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Thomas Jack Smith, Jr.   April 19, 2011

THE ARAB FASCISTS: A STUDY OF THREE IDEOLOGICAL VARIANTS OF
ARAB NATIONALISM

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Abstract

THE ARAB FASCISTS: A STUDY OF THREE IDEOLOGICAL VARIANTS OF
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This thesis examines three ideological Arab Nationalist movements that developed in the interwar period, and attempts to prove that Fascist influences existed in interwar Arab Nationalist thought. The three main movements examined are the Young Egypt movement, the Syrian Ba'th Party, and the Lebanese Kataeb Party. This thesis examines ideological treatises and other works by the founders and other important members of these movements, specifically Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th by Michel Aflaq, Sīrat Hayyatī by Abd al-Rahman Badawi, and Connaisance Des Kataeb by Pierre Gemayel. This thesis establishes a working definition of generic Fascism and applies it to the three movements in question to determine if there were Fascist influences present in their ideologies.

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The study of Fascist trends in Arab Nationalist thought is by no means a new phenomenon. The emergence of autocracy in the mid-twentieth century as a replacement for liberalism in most of the nations of the Middle East drew instant comparisons between these new regimes and those that had just been deposed in Europe following the Second World War. The new leaders of Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon and the movements that had propelled them to power possessed an ideology that was difficult to categorize: they were neither completely Marxist nor liberal capitalist (seemingly the two remaining political categories), and yet in some ways bore elements of both. As the ambiguous nature of the Fascist ideology has led to the categorization of any seemingly autocratic political ideology as "Fascist", the usefulness of this term has long since been called into question, especially as it relates to Authoritarianism in the Arab World. As early as 1944, George Orwell wrote: "It would seem that, as used, the word 'Fascism' is almost entirely meaningless. In conversation, of course, it is used even more wildly than in print. I have heard it applied to farmers, shopkeepers, Social Credit, corporal punishment, fox hunting, bullfighting, the 1922 Committee, the 1941 Committee, Kipling, Gandhi, Chiang Kai-Shek, homosexuality, Priestley's broadcasts, Youth Hostels, astrology, women, dogs and I do not know what else."[1]

The problems stemming from the use of the term "Fascist" as a label have been further exacerbated even by those scholars who have made it their specialty. Many are loathe to consider Fascism a phenomenon that existed outside of Europe, or after the capitulation of the Axis powers. The study of Fascist ideology is therefore limited in

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[1] George Orwell. "What is Fascism?", *Tribune*, 1944, accessed March 22, 2011, http://orwell.ru/library/articles/As_I_Please/english/efasc

academia to the period of time between the end of the First World War and the destruction of the German and Italian Fascist states. The possibility of a Fascist ideology outliving this era, and the idea that Fascism could spread in a meaningful form anywhere beyond the borders of those states where it first took hold is anathema to many scholars, who have in many cases dismissed the possibility of "Arab Fascism" as a myth. However, it has also been argued that modern Arab autocrats display Fascist influences in their approach to power. This debate is complex, based on various perceptions of what the "true" Fascist ideology is, and how to precisely define the Arab Nationalist movement. The debate remains unresolved, complicated by misrepresentations of Fascist ideology in the public sphere, and the current War on Terrorism has once more placed intense scrutiny upon the same Middle Eastern dictatorships whose ideologies were first defined in the political arenas of the nineteen-thirties and forties.

1.1 A Working Definition of Fascism

Considering these problems, it is necessary to create a working definition of Fascism that categorizes the principle elements of this ideology. To this end, Roger Griffin's definition of Fascism is perhaps the most useful, as it is concise and far more inclusive than that of Stanley Payne, whose understanding of "generic Fascism" is inherently connected to the conditions in Europe between the two World Wars. As Payne writes: "It is doubtful that a typology derived from European fascism can be applied to non-European movements or regimes with any specificity."[2] Griffin defines Fascism as follows: "A genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a

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[2] Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism: Comparison and Definition* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1980), 176.

palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism."[3] The *palingenesis* referred to in this definition is a view of the nation's history that links its current incarnation to a glorified historical predecessor. Although Griffin's definition is comprehensive and convenient, it lacks an economic component. Thus for the purposes of this study one must be added. As Fascist thinkers believed themselves to be proponents of a "Third Way", lying somewhere between Capitalism and Communism, any serious study of Fascism cannot neglect the economic component of Fascist ideologies.[4] Though in many cases, Fascist leaders subordinated economic concerns to political concerns as a matter of doctrine, all paradigmatic Fascist states had some measure of economic policy that, while vaguely defined, was based upon central control or supervision of the economy and an enforced harmony between the economic elements of society.[5] For present purposes, this trend in economic ideology can be referred to as Corporatism, using a broad definition of the word and emphasizing a holistic and authoritarian view of society as an organic being in which every individual, class, and institution plays a role like a limb or a vital organ in a body. Therefore, if the Arab Nationalist movements to be examined in this study are to be labeled Fascist, they must be characterized as palingenetic, populist, and ultranationalist movements with a corporatist view of the political economy and the wider society.

Fascism, as it was conceived by Benito Mussolini, was both a system of government and a system of thought, though perhaps it is more accurately described as a "political culture" that attempted to incorporate all elements of the life of the citizen into the national political life.[6] Fascism was also ideological, and a pervasive ideology was an

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[3] Constantin Iordachi, *Comparative Fascist Studies: New Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2010)*,* 115.
[4] Ibid., 154
[5] Ibid., 153-154.
[6] Benito Mussolini, *Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions* (New York : H. Fertig, 1968), 7.

intrinsic component of any Fascist society, as observed in the Fascist states of the first half of the twentieth century. For Mussolini, Fascism grew out of an austere, spiritual conception of life and mankind that was anti-positivist, Romantic, and humanistic.[7] He argued that the positivist notions of the 19th century, which had grown out of the Englightenment period, placed the center of life outside of man himself. Thus, Fascism, as an anti-positivist movement, had to center its conception of life on the individual human being.[8]

However, despite his critiques of Positivism, Mussolini was by no means an individualist. To him, the individual was considered important only in so far as his energy and action contributed to the group. As Mussolini writes: "Man is man only by virtue of the spiritual process to which he contributes as a member of the family, the social group, the nation, and in function of history to which all nations bring their contribution…Outside history man is a nonentity."[9]

This represents one of the principal ideas of Fascist ideology: the notion of corporatism. Corporatism was represented in Fascist ideology both as a rhetorical conception of society as a living organism and as a form of economic organization that aimed to place the state as an arbiter above the various elements of the national economy. This theory partially defined what the Fascists called "The Third Way", an economic system that lay somewhere between Capitalism and Communism.[10] Owing largely to the lack of a functional model of Fascist corporatism (Mussolini's corporate state is considered to be somewhat of a sham that abandoned the ideological principles of

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[7] Mussolini, 7.
[8] Ibid., 7.
[9] Ibid., 10.
[10] Iordachi, *Comparative Fascist Studies*, 154

corporatism) the term has frequently come to denote Fascist economic practices in general. [11] Therefore, a rhetorical notion of corporatism, which professed the idea that the individual was important to society in the same way a body-part is to the whole, can be used in many cases to identify corporatist notions in Fascist movements where a coherent economic vision is absent. Fascist corporatism, because it was authoritarian in nature, sought to link the individual organically to the state and rejected the Marxist notion of class struggle in order to promote "class harmony" for the greater national good.

As Michael Mann explains, "Fascists worshipped state power. The authoritarian corporate state could supposedly solve crises and bring about social, economic, and moral development…Since the State represented a nation that was viewed as being essentially organic, it needed to be authoritarian, embodying a singular, cohesive will…[12]" Mann goes on to elaborate how the corporate state would solve these problems: "Fascist nation-statism would be able to 'transcend' social conflict, first repressing those who fomented strife by 'knocking both their heads together' and then incorporating classes and other interest groups into state corporatist institutions."[13] Thus, it is evident that Fascist corporatism was an all-embracing notion: social, political, and economic. It is the most characteristic organizing principle of the Fascist state, and although the term has been used by different regimes to refer to different aspects of state organization,[14] it can be used here to represent the pervasive ideological notion that society, politics, and

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[11] Iordachi, *Comparative Fascist Studies*, 153
[12] Ibid., 194
[13] Ibid.*,* 194
[14] Ibid., 153-154. Roget Eatwell explains that the various incarnations of the Fascist state organized their economies in somewhat different ways and that the Italian Corporate State failed to live up to its promise. However, he goes on to explain that all of these incarnations were attempting to forge a "Third Way" involving a centrally coordinated economy that harmonized relations between producers, consumers, and interest groups. Corporatism will be used in this paper to refer to this "Third Way" as well as its social and political implications.

economics are interrelated aspects of national existence and that the nation is an organic entity.

Another important characteristic of Fascist ideology was national palingenesis, or rebirth. Fascist ideology holds that a nationalist social regeneration is necessary to overcome decadence and redefine the national character in order to lead the nation to its glorious destiny. Quintessential parts of the palingenetic ideology were a palingenetic myth about the nation's past and a forward-looking drive to create the "New Man" that would embody the national character. Speaking about the origin of the Palingenetic ideology of the Romanian Fascist movement, the Legion of the Archangel Michael, Constantin Iordachi explains that the Legion "concomitantly promoted a 'regressive' and futurist political utopia based on the glorification of the Middle Ages but oriented toward forging the new man and the building of a totalitarian Fascist state."[15] Iordachi explains that this Romanian incarnation of Fascist palingenesis was inherently connected with Romantic palingenetic notions that developed as a reaction against the French revolution and its effects on traditional values. He asserts that: "In the spirit of Romanticism, the fascist regeneration was seen as a restoration of medieval glory; but it was also a culmination of the historical development of the Romanian people" [16] Therefore, the Fascist vision of national palingenesis was both connected to the Romantic notion of recognizing the historical mission of the nation and articulating a utopian vision of the future, where the totalitarian state would be forged by the "New Man" who encapsulated the national values.

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[15] Iordachi, *Comparative Fascist Studies*, 343
[16] Ibid., 343

In Europe, the catalyst for the palingenetic ideology was the First World War and the sense of defeat that pervaded Germany, and the sense of betrayal that affected the Italians. In both cases the desire to return the nation to its past glory was connected at its core to the concept of *ultranationalism*. The concepts of ultranationalism and palingenesis as espoused by the European Fascist parties captured the imaginations of demobilized soldiers, the working class, the urban and rural poor, and disaffected intellectual elites who saw in their countries' past histories something of which to be proud, and in the present age had witnessed only defeat and the failure of parliamentary democracy to right the wrongs done to their nations.

In these emotions, one can discern the final essential element of Fascism: populism. In both Italy and Germany the Fascist movements sought to gain power through revolution and saw in the masses of disillusioned and disinherited countrymen a weapon that could be wielded against the liberal democratic state. Mussolini's March on Rome was possible because of his appeal to the masses, and though Hitler failed in his Munich *putsch*, his rise to the Chancellorship by semi-constitutional means was aided and abetted by thousands of members of the paramilitary SA. Roger Griffin describes the interconnectedness of the palingenetic project and Fascist populism, linking them by what he calls a "mythic core" that is common to all Fascist movements.[17] He explains that this mythic core is "the vision of the nation as betokening the birth-pangs of a new order. It crystallizes in the image of the national community, once purged and rejuvenated, rising phoenix-like from the ashes of a morally bankrupt state system and the decadent culture associated with it."[18] Achieving this vision is the goal of the

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[17] Iordachi, *Comparative Fascist Studies*, 117
[18] Ibid., 117

palingenetic project, and the myth is the force that is to be used to mobilize the masses in order to realize this project. As Griffin explains: "The term 'myth' here draws attention, not to the utopianism, irrationalism, or sheer madness of the claim it makes to interpret contemporary reality, but to its power to unleash strong affective energies through the evocative force of the image of vision of reality it contains to those susceptible to it."[19] Thus, the Fascist palingenetic myth provides the impetus for the mobilization of the masses, who will pave the way for the rejuvenation of the nation.

In line with the importance of the mass-mobilizing goal of Fascist populism, Robert Paxton, explaining that "feelings propel Fascism more then thought does," provides a list in his essay "The Five Stages of Fascism" that serves to highlight the emotions to which Fascist movements appeal.[20] In searching for Fascist influences outside of Europe, and when undertaking a comparison between Nationalist groups in the Arab world that display the superficial characteristics of Fascist movements, this list will prove useful:

"1. The primacy of the group, toward which one has duties superior to every right, whether universal or individual.

2.The belief that one's group is a victim, a sentiment which justifies any action against the group's enemies, internal as well as external.

3. Dread of the group's decadence under the corrosive effect of individualistic and cosmopolitan liberalism.

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[19] Iordachi, *Comparative Fascist Studies*, 117
[20] Ibid., 170

4. Closer integration of the community within a brotherhood (*fascio*) whose

unity and purity are forged by common conviction, if possible, or by

exclusionary violence if necessary.

5. An enhanced sense of identity and belonging, in which the grandeur of the

group reinforces individual self-esteem.

6. Authority of natural leaders (always male) throughout society, culminating

in a national chieftain who alone is capable of incarnating the group's

destiny.

7. The beauty of violence and of will, when they are devoted to the group's

success in a Darwinian struggle."[21]

These mobilizing passions, which Paxton explains "may sometimes be articulated only

implicitly,"[22] are useful when attempting to discern if a movement with Fascist

characteristics truly represents Fascist ideology, as the large number of paramilitary

movements in the Arab world that attempted mass-mobilization can complicate the

search for a true Fascist ideology motivating their political projects.

Borrowing from Griffin's definition and Paxton's elaboration, and adding the

Corporatist economic component explained above, one can define Fascism as a

palingenetic, populist, and ultranationalist movement whose socio-economic view was

based on Corporatism. This is a broad definition, suited to the study of Fascist ideology

outside of Europe, as previous scholars of ideological Fascism have chosen to focus on

the conditions that led to the rise of Fascism as they were specific to interwar Europe.

However, Fascism was at its heart a fluid ideology, based on the current mood of the

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[21] Iordachi, *Comparative Fascist Studies*, 170
[22] Ibid., 170

population it was attempting to win over and the political and economic situation of the country it sought to rule. The Fascist ideologues themselves were quick to admit their ideology was being forged on a day to day basis, and many of the specific economic and political principles initially espoused by the leaders of the Nazi party and the Italian Fascist party were abandoned as time went on. Furthermore, to restrict Fascism to Europe is to ignore the international appeal of its anti-democratic and authoritarian ideology and blind oneself to the widespread disillusionment of the rest of the world with liberal democracy. The Arab world, which had suffered under colonialism and foreign domination throughout the 19th century was fertile ground for the growth of the Fascist ideology.

The question of whether the Arab nationalist parties and movements that exist today are truly "Fascist" is reasonable, but it is unlikely that one would find all of the original ideologies of Fascism in them today. The same parties whose intellectual leaders were drawn to the examples of the Third Reich and *Il Duce*'s Italy have undergone innumerable changes in ideology in the intervening decades. Therefore, to answer the question of whether or not Arab political movements draw on a heritage of Fascist thought it is necessary to examine Arab Nationalism when it was still in its infancy: before the 1952 revolution of the Free Officers in Egypt, before the rise of the Ba'th in Syria and Iraq, and before the Phalangists and Hezbollah made war on one another in the streets of Beirut. The answer to the question of whether the Arab Nationalists had a Fascist streak is to be found at the time when the world's attention was not on the aspiring ideologues of the Middle East, but on the *Führer* and the *Duce* as they embarked upon their tragic paths. In this thesis I will seek to prove that the nationalists of the Arab

World were neither clones of these European dictators, nor were they free from the ideological vices that characterized the Nazi party and the Fascists of Italy. Their movements were for the most part palingenetic and ultranationalist in character; however, as with all of the Fascist movements of Europe, their programs were adapted to fit the particular conditions of their own societies and to lead their own people towards whatever national destiny they envisioned.

1.2 Arab Nationalism: Historical Background

The Nationalist movements that arose in the Arab world in the twentieth century were not all of one character; on the contrary, they were influenced by the peculiar "national" characters of the states in which they arose. Thus, considering Arab Nationalism as a single, monolithic phenomenon or unified political movement is a mistake, and one might be inclined to discard the term entirely. However, there is potential merit in using such a term broadly, and when one examines the various movements that styled themselves as Nationalist in the Arab World, one does see that there were certain common elements among them. For example, every Nationalist group in the Arab world was concerned both with political independence and economic independence from foreign powers. Like Fascism, Arab Nationalism can be used to describe a broad phenomenon, but it is necessary for it to be explained clearly and precisely before it can be compared with Fascism.

It is difficult to determine precisely when modern Arab Nationalism emerged as a movement. Certainly events such as Muhammad Ali's attempt to forge a new, Arab-centered Empire in Egypt had a powerful effect on the emergence of an anti-Turkish

notion of Arab nationhood.[23] Although Muhammad Ali's dream of imperial grandeur was primarily a military endeavor, and lacked the political and ideological characteristics that define modern Nationalist movements, his regime catalyzed the emergence of a sense of "Arabism" and, especially in Syria, the idea of political cohesion separate from the other Ottoman lands.[24] The rise of the Ottoman Sultan Abd al-Hamid II with his authoritarian, centralized approach to governing the empire gave rise in Syria to talk of independence or autonomy within the Ottoman Empire.[25] There was no clear consensus as to what form this autonomy should take, or whether it would mean the separation of Syria from the Ottoman Empire entirely, or the development of a Syrian national consciousness within the Empire. A movement formed in Beirut in the 1870s adopted the slogan "Our homeland is the Empire, our country Syria," highlighting ambiguous feelings toward full independence as well as the growing sense that Syria was something more than a province within the Turkish domain.[26] In 1913, a congress met in Paris calling for the decentralization of the Ottoman Empire and greater Arab participation within the Ottoman administration. More than eighty percent of those who attended were Syrians.[27] Therefore, the governing idea in Syria seemed to be that at the very least, autonomy was needed for the Arabs within the Ottoman Empire, if not full independence. However, conflicting visions arising from the lack of a unified Syrian Nationalism would play out in the ideologies of several nationalist movements before and after the eventual independence of Syria and Lebanon.

