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The Sheikh of Princeton: Philip Hitti and the Tides of History

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The Sheikh of Princeton: Philip Hitti and the Tides of History

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Abstract

The Sheikh of Princeton: Philip Hitti and the Tides of History

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When Princeton University launched an Oriental Department in 1927, the school broke convention in two ways. Firstly, it sought to focus on Arabic and Islamic Studies, making the department the first center in the world devoted to these subjects. Secondly, the scholar chosen as the intellectual architect of the department was Philip Hitti (1886-1978), a native of the “Orient.” Less than a dozen Orient-born faculty had secured professorships in Western universities. None enjoyed institutional support as would Hitti.

Born in Lebanon to Christian-Maronite parents, neither of whom enjoyed formal education, Hitti was the first native Arabic-speaker to earn a PhD in a university in the West (Columbia 1915). Before joining Princeton,

Hitti headed New York's Cosmopolitan Club (1915-1920), the largest organization for foreign college and university students in the country.

Princeton's hiring of Hitti meant that a native Arabic-speaker would take the lead in developing Arabic and Islamic Studies in Western academia. Hitti subsequently became the most widely-circulating Orientalist of his time—as well as the most circulating Arabic writer until around 1960. Only Hitti's compatriot and correspondent, Lebanon-born and immigrant-to-America Gibran Khalil Gibran (1883- 1931), supplanted Hitti in book-sales in the 1960s, thanks to Gibran's 1923 *The Prophet*.

At Princeton, Hitti welcomed Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ambassadors, US Senators, a Shah and an Emperor, as well as ministers of education from around the world. Capital and technology from the Americas regularly flowed through Hitti to the Middle East. Hitti headed the 1915-founded Near East Foundation, which raised hundreds of millions of dollars for relief efforts in the Levant beginning in WWI. Hitti also exported the Arabic linotype printing press from the US internationally (1929), energizing an already fermenting Arabic printing revolution.

Yet what happened to the memory of Philip Hitti?

This dissertation illuminates why Hitti has been forgotten-- and why he should be remembered.

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Chapter 1: Transgressions

“Of all the lands comparable to Arabia in size, and of all the peoples approaching the Arabs in historical interest and importance, no country and no nationality have perhaps received so little consideration and study in modern times, as have Arabia and the Arabs.” So began Philip K. Hitti’s *History of the Arabs* (1937), the standard textbook of Arab history, read throughout the world, for over half a century.¹

Hitti’s *History* was “nothing short of revolutionary,” wrote Professor Fred Donner, chair of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Chicago, in a short 1996 article about the Princeton professor published in the *Journal of Middle East Medievalists*. Hitti’s work valorized the Arabs, treating them as a people worthy of attention from the Western academy. As significantly, the book popularized Arab history for a worldwide readership. “No other work of Middle Eastern Studies had an impact remotely as great,” Donner noted.²

In the Middle East, *History* underwent at least two separate unauthorized translations in the 1940s alone.³ Translated into twenty-five languages—including Urdu, Serbio-Croatian, Africaans, Persian and Bangali—*History* has since been reissued fourteen times in English and at least four in Arabic.⁴ Warned by his own publishers in

¹ Hitti, Philip, *History of the Arabs*, 10th edition, 1970, pg 3.

² Donner, Fred, “Pioneers in Medieval Middle Eastern Studies, *Al-'Usur al-Wusta, The Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists*, October, 1996, pgs 48-53

³ *Ta'rikh al-'Arab*, [unauthorized] tr. [of *History of the Arabs*] Muhammad Mabruk Nafi', 3 vols. Mansurat Dar al-Mu'allimin al-Aliyah, no. 2. Baghdad: Matba'at Tafayyud and Matba'at al-Najah

Ta'rikh al-'Arab [unauthorized] tr. [of *History of the Arabs*] Muhammad Mabruk Nafi, 2nd printing, 3 vols. Cairo: Dar al-Tawzi w'al-Tiba'ah w-al-Nashr

⁴ Translation of 25 languages is stated in the TV show with Hitti circa 1955, Box 33 on CDs at IHRC. English editions:

1937 that he would not sell more than a hundred copies, Hitti proved the experts wrong, earning within months of initial publication praise from the world's leading print publications, from *The New York Times*, to *The Times of India*, and the *Irish Times*.⁵ “[I]f any one book could be adduced in [establishing Arab Civilization],” noted the literary journal *The London Mercury* in July 1937, “it is the wholly admirable compilation of Professor Hitti, a thorough and indeed a renowned master of his subject.”⁶ The *Christian Science Monitor* called *History* “one of the finest histories ever devoted to a people and its accomplishments,”⁷ and reviewers in the Middle East concurred: “It is comprehensive and authoritative, and it is singularly free from that numbing aridity of style and presentation which is the orientalist’s worst drawback,” stated the English-language *Egyptian Garzette* of Alexandria, a few weeks following *History*’s publication, continuing:

Hitti has been able to infuse no little charm into the scientific precision of his account. Unlike most of his brethren, he is not under the delusion that the mark of scholarship in Semitic affairs is to pack your prose as thick with polysyllables as currants in a cake. His object seems rather to have been to reach as many readers as possible by the clarity and quiet enthusiasm of his writing. The attractiveness of this method is...immaculate.⁸

History was a museum of over two thousand years of Arab history within the covers of a book. The widely available, scholarly blueprint of the collective past of Arabic-speakers

