersect.

While these reports can be located within a history of turning back the charges of license and *inhilal* (both as moral looseness and as degeneration) against the West from which these charges originated, there is hardly anything subversive in them. They come at a time when the West had stopped marketing itself as the site of puritanical sexual respectability, and started to market itself as a space of sexual liberation.⁷⁶⁹ In line with the Western hegemonic message, *Ruz al-Yusuf's* reports on sexual liberation in the West are characterized with fascination – mixed with some sense of scandal, of guilty pleasure, and coded in an ambiguous language that simultaneously condemns and praises; Arabs feel guilty when they go to peep shows on 42nd street, and they are disgusted by Arabs who procure prostitutes in Paris, but they are enticed by peep shows, by topless women in Hyde Park, by the women in

⁷⁶⁹ For a larger analysis of how this reversal affected Arab representations of desire, sexuality, and sexual respectability, see Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 37, 175, 191 – 268.

miniskirts in Paris, and by their smiles, which signal conditional invitations, according to *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s reports.⁷⁷⁰

Opposed to the Western *attractions*, cathected with horror and fascination, appears an abnegated self; we have already explored the appearance of the Arab pervert and the Arab prostitute in relation/opposition to attractive Parisian sexuality. In a similar vein, al-Tuhami's confession to succumbing to his voyeuristic desires and attending a peep show can be read as a gesture towards the stereotype of the Arab/Muslim/Oriental voyeur (which we have encountered repeatedly in the previous chapters). More playful versions of self-abnegation in the face of fascination by the West appear in the report on partial nudity in Hyde Park. Towards the end of this report, 'Asim Hanafi juxtaposes the scene of Western naked bodies to the hypothetical scene of his "aunt hippopotamus" getting naked on the beach "while she stuffs vegetables with rice." This juxtaposition betrays in opposition to the male fascination with the West/Western female bodies, an abnegation of the Arab self and of indigenous Arab female bodies and culinary practices. Similarly, a *Ruz al-Yusuf* report on satellite porn channels ends by disapprovingly citing how Egyptian television broadcasts a religious show every night, wondering how Egyptian television can compete, through such policies, with (pornographic?) satellite

⁷⁷⁰ For how the *desire* of the colonized man for the white woman, which is dictated by colonial *cultural imposition*, goes beyond sexual desire to a Hegelian desire for recognition, through which the colonized imagines an approximation of whiteness and thus of humanity-proper through the white woman's recognition, see Fanon's chapter entitled "The Man of Color and the White Woman," in *Black Skin White Masks* 45- 63. While Tuhami's reports narrate an absence of recognition (the Arab is lurking on the Parisian sidewalks or behind the screen of a peep show, and only recognized through his money when procuring Parisian prostitutes), Hanafi narrates a moment of recognition which brings to mind the Fanonian analysis: the white topless woman lectures him on the merits of nudity and naturism, on global politics, and on British imperialism, as if giving him a glimpse of her white culture –which brings him to abhor his "aunt hippopotamus" and her stuffed vegetables as we are about to discover.

channels.⁷⁷¹ In these examples we see the Arab/Egyptian (and the Egyptian man more specifically, since all accounts, except the one on al-Zawahri, were written by men and narrated desire from a male heteronormative standpoint), much like the black man in Fanon's analysis "constantly struggling against his own image."⁷⁷²

The predominant presence of an abnegated version of the self in reports about the licentious West reveals something about the working of the Fanonian trauma and its articulation in the Egyptian context. We have already argued repeatedly that the othering from the white frame of reference and therefore othering from the self had occurred in Egypt prior to the first personal encounter with a colonizer/white person (always conditioned by the first encounter between Egypt and its European colonizer, French or English). The personal encounter with the colonizer, however, and on the colonizer's own territory, highlights this trauma, and leads the (post)colonial subject to feel its density. Like Fanon's Antillean who in the presence of the white gaze "feels the weight of his melanin,"⁷⁷³ and who experienced unease and a self-consciousness of acts priorly perceived as natural or habitual,⁷⁷⁴ Hanafi and Tuhami's accounts reveal certain uneasiness about their presence and their bodies. We also perceive this in Hanafi's hesitance to disrobe (against the white woman's implorations, perhaps betraying a hidden abnegation or shame of the indigenous body, an abnegation which he only reveals at the end of his essay through projecting it onto his aunt's body), but we see it more clearly in Tuhami's shame of his desire in Times

⁷⁷¹ Wa'il Lutfi, Khalid Abu Jalalah, "al-Jins 'ala al-Hawa' bi al-Sawt wa al-Surah," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 12/12/1994, 39- 42.

⁷⁷² Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 170.

⁷⁷³ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 128.

⁷⁷⁴ See Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 90- 91.

Square, and of the desire of his Arab peers in Paris. This shame of being present (as a body and a desiring subject) in the metropole was summarized in Fanon's painful proclamation: "I was taking up room."⁷⁷⁵

Blaming Counterculture

Depictions of the licentious West in Egyptian discourse also subscribed to the Western hegemonic discourse in another aspect: when licentiousness goes beyond the bounds of what the Western agenda of sexual liberation permitted, when licentiousness is to be depicted as dangerous and subversive, the Western dissident, the figure of Western counterculture, most notably the hippie becomes the epitome of licentiousness. The hippie is already located at the intersection of the licentious and the subversive, the sexually and politically active (one could even go as far as describing the hippie, side by side with the French *1968er*, as a fulcrum around which the discourse on the licentious political activist has revolved since 1968/69). The licentiousness of the hippie connects to the licentiousness of the sexual savage, by way of the hippie appropriation of Native American culture (but also by way of the association of the hippie counterculture with the Black and Red liberation movements in the United States).

In post-Nasserist Egyptian representations of licentiousness, the hippie surfaces as a marker of a Western licentiousness that threatens to infect Egypt. This appears as early as 1970 (during the final days of Nasir) when the government-owned weekly magazine *Akhir Sa'ah* ran a report on hippies in West Germany (it is curious

⁷⁷⁵ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 92.

that they chose West Germany rather than the United States, which was perhaps testimony to how the hippie counterculture was infectious, even beyond North America).⁷⁷⁶ A few weeks later the same magazine published an alarmist and thoroughly sensationalist report on a hippie party in Alexandria. Imported licentiousness is highlighted in the article, beginning with the woman at the entrance of the house where the party was staged, wearing a towel “and nothing else,” a girl who drew hearts on her face with the help of her own mother, underage drinking, to an underage girl wearing a t-shirt marked with English obscenities. It is noteworthy how, in this article, licentiousness is gendered as feminine, and how the licentious female body serves as the metonym and the surface for the inscription of licentiousness, sometimes literally so.⁷⁷⁷ This article was referenced by *Ruz al-Yusuf* during the Satanists scandal (1996-97), as if to provide a genealogy for Western licentiousness in Egypt, thus initiating a trend of likening the Satanists to the hippies.⁷⁷⁸ Hippie licentiousness, in *Akhir Sa‘ah* and *Ruz al-Yusuf*, is not only sexual. Reference to Charles Manson (mistakenly identified as the leader of the hippies), were often made, to illustrate how something that could start as an exercise of personal freedom could lead to gruesome crimes.⁷⁷⁹

It was not only *Ruz al-Yusuf* that resurrected the hippie as a model for Western licentiousness in the 1990s. In *Rajul al-Mustahil*, a novel-series (dubbed by

⁷⁷⁶ “Hadith ma‘ al-hibbiz ‘ala al-rasif, wasat al-dukhan al-azraq,” (an interview/conversation with the hippies on the sidewalk, amidst ‘blue smoke’—*blue smoke* is a vernacular Egyptian reference to the smoke of hashish) *Akhir Sa‘ah*, 2/9/1970, 40.

⁷⁷⁷ “Hafalat al-Hibbiz Mamnu‘ah fi al-Iskandariyyah bi Amr al-Muhafiz,” *Akhir Sa‘ah*, 23/9/1970.

⁷⁷⁸ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Hafalat ‘Ibadat al-Shaytan fi al-Zamalik,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 25/11/1996, 99.

⁷⁷⁹ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Nadi ‘Ibadat al-Shaytan fi Misr,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 11/11/1996, 79. See also *ibid* and “Hafalat al-Hibbiz Mamnu‘ah fi al-Iskandariyyah.”

its publisher as a series of “pocket novels”) that took upon itself the task of instilling military ideology in the minds of a young readership for a good part of the 1980s and 1990s, and perhaps through the early 2000s, the hippie made an appearance as an index of a licentious West, a foil to the proper masculinity of the Egyptian military man/intelligence officer, and a target for his violent disciplining.⁷⁸⁰ Even in the discourse on the Islamists, the Islamist terrorist is comparable, according to a former minister of interior, to the hippie, inasmuch as both stage a juvenile rebellion against paternal authority and against society and its norms.⁷⁸¹

The figure of the hippie therefore indexed in Egyptian pro-State conservative discourse a Western licentiousness or a licentious rebellion. For our analysis, the hippie also indexes the subscription of the Egyptian pro-state discourse to the Western

⁷⁸⁰Nabil Faruq, *Rajul al-Mustahil* issue 82, *al-Akhtabut*, 54. While the main character, the Egyptian soldier-turned-intelligence-officer Adham Sabri was suffering from amnesia and peacefully painting a wall in an unidentified Latin American country, a group of biker-hippies (sporting long hair and leather jackets, according to Faruq) started catcalling and sexually harassing a woman from the neighborhood. Full of Egyptian military protective machismo (which his amnesia was not able to stem out), Adham took it upon himself to give those biker-hippies a good beating and a lesson in morality. Clearly the description of the gang (on motorbikes, wearing leather jackets, acting in an aggressive macho attitude and catcalling women) confuses biker gangs with hippies. This confusion can be traced, however, to the confusion the hippies themselves made when they invited Hells Angels to secure the 1969 Altamont Festival with disastrous consequences. In a footnote, Faruq describes the hippies, or the *hibs*, as “an antiwar pacifist youth movement that emerged in the United States and Europe after [?] the wars [?] of Vietnam in the sixties. Their members, however, deviated into a savage (*hamajiyah*) way of life and later some of them committed gruesome/disgusting (*muqazzazah*) crimes.” It is not clear if by the savage way of life and the gruesome crimes Faruq is referring to the Charles Manson family, to the killing at the Altamont concert (hence the confusion between hippies and motorcycle gangs), or if he was simply referring to the hippie lifestyle as savage, disgusting, and gruesomely criminal. Though the reference to the *hamaji* (savage) in Arabic discourse does not invoke the figure of the Native American the way it does in English, it still serves as a reference to primitivity. Therefore, while the racialization of the hippies through their association with Native Americans (or their appropriation of Native American culture) can be read as missing from Faruq’s depiction, savage primitivity is still attributed to them. An interesting twist, however, is how the proud Egyptian intelligence officer is named Adham, meaning black, while hippies were mostly white. The setting of the episode in a Latin American country leaves open the question of whether those hippies were white, Hispanic, Chicana, Native American, or black.

⁷⁸¹*Akhbar al-Yawm*, 18/01/1992, 17.

hegemonic discourse, even as it aimed at directing the charge of licentiousness to the West. It is not the businessman on Wall Street⁷⁸² or the US marine that are being charged with licentiousness, but rather the American hippie; not the dominant capitalistic and militaristic culture, but the rebellious counterculture. In fact all, or most, of the previous examples can be read as subscribing to a Western hegemonic discourse about “disorderly” conduct and morality. Even as these authors try to project licentiousness on the West, and as they attempt to denounce the West as unruly and licentious, it is the West’s internal others that are denounced. This is not new. As we already saw in al-Mufid’s coverage of the Alexandria riots and the British invasion in 1882, aside from the incidents wherein *al-Mufid* blamed British troops for spreading chaos, what it ultimately denounced were the *awbash* among the Europeans, the lower classes and the lesser whites (the Greeks, the Maltese). *Al-Shidyah* as we showed clearly denounced the socialists, the revolutionaries, the lower class, and the crowd – all of whom already were represented by the figure of or produced in the image of the racial savage, the Arab included. *Ruz al-Yusuf* and *Rajul al-Mustahil* ultimately denounce the counterculture and not the hegemonic culture, and by way of denouncing the hippie they partake of denouncing the Native savage (native to America or other colonies). In his attempt to denounce what he thought was the American hegemonic culture, even Qutb, ultimately partook of an evolutionary discourse in which the sexual savage was denounced. When the self is not abnegated, abnegation is displaced onto other racial others (perhaps an attempt to identify with whiteness or compete with it over its place in the hierarchy of civilizations, at the expense of other racial others), but also to the West’s own subaltern groups: the lower

⁷⁸² In fact, in *Ruz al-Yusuf*’s article on the sex shop on 42nd street, Wall Street is posited as one of New York’s landmarks and as a respectable attraction, alongside Broadway, and is opposed to the sex shop.

class, the rebellious, the counterculture, usually while preserving Europe's racial others as the referent for the licentiousness of these groups. The result is, at best, a deflected, delayed, deferred, and/or imminent Fanonian trauma.

Through all these examples, the Western metaphysics of statehood, whereby what is upheld by the nation State becomes proper and what evades it is licentious, are re-produced. The national post-colonial State inherits these metaphysics and posits what falls outside of its purview – including that which falls in the West, as licentious. In many of the above examples furthermore, what falls outside the purview of the post-colonial State also falls outside the purview of the Western State. There are examples, of course, wherein licentiousness is sponsored by Western states as part of neocolonial design to undermine the post-colonial state, like foreign sponsored pornography in the discourse of *Ruz al-Yusuf*.⁷⁸³ But, aside from the examples where there is a depiction of a clear Western conspiracy, Western licentious spaces seem to defy even the gaze of the Western state:⁷⁸⁴ they are seedy sex shops on 42nd street, hippie *happenings*, speakers' corners, and liminal spaces at the borders of Western states.⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁸³ In "Suq al-Shara'it al-Jinsiyyah fi Misr," 6/3/1995, 30- 32, Majdi Dirbalah traces the origins of porn and narcotics (including hashish) to foreign territories. Even the local porn industry is masterminded by "foreign institutions which have studied well the Egyptian mentality and character." According to Dirbalah, the distribution of porn disks started, of course, at the American University in Cairo (the latter served, in the pro-regime conservative discourse, as a hub for Westernized licentiousness, and later as a center for Western-inspired subversive political activities, as evident in the pro-regime thug identifying the effeminate demonstrators as "a bunch of American University pansies," as shown in Chapter 1).

⁷⁸⁴ Even the topless encounter at Hyde Park, as per-*Ruz al-Yusuf's* reporter, is an encounter with an Irish nationalist who opposes British imperialism and sympathizes with Arab causes.

⁷⁸⁵ Like the hideout of Ayman al-Zawahri, with his 'pretty wife', at the Swiss-French borders.

Through the Egyptian representations of the licentious West, specifically representations by the regime's sensationalist mouthpiece *Ruz al-Yusuf*, we see the preponderance of the white gaze and the figure of the sexual savage (whether through the figures of the African and Native American or through the figure of the Arab pervert). This preponderance also came to shape Egyptian statist and counterrevolutionary ideologies and representations. In their own right, these ideologies and representations were continuations of the colonial *cultural impositions*. The same gaze which enacts psychic violence against the non-white, was internalized in such writings, which worked hand in hand with the invention of a State gaze which mimicked its colonial predecessor. We may recall here our argument in Chapter 2 that the conception of the gaze of the state as a mechanism entitled to open up (even if forcefully) all segments of the societies, all hidden pockets, private affairs, and orgiastic spaces, is a symptom of a modern Western form of power. We may also recall that part of the impetus for colonization was constituted (or at least justified) by the urge to open up all hidden spaces to the gaze of the (colonial) State. Relevant here is Fanon's analysis of the French campaign against the veil in Algeria, and how it was fueled by the colonizers' anxiety about what is hidden, and their urge to visualize everything to their gaze.⁷⁸⁶ It should come as no surprise then that the representations of the licentious female body behind the veil in the Egyptian State's anti-Islamist propaganda (which we encountered in Chapter 2) eerily resembles the French colonial representations of the veiled Algerian woman as explicated by Fanon: "The European's aggressiveness will express itself likewise in contemplation of the Algerian woman's morality. Her timidity and her reserve are transformed in accordance with the commonplace laws of conflictual psychology into their opposite,

⁷⁸⁶ Fanon, "Algeria Unveiled." See the discussion in Chapter 2.

and the Algerian woman becomes hypocritical, perverse, and even a veritable nymphomaniac.”⁷⁸⁷ More broadly, this persistence of the colonial gaze and its target figure of the perverse Arab/sexual savage in Egyptian representations explains the proliferation of the figure of the Islamist as a sexual savage/pervert according to the civilizational presumptions of European colonialism (and as seen in Chapters 1 and 2 of this study). While this white-colonial gaze always produced the sexual savage as its other, or as one of the figures through which its non-white other is comprehended and represented, the appropriation of this gaze by the postcolonial state produced the Islamist as one of its internal others⁷⁸⁸ (which can also be explained through the process whereby the colonized projects licentious non-whiteness onto other colonized populations: the Antilleans onto the Senegalese, Egyptian mainstream media onto the Africans and Native Americans, Qutb onto the *primitive man*, etc.)

The effect of the national adoption of the colonial gaze is not limited to the othering of Islamists-as-primitives/sexual savages, or to the occasional association of dissidents (Islamist and otherwise) with primitives and savages. The larger adoption

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid, 46.

⁷⁸⁸ For how this process of producing the Islamist as an internal other, and at times an internal Orient, see Anas al-Ahmed, “Internalized Orientalism in Postcolonial Egypt: Media Representations of the Self and the Other in Egyptian News After The 2011 Revolution,” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2017). While I agree with al-Ahmed that many of the representations of the Islamists internalized Orientalism, al-Ahmed seems to mistake any critique of the Islamists for an Orientalization of the self. In addition, al-Ahmed does not sufficiently explain what the ‘self’ is in this context, which leads him to sometimes conflate the Islamists with the self. I depart from al-Ahmed’s analysis to the effect that I do not view the Islamists as necessarily representing an authentic version of the self. Instead, I am interested in how the modernist discourse and the colonial/statist gaze produce them as perverse indigenous versions that somehow escaped the forces of modernity (just like the jackal in the previous chapter). My purpose, in other words, is not to argue that the Islamist represents the authentic self, but to explore how the abnegated version of the self is projected onto the Islamist. To that effect and in departure from al-Ahmed’s analysis, I only deal with *versions, images, and perceptions* of the self, but never the self *an sich*.

of the “metaphysics of modernity” (as per Timothy Mitchell’s formulation),⁷⁸⁹ which only comprehends what it could structure through a plan, leaving out what does not follow a plan as devoid of meaning or value, is also at play. In Chapter 2 I have built on Mitchell’s conception of the *metaphysics of modernity* to argue that, against and in opposition to the institutions that embody the *order* or are structured according to a *plan* (the exhibit, the museum, the army, to name a few of Mitchell’s examples), social bodies or spaces that are not regimented into this order or do not lend themselves to the plan (most notably the crowd) become devoid of meaning, licentious, and Oriental. In Chapter 3 I have argued that these colonial epistemologies and *metaphysics* organize space into proper spaces – modeled on European bourgeois ideals, accessible to the gaze of the state – and licentious spaces (most notably the crowd) which are constantly referred to Europe’s racial other. In this chapter we have established how the colonial gaze is predominant in Egyptian representations. Taking these arguments side by side, it should not come as a surprise that the Egyptian public and especially pro-State discourse consistently posits institutions that are modeled on their European/colonial counterparts (e.g. the army and the family) as *the* proper spaces, while adopting the same colonial biases against crowds, and against the indigenous crowd, as constituting licentious spaces. Given how the proper spaces are modeled on colonial/Western/European bourgeois/white institutions, and how the licentious spaces were produced in mutual mapping with Europe’s others (including the Egyptian, the Arab, and the Muslim), we can see how the organization of space parallels and further sustains the psychic colonial trauma. In the next chapter we will further explore the tension between remnants, re-appropriations, and reinventions of colonial practices on the one side and proper spaces on the other through a study of

⁷⁸⁹ See the discussion in Chapter 2.

the discourse on the family and the army in modern Egypt. Prior to moving to proper spaces, I want to trouble the above account of seemingly uninterrupted colonial epistemic triumph. First, if to argue that the colonial gaze persisted even when inflected, I picked examples wherein colonial biases and presumptions were reproduced, this does not preclude the presence of other variances and exceptions. Indeed, there are various Egyptian cultural products and works of art that subvert the colonial gaze along with its underlying epistemologies: a notable case is Muhammad al-Muwaylihi's *Hadith 'Isa ibn Hisham*⁷⁹⁰ (originally published circa 1906) which not only subverts the colonial gaze but also deconstructs the whole notion that what is open to the gaze of the state is proper and what hides is licentious. Given the depth, complexity, and unique quality of this text, it will be impossible to do it justice in this chapter. This trend, however, remains almost entirely absent from the archives of this study, which speaks to the colonial nature of Egyptian nationalism, the Egyptian State, and Egyptian counterrevolution. Another exception which fails to subvert the colonial notions yet offers an interesting counterpoint to it, and which is crucial for this study, is the rhetoric of the Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir regime (1952- 1970).⁷⁹¹ The Nasir regime, furthermore, proves that even as the indigenous crowd was recuperated

⁷⁹⁰ *Hadith 'Isa ibn Hisham* is usually inaccurately translated as *The Tale of 'Isa ibn Hisham*, or *What 'Isa ibn Hisham Told Us*, neither of the two translations capture the literary valence of the term *hadith* nor the significance of 'Isa ibn Hisham as a narrator. While often referred to as a novel, the book brands itself as a *hadith*, which references both a classical Arabic oral tradition of narration and the classical genre of *al-maqamah*, an episodic style of narrative prose which employs rhyme and satire. The genre of *al-maqamah* is also referenced through 'Isa ibn Hisham, a recurrent narrator in many of the classical famous *maqamahs*.

⁷⁹¹ It is debatable whether the start of the Nasir era should be marked at 1952 or 1954. In 1952 the coup d'état led by Nasir and his clique of *free officers* was successful. Since then, Nasir became the strong man of the regime, the minister of interior, and the prime minister. He only officially became president in 1954 after ousting his comrade Muhammad Najib. I am using 1952 as the starting point given that it marked the beginning of Nasir's rise to power – though not of his presidency.

through a nationalist and anti-colonial rhetoric, institutions of colonial modernity (namely the army) remained the recuperating factor to the licentiousness of the crowd.

Of Crowds and Masses: The Nasir Era

صوت الجماهير هو اللي بيصحي الأجيال
صوت الجماهير هو انتفاض عزم الأبطال
هو اللي بيتكلم هو اللي بيتحكم هو البطل ورا كل نضال

(The refrain of Sawt al-Jamahir [roughly: the voice of the masses], a famous Nasserist mobilizational song written by Husayn al-Sayyid and composed by Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab)

While never fully subverting the colonial structure of the State or its underlying epistemologies, notions, and presumptions, the rhetoric of the Nasir regime differed from the colonial *cultural impositions* in one major regard: the indigenous crowd was no longer licentious; instead, for the new regime that designated itself as “revolutionary,” the crowd comprised the venerated national mass. Despite the military background of Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir and his entourage, and the dictatorial, at times oppressive, nature of his regime, Nasserist ideology appealed to the masses in a manner that precluded the licentious crowd from surfacing in State discourse. While this is hardly a complete subversion of colonial notions (after all the veneration of the *national* mass is a phenomenon rooted in modern Western traditions, from the Rousseauian to the fascistic, let alone its imbrication with nationalism, a modern Western and colonial phenomenon *par excellence*), Nasir’s veneration of the masses, coupled with a vehement anti-colonial rhetoric, allowed for divergences from the

colonial biases. It is telling that, despite Nasir's persecution of certain political crowds, his regime did not produce a discourse on the licentious crowd, and despite his persecution of the Muslim Brothers, his regime did not produce any discourse on the licentious Islamist.

A brief study of the Nasir rhetoric will thus be an opportune moment to bring back the crowd to our analysis, and to complete our history of the licentious spaces by showing the alteration of the notion of the licentious crowd under Nasir, before the licentious crowd's resurgence under Sadat. Furthermore the Nasir regime's relationship to the crowd provides an opportunity for studying the peculiar relationship between the military and the crowd more generally, which is necessary to pave the way for the account of the opposition between the military (as one of the model proper spaces) and the licentious crowd in the next section. For this purpose I will conclude this section by comparing the rhetoric of the Nasir (military) regime with the rhetoric surrounding the 2013 military coup d'état, giving special attention to the relationship between the army and the crowds/masses in both.

The intimate relationship between the Nasserist State and the Egyptian crowds, between Nasir and his masses, is best captured in the mobilizational/propaganda songs of the Nasir era. As a populist regime, which rested on a *revolutionary* legitimacy, and which aimed to use the masses internally to deter the powers of reaction and the *ancien régime*, and regionally in an attempt to destabilize colonialism, its allies, and reactionary Arab regimes, the Nasir regime often resorted to songs as a mobilizational tool.⁷⁹² Songs were composed for Nasir by

⁷⁹² For an analysis of the mobilizational potency of songs in an Arab postcolonial context, see Massad, "Liberating Songs: Palestine Put to Music," in *Palestine, Israel, and the Politics of*

the lead songwriters, musicians, and singers of the time; many of these songs were performed at public events attended by Nasir himself (most notably the anniversary of the 1952 revolution/coup and later the anniversary of the defeat of the tripartite aggression of 1956). The state-owned audiocassette and videocassette production company, *Sawt al-Qahirah lil-Sawtiyyat wa al-Mar'iyat*, recorded these songs and made them available to the public. The recordings included commentaries narrating the struggle of the Egyptian people against colonialism and feudalism. These songs were filmed by the nascent Egyptian national television, sometimes in concert, sometimes in *avant-la-lettre* video clips (which included segments of Nasir's speeches).

These songs did not only address the masses, they also depicted them in a positive light. Instead of the licentious crowd, the stern, respectable, and commanding masses (usually signified as *al-jamahir*, and occasionally as *al-malayin*, lit. *the millions*) took centre stage. For example, the song *Ya Ahlan bil Ma'arik* ([Say] We Welcome Battles, written by the leading vernacular poet of the time Salah Jahin and composed by Kamal al-Tawil), which prophesied a future of a harsh yet successful struggle to industrialize the country, to achieve socialism and prosperity, and to defeat imperialism and Zionism, repeatedly referred to the role of the Egyptian masses in winning this struggle. The refrain of the song declares: "millions of people (*malayin al-sha'b*) are marching (*tidu'/taduqq al-ka'b*, lit. *are digging in their heels*) declaring their preparedness." In another song titled *Allah ya Baladna!* (an expression of amazement and marvel that is impossible to translate to English, the nearest

Popular Culture, ed. Ted Swedenberg and Rebecca Stein (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 175- 201. See pp. 178- 181 for a brief analysis of the Nasir era songs, including the Voice of the Masses, which I quoted in the epigraph.

translation would be *God Bless You, Our Country*, or *Our Country, {By} God {You are Amazing}*, lyrics by Anwar ‘Abd Allah, music by Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhab), celebrating the defeat of colonial forces of the tripartite aggression (1956), praises the people and the army as they stand together, and credits “the free” (*al-ahrar* which can be understood as a reference to the free people of Egypt, but also to the ‘Free Officers’, the name the military Junta had given itself) with defeating colonial armies through “the weapon of popular revolution” (*bi silah al thawrah al-sha ‘biyyah*).

It could be contended here that, even as the (civilian) masses of the Egyptian nation were celebrated, they were militarized in the process. In both *Ya Ahlan bi al-Ma ‘arik* and *Allah ya Baladna*, the people are depicted as standing side by side with the army, and, especially in the case of former, the masses/millions are depicted as marching in military formation. Other songs that celebrate the masses, including *Sawt al-Jamahir* (the Voice of the Masses), *‘Ash al-Jil al-Sa ‘id* ({Long} Live the Rising Generation), and *al-Watan al-Akbar* or *Watani Habibi* (My Beloved Homeland, which celebrates the masses not just of Egypt but of the ‘Arab homeland’, written by Ahmad Shafiq Kamil and composed by ‘Abd al-Wahab) are sung to what sounds like a Soviet-style socialist military march. It seems as if, for the crowd to become the respectable *jamahir*, a military antidote must be applied. Other examples of the Nasir regime applying the military antidote to the licentious crowd include the famous *Abu ‘Uyun Jari’ah* incident when contestants of a male beauty pageant – named after a song by the famous singer ‘Abd al-Halim Hafiz (the same singer who sang many of the nationalistic/propaganda songs cited above)- were rounded up and sent to serve in the army to learn proper behavior (reportedly at the behest of Nasir himself who, according to some accounts, exclaimed “khalihom riggalah” {turn them into men, or

let them become men}).⁷⁹³ The military antidote was applied more dramatically and brutally when the Free Officers regime used army troops to brutally put down a workers' protest in Kafr al-Dawwar and tried and executed the leaders of the protest in a military tribunal soon after it came to power.