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[23] Hopwood, Derek. *Syria: 1945-1986*, Unwin Hyman Ltd, London, 1988. pp. 15-16
[24] Ibid., 16
[25] Ibid., 17
[26] Ibid., 17
[27] Ibid., 17

During World War One, the Arab Revolt led to the first definitive expressions of the desire for an independent Arab state. It could be said that this Revolt, led by the family of Sharif Hussain Bin 'Ali, was more a military than a political endeavor; a conquest of Turkish lands stripped of garrisons by an opportunistic family of Arabian aristocrats. The movement was crippled by a number of factors: devoid of a nationalistic ideology at its beginning, allied with and supplied by the colonial powers of Britain and France, and with potential kings and aristocrats that were not of the people they hoped to rule, the Arab Revolt may have been condemned to failure before it began.[28] T.E. Lawrence himself, whose *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* is still one of the most complete accounts of the Arab Revolt, claims repeatedly that the Arab rebels under Faisal and his brother Abdullah received little support from the Arab inhabitants of the lands beyond the Arabian peninsula. Lawrence's argument for the creation of an independent pan-Arab state under Hashemite control seems to have been made in spite of this realization. Such an ill-advised and artificial act of states creation could not have been expected to be successful, especially considering that in the end many of these artificial nation states remained under European control.[29] However, the influence of the Arab Revolt on the region is not to be discounted. The defeat of the Ottoman Empire led to the partitioning of its former Arab dominions and although the vision of a unified Arab state was not realized, in the new states of Syria, Iraq, and Transjordan Arabs were ruled, at least nominally, by other Arabs for the first time since the Ottoman conquest. The question of whether the Arab world would achieve full independence from Istanbul had been

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[28] For an excellent explanation of the factors contributing to the failure of the Arab Revolt see: Fromkin, David. *A Peace to End All Peace*. Owl Books, 1989.

[29] The case of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is an exception to this, and the descendants of the Hashemite king Abdullah I continue to rule the country.

answered once and for all, though new colonial masters in the form of Britain and France now imposed themselves upon the nominally independent states.[30] In Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine the situation created at the end of World War I would define the various forms Nationalism in those countries would later take. The problems of colonial intervention, manipulation by European powers, and the apparent betrayal of the Arabs by Europe with the Balfour Declaration created a political environment that was fertile ground for a new generation of educated Arab political thinkers who felt that a revolutionary nationalist ideology was the only way to complete the process of full national independence.[31]

The situation in Egypt was different from that in Syria and Lebanon, although in many ways the concerns were the same. Egypt had dealt with direct European intervention for longer than the other states, beginning with Napoleon's invasion in 1798, and it had also experienced political and economic autonomy under Muhammad 'Ali's rule.[32] His modernizing efforts and ties with Europe put many Egyptians face to face with the fact that the West was ahead of the Middle East economically and politically, and that one of the solutions to this problem was to adapt these innovations to the Egyptian situation.[33] As Jacques Berque writes: "Of all the nations which were then being confronted by European culture, Egypt is undoubtedly – next to Japan – the one which adopted that culture most eagerly."[34] However, this came with a cost for "the process of modernization involved the setting up of special tribunals, the Mixed Courts (1875), the presence of Anglo-French ministers (1878), and the Debt, that State within the State

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[30] Hopwood, 18-24
[31] Ibid., 20-22
[32] Ibid., 15-16
[33] Ibid., 15-16
[34] Berque, Jacques. *Egypt: Imperialism and Revolution*. (New York: Praeger Publishers Inc., 1972), p. 39

(1876). In 1879 the European powers deposed the Egyprian Viceroy."[35] Colonel Ahmed 'Urabi attempted a revolution against European influence in 1882, which led to the British invasion and the 1882 Anglo-Egyptian War that resulted in Egypt becoming a British colony.

The end of World War I held the same promises for Egyptians as it did for the nationalists in Damascus or the Hashemite leaders of the Arab Revolt. However, Berque postulates that "this hopeful radicalism invariably conflicted, in Egypt even more than elsewhere, with the situations that had been established, and with the continuity, and what might almost see, the virtues, of dependence…The stage of colonial development which Egypt had then reached had lasted for almost two generations. It had conditioned situations, *mores* and judgments."[36] Britain's Unilateral Declaration of Egyptian Independence granted Egypt limited independence in 1922 with Fuad I as king. A constitution was drawn up in the following years as the nationalist Wafd party began to dominate the political arena. However, as Berque states: "Already the Revolution of 1919 had become a thing of the past, although its appeal lingered, or rather sank deeper, in men's minds. The Constitution, in the same way, had had its day, as a Utopia rather than as a reality; the Wafd had raised great hopes, and had soon disappointed them."[37] Therefore, as Egypt approached the 1930's, the political climate was one of disillusion. The full independence expected in 1919 had not come to pass, the Wafd remained a mass movement but was quickly disappointing the masses, and the parliamentary democracy and liberalism that apparently would dictate the organization of states after the end of World War One was becoming meaningless in the face of bureaucratic squabbling and

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[35] Berque, 39-40
[36] Ibid., 269
[37] Ibid., 386

deals made in the corridors of power. Again, Berque explains: "Any movement for independence, though based on collective aspiration, drew its arguments from the international code of ethics propounded by the victors of the Great War. Now these principles were incapable of solving anything, and it did not take long for the Middle Eastern leaders, as they hung about the corridors of the Versailles Conference, to realize that the only thing being discussed there was the division or redivision of zones of influence among the Great Powers."[38]

Thus in both Egypt and Syria the conditions in which nationalist movements developed were distinct but similar enough to promote the emergence of similar concerns. Similarly, the conditions in Italy and Germany following the end of World War I were distinct from one another, but in both countries led to the rise of Fascist movements. World War I had dashed the hopes of the early Arab nationalists and the period following the Versailles Conference had seen the implementation of repressive European colonialism in the Arab world in place of Ottoman imperialism. The initial goal of the Arab nationalist movements as they developed in Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon was therefore the same: full independence motivated by Nationalism. What form this Nationalism took in its different incarnations depended on the ideological persuasion of its proponents and the peculiarities of the country they considered their nation. However, these nations were not always the same as those that were defined by the borders drawn on maps at the time. For the Ba'th Party, the existence of any division between Arab lands was in and of itself an affront to the Arab nation. As the 1947 Ba'th Party constitution states: The "The Arabs form one nation. This nation has the natural right to live in a single state. As such the Arab homeland constitutes an indivisible political and

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[38] Berque, 386

economic unity. No Arab country can live apart from the others."[39] In contrast, the Lebanese Kataeb party embraced a notion of strictly Lebanese nationalism, in a country that had been separated from the territory of Syria by the French during the period of their Mandate. The Syrian Social Nationalist Party's ideology was largely a reaction against this bifurcation and called for a unified Syria and Lebanon called "Greater Syria." Similarly, the Egyptian Nationalist movements frequently called for the annexation of Sudan to Egypt as part of their territorial ambitions.

The various nationalist thinkers differed as to how the state would be organized, and how the economy should be managed. Concepts such as "Arab Socialism" were developed in response to this question, and Antun Saʿdah, head of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, created a leadership principle by which he intended to elevate himself to the position of dictator over both Syria and Lebanon. The Kataeb in contrast promoted freedom of trade with the former colonial occupiers and mostly supported the Lebanese parliamentary system. The Young Egypt movement and the SSNP both adopted elements of racialism in their ideologies, using them to promote the majority culture or ethnicity to a position of superiority while the Kataeb stressed in its party literature that no ethnic or religious group was superior to another and that all were equally Lebanese.

1.3 A Study of Arab Fascism

Given the disparity in political ideologies among the various nationalist movements and the distinct conditions in the various countries of the Middle East in the modern period through World War II, this study will examine three Arab Nationalist movements from three different countries: the Young Egypt Movement, the *Baʿth* party

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[39] Devlin, John. *The Baʿth Party: A History From Its Origins to 1966*. Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1976

of Syria, and the Lebanese Kataeb, or Phalange movement. The time frame of this study will largely be restricted to the 1930s and 1940s, in the period leading up to and through World War II, when Fascist ideological influences were most evident and while these parties' ideologies were still developing along their initial lines, before the major ideological shifts that affected each of them later in the century.

The political philosophers of Arab Nationalism were not isolationist in their thinking. They were willing to look to Europe for ideas on how to solve their particular national problems, and most of their political writings displayed some familiarity with European political thought. This, coupled with the extensive propaganda campaigns directed toward the Arab World from Rome and Berlin meant that Fascist ideas were widely available for consideration. Michel Aflaq, Pierre Gemayel, and Abd al-Rahman Badawi had all either studied in Europe at the time of the rise of Fascism, or had visited the Fascist states and been impressed by what they saw. They did not suppress their admiration for Fascism in favor of an entirely distinct ideology, but rather allowed themselves to be affected in their thinking by the powerful images of order and national unity.

This is not to say that all Arab Nationalist thinkers were keen to identify themselves overtly with the Fascists of Europe. It is evident from the writings of political intellectuals such as Michel Aflaq that the ideologues behind some Arab nationalist movements took great pains to differentiate their ideologies from those of the European fascists. Many were writing at a time when the true nature of Nazi atrocities and the racist characteristics of Hitler's Germany were becoming widely known, and it is understandable that many Arab intellectuals, despite their opposition to the western

powers, wanted to distance themselves from the "Bogeymen of Europe." Michel Aflaq in his treatise *On the Way of Resurrection* goes to great lengths to explain how his nationalistic notion of "Arab Socialism" is different from "National Socialism," as well as from other forms of European and Soviet-style socialism. However, the economic parallels between Aflaq's Arab Socialist vision and the corporatist models employed by Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy are significant. The fact that Aflaq felt compelled to make this distinction indicates that he was aware of the negative aspects of the Nazi system and considered his own Socialist vision similar enough to it to warrant drawing a clear distinction. However, as noted above, Fascist movements were never exact models of one another in the first place, and were tailored specifically to the needs of the countries in which they originated.

The Syrian Ba'th party, the Lebanese Kataeb, and Young Egypt were anti-democratic, and anti-colonialist, and were attracted to Fascism by the rejuvenation of Germany and Italy under Hitler and Mussolini. However, Arab Nationalism was not a singular ideology, and these movements differed from one another in many respects. They therefore represented of the Fascist ideology in different ways. Despite their differences, however, these three movements remain by far the best representatives of the palingenetic and populist ultrantionalism that defines the Fascist ideology. To the extent that there was an "Arab Fascism" it is to be found in their ideologies.[40]

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[40] At this point, it may be worthwhile to point out that the term "Arab Fascism", as far as my research in writing this thesis has shown, has not before been used to describe Arab Nationalist parties or movements that have Fascist influences. Nor, to my knowledge, has a comprehensive examination of the ideologies of these parties and movements been undertaken beyond the superficial qualities that may imply that these movements had a Fascist character. The term Arab Fascism is therefore a new term, and is not used lightly, nor intended to imply in any way that all nationalist, or even ultranationalist movements in the Arab world had Fascist characteristics. This study attempts to avoid such blanket categorizations by way of its methodology, explained in this introduction, wherein a movement that displays evidence of Fascist influences is examined carefully in the context of the working definition described above.

I: The Young Egypt Movement and Abd al-Rahman Badawi, the Ideological Fascist

The situation in Egypt in the interwar period was fragile. The nation had not yet managed to free itself from British occupation, despite the promises made to the Arabs during World War I, and the nationalist Wafd party was finding it difficult to deliver on its promises of resurrecting a strong, independent Egyptian state. The parliamentary system fell under the criticism of being ineffective as a result of partisanship. The ground was fertile for an ideological war between proponents of Fascist dictatorship, Monarchists, and those who supported the existing Parliamentary system. Many of the parties and movements in Egypt at this time had a populist outlook, much as the Fascist movements in Europe, and even those that chose to participate in the democratic process or had liberal-minded outlooks, such as the Wafd party, turned to mass mobilization of the national youth in an effort to supplement their authority. Not only were the Egyptian people keen to argue amongst themselves about the future form their government should take, but they also were exposed to Fascist propaganda at first from the Italian Fascist state under Benito Mussolini, and later from the efforts of Joseph Goebbels and the Nazi establishment in Germany. The ideological seedbed that existed as a result of discontent with the inefficacies of the Wafd government and the system of Parliamentary Monarchy was fertile ground for the Italian and German propagandists, who wanted to create their own "fifth columns" to undermine the British residency and British control of the Suez canal.

Although the Egyptian monarchy throughout this time period was attempting to capitalize on the charisma of the young king Farouk, and was pushing to expand its already substantial royal powers in an autocratic direction at the expense of the Wafd, the

influence of Fascist ideology from Europe on the extra-parliamentary Young Egypt

movement make this a better potential subject of an examination of Fascist influence, and

thus this section will focus on Young Egypt instead of the Autocratic monarchists.[41]

Among the Arab Nationalist intellectuals that this study covers, Badawi's Fascism was

the most ideological in character, and he subscribed more to the ideological tenets of the

early Fascist and National Socialist thinkers, whom he had read, than did either Pierre

Gemayel or Michel Aflaq.

To understand the situation at the time of the rise of the Young Egypt movement,

it is necessary to examine the political atmosphere in Egypt at the end of World War One,

and especially at the time of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 when great political

changes and new ways of thinking about Nationalism were sweeping the world. As

Jacques Berque recounts in *Egypt: Imperialism and Revolution*:

> However special Egypt's case might be…she could not abstract herself from
> all the movements which were busily reshaping the world around
> her…Statesmen tried to assess the new opportunities offered by international
> conferences. The collapse of the Habsburg empire and that of the Tsars, the
> principles of President Wilson, the October Revolution opened up
> possibilities which the preceding generation would not have dared to
> imagine. But this hopeful radicalism invariably conflicted with the situations
> that had been established, and with the continuity, and what might almost
> seem the virtues, of dependence.[42]

These "virtues of dependence" refer to the weakness of the Egyptian political and

economic institutions, which were incomplete and wedded to the colonial era. Berque

sets up a dichotomy between the hopeful revolutionary fervor of the time and the

enduring colonial realities, which made full independence for the Arabs nearly

impossible. Egypt, according to Berque, aspired to a state of development that was

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[41] Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Confronting Fascism in Egypt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 37

[42] Berque, 269.

unique in the Arab world, and had extensive experience with anti-colonial struggle that allowed it to wield what Berque called the "complementary weapons" of "internal agitation and international argument."[43] This experience, combined with the rising excitement driven by the rhetoric of national self-determination coming from the West helped create an atmosphere that was both hopeful and explosive. Britain's reluctance to grant Egypt full independence contributed to the growing revolutionary sentiment after 1919. As Berque explains: "By virtue of the principle of nationalities, [the Arabs] should have been granted independence. But the principle was relaxed because of the acquisitive desires of two great powers and the promises which they had made to each other and which one of them had made to others [the Hashemites, the Syrian patriots, and the Zionists]."[44] Furthermore, the exploitation of the Egyptians had extended beyond the realm of politics into the economic sphere: all of the wealth that had been generated by the war had gone into the coffers of the foreign firms that controlled Egypt's markets as surely as British soldiers controlled its soil.[45] Egypt's cash reserves had dramatically increased during the war, though little of this money entered circulation in the general market, but was instead exported or hoarded by the banks, the Egyptian upper class, and the government.[46] The year 1920 saw the beginning of a massive rise in the price of cotton, Egypt's chief export, but within a year the price had collapsed, leading to an economic panic. The government, which supported itself by taxing the rural poor now found itself facing a massive deficit while its war-time reserves had all been

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[43] Berque, 270
[44] Ibid., 269
[45] Ibid., 287.
[46] Ibid., 295

squandered.[47] This situation contributed to the widening of an already serious gap between rich and poor, as "Egypt displayed ostentatious wealth and destitution side by side. There was so little money coming in that old silver coins, long obsolete, had begun reappearing in the State treasury; pursued by tax collectors, the [peasant] had to extract from some hiding-place in his garden."[48]

However, the Egyptians sought political independence before economic independence, and to this end Saad Zaghlul created the Wafd (delegation) Party, intending to take Egypt's case to Paris for the peace conference.[49] When the British authorities refused this, the Wafd quickly became a nationalist movement, taking its message instead to the Egyptian people, which culminated on January 14, 1919 when Saad Zaghlul spoke to a gathering of several hundred Wafd supporters.[50] A month later the British authorities arrested Zaghlul and exiled him to Malta, intending to strangle the Wafd in its cradle. Instead, this heavy-handed act sparked a revolt, and violence broke out both in the countryside and in the centers of the colonial administration. A strike of Egyptian civil servants paralyzed the day-to-day running of the country and a list of demands was presented calling for recognition of the Wafd as the legitimate representative of the Egyptian people, the renunciation of the protectorate, and the end of martial law.[51] A general strike followed in April. In the following months, The British dispatched a Commission of Inquiry led by Lord Milner, which was to conclude that Egypt's protectorate status should be abandoned. On February 22, 1922, the head of the British military mission to Egypt, General Allenby, unilaterally declared Egypt

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[47] Berque, 296
[48] Ibid., 298
[49] Ibid., 304-305.
[50] Ibid., 306
[51] Ibid., 308

independent with the support of the British government, but withheld such national privileges as defense, protection of foreign dignitaries, and maintaining the security of British communications.[52] This, along with the continuous failure of the Wafd to negotiate a formal Treaty with the British ending British involvement in Egyptian affairs,[53] made the unilateral declaration of formal independence an empty promise, and contributed to the discontent that began to brew immediately after independence and led to the heated debates of the 1930's over whether the Parliamentary system was good for Egypt. As Berque states, referring to Egyptian admission into the League of Nations:

> The victory of 1936 should have been won in 1919. And even so, it was drained of much of its exuberance, which alone contained the promise of the future; and now those in power [the Wafd], although they represented the community's needs and carried the hopes of parliamentary democracy, did so in a divided, bureaucratic and somewhat exhausted fashion. They could mobilize a wide section of the younger generation, but they could only capture its energies in mutilated form.[54]

As Egypt proceeded through the 1930's, there were many who sought to capitalize on the energy of a new generation of elites, referred to by some as the "new *Effendiyya*." These were "younger Egyptians born mostly in the early decades of the twentieth century, young men who had reached early adulthood and came to political consciousness and involvement in the wake of the Egyptian Revolution of 1919 and under the institutions of the new independent parliamentary monarchy."[55] As Berque explains, many of the aspirations of 1919 had yet to be achieved, and the trust that many Egyptians had put in the new parliamentary monarchy and the Wafd was fading. Even as early as 1926 it was

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[52] Berque, 321
[53] A Treaty had never been established to formalize the occupation, and one would never be negotiated to formally end it.
[54] Berque, 552
[55] Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Confronting Fascism in Egypt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 207

becoming apparent that the Egyptian Parliament was not equal to the task of solving the

nation's problems:

> What it lacked was an efficacy equal to its ambitions or even to its capacities.
> Other powers, that of the Palace and that of the Embassy, reduced it to
> impotence where the country's major interests were concerned. This
> impotence arose from the very character and status of the Parliament…the
> fact that it was a model rather than a functioning instrument.[56]

The perceived weaknesses of the system opened the way for a number of new movements

that existed outside both the Parliament and the Palace, and which sought to recapture the

revolutionary and Nationalistic spirit of the "new *Effendiyya.*"[57] Debate was thus joined

between proponents of the current Parliamentary system (represented by the Wafd), and

those of dictatorship or authoritarianism.[58] The extra-parliamentary movements,

especially Young Egypt, were heavily drawn to the example of Fascist dictatorship, while

the Monarchy sought to expand its already substantial powers at the expense of both the

Parliament and the Wafd.[59]

Eager to expand their sphere of influence across all of North Africa, and to direct

negative attention away from the campaign in Abyssinia, the Italians went to great

lengths to establish a foothold in the information war in Egypt. Radio Bari, the voice of

the Italian Fascist state overseas, began broadcasting in Arabic in the 1930's and gained a

strong following among North Africans looking to define their stance in the debate

between proponents of democracy and dictatorship.[60] This early success was built upon

in subsequent efforts by the Italians to bribe the Egyptian press into both deterring

criticism of Italian expansionism among the Egyptian public, directing criticism at the

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[56] Berque, 379
[57] Gershoni, 28
[58] Ibid., 14
[59] Ibid., 37
[60] Ibid., 15.