1937, 1940, 1943, 1949, 1952, 1953, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1964, 1970, 2002, 2007 (audiobook)

Arabic editions: 1946, 1954, 1965, 1986,

⁵ For 100 copies, see Starkey, John, “A Talk with Philip Hitti,” July/August 1971, Volume 22, Number 4,

<http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/197104/a.talk.with.philip.hitti.htm>

For *The New York Times*, see The New York Times Book Review, July 11, 1937 “The People of Arabia” By HI Katibah, Box 16, FF2

For *Times of India*, see Aug 27th 1937, “Pageant of Arab Civilization” Box 16, FF1

For *Irish Times*, see 3 July 1937, “Arabia Unveiled,” Box 16, FF 2

⁶ Box 16, FF 2, July 1937, “The Arab Civilization” by Kenneth Williams

⁷Box 15, FF 11, April 8, 1952, “From the Bookshelf”

⁸ August 7, 1937, *The Egyptian Gazette*, “Arabian Theme” Box 16, FF2

came in language that was not only easy to follow, but entertaining.⁹ Hitti's *History of the Arabs* "is the best survey of Arab history... in any modern language," wrote Walter Wright from Turkey, President of Robert College in Istanbul.¹⁰

History of the Arabs was the first blockbuster of Arab history. By the release of the second edition in 1940, over fifty thousand English-language copies had sold, and that was in the US alone.¹¹ Returning from Cairo, an American correspondent for Princeton's alumni newspaper revealed in 1968 that *History* can "[still] be seen in every bookstore window in the Near East."¹²

History valorized native Arabic-speakers of all religious origins and cultural practices, subverting the patronizing image of the Arabs that had hitherto dominated in academia. Offering an engaging text about a people generally neglected and often stigmatized in scholarship, *History* presented a "refutation of what had been, until that time, the prevailing conceptual paradigm... His work thus helped clear obstacles of ignorance and prejudice," as Donner stressed. Emanating from Princeton, Arab history had never been so successful.¹³

In the nationalist congresses sprouting in Cairo and Damascus in the 1950s, Hitti's *History* became a standard reference, the indispensable historical Bible of the broader regional past. Delegates debated the nature of Arab nationalism while carrying Hitti's *History of the Arabs* in hand, a book which was "not only a significant work of

⁹Box 16, FF1, the *Quarterly Review*, March 1938, second from same box FF 2

¹⁰ *Princeton Alumni Weekly* on August 20, 1937, Box 16, FF1,

¹¹ Box 14, FF 12, paper beginning with "Philip K. Hitti was born in Lebanon"

¹²Aminta W. Marks, "Princeton and Near Eastern Studies," *Princeton Alumni Weekly* January 20, 1968, 6-16

¹³ Donner, *Ibid.*

scholarship, but also a key document in the creation of an Arab nationalist identity.”¹⁴ In Lebanon, the success of *History* led a newspaper to note what was otherwise obvious, even if it would be forgotten in the years to come: In upper-case letters, the article about Hitti declared: “L’HISTOIRE DES ARABES PASSE PAR LA UNIVERSITE DE PRINCETON”—the history of the Arabs passes through Princeton. From the American university, Hitti was not only writing the Arabs’ past, but shaping their horizon.¹⁵

Hitti’s students reaffirmed the hype. His “commitment [was] to making the history and the views of Arabs, in the past or today, heard everywhere,” wrote Dr. Oleg Grabar of Princeton’s Institute of Advanced Studies, describing Hitti as a “direct pipeline between ... Lebanon and... America.”¹⁶ Shortly before Hitti’s transfer to teach at Harvard in 1955, Dr. Constantin Zurayk, Dr. Jibrail Jabbur, Dr. Nabih Faris and Dr. Musa Sulayman—other native Arabic-speaking students who would become major intellectual figureheads in the Middle East—added to the description, presenting the legendary Princeton professor with the following written and signed statement:

To you, more than to any other, belongs the credit of securing for Arab Studies a safe place in the curriculum... Your books are standard references, your students standard bearers of the tradition you have established, and your spirit a constant source of inspiration to all who were privileged to sit at your feet.¹⁷

¹⁴ Donner, *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *L’Orient*, Beirut, Lebanon, July 24, 1966, “Le rayonnement de la Science arabe a l’époque abbasside”, Box 25, FF 4

¹⁶ *Luminaries : Princeton Faculty Remembered*, edited Patricia Marks; Association of Princeton Graduate Alumni, 1996, 123

¹⁷Undated Box 26, FF4,
Signed by Constantine Zuryk, Jibrail Jabbur, Nabih Faris, Musa Sulayman

In 1973, a nearly eighty-eight year old Hitti received a personal letter from Constantine Zurayk, one of the leading Arab nationalist figures of the 20th century, stating:

You have been and continue to be an inspiration on your students and friends. Your energy is inexhaustible, and your reason as alive as ever. Each one of your new publications—and they have been many since your retirement—is a challenge to your students who admire you, but cannot emulate you. May God keep you in good health, and may He bless and deepen the satisfaction and happiness which I am sure your great accomplishments give you.¹⁸

Hitti's archives hold thousands of personal correspondences addressing the professor with similar high esteem, as well as thousands of laudatory articles in German, Persian, Hebrew, Yiddish, Arabic, Armenian, Italian, Spanish, and other languages.¹⁹