It is true that militarism played various roles in the Nasserist rhetoric, especially in turning the licentious crowd into respectable masses, but even then, the epitome of this militarization was not always the disciplined soldier. Frequently it was the *fida'i* (roughly the freedom fighter, coming from the root *fida'*, to sacrifice, especially oneself). In addition to a famous song by 'Abd al-Halim Hafiz titled *fida'i* in *Ya Ahlan bil Ma'arik*, the Egyptian population is interpellated as "30 million *fida'i*," which was the number of the Egyptian population at that time. Even as the *fida'i* is mentioned in the song in the context of heeding calls of 'Abd al-Nasir ("command and you will find, 30 million *fida'i*, across all fields"), there is a huge difference, in terms of discipline, obedience, and line of command between declaring

⁷⁹³ 'Adil Sabri, "Hukm 'Abd al-Nasir 'ala Musabaqat Ahla Rajul," *al-Ahram*, 2/8/2017, <http://www.ahram.org.eg/News/202344/11/606784/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A9/%D8%AD%D9%8F%D9%83%D9%85-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B1%D8%AC%D9%84-.aspx>. Nuha Hamdi, "Radd fi'l 'Abd al Nasir 'ala Awwal Musabaqah li Malik Jamal Misr: Khalluhum Rijjalah," *Itfarraj*, 29/7/2017, <http://www.itfarraj.com/%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D9%81%D8%B9%D9%84-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A3%D9%88%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83-%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%AE%D9%84%D9%88%D9%87%D9%85-%D8%B1%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9/>, and Nur al-Huda Zaki, "Irfu al-Sarwil wa Khallikum Rijjalah," *al-Misri al-Yawm*, 21/5/2014, <http://www.almasyalyoum.com/news/details/450174>. In this last example Nur al-Huda Zaki, a vehement Sisi apologist, invokes the incident to prescribe militarization as a cure for the licentiousness of the Egyptian youth and as means for national progress. She also identifies male effeminacy as foreign, and chastises the Westernized effeminate youth for their long hair (the Western origins of this gendered code and the indigenous traditions of male long hair notwithstanding). Finally she opposes this stern military masculinity to political dissent: the epitome of the effeminate, Westernized, and licentious youth is "the youth who chant 'down down with military rule' while sitting at cafes."

the population as comprising 30 million freedom fighters, and declaring them as 30 million soldiers.

It remains, however, that the Nasserist discourse gave the masses a commanding voice (as opposed to the howling, noise, and faux Arabic of the licentious crowd). This is evident in songs like the early 1960s song *Sawt al-Jamahir* (roughly The Voice of the Masses), a revolutionary pro-Nasir anthem written and composed by two famous cultural figures of the time and sung by a number of leading singers hailing from Egypt and Syria. The national masses, appearing as the opposite of and threat to imperialism, are the true heroes paving the way to freedom and socialism. While even LeBon allowed for the crowds to be heroic at times, in Nasserist propaganda the masses are not only heroic, they also possess a voice that is stern, sober, normative, and commanding (evident by the very title of the song). The refrain of the song, quoted in the epigraph, tells us not only that the masses have a voice of their own, but that it is this voice that has the capacity to awaken the next generation, it is this voice that is entitled to “speak and to rule/control/command,” and it is the true “hero behind every struggle.” Indeed, the song asserts that only God has the power to “stop the current of the advancing masses.”⁷⁹⁴ Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir himself summarized this appeal to, nay faith in, the masses through his famous slogan “al sha‘b huwa al-qa’id wa al-mu‘allim” [roughly: the people are the leader and the teacher.]

Other fields of state cultural production under Nasir shunned militarism altogether and showed, instead, a celebration of the political activist (classically understood as crowd-born(e)) and the secret organization (typically the crowd’s

⁷⁹⁴ See Massad’s analysis of this song in “Liberating Songs,” 23- 24.

surrogate as shown in Chapter 2). To illustrate how the discourse was not fully militarized even as the military was playing an important role, and how the activist and the militant organization were celebrated, I will briefly discuss the play *al-Qadiyyah*, written by Lutfi al-Khuli in 1960 and produced by state television in 1961⁷⁹⁵ – at a moment when the Egyptian state’s cultural apparatus believed in the education of the *masses* and in funding and promoting sophisticated cultural-ideological productions (a socialist achievement which speaks to a different relationship between the State and the masses that differs significantly from the relationship of abnegation between State and crowd we explored throughout this study). This moment also marked the rapprochement between the Nasir regime and segments of the Egyptian Marxist left, including the prominent leftist intellectual Lutfi al-Khuli (the playwright of *al-Qadiyyah*). Starting in 1961, al-Khuli was given a weekly column in the state-owned *al-Ahram* newspaper, and starting in 1965, he became the editor in chief of the state-owned *al-Tali‘ah* (the Vanguard) magazine. Consequently, his play was promptly produced by the State, only one year after its publication; and though not necessarily indicative of the mainstream rhetoric of the Nasir regime, the play was indicative of the leftist contingent of that regime, or of the leftist/revolutionary rhetoric this regime was ready to tolerate and at times promote. The play is set in pre-revolutionary Egypt, creating an illusion of anticipating the 1952 coup and the revolutionary ideals it stood for. In this play, the main character, presented as the model subject (he is the dream husband of the lead female character; he stands for the principles of the regime; he looks and moves like Jamal ‘Abd al-

⁷⁹⁵ A complete recording of the 1961 production, from the television archives, can be found on the YouTube channel of *Maspero Zaman* (a state run television channel responsible for broadcasting *Maspero’s* archival material); “*Rawa’i’ al-Masrah al-Qawmi: Masrahiyyat al-Qadiyyah li Lutfi al-Khuli,*” YouTube Video: 3:03:02, posted by “*Maspero Zaman – ماسبيرو زمان*,” 11 August 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9fiRNx47vE>.

Nasir; he sports a Nasir-like mustache; and he wears a summer-suit similar to Nasir's civilian uniform) is not a military man but a civilian. He belongs to a secret organization (the surrogate of the crowd). Throughout the play he uses a revolutionary rhetoric (which serves to further charm his lover) and seeks to subvert various hierarchical structures (including the family). The ideal subject in *al-Qadiyyah* therefore is not very far from the crowd-born(e) subject, believing in a revolutionary theory associated with the crowd, belonging to the crowd's surrogate (the secret organization) and subverting a space that is the crowd's other. While this play does not speak for the Nasserist propaganda or the cultural production under Nasir's regime as a whole, it is telling of how state media allowed for the emergence of ideal subjects that are not militarized and that are almost crowd-born(e), and more significantly, that the political activist and crowd-born(e) subject appear not as licentious or bad egos, but as model subjects.

Two underlying trends, therefore, can be observed in Nasserism as a state ideology through these cultural productions sponsored by it. First, even as the masses were celebrated, the militarizing trend was evident. The masses were depicted as respectable and heroic and given a commanding voice, but only after a military antidote was applied to them, after they were able to march to military tunes, and become interpellated, if not as soldiers, then as *fida'is*. This, however, is not militarism *in toto* and *tout court*, in which the good subjects are interpellated as disciplined soldiers, not as freedom fighters, and in which the crowd is subdued to military discipline. Rather, it is hybrid populism in which the masses and the army march hand in hand. Second, there is the civilian or revolutionary trend, most evident at a time when the Nasir regime was making peace with the Marxist left, and epitomized in state cultural productions like *al-Qadiyyah*, where the model subject is

not a soldier but a political militant, a revolutionary reminiscent of the crowd-born(e) subject, and in which respect and faith is placed not in the army but in the militant organization.

All this was reversed under Sadat, who restructured the regime to cater to a new comprador class and a new neoliberal project; the venerated *jamahir* disappeared and the licentious crowd reappeared. Opposed to Nasir who used the language of workers' rights (even as he crushed the workers' movement), and who announced his readiness to sit and talk with the protesting students in 1968 (even as he allegedly contemplated the use of the air-force against them),⁷⁹⁶ Sadat consistently characterized the crowd that opposed him as "thieves," "thugs," deluded or ill-behaved "children," and communist saboteurs.⁷⁹⁷ In addition, he reintroduced terms like *ri'a* (riffraff) to the political discourse on the crowd. Demonstrators and their slogans were dismissed by Sadat as *badha'ah* (obscenity) and *gur'ah/jur'ah* (insolence, impertinence, impudence, license), while the demonstrators were "deluded children." These deluded children and their insolence, according to Sadat, warranted merciless disciplinary action by the president.⁷⁹⁸ Examples of Sadat's infantilization of the crowd and the nation at large were presented in Chapter 1. A telling example in this context was the following incident: a female secondary school student, in a meeting with Sadat, called for a democratic system whereby the president would not

⁷⁹⁶ See Hisham al-Salamuni, "al-Jil alladhi wajah 'Abd al-Nasir wa al-Sadat, 10," *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 28/4/1997, 50- 53.

⁷⁹⁷ See the discussion in Chapter 1.

⁷⁹⁸ For excerpts from a speech in which Sadat made these allegations, in a video posted by a regime supporter in response to the revolutionary upheaval that followed the 2011 uprising, see "Al-Ra'is Yu'alliq 'Ala al-Ahdath ba'd miliyuniyyat 18 November," YouTube Video: 4:30, posted by "MrRealEgyptian," 22 November 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2N9iBJIHARE>

be immune to criticism, Sadat responded “eih el-halawa dih,”⁷⁹⁹ (Such sweetness/loveliness!) a term of endearment (thus illustrating Sadat’s infantilization of the opposition) that can also be interpreted as a comment on the physical attractiveness of the female student (who was indeed physically attractive by the standards of our source on the incident).⁸⁰⁰ Understood this way, Sadat can be seen as setting the trend for producing female activists as licentious bodies and a fair target for external patriarchal/male desire and sexual harassment. In addition, the secret organization as an alibi for sexual license, especially under the perversity of the Islamic *Amir* (leader, commander), was introduced by Sadat in a public speech (ironically, one that was re-posted in March 2011 by a YouTube user as a commentary on the 2011 demonstrations).⁸⁰¹ The licentious crowd of 2011, though not a direct result of Sadat’s propaganda, was made possible through Sadat’s reversal of (or *reaction* to) the Nasserist rhetoric, his (re)introduction of the crowd-as-riffraff, and his promotion of various versions of the licentious crowd and its surrogate(s).

We have come, then, full circle, and reached the return of the licentious crowd under Mubarak, a phenomenon that needs no further explanation after its exposition in Chapters 1 and 2. Instead of rehearsing the same argument again, I will end this discussion of crowds and masses by examining a 2013 work of parody that sheds light on what became of the venerated masses, the *jamahir*, and of the curious relationship between these masses and the army.

⁷⁹⁹ Hisham al-Salamuni, “al-Jil alladhi wajah ‘Abd al-Nasir wa al-Sadat, 11,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 5/5/1997, 54-57.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁰¹ “Ra’i al-Sadat fi al-Muzaharat,” 4:52 YouTube Video, posted by “Muhammad Alaa,” 5 March 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8bQjyr8tPI>

Gamahir or What Remains of Jamahir

The work of parody I am about to examine comes from the show named *al-Barnamij* (lit. *The Programme/ The Show*), which was produced and presented by the Egyptian satirist (and former cardiothoracic surgeon) Basim Yusuf. The show started as an underground satire of the counterrevolutionary discourse during the 2011 uprising and was initially broadcast on YouTube. The show's rising popularity propelled its move from YouTube to television. First the show aired on the Egyptian private satellite channel *Ontv* (owned by Egyptian tycoon Naguib Sawiris, who later played a role in funding and promoting the movement that led to the 2013 putsch). Eventually the show moved to *CBC*, a private media outlet owned by a businessman close to the *ancien régime* and the military. With the election of President Muhammad Mursi and the (at least nominal) rise of the Muslim Brothers to power, Yusuf and *CBC* made common cause; Yusuf, the professed liberal, took it upon himself to expose the shortcomings of the new democratically-elected government, which fit the agenda of *CBC* and the power centers it is linked to. Under President Mursi, Yusuf played a remarkable role in satirizing, exposing, and ridiculing the policies, mistakes, and transgressions of the Muslim Brothers, the president, and their allies and supporters. The complicity of the Islamists in the warfare of sexual libel with the opposition, and the public statements made by Islamists to the effect that protest spaces against Mursi witnessed inebriation, illicit sex, and/or rape (effectively that they were what I call *licentious spaces*), particularly came under Yusuf's scathing fire (especially that these statements are easily exploitable for laughs, something many of the Islamists opened

themselves up to).⁸⁰² Eventually *the Show* joined the ranks of propagandists agitating for the 30th of June demonstrations, which functioned as a prelude to the coup. After the demonstrations and the 3rd of July coup d'état, Yusuf came back with one episode where he attempted to satirize the people's enthrallment with (then General) 'Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi. This episode was perceived by many as irreverent to the army, to al-Sisi, and to Egypt. It led to a public outcry by regime supporters and eventually to *CBC* terminating the show (it also led, according to Yusuf, to messages of intimidation from the regime).⁸⁰³ Yusuf then tried to move to other satellite channels and hosted *the Show* for a brief period on *MBC Misr*. Although Yusuf toned down the political satire (to the detriment of the comedic quality of the show), his program was not tolerated (neither by the regime nor by the owners of *MBC*),⁸⁰⁴ and eventually stopped.

The satirical piece I examine comes from Yusuf's last episode on *CBC* before his move to *MBC*, the one where he attempted to satirize the enthrallment with al-Sisi, and which caused an outcry and led to the sacking of the show (intriguingly enough, the episode is not included in the list of episodes on the show's YouTube page, but has fortunately been uploaded by another YouTube user).⁸⁰⁵ After parodying the sexual and erotic turns that some of the manifestations of support for Sisi took,

⁸⁰² "Al-Barnamij- Halaqah 4 Kamilah," YouTube Video: 1:00:11, by "Albernameg," posted on 15 July 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdoqZ9WnhEk>

⁸⁰³ See Basim Yusuf's statements to that effect in "Basim Yusuf: Talaqayt Tahdidat wa lan Ukhatir bi Hayat 'A'ilati," in *Akhbarak.net*, 19/09/2015, <http://www.akhbarak.net/news/2015/09/19/7250912/articles/19832096/> باسم يوسف تلقيت تهديدات ولن أخاطر بحياة عائلتي.

⁸⁰⁴ See *ibid.*

⁸⁰⁵ "Albernameg- BasemYoussef s03e01. Full English," YouTube Video: 1:12:55, posted by "Peter Francis," Jan 18, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdrTb4rFrVE>.

Yusuf presented a mock phone call from a fictional character, called *Gamahir* (Cairene Egyptian rendering of Jamahir), which will be the focus of our analysis.

Gamahir was a recurrent character on Basim Yusuf's show. During the reign of Muhammad Mursi, Yusuf's show hosted mock phone calls from *her*, in which she complained about her *love problems* with her new husband (i.e. President Mursi). In these phone calls, the political, social, and economic problems and the various governmental failures were narrated through sexual jokes, innuendos, and *double-entendres*. Regardless of whether the show-makers were aware of it or not, the result was a brilliant satirizing/highlighting of the sexualized and gendered aspect of power, which posits the leader as masculine and active (or the failed leader as a failed man who is impotent), while feminizing the masses.

This gendered and sexualized nature of this relationship is further highlighted and satirized through drag: Gamahir is played by a man who emphasizes and accentuates the demeanor typically understood as (lower middle class) feminine behavior, and who covers his hair with a makeshift wig while leaving his moustache intact and visible. This presentation doubly highlights and destabilizes the gendering of the masses,⁸⁰⁶ one may even go further and posit that the masses are rendered through double failure, a failure to be masculine (highlighted by the feminine demeanor of the actor) and a failure to be feminine (highlighted by the moustache of the actor), a transgender being who never made a full transition to either gender. In her mock call to the talk-show, Gamahir's main complaint was that her husband, President Mursi, was married to another woman, whom she refers to – in the common

⁸⁰⁶ According to Judith Butler, drag and other forms of gendered parodies – parodies that do not assume an original - highlight the fictive nature of gender; Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 186- 193. Here, Gamahir in drag parodies a gender that is already perceived as fictive (unlike gender on the individual level, which is a fiction that is largely perceived as fact).

Egyptian tradition- as his *gama‘ah* (jama‘ah), thus playing on the word that may mean the *jama‘ah* (society/organization) of the Muslim Brothers and *jama‘ah* as wife, and, perhaps unwittingly, capturing the kinship between the crowd/masses/jamahir and the jama‘ah.⁸⁰⁷

The ideology that produces the army as the embodiment of masculinity and the army man as the model male subject, along with the gendered and sexualized fascination with al-Sisi, provided the makers of the show with more material to parody in the episode following the coup. After showing footage in which a commentator described al-Sisi as “ma‘shu’ [ma‘shuq] al-gamahir/jamahir” (the idol of the masses/Gamahir), Basim Yusuf wondered (while romantic music played in the background) whether al-Sisi loved Gamahir back, only to be interrupted by a phone call from Gamahir. In the phone call Gamahir recounts how her problems with her (now ex) husband have been resolved thanks to the intervention of her (maternal) cousin, who happens to be an army officer (in allusion to al-Sisi, playing on the theme of kinship between the people and the army) adding the spin that it was her husband who introduced her to her cousin (alluding to the fact that it was Mursi who had appointed al-Sisi in the first place as his defense minister, and adding a hint of cuckolding to the conceit). The confrontation between Gamahir’s ex-husband (i.e. Mursi) and her officer-cousin (i.e. al-Sisi) is narrated through sexual terms: for example when the husband attempted to assault Gamahir in the presence of the cousin, the latter “whipped it out” – and when asked what she meant by *it*, Gamahir

⁸⁰⁷ See *al-Barnamij* season 2 episode 5 at “al-Barnamij- al-Halaqah 5 Kamilah,” YouTube Video: 1:12:39, posted by “Albernameg,” 22 December 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dysJNQZN3wo&list=PLblwmgOZDF8JXgfS_mHAeJ_6MZUy_p2wL&index=3, and season 2 episode 22 at “Al-Barnamij- al-Halaqah 22 Kamilah,” YouTube Video: 1:03:03, posted by “Albernameg,” 19 April 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVwn3TtLaJA&list=PLblwmgOZDF8JXgfS_mHAeJ_6MZUy_p2wL&index=20

explained that she meant the declaration (meaning the declaration issued by al-Sisi two days before the coup d'état threatening that the army would have to intervene if the situation were not resolved). In the same manner Mursi's long speeches were satirized as "taking too long to finish[-off]" while the short speeches of 'Adli Mansur (the interim president) as timely (though curiously, not as premature) finishing[-off]. Although she is now married to the "old guy" (i.e. the interim president 'Adli Mansur), Gamahir yearns for her cousin, and recounts how he "swept [her] off" with his "gentle voice." Although she likes the kind of respect her older husband musters, Gamahir declares: "I want someone who can kindle my fire, and fulfill my desires as a female." When asked who could do so, Gamahir answers, in a lustful tone "my cousin!"⁸⁰⁸

The masses (or *Gamahir*) as a feminized male body yearning for the military machismo of the eroticized general brilliantly subverts both the veneration of the masses and the military antidote. This skit also captures the eroticization of al-Sisi as part of his rise to power, and with it captures the relationship between the masses and the military in the dominant ideology—the relationship that was once characterized, in a different context, by Wilhelm Reich as follows:

From the point of view of mass psychology, the effect of militarism is based essentially on a libidinous mechanism. The sexual effect of a uniform, the erotically provocative effect of rhythmically executed goose-stepping, the exhibitionist nature of militaristic procedure, have been more practically comprehended by a salesgirl or an average secretary than by our most erudite politicians. On the other hand it is political reaction that consciously exploits these sexual interests.⁸⁰⁹

⁸⁰⁸ "Albernameg- Bassem Youssef s03e01. Full English," YouTube Video: 1:12:55, posted by "Peter Francis," Jan 18, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdrTb4rFrVE>.

⁸⁰⁹ Wilhelm Reich, *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, ed. Mary Higgins and Chester Raphael, (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1970), 32.

This rise can be seen, thus, as a fulfillment of the prophecy of the all-boy band *Cairo-Ke*, that a *dhakar* (a male, a manly man, a masculine figure, or a male organ) was needed to save the day. Although the opposition between the masculine army and the feminine crowds or masses were already at play during the events of 2011 (as shown in Chapter 1), the events of 2013 officiated the sexualized and gendered relationship between the army (or more specifically the army man, more specifically yet ‘Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi) as masculine, dominating,⁸¹⁰ and active, and the masses as feminine, submissive, and receptive (failure to meet the last two criteria would render the masses a licentious crowd). Even in representations bereft of hypersexualization and gendering, the same relationship between the masses and the military leader can be observed: the masses, though now celebrated for their role in the June 30th demonstrations (unlike their counterparts who participated in the 2011 uprising, though not unlike the attempt of some of the regime propagandists to flirt with the ‘civil’ crowd that took it to the streets on January 25th 2011, as opposed to the unruly and licentious crowd that took it to the streets on January 28th and after) these masses were nothing like the commanding normative masses of the Nasir propaganda. Instead, they were masses yearning for a leader, a body yearning for a mind (again the gendering of the body as feminine and the mind as masculine is clear, though implicit), a space of chaos yearning for the orderly military to insert discipline. This is clear in many examples of the works of propaganda that emerged at that moment, but perhaps most evident in the footage that were broadcast on various television channels depicting the demonstrations and justifying the impending coup.

⁸¹⁰ The theme of dominance is also played out in the Gamahir skit. When asked if her new lover is being so restrictive with her, Gamahir responded “no, he is just of the dominant type, rawr!”

The night after the June 30th demonstrations, a video filmed and ‘directed’ by film director Khalid Yusuf (who identifies as a Nasserist) featuring aerial projections of the demonstrations was used to claim that this was the largest demonstration Egypt had ever witnessed and to justify the army’s intervention (allegedly on the side of these masses). Despite Yusuf’s intentions, the film works as a perfect satire for the relationship between the army and the masses, or for how the army and the dominant military ideology see the masses. Shot from an army helicopter, the film shows the masses from a military vantage point, *distant, small and below*, lending support to the army *above*. The masses, though celebrated, were literally and metaphorically *looked down upon*. The distance also served to show the masses as one homogenous unit (presumably wanting the army to interfere) effacing the differences in factions, those who joined out of spite for the Brothers but not necessarily to ask for military intervention, those who wanted a liberal regime, and those who wanted neither the Brothers nor the military to rule.

Read as a mode of interpellation, this footage performs a double- somehow paradoxical- function. Inviting the audience to see themselves (as the people of Egypt, the supporters of the military regime, members of the national masses) through the vantage point of a military helicopter, the footage fixes the military as the seeing Subject, the valid national subject position, while presenting the people with the self-image of a not-fully-formed subject: not properly individual, only existing through the point of view of the military, and only acquiring agency through military agency (indeed, a self *in the third person*, and only in the third person plural). The distance between subject and Subject, necessary for the Althusserian mode of interpellation,⁸¹¹

⁸¹¹ See Introduction.

is highlighted, emphasized, and augmented, producing the redeemable, though not fully redeemed, national masses or not fully formed subjects on the side of the former, and the army, the military man, and ultimately ‘Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi as the latter.

Apparently the Nasserist director of the footage wanted to re-enact the populist Nasserist moment where the masses were redeemed through their relationship to the army. Yet, something is radically different between the two moments; the proximity between the army and the people in the Nasser rhetoric is transformed into distance in Yusuf’s footage. Whereas Nasserist propaganda typically invited an almost complete identification between the people and the army (as we saw with how the term *al-ahrar, the free*, conflated the free people of Egypt with the Free Officers), sometimes even between the people and Nasir – “you are all Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir” the latter thrice proclaimed in a famous speech (allegedly after being shot at by a member of the Muslim Brothers),⁸¹² for Khalid Yusuf’s footage and other works of pro-Sisi propaganda, maintaining the distance between the people and the leader, between the army and the masses, was necessary. Propaganda songs glorified the army and *looked up* to it (as it was slaughtering the opposition) but never invited a full identification with it. Al-Sisi was identified *as* the model leader, the model subject, *kin* to the nation (maternal cousin to *Gamahir*), cathected with erotic investment by masculine and feminine men alike and by women, promoted as the model male subject, but never identified with.

These ideological representations/expositions of the relationship between the

⁸¹² See “Khitab al-Ra’is ‘Abd al-Nasir fi Maydan al-Manshiyyah bi al-Iskandariyyah bi Munasabat ‘Id al-Jala’ (Hadithat al-Manshiyyah), 26/10/1954,” in *Mawqi’ al-Ra’is Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir*, <http://nasser.bibalex.org/Speeches/browser.aspx?SID=263>

army and the masses reveal the distribution and organization of space into good and bad, proper and licentious, a century and a few decades after this organization was inaugurated by colonialism and the nascent (colonial) state. The effect is not simply the opposition between the licentious crowd (standing for and roaming the licentious spaces) and the proper army (standing for and spreading the proper State) – this point has already been established in Chapter 1. What we see here is the army, standing next to – or atop of- the masses, simultaneously highlighting the (potential) licentiousness of the crowds and producing them as redeemable through this curious relationship with the military. This relationship promotes and sustains an identification and erotic cathexis with the figure and imago of the military man as the ego ideal, as the Althusserian Subject to the national subjects being formed. Despite the differences in modes of identification and in representations of the relationship and hierarchy between the masses and the army, what the Nasserist propaganda and the 2013 representations have in common is positing a proper and respectable version of the crowds (which I have been intentionally referring to as the masses, to distinguish it from the crowd as a space of licentiousness), made possible through a proximity to the army and its values. In 2013 – perhaps because of the distance between the subject and the military imago, the subject and Subject (in Althusserian terms), the redeemability of the masses seemed contingent, as its potential relapse into the licentious crowd is always imminent (perhaps due to the recent memory of the 2011 events). Gamahir’s skit exposed the fragility of this identification-redemption, showing how, in a dominant military ideology, underneath the venerated masses, there is still the licentious body, the crowd. The outcry against the skit can be thus interpreted as denial and resistance to this exposition; perhaps the crowds in rebellion in 2011, or the crowds under Muhammad Mursi's rule, were licentious, but the

venerated masses, the ones that marched under army tutelage, raised the army to power, and thus became the national masses par excellence, the personification of Egypt, could never be licentious.

Although the phenomenon of attempting to recuperate the crowds/masses through the curious relationship with the army slightly differs from the attempt to turn the charge of licentiousness back to the West, we have not departed from the running theme of Western models of subjectivity, propriety, and proper spaces pervading Egyptian discourse through various modes of *cultural imposition*. Nor have we departed from the Fanonian explication of the colonial trauma: in his explication of the *cultural imposition* of Western modes of subjectivity in the colony Fanon posits militarization as one of these modes, which he ties to subjectivation through the parallel familial figure of authority, the father in the bourgeois nuclear family.⁸¹³ “Militarization and a centralized authority in a country,” Fanon notes, before he goes on to explicate the Western specific nature of Oedipal subjectivation, “automatically result in a resurgence of the father’s authority.”⁸¹⁴ Indeed, throughout this study, militarization and the family have appeared as modes of proper subjectivation, antithetical and antidotal to the licentious crowd, and the authority figures of both (the military general, the father) as proper Subjects through which subjects are produced and/or interpellated. In the next chapter we will examine more closely the *cultural imposition* of the family and the military in Egypt and how both oppose the licentious space and comprise proper spaces.

⁸¹³ Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 120- 121.

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Chapter 5

The *Cultural Imposition* of Proper Spaces

Two Model Proper Spaces: The Family and the Army

Throughout this study, licentious space emerged in opposition to or in a dialectical relationship with the proper space sanctioned by the State; it was sometimes posited as a threat to or neutralized and/or redeemed by proper spaces. In contrast to licentious subjects ensconced within licentious spaces, proper spaces host, foster, and produce good and proper subjects exhibiting proper behavior and upright allegiance to the State—sometimes to the extent of recuperating bad subjects who willingly heed their call and exit licentious space. The State sanctions these spaces as proper, and delegates to them the task of incubating good subjects, monitoring their behavior, and upholding their good subjectivity.

Two institutions that have so far recurred in the various archives this study consulted with as the other of licentious space are the family and the army. In the early 20th century, these two institutions appeared in various journalistic and other sources, side by side, sometimes only a few pages apart, as the embodiment and paragon of good subjectivity, producers of good norms and good subjects, and pillars of the nascent nation. The concern with strengthening both the army and the family dominated Egyptian nationalist thought of the time. This remained the case in the late 20th century, wherein the army (and to a lesser extent the police) was depicted as the highest embodiment of Egyptian nationalism, and wherein the family was depicted as the custodian of national values, the incubator of national subjects, and the guard against extremism, Satanism, political activism, and other modes of bad subjectivity.

This remained the case in the post-2011 moment, when the unruly behavior of the ‘revolutionaries’, especially women, was attributed to bad or absent parenting, and whereby the confrontation between the licentious revolutionary and the proper army/army-man played a prominent role in media representations and official state ideology. In this chapter I aim to chart the key moments in the history of these oppositions, and of the emergence of the family and the army as model proper spaces. Concluding our account of licentious spaces with a brief account of the proper spaces, their rise, their *cultural imposition*, and the ideological role they play, will enrich our understanding of the opposition between licentious spaces/bad subjects and the modes of proper subjectivity.

This running concern with the family and the army, however, presents a departure from the archive of the first wave of Egyptian nationalism (i.e. the ‘Urabi movement), wherein militarism played a less significant role (despite the military background of its leaders and the military nature of its government), and which showed no interest whatsoever in *reforming* or *strengthening* the family. That the family and, to a lesser extent, the army, or militarism proper, were not of concern in 1882 but became so in the 1900s in the wake of the British invasion gestures toward a colonial role in inventing, re-modeling, transforming, inciting concern in, and/or strengthening these institutions. The colonial nature of these two institutions as colonial effects of the British invasion will be our focal point.

Whereas these two institutions appear all of a sudden in the 20th century archive of Egyptian nationalism, their emergence and later recurrence were anticipated and further supported by a plethora of colonization-modernization policies—the same policies that made the organization of space possible. Many of these policies were fashioned in accordance with a military paradigm; the army

presented a model of discipline and order, based on which the new polity and the whole society were to be structured.⁸¹⁵ Similarly, many of the policies redefining space, re-organizing practices related to space, and especially those re-designing households, aimed to produce a space for nuclear families modeled on the European domestic, and in the process erasing pre-colonial formations (particularly the extended family).⁸¹⁶ This transformation of space was followed, in the early 20th century, by important ideological transformations that sustained the *cultural imposition* of the two institutions. I will first examine these transformations and their lasting effect through the lens of the family and then move to examining them in relation to the army, its fraught history and contentious relationship with colonialism.