British, and creating a favorable view of the Italian state and its Duce, the self-styled

"Defender of Islam".[61] The Italian government spent vast sums of money subsidizing the

education of Egyptian youth, seeking to find a backdoor into *Al-Azhar* for Italian

propagandists. [62]

In the end, Italian efforts proved unsuccessful, as the Anglo-Rome agreements of

1938 prevented Italy from continuing its smear-campaign against Britain and Italian

propaganda efforts in other areas lost their edge.[63] The propaganda campaign had

arguably been pointless, as Italian brutality in Libya generated strong anti-Italian

sentiment. Throughout the period of the Abyssinian crisis, public opinion in Egypt

remained strongly on the side of the Abyssinians, and fear of Italian expansionism grew

with the eventual invasion of Albania.[64] This did not deflect criticism from Britain among

the Egyptian public, however, as they were not confident in British ability to defend

Egypt if the Italians attempted to invade, despite the deployment of British warships to

the Red Sea. The propaganda vacuum created by the easing of Italian efforts, however,

was filled not by Britain, but by the enterprising agents of the Third Reich.[65] Fascism in

the form of National Socialism therefore retained its place in the imagination of the

Egyptian public.[66]

Weighing in heavily in the debate over the future of the country was the Young

Egypt Party, *Misr al-Fatah*. The avowedly anti-democratic Ahmed Husayn had founded

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[61]Gershoni., 16, 17.
[62]Ibid., 16.
[63]Ibid., 17.
[64]Ibid., 16-18
[65]Ibid., 17
[66] For a more complete summary of the external pressures exerted upon Egypt by Germany and Italy, see the first chapter of Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski's book *Confronting Fascism in Egypt*. As this section focuses primarily on the development of the Young Egypt movement's Fascist sympathies through the work of Abdurrahman Badawi, propaganda efforts by Italy and Germany within Egypt warrant a summary, but not an in-depth analysis.

the party in 1933, amidst a wave disaffection among the new young, urban professional class that was referred to as the "New *Effendiyya*," This class of male Egyptian youth had grown dissatisfied with the perceived corruption of the Wafd and its inability to solve the nation's rampant social problems and end the British occupation of the country. However, Young Egypt, a paramilitary, populist, palingenetic movement found itself competing from the start with the Society of the Muslim Brothers and the Wafd's "Squadron of Blue Shirts," who also drew heavily on the same class of disaffected male youths. As with Hitler's *Sturmabteilung* (Brownshirts) and Mussolini's Blackshirts, which had played on similar sentiments and demographics among German and Italian youths, Young Egypt found appeal among the new *Effendiyya* and grew at a steady pace during the 1930's, although not as quickly as the Muslim Brothers.

It was Young Egypt's palingenetic platform, however, that set it apart from the other extraparliamentary political movements in Egypt, as it was not mere independence that its leaders sought.[67] Instead, they looked back to the historical dominance of successive Egyptian empires and defined their goal as reinventing Egypt as the leader of both the Arab world and of Islam.[68] The movement was further defined by its stated disregard for contemporary laws, and its profession of the need for revolution to achieve its aforementioned aims.[69] This recklessness, which was reflective of the practices of the early Italian and German Fascists, manifested itself in the frequent struggles between Young Egypt paramilitaries and their opponents, and the generally militaristic character of the movement, which organized its followers into "corps," "brigades," and "squads."[70]

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[67] Gershoni, 236
[68] Ibid., 235
[69] Ibid., 236
[70] Ibid., 236

The difference between Young Egypt and the Fascist parties of Europe owed much to the unique national character of Egypt, a non-European country that had not participated in World War I. As such, the Egyptian ultranationalists were paramilitary more in terms of their style and organization than they were in fact, as they did not have massive pools of demobilized soldiers like comparable parties in Europe.[71] However, one cannot disregard this characteristic because of a failure to fully manifest itself. If one looks for fascist influences among the leaders of Young Egypt, one finds that superficial similarities abound, and one can see from comparison that similar anti-British and anti-French tendencies, a fascination with populism and mass-mobilization, and palingenesis are clearly similar to those that existed in European Fascist thought.

It is important to note once again that searching for an exact replica of European Fascist movements is futile. As Robert O. Paxton writes, "One cannot identify a Fascist regime by its plumage…Focusing on external symbols, which are subject to superficial imitation, adds to confusion about what may legitimately be considered fascist."[72] Fascist movements were pushed forward as much by particular circumstances as by the ideologies of their intellectual founders. Likewise, it was the particular circumstances to be found in the Arab world in the early and mid-twentieth century that defined the Arab ultranationalist ideology. The social and political conditions that were so appalling to Mussolini and Hitler, and that propelled them into the political arena and defined their ideologies were similar in some ways to those that propelled the Arab nationalist intellectuals to seek political change. However, in other ways, they were quite different. Germany had lost the First World War and had had the humiliating terms of the Treaty of

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[71] Gershoni, *Confronting Fascism*, 238
[72] Iordachi, *Comparative Fascist Studies*, 168

Versailles forced upon it without being given the privilege of negotiation. The German

people had not felt that they had lost the war in such a decisive fashion as to warrant the

imposition of humiliating disarmament terms, war indemnities, and partial occupation.

Italy, by contrast, had been on the winning side, joining the Allies in 1915 and

participating in the Paris peace conference, although the Italians felt cheated out of their

territorial claims by France and Britain.[73] This pales in contrast to the Arab situation, and

particularly the Egyptian situation, as Egypt had been under British occupation for

decades, and every aspect of Egyptian politics, economics, and society before the

Revolution of 1919 was dominated by the British. This occupation had no legal

framework, as a treaty had never been presented or signed instituting the Protectorate.

Therefore, the concept of national humiliation was present both in Europe and in the

Arab World, but the humiliations were of a different character and stemmed from

different causes.

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[73] Although a sense of betrayal by her allies certainly played into the general sense of dissolution in Italy, other factors were also important. As in Egypt, the apparent paralysis of the parliamentary system led the relatively small Fascist movement of Benito Mussolini, founded in 1919, to increase its popular appeal by intervening against the socialist elements that had brought the country to the brink of revolution during the "Two Red Years" of 1919-1920. The proportionally representative system that required coalitions of parties to form a government had paralyzed the parliamentary system, as the *Partito Socialista Italiana* (PSI) was dominated by a revolutionary wing that believed parliamentary paralysis would hasten the advent of the socialist revolution. The Fascist squadrons preaching nationalism and anti-socialism recruited from the masses of the young middle class (much as Young Egypt did) that felt that parliamentary government was incapable of stopping the revolutionary socialist elements in the country. In Egypt, revolutionary socialism was not as much a factor in dissillusion with democracy as was the colonial occupation, and therefore the comparison with the rise of Italian Fascism does not contain all of the same nuances that led to the rise of Italian Fascism. This is representative of the fact that Fascism in every country in which it arose took a form dictated by the particular conditions in each of these countries, and Fascist movements therefore are not exact models of one another. Young Egypt did however build upon dissillusion with the parliamentary system, dissatisfaction with the outcome of World War I, and the sense of dissatisfaction among the young middle class. Roger Griffin's emphasis on the positive revolutionary nature of Fascism is therefore more appropriate for comparing Arab Fascist movements to European Fascist movements. Anti-communism proved to have a bigger role in the formation of the Arab Socialist ideology of the Ba'th Party, as will be shown later. For more on the "Two Red Years" and the anti-communist aspect of the advent of Italian Fascism see Philip Morgan, *Fascism in Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 46-51.

It was the dream of the Italian state to gain favor among the Arabs, and to differentiate itself from Britain and France, which had subjugated the Arab nations. Mussolini desperately tried to gain favor among the Arabs and in the wider Muslim world, knowing that Britain's tenuous hold had frequently been broken by appeals to religion. However, it was never quite possible for him to differentiate his own country from the greater construct of the "West" in the popular imagination and therefore to make his enemies the enemies of the Arabs. Popular discontent with the colonial powers after World War One was not a thing created by the Fascists, nor was anti-colonial anger something that could be manipulated. Rather, it evolved on its own, in its own forms, and in some cases the trappings of Fascism were adopted by ultranationalist movements when it suited them. Therefore, although similarities exist between certain of the Arab palingenetic and ultranationalist movements and their European counterparts, this similarity alone is not evidence of a hidden Fascist international. However, the existence of differences does not provide evidence that palingenetic Arab nationalist movements lacked a Fascist character. Thus, to accurately categorize a particular movement as Fascist, its ideology must be examined along with its outward manifestation and performance.

The philosophical underpinnings of the Young Egypt movement show many similarities with European fascism. The socio-political aspect of Fascist Corporatism was expressed in the context of a written critique of the Egyptian parliamentary system by the Young Egypt activist Hamada al-Nahil in April, 1937.[74] He wrote that "democracy has its deadly diseases," just as the human body does, and called for a dictator to act as a doctor

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[74] Gershoni, *Confronting Fascism*, 246

and eradicate the "disease" of political partisanship.[75] He went on to cite the examples of Hitler and Mussolini who had revived their countries from similar maladies, and after explaining his ambivalence regarding both democracy and dictatorship he went on to write, "If [the future leaders of the nation] are dictators, as in Germany, because the nature of the people destines it so, then I welcome the noble, honorable rulers."[76] The growing discontent with the young parliamentary system in Egypt mirrored that experienced by the German people in the wake of the German Empire's defeat in World War I. The impotence of democratic government was felt by both the Germans and the Egyptians and in both cases the merits of a single will to direct the nation were carefully considered. In Egypt especially, the partisanship of the new democratic system and a series of elections increasingly dominated by apparently self-serving politicians accelerated Young Egypt in the direction of Authoritarianism and further away from accepting a peaceful constitutional change of government.[77] As Young Egypt spokesman Fathi Radwan wrote: "If it is dictatorship that will place a limit on the anarchy that has been disclosed about our high officials, then we will be among the supporters of dictatorship…if it can instill the youth with strength and the nation with a militant spirit, filling the people with electricity, vigor, and dynamism, then we will be dictators to the bone."[78] These words share many similarities with the early rhetoric of Mussolini, whose dynamic populism led him frequently to call upon the fervor of the Italian people as the essential agent of change in the nation, and who proposed militarism as the quintessential solution for the nation's stagnation and catalyst for its rejuvenation.

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[75] Gershoni, 246
[76] Ibid., 246
[77] Ibid., 247
[78] Ibid., 248

Clearly, as the 1930's drew to a close Young Egypt was flirting more and more with Fascist ideas and it was only a matter of time before the movement, now a political party, would extend its feelers to those states who espoused the virtues it so admired. The Egyptian philosopher and intellectual Abd al-Rahman Badawi (d. 2002) represents this trend, and his own admiration for the order and militarism of the Italian and German Fascist models remained even at the end of his life, as expressed in his autobiography. This work, *Sīrat Hayatī* (*The Course of My Life*), is composed of two volumes, the first of which contains an account of Badawi's early career, his travels in Europe, and his enthusiasm for Nazism as he knew it in Germany in the 1930s, and thus proves useful to any scholar seeking to trace the roots of Fascist influences on Badawi's thinking.[79] It reveals that not only did Badawi read the works of the prominent Nazi leaders and ideologues, but that their implications had a profound and even lifelong effect on his thinking. Within this work he recalls events from the time he spent as a student in Germany and the powerful effect the Nazi illusion had upon his political consciousness. In fact, it seems that the Nazi state was acceptable to the majority of the expatriate Egyptians he spent his time with, partly due to the ongoing debate between the proponents of democracy and dictatorship in Egypt. Badawi's disillusionment with his fellow Egyptians in Munich, however, stemmed from their merely superficial knowledge of the structure of the Nazi regime. As he recalls in his autobiography: "In Germany I asked the Egyptian students in Munich about the Nazi system: its foundations and its

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[79] The work, written at the end of Badawi's life, begins with a chapter entitled "Everything is Coincidence", and its contents give the impression that Badawi the philosopher, at the end of his days, was writing this book in an attempt to make sense of the events of his life. Thus, his description of his impressions of Nazism as he knew it in Germany in the 1930s seem to be honest assessments of a stage of his political and intellectual development; a candid description of his impressions that proves useful in understanding why in his later writings in *Jaridat Misr al-Fatah* he so enthusiastically embraced Nazism. Israel Gershoni has cited the work in *Confronting Fascism in Egypt*, though it is not evident that it is used it in that book in the same way it is used in this thesis, to contextualize Badawi's endorsement of Fascism.

bearings and its theories – they could not find an answer. Then I asked them about its principal persons – and they had learned nothing except for their names and their ministries. ”[80]

It is apparent that the young Badawi, as with many contemporary Egyptian intellectuals, took an acute interest in the political developments in southern and central Europe. He goes on to state that during his time in Munich, the "capital of the Nazi movement," he decided to undertake a deep study of the Nazi party, and began first with Hitler's autobiography *Mein Kempf* and continued his study with Alfred Rosenberg's *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*. He explains that his reading of these foundational works of Nazism allowed him to comprehend the precise nature of Nazi ideology and the racial theory put forth by Rosenberg and Hitler that elevated the Aryan race to a superhuman level.[81] He explains that he bought a number of similar books that led to the development of the Nazi ideology, including those of Housten Stewart Chamberlan, the British-born German writer who pioneered the racialist pan-Germanic theories that inspired men like Rosenberg and Hitler.[82] He also mentions buying *Deutsche Schuften*, a nationalist text written by the polymath and biblical scholar Paul de Lagard, whose virulent anti-Semitism laid the foundations for the racialist policies of the National Socialist party.[83] From Badawi's reading list, and the fact that he claims he carried both of these books and the ideas they contained back to Egypt when he began his work with

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[80] Abd al-Rahman Badawi, *Sīrat Ḥayyatī*, (Beirut: al-Mu'assasah al-'Arabīyah lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr, 2000), 93.
[81] Badawi, 93.
[82] Ibid., 93.
[83] Ibid., 93.

Young Egypt, we can gather that his studies of the Nazi state and the ideology of

National Socialism had a profound effect on him.[84]

Upon his return to Egypt, Badawi became head of Young Egypt's new Office of

External Affairs, and published a series of essays in *Jaridat Misr al-Fatah*, the Young

Egypt party newspaper, exploring the Nazi ideology. In addition, he published

translations of works by Mussolini and the Nazi party program. These works were

collected in a series called "The School of Fascism," reflecting Young Egypt's interest in

the European trend. The first two essays published in the Young Egypt Newspaper were

analyses and endorsements of Nazi racialist ideas. From the fact that Badawi traced Nazi

ideology to the writings of Paul de Lagarde and Housten Stewart Chamberlan, we can see

that he found this to be the central component of Nazi ideology. He described their

ideology as a form of "racial mysticism" distinct from Marxist materialism and appealing

to the spiritual side of the human being. This ideology appealed to the sense of belonging

to a distinct elite class of human beings and required one, by the apparent reality of this

fact, to sacrifice oneself for the "race."[85] Evidently, Badawi had a firm grasp of the

ideology of Nazi racism, and was able to analyze it more clearly than Ahmed Husayn,

who had written only about the Nazi strategy for mobilizing the masses of the German

people.

To Badawi, the cornerstones of this strategy were racism (*'unsuriyya*) and

Corporatism. In an essay published in *Jaridat Misr al-Fatah* that summarized the ideas of

many of the proto-Nazi thinkers whose books he had read in Munich, he explained the

compelling nature of the Corporatist, racialist ideology, explaining that "the individual is

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[84] Ibid., 93-94.
[85] Gershoni, 252

an indivisible part of the race and is incapable of separating himself from it…There is no life for the individual outside of the race."[86] Perhaps intentionally, Badawi touched on one of the more important interactions between Fascist ideology and its interaction with Nazi racialism. Drawing on Fascist Corporatism, which itself was born of the effort to find a nationalist alternative to the Socialist method of considering community, and the desire of the individual to belong to a group, racialism was a recipe for the unification of peoples that went beyond national borders. Though the Young Egypt movement was not a pan-Arab movement at its core, there was in Badawi's thinking the germ of this Pan-Arabism, and perhaps for this reason he was keen to take up Nazi ideas of racial superiority, transfer them to the Egyptian situation, and use them to mobilize the masses of the Arabs.

Later essays published in the same series expressed admiration for other principles of the Nazi program. The "Fuhrer principle" was one of the most appealing to Badawi, and provided a chance for him to weigh in on the debate between proponents of democracy and proponents of dictatorship. As Young Egypt's leadership was particularly interested in how the Nazi Party had managed to mobilize so much of the German population in a short period of time, an explanation of this core tenet of the Nazi ideology was called for. Badawi had already accepted the notions of racial exceptionalism and a common racial character. He also stated that the leadership of one man who embodied the character of the nation was in fact "true democracy, rather than these parliamentary comedies that the so-called democratic states boast about, states in which the fancy traders in words and the capitalists dominate the state."[87] Badawi believed that obedience

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[86] Ibid., 253
[87] Gershoni, 253

and responsibility were two of the defining characteristics of both the German and the

Egyptian peoples, demonstrating the extent to which he had accepted Nazi and proto-

Nazi notions of racial spirit and exceptionalism. His background as a philosopher had led

him to explore the nuances of what seemed a deeply mystical ideology, and his interest in

contemporary politics and the situation in Egypt drove his admiration for the Fascist

program that had apparently rejuvenated Germany and its people.