Praise for Hitti came from those he knew personally and from those he had never met. "I am glad to state that most of the Orientalists are as enthusiastic about you History [sic] as I myself," wrote the Jewish-German physician and Orientalist Max Meyerof from Cairo in 1937, famed in Egypt for treating the poor free of charge. "I did not tell you in my review how much I admired the fact with which you were mindful of the feelings of orthodox Muslims concerning the Prophet and the Qur'an." A few weeks before writing to Hitti personally, Meyerof published a review about *History* in Cairo's English-language periodical *The Sphynx*: "Hitti has given us a concise but very complete and up-to-date narrative of the people of Arabia and their long and complex history, a gift which is all the more welcome as no other work of the same scope and ability has appeared."²⁰ Meyerof, who had relocated from Germany to Egypt in 1903, was one of many voicing surprise over the new cultural appreciation coming from Princeton.

¹⁸Box 9, FF 10

¹⁹ Box _ FF 8 (missing number)

²⁰Box 19, FF 7

The groundswell of acclaim echoed worldwide. “Millions of Muslims and many others in many parts of the world will remain eternally indebted to you for all you have done,” wrote Hassan Habib, the chief secretary of the State of Khairpur, Pakistan.²¹ Habib’s was one of hundreds of letters arriving to Princeton’s Oriental Department on the news of Hitti’s retirement, an event covered in mainstream media outlets, including *Time Magazine*.²²

Commendation for Hitti appeared in writings to him and about him, in private and public forums, in national and international media. His fame preceded his *History of the Arabs*, as it preceded his arrival at Princeton. Visiting Brazil in 1925, for example, one year before arriving at Princeton, Hitti realized that he was already a celebrity, as he acknowledged in a letter from Sao Paulo sent to his wife back in the U.S:

Imagine me landing from a train at Sao Paulo and receiving about fifty men welcoming me including newspaper men, delegates from societies, merchants... Many came to hotel. The Beirut Society sent a big bouquet of flowers which is now on table before me. In the evening, three reporters from biggest Brazilian papers came to see me... almost all papers had a write-up.²³ In a single one-night fundraiser during his visit in Brazil, a country he identified as “more Syrian than Syria,” Hitti raised from Arabic-speakers in Sao Paulo the equivalent of ten thousand US dollars for formal education in Greater Syria—a sum exceeding the 2014 buying power of 130,000 US dollars.²⁴ “The Syrians [in the country] seized upon this opportunity to present our guest before the Brazilian public as representatives [sic] of Syrian culture, scholarship and refinement,” wrote one notable Syrian in the Arabic-

²¹ Hassan Habib letter Box 26, FF 3;

²²*Egyptian Gazette*, “Dr. Philip Hitti To Retire,” May 1954, Box 29, FF 12; *Time Magazine*, June 28, 1954, Box 26, FF8, “Education”

²³ July 18, 1925, Box 1 FF 4

²⁴Box 1, FF 6

speaking Brazilian community, explaining the value of Hitti's arrival, which was significant as no Arabic-speaking intellectual from the Middle had visited Brazil, not to speak of a leading American Arabic-speaking intellectual.²⁵ Hitti's popularity in Brazil reflected not only in the Brazilian mainstream media, but even in the *New York Times* which published an article about Hitti's impressions of the country.²⁶ Years later, Hitti's clout would lead to the establishment of a center of Arabic Studies at the University of São Paulo (opened in 1960), an institute modeled after his own department at Princeton.²⁷

Soviet scholars acknowledged Hitti as well. The Orientalist Ignaty Krachkovsky (1883-1951) corresponded with Hitti in Arabic as early as 1930.²⁸ A few years later, even before Hitti's scholarship was available in Russian, another Russian reviewer wrote a review of *History*, calling it the "best amongst such works [on the Arabs]."²⁹ The Russian reviewer passed over in silence Hitti's previous milestones, recognizing neither Hitti's place as the first native Arabic-speaker to receive a PhD in a university in the West (Columbia, 1915), nor his place as the first native Arabic-speaker to be made faculty in a university outside the Middle East (first at Columbia in 1915, then at Princeton in 1926). The reviewer made no mention of Hitti's exportation of new technology from the US, namely the linotype printing press in Arabic, which energized an already fervent printing revolution in Arabic letters. Nor did the reviewer mention Hitti's head of the Near East

²⁵ Box 29, FF 13; including in Rio di Janeiro's *Ilustracion Moderna*, Sao Paulo's *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Jornal de Campinas*; *Diario do Povo*; *Correo Popular*; see also Box 30, FF8

²⁶ "Brazil A True Melting Pot," Philip Hitti, Oct 25, 1925, pg. X14

²⁷ Box 29, FF 10, Karam, John, "Philip Hitti, Brazil, and the Diasporic Histories of Area Studies," in the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 46, 2014, pgs. 451-471

²⁸ Box 33, FF 9

²⁹ Box 26, FF 6

Foundation, America's oldest non-sectarian philanthropy, whose relief services are credited with saving more than a million Levantine lives between 1915-1930.