Many of the colonial interventions in the field of the family were designed for the purpose of bringing the family, along with the members and practices it hosts, within the fold of the State and under its gaze— for example through designing homes in a manner that makes it easier for the state to count family members and establish their respective position in the family network,⁸¹⁷ and through mandating the registration of marriages and births with state institutions. The role of the modern family (the precondition of the domestic) in exposing the intimate lives of the subjects of the State may seem paradoxical given the liberal myth that the domestic is the

⁸¹⁵ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 34- 62.

⁸¹⁶ See Mitchell's discussion of the "model housing" British colonialism tried to impose on the Egyptian countryside; Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 44- 48. Although this 'model housing' was not successfully applied, it simply presents an extreme *model* of what modern urban planning already prescribed. For how the urban transformation from larger houses to apartments catalyzed the transformation of marriage and of the family, see Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*, 6-7. Cuno further discusses the demise of the 'joint household' in urban settings (to the extent that it is now imagined as something exclusively rural) and how it affected marriage practices, 67- 76. For how the change in housing patterns compartmentalized the extended family (into nuclear units) see pp. 207- 209.

⁸¹⁷ See *ibid.*

realm of the private, shielded from the gaze of the public and the intervention of the State. The subsequent account of the family, however, will dispel this myth, showing how even the *domestic* and the *private* are key domains of state intervention and recognition.⁸¹⁸ The modern family, the family that is sanctioned by the State to organize the intimate lives of its subjects and make these lives transparent to the State, stands in opposition to the *indescribable orgy*. The family is monogamous whereas the orgy is the antithesis of monogamy. The family is a structure that forms under the gaze of the State and renders mating and reproductive habits legible to it, whereas the orgy unfolds beyond the State's gaze (to the extent that the State cannot ascertain beyond doubt whether orgiastic activities are sexual, leaving the matter to the imagination of state ideologues and propagandists). In opposition to collectivities that constitute crowds, *indescribable orgies*, and licentious spaces, the family produces individual members, endows them with individual names, accords them individual positions in its structure of kinship, and thus facilitates state-recognition and the interpellation of the resulting offspring as individual subjects.⁸¹⁹

To play this role as a proxy for the gaze of the State, or as an ideological state apparatus, the Egyptian family needed to be transformed into something nuclear, ideally monogamous, legible to the State and sanctioned by it. This ideological and social transformation was supported by a number of legal transformations: bringing

⁸¹⁸ To offer the theoretical groundwork for dispelling this myth, one may turn to Antonio Gramsci's theorization of the *civil society* and the *private sphere* (including the family) as parts of the State and realms of the hegemony of the dominant classes; see Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith, (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 12-16, 206- 278. The Althusserian conception of the ideological state apparatuses – which include the family, presented as a paradigmatic example of the ideological State apparatuses in his famous essay on the matter- derives from the Gramscian conception of civil society.

⁸¹⁹ See the discussion of the role of the family, as an ideological State apparatus, in defining the position of and interpellating the subjects of the State even before they are born, in Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," 119- 120. See also his unique formulation of "living and bearing children as culture in human culture" in his "Freud and Lacan," 140.

Shari‘ah and shar‘i courts within the fold of the state, inventing the category of *personal status* (originally a category of French law) as a category of Egyptian law and the domain to which the state applies shari‘ah,⁸²⁰ it was further solidified (and *codified*) through a number of laws regulating marriage, most notably Law no. 56 for the year 1923 and Law no. 78 for the year 1931, which mandated that all marriages must be registered with the State.⁸²¹ The new family and the new marital practices that inaugurate it were further sustained by an ideological offensive that promoted the nuclear monogamous family as *the* model family,⁸²² the place where national subjects are produced,⁸²³ and the building block of the nation⁸²⁴—at the expense of all other

⁸²⁰ See Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*, 158- 184. See also Massad, *Islam in Liberalism*, 188- 194.

⁸²¹ For a discussion of these laws and their ideological effect, see Hanan Kholoussy, “Nationalizing Marriage,” in *Re-envisioning Egypt 1919-1952*, ed. Arthur Goldschmidt, Amy J. Johnson, Barak A. Salmoni, (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2005), 317- 350. See also Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse: The Marriage Crisis that made Modern Egypt*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 5- 10, 94- 99. See also the discussion in Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*, 123- 204, esp. 183- 184.

⁸²² For a thorough analysis of this ideological offensive see Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*. In the first chapter Cuno shows how the ruling dynasty epitomized this new ideology through upholding monogamy (to the extent that the polygamy of ‘Abbas Hilmi II was kept away from the spotlights); 19- 44. This trend, according to Cuno, was introduced by Khedive Tawfiq, whom Cuno identifies as “Egypt’s first monogamous ruler,” 19. It is no coincidence, one may add, that this is the same Tawfiq who acted as the agent of British imperialism and effectively invited British troops into Egypt. The tenure of this ideological offensive in early 20th century Egyptian discourse is explored in *ibid*, 77- 122. Another thorough account of the ideological debate around marriage and how it became a national(ist) issue is provided in Hanan Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse: the Marriage Crisis that Made Modern Egypt*. It is also important here to keep in mind Althusser’s argument that this nuclear family is made in the image of, and stands in a subject-Subject relationship to, ‘the Holy Family’, thus investing the family with a ‘holy essence’ that enables its role as an ideological State apparatus; Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus,” 122.

⁸²³ For a telling example of how Egyptian nationalists, as early as 1903, believed that good subjects are only produced within the Western family, and through Western modes of mothering (while denouncing indigenous mothering as not conducive to good subjectivity that produces “children of alleys and of coincidence”) see “Madha Yajib ‘ala Ummah Faqadat Madrasat al-Umm?” *Al-Liwa’*, 17/8/1903, 1.

⁸²⁴ See “al-‘A‘ilah,” *al-Liwa’*, 19/8/1901, 1- though in this particular example, unlike other examples presented throughout this section, the author, identified as “an author among the greatest,” implicitly blames British colonization for undermining family values in Egypt. See also the discussion in Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse*, esp. 106, 126, where Kholoussy highlights not only the ideological representation of the family as the building block of the nation but also its role in producing national

familial and conjugal formations. The colonial and state-sponsored struggle to impose the modern family, whether in the early or the late 20th century, was largely a struggle over the nature of marriage and divorce. In line with 18th and 19th century European bourgeois and Victorian ideals, marriage was to be dissociated from pleasure and restricted to the formation of families that would ideally resemble their European middle class counterparts: nuclear, monogamous, and permanent. As such, both polygyny and divorce were to be abhorred, as they defeated the very purpose of modern marriage.

Colonizing the Family

When the British came to Egypt, the indigenous conjugal and matrimonial practices, as evidenced by various pronouncements on the subject, appalled them:⁸²⁵ both marriage and divorce were easy, a man could marry many women, whether at once or over the course of time, whereas women were able to marry many men over the course of time (though not at once); families were not nuclear but extended, and lacked the compulsory impetus to be permanent- contrary to the modern Western-Christian model that the purpose of marriage should be to form families rather than to fulfill sexual pleasure, and contrary to the modern ideological and legal norms in Northern and Western Europe – not to mention the older European Christian regime, which left little space for divorce. In Britain, divorce was not legalized until the early

subjects, including the literal production of offspring as legal subjects “in legal and socially acceptable unions,” *ibid*, 126.

⁸²⁵ See for example Lord Cromer’s appallment at Islamic easy divorce and his championing of a reinterpretation of Islam that would make divorce more difficult in Evelyn Baring Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, (London: Macmillan, 1908), 158- 159. This appallment appears in the context of his denunciation of various indigenous matrimonial practices including polygamy (157- 159). See also the various examples and analyses provided in Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse*, esp. 79, 82- 83.

19th century and even then it became a contentious issue.⁸²⁶ In France, the French Revolution legalized divorce, but the Bourbon Reaction outlawed it again in 1816, and it was not legalized again until 1884.⁸²⁷ Divorce also played a role in the debates surrounding the Paris Commune, both as a demand put forward by the revolutionaries (especially the female contingent), and as an ideological tool to malign and delegitimize the revolutionaries and add an aura of license to the depiction of revolutionary women.⁸²⁸ The anxiety of Western conservative forces regarding the question of divorce was not only on account of the disdain they felt toward sexual pleasure and their need to restrict marriage to the formation of families rather than to sexual consummation, but was furthermore and foremost about the permanence of social contracts. In his comprehensive (albeit brief) study of the history of French divorce laws, Samuel Stoljar noted how “a Christian union between man and woman became part of a divinely established *order*, as permanent in its own way as the world and God were permanent in theirs”⁸²⁹ (emphasis added), in other words, to the same *order* we identified in Chapter 1 as underlying (some of) the mythologies of the State. The debate over divorce was thus a politicized debate, wherein not only the Church

⁸²⁶ For an interesting overview of the contentiousness of the issue of divorce in Victorian England, which approaches the issue through the writings and career of Charles Dickens, see Neslihan Günaydin, “The Dilemma of Marriage in Dickens’ *David Copperfield*,” *The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies*, 27 (Autumn 2014): 541- 552. See also Hem Raj Bansal “‘No Way Out’: Issues of Marriage and Divorce in Dickens’s *Hard Times*,” *Spring Magazine on English Literature* 2, no.1 (2016), <http://www.springmagazine.net/divorce-in-dickens-hard-times>.

⁸²⁷ For a brief overview of the struggle over divorce in France, and how it was part of the struggle between the Revolution and the counterrevolution, see Samuel Stoljar, “A History of the French Law of Divorce – 1,” *International Journal of Law and the Family* 3 (1989): 137- 159. The article also offers a glimpse (though not a thorough discussion) into how divorce was associated with primitiveness (140).

⁸²⁸ See Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 111- 114, 224. See also the counterrevolutionary cartoon in which female communards are depicted as “a club of Amazons” debating divorce laws, Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 115, fig.14.

⁸²⁹ *Ibid*, 139.

but largely the supporters of monarchy championed the permanence of all contracts (whether between sovereign and subject or between man and wife), whereas revolutionaries and supporters of the Republic championed the right to divorce which they rooted in the larger right to abolish contract, which in turn they rooted in the newfound concept of *individual liberty*.⁸³⁰ It was for this reason that the French Revolution understood marriage to be terminable and divorce to be permissible, and for which one of its earliest legal reforms (as early as 1792) was to allow divorce (citing the notion of *individual liberty*). For the same reasons, one of the first *reactions* of the Bourbon Restoration was to re-outlawed divorce.⁸³¹

Appalled by indigenous marriage practices, especially polygyny and the ease with which marriage and divorce were conducted (which effectively led not only to polygyny but also to serial female polyandry), the British colonizers sought to transform marriage practices as part of their mission to transform Egypt. It fell to the British colonizers to write about the subject with Orientalist/ethnographic disdain and to draft laws to regulate it, but to Egyptian authors to carry out the requisite ideological work, and so they did. Egyptian nationalists, even the ones of the anti-colonial variety, spearheaded an ideological campaign to transform marriage practices along colonial lines, to repudiate divorce,⁸³² and to depict the permanent nuclear family as the model social formation and the quintessential building bloc of the

⁸³⁰ See *ibid* esp. 141.

⁸³¹ *Ibid*.

⁸³² For the centrality of divorce in these debates, see Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse*, 77- 98 and Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*, 151, 199.

modern nation.⁸³³ Among the proponents of reforming the family and marriage was none other than *al-Liwa'* newspaper, whose fierce anti-colonial and pan-Islamic sentiments did not inoculate it against coding its ideological campaign in terms of disdain for indigenous and Islamic marriage and divorce practices.

A most emblematic article of this discourse, the ideology behind it, its colonial biases, its disdain for local practices, and its modernist-colonialist agenda, in short, of *cultural imposition* appeared in *al-Liwa'* on 12/1/1904 under the telling title “al-Zawaj fi al-Sharq” [Marriage in the Orient], written by their Alexandria reporter. The article opens with the dramatic proclamation that “in most of the Oriental countries/regions, marriage has become a form of commerce (*tijarah*): you seldom find a couple who joined together (*iqtarana*) due to mere compassion between them” الزواج في أغلب الأقطار الشرقية تجارة أو سببها فلا تجد اثنين اقترنا لمحض ائتلاف بينهما إلا فيما ندر. This enchantment with the Western ideal/myth of the romantic couple and companionate marriage⁸³⁴ soon fades into the background in order to allow divorce to take centre

⁸³³ On the Westerner’s horror at the ease of divorce in Muslim societies and how it played a role in shaping the attitudes of modernist Egyptian thinkers and legislators, see Hanan Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse*, 79, 82- 83. After explaining the civilizational anxieties of some of the “modernists” who concerned themselves with marriage and the alleged rise of divorce, Kholoussy’s critique becomes particularly scathing: “they appropriated colonial notions about the inherently fickle nature of Egyptian men,” 85. See also the discussion in Kenneth Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*, 20.

⁸³⁴ For how the *ideal* of companionate marriage played a role in the family and marriage ideology of the 19th and early 20th century and in transforming family and marriage along colonial and modernist lines in colonial Egypt, see Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*, 20, 44- 48, 76- 78, 100- 114. Although Cuno’s analysis reveals the tension between the companionate component of modern marriage, and the domestic component which served to contain and subdue women within the modern household (in Egypt and Iran, as Cuno notes, as if this is singular to these two countries; see his rushed paraphrase of Afsaneh Najmabadi on p. 122), one point that remains un-elaborated is the ideological, sometimes mythical, nature of this *companionate* component. While modern, Western, bourgeois marriage marketed itself as companionate, the model household was predicated on containing women in the domestic rather than providing them with a companionate status (something we have already encountered in the anti-Commune anxiety about revolutionary women and their straying away from the domestic where they belonged in the dominant ideology of the time). The ideological mythology of companionate marriage can be easily dispelled by taking a glance at *A Tale of Two Cities*, wherein

stage. *Al-Liwa*'s reporter identifies the ease with which divorce is conducted "in the Orient" (i.e. in Islamic Shari'ah) as the reason not only behind the "parting of ways" [al-firaq] among couples, but also behind rushed marriages. After denouncing the "Oriental" ease of contracting marriage and dissolving it through divorce, the reporter then prescribed making both marriage and divorce more difficult, and although he did not suggest outright the outlawing of divorce, he found it to be a matter worthy of emulation: "criminalizing divorce is one of the strongest incentives for couples to think about/assess their situation before concluding a [marriage] contract." إن تجريم الطلاق يعد من أكبر البواعث لشدة بحث الزوجين في أمرهما قبل التعاقد بينهما

After implicitly suggesting (or admiring) the criminalization of divorce, the reporter fell back on calling for finding ways to make divorce difficult, all the while identifying easy divorce as an Oriental vice that led Orientals to ruin and dishonor/shame (in awkward Arabic phrasing, suggesting that the reporter might have thought in French while writing the article in Arabic, or that he was attempting to hide his call to criminalize divorce behind ambiguous phrasing).⁸³⁵

This avoidance, limiting, and/or outlawing of divorce, according to the logic of *al-Liwa*'s Alexandria reporter, is bound to lead not only to a decline in the breaking up of couples and families, but also to a decline in non-pre-meditated and easy

the ideal bourgeois unit is the Manette-Darnay household whereby Lucie acts as a subservient wife and mother, a veritable Victorian "angel in the house," whereas the companionate Therese and Earnest Defarge constitute a couple that was too revolutionary, too subversive, and too radical, especially due to the ability of Therese Defarge to walk out on her husband and thus to bypass his moderation and commit tragic acts of hubris (which eventually bring her downfall).

⁸³⁵ The full sentence reads: إن تجريم الطلاق يعد من أكبر البواعث لشدة بحث الزوجين في أمرهما قبل التعاقد بينهما فكيف نفعل نحن معشر الشرقيين أمرا جديرا بالاعتبار كهذا والطلاق أقرب الأمور لدينا بل إن الإفراط في الأخذ به قد سار بنا إلى هاوية الدمار ومنتهى العار. جاء في الحديث الشريف إن أبغض الحلال عند الله الطلاق فما الداعي إذا لإهمالنا أمر التوصل لتجنبه لكي تعيش عائلتنا في بحبوحة الهناء

marriages, as it deterred youngsters from rushing into marrying (the fact that these easy nuptials were allowed, nay sometimes encouraged, in Islamic thought notwithstanding). Limiting divorce would also paradoxically lead to a decline in divorce lawsuits and court cases; it was left unexplained, however, how this would be the case. One would expect a limiting of divorce to lead to an increase, not a decrease, in divorce-related lawsuits, as the more difficult divorce would be made, the more likely that dysfunctional couples would take their problems to the courts. The author perhaps thought that lawsuits would decline because these marriages would not be contracted in the first place (which was most likely based on the unsubstantiated assumption that a rushed marriage would necessarily or likely end in divorce while a pre-meditated one would not). The author, however, seemed less interested in the wellbeing of the couple and more in the civilizational appearance (before the colonial gaze); when describing divorce lawsuits, he found them “bizarre and embarrassing (*gharibah mukhjilah*).”⁸³⁶ Although the author did not specify to whom it would be “embarrassing,” it is easy to infer a colonial civilizational gaze before which the educated/colonized native would be embarrassed by his compatriots. If *al-Liwa*’s reporter was silent on the colonial-civilizational gaze before which divorce would be embarrassing, a later nationalist writer, Ahmad al-Sawi, who was a French-educated journalist, was explicit about the civilizational and classist nature of this sense of shame and embarrassment. After ascribing easy marriages and divorces to the lower classes (unlike the “enlightened classes” which “hesitate before marrying”), al-Sawi

⁸³⁶ “al-Zawaj fi al-Sharq,” *al-Liwa*’, 12/1/1904, 1. Cf. Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse*, 90: Kholoussy convincingly turns these court debates, shameful in the eyes of colonized modernists, into signs of female agency.

proclaimed: “If Parisians heard about what happens every day amongst us ... their mouths would drop open in astonishment.”⁸³⁷

Although the article in *al-Liwa's* appealed to a discredited Prophetic tradition proclaiming divorce to be the “most detested to God of all that He sanctioned,”⁸³⁸ the colonial biases of the article were unmistakable (nor did the reporter try to mask them). As is obvious from the above exposition, the article showed disdain for indigenous practices of marriage and divorce (identified as Oriental and condemned as leading to ruin and dishonor/shame). The article also expressed admiration for Western-Christian models whereby marriage was conceived as a complicated affair and divorce was not easily accessible (or sometimes completely inaccessible). *Al-Liwa's* argument presented number of Orientalist stereotypes including that of the Easterner who followed his or her whims in opposition to the calculating Westerner.⁸³⁹ The calls to reform marriage, to deter un-pre-meditated marriages, and to make divorce difficult were made, early on in the article, on the authority of *sahib usul al-Shara'i* (lit. the author of the fundamentals of *shara'i* – laws, theories of jurisprudence, etc.). *Sahib Usual al-Shara'i* is none other than Jeremy Bentham, and *Usul al-Shara'i* is the title of Ahmad Fathi Zaghlul's translation of Bentham's *An*

⁸³⁷ Qtd. in Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse*, 81- 83.

⁸³⁸ It is not relevant, of course, as far as this study is concerned, whether the *hadith* is authentic or not, whether it was uttered by the Prophet or fabricated by narrators. What is relevant, however, is how this *hadith* was discredited by scholars and was never a relevant object of discourse until the transformation of Muslim societies along colonial lines in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; in other words the power relations, ideologies, and paradigms that discredited this tradition until the end of the 19th century or alternatively resurrected and reinstated it in the 20th century. For a discussion of the authenticity, relevance, and interpretation of the hadith, see “Darajat Hadith Abghad al-Halal ila Allah al-Talaq,” Islamweb, <http://fatwa.islamweb.net/fatwa/index.php?page=showfatwa&Option=Fatwald&Id=158875>, and “Rutbat Hadith Abghad al-Halal ila Allah al-Talaq,” Islamweb, <http://fatwa.islamweb.net/fatwa/index.php?page=showfatwa&Option=Fatwald&Id=182459>

⁸³⁹ Like the nationalists whom Kholoussy chastises, *al-Liwa's* Alexandria reporter “appropriated colonial notions about the inherently fickle nature of Egyptian men.”

Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation.⁸⁴⁰ The irony here is not only that a newspaper with anti-colonial standpoints and pan-Islamist/Ottomanist leanings used the writings of a British social thinker to supplant – to the effect of complete erasure— indigenous and Islamic practices, but also that *al-Liwa'* cited a translation by its arch-enemy Ahmad Fathi Zaghlul (whose role as a colonial functionary was discussed in Chapter 3, and who was repeatedly attacked alongside his famous brother, Sa'd Zaghlul, as agents of British imperialism). The words of the colonial reformer via the colonial functionary become, according to the article “pearls of wisdom [belonging to/addressed to] a nation who knew the meaning of life, and we are worthy of following it” (hence adding the Orientalist and colonialist stereotype of a lively West versus an East that is dead or not worthy of living, and that of a knowledgeable West able to discern ‘the meaning of life’ versus an East that only lives haphazardly). Opposed to the colonial pearls of wisdom, Muslim scholars were heading, according to the article, to an abyss, and taking with them the entire Egyptian community. The article ended with an appeal to writers to “delve into the matter” (i.e. to carry out the ideological campaign of *cultural imposition*, to transform marriage and the family along colonial lines).⁸⁴¹

⁸⁴⁰ Of course this is an unfaithful rendering of the thought of Jeremy Bentham, who went as far as proposing short term marriages which would have scandalized Cromer and his Egyptian disciples. Cf. Mary Sokol, “Jeremy Bentham on Love and Marriage: A Utilitarian Proposal for Short-Term Marriage,” *The Journal of Legal History* 30, no.1 (March 2009): 1- 21.

⁸⁴¹ An earlier noteworthy effort in the battle of the *cultural imposition* of Western marriage comes in Qasim Amin 1901 book *The New Woman* (wherein Amin took the paradoxical position of simultaneously championing Christian marriage and women’s right to divorce). I decided to focus on *al-Liwa'*’s article instead of Amin’s work in the main text for two reasons. First, it comes with no surprise that the clients of British colonialism and the friends of Lord Cromer (including Amin and Muhammad Abduh who was rumored to have served as a ghost-writer for *The New Woman* and who endorsed similar views that promoted the *cultural imposition* of Western marriage) repudiated indigenous practices and looked up to the practices of their British masters. When we establish, however, that even the anti-colonial nationalists adopted this position, the scale of *cultural imposition* is better appreciated. Second, Amin was over-studied whereas *al-Liwa'* was not. For an analysis of the

This article comes as part of a litany of articles turning indigenous marriage practices into objects of public scrutiny, and often into objects of denunciation. *Al-Liwa*'s purpose was not merely modernization; a more direct material and opportunist purpose was also in play. Later in 1904, one of *al-Liwa*'s adversaries, al-Shaykh 'Ali Yusuf, the editor-in-chief of *al-Mu'ayyad* (which competed with *al-Liwa*' for khedival patronage) was involved in a divorce lawsuit that brought the issue of marriage and divorce to the centre of public discourse (partly through the heavy coverage *al-Liwa*' dedicated to the lawsuit). 'Ali Yusuf was betrothed-to-be-wed to a much younger noble woman named Safiyyah, the daughter of the notable *al-Shaykh al-Sadat*.⁸⁴² The latter, though initially consenting to the betrothal, kept delaying the conclusion of the nuptials. In response, the couple eloped. The angry father retaliated by filing a lawsuit against his new son-in-law, demanding the marriage contract be declared void. The court hearings (which were highly publicized, mainly through *al-Liwa*'), scrutinized the conditions under which the marriage contract was conducted, the compatibility of the spouses, and ultimately the legality of the contract, further inciting a public discourse on marriage and divorce as objects of State and public scrutiny and targets for the State's legal intervention.⁸⁴³

role of Qasim Amin in the colonial attempts to transform nationalism, marriage, and Islam see Joseph Massad, *Islam in Liberalism*, 85-86, 117, 197.

⁸⁴² Both Safiyyah al-Sadat and her father were considered *nobles* or *notables* not only because of their high economic and social status but furthermore because of the belief that their family descended from the Prophet.

⁸⁴³ See for example *al-Liwa*' 28/7/1904, 1, 3/8/1904, 1, 4/8/1904 (where the letters to the editor section is dedicated to attacking 'Ali Yusuf, one of which laments how men "seduce noble women through marrying them"—as if there were any other purpose for marriage. Evidently, in addition to the obvious class element, this is part of the attempt to dissociate marriage from pleasure and fix it to other formations including the family, the law, and the class system), 6/8/1904 (with more court details), 7/8/1904 (which constitutes an open-season on 'Ali Yusuf), 10/8/1904, 1, 11/8/1904, 1-3. Kenneth Cuno rightly notes that what is novel about this incident is not that Safiyyah al-Sadat married herself off without her father's consent, but rather the discourse it generated; Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*, 94.

This is not to argue that the case of ‘Ali Yusuf single-handedly *incited* the discourse on marriage as a State affair. Rather, it served as a point of articulation and further incitement for a transformation that had already been under way since the late 19th century (if not earlier), a product of the emergent biopolitical state concerned with the reproductive habits of its subjects, and accessing these subjects and their reproduction (their very biological reproduction, let alone their re-production as subjects) through official documents and *statistical* figures. The novelty of the debate on marriage and divorce notwithstanding, these biopolitical transformations were already underway; the nascent biopolitical state had already been striving to bring conjugal and reproductive practices within the fold and gaze of the State since the 19th century. The biopolitical state, though a colonial imposition, found at its disposal traditions within Islamic thought that favored the documentation of marriages (especially the Hanafi school, from which Egyptian ‘personal status’ law is derived). According to Kenneth Cuno, by the end of the 19th century the legal transformations that Egypt witnessed gave credence to and capitalized on this tradition of documentation: “the Hanafization of the courts had a significant impact as a result of the second major aspect of the procedural laws, namely the encouragement and, eventually, requirement of the use of documentary evidence in legal proceedings, including family matters.”⁸⁴⁴ The state created its prop, the *ma’dhun* (lit. the permitted, sanctioned, or delegated, meaning the person delegated by the State to officiate and register marriages and divorces), often dressed him in religious garb, and through this figure and his religious exoskeleton, the State was able to interfere in the formation

⁸⁴⁴ Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage*, 124.

and the annulment of marriages.⁸⁴⁵ Even before registering marriages became mandatory, the set of legal transformations more than encouraged it: “By the turn of the twentieth century civil registration of marriage and divorce was all but required, as the courts would not hear any claims regarding marriage or divorce that were not supported by official documents.”⁸⁴⁶ Marriage was no longer a private or communal affair, a contract (oral or written) between two people or two families, but a matter of public scrutiny, a site for legal intervention, and an exclusive domain of state power, now invited through its judiciary to sanction or nullify marriage contracts. These transformations were codified, in the 1920s and through 1931, into the set of laws bringing marriage, divorce, and the family to the fold of the state, and making mandatory the official registration of marriages, divorces, and births.⁸⁴⁷ Marriages not sanctioned by or registered with the State from then on were referred to as ‘*urfi* or *customary* marriages.⁸⁴⁸ Marriages that did not produce nuclear monogamous families on the Western model, and marriages that evaded the gaze of the voyeuristic State became forms of license that the State and the bourgeois morality it embodies could no longer tolerate. Since then, the State, mainly (but not exclusively) through its

⁸⁴⁵ See *ibid.*

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁷ For a discussion of these laws see Kholoussy, “Nationalizing Marriage.”

⁸⁴⁸ It is important to note how the bringing of marriage to the fold of the State makes it possible to identify other types of marriage as *customary*. Before State intervention, all marriages were *customary*, or ‘*urfi*. It is ironic that for the Egyptian middle class the term ‘*urfi* has developed a scandalous ring, although the term ‘*urf* means custom, good practice, or common practice (and is referenced by the Qur’an as one of the sources of good governance). ‘*Urfi* is also the term the ‘*Urabists* used for the council of intellectuals (including religious scholars), politicians, and army men which assumed power and declared the Khedive a rebel and a traitor. ‘*Urfi* in that context served to highlight the popular and religious appeal this council sought to achieve. It also shows the revolutionary potential of the ‘*urfi/customary* as something that lies outside and has the potential to challenge the official State.

ideological apparatus, was engaged in a struggle against ‘*urfi*’/“customary” and other non-state-sanctioned forms of marriages.

Licentious Matrimonies

Forms of marriage not sanctioned by the state: customary contracts, ephemeral and short term nuptials, serial marriages, polygamous arrangements, underage marriages, in short, marriages that do not subscribe to the modern colonial ideals of marriage and the family, persist to the present as a problem in pro-State representations (a century after the inauguration of the effort for their *cultural imposition* and seven decades after the withdrawal of British troops) —*jihad al-nikah*⁸⁴⁹ being the latest incarnation of these licentious matrimonies. It is as if the State’s ideological apparatus continues to be engaged in the struggle to bring marriage within the fold of the State. It is either that these kinds of marriages were practiced in orgiastic spaces, thus contributing to their production as orgiastic and licentious and as a problem for State power, or conversely that as State-sanctioned modern marriages became the spaces where good subjects are produced, bad subjects can only be imagined to be produced by licentious matrimonies, thus making these kinds of para-state marriages readily available as a tool in the hands of pro-regime propagandists to discredit enemies of the State.

As we saw earlier in Chapter 2, the horror at licentious marriages (undocumented, frequent, and polygamous) played a central role in the propaganda against Islamist organizations— bear in mind Sabir Shawkat’s denunciation of these undocumented marriages as the worst of the Islamists’ practices (worse, therefore,

⁸⁴⁹ See Chapter 1.

than terror, killing, and looting). At one point Shawkat went to the extent of describing these marriages as kinds of “relationships that no religion or society on the face of earth would approve of”⁸⁵⁰ (of course he neglected to add: *except for Islam*). The absence of certification in these licentious nuptials led, according to the account given by Shawkat and explored in Chapter 2, to a suspect form of polygamy of which not only men but also women partook.