Even years later as he wrote his autobiography, the effect of his time in Germany

is evident. His description of his sojourn in Germany provides a good example of the

admiration felt for the National Socialist regime in Germany by a number of Arab

philosophical and political thinkers of the early twentieth century, as well as the

apologetics often expressed by these thinkers on behalf of the Nazi regime. In a section of

his autobiography entitled "Nazism and the Jews," Badawi recalls the two and a half

months he spent in Germany in the mid 1930's, using his own experiences to portray

American, French, and British characterizations of the Nazi police state as baseless

propaganda. He makes the point that while in Munich, neither he nor any of his fellow

Egyptians experiences any sort of trouble with the militant wings of the Nazi party (SA

and SS), or with the regular or secret police (Gestapo). These assertions were meant to

counter allegations by postwar historians of Nazi Germany that as early as Hitler's rise to

power in 1933 abuses by police and paramilitary organizations were rampant.[88]

Comprehensive histories of Nazi Germany based on captured German government

documents such as William Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* point out

numerous early instances of Nazi state terrorism as early as 1933. Therefore, this attempt

to portray the Nazi state as something other than a police state provides a fine example of

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[88] Badawi, 76

the admiration that western-educated Arab thinkers such as Badawi had for Hitler's
Germany.

Another purpose of this section of Badawi's autobiography is to debunk postwar
allegations of Nazi mistreatment of the Jews, at least in the early years of the regime. His
central piece of evidence is an anecdote that concerns a Jewish landlady who managed
the apartment building in which Badawi's friend Fouad Asl was staying at the time.[89]
Badawi says that while the reader may have expected that the apartment building would
have been subject to nightly visits by the police, in fact nothing of the sort ever occurred
in Asl's recollection. He goes on to recount his own visit to the woman, inquiring about
where to purchase books by German Jewish authors that had become scarce in recent
years, and how he was assured that such books could still be found.[90] He then recalls a
trip to a bookstore owned by a German Jew as part of the same episode. The fact that the
landlady suffered no police harassment and the existence of a bookstore owned by a Jew
and containing books by Jewish authors are used by Badawi to prove that the Nazi
persecution of the Jews in the early years of Hitler's regime was not true in his own
experience. [91] He asks the reader: "what is the meaning of these lies that were broadcast
in various parts of the world – especially in America, France, and England – about
alleged persecution of the Jews in Germany until 1937 at the least estimate?!"[92]

It is well known to historians today that Nazi abuses of German Jews became
state policy almost immediately after the party's rise to power in 1933. Although major
examples of Nazi state terrorism such as *Kristallnacht*, which prompted outrage both

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[89] Ibid., 76
[90] Badawi, 76
[91] Ibid., 76
[92] Ibid., 76

within Germany and abroad, did not occur until later, instances of government boycotts of Jewish businesses and laws barring Jews from government or military employment became widespread from the moment of Hitler's rise to power. The evidence of the Nazi policy of institutionalized anti-Semitism, visible to many at the time of its implementation, is overwhelming, and renders ridiculous Badawi's critique of what he believes to be Western European and American propaganda. His attempted defense of the German state in the early 1930s, however, provides excellent evidence of the anti-Western ideology that pervaded intellectual circles in Asia in the twentieth century, and that continued even after the end of World War II and the beginning of decolonization. As Cemil Aydin writes: "In the postcolonial period, the image of an untrustworthy and sinister West continued to exist as a trope in the intellectual histories of Asian societies, despite the fact that the international context that created this image had been radically transformed with the end of the Western empires."[93] The notion of the threat of Western imperialism had become so ingrained in intellectual discourse in colonial societies that even long after the breakup of the Western empires the perceptions of Nationalist thinkers were still influenced by the idea of a menacing "West." From the period leading up to the First World War and through the Second World War, Germany was seen as a friendly power to the peoples of what would come to be called the "Third World." Bereft of African colonies after the Versailles agreement, and placed under virtual occupation by the European Allies, Germany took on a sympathetic appeal in the eyes of Arab, and particularly Egyptian, intellectuals who had suffered under the occupation of the same Allies who had defeated the Kaiser's Germany in the Great War. The combination of a

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[93] Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2007), 201

desire to sympathize with a once powerful state with an esteemed academic tradition and to throw off the twin yokes of French and British occupation prompted outpourings of support for Hitler from many Egyptian intellectuals and members of Egyptian Nationalist groups. Badawi was among these. His flat rejection of Nazi abuses in the early years of the Hitler regime and his attempt to portray such accusations as the concoction of postwar French, British, and American propagandists is evidence of his desire to preserve in his own mind Hitler's Germany in an idealized form.

Later sections of Badawi's autobiography illustrate just how closely many politically active Egyptians identified with the rising Nazi state. For example, he devotes a paragraph to describing the early life and political career of Hitler's deputy, Rudolph Hess. Hess was born in Alexandria to a German businessman and spent many of his formative years in Egypt before returning to Germany for schooling.[94] He explains correctly that Hess was among the earliest followers of Hitler, and took part in the notorious "Beer Hall Putsch" that landed Hitler in Spandau prison.[95] As Badawi continues to explain, Hess first escaped Germany but later returned and demanded to be incarcerated alongside his Fuhrer.[96] The request was granted, and Hess was among those to whom Hitler dictated the narrative of his life and political ideology that would become *Mein Kempf*. This work was both an autobiography and a political treatise that outlined many of the programs the Nazi state would implement, including rearmament, expansion of the Reich, and the relentless persecution of the Jews. Badawi explains that Hess's personal connection to Egypt led many of the Egyptian students studying in Munich, the

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[94] Badawi, 92
[95] Ibid., 92
[96] Ibid., 92

spiritual heartland of Nazism, to see him as a possible intercessor on their behalf.[97] In this

we find an excellent example of the personal nature of Egyptian anti-establishment

identification with the German state. The Arab students who studied in Europe at the time

of the rise of Fascism saw connections between their own plight and that of Germany.

Germany had apparently been resurrected by the Fuhrer principle and the order promised

by the Nazi state. This was achieved by stripping the populace of their sense of defeat,

fuelling a sense of betrayal by the democratic leadership, and transferring the blame for

Germany's defeat to the Jews. Badawi notes (with some pride) that one of the most

prominent individuals in the Nazi hierarchy was Egyptian-born, and that many of the

young Egyptians in Munich were excited by the prospect of a German leadership that

would understand their plight and aid them.

However, Badawi also displays some skepticism about his compatriots'

excitement for a European intercessor, and despite his pride that Hess was an

"Alexandrian by birth", he seems to think that his compatriots' feelings were misplaced.[98]

He explains that they knew little of the Nazi movement, and states that it is for this reason

that he embarked upon his mission to learn the nuances of the Nazi ideology, which in

the end gave him more to work with politically than the naive hope of foreign

intercession. Evidently, Badawi the ultranationalist believed that what was achieved in

Germany was possible elsewhere, and that the Nazi values of nationalism, order, anti-

Semitism, and militarism could be transplanted into the ideology of Young Egypt. To

resurrect an envisioned Egyptian empire would remain a fantasy so long as the Egyptian

people refused to accept the values that had transformed Germany. In this way Badawi

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[97] Ibid., 92-93
[98] Badawi, 92

saw more possibilities in Fascism than some of his contemporaries, whose view of this political phenomenon remained narrowly Eurocentric. To Badawi and other Arab nationalists who held onto similar notions of racial exceptionalism Nazi racialist ideology and the Fascist values of order, revolutionary spirit, and militarism were universal concepts, to be transplanted onto Arab soil for the purpose of national resurrection.

The extent to which Abd al-Rahman Badawi endorsed Nazi ideology, strove to understand its teachings, and defended its racist character even at the end of his life provide evidence of the existence of real Fascist influence in the Nationalist movement of Egypt. Badawi provided many of the philosophical underpinnings for the Young Egypt party program, and his endorsement of Nazism went beyond mere admiration for the effectiveness of the Nazi party in reorganizing and rearming the German state. These were the principle points of interest for Young Egypt founder Ahmed Husayn, whose reflections on the Fascist paradigm were confined to its pragmatic application to current problems. Badawi's time spent in Germany made him a believer in the order and efficacy of dictatorship, and his exploration of proto-Nazi racist literature converted him into a committed Fascist. This stance was not to be expected from a student of Existentialism, whose literary proponents were more often than not distinguished by a respect for the individual, which was antithetical to Fascist ideology. If Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus were both pro-Arab, but their beliefs came from the notion of the universal human experience, which was encapsulated in the thinking of the left at that time. Badawi's nationalism was restrictive, and like many of the Arab Nationalists who toyed with Nazism, he found the idea of inherently racial characteristics appealing, and applicable to the problems of the Arab people.

Evidently, Badawi's line of thinking and the anti-Semitism that went along with it had a signifanct effect on the direction of the Young Egypt party. The movement was slow to adopt an anti-Jewish stance, but once converted to the irresistible notion of racial unity, its adherents launched a campaign against the Egyptian Jews that was as rhetorically vehement as that of the Nazis in Germany. However, the Young Egypt movement's flirtation with European Fascism remained complicated. The movement's Ultranationalism generated a great deal of respect for what had been achieved by one-man, one-party rule in Italy and Germany, and as with many anti-establishment movements of the time, disillusionment with democracy made such ideas as the "Fuhrer principle" appealing. The Corporatist need to belong to a unitary society was also evident, and the racist dogma of Nazi ideologues like Rosenberg and his anti-semitic intellectual forefathers de Lagarde and Chamberlan seemed applicable to the position of the Egyptian Ultranationalist intellectuals. These intellectuals were fascinated by the way in which Hitler, an Austrian, had mobilized the masses of the German people to his cause, and by his success in rebuilding a nation that had been as shattered as Egypt appeared to be at the time. However, many Arab intellectuals were as hateful of colonialism after decades of occupation as they were in love with the prospects of revivification and palingenesis. Thus, the aggression and expansionism of the Fascist nations of Europe caused them to wonder whether the ideologies that had revived these nations was simply an excuse for a new campaign of colonialism. Clearly, Italian aggression in Libya and Abyssinia had won few converts among the Egyptian masses, and Fascist propaganda was weakened both by the political realities of Rome's agreements with England and the public disillusionment with Mussolini, who both

professed to be a "defender of Islam" and at the same time subjugated the Libyan Muslims. It is due to the expansionism of the Fascist regimes in Italy and Germany that the Fascism as it existed in the Arab world and other colonial and post-colonial nations could never be an exact replica of European Fascism.

Badawi's autobiography, however, reveals that despite these sentiments his hatred for what he considered the two-faced policies of the Western colonial powers caused him to put his sympathies behind the Germany he had known in the thirties. For this Arab intellectual and philosopher, who was swayed by notions of racial exceptionalism, national unity, and the order provided by a one-party state, the vilification of Germany after the war was nothing but a conspiracy by Britain, France, and the United States. Again, as had happened after the end of the First World War, the sight of a proud nation brought to its knees elicited sympathy and he felt himself called to Germany's defense in his memoir. For many nationalists such as Badawi, the Nazi ideology had a universal appeal; its seeds could be planted in Arab soil. As the essays of other Young Egypt ideologues and Badawi's autobiography illustrate, Fascist ideas ran deep in that movement's ideology.

It is through studying the writings of ideologists like Badawi that we are able to see a Fascist character that transcends the superficial similarities between Nazi Germany, Mussolini's Italy, and the political vision of Young Egypt. One can excuse the existence of "Shirt" movements affiliated with nationalist parties if their ideologies proved to be substantially different from European Fascist models. However, Badawi's acceptance of the racist ideology of Chamberlan, de Lagarde, and Rosenberg and his later endorsement of racial Corporatism, one-party rule, and the methodology of national unification prove

that although he hesitated to call himself a Fascist, he definitely fit the definition outlined

in the introduction to this thesis.

II. The Syrian Ba'th Party and Michel Aflaq, the Fascist Economist

The case of the Syrian Ba'th Party is distinct from that of the Young Egypt Movement in terms of the Fascist influences displayed by its members. Unlike Young Egypt, the ideology of the Ba'th party was essentially the creation of a single individual: Michel Aflaq. Furthermore, among the Arab Nationalist movements that exhibited some degree of Fascist influence, the Ba'th was one of few to actually take power in an Arab country, and in this case found success not only in Syria, but also in Iraq. The Ba'th was also the most profoundly Pan-Arabist of the twentieth century Arab Nationalist movements. For Ba'thists Pan-Arabism was not only a political goal, but an essential component of their ideology. Whereas the Young Egypt movement was a territorial Nationalist movement in the sense of its dedication to the aspirations of the Egyptian nation and people,[99] the Ba'th party saw itself as the proponent of an unrealized Arab nation and as the vanguard of a struggle that affected the entire Arab people, who inhabited the lands between Mesopotamia and North Africa. Of the various Nationalist movements arising in the Arab world in the early twentieth century, Ba'thist nationalism evoked most clearly the sentiments of the Romantic nationalists of nineteenth-century Europe. To Aflaq, as with his intellectual, proto-nationalist Syrian forefathers, the Arabs were a people with a common culture, a common language, and a common destiny. The boundaries between Arab states were artificial, but the Arab "homeland" was vast.

The Ba'th Party arose in a Syrian intellectual milieu that had been the basis for Arab Nationalism for many years. Damascus was the traditional center of Arab nationalist thought, and it had been one of the hotbeds of Arab opposition to Ottoman rule in the period leading up to the First World War. Syrian Nationalism was a distinct

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[99] Gershoni, 235

phenomenon, however, as Syria, unlike Egypt, existed in the minds of many Nationalist intellectuals more as a concept than as a territory with boundaries drawn on any current map. The idea of "Greater Syria" defined the Nationalist aspirations of many who came before the Ba'thists,[100] and it was this concept of an Arab nation not beholden to borders drawn by foreign occupiers that was to form the basis of the Ba'th Party's ideology. Michel Aflaq and others would take that idea further by espousing pan-Arabism and the formation of a single Arab state to express the aspirations of a single Arab people. Syrian nationalists had defined the region of Greater Syria to include Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Iraq and it was this country that King Abdullah I of Transjordan sought to rule from a throne in Damascus.[101] This expansive nationalism was based upon the idea that the Arabs, as a single people with a single national spirit, would accept the creation of a state unto themselves with a single government ruling over them. Such a sentiment was reminiscent of Romantic Nationalism, and reached Aflaq through such thinkers as Sati' al-Husri who sought to define the Arabs as having a shared language, culture, and artistic tradition. This is the spirit of which Aflaq writes when he describes the "immortal Arab message"[102] that transcends the artificial boundaries of countries that were imposed by foreigners and did not reflect the true boundaries of the land inhabited by the Arab people.[103]

The nineteenth century brought sweeping changes in the political realities of the Middle East that were felt as much in Syria as anywhere else in the region. Napoleon's

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[100] Kamel S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party: History, Ideology, and Organization* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1966), 24.
[101] Ibid., 24
[102] Michel Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th* (Beirut: Munshūrāt Dār Al-Talī'a, 1963), 139.
[103] John F. Devlin, *The Ba'th Party: A History from Its Origins to 1966* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1976), 3.

invasion of Egypt in 1798 had paved the way for the rise of Muhammad 'Ali whose son Ibrahim invaded and occupied Syria between 1831 and 1840.[104] The efficient administration established in Syria by the new overlords effectively centralized the government for the first time in centuries and introduced economic reforms that opened Syria to European merchants.[105] While the imported European goods harmed the local cottage industries, and the missionaries that came with the traders threatened the traditional balance of power in Syrian society, this exposure to European ideas and customs would have far reaching consequences as would the Syrian experience with a centralized government and administration.[106] The Ottoman Empire reconquered Syria in 1840 and by the end of the nineteenth century the autocratic policies of Sultan Abdulhamid were provoking nationalistic agitation in Syria, although these early nationalists were without a clear program of what form future independence would take or even what the new country should look like on a map.[107] Early movements for regional autonomy at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century demanded decentralization of the Ottoman administration and the adoption of Arabic as an administrative language, or simply attempted to promote nationalistic sentiment among the peoples of Greater Syria.[108] These were essentially the same demands raised by the attendees of the Arab Congress of Paris in 1913, the majority of whome were Syrians and Ottoman loyalists.[109]

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[104] Derek Hopwood, *Syria 1945-1986* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 16-17
[105] Ibid., 17.
[106] Ibid., 17.
[107] Ibid., 17.
[108] Ibid., 17.
[109] Ibid., 17.