The reviewer passed over in silence Hitti as a central artery for the Islamic lands—a conduit for philanthropic, technological, and intellectual contributions from the Americas elsewhere. Instead, the Russian reviewer focused solely on *History*, which appeared to be Hitti's only accomplishment, an understandable phenomena evident in other countries as well. Upon reaching Pakistan in 1958, for example, Hitti again recognized the power of his *History*: “[Hundreds] of curious people want autographs,” he wrote his wife from Kariachi. “[They want] to see the *History of the Arabs* author, ask silly questions... One man wanted autograph of *History of Arabs* for which he paid 1/3 of his monthly salary.”³⁰ The author of the seminal work of Arab history, Hitti had produced the first history of the Americans in Arabic (*Tārīkh al-sha‘b al-Amīrikī*, ‘History of the American People,’ 1946), although the significance of his 1937 *History* outweighed any of his other accomplishments.

The flickers of the camera and the adulation of reporters might have appeared standard for an opera singer, a movie star, a politician, or a military-man, but not for an academic, and certainly not for a historian of the Middle East. Even Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meier referenced Hitti in her media contribution for the *New York Times*, as did Israeli Ambassador to the UN Abba Eban in his autobiography, citations which Hitti acknowledged only in passing: “It has been my practice never to answer, argue with, or even recognize him who writes about me in a popular paper. I may answer or allow to

³⁰ Box 1, FF 6

be quoted only in the case of a scholar writing in a learned publication, not for political, propagandistic purposes,” Hitti responded in correspondence, deflecting Meier’s reference in particular.³¹ There was also the more personal evidence of celebrity, reflected in more modest encounters, as in a Christmas card from Hitti’s grandson, Baily Winder. From the American University of Beirut—Hitti’s alma mater and the university which in 1945 unanimously elected Hitti as the first native Arabic-speaker trustee—Winder wrote his grandfather to wish him a Merry Christmas, and to tell him that he “had an exam on your book last week which I think I did well on.”³²

The commendation for Hitti came in languages that he knew, and in those that required translation, in handwritten notes and in formal typed letters, from local neighborhoods and from lands far away. Along with the seemingly never-ending stream of newspaper articles and personal letters to Hitti from predictable sources, *History* also prompted letters from unlikely places, as in the 1944 correspondence of the scholar Friedrich Foerster (1869–1966)—one of Germany’s foremost (non-Jewish) anti-Nazi intellectuals. From South Africa, where he had escaped the Nazis, Foerster wrote Hitti in English to commend him on his “beautiful book: *History of the Arabs*,” and to note the value of the work which lay not only for popular readerships but for scholars like himself: “To an Arabist, your book is a source of great [inspiration]... the more when he is able to read the originals.” Escaping the Nazis for South Africa before the War, Foerster was incarcerated in the country on account of his German nationality. From his prison

³¹ Box 6 FF10, letter February 6, 1976; Eban, Abba, *Abba Eban: An Autobiography*, New York: Random House, 1977, pg 87

³² Box 14, FF 1

cell, the whereabouts of which were stamped onto his letter, Foerster took the time to write Hitti in appreciation of his cultural and intellectual breakthrough.³³

Hitti was the “world’s leading historian of the Arabs,” claimed the *New York Times* following the publication of *History*, the “most distinguished living western historian of Arabia and the Near East,” as Joseph C. Shipman announced for the *Library Journal*, statements that dared to position the Princeton professor at the throne of Arab history.³⁴ A letter from Hitti’s nephew in Jerusalem, sent in 1945 indicates Hitti’s centrality in the Middle East: “We are kept in touch with your news from the Arab press in Palestine where scarcely a week passes without reading something about you.”³⁵ The place in the US of a leading Arabic-speaking intellectual was not completely startling, although Hitti’s reach and influence appeared remarkable. Hitti was “the most famous contemporary historian of the Arabs” (‘Ashhar Mu’arikhy Al Arab Al Mua’sir’) announced the mainstream Saudi Arabian newspaper *Al Yom* (‘Today’), on the occasion of his death in 1978—an admission that was striking given Hitti’s Maronite-Christian background and his status as a naturalized American citizen who had at twenty-seven years of age relocated to the US, where he would be buried.³⁶

Princeton’s media also reveled in the Hitti phenomena: “since Hitti established his home here, Princeton has become the most important center of Islamic studies in the

³³ 18/11/1944; Box 7 FF 7

³⁴See also Box 16, FF 5 for *New York Times*; Box 13, FF 13;

³⁵Letter of January 22, 1945, Box 5, FF 6; Box 4, FF 4

³⁶Box 28, FF 4

Americas, a kind of western Mecca regularly visited by Near Eastern Dignitaries.”³⁷ The two cedar trees imported from Lebanon and planted in front of Princeton’s Graduate School shortly following the publication of Hitti’s *History* reflected the physical changes that accompanied Hitti’s rising star, as did the stained glass windows of two Arabic luminaries installed in Princeton’s University Chapel in 1938. The figure of the 7th-8th century priest John of Damascus in a glass window perhaps raised fewer eyebrows than the figure of the 9th-10th-century Moslem physician Mohammad Al Razi, but both were Hitti recommendations. The appearance of a glass window prominently displaying a Muslim at the ceremonial center of Princeton, a transgression that previous Princeton classes might have believed impossible, signified a shift toward openness that appeared especially noteworthy at such an elite Presbyterian institution.³⁸

In the Arabic-speaking lands, Hitti was not only the historian par excellence of the region, but a media-icon. The front-page of Lebanon’s *Al Dustur* magazine in the 1970 Tammuz (July) issue pictured Hitti on its cover—a treatment that was not unusual for the professor, who was the subject of the next five pages of coverage in the magazine. “Dr. Hitti recently returned from several months of travel in the Middle East, where he spoke to such heads of state as King Saud, the President of Syria, ambassadors, ministers, and as he added himself ‘chauffers, teachers, farmers and housemaids,’” wrote one Beirut newspaper in 1946 upon Hitti’s visit to his native country.”³⁹