The campaign against undocumented marriages in the 1990s was not limited, however, to anti-Islamist propaganda. *Ruz al-Yusuf*, which spearheaded anti-Islamist propaganda, was simultaneously engaged in a campaign against all forms of licentious matrimones, whether practiced in underground and insurgent Islamist organizations in the form described earlier, by university students in the form of customary marriage,⁸⁵¹ in Iran and other Shi‘i majority countries in the form of mut‘ah⁸⁵² (a temporary marriage contract endorsed by some Islamic schools of jurisprudence, especially by the school of Twlever Shi‘ism, but denounced by others), or customary and underage marriages in the Egyptian countryside.⁸⁵³ These forms of marriage were

⁸⁵⁰ Shawkat, *Irhabitaht al-Tamrin*, 21.

⁸⁵¹ See for example ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Tahayul Shar‘i wa nizam muwazi lil zawaj al-‘urfi fi misr” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 18/3/1996, 95- 63.

⁸⁵² For example in “Zawaj al-Mut‘ahbayna al-Haram wa al-Halal,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 13/5/1993, 28- 29, Ibrahim ‘Isa introduces *mut‘ah* by comparing it to the kind of marriages the “extremists” conduct (thus creating a fake solidarity between Egyptian Islamist organizations and Iran, and between Shi‘ism and Sunni ‘Fundamentalism’). Throughout the article ‘Isa reiterates his fierce opposition to mut‘ah *ad nauseum*, and the article is punctuated with caricatures that ridicule this kind of marriage. See also how Shi‘ism becomes a sexual menace and mut‘ah becomes a form of prostitution in Wa’il al-Ibrashi, “Shabakat li Zawaj al-Mut‘ahwaFatawalil-Ijar,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 11/10/1993, 20- 24.

⁸⁵³ For an example of *Ruz al-Yusuf’s* alarm with regards to the last two, see “Qaryah Tarfud Zawaj al-Hukmah: Atfal Yatazawwajun ‘Urfiyyan,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 14/12/1992, 67- 69. In all the examples of underage marriage provided in the article, both partners are of the same age range; there is, therefore, no hint of child molestation by adults, no fear that women would be married off against their will to older men. In addition, all the interviewed ‘children’, boys and girls- or males and females if we want to subvert the hegemonic understanding of maturity and modern European criteria for

depicted as insurrectionary in nature, as if invested with agency to resist the State and defy its gaze (even when not practiced by insurgent Islamists). An alarmist report about customary and underage marriages expressed this horror: it is significantly titled “Qaryah Tarfud Zawaj al-Hukumah: Atfal Yatazawwajun ‘Urfiyyan.”⁸⁵⁴ The title itself suggests a certain defiance of or resistance to the State in ‘urfi marriage; it translates to “a village rejects governmental/state marriage: children are contracting customary marriages.” The report depicts an insurrectionary situation wherein villagers wait for representatives of the State to be absent in order to be able to conduct their communal unofficial nuptials as they please. The villagers are described as “administering ‘urfi marriage like hashish.” This kind of marriage, according to the article, is “spreading like a plague.” *Ruz al-Yusuf*'s alarm is emblematic of how colonialism, persistent through colonial paradigms even after the official ending of the colonial era, and the gaze of the State work together (more than three decades after the withdrawal of British troops and about at least a decade and a half after the opening up of the country for US *cultural imposition*). As evident in the title, the situation in this village was alarming because of how it resisted the power of the State to sanction marriage; people were taking their intimate lives into their own hands and resisting the infringement of the State on their marriage practices. The alarm was also about the colonial ideal of marriages, and how Western modernity defines marriage,

consensual age on which this report relies, reveal their willingness and eagerness to marry; there is no hint of coercion. Third, these children are described as “in their early teens,” which means that, most probably, they are physically and psychologically capable of sexual intercourse. Of course the authors here are taking up the arbitrary Western model that insists that social sexual maturity does not coincide with physical sexual maturity (at the expense of the Islamic model, wherein being physically capable of sexual intercourse makes one an adult). Furthermore, one of the interviewed young women spoke of getting pregnant five years later, because she was aware that early pregnancy was detrimental to her health. Instead of expressing admiration for the young woman and her ability to plan ahead, the author of the report found her rationale abnormal and cringe-worthy. It is important to note here how the first colonial legal transformations in the realm of marriage were to set the legal consent age for marriage as high as 16 for women and 18 for men, as per the 1923 colonially-inspired law.

⁸⁵⁴ *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 14/12/1992, 67- 69.

the age of consent, and adulthood.⁸⁵⁵ This report is also a clear example of how, almost a century after colonialism had imposed both state-marriage and the modern State itself, the State persists in its struggle to take control of marriage and transform it along modernist-colonial lines. In another essay, journalist ‘Abd Allah Kamal (mentioned earlier as the propagandist who incited the scandal of the Satanists in 1996), went to the extent of declaring ‘urfi and mut‘ah marriages as constituting a “parallel regime” (*nizam muwazi*).⁸⁵⁶

In the 1990s, licentious matrimonies that defy the modern/official understanding of marriage and that are not conducive to modern/monogamous/nuclear families were thus more than just a tool to besmirch and malign Islamist organizations. Although they were recurrently associated with the Islamists and the rural population, and although they seem to acquire enhanced subversiveness in the hand of Islamist terrorists (licentious matrimonies being one of the *terrors* Islamists visit on society), these licentious matrimonies and para-State nuptials were, in themselves, and even when not practiced by terroristic or subversive organizations, depicted as a challenge to the state, in short, an *insurrection*.

Terror and the Family

⁸⁵⁵ It is also important to note that one of the first colonial impositions on marriage, promoted by the British occupiers and their epistemic allies, was to introduce the Western modernist notions of adulthood – based on the arbitrariness of the Gregorian calendar, and to require a minimum age of sixteen for women and eighteen for men to allow them to be wed through law no. 56 of the year 1923. See Hanan Kholoussy’s analysis in “Nationalizing marriage,” 320- 322.

⁸⁵⁶ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “Tahayul Shar‘i wa nizam muwazi lil zawaj al-‘urfi fi misr” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 18/3/1996, 95- 63.

We have so far explored how matrimonies and conjugal practices that do not abide by the models of modern marriage and the bourgeois family are invested with an insurrectionary agency. Now I will turn to the opposite side of the same coin: how political and/or armed insurrection is depicted as a threat to the family, indeed, how activism or militancy against the State is perceived, in various pro-State representations, as an insurgency against the family.

Even before the licentious revolutionaries of Tahrir Square walked out on the paternal authority of Mubarak and of their families, and even before *Rami al-I'tisami* and his comrades in lewdness walked out on their upper class families, Islamist organizations in the 1990s were depicted as undertaking an insurrection not only against official matrimonial practices that were conducive to the production of nuclear families but also against the parental and paternal authorities and filial bonds of the family. We have repeatedly revisited the example where a former ministry of interior official described the Islamists as “hippies” who rebel against their parents and their societies. This theme was repeated by other propagandists: militants who join these organizations, according to the ‘investigative report’ of Shawkat and the confessions of ‘Adil ‘Abd al-Baqi, the ‘repentant terrorist’, end up “forgetting their fathers, mothers, and children.”⁸⁵⁷

This insurrection against the family takes the form of class warfare in the testimonies of Shawkat and ‘Abd al-Baqi. According to ‘Abd al-Baqi, recruitment to Islamist organizations appears as a ploy by poorer youth, harboring class resentment against the family as class privilege, to deprive rich kids of their families.⁸⁵⁸ Although

⁸⁵⁷Shawkat, *Irhabitaht al-Tamrin*, 9.

⁸⁵⁸Shawkat, *Irhabitaht al-Tamrin*, 162- 164.

this is mere classist propaganda (which assumes, first, that the poor do not have functional families, that the poor want to sabotage the lives of the rich, and that the Islamists are predominantly poor – thus denying the existence of, or even absolving, rich terrorists as the naïve victims of a lower-class Islamist conspiracy against the family), this propaganda and this ideological representation allude to the nature of the modern family as a bourgeois achievement. There is a difference, of course, between claiming the modern family as a bourgeois construct that is universalized to other classes, or one which other classes are wont to emulate due to the dominance of bourgeois ideology, and proclaiming the family to be the exclusive privilege of the upper class. Despite positing the family as an exclusive upper class privilege, Shawkat acknowledges the lower class yearning for a similar lifestyle (perhaps it was this yearning that fueled their resentment). This is where the insurrection against the family backfires. ‘Abd al-Baqi reports how whilst trying to assimilate to mainstream society after his own repentance, he was overwhelmed by regret once he saw one of his former school colleagues driving his family in his own “luxurious car,” thinking that he could have been in a similar position had he not pursued the path of extremism and terror.⁸⁵⁹ The bourgeois dream of living with one’s family, parenting one’s children (in addition to the dream of sheltering them in bourgeois households, driving them in luxurious cars, etc.) haunts the Islamist, according to the recurrence of the image in ‘Abd al-Baqi’s confessions and Shawkat’s reports. ‘Abd al-Baqi, according to Shawkat, “dreamed of working, like every other young man, in the morning, and of returning home at the end of the work day to find that his wife had prepared food for

⁸⁵⁹Shawkat, *Irhabitaht al-Tamrin*, 149: *وكم بكيث كثيرا عندما يجيء إليّ زبون ... مع زوجته وأطفاله في سيارة فاخرة... وأفاجأ أنه كان زميلي في الدراسة ... وكان يمكن أن أعيش حياتي سعيدا مع أسرتي مثله.* Also significant here is the use of the term *usrah*, which literally means the nuclear family, as opposed to *‘a’ilah*, which could mean either the nuclear or the extended family.

him, so that he could rest after a day's toil, and to stay up at night helping his children with their schoolwork."⁸⁶⁰ The bourgeois dream here seems to be based on two pillars, the Protestant work ethic and domestic marital bliss (which ties to my earlier argument that the two proper spaces that emerge in this discourse are domestic and work spaces. The licentious space, including the Islamist orgy, is of course inimical to both). The latter is emphasized but the former is important, especially for the purpose of producing men as fathers and providers, thus producing the domestic as its (good) other to which the father-homofaber can retreat at the end of the day.

It was this bourgeois dream of marital bliss, in fact, that redeemed 'Abd al-Baqi and that was thought to act as an antidote to extremism that could redeem terrorists. Shawkat concluded that it was this dream that triggered 'Abd al-Baqi's repentance. It was also the fear that 'Abd al-Baqi would lose his children to "the empire of extremist organizations" that led 'Abd al-Baqi to defect and confess.⁸⁶¹ Just as the family worked as an antidote to 'Abd al-Baqi's extremism, it could also work to redeem and recuperate other terrorists: when presenting his vision of how to recuperate and re-assimilate young extremists who defect from their terrorist organizations, 'Abd al-Baqi declared that he wanted to "retrieve our children from their caves, [so that they could] return once more to the embrace (*ahdan*) of society, and enjoy the warmth and security (*dif' wa aman*) of the nuclear family (*al-usrah*) and of a safe/secure (*al-amin*) society,"⁸⁶²— (note here that by being described as the domain of security and safety, the family, and the nuclear family specifically, the *usrah* becomes the opposite of *terror*).

⁸⁶⁰Shawkat, *Irhabitaht al-Tamrin*, 195.

⁸⁶¹Shawkat, *Irhabitaht al-Tamrin*, 105.

⁸⁶²Shawkat, *Irhabitaht al-Tamrin*, 105.

The opposition between the terrorist organization and the family, the former seen as engaged in a struggle to destroy the latter, and the latter as an antidote to the former, was not unique to *Irhabi taht al-Tamrin*. The other two main works of anti-Islamist propaganda that were produced in the same year (1994) carried the same theme: a television drama dealing with the theme of Islamist extremism and terrorism, titled *al-‘A‘ilah* (the family, though here it can either mean the nuclear or the extended family, and can be seen as a metaphor for Egypt), was written by Wahid Hamid (long time pro-State and anti-Islamist propagandist, though occasionally directing moderate criticism to the regime and the ministry of interior) and aired during the holy month of Ramadan of that year.⁸⁶³ The other work of the year was ‘Adil Imam’s blockbuster *al-Irhabi* (which we already discussed in Chapter 1, and which was released to theatres during the ‘Id/feast immediately following the month of Ramadan during which *al-‘A‘ilah* was aired). In *al-Irhabi*, the themes of the family vis-à-vis the terrorist dominate the plot. In this film, the terrorist organization is pit against the family from the onset when the commander of the organization (branded as *Amir al-Jama‘ah*) promises to wed the protagonist to a woman who had just run away from her “infidel husband” and who was then declared divorced of him by the Amir (this scene precedes immediately the scene when the terrorist engages in the masturbatory push-ups, discussed in Chapter 1). Eventually, the protagonist was dispatched to carry out a terrorist attack, during which he was injured but fled the scene. He was picked up by an unsuspecting upper class family who took pity on him on account of his injuries (presumably, as upper class families usually do when

⁸⁶³ In 2010 the same screenwriter, Wahid Hamid, wrote another television drama (also aired during Ramadan) titled *al-Jama‘ah*, consisting mainly of anti-Muslim Brothers State propaganda. It is as if the career of Wahid Hamid recognizes the opposition between *al-‘a‘ilah* and *al-Jama‘ah* (the crowd’s surrogate, as shown repeatedly throughout this study). A new season of *al-Jama‘ah* was released in 2017 (during the writing of this manuscript).

they encounter an injured lower class bearded man on the street). The upperclass family's loving care creates a dilemma for the terrorist: should he remain loyal to the family or to the terrorist organization and cause? The dilemma is highlighted by the socially liberal (sometimes ostentatious) lifestyle of his host family: they allow him to mingle with their daughters who, by the terrorist's standards, are not decently clothed, and they host parties where liquor flows and people indulge in alcohol (including the terrorist himself)—the only person who shares the terrorist's social conservatism turns out to be a Christian friend of the host family. The family, expectedly, opposes the terrorist and his organization's political views. One of the members of the family hangs a picture of Che Guevara in his room (though he proclaims not to be a Communist, only an admirer of Guevara's struggle), and the family befriends a liberal journalist and intellectual who writes against Islamist organizations and is presumably on their kill list (modeled on the anti-Islamist intellectual Faraj Fudah who was indeed assassinated by Islamist extremists in 1991).

This presents one of the greatest dilemmas for the terrorist. Faced with his organization's intent to kill the friend of his host family, and unable to pick sides between the terrorist organization and the family, the terrorist makes an anonymous phone call and warns the journalist against the attempt to be made on his life. The journalist interprets the phone call as a threat and declares himself not to be one who succumbs to intimidation. The terrorist then tries to make an appeal in the name of the family and asks the journalist to think of his children (who would become orphaned if he were to be killed) and wife (who would be widowed). The journalist proclaimed "and if we only worry about our children, who will worry about our country!" (it seems, therefore, that even within the ideology of the modern family there is one thing

that is above the family, and that is the country).⁸⁶⁴ The terrorist eventually chooses the family over the *jama'ah*. In a telling scene, we see the former terrorist, now reformed as a family man (manifest in his shaven beard and modern Western suit) telling his organization that he could not bring himself to carry out any new operations. The members of the organization wondered what had changed, since he had always been the first to volunteer to carry out operations. One of the members accused him of liking “their” lifestyle and becoming “one of them” (the infidels? The urbanites? The family?).⁸⁶⁵ In a final attempt to rescue the terrorist from succumbing to urban and family life, the *Amir* promises to wed him to a virgin girl “not yet 15,”⁸⁶⁶ but to no avail. The Islamist animosity to modern/normative state-sanctioned marriage and bourgeois family is not only highlighted through their intention to wed a grown man to a not-yet-15 year old girl, but also in suggesting that they would live together in the house of another terrorist-couple; the rules of marriage and sexual norms are subverted while the privacy of the domestic is denied, and a regression to a time when the household and the family were not compartmentalized into nuclear units is observable. Unable to resist the lure of the modern normative, the reformed terrorist

⁸⁶⁴ Unlike Alexander Manette but more like the Revolutionary tribunal in *A Tale of Two Cities*, the journalist puts the country (or perhaps the Republic?) above the family. One theme this study was not able to explore is the Egyptian secularists’ affinity towards the values of the French Republic, sometimes even the values of the French Revolution. Though I will not be able to explore this theme any further, it is important to note it, lest the account given throughout this study be misconstrued as placing the French Revolution and the Islamists on the same side and the liberals and secularists on the other.

⁸⁶⁵ Of course what has changed, according to the film, is not simply limited to the terrorist endorsing family values. More broadly, the film is about the terrorist being reintegrated into modern society and lifestyle. The family, as we see in this work and others, and as established by the history provided in this chapter, provides an important cornerstone to this modern/urban/liberal/secular society.

⁸⁶⁶ This can be seen as an unwitting echo of the Orientalist horror at the marriage of “underage” girls in Islamic history (including the Prophet’s wife ‘A’ishah). This horror, and the versions of adulthood and consent it bases itself on, are not only specifically Western, but also within the West they are specifically Anglo-Saxon. In many “Western” countries that are not England or North America, the age of consent is set as low as 14, thus marrying a not-yet-15 year old may be perfectly legal, not only within Islamist organizations but also in a good part of the “West.”

gradually succumbs to the infidel-family lifestyle and is eventually killed by his own organization.

We see, therefore, a theme of depicting political insurrection/terrorism as inimical to the family emerging in various representations under Mubarak:⁸⁶⁷ in news reports about marriage practices that defy the government, in journalistic investigative reports about terrorists, in confessions of repentant terrorists, and in television and film representations. That these representations, in various fields, some of them “factual,” others fictional, emerged simultaneously (many during the same year, sometimes less than a month apart as was the case between *al-‘A‘ilah* and *al-Irhabi*) may suggest that there was one state apparatus responsible for propaganda, or for issuing directives to various authors and media figures to focus on certain themes, but may also suggest that pitting the family against the terrorist organization, political insurrection, or the licentious space more broadly is a *theme*, or *topos*, dictated by an ideology or an ideological formation that weighs heavily on mainstream (cinematic, journalistic, and official) discourse producing them as effects. At any rate, the

⁸⁶⁷ In addition to the previous examples, the same theme appears in Muhammad Salmawi’s play *al-Zahrah wa al-Janizir*, which was published by the state-run “al-hay’ah al-‘ammah lil kitab.” The play was renamed *al-Janizir* and performed by the state-run National Theatre in the same year during which the above works were aired; 1994 seems to have been the year of ideological showdown between the family and the *Jama‘ah*. Given the close similarity in theme and plot between *al-Irhabi* and *al-Janizir*, Salmawi accused Linin al-Ramli, the screen-writer of *al-Irhabi*, of plagiarizing his play. Al-Ramli responded by pointing out how the theme of the family versus terrorism is a universal theme that is expected to recur. Al-Ramli caustically queried Salmawi whether it were he who invented terrorism, hostage situations, and the family. He then went on to note that he (al-Ramli) had already visited the theme of the terrorist versus the family in his 1967 television drama “‘Abd al-Mu‘ti” on which he based *al-Irhabi*. See Wa’il’ Abdul-Fattah and Wa’ilLutfi, “al-sariqah ‘alatariqat al-mubdi’in: arjuk la tattahimni bi sur‘ah” *Ruz al-Yusuf* 15/8/1994, 70- 71. For a review of the film that emphasizes the theme of the terrorist versus the family, see Tariq al-Shinnawi, “al-Jumhur wa ‘Adil Imam ‘Ala Khatt al-Muwajaha: thalath manatiq mahzurah yadkhuha al-Irhabi,” *Ruz al-Yussuf*, 21/3/1994, 58-59. Of course the theme of the terrorist versus the family is not restricted to the 1990s or to Egypt. An interesting commentary on the theme, though from a point of view that is less sympathetic to the family and more sympathetic to the terrorist, can be found in Franca Rame’s *The Mother*. What we have in the Egyptian examples, however, is not just the terrorist versus the family, but also the *jama‘ah*, with all its connotations, versus the family.

prevalence of the theme in various forms of representations that transcend one genre and transgress the boundary between fact and fiction attests to the presence of a state ideology that upholds marriage and the family, and that conversely associates terrorism and insurrection with assaults on state-sanctioned marriage and the bourgeois family (and vice versa).

Dysfunctional Families Breed Activists, Terrorists, and Other Bad Subjects

We have so far explored two facets of the ideological opposition between political dissidents and the family. First we showed how licentious matrimony is the sign – perhaps the *sin(e) qua non* - of the political dissidents-qua-bad subjects. Second, whereas licentious matrimony in itself constituted an insurrection, dissidents (and especially terrorists) were depicted in opposition to, as if waging their own insurrection or struggle against, proper state-sanctioned marriage and against the modern (bourgeois, nuclear, state-sanctioned) family. A third facet, which we are about to explore, is how failed families produce failed, bad, and licentious subjects, or how bad subjects are almost always produced due to a failure of the family: Sydney Carton, the female communard (and the Arab women of/victims of insurgent tribes to whom she is compared), and the licentious revolutionary in Tahrir Square, much like the Islamist terrorist, were all uprooted from the domestic and the family, and this uprooting was the precondition of their dwelling/wandering in licentious space.

In the Egyptian State's and media's ideological representations, dysfunctional families continually produce bad offspring who become political activists, Satanists, or Islamist terrorists. That dysfunctional families breed terrorists is a staple of *counterinsurgency* and *terror psychology*. This theme attests to both the non-

normative behavior and lifestyle of the terrorist, and the terrorist's pathologization through normalizing the bourgeois family and positing it as the other of the terror breeding ground.⁸⁶⁸ This ideology appeared in (or was *culturally imposed* on) Egyptian counterterrorism discourse as early as 1989. After the violent confrontations between the police and an Islamist organization that year (an event that set the tone for the confrontations, both material and discursive, between the State and the Islamists throughout the 1990s), the newspaper *Akhbar al-Yawm* invited a panel of experts (psychologists, criminologists, political commentators, etc.) to contribute to an extended report on terror psychology. These experts' opinions all concurred that the dysfunctional family was a major factor in the etiology of the deformed psychology of the terrorist.⁸⁶⁹

A similar report, less grounded in pop-psychology but similarly looking for the etiology of terror and identifying the family's failures as a principal factor in the etiology of terror, appeared in *Ruz al-Yusuf* three months later.⁸⁷⁰ In both reports a famous psychiatrist of the time, Muhammad Sha'lan, was invited to provide his expert opinion, and in both reports he blamed terrorism on the dysfunctional family. A few months later Ibrahim Si'dah, the editor of *Akhbar al-Yawm*, recapitulated this same logic by blaming dysfunctional families, negligent parents, and bad parenting, for breeding terrorists; the family should be, according to Si'dah, the "the first fortress" (against terrorism, apparently).⁸⁷¹ A month later still, famous journalist and story

⁸⁶⁸ See Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 56.

⁸⁶⁹ See the extended report on *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 7/1/1989, 4. This is not very different from the US counterterrorism discourse discussed by Puar; see *ibid.*

⁸⁷⁰ Samar Fathi Khalil, "Shurut al-Intisab lil Jama'at al-Mutatarrifah," *Ruz al-Yusuf* 10/4/1989, 58.

⁸⁷¹ Ibrahim Si'dah, "al-Mawqif al-Siyasiwahdahu la yakfi," *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 23/12/1989, 1,8.

writer Luwis Jurays took this logic beyond terrorism to political dissent as such: bad parenting, according to Jurays, was responsible for all forms of bad youth behavior, including demonstrations and “revolutions.”⁸⁷² The same dysfunctional family and bad parenting that produced the terrorists that took up arms against the state in 1989 and through the 1990s, and simultaneously bred Satanists (in one incident, presented in chapter 2, *Ruz al-Yusuf* took the ideological metaphor literally, showing how one of the Satanists actually came from a family who belonged to the Muslim Brothers)⁸⁷³ would produce prodigal children-cum-activists in 2011. We have already encountered examples to that effect in earlier chapters: Dalia from *al-Sifarah fi al-‘Imarah* was the product of a dysfunctional Communist family that resembled the working class crowd, Rami and his “comrades in licentiousness” produced through an escape from the hold of the already loose upper class family, the ribald ‘girl’ of Tahrir Square in the discourse of Murtada Mansur produced by a failure/refusal to recognize paternal authority, and the activist women of May 9th 2011 whose virginity were in question given that they were not “like your daughters or my daughters.”

The Family and State Ideology

The anxiety about the family is therefore not only about a proper space that is opposed to and threatened by licentious space, not only about sexual practices that escape state sanction, but also about the family as a mode of subjectivation. This is most evident in the allegations made against political activists during the events of

⁸⁷² Luwis Jurays, “AzmaNa‘am, Karithah La,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 26/2/1990, 18.

⁸⁷³ ‘Abd Allah Kamal, “al-Muharridun fi firashihim, wa al-dahaya fi al-niyabah,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 27/1/1997, 85.

January-February 2011– that they failed to recognize Mubarak as their father because they never learnt to recognize and/or respect their own fathers. The same representational strategy appears in Luwis Jurays’ 1989 article attributing “the youth’s revolution” to the failures of the family. Proper subjectivation through a proper family with proper paternal authority would have taught these prodigal subjects to identify, internalize, and heed the (paternal) authority of the president and the government.

In addition, the discourse on the infantile/pubescent crowd, through its insistence on infantilizing the members of the crowd, invites the political activists to accept their position as children. Once they accept their position as children, they need to identify their elders, not only in terms of age but also in terms of political rank: government officials, army men, and the president, as paternal authority.⁸⁷⁴ The family thus, through paternal identification, produces subjects that are successful and docile, and produces subjectivities/psyches that submit to the State as a paternal mode of authority.⁸⁷⁵

Clearer than Murtada Mansur’s denunciation, and clearer than *Ana Asif Ya Rayyis*’ filial apologies, was Sadat’s patronizing interpellation. On various occasions Sadat (who re-introduced the infantilization of the masses as I argued in Chapters 1 and 4) explicitly invited his critics to recognize him as their father and thus to refrain from criticizing him (in other words to become good docile obedient children-subjects). This manifested most clearly in the famous incident when Sadat lost his

⁸⁷⁴ See the discussion in Chapter 1.

⁸⁷⁵ For how this phenomenon is culturally specific to a certain moment in European history, yet universalized through *cultural imposition*, see Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, esp. 120- 121. For an informative, albeit abrupt, historicization of the family and how it came to play this role on behalf of/in conjunction with the State, see Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 158. For an alternative reading which does not preclude the family playing this role on behalf the State but problematizing the direct continuity between the two, cf. Foucault’s notion of “the rule of double-conditioning” in Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, v.1, 99- 100.

temper when debating with a young ‘Abd al-Mun‘im abu al-Futuh (then an activist within the ranks of the extremist *al-Jama‘ah al-Islamiyyah*, and later a “moderate” Islamist presidential candidate in 2012). In response to Abu al-Futuh’s criticism, Sadat fired back: “Abide by your [filial] station, I am the elder of the family.”

A calmer and more meticulous elaboration of family ideology and its role in interpellating children-as-subjects (or subjects-as-children) manifested in Sadat’s encounter with the female secondary school student discussed in the previous chapter. The student challenged Sadat on the need for a democratic system whereby the president would be held accountable to the people “just like in America.” Sadat responded: “what you say is true, but [true only] in America. Here we are a family, and I am the elder of the family. It is impertinent for someone to challenge the elder of the family.”⁸⁷⁶ The metaphor of the nation-as-family (in a way a staple of modern nationalisms, Western and otherwise) is extended here by Sadat into full ideological conceit, reserving for himself the position of the father, while casting the citizens as children, and coding political docility as *family values*. Thus, Sadat reified the family and the State both at once, entrusting both with the production of good obedient and docile subjects. This good national-family is opposed to the dysfunctional and/or licentious American family (or American nation which does not resemble the family). While the metaphor of the nation as family is hardly innovative, Sadat’s reign marks the instilment of this metaphor as almost-official State ideology. Furthermore, Sadat’s innovation lies in this indigenization of the family-as-nation ideology by opposing the national-family to (alleged) American democracy. It is ironic that Sadat represented this mode of subjectivation as indigenous and its others as Western. This mode of

⁸⁷⁶ Hisham al-Salamoni, “al-Jilalladhiwajah 'abd al-Nasir wa al-Sadat, 11,” *Ruz al-Yusuf*, 5/5/1997, 54-57.

subjectivation, let us not forget, is a colonial creation.⁸⁷⁷ Of course my claim here is not that colonialism created the family ex-nihilo, but rather that colonialism redefined and transformed the family along modernist-colonialist lines, thus assimilating, suppressing, and sublating other indigenous formations that predated colonialism.

The anxieties we observe in the various examples above closely resemble colonial anxieties about the family, most clearly the anxiety about non-normative marriage practices, directed against the entire Egyptian population by British colonialists and their epistemic allies at the early 20th century, and against *Islamist terrorists* by the post colonial state and its ideological apparatuses at the turn of the 20th- 21st century. We also observe an anxiety about paternal identification within the family, to wit, about the Oedipus complex, and its capacity to produce successful and docile subjects. In his foundational *Black Skin White Masks*, Frantz Fanon posited how the Oedipus complex was specific to a certain Western mode of the family, arguing that, in the Antilles, there was no Oedipus complex.⁸⁷⁸ My analysis here takes up Fanon's historicization of the Oedipus complex without attempting to replicate it for Egypt. This is not an argument about the presence or absence of the Oedipus complex in Egypt: in a society that experienced two centuries of Western colonialism, first through the French invasion and the cultural and institutional transformations that

⁸⁷⁷ As per the archival evidence produced throughout this chapter, but also as per Fanon's previously cited formulation; see for example *Black Skin White Masks*, 31, 120- 121, 127. One minor difference between my analysis and Fanon's (indeed between Egypt and Martinique, or between the Arab World and the Antilles) is that in Fanon's formulation the Antillean family remains intact (at least to an extent) whereas *culture*, imposed by the colonizer, interferes to play the role the nuclear family plays in the metropole (see for example pp. 128- 131). In my formulation the family is produced in culture, which is in turn conditioned by colonial imposition. In simpler terms, the family which appears in our archive is not comparable to Fanon's relatively intact Antillean family, but a family which the colonizer and his local allies have engaged in an effort to thoroughly colonize and transform. The extent to which this *cultural imposition* has been successful will be repeatedly revisited in the remainder of this chapter.