The outbreak of the First World War in Europe and the beginning of the Arab

Revolt in 1916 at the direction of Amir Hussain, the Hashemite Sharif of Mecca,

eliminated the possibility of Arab autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, and made revolt

and full independence seem better paths to the Arab nationalists.[110] Hussain was neither a

Syrian nor an idealistic Arab nationalist, but hoped to incorporate the lands of

Mesopotamia, Greater Syria, and Arabia under his rule.[111] When his son Faisal marched

triumphantly into Damascus at the end of 1918 with a detachment of Arabian horsemen,

it is likely that he thought these ambitions were soon to be realized. Damascus, a

historical center of the Arab world, was named the capital of the new Arab state.[112] As it

turned out, Faisal's territorial ambitions were shattered by the Sykes-Picot agreement,

which established British and French spheres of influence in the region of Greater Syria

and essentially redrew the map of the Arab world.[113] The Balfour Declaration of 1917

raised another problem that future Syrian Nationalists would have to deal with and

contributed to the sense of betrayal felt by the Arab Nationalists at having their hopes so

drastically dashed by their erstwhile European allies.[114] The postwar negotiations also

had another effect on the future of the Arab world in that they separated a number of the

territories that the Syrian nationalists considered to be rightfully part of a Greater Syria,

particularly Lebanon.[115] The fact that the Hashemite, non-Syrian Faisal had agreed to

allow Lebanon and Syria to be separated from one another provoked a fresh wave of anti-

Hashemite feeling and demonstrations.[116] This sense of betrayal led the Syrians to look

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[110] Hopwood, 18-19.
[111] Ibid., 19.
[112] Ibid., 20.
[113] Ibid., 19-20
[114] Ibid., 19-20
[115] Ibid., 24.
[116] Ibid., 22-24

elsewhere for Nationalist leaders, turning to a younger generation of Syrian Nationalists who were both anti-French and anti-Hashemite, while older Syrian notables accepted pan-Arabism and the creation of a large Arab state as the solution to the economic devastation left in the wake of the Ottoman withdrawal and the British advance.[117] As we shall see, Michel Aflaq, the Ba'th Party ideologue, had similar fears which drove him to seek the creation of as large an Arab homeland as possible. For Aflaq, as with the older notables, because the economies of the Arab states were in a dire state, a larger land area would be needed to compensate for this and effect an economic revival. The notables accepted Faisal and the Hashemites on these grounds, although their personal sentiments were pro-Syrian, while Aflaq's personal feelings about the shared culture of the Arabs led him to believe that Arab unity would be a natural, organic process.[118]

French resistance to Syrian nationalist sentiment and demands for full independence eventually culminated in an ultimatum issued by the French mandatory authorities to Faisal calling for the dismissal of the Nationalist politicians in his government.[119] He was forced to accept the ultimatum, which led to an uprising against Hashemite rule and a French invasion, which defeated a detachment of Hashemite soldiers and local irregular forces and captured Damascus, forcing Faisal and his government to leave the country.[120] The Arab kingdom in Syria was destroyed and the French began an occupation that would last thirty years, while Faisal with the help of his British allies ascended to the throne in Iraq, and ruled until 1933, the year that he died.[121] The rest of the Hashemite family experienced a mixed fate. Hussain was abandoned by

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[117] Hopwood, 21-22.
[118] Ibid., 21-22
[119] Fawwaz Traboulsi, *A History of Modern Lebanon* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 79.
[120] Ibid., 79.
[121] Hopwood, 22.

the British and ousted by the al-Saud family in 1924, while his son Abdallah became the ruler of the new country of Transjordan.[122]

The French attitude towards their new subjects was unabashedly colonialist. The French military governor Gouraud plainly told an audience in Beirut in 1919: "We come to you as descendants of the Crusaders."[123] Although the terms of the treaty establishing the French Mandates in Syria and Lebanon alluded to some limit to French authority, the French government's actions and rhetoric treated Syria as merely another colonial possession, without rights or the prospect of future independence. Few French officials spoke Arabic or had experience with local customs and history: many were generals with colonial experience from France's African possessions, and all ruled with absolute authority, taking only minor steps to preserve the façade of Syrian self-government.[124] A secret police service was established to monitor and arrest dissidents, which frequently acted with impunity to preserve the French occupation.[125] Furthermore, French colonialist meddling continued to divide traditional states and provinces into different parts, the most significant action being the creation of Greater Lebanon in 1920. Syria did not recognize this partition, which has accounted for the strange and difficult relationship the two states have since had with one another. Syrian Nationalists hanging on to the idea of a Greater Syria have always included Lebanon as a natural part of the Syrian homeland.

Syrian Nationalism developed at a slower rate under the French occupation but the French legalization of political parties in 1925 led to the formation of the People's Party by Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar and Faris al-Khouri, former members of the

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[122] Hopwood, 22.
[123] Ibid., 23.
[124] Ibid., 23-24.
[125] Ibid., 24

Hashemite government.[126] They opposed the French occupation in pursuit of their aims

of Syrian unity and independence.[127] Many of the members of the People's Party were

from the urban elites and wanted both to modernize the economy and maintain their

stations in any future state.[128] This would echo the desires of the early Ba'thists, as

Ba'thist aspirations to rule over a future Arab nation were born out of the ideology of the

"vanguard" party that would direct a "revolution from above."[129] The Druze revolt

between 1925 and 1927 led to the arrest and execution of several members of the

People's Party, and following the French defeat of the revolt, the French authorities

called for a constitution to be drafted and a government to be formed.[130] The ensuing

elections saw a number of Nationalists elected to the National Assembly and the ensuing

constitution, which included a clause about the indivisible nature of Syrian territories,

was rejected by French authorities, who drafted their own constitution in its place.[131] The

decade of the 1930s saw the continuation of struggles between the Syrian nationalists,

who wanted their own government and independence, and the French authorities who

opposed them at every turn. In 1939 the French once again threatened Syrian territorial

integrity when they ceded the port of Alexandretta to Turkey, infuriating the Syrians who

rioted against the treaty and were brutally suppressed.[132]

 The outbreak of the Second World War once again dramatically changed the

situation in Syria. France's defeat, the German occupation of France, and the creation of

the Vichy government complicated negotiations and left the future of the Mandate in

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[126] Hopwood, 25
[127] Ibid., 25
[128] Ibid., 25
[129] Raymond Hinnebusch, *Syria: Revolution From Above* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 2.
[130] Ibid., 25
[131] Ibid., 25-26
[132] Ibid., 27

doubt.[133] Vichy's withdrawal from the League of Nations rendered the Mandate void, and following a wave of pro-German sentiment among the Syrians, who saw an Axis victory in Europe as a potential gateway for their own independence, Free French and British forces occupied the former French mandatory territories in Syria and Lebanon.[134] Despite Free French objections, the British believed that the occupation of France by Germany made governing Syria as a Mandate impossible and decided that independence was the only possible alternative.[135] Overruling Free French protests, a nationalist government was formed in Syria and recognized by both the Soviet Union and the United States. After a final attempt by General De Gaulle's forces to save Syria for the French, which resulted in a bombardment of Damascus that killed 2500 people, British forces escorted the French out of the Syrian territories and by 1946, Syria was an independent country.[136]

It was slightly before independence and out of this Nationalist fervor that the Ba'th Party was born, issuing its First Communiqué in July 1943.[137] The most important of the Ba'th's founders was Michel Aflaq (d. 1989), who was born in 1905 in Damascus to a Greek Orthodox family.[138] He began his education in French occupied Syria and completed his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris in the 1930s, where he met Ba'th party cofounder Salah al-Din al-Bitar.[139] Upon his return to Syria, Aflaq became a schoolteacher, teaching humanities at the Tajhiz school in Damascus, among other places. During his time there, he was introduced to Germanic and Hegelian thought by his colleague Kamal al-Ayyad, which built upon his exposure to European socialist

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[133] Hopwood, 27-29
[134] Ibid., 28-30
[135] Ibid., 28-29.
[136] Ibid., 29-30.
[137] David Roberts, *The Ba'th and the Creation of Modern Syria* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 18.
[138] Ibid., 15.
[139] Ibid., 15-16.

thought in Paris.[140] With the French abuse of Syrian territorial integrity still fresh in the

minds of the new generation of Nationalists, the idea of pan-Arabism was attractive to a

people who already believed that the borders of their country did not adequately represent

the extent of their national homeland. It was probably only a small stretch for a

European-educated young Nationalist such as Michel Aflaq to imagine that the Romantic

Nationalism that had united Germany was also applicable to the Arab world. In his mind,

the Arabs were members of a single culture and shared a language and literary tradition

that was many centuries old. The early activities of the Ba'th Party were focused on

opposing the French occupation, and after independence Ba'thists protested the loss of

Alexandretta and opposed the newly independent Syrian government.[141] The Ba'thists

also called for neutrality in international relations, not wanting to side with either the East

or the West as the Cold War brewed, and believed that accepting aid from a foreign

power was tantamount to giving up independence, which ran contrary to the

ultranationalist mindset of the Ba'th Party's founders.[142] The Party's declaration after its

first congress in 1947 demonstrated the pan-Arabist sentiment that was at the core of its

ideology, for it called upon the Arab League (whose existence it generally opposed as

being only a superficial attempt at Arab unity)[143] to take steps to combine the armed

forces of the Arab states, allow free travel without passports between states, and pursue a

unified foreign policy.[144] The party's declaration also advocated political nonalignment

and suggested stopping the sale of oil to Western nations as a tool for achieving its

political ends, as well as withdrawing from the United Nations in order to pursue an

[140] Roberts, 15-16.
[141] Abu Jaber, 24-25.
[142] Ibid., 26.
[143] Ibid., 25.
[144] Ibid., 27.

independent foreign policy completely free of obligation to nations that were not Arab.[145]

The establishment of Israel in 1948 and the humiliation of the Arab states that had

opposed its creation was one of the foremost events that placed the Ba'th Party in the

forefront of Syrian politics.[146] Having already established their Nationalist credentials by

speaking out against what they considered Western institutions such as the United

Nations, the Ba'th now found the Syrian people, who were smarting from their defeat and

feeling betrayed once more by the West, to be far more receptive to their program. Now

that the party had become a major political player, it became involved in the three *coups*

d'etat that would sweep Syria over the next several years. Finally, in 1954, the Ba'th

Party would be able to wield authority disproportionate to the sixteen parliamentary seats

it had gained in that year's elections.[147] From this point forward, the Ba'th party would

become a permanent fixture in Syrian politics and society.

The Ba'th Party was one of only a handful of Arab Nationalist political parties

that were avowedly "socialist" in nature, although by Aflaq's assertion it was an "Arab"

socialism that differed from its European counterparts. Many who have spoken on behalf

of Aflaq and the Ba'th Party have done much to further the notion that Ba'thist ideology

was a distinct phenomenon, drawn strictly from the heritage of the Arab people. The idea

that concepts such as social justice and individual liberty have different meanings to

Arabs than they do to Westerners has also been used to justify apparent discrepancies

between Ba'thist ideological principles and actual state policies as practiced in Ba'thist

Syria. For Aflaq, Arab Socialism was therefore distinct from Marxism and its European

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[145] Abu Jaber, 27.
[146] Ibid., 29.
[147] Devlin, 59-61

alternatives, and his Nationalist sentiments made the internationalist outlook of Marxism anathema to him.

Parallels can be drawn between the National Socialism of Adolf Hitler and the Arab Socialism of Aflaq and the Ba'th Party. Just as Badawi's acceptance of the social principles of Fascism and Nazism allowed him to become the ideologist of Arab Fascists, Aflaq's obsession with Arab Socialism made him the economist of his group, and it is Aflaq's Fascist economic theory that proves to be the most interesting aspect of his ideology. If Aflaq did indeed develop his economic program independently of direct Fascist influence, his economic platform would be the only Fascist economic model to be developed independently of European Fascist theory, though it is likely that his schooling in Europe and his interest in European political systems also contributed to his economic thought.[148] Aflaq's economic theory is corporatist in nature, in that it subjugates the individual to the state and places the state as an arbiter between the people and the means of production, in the manner of the state Corporatism of Mussolini.[149] Aflaq believed in a strong state organizing a centrally-planned economy, a classless society, and a harmony and "consonance" between the individual, the group, and the state. As Aflaq writes, explaining how the Ba'th party, once in power, will enforce Corporatist economic harmony as part of the palingenetic process:

> Thus things will reassume their natural form and reveal themselves as they
> are. The Arabs will then be convinced, as will the whole world, that in the
> living and healthy constitution, that of the Arab nation, will be realized what
> has escaped being realized in many: the harmony of the freedom of the
> individual and the community with the unity of the nation, the consonance of
> the right of the citizen with the power of the state.
> The expression of this idea is the formation of one Arab party, unified in
> direction, leadership and planning over all the Arab regions, for the Arab

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[148] Cyprian Blamires, *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Greenwood: ABC-CLIO, 2006), 83.
[149] Ibid., 84.

nation is in dire needs of unity so that it can completely bring up all its potentialities and powers. These powers and potentials will not only guarantee the liberation of the Arabs from all kinds of imperialism but will also establish for the world a new Arab culture.[150]

Furthermore, the very ambiguity of his definition of Arab Socialism is highly reminiscent of earlier Fascist explanations of what a Fascist economy should look like. In fact, most of the Ba'thist ideology as embodied by the Constitution of 1947 was ambiguously defined. As David Robert writes: "It is appropriate to begin with a word of caution about Ba'thist ideology in general. It is certainly true that there are so many unsupported and unverifiable statements in Ba'thist writings that the student is all too apt to abandon them as not worth further pursuit."[151] The section of the constitution dealing with economic policy is perhaps the best articulated: "This is socialist. There is a limit to the ownership of land and industry and real estate may only be owned within the confines of justice, but property and inheritance are permitted. The state will control internal and external trade."[152] This proposal, although still vague, may be compared to the more ambiguous section on the fundamental principles of the Party: "First, the Arab nation is one and free. Second, the Arab nation has a personality, from which follows freedom of speech. Third, the Arab nation has an eternal mission which is to destroy colonialism and extend the hand of friendship to humanity at large."[153] These excerpts can be compared to Mussolini's equally vague and metaphysical description of the Fascist political economy:

> Fascism desires the State to be strong and organic, based on broad foundations of popular support. The Fascist State lays claim to rule in the economic field no less than in others; it makes its action felt

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[150] Aflaq, "For One Arab Nation There is One Popular Action," *A1-Baath*, March 11, 1947, accessed April 5, 2011. http://albaath.online.fr.
[151] Roberts, 62.
[152] Ibid., 63-64.
[153] Ibid., 63.

throughout the length and breadth of the country by means of its corporative, social, and educational institutions, and all the political, economic, and spiritual forces of the nation, organized in their respective associations, circulate within the State. .[154]

In both cases, the creators of these economic models believed that to define an economic system too closely was to threaten the Fascist view of the state and the spirit of the nation as the driving forces behind human and national endeavor. In a Fascist system, political concerns were always placed ahead of economic concerns.[155] So it was with Aflaq, whose chapter on Arab Socialism in his political treatise *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th* (*On the Way of Resurrection*) demonstrates many of these same traits. This is a five volume work that explains the precise points of Michel Aflaq's semi-mystical nationalist political philosophy. The work describes the nature of Aflaq's revolutionary thought, his Pan-Arabist political theories, and includes a long section on what he calls "Our Socialism," or "Arab Socialism." In the course of my research, I have not found this work to have been used before in an examination of the Ba'thist ideology for Fascist ideological characteristics, though it has proved invaluable to this study as a readily available ideological treatise written by Aflaq's own hand. As Kamel S. Abu Jaber notes, party publications and ideological pamphlets do not exist in the United States and are hard to come by even in Syria, and therefore this ideological treatise is one of few from which Michel Aflaq's ideology can be studied as he expressed it.[156]

From this work it is clear that Aflaq's non-Marxist and national-culture approach to "Socialism" is uncannily similar to the economic theories of prominent ideological Fascists in Europe. This along with his other Fascist credentials (as a populist

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[154] Mussolini, 38.
[155] Iordachi, 153
[156] Abu Jaber, 213

ultranationalist with a palingenetic vision) make it quite likely that Aflaq did indeed draw

inspiration from the European Fascist movements, with which he was no doubt familiar

as an educated intellectual in the thirties and forties.

Aflaq's Fascist proclivities according to the working definition used in this thesis

were extensive. As the proponent of a Syrian nation, and more generally of a primordial

Arab nation, his ideology was palingenetic. The party's name, "Resurrection," echoed the

hope to revive a vast Arab empire in order to elevate the Arabs to the level of their past

glory. His commitment to revolution and what he saw as the inevitable realization of Pan-

Arabism identifies him as an ultranationalist. The Ba'th movement was unarguably

populist and militaristic in character, and the fusion of "Socialism" (one that abandoned

the quintessential socialist idea of class affiliation) and nationalism inevitably subjugated

the individual to the state in the Corporatist mode. However, Aflaq also went to great

lengths to differentiate the Ba'thist movement from concurrent European political trends,

going so far in his political treatise *On the Way of Resurrection* to dedicate a chapter to

explaining how Ba'thist socialism differed from Fascism and National Socialism. Aflaq's

amalgamation of these two ideologies into a single type (labeled "Italian and German

National Socialism") and the text of the chapter itself prove that Aflaq understood full

well the nuances of the European Fascist movements, at least enough to realize that in

order to characterize his own ideology as a uniquely Arab phenomenon it was necessary

to address in advance evident similarities between his Socialism and that of the European

Fascists. Take, for example, the introduction to this section of his treatise:

> National Socialism in Germany and Italy is linked to the two philosophies of
> Nazism and Fascism, and these two philosophies are based upon the idea of
> racial superiority and differentiation between the nations, any superiority of a
> race over another and their right to dominance over the world, and also

undertake to differentiate between the peoples within a single nation, leading to the dictatorship of an individual or class.[157]

Aflaq's primary contention was that European National Socialism was an inherently racist ideology, and that in comparison the Ba'thist ideology did not undertake to differentiate between individuals in a society based on race or class. To Aflaq, Arabs were one indivisible race. He criticizes the colonialist sentiment implied by National Socialist ideas of racial superiority and goes on to say: "Ba'th Arab Socialism, as it is printed in its ideology, does not despise other nations and does not embark upon colonialism."[158] The next section of the chapter follows the same anti-colonialist rhetoric, and pledges to use Socialism to elevate the people of the Arab nation to the same economic level and free them from colonial occupiers:

> National Socialism in Germany and Italy is subject to the Nazi and Fascist systems, is aimed at expansion and colonialism, and will not undertake that which will not realize this expansion, as it is a tool for colonialism. However, Ba'th Socialism is not aimed at expansion; its purpose is only to find a fair economic system for the Arab homeland. It advocates principles that call for the liberation of the colonized nations and wishes to implement socialism in them so that these Socialist policies can lead to the dissemination of justice and raise the economic level between these peoples along with the preservation of their nationhood.[159]

In general, Ba'thist Socialism as conceived by Aflaq was essentially an anti-colonialist ideology, whereas European National Socialism advocated territorial expansion and the adoption of colonialist practices. In the same way that Italian propaganda proved ineffective in Egypt in the face of the Italian colonial campaigns in

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[157] Michel Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th* (Beirut: Munshūrāt Dār Al-Talī'a, 1963), 213.
[158] Ibid., 213.
[159] Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, 213.

North and East Africa, for Aflaq, the demonstrated goal of European Fascism was territorial expansion. Therefore, Arab Socialism had to differentiate itself as a system aligned with the peoples of the colonized countries.

Despite Aflaq's rejection of European Fascism, his notion of Arab Socialism shares most of the characteristics of the ambiguous "socialism" espoused by the Fascist thinkers of Europe. Like both Mussolini and Hitler he attempted to create an economic system that would privilege the socialist value of community while eliminating the idea of class struggle.[160] Along with the German and Italian Fascist thinkers, he believed that an inclusive national affiliation had to replace class identification in society, and that the Arabs "should never confuse their nationalism with felonious notions of class interests."[161] His economic principles were difficult to grasp, as they were explained in ambiguous, almost mystical terms, and were defined in opposition to a generic "Western" Socialism. Aflaq explained that it was necessary to tailor Socialism to the particular needs of the Arab people, because European Socialism had evolved to suit the needs of the West. For this reason, he called his Socialism "our Socialism":

> If we wish to define our Socialism by a definition that differentiates it from western Socialism, we must look at the genesis of Socialism in Europe and at the intellectual, spiritual, and economic conditions that led to its appearance. Next, we must speak about our Arab society and differentiate its situation and conditions and examine it to see if the solution that fits the Western nations can fit our situation as well, because Arab Socialism must meet our needs and be sensitive to all of the conditions surrounding the Arab nation at its present stage.[162]

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[160] Blamires, 84
[161] Ibid., 84
[162] Michel Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, 209.