³⁷Box 25, FF4

³⁸ Box 30, FF 7; for changes on campus, see “East Meets West at Princeton,” Box 17, FF 3

³⁹ Box 33, Interviews, newspapers , *The Daily Star*

American media concurred. He “knows personally almost all of the contemporary heads of state [in the Middle East] as well as leading authors and journalists,” Princeton University’s press noted about the man widely referred to as the “‘Sheikh’ of Princeton,” the professors who stood out amongst Princeton’s faculty not only on account of his origins but on account of the fame and circulation he had secured.⁴⁰ “Few men in our time can speak with such a solid backing of international acclaim—Arabic scholar, historian, teacher and writer—as Philip Hitti,” read another media announcement.⁴¹ Had a Civil War not erupted in Lebanon in 1975, Hitti might have been honored with a “Philip K. Hitti Institute,” as the Orientalist Assad Khairallah acknowledged in a letter to Hitti. From West Germany, Khairallah wrote Hitti in in 1976 reminding him of

the Philip K. Hitti Institute. That project is still on my mind! Just before our civil war broke out, I was trying to negotiate with people working with the Tunisian Bank in Lebanon concerning a certain Cecil Hotel they own in Quarnet Shahwan (where I live), as a first step, for an institute for Arabic culture. Unfortunately, Quarnet Shahwan is no more the suitable place for such a project, but as a stubborn Bhamdouni, I promise that this dream will come true!⁴²

Not only in Lebanon, his land of birth, was Hitti considered a foundational and even transformational figure. Hitti wrote the first history of Arabic-speakers-- a panoramic representation of this history of an previously fragmented population-- making him a standard reference wherever the Arab past was discussed. Celebrated as “sawt al Arab” (voice of the Arabs) in the Jordanian newspaper *Ar Ra’y* (‘The Opinion’), Hitti generated a stream of international press that is unique for any Arabic-speaking intellectual. By the

⁴⁰Box 13, FF 14, no date

⁴¹Box 13, FF 14, date withheld

⁴²Philip Hitti Institute, letter November 19, 1976

mid-20th century, he appeared in every major newspaper of the Middle East, to speak nothing of those outside the region.

Hitti's place as an interpreter of Arab and Islamic history was unrivaled. Not simply the American University of Beirut's first native Arabic-speaking trustee, he was "the most valuable trustee we ever had," wrote the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Beirut (AUB) in 1975, three years before Hitti's death.⁴³ The 1908 valedictorian of his class of about 250 at the then 900-person school in Beirut, Hitti had been a scholarship student at the school between 1904 and 1908. Upon his graduation, he was hired as an instructor at the institution, which would be renamed the American University of Beirut in 1920. The college made a significant investment in Hitti by covering his tuition as a teenager, employing him following the completion of his bachelor's degree in 1908, and sponsoring his trip to the US five years later, in 1913. In his will, Hitti paid off this generosity multiple times over, bequeathing his library to the institution, as well as \$15,000 (approximately \$50,000 in contemporary dollars). These donations were marginal in comparison to the press and prestige Hitti conferred on the Beirut establishment.⁴⁴

Princeton University also celebrated its 'Oriental' Orientalist. Hitti was "the most widely and exotically translated of the University's Professors (sic)," read one University statement about the self-identifying 'Arab' on campus.⁴⁵ The university honored its foreign-born professor not only with cedar trees and stained glass windows, but also with

⁴³Box 26, FF1, Box 26, FF1

⁴⁴ Box 27, FF 2

⁴⁵Box 26, FF1

Hitti's first honorary degree, granted in 1966. Another article in Princeton's media underscored the peculiarity of the man whose parents had initially not expected their son to finish middle school, let alone to become the head of a Princeton department, a school they never visited:

The 73-year-old Hitti, once described by an exhausted colleague as "perpetual motion in motion" has been one of the most striking and dominant personalities on the Princeton scene since 1926. Although he officially retired from the University in 1954, he continues as the dean of American Arabists and, much like a magnet, attracts to Princeton an almost steady stream of visitors from the Islamic World, most of whom feel he is largely responsible for the introduction and rapid development of Islamic studies in the United States. In fact, it has been said that he has been more quoted in Arabic newspapers than any other spokesman for the Western world.⁴⁶

A singular phenomenon in the history of education, Hitti rose from inauspicious beginnings of economic, social, and educational disadvantages otherwise unknown in Western education in generation. Not only did he become a Princeton department head, but the pioneer of Arabic and Islamic Studies in international educational systems worldwide, including those in the Middle East. The only one of Princeton's roughly two hundred and fifty faculty born outside Europe or the Americas (and to non-American parents), Hitti established a center in Arabic and Islamic Studies at Princeton-- an anomaly as no such department existed anywhere worldwide. Focused on the Islamic lands and the Middle East in particular, Hitti's department consisted of some fifteen full-time faculty working to produce new narratives of the Middle East that would become staples in the region and in other Islamic lands. Not only would Hitti's presence at Princeton bring dozens of Arabic-speaking scholars and even Muslims to that institution.