⁸⁷⁸ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 130, 157n44.

followed suit, and second through British colonization, and third through US economic and cultural imperialism, it would be absurd to argue for a total absence of the Oedipus complex, especially after we have shown how the modern Western nuclear family was imposed, internalized, and promoted by Egyptian intellectuals and state bureaucrats, including anti-colonial nationalists, in the early 20th century, and by state propagandists in the late 20th century and through the 21st. What we have, however, juxtaposed to this hegemonic institutionalization of the family, is a history of contingency, precarity, and failures (even if limited ones) wherein the State needs to continuously intervene to restore the Western bourgeois family, lament the distortion thereof, and single out bad subjects that are not produced through proper Oedipal identification.⁸⁷⁹ These modes of subjectivation, their failures, and their relationship to colonialism and to the state will become clearer once we examine the role of the army as a model proper space and the soldier as the ideal type of national subjectivity.

The Military Antidote

In the discourse on the crowd, the army emerges as the crowd's other; its discipline functions as an antidote to the crowd's licentiousness. In place of the chaotic, orgiastic, convulsive, and potentially subversive movement of the crowd, the army introduces a calculated, meticulous, and purposeful march. The opposition of crowds to troops was central to late 19th century and early 20th century crowd theory (evident

⁸⁷⁹Judith Butler observes, in a different context, how even through its failure, the Oedipal psyche is continually produced as the norm. Through a Derridean reading of Lacan, Butler notes: "[W]here and when the Oedipus complex appears, it exercises the function of universalization: it *appears* as that which is everywhere true ... its failure at realization is precisely what sustains its status as a universal possibility" (emphasis in original); Judith Butler, *Antigone's Claim*, 45.

in LeBon's writings and career)⁸⁸⁰ as well as to an emerging military theory that adopted and built on crowd theory.⁸⁸¹ Two influential French generals and military theorists, namely Henri Bonnal and Louis de Maud'huy, took up LeBon's ideas and subsequently started infusing LeBon's thought into the École de Guerre. Hence, they envisioned the regeneration of France through its military, by way of countering the chaos and degeneration of the crowd.⁸⁸²

Paraphrasing de Maud'huy's thought, Robert Nye writes "The employment of artificial measures such as discipline, habitual training, long association, and stable leadership cause a 'foule' to be transformed into a 'troupe'."⁸⁸³ Nye then concludes (and it is not entirely clear when his paraphrase of early 20th century French war theory ends and where his own adoption thereof starts) that "Unlike the 'feminine' and very mobile crowd, this troop has enough 'masculine' character to be accessible to reason and control; a wise *chef*, drawing on the high emotional content of the troop could compose his unit into a 'moral force' of great solidarity and power"(emphasis in original).⁸⁸⁴ The effect of LeBon's theory on military thought did not end with these two figures. According to Nye: "From 1905 the model of the troop as a

⁸⁸⁰ For LeBon's adoption of militarism as a way to regenerate France, which to him had turned decadent/degenerate through the rule of the crowd, see Robert Nye, *Origins of Crowd Psychology*, 123- 147. It is also worth noting how LeBon, a conservative and an anti-Semite who was on the anti-Dreyfusard side of the Dreyfus affair, perceived the Dreyfusards (i.e. those who were calling for the re-trial and possible exoneration of Alfred Dreyfus) as delivering a blow to militarism and by extension to the French national body and its prospects to (re)generate, see *ibid*, 93. Nye's discussion of the involvement of LeBon in the Dreyfus affair and other "dilemma[s] of the Third Republic," though apologetic to LeBon's anti-Semitism, gives a clear idea of how militarism operated in LeBon's thought as an other and antidote to the crowd's and their degeneration; *ibid*, 83- 113.

⁸⁸¹ See Nye, *Origins of Crowd Psychology*, 123- 147.

⁸⁸² See *ibid*.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid*.

disciplined crowd began to appear with increasing frequency in military writings.”⁸⁸⁵

In the subsequent exposition I will briefly show how this opposition appeared in Egypt.

In our earlier analysis of the crowd, it has been shown (building on Timothy Mitchell’s thesis on the metaphysics of modernity and the world-as-exhibition) how the military is one of the institutions (alongside/modeled on the Exhibition), which turns the crowds into disciplined troops and individuals.⁸⁸⁶ The same opposition between *crowds* and *troops* can be observed, to various degrees, throughout Egyptian military history. When introducing both the military and the police (as national agents of order) to Egypt and other Arab speaking territories, the disciplining role of the institution and of its officers was coded in the very Arabic term for *officer*, *dabit*, literally the one who adjusts, puts things in place, disciplines, or sets things right. The term also carries the connotation of tying things to their place. In the Egyptian manifestations of the ideology of Order, since the late 19th century and up to this very moment, the noun *dabt* is usually associated with *rabt* (tying or linking), and discipline is usually referred to as *dabt wa rabt* (adjusting and tying).⁸⁸⁷ Incidentally, the linguistic antonyms of *dabt wa rabt* include *inhilal* (dissolution, coming undone, degeneration) and *infilat* (setting loose), which recur as signifiers of the physics and metaphysics of political and social disorder as explained in Chapter 1, and which also denote license and licentiousness.

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid., 139.

⁸⁸⁶ See the discussion in Chapter 2.

⁸⁸⁷ An early significant example comes from *al-Mufid*, which credits *ma’mur al-dabtiyyah* (the sheriff/controller of the *disciplinary bureau*) with implementing strict discipline *dabt wa rabt* to the extent of raiding cafes where hashish is smoked and prohibiting prostitutes from soliciting customers outside the whorehouses. The opposition between discipline and licentiousness (narcotics and prostitution) is thus evident. *Al-Mufid*, 27 Jumada al-Thani, 1299, 15/5/1882, 4.

The confrontation between orderly militarism (through its agent, the *dabit*) and licentious disorder, in other words between the licentious space and the disciplined *uniformed* space, took many forms throughout modern Egyptian history. We have seen how, in 1882, the ‘Urabist military government, understanding itself as the agent of order (coded as *rahaḥ*, lit. *comfort*), threatened to shoot rioters and saboteurs. As military ideology progressed and took more sophisticated forms, this confrontation became more subtle and symbolic (though the shooting of dissidents was never ruled out, as evidenced by recent Egyptian history).

One of the major symbolic forms the confrontation between the army and the licentious crowd would take later was a gendered form; whereas in 1882 no sign of gendering whatsoever appeared in the confrontation between the army of order and the licentious crowd, later confrontations would be largely (through not exclusively) coded in gendered terms. In Chapter 1, we witnessed the confrontation between the military man, the embodiment of military valor, discipline, and masculinity, on one side, and the crowd-born(e), licentious, feminine or feminized body on the other. We have seen this opposition in the army officer trying to emasculate male demonstrators in front of the Israeli embassy, in social media depictions of “depraved” and “hysterical” women screaming and yelling at army men, and in the army’s subjection of female demonstrators to virginity tests in March 2011.⁸⁸⁸ This last example shows not only the opposition between the army and the licentious and feminine crowd-born(e) subject, but also how the former can, through phallic intervention, cure (a paradoxical position wherein the army both violates and protects, or violates in order to protect), regiment, or stem out the licentiousness of the latter. Modern medicine (as

⁸⁸⁸ All these examples were discussed in the section on “Effeminate Crowds and Feminine Chaos” in Chapter 1.

much a phallic object as the paraphernalia of modern militarism),⁸⁸⁹ acts here in compliance with militarism. It replaces, in a way, the guns, bullets,⁸⁹⁰ and torture equipment which militaries use when quelling licentious crowds (and which Egyptian military police used when dealing with demonstrators on March 9th 2011, whether through the violent breaking up of the sit-in and the kidnapping of activists, or through forms of torture other demonstrators were subjected to in the chambers of the Egyptian museum at the same time as the virginity tests were being administered). This opposition between the army and the licentious crowd culminated in the army's putting an end to the revolutionary situation and usurping power in 2013, and the coming to the fore of the military man, 'Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi, who took centre stage and became the de facto ruler, and later the 'elected' president, of Egypt, depicted then through tropes of masculine attractiveness and sometimes hypermasculinity. On August 14th 2013, the piercing of the crowd-born(e) licentious bodies through phallic

⁸⁸⁹ For a brief analysis of the patriarchal and phallic nature of modern sciences and especially modern medicine (in the context of a 70s feminist manifesto attempting to reclaim earlier non-patriarchal and non-phallic medical practices), see Barbara Ehrenreich and Deidre English, *Witches, Midwives, and Nurses: A History of Women Healers*, (New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY, 2010).

⁸⁹⁰ To recapitulate and build on a comparison I made in Chapter 1, the virginity tests re-enact the opening scene of Victor Hugo's account on the uprising of June 1848, where two "public whores" appear atop the barricade and start cursing at and flashing the National Guard before their crowd-born(e) licentious bodies were pieced by bullets ejected/ejaculated from the phallic weaponry of the army men. Phallic medical interference in the virginity tests replaces the piercing by phallic bullets in Hugo's account. This is not of course to argue that there was any conscious re-enactment of the scene. What I am arguing for is that there is a certain mode of domination which produces the army as masculine, the revolutionary crowd as feminine and licentious, and posits the latter as the target of (corrective) phallic acts of violence by the former. This mode of domination was in the making in the 19th century, and events like the uprising of June 1848 (a working class uprising), and later the Commune, provided a suitable laboratory for these modes. Later they took more subtle, more 'scientific' forms, like the virginity tests, though they were never rid of their violence.

military ordnance took a more literal turn with the slaughter of demonstrators in Rabi‘ah al-‘Adawiyyah and al-Nahdah Squares.⁸⁹¹

Of course one cannot reduce a massacre of that scale to the opposition between a licentious effeminate crowd and a proper masculine army – nor should we let intellectual musings and theoretical representations mask the bloodletting of 817-3000 victims. Even in the pro-State discourse, the representations of the confrontation, and the representations of the Rabi‘ah and Nahdah crowds more generally, steered away from gendered tropes; the army needed to avoid feminizing the Rabi‘ah and al-Nahdah crowd lest it be depicted as the murderer of women and children rather than their protector.

While there was no clear gendering in the discourse on the massacre of Rabi‘ah and al-Nahdah, depictions of licentious crowds played a role in justifying the massacre, both during the buildup and after. The two sit-ins were maligned as noisy

⁸⁹¹ From the start, the coverage of the massacres was highly politicized, and therefore estimates of casualties vary drastically. While government sources suggest a mere 333 (which is by no means a small number), pro-Muslim Brothers’ commentators raise the number to around 3000. The independent initiative *wikithawra* put the number of the dead at the Rabi‘ah Square alone at 1260, 932 of which are fully documented (dead bodies counted, official identity papers found, etc). Human Rights Watch has found the number to be “at least 817 and likely more than 1,000.” See Muhammad Abu al-Ghayt and Inas ‘Abd-Allah, “bi al-Suwar, Bawwabat al-ShuruqTabhath ‘an Ijabat al-Su‘al al-Sa‘b: Kam ‘AdadDahayaFadd Rabi‘ah,” *al-Shorouk* 26/10/2013 (updated on 27/10/2013), <http://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=26102013&id=d1509358-418e-48e0-8c61-73977f30fcdb>, “Taqrir Shamil: Hasr Dahaya Fad Rabi‘ah Tafsiliyyan wa Aliyyat al-Hasr,” *Wikithawra* 3/9/2103, <https://wikithawra.wordpress.com/2013/09/03/rabiadisperal14aug/> “LimadhaTadarabat Arqam Dahaya Fadd Rabi‘ah,” *al-Jazeera*, 6/3/2014, <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2014/3/6/%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B0%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%B6%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D8%A3%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%B6%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%81%D8%B6-%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%A9>, and “All According to Plan: The Rab‘ah Massacre and mass Killing of Protesters in Egypt,” Human Rights Watch, 12/8/2014, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/08/12/all-according-plan/raba-massacre-and-mass-killings-protesters-egypt>. These drastically different estimates may bring to mind al-Naqqash’s reporting of Egyptian casualties to may have been 350 or 2000. In both cases military violence renders the crowd uncountable. It is also worth noting that the massacre of Rabi‘ah and al-Nahdah, according to most of these estimates (with the exception of the government’s 333) constitutes the largest massacre in Egyptian history since the bombing of Alexandria by the British fleet.

and unruly; spreading noise and trash, harassing women, and sometimes firing random bullets at the surroundings.⁸⁹² Unmistakable here is the opposition between the precise army gunfire (which, at least on some level of the imagination of the regime and its supporters, only finds its way to members of the Muslim Brothers – understood as a belligerent party and excluded from the category of *civilians*, while sparing innocent civilians) and the stray bullets fired by the Muslim Brothers (an accusation that was also heralded against an earlier protest in al-‘Abasiyyah, 2012, which was one of the last incidents wherein Islamist and secular activists marched hand in hand against the military). This opposition is reminiscent of the opposition between the fire of order (Versaillais in 1871 and British in 1882) to the wildfire of the revolutionaries and natives, explored in Chapter 1. It seems that Egyptian demonstrators in 2011- 2013 Egypt also stood at the threshold of fire; with the exception of course of the demonstrators marching in support of and in coordination with the army. For those, alliance with the army seems to have cured them of their crowd-born(e) licentiousness. Opposed to the stray bullets of the Muslim Brothers, these demonstrators were constantly depicted as using laser pointers – perhaps the most precise of phallic gadgets.

More than their stray fire, the most stark characterization of Rabi‘ah and al-Nahdah as licentious crowds was the rumor of jihad al-nikah/nikah al-jihad, which presented the marital and mating practices within the sit-ins as an abomination of the proper family, and which was used to justify the massacre, especially after the fact.⁸⁹³ Even when the crowd-born(e) body was not clearly gendered as feminine, corrective

⁸⁹² This particular allegation played a role in turning ‘secular’ and ‘leftist’ political activists against the pro-Muslim Brothers sit-ins and even moved some of them to support their impending break up, not knowing that they would be the next victims of the military regime.

⁸⁹³ See the discussion in Chapter 1.

(and, in this example, lethal) piercing served to cure and expunge the crowd's licentiousness (and in the case of jihad al-nikah, protect the family and its values against non-normative coupling), to the effect of expunging the crowd itself.

The year 2013 can therefore be read as more than a mere military takeover. It was the moment of the triumph of order, discipline, and propriety, embodied in the army, over the chaotic, dirty, and licentious space (be it the revolutionary *crowd* or the Islamic *jama'ah*). It was also the moment of the triumph of military ideology, engendered by the military-qua-proper space, and embodied in the figure of the army man, posited as the model subject, or *ego ideal*. In fact, the Sisi cult of personality that engulfed the Egyptian media during and after the coup, and the erotic twist which this cult sometimes featured, can be explained (at least partly), in terms of the rise of the army man as model subject/ego ideal,⁸⁹⁴ and of militarism as antidote to licentiousness.

My description of 2013 as a moment of triumph for military ideology confirms that this ideology was not created ex nihilo in 2013, but had already been present and/or pervasive (if not necessarily dominant) before. Yet, to describe it as a moment of triumph is to argue implicitly that it had not been completely triumphant before. Indeed, to say that 2013 is the moment of the triumph of military ideology is to run up against the common stereotype of Egypt as a country where military

⁸⁹⁴ Here I am building on Freud's thesis that a group leader becomes identified with, or internalized as, the *ego ideal* of the group members (and thus cathected with a certain erotic investment). This thesis was mainly put forward by Freud in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, (New York: Liveright Publishing, 1967), esp 37- 42- for how this ego ideal harks back to the image of the father see Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, (London: Hogarth Press, 1927), 23-33. For a further elaboration on the role this identification, internalization, and cathexis plays in the rise of 'populist' leaders see Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason*, (London: Verso, 2007), 52- 64.

ideology had always reigned supreme. The following account will trouble this schema.

A Brief History of Egyptian Militarism

In his seminal work on the Egyptian army, Khalid Fahmy shows, beyond the shadow of doubt, how the Egyptian army under Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha did not enjoy any popularity among Egyptians.⁸⁹⁵ It was not uncommon, according to Fahmy, for potential conscripts to maim themselves in order to escape military service.⁸⁹⁶ What Fahmy observed in the archive of the early to mid 19th century remained true in the early 20th century. Even as he was trying to rehabilitate the image of the army, Mustafa Kamil (the founder of *al-Liwa’* newspaper and of *al-Hizb al-Watani* or the National Party) noted its unpopularity; Egyptians often went to military service “with tears in their eyes,” “as if they were being led to their deaths.” Kamil then recounted the extremes to which Egyptians went in order to avoid military service; Kamil lamented how Egyptians were ready to go as far as “cutting their own fingers off or maiming themselves” to dodge conscription.⁸⁹⁷ This begs the question of when the army became popular.

⁸⁹⁵ Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha’s Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army, and the Making of Modern Egypt*, (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002). See esp. 89- 92 where Fahmy discusses the Egyptian people’s resistance to military conscription. See also his discussion of desertion in pp. 256- 260.

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid, 99- 103, 260- 263.

⁸⁹⁷ “Sharaf al-JundiyyahwaMajd al-Umam,” *al-Liwa’* 5/6/1904, 1. Though no author is named, it is easy to guess from the style and sets of references that the author is Mustafa Kamil himself. Kamil prescribes education to cure the Egyptians’ aversion to the army and to military service. Once again we see civilization and militarization working hand in hand.

The first attempt to make the Egyptian army popular was the ‘Urabi revolt: the army, under ‘Urabi, presented itself as the representative of the Egyptian people and that it adopted their demands, and later proved its willingness (though not its efficacy) to fight foreign invaders on behalf of Egyptians, the Ottomans, and *dawlat al-khilafah*. On the eve of the confrontations with the foreign invaders, the popularity of the Egyptian army peaked to the extent that *al-Mufid* proclaimed, in the context of responding to the London *Times*’ anti-‘Urabi propaganda: “*kulluna jaysh*” (we are all an army, which could also be conversely read as “the army is all of us.”).⁸⁹⁸ ‘Urabi, as the leader and representative of the movement, was often referred to as *al-shahm al-humam*.⁸⁹⁹ The word *shahm* denotes chivalry, virtuousness, and the ability to stand up for what is right and/or for the weak. *Humam* means spirited, mettlesome, and/or audacious. The construction *al-shahm al-humam* can be easily translated into the English word *gallant* (a word that was later used in the academic literature about the Egyptian army and soldiery, sometimes to the effect that academic works seemed to espouse the ideology of the very army they purported to study).⁹⁰⁰ The *gallantry* of

⁸⁹⁸ *Al-Mufid*, 13 Jumada al-Thani, 1299, 1/5/1882, 2.

⁸⁹⁹ See for example *al-Mufid*, 9 Jumada al-Thani 1299, 27/4/1882, 3, and 13 Jumada al-Thani 1299, 1/5/1882, 1-2. Even the turncoat Salim Faris al-Shidyaq used the term in reference to ‘Urabi; see for example *al-Jawa’ib* 30 Jumada al-Thani 1299, 18/5/1882, 3.

⁹⁰⁰ See for example Hazem Qandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen: Egypt’s Road to Revolt*, (New York: Verso, 2012). The book being an institutional history rather than a history of ideology, falls into the trapping of the military ideology it attempts to historicize. On at least three occasions, the book comments on the ‘gallantry’ of Egyptian soldiers (83, 121, 140). Sa’d al-Din al-Shadhly (whom Qandil elevates to a “military legend,” 228) becomes the military protagonist, the eroticized soldier, and the model national subject in Qandil’s narrative. Qandil goes to the extreme of fabricating a scene which is supposed to have taken place during the events of 2011 (without providing any sort of documentation), in the wake of the news of al-Shadhly’s death, wherein “[s]obbing demonstrators marched around Tahrir yelling out his [al-Shadhly’s] name and offering condolences to teary-eyed officers who surrounded the square,” 228. This is not merely a fictional dramatic scene, it also serves as a pretext for a reconciliation between the army and the revolutionaries (both sobbing together, offering each other condolences). This undocumented scene thus belongs to the fantastical on many levels, not only for creating a fictional unity between the teary army men and the sobbing demonstrators who offer their condolences, but also by producing the army as a timeless entity,

the army leader connects two disparate figures. It brings the figure of the noble warrior (an archetype that predates modern soldiery and that is common in many cultures, including Egyptian culture) with the figure of the modern soldier (belonging to a different newer species for whom discipline is crucial, and for which courage and valor are less of an essence);⁹⁰¹ it puts the warrior of epics and folk tales in a modern military *uniform*. The rhetoric on the ‘Urabi movement and the gallantry of its leader, however, with very few exceptions, lacked the trappings of modern military ideologies; there was hardly any fascination with his uniform, or with military masculinity, and military discipline, let alone sexualized references to the country’s honor, or tropes of rape and/or emasculation (on the contrary women were allowed a heroic role in the emerging nationalist narrative as shown in Chapter 1, and as opposed to the *damsels in distress* that appeared in British reports). Soon enough, the whole movement was defeated, and ‘Urabi’s surrender left little chance for him to survive as a hero (that is, until his later appropriation by the Nasir regime).

The khedival restoration project, under Khedive ‘Abbas Hilmi II and in alliance with the second wave of Egyptian nationalism, attempted to reinstate the

wherein the present day soldiers and officers would feel solidarity with al-Shadhly who was discharged in 1973, long before many of those officers and soldiers were recruited. This mythological narration thus produces the present day Egyptian army as the same army which fought in 1973, as if the army men curbing the 2011 revolt have themselves participated in that war, and served under al-Shadhli whom they now mourn. We can even go further and scrutinize the opposition between *teary-eyed* army men and *sobbing* demonstrators; even in mourning a military man the army is more rational, restrained, and masculine in its display of grief. After providing a history of the armed forces whereby the Egyptian military was allegedly only interested in its own professional duties and in defending democracy, Qandil concludes that “the objective interests of the officer corps are not necessarily inconsistent with the revolution’s democratic ideals,” (232). As for the suspicions that “liberals” and “leftists” harbored towards the army, they were “based mostly on theoretical clichés (and unsubstantiated news reports and hearsay),” 234. The Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) appears thus as a force of democratization; “SCAF has indeed organized free elections – ‘What else do he revolutionaries want?’ they keep asking. Also, violent repression of civilians has been relatively limited and carried out mostly by the military police,” 235. It is ironic that these Panglossian observations, prophecies, and pseudo-analyses came less than a year before the military put an end to the democratic process and utilized its “limited” capacity for “violent repression” to carry out the largest massacre in modern Egyptian history since 1882.

⁹⁰¹ For the difference between the two, see Khalid Fahmy, *All the Pasha’s Men*, 153.

image of the army as part of the new nationalist project, and in the process adopted the French and British notions of militarism, military masculinity, and proper subjectivity as heeding (sometimes literally sometimes metaphorically) a call to arms by the nation. French notions found their way to Egyptian nationalist rhetoric at the hands of the cohort of Egyptian nationalists who formed (under khedival patronage) *al-Liwa'* newspaper and later the National Party. They were mostly French-educated middle class professionals (mainly lawyers and teachers, with the notable exception of Shaykh Muhammad Jawish); gone are the days when Azhar-educated thinkers were in charge of the ideological struggle. Early in its tenure, *al-Liwa'*, in an article titled "*al-Sayf wa al-Qalam*" (the sword and the pen) expressed its admiration for the Napoleonic model and praised the French for valuing both Victor Hugo and Napoleon⁹⁰² equally.⁹⁰³ This French ability to value both intellect and militarism equally (both the *pen* and the *sword* as the title of the article suggests) is juxtaposed to an indigenous meekness that overvalues intellect and fails to value might and militarism, for which the article finds emblematic a famous line of poetry by the classical Arab poet al-Mutanabbi that places sound opinion above courage⁹⁰⁴ (a line of poetry that was repeatedly invoked by the 'Urabi movement,⁹⁰⁵ signaling the shift from the 'Urabists' over-valuing of restraint to *al-Liwa'*'s overvaluing of military resolve). What the author of this article missed, however, was that al-Mutanabbi was himself a warrior and that his poetry celebrated the balance between restraint on the

⁹⁰² The article does not specify which Napoleon. It is more likely that the admired Napoleon is Napoleon Bonaparte I rather than Napoleon III, though the Second Empire indeed played a role in promoting French militarism and the imperial/military model.

⁹⁰³ Al-Sayfwa al-Qalam," *al-Liwa'* 10/10/1901, 1.

⁹⁰⁴ الرأي قبل شجاعة الشجعان... هو أول وهي المحل الثاني

⁹⁰⁵ See for example the invocation of the line by a graduating officer, in a military-school ceremony, at the eve of the British invasion, in *al-Mufid* 13 Sha'ban 1299, 29/6/1882, 3.

one side and forwardness and resolve on the other,⁹⁰⁶ and that he was given the epithet *rabb al-sayf wa al-qalam* (the wielder/lord of the sword and the pen) which the very title of *al-Liwa's* article echoes. This invocation of al-Mutanabbi's line might have been an oblique reference to the 'Urabi movement (thus juxtaposing 'Urabi, or, once again, *Arabi*, the embodiment of indigenous meekness that values sound opinion over the sword, to French militarism—just like the *Gazette de France* juxtaposed the unruly lot, the *émeute* that constituted the 'Arabi movement to what a military model should have looked like). The final words of the article were less oblique in their reference to 'Urabi: the author ended the article by wishing that the sword of the “Orientals” not be like “the sword of 'Urabi.”⁹⁰⁷ The model for proper militarism and proper subjectivity was therefore French and Napoleonic, not *Arabi*.⁹⁰⁸

British notions, obviously, had a similarly important role to play. The conquering British brought with them notions of militarism and military masculinity as models of heroism and subjectivity, while the defeat in the face of the latter emphasized to the Egyptian nationalist the role a nationalist army could play/could

⁹⁰⁶ For example one of his famous verses praises his patron, Sayf al-Dawlah, for being good at both wielding and sheathing the sword: ولقد زرتة وسيوف الهند مغمدة... ولقد نظرت إليه والسيوف وكان أحسن ما في الأحسن الشيم دم/ فكان أحسن خلق الله كلهم... وكان أحسن ما في الأحسن الشيم. On a different occasion al-Mutanabbi warned that patience and generosity, while necessary at times, can be detrimental at others, just like violence can be harmful if applied in a context that requires patience and generosity: ووضع الندى في موضع السيف بالعلاء.. مضر كوضع السيف في موضع الندى

⁹⁰⁷ “al-Sayfwa al-Qalam,” *al-Liwa'* 10/10/1901, 1. See also the discussion in chapter 1 of the civilizational disdain with which the second wave of Egyptian nationalists approached 'Urabi and his movement, and how 'Urabi's failure to approximate proper military models was seen, in the words of the court poet Ahmad Shawqi, as “Oriental blindness.”

⁹⁰⁸ The irony is that 'Urabi himself cites the Napoleonic model as one of the main inspirations for his movement; see 'Urabi, *Mudhakkirat al-Za'im Ahmad 'Urabi*, v.1, 96. It is not clear however, if 'Urabi meant that he looked up to the Napoleonic model or feared that it would be emulated. Important in that regard was the editor's note on the same page (96n3). He found it perplexing that what 'Urabi cited as the lessons he had learned from studying the history of Napoleon was the importance of “constitutional and parliamentary government” and not “courage and forward resolve” (*al-basalah wa al-iqdam*).

have played in fending off the occupiers.⁹⁰⁹ From then on, the Egyptian nationalist rhetoric began to adopt militarism and military masculinity/virility as tools for national regeneration and for defeating the occupier. In fact one of the earliest references to national *virility* in the archive of Egyptian nationalism (incited by a militarized context, though not exclusively referring to military masculinity) appeared in *al-Liwa*'s rendering and response to a note given by Lord Cromer in Khartoum during a military ceremony in honor of a departing British commander (one Captain Bailey) and wherein Cromer reminisced about his British military and civil tenure in the Sudan. Towards the end of his speech, Cromer noted:

The Sudanese are a fine race. Many of those I am now addressing have had ample opportunities of testifying to the fact that they possess in a very marked degree the *virile* quality which is the foundation-stone of all other national qualities. They are courageous, but unfortunately very illiterate. (emphasis added)⁹¹⁰

⁹⁰⁹ For how models of British militarism and British masculinity (through the image of its war-heroes leading its imperial army to colonial wars) affected not only Egyptian notions of militarism but also those of masculinity and proper subjectivity, see Wilson Jacob, *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870- 1940*, 27- 43. Jacob then (mainly in the next chapter, pp. 44- 64) shows how notions of British military masculinism that served to feminize or otherwise produce the Egyptian people and their army as feeble were reversed by Egyptian nationalists, especially Mustafa Kamil and his cousin-biographer. It is important to note, however, that Jacob imposes the issue of masculinity on an archive that does not always make reference to it through translation acrobatics. While the notions of dignity, youthfulness, discipline, and so on, which Jacob traces as emerging markers of proper subjectivity in colonial Egypt, can very well be argued to have been gendered, Jacob eschews the argument by making translation shortcuts, imbuing terms with gendering effects they do not necessarily evoke. *Futuwwah*, for example, which means youthfulness and prowess—comparable to the *virtu* of the renaissance, and which indeed can be attributed to men or women, is persistently rendered by Jacob as “youthful masculinity” (which Jacob even claims it to be the “literal” translation, 229). While an argument can be made about the gendering as masculine of *futuwwah* (the syntactic gendering of the term as feminine notwithstanding), or indeed of *virtu*, the act of translating them into “youthful masculinity” preempts the argument through a biased imposition. For an analysis of how the gender norms of the Western colonizer have become inserted into the nationalist ideology and the nationalist liberation project (in the context of Palestine) see Joseph Massad, “Conceiving the Masculine: Gender and Palestinian Nationalism,” in *The Persistence of the Palestinian Question: Essays on Zionism and the Palestinians*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 41- 54.