Aflaq believed that Communism and European Socialism were dangerous to nationalism in the Arab world, as they replaced national identity with class identity. Aflaq characterizes Communism as a "negative" ideology and Arab socialism as a "positive" ideology, as the Arabs were at that point on the cusp of national independence and filled with a sense of hope for the future. Again, he linked the differences between Western socialist theories and Arab Socialism to the different conditions existing in the West and in the Arab world. Aflaq believed that Socialism and Nationalism were intertwined and that Arab Socialism would reverse the effects of colonialism and exploitation in order to realize the palingenetic idea of resurrection of the Arab people. As he writes:

> We are a nation preparing to receive new life, and are struggling to complete
> our liberation and unity. The motive that prompts this is hope in the future
> and feelings of being tied to the past and history and unity of our society.
> Therefore, this is not the negative milieu that Marx addressed that knows
> neither its origins or its soul. Our movement is positive as opposed to
> Western Socialism that is embedded in a negative character. Therefore we
> can say that Arab Nationalism is linked to socialism at this time, and there is
> no conflict between Nationalism and Socialism. The Arab Nationalist is
> aware that socialism is the most effective means for the raising up of his
> Nationalism and his Nation.[163]

The palingenetic aspect of Aflaq's conception Arab Socialism is evident here, and its opposition to European Socialism demonstrates that Aflaq through Arab Socialism wanted to promote national economic revitalization without reference to class warfare. In the same way that Hitler was never a socialist and Mussolini had since abandoned socialism by the time of the founding of the Fascist Party, Aflaq liked the idea of a national-culture based classless society that privileged the value of community, as the socialists did. The abolition of classes was referenced as early as in the 1947

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[163] Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th,* 203-204.

Constitution, under the heading "Social Policy," and stated that "This will protect the family, marriage public health, trade unions and cultural activity. Social classes are to be abolished, as is anachronistic nomadism."[164] It is evident therefore that the plan for a classless society, with the state acting as an arbiter was the long term goal for the Ba'th party. Nationalism was to replace class affiliation and to fuel the national resurrection, and was considered indivisible from socialism, which would aid in the "raising up" of the Arab nation. This ideology was the root of Corporatist thought, and later Ba'th initiated programs demonstrated that as in Europe, the Corporatist ideology led to the implementation of Corporatist policy. A key aspect of the Ba'thist economic program was the mass organization of the industrial and agricultural classes, and the Syrian peasants were corporatized by the Ba'thist state.[165]

Aflaq's rejection of widely accepted Socialist theories, and of Marxist materialism in particular, not only indicates that the Ba'th party was a Fascist movement, but also indicates that Arab Socialism as an ideology remained underdeveloped. In the same way that Mussolini had trouble explaining the precise economic principles to be used in governing Fascist Italy, Aflaq and other proponents of Arab Socialism avoided laying down specific principles and a concrete plan of implementation, preferring instead to discuss the general needs and character of the Arab people in their writings. For them "Socialism" constituted an ambiguous reference to a welfare state that would eliminate class distinctions and accentuate the shared characteristics of all of the Arab people. In this sense it resembled Romantic Nationalism. As Abu Jaber explains in *The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party*:

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[164] Roberts, 64.
[165] Ibid., 97-98

> The paucity of literature on Socialist doctrine in the Arab world gives the impression that Arab socialism has no theory at all…This lack of elaborate Socialist theory was, until recently, a source of pride among Arab intellectuals…To theorize on the problems of society was considered useless by Aflaq. 'Society is a living organic being and not a dead mechanical creature,' he wrote; thus it defies abstract analysis…Aflaq rejects abstract theory completely on the ground that abstractions tend to limit the actions of those in power…It is impractical since it does not take into account the realities and cirumstances under which the theory might have to operate in practice.[166]

This explanation provides an excellent context to Aflaq's sometimes rambling explanation of what characterized "our Socialism" in his mind, and also explains why Aflaq uses most of the section of *On the Way of Resurrection* to describe the various manifestations of European Socialism and Communism. Aflaq's Corporatist notion of Society as "an organic being and not a dead mechanical creature" meant that any form of Socialism applied in the Arab world would need to be uniquely suited to the needs and the conditions present there, and theories that evolved in Europe were therefore unsuitable. It is possible therefore that the lack of specific description of what constituted Arab Socialism in Aflaq's work owes more to the fact that his Corporatist ideals rendered Arab Socialism an ever-evolving thing, to be described ambiguously an applied in different forms as conditions warranted. From this explanation and examination of Aflaq's own writings on the subject of Arab Socialism we recognize that he fits the Fascist economic mould of an anti-Marxist "Socialist" whose fervent Nationalism led him to reject communist internationalism in favor of an ambiguously defined, centrally-planned economic program that was specifically suited to his conceptions of the Arab people, their needs, and the conditions under which they were living. As he writes:

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[166] Abu Jaber, 98.

One of the features of Arab awakening is that it endeavors to emerge from economic backwardness by setting out economic policies on popular, progressive and revolutionary bases. Most efforts are to be directed towards raising the standard of the greatest number of the Arabs and concentrating on fundamental matters such as strengthening defense and establishing basic industries in order to liberate the homeland from foreign dependence. All this should take place in the framework of the logic of Arab unity, which requires that the Arab economy should be integrated with every part complementing others and become open to unifying steps while enhancing them.[167]

It is also possible that Aflaq's vagueness concerning the nature of Arab Socialism was the result of his belief that the economic problems facing the Arab world and its political situation were intrinsically connected to one another. Therefore the first problem that needed to be dealt with was the issue of Nationalism. It was felt that the Nationalist and pan-Arab revolution had to be exported to all of the Arab nations so that the economic problems could be addressed by a single-party state created to rule over all of them. Aflaq says as much in the section of his treatise entitled, "Our Problem Is the Issue of Nationalism." In this section he again compares the conditions in the Arab world to those in the Western world that led to the rise of Socialist theory, explaining that the European states did not face the problem of Nationalism in the same way that the Arabs did at the time of his writing. In his view there existed more or less predetermined boundaries between the European peoples that facilitated the creation of nations more so than in the Arab world (although evidently he did not closely consider the case of the vast area inhabited by the Germans). According to this notion, economic problems could be dealt with independently of political ones:

The difference between us and the West is that the Western nations, the largest of them in particular, are nations with nationalities united in their conditions. Therefore nationalism is not the principle concern of the economy

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[167] Michel Aflaq, "The outcome of a stage of struggle," December 5, 1956, accessed April 5, 2011. http://albaath.online.fr.

because social problems occupy the primary place in their life. For they do not disagree about the independence of their countries, or their liberty, or their unity because they are independent and united. Nor do they disagree about the definition of their homeland or about the rights of the citizens, and they are not quarrelling over the nation's history or its past or future, or over the dissemination of the revolution.[168]

For the Arabs, Aflaq argued, economic problems and political problems went hand-in-hand and had to be addressed through the lens of Nationalism. Hitler, in forging the Nazi state, similarly constantly subordinated economics with respect to politics and in many cases Nazi economic policy was directed by the political necessities of the time. It is no secret that the corporations in Nazi Germany were not unfriendly to Nazi state policy, and cooperated closely with the regime for profits flowing from the military industry, the Holocaust, and the expansion of the Third Reich into Soviet territory after 1942. Fascism, embracing the elimination of class as a mobilizing factor, was disdainful of philosophical materialism, believing that it ignored the human character of the nation. Georges Valois, who led the French Fascist *Faisceau* party, wrote, "It's not the case, as Marx believed, that the mode of production determines moral, political and intellectual life; rather, it is the intellectual, moral, and political life which determines economic formations."[169] Clearly Aflaq was of the same mind when he wrote that the realization of Arab political unity was what would facilitate economic revival in the Arab world, and not the other way around. "Our problem is the issue of nationalism," he wrote, by way of explaining Arab Socialism, and the two were intertwined in his though. Similarly, Mussolini's Corporate State could not have existed without the mass movement, the leader principle, and the ultranationalist, palingenetic empire that he set about to build.

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[168] Michel Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Baʻth*, 204-205.
[169] Iordachi, 153

For Aflaq, political unity had to be achieved before Socialism could be implemented. Nationalism and political unity took precedence in the Ba'th ideology over Socialism, as the individual Arab states were too poor and backwards economically to develop a full Arab Socialist model.[170] Only with the resources of a large Arab homeland could Arab Socialism be used to elevate the inhabitants of these countries to another level. As Aflaq writes:

> The freedom, which every Arab region pursues all alone, cannot reach in profundity, comprehensiveness and positive significance the level of freedom to which the Arab nation aspires when it puts its destiny and the destiny of humanity in question. Similarly, socialism reduced and distorted within the borders of one region, to the point of confining itself to partial and deceptive reforms, will reach its full theoretical and applicable scope when its area becomes the Arab homeland as an economic unity and as a unity of popular struggle.[171]

Aflaq further expressed the connections between Arab Socialism and pan-Arabism in *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*:

> Arab Unity is not a political process based upon negotiations and agreements between governments so much as it is a revolutionary process and struggle that the people undertake because they need unity and are sincere in requesting it. Therefore, the struggle on the path of Arab Unity cannot become a reality if it is not intertwined with the struggle of the masses of the Arab people for their right to life and raising their standard of living. When we tie unity to socialism we are not being harsh or improvising, but we have found the only way to unify our dynamic lives by demanding that every worker asks for his daily bread or more food and medicine for his children, and when it is asked of every poor, oppressed peasant to reclaim the right to his own labor and throw off his enslavement. In that way we make Arab Unity a living and realistic requirement that enters into the life of every individual member of the Arab people in the conditions of their daily lives and in the simplest things in their lives and it becomes a material necessity.[172]

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[170] Abu Jaber, 102
[171] Michel Aflaq, "Unity of struggle and unity of destiny," August 1, 1955, accessed April 5, 2011. http://albaath.online.fr.
[172] Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, 219.

Thus, it is evident that while the political necessity of unity was seen as the prerequisite to implementing true socialism, in Ba'thist thought Arab Unity unity and socialism were interconnected. Unity was seen as a humanitarian necessity as much as food or medicine, and the Arabs could not be asked to struggle for unity without having first been given the basic needs that a welfare state would provide. However, Aflaq also leaves room in his theory of Arab Socialism for compromise between the Arab Socialist ideals and the practical realities of achieving the palingenetic resurrection of the Arab states through their unification. As he writes in *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th* in the section entitled "When Will Socialism be Realized?":

> If we took power in Syria, we would remove the differences and implement justice, but we will also be preparing to complete the rest of [our program of unity], and maybe we will not give the people everything that they want, but perhaps will take from their needs to feed the army and realize the revolution in all of the Arab countries. It is not possible to realize socialism in Syria alone because it is a small country and its capabilities are limited, and because colonialism and [foreign] pressure upon the Arab countries do not reasonably allow for its complete realization. Therefore, socialism will not be realized completely in a single Arab state.[173]

Therefore, the Arab Socialist ideology was both tied philosophically to the palingenetic mission of unification, and subordinated to it. For Aflaq, spreading the Ba'thist revolution throughout all of the Arab countries was an unavoidable step in implementing the Arab Socialism that would elevate the Arabs to the level of their national rebirth. One sees the same compromises between Socialist ideals and the practical realities of ultranationalism in Fascist Germany and Italy, where Corporatist economic policies were never truly defined and implemented because of the necessities of expansionist warfare. For Germany, the war economy bore the hallmarks of Fascism in the subordination of the subject peoples for the good of the German fatherland. However, ideological Fascists

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[173] Ibid., 212-213.

who took the word Socialism in such constructs as "National Socialism" literally believed that an effective economic and cultural revolution would define a Third Way, between Capitalism and Communism.[174] This Third Way in economic terms would involve a centrally planned economy that would modernize the means of production, exchange, and distribution of wealth with the state acting as the Corporatist link between the people and the means of production.[175] Clearly Aflaq, whose political program was anti-democratic, Authoritarian, and based on the notion of a vanguard party establishing a single-party pan-Arab state, envisioned this as the end result of his brand of Socialism. Furthermore, his belief that the Arab states individually were too poor and economically backwards to implement Arab Socialism on its own tell us that he believed in a Corporatist notion of the new state's institutions acting as the agents of economic revolution, modernization, and distribution. As he asserts, only through attaining political unity through the Ba'th could Socialism be implemented to effect in the Arab World.

If one is to define Fascist economics as a form of anti-Marxist, national-culture based "socialism" that sought to replace class orientation with nationalism, was based on class-harmony as opposed to class-struggle, and was subordinated to and able to adapt to changing political realities, then Michel Aflaq was clearly a Fascist seeking the Third Way. His chapter on Arab Socialism in *On the Way of Resurrection* is at once a critique of European Marxist socialism and a rejection of the narrow materialist view of human endeavor. To Aflaq, who believed as the Corporatists did that society was a "living organic being", economic theory, especially that which had emerged in European conditions, was not universal or all encompassing and therefore could not be applied to

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[174] Iordachi, 153-154
[175] Ibid., 154

his visionary state. Though Aflaq was occasionally ambiguous with regard to his economic solution, he was certainly concerned with economics, and his ideal political-economy followed the Corporatist model. The defining component of Ba'thism was Arab Socialism, which one can extrapolate from Aflaq's writings and the party programs implemented in early Ba'thist Syria was Corporatist in nature. Aflaq outlines his opposition to Western Socialism and Communism on the grounds that they are not grounded in Arab tradition and are "negative" philosophies. Arab Socialism in contrast is positive, promoting class harmony over class warfare, and believing in the power of a strong state that can act as an economic arbiter. Corporatism, as has been shown, moved beyond the theoretical sphere and was implemented to some extent in early Ba'thist Syria, through the corporatization of the agricultural and industrial classes as functional parts of the State. In Aflaq's opinion, Corporatist Arab Socialism would fuel the resurrection of the nation, and went hand in hand with palingenetic nationalism. It therefore differed from Marxist Socialism that established class, rather than nationality, as the primary identifier for citizens. As Hitler and Mussolini's economic models were based on state control of the economy, and the state acting as an economic arbiter, so was Aflaq's Arab Socialism a Corporatist theory that sought to use Nationalism to propel the economy.

III. The Lebanese Kataeb and Pierre Gemayel, the Mimetic Fascist

It is fitting to move from a discussion of the Ba'th Party and its ideology directly into a discussion of the Lebanese Kataeb, or Phalange Party. In many ways this Lebanese Nationalist movement's ideology was the opposite of that of the Ba'th, which as has been shown centered primarily on the notion of pan-Arabist Corporatism. The Kataeb summarily rejects this ideology as a threat to the Lebanese national identity. Kataeb ideology argues that there is a historical nation known as Lebanon, and that this nation has always been distinct from Syria. Thus, the Syrian Nationalist notion of a "Greater Syria" that included Lebanon as part of its historic territory and which the Ba'th Party and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party both accepted as a given was incompatible with the Kataeb's fierce promotion of a particularly Lebanese Nationalism and its rhetorical and physical defense of the territorial integrity of the state of Lebanon.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Lebanese Nationalists got their first taste of autonomy with the creation of "Greater Lebanon" during the period of the French Mandate when Lebanon was separated from Syria and ruled from Beirut as opposed to Damascus. The Syrian Nationalists were unable to come to terms with this division for six decades and only formally recognized Lebanon as an independent entity in 2008, when formal diplomatic relations were finally established. This complicated the issue of identity in Lebanon, where few inhabitants considered themselves "Lebanese" but instead more readily identified with the religious or communal labels placed upon them by the confessional system that had existed in the region for centuries. Pan-Arabism was not absent from Lebanon, and Syrian Nationalist parties were just as active in that country as they were in Syria. Faced with these identity problems and the existence of Syrian

transnational movements, the Kataeb was one of the first Lebanese organizations to begin

work in earnest to create a truly Lebanese national identity, concentrating largely on the

younger generations of Lebanese who might be more receptive to a break with

Confessionalist identity politics.

The Kataeb party was the brainchild of Pierre Gemayel (d.1984), a Lebanese

Maronite Christian who was born in 1905 in Mansourah, Egypt and raised in Bickfayya,

Lebanon. Gemayel's family, which had played a prominent role in Lebanon since the

sixteenth century, was forced to flee Lebanon for Egypt during World War I due to their

vocal opposition to Ottoman rule, and only returned after the end of the war and the

dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. Gemayel, who had an interest in sports, travelled to

Berlin for the 1936 Olympic Games as captain of the Lebanese Soccer Federation, and

founded the Kataeb upon returning to Lebanon later that year.[176]

The Kataeb began largely as a youth-oriented athletic organization, and at the

same time promoted patriotism and pride in Lebanese identity.[177] To achieve this, the

leaders of the Kataeb created a palingenetic view of Lebanese history, tracing the origins

of the Lebanese nation back to ancient Phoenician civilization in order to promote

national pride and a historical sense of separation from the neighboring Arab states and

especially Syria.[178] It was also a highly popular movement, gaining acceptance and

membership through grass roots campaigns, many of them youth oriented, which allowed

the party to expand quickly and eventually grow into an inter-confessional Nationalist

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[176] Robert Fisk, *Pity the Nation: Lebanon at War* (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1990), 65.
[177] John P. Entelis, *Pluralism and Party Transformation in Lebanon: Al-Kata'ib, 1936-1970* (Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1974), 46.
[178] Pierre Gemayel, *Connaissance Des Kataeb* (Département des Etudes, 1948), 6.

movement with tens of thousands of members.[179] In studying this process, we find that the Kataeb also fulfilled several conditions of our working definition of Fascism. For example, it was a populist, ultranationalist, palingenetic movement with a distinct ideology that reflected these traits. Indeed, if we are to identify Fascism by superficial traits alone, then the Kataeb party appears as the most clearly identifiable example of a pure Fascist movement in the Arab world. The name Katā'ib itself means "brigades" in Arabic, and the French translation "Phalange," or Phalanx party, echoes the name of the Spanish Fascist movement led by General Francisco Franco. These words are also reflective of the Italian word "*fascio*" that means a bundle or sheath, and from which Mussolini's Fascist movement took its name. Furthermore, the militaristic nature of the party was evident from the beginning, with parades and mass demonstrations acting as a counterpart to the organization's focus on sports and athleticism to create a New Man that would lead a New Nation. It was party founder Pierre Gemayel's experience as captain of the Lebanese Soccer Federation at the 1936 Berlin Olympics that inspired him to attempt to create a national organization that would create the same level of order and discipline that he witnessed in Hitler's Germany, and many of the party's early motifs were clearly inspired by European Fascism.[180] The members of the Kataeb party even wore a uniform consisting of a brown shirt, and used the Nazi salute.[181]

However, despite these superficial similarities, there is still a debate over whether the Kataeb party was in fact a true Fascist party. In many cases, scholars have concluded that the party does not possess a true Fascist ideology. There is no evidence, for example,

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[179] Entelis, ix

[180] Entelis, 46

[181] Robert Fisk (2007-08-07). "Lebanese strike a blow at US-backed government". *The Independent*. http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/fisk/robert-fisk-lebanese-strike-a-blow-at-usbacked-government-460547.html. Retrieved 2011-21-3.

that Pierre Gemayel studied Nazi ideology as an intellectual, in the same manner that

Abd al-Rahman Badawi did. Rather, he was enamored only of the superficial

characteristics of Fascism: order, discipline, youth movements, athleticism, militarism,

and nationalism.[182] Thus, Gemayel was a passionate observer of Fascism, but not a

student of its ideology, and his party therefore merely imitated these superficial

characteristics, placing the notions of national order, patriotism, the youth movement, and

athleticism at the core of the movement. Pierre Gemayel was not an ideologist like

Badawi, and he dealt sparsely, if at all, with economics as the Arab Socialist Aflaq did. In

effect, whatever Fascism he displayed revolved around performance. As he recalled later:

"[In Germany] I was struck with admiration. We orientals are, by nature, an unruly and

individualistic people. In Germany I witnessed the perfect conduct of a whole, unified

nation."[183] A visit to Czechoslovakia prior to his return to Lebanon after the Olympics

exposed him to the Czechoslovak *Sokol*, or "Falcon" movement, which was a

paramilitary youth movement that focused on athletic development.[184] This movement,

which promoted patriotic fervor in a European nation that was similarly split by internal

divisions (ethnic divisions in this case, which would contribute to the demise of that

country at Hitler's hands) reinforced the admiration he felt for what the Nazi party had

seemingly accomplished in Germany. In many ways the Sokol movement can be

considered the real model for the early Kataeb movement. As Gemayel reported later, he

asked himself upon learning of the *Sokol* movement: "Why not the same thing in

Lebanon? "[185]

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[182] Entelis, 45-47.
[183] Ibid., 46.
[184] Ibid., 46.
[185] Ibid., 46.