⁴⁶Box 26, FF3

Because he became a standard interpreter of Islamic and Arab history, he became the standard reference wherever these subjects were addressed—including in the US Congress and in the United Nations. Leading scholars from around the world, as well as heads of state from the Islamic lands, arrived at Princeton to visit what became known as ‘the Hitti magnet,’ seeking his instruction or his representation. The migration of scholars and statesmen to Princeton was almost as extraordinary as the migration of narratives about the Islamic past that the department exported internationally. Hitti’s success as the intellectual architect of the Oriental department at Princeton—a department funneling millions of dollars into the study of the Islamic Middle East—earned him colorful appellations during his lifetime. Hitti was the “father of Middle Eastern Studies” and “the father of Arabic Studies,” noted native Arabic-speakers and non-Arabic-speakers alike, including in his honorary degree from the American University of Beirut in 1969 (his second honorary degree), and reiterated at Hitti’s funeral nine years later.⁴⁷

Eschewing such distinctions, Hitti also eschewed the “educator of the century” honor bestowed on him first by US-Levantine organizations (1955) and republished in the newspaper *Princeton Packet*, a distinction he would not physically accept: “I am greatly flattered by the decision of your Federation to honor me by a citation naming me the ‘Educator of the Century,’” he wrote in response to the decoration, continuing:

Such gestures on the part of our people, I assure you, are not small part of the regard of one who has devoted all his life to making our culture and our people more favorably and more widely known...How I wish I could be with you, not only to express my appreciation of this distinction, but to see you and the other

⁴⁷ “the father of Arabic Studies” in article: “Arabist Hitti Awarded honorary Degree by AUB,” *The Lebanese American Journal*, June 26, 1969, Box 1 FF 1, “father of Middle Eastern Studies,” Farhat Ziadeh eulogy of Hitti, Box 25, FF 4

personal friends whom I have not seen for years, but alas, since this is impossible, may I ask you to accept for yourself and to convey for all members of the Federation my sincere appreciation coupled with my salams [salutes] and best wishes.⁴⁸

In other correspondence, he was more direct about his dislike of awards: “I do not believe... in external decorations,” he stated a few years earlier.⁴⁹ “I have repeatedly said that the achievement of the past is the promise of the present for the future,” he emphasized, illuminating the role of opportunity and external aid behind his own success, which owed, as he acknowledged, to actors and factors far beyond his control.⁵⁰

Transmission of past heritages had been his most recognizable trademark, and Hitti self-identified as a conduit to previous accomplishments, not their creator, a transmuter and translator of narratives which had predated him and which he would merely pass onto new generations. “My object [has been] to trace the development of the human spirit in Western Asia,” he noted in one letter written in New York in 1920 to the president of the American University of Beirut, six years before joining Princeton, and seventeen before the publication of his *History*. “Nothing that has no direct or indirect relation to the present can interest us,” he continued, manifesting his distinct concern for social relevance, a dedication which uniquely shaped his historical oeuvre, making it readable and accessible. Unlike scholars engaging only academic audiences, Hitti intentionally sought to engage a public that no Arabic writer had yet imagined.⁵¹

Interestingly, however, in the last years of his life, Hitti acknowledged his own legacy as itself worthy of transmission, recognizing the value of his personal narrative for

⁴⁸ Princeton Packet, 7/7/1955, Box 26, FF8

⁴⁹Box 14, FF1, December 29, 1946

⁵⁰See box 33, “Recent Views of Dr. Hitti on Islam and the Arabs,” The Muslim Digest page 20

⁵¹ Box 6, FF 9

future generations. This concession partly explains a letter he wrote to *The New Lebanese American Journal* in 1972 following the journal's republication of an interview he had given in another publication. Contradicting his former stance against interfering with his own public image, Hitti publicly saluted the immigrant paper, which had republished without his knowledge an interview he gave to Saudi Arabia's *Aramco Magazine*. Rather than ignoring the republication of this interview, or perhaps publicly or privately castigating that journal for reprinting his words without his permission, Hitti did what was otherwise out of character for him: he wrote *The New Lebanese American Journal* directly, acknowledging the interview's reappearance. The newspaper in turn printed the professor's response in its opening page: "[The republication] delighted me," Hitti confessed, "not so much because it appeals to the ego in me—that day has passed, but because especially young readers of our people may find in it some inspiration for their own lives. This, to my mind, was the justification for permitting the interview originally and now for rejoicing in seeing it in print..."⁵² Mindful that the narratives of the past could inspire the future, Hitti also recognized his own narrative as remarkable.

And remarkable it was. Born on the slopes of Mount Lebanon in a village of merely three hundred people, a hamlet he described as "humble but picturesque," Hitti arrived in the US on the benefaction of others, planning to spend only one year there to further his education, before returning to the Syrian Protestant College to continue his teaching.⁵³ Unable to return to Lebanon on account of the outbreak of War War I in 1914,

⁵²Box_ FF 10 (April 27, 1972)*The New Lebanese American Journal*, box number missing

⁵³Box 29, FF4.

Hitti decided to continue his studies at Columbia University by pursuing a PhD, which he completed at twenty-nine years old in 1915, becoming the first native Middle Easterner to earn that honor in a European or American institution, preceding Egypt's Taha Hussein who received his PhD from the Sorbonne in Paris in 1916. After receiving his doctorate at Columbia under the tutelage of the Jewish Orientalist Richard Gottheil, Hitti continued to teach at the New York institution and married in 1918. He became an American citizen in 1920.