⁹¹⁰ Qtd in “Lord Cromer on the Sudan,” *Times*, 30/1/1903, 3. It is curious that Cromer referred to Sudanese *virility* rather than *masculinity* or *manliness*, which is perhaps testament to a civilizational discourse that sees the savages as virile but only the white man as properly *masculine* and *manly*.

The awkward Arabic rendering of *al-Liwa'* (a salient feature of the rhetoric of the French-educated second wave of Egyptian nationalists, as opposed to the eloquent Arabic of the first wave) reads as follow:

السودانيون شعب ... تحققت فيهم الصفات الرجولية التي هي أنظم الأركان المقومة للأمة فهم قوم شجعان بواسل
لكنهم للأسف أميون⁹¹¹

The article then goes on to juxtapose the virile Sudanese to the Egyptian collaborators who lack *kull sifat al-rujuliyah* (all virile/masculine/manly traits), and who as a result lost any respect even among the occupiers they served (i.e. they did not receive an acknowledgement of virility from the British High Commissioner like the Sudanese who fought and earned that honor). The discourse on nationalist masculinity, or to be more faithful to the lexicon employed by Cromer, on nationalist *virility*, appeared in Egypt as a response to a British incitement to discourse, a response to British notions that *virilize* both the conqueror and the resistor (it is important to note, however, that the other of virility in *al-Liwa'*'s discourse is not the effeminate man but rather men who lack virtue, or *virtu*; the collaborators, according to *al-Liwa'*'s article, have flooded the country, not with feminization and effeminacy, but rather with *weakness* and *death*, and therefore, they have become, not effeminate men, but mere moving bodies *ajsam mutaharrikah*, tools in the hands of the colonizer,

⁹¹¹Ahmad Hilmi, "al-Ajسام al-Mutaharrikah Lughz Laghazahu Cromer," *al-Liwa'*, 4/2/1903, 1. By translating *virility* as *rujuliyah* (rather than terms that refer to masculinity in its biological or active-sexual sense, like *dhukurah* or *ba'ah*, which render more faithfully the sexual connotations of the term *virility*), *al-Liwa'*, perhaps unwittingly, neutralized the sexualized coding of military prowess and war effort. National and military honor and valor are still about the gendered notion of being a man, but they are not restricted to the sexualized notion of being able to penetrate.

and vehicles/animals to be ridden/mounted and controlled by others *al-alat mutaharrikah fi yad al-ghayr wa al-matiyyah zimamuha biyad rakibiha*).⁹¹²

The British occupation and its ideology and discourses therefore provided the *incitement* to a nationalist masculinist and militarized discourse in Egypt. But more importantly, the British brought militarism into the everyday lives of Egyptians through the reality of military occupation. Egyptians, at least in the major cities, were made to (literally and metaphorically) see the British tank, British troops, and the various paraphernalia and emblems of British militarism, and every anti-colonial Egyptian nationalist was made to dream of defeating this military presence – it was only natural then that Egyptian nationalist dreams would then include military troops and terror networks (and while the story of the latter may be more interesting, our concern in this chapter is only with the former).

In the light of these transformations, Egyptian nationalist discourse began to concern itself with *emblems* of militarism that had no value in the discourse of the ‘Urabi movement and its *military* government. The very title of the mouthpiece of the second wave of Egyptian nationalism, *al-Liwa*’, is a military reference: it means the flag, the emblem, the banner, but also the military formation, the brigade, and more recently it has come to mean the rank “Major General” (deriving from the earlier Ottoman rank *Amir Liwa*’, which is Arabic for commander of a brigade, commander of a banner, or banner-man). All the mouthpieces of the ‘Urabi movement, on the other hand, did not reference military notions; even when ‘Urabi wanted a more sobering title for al-Nadim’s *al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit*, he proposed *Lisan al-Ummah*

⁹¹² While being *ridden* or *mounted* in contemporary Egyptian vernacular has its sexual connotations, there is no suggestion to that effect in *al-Liwa*’s article. The referent is clearly machines and animals, not women, effeminate men, or penetrates.

(the mouthpiece/spokesparty of the ummah/nation) and eventually the title changed to *al-Ta'if* (the roamer). Members of the second wave, however, despite their civilian background (but perhaps due to their French education, or because they were defeated and were preoccupied with organizing resistance to the invader, whether peaceful or violent) were thinking of banners and brigades. The other emblem, paraphernalia, or fetish of militarism that emerged in the discourse of *al-Liwa'* was the military uniform.⁹¹³ Military emblems, particularly the uniform, consecrate the modern military models of subjectivity; whereas warrior courage has always been part of most cultures' conception of the *hero* or even the *model subject*, militarism places this warrior model into a very particular mode of discipline, it *uniforms* this warrior.

Even as various signs of military glory started to *invade* Egyptian nationalist rhetoric, in most of *al-Liwa's* articles on armies and militarism, the Egyptian army appeared as a source not of glory but rather of pity. The Egyptian army was consistently depicted as deprived of the glory it was due as a result of British dominance, and the miserable conditions of Egyptian officers were often lamented⁹¹⁴—valor and honor, on the other hand, were reserved for the Ottoman army, including its Egyptian contingent.⁹¹⁵ While there is an implicit militarization-through-negation in this discourse — that armies *should* be glorious, that soldiers *should* be heroic, and that Egyptians have a potential for and are worthy of this heroism and glory- the

⁹¹³ See for example the fixation on uniform in “al-Junud al-Misriyyah,” *al-Liwa'* 5/8/1901, 2. Here *al-Liwa'* reports on how the Ministry of War noticed the abysmal situation of the uniforms of Egyptian soldiers returning from Sudan for military leave, and thus decided to punish whoever appears in improper/unbecoming (*ghayr la'iqah*) uniforms by canceling their leave. In a not unrelated vein, see the fetishization of the uniform of the policeman in “Jinayat al-bulis 'ala al-Adab,” *al-Liwa'*, 26/8/1903, 1.

⁹¹⁴ See *al-Liwa'* 22/7/1901, 1, 5/8/1901, 2, 6/2/1902, 1, 8/2/1902, 1.

⁹¹⁵ See for example *al-Liwa'* 20/6/1900, 1-2, 21/6/1900, 1, 23/1/1902, 3.

glamorized Egyptian soldier (enjoying military rank, uniforms, decorations, and other forms of military paraphernalia and fetishes) as a model nationalist subject and as a source of glory would not appear in Egyptian representations until the third decade of the 20th century. The soldier as the ideal Egyptian subject appears all of a sudden in the 1921 musical *Shahrazad*, which tells the story of the rise and fall of an Egyptian soldier, named Za‘bullah, serving in an imperial army, who incites the lust of the eponymous queen through his military glamour and uniform, and who brings military glory while singing the praises of his Egyptian homeland and his Egyptian ancestry (the musical was revived a number of times, most notably through another theatrical production in 1923, and through an audio-performance produced and broadcast by Egyptian national radio in 1957 and available in the Egyptian market via *Sawt al-Qahirah lil Sawtiyyatwa al-Mar’iyyat*. This happens to be the only fully recorded version of the musical. Unless otherwise specified, my subsequent discussion is based on this recorded version).

But before we examine the sudden appearance of the glamorized and eroticized male-soldier in *Shahrazad*, a curious earlier example (which celebrates a soldier but does not produce a celebration of militarism in the model conditioned by modern military ideologies) appears in the oeuvre of the important Egyptian poet, Hafiz Ibrahim. Ibrahim was associated with the nationalist movement and second in fame only to the poet Ahmad Shawqi.⁹¹⁶ He himself served in the Egyptian army and wrote numerous paeans to the Ottoman army. While Ibrahim’s oeuvre lacks any paeans to the Egyptian army, a few curious lines (written circa 1906) describe the beauty of a boy-soldier, and are titled in Ibrahim’s *diwan* (collected poetry) as *fi Jundi*

⁹¹⁶ The importance of Shawqi was briefly discussed in Chapter 1.

Malih (roughly: For a Pleasant Looking Soldier)⁹¹⁷ – these lines were identified by Joseph Massad as one of the last instances of modern mainstream poetry written by male poets for the love of young males.⁹¹⁸ The eroticization of the boy-soldier in Ibrahim’s poem, however, is radically different from the eroticization of soldiers in military ideology. While the latter tends to (hyper)masculinize the soldier, Ibrahim’s depiction is rather feminizing. The first two lines appearing underneath the subheading *fi Jundi Malih* point out the ‘*ajab* (wonder, bemusement, irony) that they gave the soldier a sword to hold while the gaze of each of his two eyes is a sword in its own right. Whether he raises or sheathes the sword of his gaze, the poem tells us, the soldier kills:

ومن عجب أن قلدوك مهندا ... وفي كل لحظ منك سيف مهند
إذا أنت جردته أو غمدته... قتلت به واللحظ لا يتعمد

The sword reference here is not phallic at all. A common trope in classical Arabic literature is to describe the gaze of the female beloved as a cutting weapon, and her effect on her male beholders as cutting or killing. In this poem, Ibrahim, who was well versed in classical Arabic literature, was feminizing rather than masculinizing the gaze of the soldier, through using the feminine trope of the gaze-qua-cutting sword. In addition, if we accept my earlier argument that precise weaponry, the domain of modern soldiery, are also the prerogative of the white man, leaving women, savages, adolescents, and revolutionaries with imprecise weaponry/fire, we can see in this poem how the (feminine) gaze of the soldier is an imprecise weapon. It kills indiscriminately, without intent, whether sheathed or unsheathed (unlike the precise and purposeful phallic weaponry of modern soldiery).

⁹¹⁷ The heading appears, in all editions and versions of Ibrahim’s “full published works” on page 247.

⁹¹⁸ Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 35.

It is not entirely clear whether the heading *fi jundi malih* applies only to these two lines of poetry or to this and subsequent poems (the next heading appears two pages later). Another poem that may have been part of the poetry dedicated to the young soldier addresses someone (the soldier? The beloved?) as *zabi al-hima* (the deer of the homeland):

ظبي الحمى بالله ما ضركا.. إذا رأينا في الكرى طيفكا
وما الذي تخشاه لو أنهم.. قالوا فلان قد غدا عبدكا؟
قد حرموا الرق ولكنهم.. ما حرموا رق الهوى عندكا
وأصبحت مصر مراحالهم.. وأنت في الأحشا مراح لكا
ما كان سهلا أن يروا نيلها.. لو أن في أسيافنا لحظكا

Again here the beloved (who might have been the same soldier, and who was described in the linguistic masculine but could have been a woman given that the linguistic gender in Arabic does not have to correspond to the gender of the person being described—the signified does not solely determine the gender of the sign) is feminized. In Arabic poetry, the deer is a common reference to a woman with beautiful eyes. Once again Ibrahim, who was well versed in classical Arabic literature, could not have been oblivious to this motif. Regardless of whether the poem is for the soldier or someone else (male or female), the last verse serves to ridicule the Egyptian army. If the army had swords like that beloved's gaze, Ibrahim tells us, the British would not have even been able to see Egypt's Nile. This line does not only highlight the defeat of the Egyptian army in the face of the British, but also shows how their weaponry were even weaker than the feminine gaze of the beloved. Or, if we want to maintain the *imposition* of the phallic metaphor on Arabic poetry, we can observe there to be three kinds of phalluses: manly phallus which defeats

enemies, womanly phallus which injures men with manly phalluses, and the Egyptian army phallus which defeats no one and injures no one.

The sudden appearance of the eroticized and glamorized boy soldier starting in the 1920s (in *Shahrazad*) is thus singular. The emergence/invention of this glamorized and eroticized figure appears not only against a complete absence of any precedent, but furthermore against a tradition of ridiculing rather than venerating the Egyptian army. This was the case even when love was declared for boy-soldiers (as seen in the poetry of Hafiz Ibrahim).

Given the singularity of *Shahrazad* and its unprecedented depiction of the glamorized boy-soldier as the model national subject, we will now turn our attention to the musical. Yet the singularity of the musical goes beyond its content and themes. Indeed, *Shahrazad* was no marginal work of Egyptian culture; the playwright and director, the Lebanese-Egyptian ‘Aziz ‘Id, was one of the major figures of Egyptian theatre at the time. Many of the songs were written by the famous Tunisian-Egyptian poet Bayram al-Tunisi (an iconic figure of Egyptian vernacular and protest poetry). The music was composed by Sayyid Darwish, who is generally credited for revolutionizing Arabic music and is considered the main inspiration for later famous musicians like Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhab (who later composed the music for a number of songs we encountered in the previous chapter, including *Sawt al-Jamahir*), the Rahbani Brothers, and the underground protest singer al-Shaykh Imam (who sang many tributes to Darwish). Darwish was part of the Egyptian anti-colonial nationalist movement and composed many protest, proletarian, and nationalist songs (many of which are still sung in political protests today). In a way, his work can be seen as a continuation of the legacy of the National Party; indeed, he is believed by music researchers to have been a member of the National Party before his turn to the Wafd

after the events of 1919 (with speculations of a return to the National Party by the time he was working on *Shahrazad*).⁹¹⁹ He famously composed the music for Muhammad Yunis al-Qadi's poem inspired by Mustafa Kamil's speech "biladi biladi" (my homeland my homeland), which was adopted as the Egyptian national anthem in 1979 and has remained so since. The duo, Dariwsh and al-Qadi, also composed songs for 'Abbas Hilmi II, including *'Awatfak dih Ashhar min Nar* wherein they defy the British ban on mentioning Hilmi's name (after his ouster and exile). Though a love poem, the first letter of every verse put together would make the sentence *'Abbas Hilmi [is] the Khedive of Egypt*.⁹²⁰ *Shahrazad* is therefore not unrelated to the nationalist project of the national party and the restoration project of 'Abbas Hilmi (a project that was aborted some seven years before the production of *Shahrazad*, when the British ousted and exiled Abbas II and severed Egypt's ties with its Ottoman suzerain).

In *Shahrazad* we see the full-fledged advent of military-ideological representations, including the fetish of the uniform, of military rank, and decoration, the association between militarism and masculinity, and producing ideal military masculinity as a model for the nation. As soon as Za'bullah appeared before Shahrazad, the queen became infatuated with his appearance and asked him where he hailed from. In response, he burst out into a song about his Egyptian origins. Falling in love with his Egyptian military masculinity, Shahrazad decided to promote Za'bullah, designed a new uniform for him ("to bring out his neck"), trusted him with

⁹¹⁹ Mustafa Sa'id (musician and music archivist and researcher, the head of the Foundation for Arab Music Archiving and Research- AMAR), discussion with the author, 16/8/2014.

⁹²⁰ Ibid.

her father's sword,⁹²¹ and tried by all means to keep him close to her- causing jealousy and dismay among members of her court, especially her Lebanese⁹²² vizier and her Tartar/Turkish army commander, who then began to conspire against Za'bullah (producing in the process a new nationalist trope of foreigners plotting to get rid of Egyptians, though this may be a new layer of meaning our modern moment imposes on the text). Feeling spurned by his refusal to abandon his Egyptian fiancée, Huriyyah, the queen decided to demote him and joined his rivals in a conspiracy to discredit him. Eventually Za'bullah decided to take Huriyyah and return to Egypt.⁹²³

The musical is thus singular in its broaching of the themes of militarism and nationalism. Not only is the model subject presented as a glamorized soldier for the first time, but furthermore the model subject is engaged in a monogamous romantic love affair with his Egyptian fiancée (and therefore with Egypt for which Huriyyah is a surrogate). His model subjectivity is emphasized through his rejection of the foreign queen's love and his commitment to the love of Egypt; in the final number, he put his

⁹²¹ Unlike the sword in the hand and gaze of Hafiz Ibrahim's soldier, this sword is phallic; it is the sword of the father, which the lustful queen entrusts to the man she loves. The queen affirms this phallic nature of the sword when she declares, as she hands Za'bullah the sword, "I gave it to you when I found you to be a man" (*sallimtu hulak lamma shuftak ragil*).

⁹²² Although the play appears only one year after the creation of "Greater Lebanon," the vizier is identified as Lebanese throughout the play. He speaks in stage-Lebanese, he presents a Lebanese stereotype of someone who is overcalculating, skilled with words and diplomacy, and always willing to play politics (or *bulutika*, as the character keeps repeating throughout the play) rather than resolve things through confrontation. In an attempt to intimidate the Egyptian soldier, the Lebanese vizier boasts of how he comes from "mountains that ram with their heads the clouds from the whereabouts of Mount Lebanon," to which Za'bullah responds "tuz!" (a vernacular disrespectful way to exclaim "I don't care!"). In fact, the character of the Vizier and this dialogue with Za'bullah can be seen as means to satirize and ridicule the nascent Lebanese nationalism by 'Aziz 'Id whose family hails from Lebanon and who studied in Beirut, but who was born in Egypt and identified as Egyptian (and who had converted to Islam from Christianity, at a time when Lebanese nationalism was generally a Maronite phenomenon). For 'Aziz 'Id's background and the story of his conversion, see Fatimah Rushdi, *al-Fannan 'Aziz 'Id*, (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-'Ammah lil Kitab, 1984), 14- 15, 35.

⁹²³ It is not entirely clear where the events of the musical are taking place, though it is clear it is not Egypt. The narrator in the recorded version identifies the time setting of the play to be *al-azman al-ghabirah* (the long gone ages/the *ancient régime*) and identifies Shahrazad to be the *Amirah* (commander/princess) of the Tartars.

homeland (herself) in opposition to the queen (herself), declaring: “she [my homeland] is more worthy of my struggle [*jihad*] than your pretty face.” While the model national subject is male (and a male soldier), the nation is female (evident here through the gendering of her surrogate (Huriyyah) and her rival (Shahrazad), but also through the gendered reference by Za‘bullah in the final number, producing the homeland not only as a linguistic *she* but also as the female rival of Shahrazad and the competitor over Za‘bullah’s romantic love) and the love for the nation is a romantic monogamous love (similar to the one that produced families discussed in the earlier sections of this chapter).

Shahrazad also introduced a gendering of spaces that was new to Egyptian discourse but in line with the dominant European notions of the time. The opposition between the military as a space of masculine discipline and the licentious spaces of dances and festivities as feminine is evident throughout the play; for example, in addition to the queen’s (feminine) lust for Za‘bullah and for his military allure, whenever there are festivities the women chorus comes in. Throughout the play, and especially in the first scene of the second act, wherein a mailman arrives with news from the battlefield and delivers the soldiers’ letters to a chorus of women; the female chorus appears as the realm of license and lust: they dance, giggle, flirt with the mailman, express their longing for the soldiers who are away fighting, and in anticipation of the return of the troops they declared that once the soldiers were back they would welcome them with kisses, bites, and hugs (though in the 1957 version this erotic anticipation was toned down into/euphemized as “returning the favor”).⁹²⁴

⁹²⁴ The original line reads *واحننا ننزل بوس وعض وحضن فيهم* (roughly: we will shower them with kisses, bites, and hugs); *Mawsu‘at a‘lam al-Musiqa al-‘Arabiyyah: Sayyid Darwish*, ed. Isis Fathallah, Hasan Darwish, Mahmud Kamil, v.2, (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2003), 610. The 1957 rendering

This opposition is also evident in a scene early on in the play wherein Huriyyah tried to convince Za‘bullah to dance with her. On duty, Za‘bullah repeatedly replied “unfortunately I cannot, as long as I am on duty” (though the feminine-licentious eventually triumphs, Za‘bullah ends up cursing military service and joining Huriyyah in dance, only to be caught by his Tartar commander who was scandalized by this blasphemy of military discipline).

Given our earlier account of the seeds of militarism sowed by the National Party and ‘Abbas Hilmi’s restoration, and the connection between the makers of the musical (especially its composer Sayyid Darwish) and these two projects, Za‘bullah can be seen as the culmination of these two projects. This reading is supported by a later musical number, reportedly composed by Sayyid Darwish and written by Badi‘ Khayri, titled “Misafir al-Jihadiyyah” (roughly: traveling for conscription, using the term *jihadiyyah*— derived from the root *jihad* to describe military conscription).⁹²⁵ The musical number takes the form of a dialogue between a mother and her son who is being taken for military service. While the mother weeps for her son, the son tells

reads *والجميل الذي علينا نرده ليهم* (and to them we will return the favor we owe). The ambiguous notion of ‘returning the favor’ to the military played a significant role in the pro-army rhetoric of 2011 and beyond. On April 22nd, 2011, a number of army supporters organized a demonstration to “return the favor” to the army (for presumably siding with the ‘revolution’ against Mubarak), using this ‘favor’ the people owe the army as a pretext for calling for an extended military rule. See “‘Asharat al-Muwatinin Yusharikun fi Jum‘at Radd al-Jamil lil Jaysh,” *al-Ahram*, 22/4/2011, <http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/62881.aspx>.

⁹²⁵ This musical number belongs to *Isti‘rad al-Tahunah al-Hamrah* (The Red Mill Performance, *Isti‘rad*, which literally means an exhibition or performance, refers in this context to a performance that includes music and dance, something close to the vaudeville genre). Very few fragments of this performance survive, too few to allow a reconstruction of or speculation about its schema. Some scraps of what remains of this show can be found in *Mawsu‘at a‘lam al-Musiqa al-‘Arabiyyah: Sayyid Darwish*, v.2, 648- 651. Although this musical number is listed among the works of Sayyid Darwish, and although I am neither trained as a musicologist nor as a musical historian, I want to cast some doubt on the attribution of the song to Sayyid Darwish (without making any definitive arguments in that regards). First, the style of the music is very different from Darwish’s distinct style. Second, the song is listed as written by Badi‘ Khayri. By 1922, the year when this *Isti‘rad* was presumably produced, Darwish had already cut ties with al-Rihani’s theater company, with which Khayri worked. Was this performance a moment of rapprochement, then, between Darwish and Khayri—or between Darwish and al-Rihani? Or was it the work of a different composer and mistakenly attributed to Darwish?

his mother about military glory. The son's speech, which calls on the mother not to weep in the name of patriotism, and which genders military courage as masculine and the peaceful cowardly life of luxury as feminine,⁹²⁶ ends with the son proclaiming the sacrifice of oneself for the homeland (in the context of war) to be the foundation/essence of patriotism (asas al-wataniyyah). This song functions as a musical echo of the discourse that emerged almost two decades earlier in *al-Liwa'* which called on Egyptians to respect military service and to seek military glory.

Yet the 'Abbas Hilmi-Nationalist Party project does not explain all the singularities of this musical, especially the emergence of the masculine soldier through a romantic trope that masculinizes the model subject and feminizes the nation. It also does not explain the sudden popularity of Egyptian soldiery after the Egyptian army had been pitted by the British against the Ottoman army in WWI, at a time when the Egyptian cultural and political spheres, and many of the Egyptian cultural and political figures, including al-Tunisi and Darwish, were largely pro-Ottoman.⁹²⁷

Alternatively, one may read the whole play as a parody of militarism.⁹²⁸ An important piece of information supports this reading: *Shahrazad* is a scene-for-scene

⁹²⁶ One verse states: *و الحرب مخلوق للشجعان .. والصيغة تلبسها ولية*. Roughly: War is created for the brave, [whereas/just like] jewelry is for women to wear.

⁹²⁷ Al-Tunisi wrote a number of poems in praise of the Ottoman sultanate and the Ottoman army, and wrote at least one poem cursing Mustafa Kemal Ataturk for disbanding the caliphate (though his earlier Ottoman poems praised Kemal in his capacity as the leader of the Ottoman army); Bayram al-Tunisi, *Bayram al-Tunisi, al-A'mal al-Kamilah*, (Cairo: MaktabatMadbuli, 2002), 595- 608. Sayyid Darwish composed a song titled "Mustafaki Biziyadaki" (roughly: your Mustafa {Kemal} is more than enough) in praise of Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman army during the wars with the Greeks.

⁹²⁸ It is important here to note that the only surviving recording of the musical is a 1957 remake sponsored by state radio. Under the regime of the free officers, the production was expected to be a celebration of nationalism and of the army, regardless of the intentions of al-Tunisi, Darwish, and 'Id. Given that no recording survives of the original production, it is impossible to discern beyond doubt

adaptation of Jacques Offenbach's opera bouffe *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*

⁹²⁹ which parodies the militarisms of Prussia and of the Second Empire.⁹³⁰ *Shahrazad*

can also be read as parody, Za'bullah (the name itself sounds like a parody)⁹³¹ quickly

whether it was meant as a celebration or parody of militarism. In my discussion with Mustafa Sa'id (whom I previously cited), as soon as I mentioned the nationalistic themes in the musical, and before I asked whether he thought they were intended as a celebration or parody, Sa'id was quick to comment that "this is *parody* [using the English term]."

⁹²⁹ I was first alerted to this fact through an online music forum: see Kamal 'Azmi, "Shahrazad: Surah Idha'iyah 1957," and "operet Shahwazad [Shahwazad being the name of the Queen and title of the musical in one of the performances, playing a pun on *shahwah* as desire/lust and *zad* as excess] li Sayyid Darwish," [Online Forum Comment]. Message posted to <http://www.sama3y.net/forum/showthread.php?t=103694>. I was able to corroborate, through watching the recording of a 2004 production of *La Grande Duchesse*, that *Shahrazad* is indeed a faithful, scene-for-scene, adaptation of Offenbach's opera; cf. *La Grande-Duchess de Gérolstein*, DVD, directed by Laurent Pelly and François Roussillon (2004; Paris: Erato Disque, 2006). It is not entirely clear what route made Offenbach's opera available for Egyptian adaptation in 1921. We know, however, that since its original production, *La Grande Duchesse* was not distant from the Egyptian cultural milieu: it had premiered at the 1867 Paris International Exposition, which was attended by both the Ottoman Sultan and Khedive Isma'il; Adrian Corleonis, "Jacques Offenbach: La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein, Operetta in 3 Acts," All Music, <http://www.allmusic.com/composition/la-grande-duchesse-de-g%C3%A9rolstein-operetta-in-3-acts-mc0002393226>. We also know that 'Aziz 'Id regularly attended French and Italian performances in Egypt (Rushdi, *al-Fannan 'Aziz 'Id*, 39), and that, before he became famous for his Arabic plays, he was part of a troupe that put on French performances (Rushdi, *al-Fannan 'Aziz 'Id*, 45). It may be at any of these encounters that 'Id was made familiar, directly or indirectly, with Offenbach's opera.

⁹³⁰ The opera, which belongs to the Second Empire, can be read as either a parody of militarism as such, of the warmongering Empire, or of the Prussian tradition - especially given the German names of the characters and the German sounding titles the Duchesse (Shahrazad's counterpart) bestows on Fritz (Za'bullah's counterpart). The Theatre de Châtelet performance of 2004 specifically highlights the Prussian element through the Prussian costume of Général Boum (who is rendered a Turkish/Tartar general under the name of Qara Adamughli in *Shahrazad*); *La Grande-Duchess de Gérolstein*, DVD, directed by Laurent Pelly and François Roussillon (2004; Paris: Erato Disque, 2006). It is also worth noting that the opposition of the military/masculine vs. the licentious/feminine is more evident in the French original. Early on in the opera Général Boum walks in on his troops hosting and dancing with women (the equivalent of the scene where Qara Adamughli catches Huriyyah and Za'bullah dancing). Scandalized, Général Boum exclaims: "de femmes dans nos camps? Effroyable licence!" A recording of the aria (From the Châtelet 2004 performance) can be found at "François Le Roux is the GénéralBoum," YouTube Video 2:46, posted by "bigpinkypig" February 26, 2007, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBTsikKilz0>. The military enthrallment and the uniform fetish that characterize military ideology are also more evident in the French original. Shahrazad's flirtation with her troops, and her implicitly erotic description of their appearance and its effect on her, is tame compared to the Grande Duchesse's aria "j'aime les militaires" in which she declares not only her love for the soldiers but also "leur uniforme coquet, leur moustache, et leur plumet." A recording of the aria (again from the Châtelet 2004 performance) can be found at "Ah que j'aime les militaires," YouTube Video 3:44, posted by "bigpinkypig" March 5, 2007, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1IQJ4Oc_VY.

⁹³¹ In Egyptian vernacular Za'bullah is a comical lower class nickname. It is commonly used in theatre for laughs. It comes from the classical Arabic root *za'bal*, which means a boy with a big belly and a tiny

rises yet quickly falls, and his fall is farcical and humiliating. The final conspiracy, whereby his adversaries are finally capable of outsmarting and humiliating him, highlights this farcical aspect especially as the main conspirator, the Tartar general Qara Adamughli, recounts it in extreme excitement, in accented Arabic/stage Turkish, and in formal military diction. Qara Adamughli starts explaining the conspiracy by recounting how, for ten years, he had maintained a love affair with *haram masun haji baba tubji Abi Shanab* (the faithful/respectable wife of His Excellency Tubji Abi Shanab). We are already in parodic territory; the woman who cheats on her husband with Qara Adamughli is the “faithful wife” of her husband, and the man who is being cuckolded is a manly *abi shanab* (literally a man with a moustache). Furthermore, the cuckolded husband is a *tubji*, i.e., he works in one of the most phallic divisions of the army, the artillery. To add another layer of parody, *tubji* in the modern Lebanese dialect means a man who is effeminate, male lover, or (usually passive) homosexual—perhaps ‘Aziz ‘Id, who studied in Beirut and whose family hails from Lebanese origins,⁹³² was adding another layer of comedy by rendering the moustachioed artillery man a cuckolded effeminate sexually passive man (which, admittedly, may also be an over-reading on our part). Qara continues to narrate the

neck (hardly the image of an ideal soldier). The name can therefore be read as a parody of militarism, even the glamorized soldier is nothing but a lower class za‘bullah, a boy with a big belly and a small neck—a Humpty Dumpty in uniform. Conversely, it could be read as an affirmation of the recuperative role of militarism, even a Za‘bullah can be rendered a glamorized soldier through nationalistic militarization (after all Shahrazad made him a new uniform to show off his neck, which goes against our earlier characterization of Za‘bullah as a Humpty Dumpty in uniform, it could be that even a Humpty Dumpty will be transformed into an attractive figure and will acquire an enticing neck through military uniform). It could also be seen as affirming the value of the Egyptian subject, and especially the lower class Egyptian, in the face of militarism, an Egyptian Za‘bullah can rise up the military ladder, and when unappreciated he can simply leave and go back to serving his homeland in other ways (in other words it is not the uniform which renders the Humpty Dumpty figure attractive, but rather his Egyptianness; and of course unlike the English Humpty Dumpty, the Egyptian Za‘bullah is in no need of *all the king’s horses and all the king’s men*, in order to put him *together again*. Whereas the King’s men try and fail in the case of Humpty Dumpty, the recuperative effect of the homeland and of Egyptian nationalism succeeds in the case of Za‘bullah).