Robert Fisk, who has written more about the Lebanese Phalange than perhaps any other western author, recounts in his book *Pity the Nation* an interview that he had with the aging Pierre Gemayel in 1982, only a few years before the Kataeb founder's death. He notes that in the archives of the French language newspaper *L'Orient* most of the back issues recounting the early rise of the Kataeb and its National Socialist heritage had been disfigured or removed entirely from the archives, perhaps hinting that the Lebanese Phalange of the civil war period, with its Israeli allies, was loathe to admit its Fascist ideological roots.[186] He recounts that the only journalistic evidence he found of the formative period of the Phalange (*L'Orient*'s December 1936 front page displaying a picture of the first hundred of the Phalange's blue-shirt paramilitaries) was framed in seventy-seven year old Pierre Gemayel's office, and the aging ideologue was at that time reluctant to speak about his experiences in the long since destroyed Nazi state.[187] Echoing his earlier statements about the *Sokol* movement, Gemayel replied: "I was the captain of the Lebanese football team and the president of the Lebanese Football Federation. We went to the Olympic Games of 1936 in Berlin. And I saw then the discipline and order. And I said to myself: 'Why can't we do the same thing in Lebanon?' So when we came back to Lebanon, we created this youth movement."[188] He went on to attempt an apologetic explanation of his first impressions of European Fascism, which continued to hold true in his mind even after the truth about the horrific abuses of European Fascism had long since come out: "When I was in Berlin then, Nazism did not have the reputation which it has now. Nazism? In every system in the world, you can find something good.

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[186] Fisk, *Pity the Nation*, 65.
[187] Ibid., 65
[188] Ibid., 65

But Nazism was not Nazism at all. The word came afterwards. In their system, I saw discipline. And we in the Middle East, we needed discipline more than anything else."[189]

So it is evident that even in his old age, Pierre Gemayel remained an ardent admirer of Hitler's Third Reich, and the implications it had had at the time of its rise, that order and discipline could transform a divided nation, held true for him long after its fall. Perhaps when Gemayel founded his Kataeb movement it seemed that a nation could be built upon the superficial values espoused by the Fascists of Europe: an entire populace united, doing the work of the nation for the sake of the nation, on behalf of the state. One must imagine that the sight of the mass demonstrations in Munich, the heartland of the Nazi party, and in Berlin on such occasions as the Olympic Games or Hitler's birthday in 1938 would have been inspiring to a young citizen of a new nation in formation. If Gemayel believed that the Arabs needed discipline, the German state was an apt model. For this reason, one may perhaps excuse Gemayel for choosing a model that would in the end prove to be a horrific entity, even to its admirers. The details of Nazi ideology, which evidently Gemayel did not study in any depth as Badawi did, are not evident in Gemayel's recollections, nor in the descriptions of the ideology of his own political movement. Gemayel was not a National Socialist economically, nor was he a racialist ideologue, but he was a mimetic Fascist. He saw the outward expressions of a pervasive autocratic ideology as Fascism's centerpiece and foundation, and attempted to construct his own ideology along the same lines. We recall that even in the 1990s as Badawi wrote his autobiography, he was not ashamed to describe his fascination with Nazi ideology, and did not condemn the Nazi state that he had known nor shy away from admitting that he was enamored of it. Gemayel, it seems, was somewhat embarrassed by the model from

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[189] Fisk, *Pity the Nation*, 65

which he had drawn his political inspiration, but at the same time it seems that his defense was based upon his youthful longing to create a nation within an artificial, colonial-era context.

Gemayel's idealism becomes even more evident as Fisk continues his account of the interview. Gemayel, according to Fisk, went on to explain the Kataeb*'s* rise to prominence in the post-colonial era: "We had four hundred years of Ottoman rule in Lebanon, and we asked for our independence. But we had to be mature enough to undertake this independence. And I think we succeeded in our Phalangist youth movement because we created young men who were prepared for politics. We succeeded because we were elected to the Lebanese parliament and we were able to take over from the Turks and French in their ministries."[190] It seems from this statement that Gemayel bought into the paternalistic ethos of the colonial masters of Lebanon more than the Syrian nationalists did, and that the Kataeb's desire to seek close relations with France and the rest of the Western European powers after its rise to prominence in Lebanon are evidence that he did not hold the same kind of grudge against the West that the Ba'thists did after the independence of Syria. Just as he was able to reluctantly admit his infatuation with the Nazi state because of its superficial value, his abbreviated version of the history of the Lebanese road to independence shows us that perhaps he was in general a gullible nationalist. Perhaps now as we sit on judgment about whether or not these Arab Nationalist movements were truly Fascist, youthful naïveté and gullibility are enough to excuse Gemayel and the Phalange for its dubious source of inspiration. Understanding the fractured political system in Lebanon is key to understanding this inspiration. At the

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[190] Fisk, *Pity the Nation*, 66.

time when Gemayel visited Germany, Lebanon remained an occupied country, under French administration.

Nationalism in Lebanon was represented both by those who sought an independent Lebanese nation that would exist separately from Syria and by the far better organized Arab Nationalist groups that accepted union with Syria as the first step in the quest for Pan-Arab Unity. This second group was represented by the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) headed by Antuun Saʻadeh. This movement was, like the Baʻth, a Corporatist Arab Socialist party that admittedly drew direct ideological inspiration from German National Socialism and Italian Fascism. Although it was based in Beirut, its founders believed that Lebanon was part of Greater Syria and sought independence as a route towards eventual reunification.[191] As with many phenomena in Lebanese politics, support for this party and its plan for greater Arab unity came largely from the Sunni Muslim population of Lebanon, whereas rejection of Arabism and support for the maintenance of Lebanese territorial integrity came largely from the Maronite Christian establishment.[192] The Kataeb found support among the Maronite lower middle-classes, many of them college students or already university educated employees.[193] The SSNP, on the other hand, drew its membership from a wider strata of Lebanese Muslims who were sympathetic to the Greater Syria plan and Arabism in general, which stressed the Islamic nature of Arab civilization.[194] Therefore one of the early goals of the Kataeb was to promote the interests of the Maronite community, which was in favor of preserving

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[191] Traboulsi, 102.
[192] Entelis, 47-48.
[193] Ibid., 51.
[194] Michel Aflaq's Baʻth Party made similar claims about the importance of the Islamic character of the Arab nation, though Aflaq himself was a Greek Orthodox Christian, as was Antuun Saʻadah of the SSNP. Saʻadeh, however, was not a pan-Arabist in the same sense as Aflaq, though he was a proponent of Greater Syria.

Lebanese territorial integrity. To do so, the early Kataeb attempted to stabilize the political environment of the country by promoting feelings of national cohesion and patriotism.[195] The Kataeb's emphasis was thus not on attaining power, but on promoting national unity to undermine the influence of Arabist movements and the SSNP's proposals for union with Syria. As John P. Entelis writes in *Pluralism and Party Transformation in Lebanon*: "[The Kataeb] was more concerned with glorifying the nation than elaborating a political ideology or program of action. Even its paramilitary structure reflected a search for discipline rather than power."[196]

The early Kataeb, despite its Fascist inspiration and populist and paramilitary character did not reflect the details of Fascist ideology as evident even on the surface of the Italian and German Fascist movements. Whereas the SSNP fulfilled elements of Stanley Payne's definition of Fascism "being nonrationalist, anti-intellectual, and highly emotional and emphasizing military virtues, power, and self-sacrifice,"[197] and further emphasized the racial superiority of the Syrian people over all others, the Kataeb, at least in its stated ideology, strove for racial and religious inclusion rather than exclusionary nationalism, and despite its attempts to form a mass movement, its propaganda was not pervasive and emotionally charged like that of the SSNP. Although racialist ideology is not by itself a sufficient characteristic of a Fascist movement, the Kataeb's rejection of any notion of Syrian racial superiority coupled with its lack of interest in territorial expansion and anti-intellectual, anti-rational ideology does much to support the

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[195] Entelis, 47.

[196] Ibid., 51

[197] Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism:1914-1945* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press,1995), 352-354.

contention that Gemayel's interest in the Fascist movements of Europe was no more than superficial.[198]

The early period of Lebanon's Nationalist struggle defined the character of the Kataeb party and throughout the period from 1937 to 1943 it developed into a consequential Nationalist force. John Entelis, in his political analysis of the early Kataeb, refers to the "Nationalist mystique"[199] that surrounded Gemayel and his followers. This was generated from their purely patriotic rhetoric, which was essentially bereft of the territorial ambitions expressed by the Syrian Social Nationalist Party. The Kataeb's role in the early Nationalist struggle and its confrontations with French mandatory authorities did much to legitimize the organization in the eyes of the Lebanese people and transformed it from something resembling a Lebanese "boy-scout movement" into a political force to be reckoned with.[200] The early goal of the movement was to expand its appeal across religious boundaries and inspire a Lebanese nationalist sentiment to counter the "Greater Syria" notion that parties like the SSNP were preaching. To this end, the Kataeb's early party program lacked a clearly defined ideology, as is evident in the later publication of Gemayel's *Connaissance Des* Kataeb*: Leur Doctrine et Leur Politique Nationales*. This work, published in French, is a collection of reproductions of original Kataeb party publications and explanations of the Kataeb's political program and ideology. Although Gemayel himself admitted to being influenced by the superficial character of Nazi Germany, this book is invaluable as a primary source when examining Kataeb ideology for Fascist ideological influences. The work contains a reproduction of

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[198] Entelis, 51.
[199] Ibid., 51.
[200] Ibid., 43.

the party's first Manifesto, *Le Premier Manifeste*, which was first issued on November

21, 1936. This Manifesto states:

> This is our objective:
> -To superimpose over the old Confessionalist ideas a National idea.
> -To effect a synthesis, in the modern forms of the State, of all of the moral
> forces that animate the diverse spiritual families of the country.
> Such a movement is not for anyone or against anyone, and it cannot exist and
> succeed without the willingness of everyone and the collaboration of
> everyone.[201]

Later, in 1937, in the article entitled "Preparing the Youth for the Obligations of

Independence," Gemayel stated that "The Lebanese Phalanges does not constitute a

political party. They are and wish to remain a national organization. Their goal is to

prepare the youth for the obligations that will arise for them after Independence."[202]

These statements issued in the early years of the Phalange are evidence that the early

goals of the party, so far as they were publically declared, were Nationalistic in the most

general sense. There is no mention in the literature of the early movement that the Kataeb

sought overt political power or wished to effect any great social or political changes in

the nation, but instead wanted to ensure that the Lebanese nation would exist, which

Gemayel and the early Kataeb founders believed was impossible without the promotion

of a Lebanese national spirit among the younger generations of Lebanese.

After independence in 1943, the Kataeb faced a crisis of direction, for to that

point it had existed as a Nationalist organization whose stated goal was the preparation of

the Lebanese youth for independence.[203] After that independence was achieved, there

arose a debate about what role, if any, the Kataeb should play in the post-independence

political arena. The Kataeb's leadership seemed reluctant to abandon the original

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[201] Gemayel, 78.
[202] Ibid., 79.
[203] Entelis, 59-60.

movement's identity as a patriotic national organization and transform itself into a true political party. Still, the ideology of the movement remained largely undefined, without a clear program for modernization, development, the restructuring of society, or gaining political power.[204] Therefore, it remained ideologically unequipped to stand up to the more well-defined political organizations that had emerged in the pre-independence period of Lebanese history. The Kataeb thus became something of a permanent opposition movement, opposing internally devised plans for union with neighboring states, such as the "Greater Syria" project, or the corresponding "Fertile Crescent" project that would see Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq amalgamated into a single country.[205] Such a limited view of nationalism goes against much of what characterized the foreign policy platforms of European Fascist movements, which were in favor of territorial expansion and were keen to create a palingenetic national myth that identified a territorial homeland of in large an area as possible. An article by Gemayel published on March 31, 1946 reinforces this rejection of internationalism as a response to a proposal raised in the League of Arab States to establish a regional Arab citizenship and a regional Arab nationality that seemed to the Kataeb to be the forerunner of a plan to unify the Arab states into a single political entity. This article, entitled "*Collaboration, Oui! Union, Jamais!*" opens by explaining that the proposal was met in Lebanon with disagreeable surprise. Gemayel, the true nationalist, goes on to write, "Talk about a 'regional' nationality and a 'regional' citizenship is nonsense, and an insult to any true nationalist. We constitute a nation, the Lebanese nation: we are the citizens of a state, the Lebanese

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[204] Entelis, 60
[205] Ibid., 60-61

state."[206] Evidently to Gemayel and the Kataeb, Lebanon's membership in a

supranational organization in which the political environment was rife with proposals of

union with Syria and neighboring Arab states constituted an existential threat to Lebanon.

Already in 1944, the Kataeb had attempted to define their role as Lebanese nationalist

"vigilantes" when president Bechara al-Khuri "adopted a mildly pro-Arab nationalist

regional policy and made significant concessions to Lebanese Muslims in government

and administration."[207] After the achievement of Lebanese independence the Kataeb saw

that there was still a role for a purely nationalistic, non-partisan organization so long as

elements that wished for the destruction of the Lebanese state still existed. This was the

primary reason for the movement's initial step towards becoming a true political party

when it ran a candidate in the elections of March, 1945. According to Entelis: "The party

wanted to be represented in the Chamber for two principal reasons: (1) to have an official

voice in the discussions concerning the Arab League, and (2) because it feared that the

present government was planning to work for closer union with Syria."[208]

  At this point in the Kataeb's history it becomes even more apparent that although

this particular movement was initially modeled on the Fascist youth movements of

Europe, it lacked a fully Fascist ideology and did not intend to develop one. The fact that

the movement avoided creating an explicit ideology and was reluctant to enter the

political arena shows that the Kataeb, although it saw itself as having a role to fill in the

creation of the Lebanese nation, did not seek to rule over the Lebanese State. If anything,

the Kataeb was more concerned with ensuring that the Lebanese state continued to exist

by opposing such pan-Arabist programs as the formation of the Arab League and the

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[206] Gemayel, 165
[207] Entelis, 60.
[208] Ibid., 61.

"Greater Syria" and "Fertile Crescent" plans. The Kataeb continued to see its role as "a

youth organization in order to continue teaching the new generation what is required of

good citizens and men." (Entelis, 61)

It will perhaps be useful at this time to differentiate the Kataeb, which shared

superficial characteristics with the Fascist movements of Europe, from an ideologically

Fascist organization by comparing it with one of its biggest rivals; the Syrian Social

Nationalist Party (SSNP). Both movements were born in Beirut and were nationalist

rather than pan-Arabist; in addition, both were nationalist populist movements with a

palingenetic view of history. Both were also influenced by the Fascist movements of

Europe to one degree or another, and yet the Syrian Social Nationalist Party was from the

beginning an ideologically Fascist movement whose goals were to gain power and

establish its program in a fully unified Syria and Lebanon. At this point it might be useful

to reexamine Robert O. Paxton's list of the seven "mobilizing passions of Fascism".

These are:

1. The primacy of the group, toward which one has duties superior to every right, whether
universal or individual.
2. The belief that one's group is a victim, a sentiment which justifies any action against
the group's enemies, internal as well as external.
3. Dread of the group's decadence under the corrosive effect of individualistic and
cosmopolitan liberalism.
4. Closer integration of the community within a brotherhood (*fascio*) whose unity and
purity are forged by common conviction, if possible, or by exclusionary violence if
necessary.
5. An enhanced sense of identity and belonging, in which the grandeur of the group
reinforces individual self-esteem.
6. Authority of natural leaders (always male) throughout society, culminating in a
national chieftain who alone is capable of incarnating the group's destiny.
7. The beauty of violence and of will, when they are devoted to the group's success in a
Darwinian struggle.[209]

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[209] Iordachi, 170.