Other native Arabic-speakers also achieved international literary celebrity in the beginning of the 20th century, and not surprisingly, all corresponded with Hitti. The first native Arabic-speaking faculty in Western academia, Hitti became distinctly synonymous with Princeton University even before the outbreak of the Depression, although Hitti was only one of a much wider network of Levantines in the Americas, a number of whose fame preceded and facilitated his own. Two of Hitti's closest companions, both also Maronite-Christians Levantines who had relocated to the US before him, bear special mention: the artist and poet Gibran Khalil Gibran and the poet and writer Ameen Al Rihani. Hitti would credit both with shaping his own intellectual trajectory.

Born in the town of Bsharri, in northern Mount Lebanon, Gibran Khalil Gibran (1883–1931), would achieve international fame following the publication of his 1923 originally English-language book of prose-poetry *The Prophet*. Arriving in the US in 1895 at age twelve with his mother, his two sisters and an elder brother, Gibran started out as a visual artist, not a poet. Publishing his drawings in English-language books by age fifteen, Gibran worked under the wealthy Boston socialite and bohemian artist Fred

Holland Day (1864 -1933), whose photographs of Gibran still remain. Day's close relationship with Gibran may have scared Gibran's mother. Day's fame and his fondness for photographing young men in the nude may have been one reason leading Gibran's mother to send Gibran back to Lebanon by age 15, where he would stay for four years. By Gibran's return to the US in 1902, he had developed interests in both painting and poetry, embracing the later craft while perfecting his Arabic in Lebanon. Re-emerging in the American art establishment, Gibran continued to paint and to write verse. Rubbing shoulders with famous men like Irish poet WB Yeats, French sculptor Auguste Rodin, Harvard University president Charles Eliot, and Swiss psychotherapist Carl Jung, all of whose portraits he painted, Gibran would at first find only mediocre success in Arabic poetry, owing to his unconventional style and subject-matter. Gibran addressed the Middle East's Arabic establishment in at least two poems published in 1920, written first in Arabic: "Your Thoughts and Mine," and "You have your Lebanon and I have Mine," the latter printed in Cairo's *Al Hillel* that year. In the latter, he characterized his critics as hostages to "an ancient dogma that cannot change you nor can you change it. My thought is new, and it tests me and I test it," words that exemplified Gibran's own rebelliousness in Arabic letters. These poems in particular would carry further resonance following his own rise as a major poet of Arabic letters.⁵⁴

At first impression, Gibran's romantic style suggests his uncontroversial orientation. His pan-religious lyricism celebrated fraternity in *The Prophet* and in his other works, manifesting a generous spirituality that would make him especially popular

⁵⁴ For Gibran's life, see Jean Gibran and Kahlil Gibran, *Kahlil Gibran, His Life and World*, 1974

in the counter-culture days of the 1960s, with even *The Beatles* borrowing from his poetry.⁵⁵ In correspondence, Gibran re-affirmed his pan-humanism. “I am not a politician,” Gibran revealed, “nor do I wish to become one.” One famous Gibran verse read: “You are my brother and I love you. I love you when you prostrate yourself in your mosque, and kneel in your church and pray in your synagogue.”⁵⁶ Gibran’s most famous poem dedicated to Arabic-speakers in the US, “I believe in you” was published in the first edition of the *Syrian World* in 1926, a leading English-language newspaper in the US:

I believe in you, and I believe in your destiny.

I believe that you are contributors to this new civilization.

I believe that you have inherited from your forefathers an ancient dream, a song, a prophecy, which you can proudly lay as a gift of gratitude upon the lap of America.

I believe that you can say to the founders of this great nation, "Here I am, a youth, a young tree whose roots were plucked from the hills of Lebanon, yet I am deeply rooted here, and I would be fruitful."⁵⁷

Such trans-religious and harmonious sentiments, however, belied Gibran’s iconoclasm in Arabic letters, which had continued to privilege linguistic conventions over new themes and subject-matters in Arabic poetry. A “new spirit... [in the Americas] aims to liberate our writers from frozenness and imitation to a role of innovation in all styles and meanings,” Gibran himself noted in Arabic in the 1920 New York-based literary journal

⁵⁵ (Gibran’s verse, “Half of what I say is meaningless, but I say it so that the other half may reach you,” is slightly altered in John Lennon’s 1968 song “Julia,” the second half of which ends: “But I say it just to reach you, Julia”)

⁵⁶ Jean Gibran and Kahlil Gibran, *Kahlil Gibran, His Life and World*, 1974

⁵⁷ July, 1926, *The Syrian World*, Vol 1, No 1

Al Rabita Al Qalamiyya (The Pen League), for which he served as president between 1920 until his death in 1931. Founded originally in 1916, before re-forming in 1920, New York's Pen League sought to unify a group of ten Arabic writers in the country aimed at "[lifting] Arabic literature from the quagmire of stagnation and imitation, [infusing] a new life into its veins so as to make of it an active force in the building up of the Arab nations."⁵⁸ Like Gibran's own writings, the poets of New York's Pen League focused not simply on the traditional and highly formalized linguistic stresses of rhythm and vowel-consonance which dominated Arabic poetry at the time, but on the human condition and its predicaments, existential concerns evident also in English-language poets like Walt Whitman. One contemporary Arabic scholar has described the Pen League as "a movement of innovation and literary adventure, unequalled in the rest of the Arab world," although similar 'leagues' of Arabic poets also manifested in other New World cities, including the *Al Rabita Al Andalusia* ('The Andalusian League') in Sao Paulo, whose literature circulated amongst Arabic readerships worldwide.⁵⁹