⁹³² Fatimah Rushdi, *al-Fannan ‘Aziz ‘Id*, 35.

conspiracy and the parody of militarism becomes clearer: after realizing that Abi Shanab, suspicious of his faithful wife, had decided to ambush her lover, he announced to Za‘bullah (and his tone and rhythm become more like those of military commands as he quotes himself) “Head immediately to the Palace of Tubji Abi Shanab! There you will find troop 35 of column 40, and column 40 of troop 35.” This description of divisions, and the mixing of numbers, parody and render absurd the importance of organization, division, and numbering in modern militaries.⁹³³ Instead of the organized and glorious military effort for which this organization, division, and numbering were originally intended, this mock-organization is used for a petty prank. Qara anticipates the success of his prank with excitement (stressing every syllable in the 1957 recording): “And instead of troop 35 of column 40, and column 40 of the troop 35, there he [Za‘bullah] will find the husband of the wife of Abi Shanab!” The success of the plot/prank further insulted military honor, Za‘bullah returned disgraced not only by the suspicion that he was spending his time womanizing instead of observing his military duties,⁹³⁴ but also with his uniform torn and the queen’s father’s (phallic) sword broken. Za‘bullah was then disgracefully demoted before he decided to head back to Egypt.

But before the above account moves us to wholeheartedly endorse the reading of the play as a parody, a look at the account given by the musical’s

⁹³³ When explaining the role of "numbering and labeling" in the discipline of the Egyptian military, Fahmy provides a lucid example that is itself reminiscent of the above mentioned scene: “[w]hen a woman merchant complained that a certain officer did not repay her money he had previously borrowed from her, it was not enough to refer him to the officer in question by name; but she also had to give his number in his military/administrative unit: the first captain of the 4th Battalion of the 10th Regiment.” Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 142. *Troop 35 of column 40, and column 40 of troop 35* sounds like a clear parody of what Fahmy is describing. In addition, the phrasing “troop 35 of column 40, and column 40 of troop 35” renders troops and columns replaceable, whereas the whole point of military/disciplinary numbering is to have a unique formula for each unit.

⁹³⁴ Let us not forget that at the beginning of the French original masculine military discipline was contrasted to the *effroyable licence* of mingling with women in the camps.

songwriter, the famous vernacular poet Bayram al-Tunisi, reveals yet another layer. In his essay on Sayyid Darwish, al-Tunisi refers to the songs he wrote for *Shahrazad* as nationalistic songs.⁹³⁵ This of course does not rule out parody, yet it suggests that there is a serious aspect to the musical, not captured by the category of parody. A third possible reading, therefore, is that the play takes the side of nationalism over militarism; it is not the uniform but rather the Egyptian man who wears the uniform who is celebrated. He is worthy of decorations and promotion, but when not appreciated by his superiors, he can simply return home and serve his country in other ways. Once taken away from the Egyptian, military glory is nothing but a parody of itself.

The contradictory nature of these readings notwithstanding, I propose them as multiple layers of a work that is already polyphonic in many ways. The very making of the musical involved multiple layers of artistic and social-political struggles between the poet, Bayram al-Tunisi, and the composer, Sayyid Darwish, of which al-Tunisi provides an account in his essay on Darwish. Earlier in their careers, the two artists had been at odds with one another; Darwish had been a target of al-Tunisi's scathing criticism due to his work with the theatre company of Najib al-Rihani, which was seen by al-Tunisi (and apparently also by 'Aziz 'Id)⁹³⁶ as overtly commercial, lewd, and immoral.⁹³⁷ Darwish, who did not seem to object to al-Tunisi's

⁹³⁵ Bayram al-Tunisi, "Sayyid Darwish," in *Mahmud Bayram al-Tunisi fi al-manfa: Hayatuhu wa-Atharuh*, ed. Muhammad Salih al-Jabiri (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1987), 328.

⁹³⁶ See Fatimah Rushdi, *al-Fannan 'Aziz 'Id*, 16-19.

⁹³⁷ Al-Tunisi, "Sayyid Darwish," 324.

characterization of Najib al-Rihani and his troupe,⁹³⁸ was ready for reconciliation with al-Tunisi (during their first meeting in 1921, while al-Tunisi's campaign against Darwish and al-Rihani was at its height, according to al-Tunisi's recollection).⁹³⁹ This reconciliation culminated in their collaboration on *Shahrazad* later in the same year. Yet, some form of artistic rivalry persisted in their collaboration. Al-Tunisi would challenge Darwish with difficult lines of poetry and unfamiliar meters that do not easily lend themselves to musical composition,⁹⁴⁰ only to be surprised by the spectacular music Darwish was able to compose for these difficult lines.⁹⁴¹ What we have here, therefore, is not merely a parody or a celebration of nationalism and militarism, but rather a collaboration/battle of two of the great artistic minds of the time (three if we include 'Aziz 'Id) wherein intentions and artistic form collided and coalesced. This textual *polyphony* of *Shahrazad* makes it difficult to provide a monolithic reading of it.

Instead of such a reading, therefore, I propose, in the Saidean tradition, a contrapuntal reading of the musical, which is sometimes credited with introducing polyphony/counterpoint⁹⁴² to modern Arabic music. In this textual counterpoint, many

⁹³⁸ See *ibid*, 324- 325. While Darwish agreed with al-Tunisi that al-Rihani's troupe was nothing more than *'isabatshawam* (roughly: a gang of Syrian/Levantine {thieve}s), he justified working with them on the basis that he needed their money, and that working with them was a chance for him to properly re-introduce the indigenous music heritage to his audience.

⁹³⁹ *ibid*, 325.

⁹⁴⁰ In al-Tunisi's words: فلم أقدم له من الأوزان إلا كل غريب مستعص لم يركب عليه لحن من قبل; *ibid*, 328.

⁹⁴¹ *ibid*, 328- 329.

⁹⁴² For example, Hasan al-Bahr Darwish, the grandson of Sayyid Darwish, in his website dedicated to the memory of his grandfather, describes the finale of the first act as an "experiment in harmony" through "polyphonic singing." See "Riwayat 'Shahrazad' (1921)," *Sayyid Darwish Khadim al-Musiqa*, http://www.sayeddarwishelbahr.net.eg/operettes/Sheherazad_1.htm. Musician and music archivist

elements come in: militarism along with the parody thereof (via French militarism and the parody thereof, through the adaptation of Offenbach's opera), budding Egyptian nationalism (perhaps with the Ottomanism it inherited, and to which both al-Tunisi and Darwish continued to subscribe), and a conflicting attitude towards the Egyptian army, the role it played, and the role it could/should play against the invaders. I am proposing counterpoint here not only as a metaphor for the various textual layers of the play, but rather as the literal characterization of the textual-musical texture of the play. Indeed, the musical counterpoint and polyphony of the play sometimes allowed contradictory things to be said all at once, on top of one another. The first scene of *Shahrazad* ends with a remarkable musical counterpoint⁹⁴³ (during which the lyrics are almost unintelligible): the soldiers sing the praises of Za'bullah, Za'bullah sings a military hymn, and the conspirators ridicule what he says (as nothing more than chatter and dreams) all at once. The words of Za'bullah, hidden within these layers of counterpoint and thus difficult to discern, sound like an anti-colonial fantasy, an instigation to violent revolt even:

دوسوا الأعادي بالقدم... ماحنناش في وقت الانتظار
 واملوا نفوسكم بالهمم... واملوا السما والأرض نار

Mustafa Sa'id, after a detailed analysis of the music in this scene, describes the musical texture as "something beautiful; I cannot call it 'counterpoint' [English in original], but I also cannot say he/it [Sayyid Darwish/ the musical structure] did not listen to or was not influenced by counterpoint. He/it is influenced by counterpoint, but came out with something different." Mustafa Sa'id, "al-Hiwarat al-Ghina'iyah- 5" *AMAR Foundation for Arab Music Archiving and Research*, <http://www.amar-foundation.org/145-musical-dialogues-in-arab-music-5-duroub/?lang=ar> [the link includes a full transcript and recording of the interview with Sa'id, and includes a recording of a 1932 rendition of the finale of ACT I]. I admit here that my characterization of the music as contrapuntal is a reductive paraphrase of this discussion. I take this license, however, since this study is not in musicology or music theory. Here I admit also collapsing counterpoint and polyphony into one another, though they are not always the same, neither in music theory (the former being a subset of the latter) or in textual analysis (the former belonging to Edward Said and the latter to Mikhail Bakhtin). For the purpose of the analysis above, however, the fine distinction between polyphony and counterpoint (whether in music theory or in textual analysis) will be acknowledged and overlooked.

⁹⁴³ See previous footnote.

يا عسكري اللي ينهزم... يقع في عار وأي عار
وإن داس على النفس وهجم... ربك كفيل بالانتصار⁹⁴⁴

The first of these lines is an instigation to violence: to step over the enemies (the invaders, perhaps? The British?) and the four lines, especially the first and last, carry a sense of urgency: in the first line we are told it is “no time for waiting” and in the last there is a call for endurance and offense, as if calling to arms someone who is reluctant to rise. It is difficult to imagine, in the insurrectionary atmosphere that followed WWI (which had already escalated into the 1919 uprising, and which will further escalate later into campaigns of terror and guerrilla warfare), and at the hands of anti-colonial nationalists like Darwish and al-Tunisi (both well versed in protest art), that this call to arms was not, at least on some level, a serious one. One could even go as far as reading the textual and musical counterpoints as a means to evade censorship; the buried call to arms by Za‘bullah may have been missed by the censors but caught by keen anti-colonial nationalist ears. We need not privilege an anti-colonial nationalist reading though also we should not ignore it.

With *Shahrazad*, therefore, we see the coming together of the elements of military ideology: the eroticized boy-soldier epitomizing national masculinity, the dichotomy between the stern masculine army and the licentious feminine spaces of singing, dancing, and flirting, various forms of uniform and rank fetish, phallic swords being passed by women from fathers to male lovers, etc. Some of these motifs appeared for the first time on the Egyptian stage in this musical, while others were enjoying their first full-fledged appearance after their timid introduction in the

⁹⁴⁴ *Mawsu‘at a‘lam al-Musiqa al-‘Arabiyyah: Sayyid Darwish*, ed. Izis Fathallah, Hasan Darwish, Mahmud Kamil, v.2, 609.

discourse of *al-Liwa*'. Yet even in *Shahrazad*, there is no clear triumph of military ideology, warped as it is in layers of parody. Although militarism is being appropriated here to deliver an anti-colonial message (*stomp on the enemy with your feet, this is not the time to wait*), there is no clear-cut adoption of militarism; militarism proper is in fact ridiculed through the figure of the warmongering Tartar/Turkish general, while the protagonist sometimes serves to insult rather than celebrate military values. Even the call to violence, hidden in the counterpoint of the final number of Act I, is not necessarily a call to militarization: it can also be understood as a call to revolutionary warfare, or even to terror (and indeed it was heeded through campaigns of revolutionary guerrilla warfare and terror in the ensuing years).

It is also important to note, through *Shahrazad*, the foreign genealogy of military ideology. Military ideology and its components: the boy-soldier, the division of space between what is stern and licentious, the trope of romantic monogamous love that binds the boy-soldier to his homeland through *her* surrogate, and accordingly the very gendering of the homeland as female and its ideal *son* as a male soldier, all come through French parody. These French tropes resonated well with the epistemically Francophile⁹⁴⁵ birth of the second wave of Egyptian nationalism; we should bear in mind that the epistemically Francophile *al-Liwa*' dreamed of a proper Egyptian army and, while its loyalty lied with the Ottoman army, looked up to the French army as a model. The effect of colonialism on Egyptian militarism, however, should also be

⁹⁴⁵ Here I find it necessary to qualify the francophilia of Mustafa Kamil and his project as epistemic. While at certain points in his career Kamil sought French assistance against the British, at other points he criticized the hypocrisy of French policies and its imperialist and expansionist trends. On the other hand, Kamil and his cohort were French-educated and tried to emulate the French and English models in many ways--whether through looking up to French militarism as shown earlier in this section, or through emulating the Western family and Western divorce norms, as discussed earlier in the chapter.

sought in how Egyptian militarism was a response to British colonialism: an internalization of British ideals of military masculinity, a response against the humiliation of an army run and kept from glory by its British overlords, and a fantasy that an Egyptian army could “step over” the invaders.

In the 1957 state-sponsored production, parody is largely elided and the motifs of militarism are largely presented to celebrate rather than spoof military ideology (one exception that remained an intentional parody in the 1957 production was the Tartar general Qara Adamughli. However, in the light of post-1952 Egyptian nationalist ideology that attempted to erase the pro-Ottoman roots of Egyptian nationalism, Qara Adamughli appeared as a parody of foreign/Turkish rule rather than of a military mind. Hence, we can see how even for the nationalist post-colonial regime of 1952, epistemic francophilia was relevant: the motifs of the glamorized boy-soldier and his eroticization, of patriotism as a monogamous romantic love affair with the homeland (or/through *her* surrogate), motifs that belong to European (especially French) romanticism and European (especially French and Prussian, and later British) nationalism-militarism, and that were originally intended as a parody of the militarisms of Prussia and the Second Empire, became adopted by Nasir’s ideological state apparatus and indigenized as tropes for Egyptian nationalism-militarism. The remake of *Shahrazad* by the state radio, therefore, signifies not only the trajectory of Egyptian militarism-nationalism, budding in the early 20th century and becoming part of official state ideology in the post-1952 era, but furthermore exemplifies the role of cultural imperialism, or colonial *cultural imposition*, in this trajectory.

But before addressing the question of post-1952 militarism, I want to address the period between 1921 and 1952 by focusing on a key movement that played a

significant role in bridging the gap between the second wave of Egyptian nationalism and the Free Officers Movement, namely *Misr al-Fatah*.

By the 1930s, the military cure envisioned by LeBon and his interlocutors in the French army had become a global phenomenon. Countries, economies, and state institutions were militarizing, and army boys were appearing almost everywhere in the West (as well as in Japan) as model national subjects.⁹⁴⁶ In Egypt, the movement of *Misr al-Fatah* (commonly though inadequately translated as *Young Egypt*) carried the banner of militarizing the nation.⁹⁴⁷ Taking inspiration from various nationalist movements (including the Young Ottomans of the 19th century, the Young Turks of the early 20th century, and the 19th century Young Italy movement, in addition to Fascism and Nazism, both of which it cut ties to as they revealed their imperialistic character)⁹⁴⁸ *Misr al-Fatah* called for Egyptian regeneration through militarization.⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴⁶ Commentators usually reduce their reading of the rise of militarism and nationalism in the early 20th century, especially the interwar era, to what later became known as the axis powers; the American National World War Two Museum, for example, presents one of the most obscene and crude versions of this narrative, where the War is attributed to the rise of militarism in Germany, Italy, and Japan, but no word is uttered about US militarism or British expansionism. This is clearly the victors' rewriting their own history. While Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy provide clear examples of the rise of militarism, this is the same period that the good white boy-soldier emerged as the ideal American subject, and then recycled into iconic superheroes like Superman and Captain America—taking the eroticization of military and national masculinity to new levels with their muscles and genitalia bulging through tight leather costumes made in the color of the American flag, and presented for a child audience (and of course for the national feminists there is Wonder Woman, clothed in a similarly star spangled outfit – with more skin showing, obviously, illustrating the wonderful non-essentialist nature of national military masculinity; it is telling in that context that *Hollywood* picked a former IDF soldier to play Wonder Woman in the 2017 film version).

⁹⁴⁷ For a comprehensive study of the tenure of *Misr al-Fatah* and its military ideology in the course of the 1930s, see 'Ali Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah wa Dawruha fi al-Siyasah al-Misriyyah 1933- 1941*, (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-'Ammah lil Kitab, 2010).

⁹⁴⁸ Ahmad Husayn, the founder of *Misr al-Fatah*, started off as an admirer of the Fascist and Nazi parties. His love affair with both ended after he visited Italy and Germany respectively; *ibid*, 464. His parting ways with fascism became terminal with the Italian invasion of Libya, and *Misr al-Fatah* went as far as calling for a military confrontation with Italy if it dared invade Egypt; *ibid*, 457. For more on *Misr al-Fatah*'s opposition to Italian colonization, see *ibid*, 464. *Misr al-Fatah* similarly had its falling out with Hitler over the Jewish question. For Husayn, Hitler's treatment of the Jews "went against human progress," and only went to serve Zionist designs in Palestine; *ibid*, 472.

The turning of the crowds into disciplined troops was a recurrent theme in the rhetoric of the movement and its founder, Ahmad Husayn. Husayn debuted his political career by calling for a “Pharaonic militia” that would “restore the glory” of Egypt. This militia would become, in Husayn’s vision, the “army of salvation” that would regenerate “*Misr al-Fatah*” the same way *Turkya al-Fatah* did.⁹⁵⁰ This vision for regeneration included the employment of military theatrics – for example the movement planned to camp between the pyramids through the night and march on the city “in organized columns” (a plan which in fact was never realized).⁹⁵¹ Militarizing the national crowd into organized troops and militias was therefore central to the project of Husayn. For this purpose, he created a para-military organization, the Green Shirts (modeled on Mussolini’s Black Shirts), and demanded of all the party members that they own a militia uniform.⁹⁵² Party publications highlighted and glamorized the image of the militia-boy in green uniform as the ideal son of Egypt (one of these ideal para-military sons of Egypt in green uniform was none other than Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir).⁹⁵³ The uniformed boy was being posited, perhaps for the first time, as the national imago (if we bracket Za‘bullah as at least potentially parodic, and as contesting the value of the uniform through his final departure from the military camp and return to Egypt). The gendering of the Egyptian national subject as masculine is

⁹⁴⁹ For an example on *Misr al-Fatah*’s rhetoric on regeneration (coded as *ba‘th*; lit. *resurrection*) see Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 89.

⁹⁵⁰ ‘Ali Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah wa Dawruha fi al-Siyasah al-Misriyyah 1941- 1933*, (Cairo: al-Hay’ah al-Misriyyah al-‘Ammah lil Kitab, 2010), 70. The reference is to the Ottoman coup carried by the Young Turks.

⁹⁵¹ Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 203. Though this idea never succeeded, Husayn provided a lucid description of what it could have been in an essay titled “*Misr al-Fatah wa al-Milishya al Far‘uniyah*”; *ibid*, 206.

⁹⁵² Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 90, 103- 104, 107.

⁹⁵³ Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 164.

achieved here through the imagery of military masculinity (and through the movement's explicit avowal to stem out national effeminacy, or *takhannuth*).⁹⁵⁴ On the other side, Egypt is produced as a woman, as evident in the very name of the party: *Misr al-Fatah* a gendering that is lost in the translation of the name as *Young Egypt*. *Al-Fatah* means the young woman; literally the name of the party means *Egypt the Young Woman* or *Egypt is the Young Woman*. Gendering the nation as a female and a woman is a staple of nationalist-military ideology, conscripting and mobilizing national masculinity in protection of the helpless woman that is the homeland, sometimes portrayed as the beloved, sometimes as the mother, and in all cases as a *damsel-in-distress*.⁹⁵⁵

Misr al-Fatah also called for militarizing the Egyptian political and social arenas; state institutions were to be run, in Husayn's vision, in an efficient militarized

⁹⁵⁴Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 126

⁹⁵⁵ For how this gendered dynamic is essential to modern nationalisms (whether European or postcolonial), see Joseph Massad, "Conceiving the Masculine: Gender and Palestinian Nationalism," in *The Persistence of the Palestinian Question: Essays on Zionism and the Palestinians*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 41- 54. For how the interplay between the masculine soldier and female land was essential for Zionism and for a Zionist narrative of Jewish redemption see *ibid*, 44. For how this gendered interplay, its European-colonial genealogy notwithstanding, became part of Palestinian nationalism and the narrative of Palestinian liberation, see *ibid* 44- 45. For more on this gendered interplay (between a phallic soldiery and the land that simultaneously serves as their virginal mother and beloved) see Massad, "The Post-Colonial Colony: Time, Space, and bodies in Israel/Palestine," in *Persistence of the Palestinian Question*, 32- 33 (although this analysis focuses on this interplay in a settler colonial context, it could be generalized, *mutatis mutandis*, to other colonial projects and to post-colonial nationalisms that emulate their colonizers). All this can be traced to the Lacanian explication of how the child, in the patriarchal family, desires to be the phallus of/for the mother; see Jacques Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the École Freudienne*, trans. Jacqueline Rose, ed. Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 84, 94. This reading points to an intersection between family and military ideologies, to which I will return at the end of this chapter. My argument here is not that Lacanian psychoanalysis provides trans-historical frameworks with which we can read power and ideology in various cultural and national contexts but rather that colonial and post-colonial nationalist ideologies adopt the very mode of power that called forth the Freudian analysis that was later elaborated/revised by Lacan. In other words, I am not taking Lacan to Egypt, but rather arguing that *Misr al-Fatah* (and other adherents to military ideology in Egypt and elsewhere) was marching towards Lacan.

fashion, and the whole of Egypt was to be transformed into “military barracks.”⁹⁵⁶ Militarization was envisioned as a force that would regenerate/resurrect Egypt,⁹⁵⁷ and was thus opposed to, or set as the cure/antidote for, the various setbacks that caused Egypt’s degeneration/death. Militarization was also opposed to moral degeneration and licentiousness, or *tahattuk*, in the discourse of *Misr al-Fatah*.⁹⁵⁸ The opposition between militarized space and licentious space, and the military as antidote to licentiousness, is evident in the kind of conduct the movement expected of its members/soldiers who endorse a military spirit, ethos, and way of life: they should (in addition to owning the uniform and contributing money to the organization) preserve a healthy body, abstain from drinking alcohol or visiting “*dur al lahw*” (lit. the houses of amusement/pastime: a generic term that usually means bars, brothels, and gambling parlors, though it may also be extended to mean cafés and other leisurely hangouts), and to only eat, drink, and buy Egyptian products.⁹⁵⁹

This opposition between licentious spaces and military discipline is also the opposition between chaos and order; a declaration by the party proclaimed “We live in a state of disorder, but we must live in a state of order. We therefore have to gather the youth in one place, habituate them to order and obedience, have them don one uniform, chant the same anthem, and provide them with a clear slogan and a specific

⁹⁵⁶ The charter turning *jam‘iyat misr al fatah* into *hizb misr al-fatah* calls for “resurrecting Egypt anew” and turning it “into military barracks, from Alexandria all the way to the equator [as Egypt in their view also included the Sudan], so that every Egyptian would strive for the glory and greatness of Egypt”; Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 97.

⁹⁵⁷ See *ibid.*

⁹⁵⁸ Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 126.

⁹⁵⁹ Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 127.

purpose.”⁹⁶⁰ *Misr al-Fatah*’s vision thus fetishized order, but it was military order, or order modeled on the military, and not the order-qua-harmony and comfort that existed in the discourse of al-Shidyaq or the ‘Urabi movement. This new form of order was no longer coded as *rahah*, (lit. comfort), a term that does not match the sternness, asceticism, and masculinity of military discipline. By then, the signifier of order had become the word *nizam*, which literally means organization and invokes a sense of a top-down ordering (and which classically referred to the organization of the poetic meter; although it is rarely used in that sense in contemporary Arabic, the term conjures the strict organization of humans and things as if they were syllables in a poetic meter). More importantly, the term *nizam* in Ottoman Turkish (and modern Persian) referred to military order or the military as such, ever since the modern Ottoman army was named *nizam jadid* (Arabic for *new order*). This is testament to the understanding of order as modeled on the military or the military as the paragon of order since the early 19th century. This was also the term used by Muhammad ‘Ali to denote the army he created and the military order he introduced. Instead of *rahah*, therefore, which mystifyingly connected order to comfort and which referred to order as a harmony of things rather than their strict organization, *nizam* came in with its invocation of a strict ordering, discipline, and hint of (Ottoman) militarization. The change in terminology mirrors the change in the conception of order and discipline, the coming to fruition of the modernizing-colonizing effort to model the organization of the state and society on the blueprint of the military barracks.⁹⁶¹

⁹⁶⁰Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 163- 164.

⁹⁶¹ For how the military barracks, alongside other modern disciplinary institutions, becomes the model for organizing the disciplined society and the polity that embodies it, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 140, 307. For how the panopticon “unlocks” modes of discipline that are otherwise contained in the barracks alongside other disciplinary institutions (namely the school and

In spite of these clear signs of military ideology (down to the marching uniformed troops), one major difference remains: it was the militia, not the military, that was celebrated by Misr al-Fatah. The party called not for the subjugation of the country by the military, but rather for the militarizing of the nation. It is not the march of a regular army that the party celebrated and called for, but rather the march of the nation in the form of paramilitary troops. Its model subject was not the conscript, the regular soldier, but rather the militiaman. Finally, its call for militarizing state institutions was never a call for the army to take over these institutions.

Although Misr al-Fatah's efforts to (para)militarize the nation was met with little success,⁹⁶² the movement represents a clear link between early (second wave) Egyptian nationalism and Nasserist nationalism (a link through which we can trace, if partially, the trajectory of military ideology from the former to the latter). Misr al-Fatah was in many ways inspired by Mustafa Kamil and the National Party. The name of the party was inspired by a speech by Mustafa Kamil calling for the regeneration of Egypt, proclaiming: "I want to stir up, within senile Egypt, the Young Egypt."⁹⁶³

the workshop), see 208- 209. For how Muhammad 'Ali's project to modernize-colonize Egypt rested on the importation of the military model both to create a new army and to organize society like a barracks, see Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 14, 34- 62. It is also worth noting that *nizam* in modern Arabic came to mean *regime*. The key revolutionary slogan in 2011, in Tunisia and Egypt, was "al-sha'b yurid isqat al-Nizam". (the people demand the downfall of the regime).

⁹⁶² One of its limited successes was the creation, with the help of their ally, prime minister 'Ali Mahir, *al-Jaysh al-Murabit* (roughly *the steadfast army*). This para-military unit, which was entrusted to their ally 'Abd al-Rahman 'Azzam is speculated to have played a role in supporting guerilla fighters against Zionism in 1948 and against the British during the Canal confrontations leading up to the events of 1952. See Shalabi, 189n15. See also see Rana Yusri, "Fi Dhikra Miladih: 'Abd al-Rahman 'Azzam Guevara al-'Arab" *Al-Bawaba News*, 9/3/2014, <http://www.albawabhnews.com/444878>

⁹⁶³ أريد أن أوقظ في مصر الهرمة مصر الفتاة. See "al-Za'im al-Watani Ahmad Husayn, Sani' Misr al-Fatah wa al-Munadi al-Awwal bi al-Istiqlal wa Rafd al-Taba'iyyah" *al-Sha'b*, www.elshaab.org/news/253636/ الزعيم الوطني أحمد حسين صانع مصر الفتاة والمنادي الأول بالاستقلال www.elshaab.org/news/253636/ ورفض التبعية. I am indebted to Majdi Ahmad Husayn, who is currently imprisoned by al-Sisi's regime, and with whom I had an extended conversation about the history of *Hizb al-'Amal* and its roots in

Faithful to the project of Mustafa Kamil, *Misr al-Fatah* (especially after it outgrew its Pharaonic phase) maintained a mixture of Egyptian Nationalism and Pan-Islamism reminiscent of the line of the National Party. Later the second man in Young Egypt, Fathi Radwan, defected from *Misr al-Fatah* and joined the National Party, and then formed *al-Hizb al-Watani al-Jadid* (the New National Party) and claimed it to be the true heir of the legacy of Mustafa Kamil. This is the same Fathi Radwan who served as ‘Abd al-Nasir’s Minister of National Guidance and was one of his close advisers; the career of Fathi Radwan thus exemplifies and personifies the link between the National Party, *Misr al-Fatah*, and ‘Abd al-Nasir. The link of course goes deeper than the hiring a former member of *Misr al-Fatah* as a chief propagandist; ‘Abd al-Nasir himself, as mentioned above, was a member of *Misr al-Fatah* and received training as a member of its militia.⁹⁶⁴

As with the Nasserist rhetoric (discussed in the previous chapter), *Misr al-Fatah* prescribed a military antidote that did not necessarily subdue the nation to the army, but prescribed the military march to turn the licentious crowd into the glorified national masses. The difference remains, however, that in *Misr al-Fatah*’s fantasies, the national masses marched *like* the army, in the Nasserist rhetoric the national masses marched *side by side with* the army (this was before the pro-Sisi national masses marched *underneath* the army and the army helicopter that provided Sisi’s

Misr al-Fatah during the summer of 2005, for clearing up the common confusion that Ahmad Husayn (Majdi’s father) named his party after the Young Turks movement. Of course Mustafa Kamil, the staunch supporter of Sultan ‘Abd al-Hamid, never viewed the Young Turks in a positive light. *Al-Liwa’* would only start to write favorably about the Young Turks after their coup in June-July 1908, 5-6 months after Kamil’s death.

⁹⁶⁴ Shalabi points out that Nasir, in addition to being a cardholding member, was part of the militia, citing a picture Ahmad Husayn shared with him, wherein Nasir appeared in the movement’s green uniform, but points out that this membership did not last more than a year. See Shalabi, *Misr al-Fatah*, 164. In Nasir’s biography, edited by Huda ‘Abd al-Nasir, Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir’s tenure in Misr al-Fatah is expanded to two years; Huda ‘Abd al-Nasir, “al-Sirah al-Dhatiyyah.”