Because both the Kataeb and the SSNP were hierarchically organized parties with palingenetic views of national history, and also because both were populist and nationalist movements, a comparison of the two based on the above factors will help demonstrate that while the SSNP would have made an excellent Fascist Fifth Column, the Kataeb's development never moved beyond the superficial stages of Fascism and was nothing more than a "mimicry" of Fascism, which Paxton explains is a complicating factor in studying international Fascist movements.[210]

The early Kataeb doctrine held that the family was the basic social unit, which was in itself a rejection of the social Corporatist notion that made the individual subservient primarily to the state (although the Nazi idea of the *heimet*, or household demonstrated the importance of the family in National Socialist ideology). However, more importantly, as the Kataeb developed the family was replaced by the individual, largely as a rejection of the Corporatist ideology of the SSNP, which held that the individual "has no worth in himself except in so far as he is a member of society."[211] Conversely, the Kataeb argued that "while man is an integral part of society, 'he is not so in his totality," and posited that the individual was "as a social cell in the organic body of society" but "rejected the right over any temporal body to claim trusteeship over the totality of his being."[212] Therefore, the Kataeb never displayed the full Corporatism of a true Fascist movement, and never ideologically subverted the status of the individual to the state, as the SSNP did.

Furthermore, although the Kataeb movement was fervently dedicated to the struggle of Lebanese National independence, it did not base its party program on a sense

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[210] Iordachi, 168.
[211] Entelis, 71.
[212] Ibid., 71.

of victimhood. As mentioned, in the pre-independence period and in the immediate post-independence phase, the movement's only well-defined objective was the "preparation" of young Lebanese for civic engagement in an independent nation. This almost paternalistic goal demonstrates that the Kataeb's founders believed that the future nation's citizenry were not yet fully prepared for independence, but first had to be trained and educated. This is not necessarily the rhetoric of a movement whose ideology is based on an idea of victimhood. Conversely, the SSNP's rhetoric claimed that the separation of "Greater Lebanon" from Syria was a foreign assault on the Syrian nation that had to be rectified, and clearly shows that the SSNP's founder, Antun Sa'dah, believed that the Syrian nation was a victim in the hands of foreign powers. In his palingenetic notion of Syrian history, which posited that the Syrian ethnic heritage was a "fusion of Canaanites, Akkadians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Arameans, Hittites and Metannis,"[213] he neglected to include the Arabs, which was indicative of his view that the Arab conquest was a negative event in the development of the Syrian nation, and that the Syrians as an ethnic people were as much the victims of the Arabs as they were victims of the European occupiers.[214] Thus, Sa'deh was able to justify his struggle against the pan-Arab nationalists on the grounds that the Arabs were not Syrians, and the Syrians were not Arab, therefore, the rest of the Arab world had no say in determining Syria's national destiny.

In addition the Kataeb movement, although based on a hierarchical, paramilitary structure, was not avowedly anti-liberal. It has already been shown that as the ideology of the Kataeb developed, more importance was placed on the role of the individual in

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[213] Labib Zuwiyya Yamak, *The Syrian Social Nationalist Party: An Ideological Analysis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 84.
[214] Ibid., 84

society. Even in the palingenetic notion of Lebanese history that Pierre Gemayel propagated, the historical origins of Western liberal thought were traced back to the early Lebanese, or the "Phoenicians," as he referred to them: "Even while they were only Phoenicians, the Lebanese already showed their sense of the universe, their attachment to liberal traditions, and a generosity of spirit and heart so great that it enabled them to love and understand even the most distant peoples."[215] It is evident that Pierre Gemayel saw liberal values and cosmopolitanism as positive aspects of the historical Lebanese character, and not as aspects to be derided and abolished from the national system of values. In contrast, Antun Sa'dah expressed his disgust with the "decadence" of Syrian society: "[The founding of the SSNP is] a great event in the history of Syria, which marks the end of the long period of cultural decadence and the beginning of our true history – the history of freedom, duty, discipline, and power."[216] Sa'deh, like Mussolini, believed that only by devoting all of the individual's efforts to the state and rejecting liberal notions of individualism would this "decadence" be erased.

Examining the fourth and fifth of Paxton's conditions for Fascism, one can conclude that these may be the only two that were met by the Kataeb. As demonstrated, the Kataeb was determined to forge a nationalistic spirit among the Lebanese people and to demonstrate that they shared a common destiny by virtue of being Lebanese. As Gemayel said: "They [the Lebanese/Phoenicians] have contributed to the blossoming of Mediterranean civilization in the domain of art, science, religion, and material progress." He also stated in a separate interview: "We believe that the Lebanese race exists as the other existing races in Europe – we are like the Italian and English races. Ours has the

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[215] Entelis, 77.
[216] Yamak, 90.

fundamental characteristics that make it equal to the others."[217] In *Connaissance Des*

Kataeb he states: "Inheritor of a millennia-old civilization, open to the knowledge and

riches of oriental and occidental culture, Lebanon is a foyer of liberty and the influence of

spiritual and human valor."[218] It is clear from these expressions that Pierre Gemayel

sought to implant a nationalistic spirit within the Lebanese people and that his Kataeb

served as a brotherhood or *Fascio* to that end, "whose unity and purity are forged by

common conviction."[219] However, fulfilling these criteria alone are not enough by

themselves to constitute a Fascist movement, especially when exclusionary violence was

not employed and when so many of the other mobilizing criteria are found to be absent.

The concept of the Leader Principle, for example, was not well developed in the

Kataeb structure, and eventually the party's autocratic leanings vanished. As John Entelis

writes describing the new Kataeb party regulations of 1942: "Theoretically the new party

regulations reaffirmed the president's absolutism: 'the leader controls all nominations and

dismissals and he alone decides on all dispositions that are to be taken in the interest of

the LKP.' In reality, however, since 1937, the President had always surrounded himself

with an advisory group with whom he consulted extensively prior to taking any decision.

The new statute, by creating a consultative council, ameliorated the president's powers

and institutionalized what had already been practiced."[220]

Just as the Party's internal organization had never been entirely autocratic, so its

views for the future of the Lebanese political system were oriented towards "pro-

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[217] Entelis, 77-79.
[218] Gemayel, 5.
[219] Iordachi, 170.
[220] Entelis, 86.

Western, parliamentary democracy."[221] To this end, the Kataeb functioned for most of its early post-independence existence not as a viable political movement, but rather as something of a large interest group dedicated to the maintenance of Lebanese nationalism and opposition to parties like the SSNP. The SSNP, by contrast, had a fully developed Leader Principle, including two separate oaths, one taken by the party's leader, and the other reserved for every other party member. In his analysis of the Leadership Principle of the SSNP, Labib Yamak explains correctly that "a comparison between the two oaths leaves no doubt that the individual, upon joining the party, agrees to abandon all his rights and to submit instead to the will of the party and the leader."[222] The Leadership Principle of the SSNP, along with its social Corporatist and Authoritarian ideology, defined "true leadership" as something opposed to "traditional leadership."[223] True leadership was the "ability to grasp the totality of the national problem without hesitation or fear and its willingness and readiness to lead, i.e., to determine national ideals and goals and work for their realization regardless of all the harships and the suffering that the leadership may encounter."[224] This is clearly a totalitarian view of how the state should be organized. Compare Sa'dah's conception of leadership to Mussolini's idea of the Fascist State:

> The rights of the State express the real essence of the individual. And if liberty is to be the attribute of living men and not of abstract dummies invented by individualistic liberalism, then Fascism stands for liberty, and for the only liberty worth having, the liberty of the State and of the individual within the State. The Fascist conception of the State is all embracing; outside of it no human or spiritual values can exist, much less have value. Thus understood, Fascism, is totalitarian, and the Fascist State - a synthesis and a

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[221] Ibid., 213.
[222] Yamak, 112.
[223] Ibid., 112.
[224] Ibid., 112.

> unit inclusive of all values - interprets, develops, and potentates the whole
> life of a people.[225]

Clearly Sa'dah's conception of the role of leadership is similar to the totalitarian notion that the State must interpret the values and the character of the people and act upon it without hesitation. In the same way, the leader of Sa'dah's ideal Syrian nation must be able to "grasp the totality of the national problem" and deal with it unflinchingly.

Perhaps there is also agreement between the last of Paxton's "mobilizing passions" and the ideologies of both the SSNP and the Kataeb, as both were militaristic in character and the Kataeb by 1952 still retained its paramilitary function of training its members for combat "in defense of the homeland."[226] In fact this may be the most important point of convergence between the SSNP, the Kataeb, and Paxton's "mobilizing passions," as the mimetic quality of Gemayel's Fascism had made the Kataeb into a paramilitary organization and not a political party. Antun Sa'dah articulated his belief in the "Darwinian struggle" more clearly than did Gemayel, however. The eighth principle of his "Principles of Syrian Nationalism" was that "Syria's interest supersedes and is prior to every other interest." According to Labib Zuwiyya Yamak's analysis of this principle in *The Syrian Social Nationalist Party: An Ideological Analysis*: "[Sa'dah regarded the defense of the nation and the maintenance of territorial integrity to be the supreme duty of every individual."[227] Accordingly, the nation was viewed as the highest value of life, and its survival was the utmost responsibility of its citizens. Evidently he viewed the relationship between nations as a struggle for survival, and therefore violence in defense of the nation was a moral duty. Although both the SSNP and the Kataeb

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[225] Mussolini, 7.
[226] Entelis, 63.
[227] Yamak, 87.

believed in the principle of national defense, Antun Sa'dah elevated this to a higher level and transformed it into an almost religious duty.

Thus although the Kataeb was a palingenetic movement with a hierarchical structure bordering on authoritarianism, and that it had a populist appeal, and a rabidly nationalist view of Lebanon's political future, it was not ideologically cut from the same cloth as the Fascist movements of Europe. Neither should it be seen as identical to its Fascist neighbors in Egypt and Syria, nor even the Syrian Social Nationalist Party that developed at the same time and in the same milieu as the Kataeb. Neither the Kataeb's view of society, nor its views of political economy (when they were articulated at all) betray the influence of Corporatist notions. On the contrary, Pierre Gemayel demonstrated an affinity for cosmopolitan, interconfessional, inclusive, even liberal nationalist thought. If anything, the case of the Kataeb is proof that the study of Arab nationalist parties with Fascist influences is something that has to be undertaken with great care. Only upon studying these movement's ideologies and ensuring that they fit the criteria of a working definition of Fascism can they be shown to be truly Fascist in character, and not simply superficial imitations of Fascism.

Conclusion

The term Fascism has long since been called into question as a useful term to describe political movements. As George Orwell indicated, as early as 1944 the term had become so overused in conversation and in print as to become almost meaningless. The inevitable connotation that Fascism has with Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism has rendered the ideology of Fascism ambiguous in the popular imagination. For this reason, a coherent definition of what constitutes the Fascist ideology is paramount to any study of this political phenomenon. Scholars such as Stanley Payne, who have based their understanding of the rise of Fascism on the particular conditions that existed in interwar Europe, have found little room for "international Fascism" that fits their definitions. This makes it difficult to describe non-European movements with Fascist characteristics as true Fascist movements. Despite this difficulty, scholars of Fascism such as Roger Griffin and Robert O. Paxton have succeeded in creating definitions that are both narrow enough to eliminate erroneous "accusations" of Fascist thought in political movements, and broad enough to allow for the existence of movements outside of Europe that developed independently along Fascist lines. For this reason, Griffin's definition of Fascism as a "genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism"[228] and Paxton's seven "Mobilizing Passions of Fascism"[229] are useful components of a definition of Fascism that can be applied to potentially Fascist movements in the Arab World. Considering the economic focus of nationalists like Michel Aflaq, whose nationalism revolved around the concept of "Arab Socialism", the component of social and economic Corporatism was added to

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[228] Iordachi, 115.
[229] Ibid., 170.

the definition, yielding a definition of generic Fascism as palingenetic, populist ultranationalism with a Corporatist view of the political economy and the wider society.

The existence of Arab Nationalist movements that were Authoritarian in their ideology and which developed in the interwar period concurrent with the rise of European Fascism warrants investigation. Considering the circumstantial evidence that points to the existence of an "Arab Fascism," such as the contact between Fascist propagandists and Arab Nationalists in Egypt and the fact that nationalist intellectuals such as Abd al-Rahman Badawi and Michel Aflaq spent time in Europe when the Fascist ideology was being developed on that continent, a study of the ideologies of these Arab Nationalist movements is necessary to determine if these ideologies fit our definition of generic Fascism. The Young Egypt Movement, the Syrian Ba'th Party, and the Lebanese Kataeb Party most readily display the superficial qualities of Fascist movements, and are therefore the best candidates for a study of Arab Fascism.

The Young Egypt Movement was clearly a populist ultranationalist movement, relying on recruits from the disaffected "New Effendiyya" to fill out the ranks of its paramilitary organization. Its ideologues were opposed to the failure of the parliamentary monarchy to achieve what it had promised upon attaining power after the unilateral declaration of Egyptian independence. They saw that Egypt remained under occupation and partisan conflict provided an obstacle to the effective governing of the nation. Young Egypt spokesman Fathi Radwan displayed which side of the political debate Young Egypt was on when he wrote, "If it is dictatorship that will place a limit on the anarchy that has been disclosed about our high officials, then we will be among the supporters of dictatorship…if it can instill the youth with strength and the nation with a militant spirit,

filling the people with electricity, vigor, and dynamism, then we will be dictators to the bone."[230] The populist and palingenetic ideal is also evident in his words, and it is clear that Young Egypt sought the resurrection of the Egyptian nation through the nationalistic rebirth of its people. Abd al-Rahman Badawi provided the final impetus for the acceptance of Fascist ideology by the Young Egypt movement. Having spent time in Germany and witnessed firsthand its apparent resurrection after its defeat in World War I, Badawi had become fascinated with Nazi ideology and undertook a study of its tenets, particularly the racialist component, as his autobiography tells us. Upon his return to Egypt in the late 1930s, Badawi undertook translations of the political works of Mussolini and elaborated on the philosophical underpinnings of Nazi ideology in the Young Egypt newspaper, *Jaridat Misr al-Fatah*. He especially endorsed the "racial mysticism" that he believed was the basis for the Nazi organization of the economy and of society. As he wrote: "While Marxist socialism is based on material pleasure, the Nazis believe that the individual is subject to a lofty mystical reality that towers above all individuals or any group."[231] Clearly, Badawi's study of Nazi ideology in Europe allowed him to come to grips with its finer points and bring the notion of racial Corporatism with him when he returned to Egpyt. Badawi's articles in *Jaridat Misr al-Fatah* made him one of the Young Egypt movement's foremost ideologists and not only drove the movement to accept a violent anti-semitic stance, but also prompted its leaders to endorse the specific elements of the Fascist ideology. Due to Badawi's involvement, the interwar Young Egypt movement can therefore be said to fit the criteria of our working definition of Fascism.

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[230] Gershoni, 248.
[231] Ibid., 253

The Syrian Ba'th Party of Michel Aflaq, like the Young Egypt movement, embraced a Corporatist notion of society as well as a populist, palingenetic form of ultranationalism. Michel Aflaq's fascination with a form of "socialism" that would likely have been unacceptable to any European socialist or communist at the time warrants the investigation for Corporatist strains in his economic thought. Like the Fascist corporatists, Aflaq believed in a strong state organizing a centrally-planned economy, a classless society, and a harmony and "consonance" between the individual, the group, and the state. As he wrote:

> Thus things will reassume their natural form and reveal themselves as they are. The Arabs will then be convinced, as will the whole world, that in the living and healthy constitution, that of the Arab nation, will be realized what has escaped being realized in many: the harmony of the freedom of the individual and the community with the unity of the nation, the consonance of the right of the citizen with the power of the state.[232]

The basis for Aflaq's ideology was Arab unity, and it was this unity that drove his palingenetic vision as well as his economic vision. Only after attaining unity could the Arabs be resurrected, and could their society become one without classes, where the individual, the group, and the state coexisted harmoniously. This vision provided the basis for his fierce opposition to Communism, which he believed was both materialistic and based on class loyalty as opposed to national loyalty. His view of society as organic echoes the Fascist corporatist ethos, and his evident palingenetic vision of resurrection and populist ultranationalism mean that the incarnation of the Syrian Ba'th Party that he founded and led was undoubtedly a Fascist movement according to our working definition.

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[232] Michel Aflaq, "For One Arab Nation There is One Popular Action," *Al-Baath* , March 11, 1947, accessed April 5, 2011. http://albaath.online.fr.

The Lebanese Kataeb Party, though outwardly reminiscent of the European Fascist mass movements, proves a different case from both Young Egypt and the Syrian Ba'th Party. Gemayel's early influences for the Kataeb were found in interwar Europe, when he visited first Germany and then Czechoslovakia. In Nazi Germany and in the organization of the Czechoslovak *Sokol* movement he saw in practice the ideological values of order, discipline, and national unity that he believed Lebanon lacked. Asking "Why not the same thing in Lebanon?" he founded the Kataeb as a youth organization that sought to instill these same values as well as Lebanese nationalism in the young Lebanese who were preparing for independence. Despite his affinities for the European Fascist movements, Gemayel never became an ideological Fascist, and it is doubtful that he undertook any study of European Fascist ideology as Badawi did. The Kataeb, therefore, was a populist, ultranationalist movement with a palingenetic view of history that traced the heritage of the Lebanese nation to the ancient Phoenician civilization and sought to resurrect a strong Lebanese nation in the modern world. It did not, however, develop along the lines of a Fascist movement and Gemayel displayed affinities for inclusive, interconfessional, and liberal nationalist thought despite the paramilitary, hierarchical structure of the movement. In the end, the ideology of Gemayel's Kataeb was directed towards preserving Lebanon as a nation-state, and not transforming it along Fascist lines. Comparison of the Kataeb with the Syrian Social Nationalist Party using Robert O. Paxton's "Mobilizing Passions of Fascism" finally demonstrates that while the SSNP was undoubtedly a Fascist movement in character, the Kataeb lacked too many of the components of our working definition of Fascism to be called a true Fascist movement.

 It is evident, therefore, that there was such a thing as "Arab Fascism" that developed in some ways independently of the European Fascist movements, and in other ways with direct influence from European Fascist ideology. If anything, this study has proved that in seeking Fascism outside of Europe it is necessary both to work according to a strict definition of Fascism and to examine the ideologies of the movements in question for Fascist elements, as opposed to simply trusting the superficial manifestations of an apparent Fascist character. While Pierre Gemayel, Abd al-Rahman Badawi, and Michel Aflaq were all influenced in some way by interwar European Fascism, their movements did not develop identically to one another, or to the European movements that provided their models. The Fascism of each of these nationalist intellectuals displayed certain Fascist elements more profoundly than others. For example, Badawi's Fascism was ideological, Aflaq's was economic in character, and Gemayel's was merely mimetic. However, this study has proved that Fascist thought had an undeniable impact on nationalism in the Arab world and that each of these "Arab Fascists", in their struggle for the resurrection of their countries, in some way believed that Fascism's palingenetic, populist, corporatist ultranationalism would provide a solution to the problems of the Arab world as it apparently had provided to the problems of Germany and Italy.

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