Nasserist film director with a military vantage point, surrendering power to the army and giving it *a mandate* to kill).⁹⁶⁵

But even under Nasir, we do not see the rise of a military ideology *in toto*. It is true that the Nasir regime applied the military antidote to the crowds (turning them into troop-like masses), and it is true that the Nasir regime took militarization a step further than the role it played in the rhetoric of *Misr al-Fatah* (militarization was transformed from an ideal, or a fiction, of good governance and good discipline, into the actual control of state institutions and society at large by an oligarchy of army officers), but even then the state ideology did not uniformly centre itself around a military Subject and/or imago through which national subjects were interpellated. Nasir himself appeared sometimes in civilian clothing, sometimes in military uniform. Even in the aftermath of the 1956 war, works of state propaganda and state cultural production allowed for civilian and/or paramilitary ideal images to appear side by side with, or at the expense of, the military imago; the citizen-in-arms, the *fida'i* in 'Abd al-Halim Hafiz's songs and the political activist in *al-Qadiyyah* (as shown in the previous chapters) are cases in point. It is, evidently, beyond the purpose of this study to establish the extent to which Nasir's regime was a military regime.⁹⁶⁶ My point here, however, is that in terms of rhetoric, of regime discourse, and its ideological representations, a military ideology that subdues the masses and promotes the army man at the expense of other (civilian and para-military) imagoes or model Subjects is

⁹⁶⁵ After seizing power on July 24th, 2013, 'Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi, called on the Egyptian people to march in order to give him a *tafwid* (mandate, authorization) to fight "the expected terror and violence." Demonstrations ensued on 26/7/2013, giving the army the authorization it needed to face the "expected terror and violence" of the Muslim Brothers and their supporters through preemptively slaughtering them.

⁹⁶⁶ For an interesting study that problematizes the common conception that Nasir regime was simply a military regime, arguing for a more complex struggle among various security apparatuses- including the army, see Hazem Qandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*.

not present *in toto*, and was often mitigated by the veneration of the civilian masses and the promotion of the political activist and/or militant.

It was under Sadat, however, that militarism became the dominant state ideology. Parallel to the demise of the venerated masses in regime discourse and the re-emergence of the licentious crowd and licentious infantilized activists, Egyptian state ideology witnessed a rise in venerating, valorizing, and submitting to the military, along with a proliferation of military imagoes. Under Sadat- and especially after the October 1973 war, Egyptian cinema started producing, en masse, films about the Egyptian army, and circulating the image of the soldier as a model, idealized, glamorized, and sometimes eroticized national subject, and about the 1973 war as a moment of national and personal redemption.⁹⁶⁷ Unlike Nasir who sometimes appeared as a military man in uniform and sometimes as a revolutionary leader in civilian clothes, Sadat, till the hour of his death, appeared in an elaborate military uniform – reportedly designed by Pierre Cardin, as if emulating his Nazi forerunners who turned to Hugo Boss to produce their fetishized military imago. Sadat’s (almost Nazi) fascination with military paraphernalia was not limited to his uniform fetish; he also showed an interest in the goose-step and in swinging his marshal’s scepter-like baton (the phallus of the father?). Perhaps like the Nazis and like Wilhelm Reich’s “salesgirl [and] average secretary” and in line with “political reaction that consciously exploits these sexual interests,” Sadat understood “the sexual effect of a uniform, the erotically provocative effect of rhythmically executed goose-stepping, the

⁹⁶⁷ One of the most famous films dealing with the October War is *al-Rasasah la Tazal fi Jaybi* (1974). Another notable example is *al-Umr Lahzah* (1978). Other films that used the 1973 war as a backdrop for redemption include *Budur* (1974), and *al-Wafa’ al-Azim* (1974).

exhibitionist nature of militaristic procedure.”⁹⁶⁸ Military parades became an integral part of the regime’s theatrics of power. Whereas the important annual event for Nasir was the commemoration of the 1952 ‘revolution’ (an event that necessitated providing a populist civilian cover for the 1952 military takeover), Sadat made the commemoration of the October War his main annual event, and hosted an annual elaborate military parade for the occasion. Time and again, Sadat emphasized, through explicit theatrics, the military nature of his regime—or at least of the ideology this regime rested upon.

Militarism and the Family

In fact Sadat’s rule provides an apt occasion to bring in family and military ideologies together. It was under Sadat that both militarism and the family became (almost official) state ideologies. Sadat himself embodied, or strove to embody, both the figure of the military commander and of the father/head of the household; in a way he tried to hold the phallus of the father both in its familial form and its military form—in addition to the various military phallic objects that were raised in his honor and saluted him during these parades; for example, the *manassah*, the platform, where he stood to watch these parades, was built in the shape of a missile platform ready for launch, emulating the scores of missiles and armed troops which marched in its vicinity. Furthermore, it is difficult not to consider Sadat’s marshal’s baton as a phallic object. Both figures, the father and the army man, and both phalluses, the paternal and the military come together in the encounter with the secondary school

⁹⁶⁸ Reich, *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, 32.

female activist who asked about democratic rule and which we examined earlier. Sadat's response was to infantilize her and declare himself the elder of the family, while commenting on her physical attractiveness; he acted both as the exhibitionist military man sharing his military virility with the attractive school-girl, and the protective father who was beyond questioning (thus producing the young woman's body as simultaneously the fair target of military violation as well as the object of military protection, a paradoxical position which the army tried to assume in the 2011 virginity test's incident and in its justification by army generals).

It is not a coincidence that these two ideologies appeared together, or that their embodiment, the Subject through which subjects are interpellated, coincided in the same figure (i.e. the ruler acting as both the Father and the military commander, as the case was with Sadat). Both family and military ideologies are similar at the core, with a clear line of command, a rigid hierarchy, and a masculine figure at the apex.⁹⁶⁹ If we believe the psychoanalytic account or its Althusserian derivatives of how subjectivity is elicited within the family, where authority is initially experienced as the law of the father, and where the law of the father is internalized through the Oedipus complex and its eventual resolution, and where the phallus of the father plays a central role in constructing the authority of the father through love (the father has a more pleasing phallus than the mother's breasts) and fear (the father is capable of castrating the male child), then we can see how the nuclear family produces (or plays

⁹⁶⁹ It is important to note here, yet again, Fanon's observation that both centralized military authority and centralized paternal authority work together "[i]n Europe and in every so-called civilized or civilizing country," and how a rise in one inevitably leads to a rise in the other; Fanon *Black Skin, White Masks*, 120- 121.

a role in producing) the subjugation to paternal authority that lies outside the family.⁹⁷⁰

If we furthermore accept Freud's argument in *Group Psychology* that leadership is produced through identification with the ego ideal (itself a product of the Oedipus complex and its resolution and therefore an effect of the father, his law, and his phallus) then we see how the nuclear/oedipal family prepares the subject it produces to identify the models of masculinity (i.e. army men) as ego ideals and ideal leaders.⁹⁷¹ It is as if the modern family produces the subjects that are docile to modes of patriarchal/paternal power and that could be thus readily inserted into systems of militarism (whether through joining the army and heeding the commands of the unit leader, who replaces the symbolic father and resonates with the ego ideal now internalized as a superego, or through becoming subjects of political systems that glamorize and idealize the military along with other models of power and authority). Or conversely, it may be that family ideology is itself a product – or is further maintained and intensified by- modes of power that exist outside the family.

Power, especially (though not exclusively) in the Western tradition has used, for symbolic and practical purposes, a panoply of phallic objects, from the medieval

⁹⁷⁰ This understanding of paternal authority as predicated on the contentious relationship with the father and his phallus (i.e. on the Oedipus complex and its resolution through internalizing paternal authority) is based on the thought of Sigmund Freud, especially *The Ego and the Id*, 23-33. For Freud's application of this theory on the level of political authority, see Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, (London: Routledge, 1950), especially 174-175. Furthermore, the above account of 'the law of the father' is based on Jacques Lacan's reading/revision of Freud, see for example Jacques Lacan, "The Meaning of the Phallus," in *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the École Freudienne*, ed. Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, 74- 85, and "Guiding Remarks for a Congress on Feminine Sexuality," in *Feminine Sexuality*, 86- 98. My approach to the writings of Freud and Lacan as describing (and to an extent deconstructing) the ideologies of masculinity and patriarchy rather than reaffirming and essentializing these two phenomena, derives from Juliet Mitchell's inventive reading/reformulation of Freudian-Lacanian psychoanalysis in *Psychoanalysis and Feminism: A Radical Reassessment of Freudian Psychoanalysis*, (New York: Basic Books, 2000) – see also her introduction to *Feminine Sexuality*, 1- 26.

⁹⁷¹ Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, esp. 37- 42.

sovereign's 'power of the sword' to modern weaponry. The commonplace critique of masculinist militarisms is to highlight how these phallic symbols are overvalued because of their resemblance to the male organ; but what if we reverse the critique? What if it is the male organ, in the first place, that is overvalued because of its resemblance to emblems of power?⁹⁷² Perhaps the phallic object produced the phallus, rather than vice versa. My point here is not to choose one direction of critique (the phallic object produced the phallus, or the phallus produced the phallic object) but to highlight the intertwining between family ideology and other modes of power (most notably militarism). Historically, both appeared in the 19th century, and both were universalized through the colonial moment. In Egypt, both appeared together, at the beginning of the 20th century, and both became official or semi-official state ideologies in the 1970s under Sadat (at a time when the Egyptian regime decided to act as a client for Western and imperialist interests, and at the moment of the unrestrained and unchecked colonial *cultural imposition* in/on Egypt).

Yet, the Sadat regime did not represent an unchallenged triumph of family and military ideologies. Even Sadat's propagandists could not help but notice how he "dressed like Hitler and acted like Charley Chaplin."⁹⁷³ It was, eventually, within his armed forces, amidst his October military parade, in his military uniform, and under his phallic *manassah* that Sadat was assassinated (the irony is more compelling when one realizes that Sadat refused to wear a bullet-proof vest under his military uniform because he wanted to look slim in his uniform; Sadat was literally killed, rather than saved, by his military ideology). Similarly, the paternal aura and family ideology did

⁹⁷² Which seems to be the position Fanon is suggesting. He highlights the rise in paternal authority as a result of the rise in militarism, rather than vice versa; Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 120- 121.

⁹⁷³ Najib Mahfouz, *Yawma Qutila al-Za'im*, (Cairo, Dar Misr lil Tiba 'ah, [1983?]), 47.

not deter rebellion; it was ‘his children’ who eventually killed him. The Oedipal drama did not lead to the complete internalization of the law of the father, but rather to the literal killing the father. Once again the irony is complete by the accounts reporting the last words of Sadat to be, addressing his assailants: *leih keda ya ibni* (why did you do this, my son?). Other accounts suggest that his last words were *mish ma ‘qul* (unbelievable, unfathomable, impossible), highlighting how the delusional dictator was oblivious to public resentment against him, perhaps masked by his self-interpellation as father.

From then on, pro-regime propaganda tried repeatedly to reinstate and sustain family and army ideologies, with varying emphasis on either, to varying degrees of success, and simultaneously to sustain political authority through the coalescing and congealing of these two ideologies. The description of the facebook group *Ana Asif Ya Rayyis* invoked both Mubarak’s alleged fatherly figure side by side with his military past. Because he is like a father, and because he fought in 1973, his people should not, according to *Ana Asif Ya Rayyis*, go against him. This logic was rehearsed by a number of Mubarak propagandists and by Mubarak himself. In his speech on February 1st 2011, Mubarak opened by stating that he addressed the Egyptian people “the way a father addresses his children.” He concluded the speech by reminding his audience that he fought for Egypt. Once again Mubarak was attempting to bring together the figures of the military man and the father. Just like with his predecessor, this combination of military and family ideologies did not

prevent Mubarak's downfall; instead it provided his opponents with rich material that was used to ridicule him, his delusions, and his failed paternal status.⁹⁷⁴

Of course this should not be confused with revolutionary success. That some of the demonstrators were willing to march hand in hand with the army, chanting "the people and the army are one hand," that the opposition was divided on whether to support the rule of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), that a significant part of the opposition supported the 2013 coup and subsequent massacres, are all testaments to the momentary triumph of military ideology. In addition, these 'revolutionary failures' can be read as testament to a deep internalization of paternal authority, a deeply rooted Oedipus complex acting as a vector for outside authority, a superego entangled with inherent guilt that constantly stops the good subject short of complete revolt, as suggested by the psychoanalytic variants of the Frankfurt School⁹⁷⁵ and of 70s feminism.⁹⁷⁶ Military and family ideologies might have therefore thwarted the 2011 revolution, but the mocking of paternal authority and of military

⁹⁷⁴ For example, the Egyptian actress Muna Hala hosted an independent show on YouTube, where she collected a number of statements by Mubarak and his supporters stressing his fatherly quality, and then went on to ridicule how this paternalist logic assumed that once the president-father left, the country would fall into chaos; "if the father leaves, who will teach the country some manners?!" Hala sarcastically exclaimed. See "Monatov– Monatov- aqwaafam al-mawsim," YouTube Video 6:35, posted by "TheMonatov," April 9, 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLLoyOazwiQ&feature=relmfu>. In a similar fashion, a video from the 18-day sit in of January-February 2011 shows a young demonstrator chanting "Mubarak is my father and I wish to be orphaned"; "'Abuya Husni wa Nifsi 'Atyattim RabbinaYantaqim Minhu" YouTube Video 1:25, posted by "hanoon71," February 17, 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pk-a3lGF-y8>

⁹⁷⁵ Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), 91- 93.

⁹⁷⁶ "The patriarchal law speaks to and through each person in his unconscious; the reproduction of the ideology of human society is thus assured in the acquisition of the law by each individual. The unconscious that Freud analysed could thus be described as the domain of the reproduction of culture or ideology," Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, 413. See also the discussion in pp. 407- 416.

masculinity never stopped. Even the rise of ‘Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi, who played the figure of the military man (and potential male lover to Egyptian men and women) more than he did the father, was accompanied by parodies of military masculinity (including ones presented by the very comedian who played a major role in mobilizing his audience for the June 30th demonstrations, Basim Yusuf).⁹⁷⁷

Let us then return to and rephrase the question with which I started the inquiry into the history of militarism in Egypt; if the question remains “when did the army become popular?” the answer is that an incremental process that started with ‘Abbas Hilmi’s restoration (and sblated the ‘Urabi project), along with the influence of British, French, and German models of militarism, eventually led to the popularity of the army, but that the unparalleled popularity of the army was not evident until the Sadat years (especially after the 1973 war). But if we rephrase the question, however, as “when did military and family ideologies triumph?” the answer is that both enjoyed momentary triumphs, especially under Sadat, and that both came together to play a role in undermining the revolutionary cause in 2011, not only through providing regime propagandists with rhetorical tools to use against the opposition, but also through the hegemonic effect they played on a political opposition and a (failed) revolution that were not able (or did not want or seek to) to challenge the hegemonic position of the military as the protector of the nation and the epitome of its good

⁹⁷⁷ After the Gamahir skit, discussed in the previous chapter, Yusuf moved to his final skit where he broadcast a speech by al-Sisi in which he explained that, in lieu of censorship, the army will attempt to “extend an arm” to interfere with the various media institutions. As Basim feigned attempting to comment on the video (invoking the sexual insinuation of the arm the army is to extend into the media), an arm (the army’s, or al-Sisi’s) appeared, started moving around him, took away his script and placed a different script in front of him, slapped him on the face, and eventually attacked his crotch. The arm here can be understood as standing for the military phallus, and the final attack on Yusuf’s crotch stands for the castrating power of the military. Consciously or unconsciously, this skit shows a deep understanding of how both military masculinity and the law/phallus of the father (or the castrating phallus more broadly) come together, and parodies both. It is worth noting that after this episode Basim Yusuf was banned from CBC and had to look for another venue.

subjectivity (chanting from day 1, that is from January 28th 2011, “the people and the army are together one hand”) or to imagine alternative societal formations and coupling/kinship other than the modern nuclear family in response to claims that they were not heeding the moral and sexual codes of the family. If we are, however, speaking of an uncontested triumph of the two ideologies, then the answer is *never*.

This means that, in Egypt the Oedipus complex, along with the various figurations of the psyche that are products of modern Western/colonial institutions of subjectivation, is neither fully triumphant nor completely absent, neither fully indigenized nor fully foreign, but is in a contentious position, engaged in a struggle to impose itself. The same could be said about the situation of institutions of modern subjectivation; it would be absurd to argue that the modern nuclear family has not been internalized and indigenized as a paragon of social organization and as the upholder of morality. Equally absurd would be to argue that the army has not become the symbol of the nation, the epitome of nationalism. And yet, both institutions face contentiousness, resistance, and ridicule, a fact that sometimes forces the authorities to intervene, sometimes by force, to reinstate these institutions, only to face more contentiousness, resistance, and ridicule.

Conclusion

The modern State, in Egypt and elsewhere, sustains a discursive division of space into proper spaces that open themselves to the gaze of the State and regiment themselves within its order, and licentious spaces that evade this gaze and escape this regimentation. This division of space in a (post)colonial context symptomatizes and sustains a colonial psychic trauma and neurosis.

This dissertation has argued that in Egyptian pro-State ideological representations since the late 19th century (much like in its Western forerunners and counterparts), the State was entrusted with upholding proper behavior, and thus proper *subjectivity*, whereas subjects and social spaces that defy or are imagined to defy the State or to evade its gaze were produced as licentious. The terms of the production of this conception of the State and the licentious were dictated by colonial *cultural impositions* (a term which I take after Fanon and read in an Althusserian and psychoanalytic light): the conceptions of the licentious were almost always predicated on Europe's racial other (and the Arab/Muslim figured prominently among the litany of racial others), whereas proper spaces and proper subjectivities were produced through institutions and psychic formations/modes of subjectivation which were imposed by colonialism.

In Chapter 1 we explored the conception of the State as the upholder of the upright order of things. We have also explored how challenging the State or evading its gaze is imagined as the collapse of order, and as the spread of chaos, abomination, and degeneration. The figures of Europe's racial other, of the infantile, childlike and

pubescent, and of the feminine (all understood as lower evolutionary forms corresponding to the category of degeneration) persistently stood for this chaos, and thus became the metonyms *par excellence* of the revolutionary/licentious crowd. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the recurrence of sexual chaos as both a trope and a telos of revolution and revolt in pro-State and counterrevolutionary representations. Building on the recurrence of the trope of sexual chaos, Chapter 2 argued for a paradox in the logic of the voyeuristic State, wherein the State and the public proclaim their ignorance of what transpires in the licentious space, and yet by virtue of this very ignorance produce these spaces as licentious (usually invoking a licentiousness of a sexual nature). The State simultaneously is ignorant of what is hatched behind its back and certain that what is hatched is subversive, licentious, and sexual: an *indescribable orgy*. This paradox was sustained through the continuous appropriation and reinvention of the *topos* of the ancient Greek Dionysian orgy and, in a (post)colonial context, through the *cultural imposition* of this *topos*. In various manifestations and appropriations of the Dionysian orgy and against various modes of state-gaze, the Oriental appears as the model for what escapes the gaze of the State and defies the modes of signification which are necessary for the operation of this gaze. The Oriental, therefore, is in many ways the quintessentially *orgiastic*. This mutual mapping of the Oriental and the orgiastic, or more broadly of Europe's racial other and its conception of the licentious, has operated, at least since the 19th century, as I showed in Chapter 3, to produce Europe's own licentious crowd. Europe saw the menace of the racial other not only in the colonies, but also in its own metropolitan crowd, especially when rioting or revolting. A *colonial revolving door* thus exists through which Europe's racial other is mapped onto its own crowds, and its understanding of its own crowds is mapped onto and imposed on its colonies and its

racial others. In Chapter 4 I turned to this *imposition* in an Egyptian context and explored the colonial traumas this imposition sustains and/or reflects. Through a Fanonian lens, Chapter 4 showed how Egyptian and Arab representations of the licentious space internalize the Orientalist and colonialist presumptions of the West, and how the colonial neurosis is evident even in accounts which try to reverse the Orientalist dichotomy of respectable Occident and licentious Orient. The application of this colonial *cultural imposition* in Egypt has thus sustained a colonial trauma and neurosis in which various versions of the self are always produced as licentious, whereas the model proper subject, and by extension the ideal ego and ideal imago, is always modeled on the white-other. *Cultural imposition*, furthermore, works not only through the imposition of a white imago and ego ideal, but also through imposing specifically European-bourgeois institutions as the spaces of proper subjectivation, or, to borrow from the Althusserian diction, as “ideological state apparatuses” (most prominently the family and the army)—which I have shown in Chapter 5.

The State, then, produces the modern, proper subject (ideally white or modeled on a discursively-produced whiteness); it represses the collective for the individual to emerge, the feminine (which it classically contained in the domestic) for the masculine to emerge and for proper distinction between the sexes and their gender roles to be maintained, the infantile for the adult, the canaille for the properly behaved citizens, modeling their behavior on bourgeois notions of propriety and of proper social distinction (often embodied in a system of private property sanctioned by the State); it represses the licentious for the proper to emerge, and it represses Europe’s racial other (most notably, for the purpose of this study, the Arab, but also the Oriental, the savage, the indigenous, the backward who fails to assimilate into colonial modernity) for the modern to emerge. This latter form of

repression/emergence, colonial in its essence (or conversely forming the essence of colonialism) was at work in the metropole as much as in the colonies: repressing the Native American, the African, the Turk, the Muslim, and the Arab was as important in the Statist/counterrevolutionary discourses surrounding the French Revolution and (especially) the Paris Commune, as much as it was necessary for the civilizing mission the colonialists, their local clients, and even their political adversaries, sought to implement in the colonies. In a way, the repression of (the) ‘Arabi (the figure through which Ahmad ‘Urabi was represented and with which he was conflated, but also the figure that stood for everything that was wrong and Arab in the *émeute*) was the common goal of British colonial authorities, of Egyptian authorities, and of the 20th century Egyptian nationalists, a repression which was necessary for the production of 20th century Egyptian nationalism. This was evident both in the institutional political project sponsored by ‘Abbas Hilmi II, and in the rhetorical and discursive political and social project inaugurated by Egyptian nationalists who orbited Hilmi’s restoration project. For example, as we saw in the last chapter, as well as in Chapter 1, Egyptian militarism was predicated on the repression and abnegation of ‘Arabi (of Ahmad ‘Urabi, of his peasant background and his traditional education—seen as opposed to Western military education, of Oriental meekness and nepotism, etc.) and the modern family was predicated on the repression and abnegation of other indigenous formations (polygamy, polygyny, customary marriages, etc.). The repudiation of Egypt’s Arabness in the discourse of Anwar al-Sadat and of contemporary Egyptian isolationist-nationalists can be seen as a continuation of the repression and abnegation of (the) ‘*Arabi*.

Later, the figure of the Islamist figured prominently in the pro-State discourse. In a way the figure of the Islamist (as terrorist, as anti-modern, as sexual

savage) replaced that of ‘Arabi. The Islamist, in the imagination of the State and its propagandists, condensed the figure of the dissident who disrupts the moral, metaphysical, and civilizational order of the State (i.e. the figure of the modern dissident/terrorist) along with the figure of the pre/anti-modern savage who refuses to live in a world conditioned by (colonial) modernity (the acquiescence of many Islamists in modernist and colonial notions notwithstanding).

Egyptians were thus made to see themselves through a civilizational gaze that is essentially white European and colonial, not only in its biases concerning the kinds of subjects it privileges, but also in its very constitution as a gaze with an impetus to invade all social spaces; one that characterizes modern/liberal modes of power, inherits the Christian Confessional, and is opposed to the extant Arab-Islamic historical practice of leaving what is hidden hidden as examined in Chapter 2. This is the same gaze that worked hand in hand with colonial violence. Anxious about the spaces that it cannot reach or visualize (e.g. the female body behind the veil, secluded spaces produced by Orientalism as the Harem, indigenous – sometimes polygamous-marital practices not registered with or legible to the State, collectivities that defy the modern State’s mode of individual interpellation), this gaze provided the European State with a drive to open up these spaces, if violently. This violent opening up for spaces to the gaze of the State has been taken up by the postcolonial State. The epistemic forms this violence took included self-abnegation (as explored in Chapter 4), and seeing the self through the lens of the colonizer, and even the reversal of colonial charges while failing to subvert the colonial assumptions or crack the colonial lens (Chapter 4). That the Egyptian vernacular often makes reference to *almazhar al-hadari* (civilizational/civilized appearance) and to *manzarna quddam al-ajanib* (how we appear to {European/Western} foreigners) is testament to this

civilizational gaze through which we came to see ourselves. The same acceptance of the Western civilizational gaze as a mode to represent and see oneself was made evident by the billboards on the highway to and from the Cairo International Airport after the 2011 Uprising and until 2013, with real and apocryphal statements by world-leaders and international news agencies about the alleged civilizational worth of the Egyptian people and their ‘revolution’ of 2011. Traces of this white/colonial civilizational gaze through which the self is seen, assessed, and often abnegated, can be observed especially in the counterrevolutionary discourse about the licentious dissident, whether in depicting the Islamist through the colonialist trope of the sexual savage and through Orientalist horror toward Islamic mating and matrimonial practices, or in depicting political activists (secular and Islamist alike) along with Satanists and other bad subjects as escaping from or signifying a failure of the *colonially* and *culturally imposed* modern family.

The dominant mode of subjectivation, thus, both replicates the Western model of subjectivity and sustains the psychic dependency on the Western model through persistently imposing the figure of the white man as the ideal ego: the ideal image is always white, while, for Egyptians and other colonized/postcolonial people the image of the self is always a bad image, a counter-imago. Throughout this study, there has been scarcely an occasion when the depiction or production of the licentious was not enmeshed, in one way or another, with the indigenous. The psychic trauma of the colonized, elaborated by Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin White Masks*, has been present in nearly all the conceptions of the licentious which this study surveyed. The result was sometimes an outright abnegation and repudiation of the self and an attempt to assimilate oneself to the white imago, in others a projection of certain aspects of the indigenous self onto others (whether back to the white colonists, as we

saw with the discourse that attempts to depict the licentious space as a Western phenomenon, or to other racial others, as we saw with Sayyid Qutb and the primitive man), but always a colonial neurosis worthy of a Fanonian analysis.

Through this process of projection and assimilation, Western subjectivity, Western spaces and institutions that produce good subjects, and the Western organization of space and interpellation of subjects was largely indigenized. The topos of the orgy, which was initially conceived as an Oriental menace, was widely used in Egyptian counterrevolutionary discourse, sometimes to the effect of associating the licentious and the orgiastic with the West. Even Islamists who claimed to adhere to an indigenous tradition that predates and transcends colonialism used the topos of the orgy and made allegations of adultery against their opponents (contrary to Islamic precepts that would prohibit such allegations in the absence of four witnesses). Similarly the concept of a national body was indigenized (first as Ottoman and second as Egyptian) and the ‘foreign body’ that infects the national body became an ‘interloper’, a foreigner or an agent of foreign interests. More notably, the bourgeois monogamous family and the army were imagined as indigenous structures, fortresses of the nation in the face of foreign influences, and their others were imagined as foreign. This can be read as a Foucauldian ‘tactical polyvalence of discourse’ in which a discourse can be appropriated and made to serve an opposite strategy (i.e. a Foucauldian mode of limited resistance that realigns rather than escapes power).⁹⁷⁸ It can also be read as a sign of the profound colonization of Egyptian ideology and discourse, to the extent of indigenizing the colonial or passing it off as indigenous.

⁹⁷⁸ See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* v.1, 100- 102.

Throughout this study, I have been arguing the latter, which does not necessarily preclude the former.

This, however, is not to be confused for a narrative of clear and uninterrupted colonial success story. Throughout this study we have seen how in the late 20th century and through the 21st, after two centuries of colonization, the State in Egypt continued to identify ‘pockets of resistance’, waging an ongoing insurrection against the moral codes that the State embodies and especially against the models of marriage and family (whether through failing to be properly subjectivated/subjected as Oedipal subjects that recognize paternal authority, or through engaging in insurrectionary marital and matrimonial practices that transgress bourgeois European monogamy, State-recognized marriage, and the nuclear family). The State’s response was to attempt to impose, through (sometimes epistemic, sometimes physical) violence, the proper modes of marriage, matrimony, and family that it inherited from its colonial predecessor. This recurrent form of violence reveals, as I argued in Chapter 5, some of the failures rather than the total success of the modern-colonial-statist project; even after two centuries of colonization the State still needs to interfere, not only through ideological appeal but also through various modes of violence, to impose the colonial model. To borrow from Joseph Massad’s concluding remarks in *Desiring Arabs*, “It is at these rare [but not so rare in our case, I would add] moments when the imposition and seduction of Western norms fail that the possibility of different conceptions of desire, politics, and subjectivities emerge.”⁹⁷⁹

My purpose, of course, is not to romanticize ‘urfi/customary marriage, polygamy, undocumented births, Islamist organizations, terror, orgies, Satanism and

⁹⁷⁹ Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 418.

Satanic rituals, the licentious, or even sit-ins (in the 2011 fashion) as successful modes of resistance or to endow them with a transgressive agency; this study was not concerned with the ‘actual’ practices within these spaces but rather with how the dominant ideology imagines and produces them, and with examples of the complicities and capitulations of political dissidents (including the Islamist organizations and the ‘revolutionary’ crowd of 2011 with its Islamist and secular contingents) to the dominant ideology. My purpose however is to use the moments of tension and confrontation between the State (through both its ideological and repressive apparatuses) and these pockets to highlight the contingency of the colonial model of propriety, of proper spaces, and of proper subjectivity, which in turn can be the starting point for imagining alternatives that do not uphold or take for granted the colonial/Statist model and do not romanticize, idealize, or reify the *others* that this model produces.

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