Gibran would not limit himself to writing in Arabic. His difficulty in finding acclaim in Arabic letters led him to compose and publish his 1923 *The Prophet* in English, a move that only facilitated his canonization in Arabic letters. Had Gibran not published *The Prophet*, or had the work emerged solely in Arabic, Gibran might well have receded into oblivion as a poet and painter, dwarfed by others of his generation. The tremendous success of the English original of *The Prophet*, however, led to an Arabic

⁵⁸ Words are of Mikhail Naimy from Levinson, David; Melvin Ember (1997). *American immigrant cultures: builders of a nation*. Simon & Schuster Macmillan, p. 864

⁵⁹ Page 235, from Salma Jayyusi in *Prophet: The Life and Times of Kahlil Gibran*.

translation and publication of the book in Cairo three years later, and subsequently to his elevation in Arabic letters as “the greatest literary figure in Arab letters during the first three decades of the century,” as a contemporary scholar of Arabic poetry has described him.⁶⁰ Comprising of 26 prose poetry essays, ranging on subjects from love, children, work, joy and sorrow, *The Prophet* helped popularize prose poetry [sha’ir al manthur] in Arabic letters, where it was previously a marginal trend first championed by the Aleppo-born poet Francis Marrash (1836-1873), himself influenced by French literature.

Following excursions in France in 1850 and 1866, Marrash returned to Aleppo and waged “a revolution in diction, themes, metaphor and imagery in modern Arabic poetry,” as one scholar has described Marrash’s poetic rebellion.⁶¹ In his incorporation of new poetic trends, Marrash illustrated the 19th and 20th century experimentation in and proliferation of Arabic letters known as the *Nahda* [Awakening]. Reading Marrash’s writings in his teenage stay in Lebanon, Gibran continued the rebellion from the US.⁶²

Gibran’s sales were still relatively limited during his own lifetime, although they were rapidly mounting, as was his influence. In 1923, Gibran sold merely 1,159 copies of

⁶⁰ Jayussi refers to Gibran: “Behind Girban’s experiment was a real creative need for a new spirit as well as a new style in literature. It marks a turning point and a division, not only in the literary conception, but also, and this is much more important, in the literary sensibility of the time. Before, Arabic poetry, despite individual differences, showed a more or less homogeneous background all over the Arab world. A largely uniform outlook and sensibility had been established over the centuries from Morocco to Yemen. Moreover, the contempt of modern Classicists for colloquial language prevented poets from drawing on the variety and local colour of popular verse in the different Arab countries... If any one person is to be credited with heralding the Romantic movement and at the same time bringing it to its climax, it is this prophet of solitude” (*Trends and Movements in Modern Arabic Poetry*, 1977, p. 94-95)

⁶¹ Moreh, Shmuel (1976). *Modern Arabic Poetry 1800–1970: the Development of its Forms and Themes under the Influence of Western Literature*. Brill, pg 45.

⁶² See Imangulieva, 23, also see *Al Thawra al-fikriyya fi adab al-mahjar in al-Adab* (‘The Revolution of Ideas in the Literature of Emigration’) 5, Beirut, 1951; *Fi al-adab al-Arabi al-hadith* (‘Concerning Modern Arabic Literature’), Beirut 1954

The Prophet, with sales doubling the following year and again the year after. By 1944, 60,000 copies had sold in English alone. Finally passing the million-copy mark in 1957, *The Prophet* enjoyed a total of 2.5 million sold in English by 1965, eventually making Gibran the most sold 20th century poet, with total sales surpassing a hundred million copies. Notably, *The Prophet* demonstrated that English could become a privileged gateway to success in Arabic.⁶³ Although set divisions often separate English and Arabic letters, Gibran's work exemplifies the interrelationships between these categories, which in the 19th and 20th centuries became mutually influenced by global developments and writers.

Gibran showed that success in English could lead to success in Arabic, a route Hitti also recognized. "As one who has devoted his life to the study and teaching of Arab history and whose supreme ambition has been to produce a work that might be considered the standard book in the field," Hitti wrote in English to a correspondent on April 9th, 1927, a few months after arriving at Princeton, explicitly recognizing the need for a work on Arabic-speakers on a scope which had never existed before.

The writing demonstrates that Hitti consciously attempted to write a work of great magnitude: "[There] is no doubt but that there is an urgent demand throughout the Arabic countries for a book which will deal not only with the history of the Arabs, in the narrow sense of the term, but of the Arabic speaking peoples at large... For a title perhaps THE HISTORY OF THE ARABS AND THE ARABIC SPEAKING PEOPLES will do," he continued, noting the deficit for such a history in the Arabic-speaking lands:

⁶³ Jean Gibran and Kahlil Gibran, *Kahlil Gibran His Life and World*, 1974

“The modern Arabic method of historiography is, on the whole, uncritical, conventional and traditional. Our task would be to secularize and rationalize the whole field of Arabic history. Then to put it in a form presentable to the contemporaneous student and reader.” Hitti acknowledged the value of such a work for world literatures and especially for the Middle East: “There is a great need for such a book as nothing along this line exists.”⁶⁴

Another letter about a month later to the same correspondent elaborates on the project that would become his *History of the Arabs*, a book ten years in-the-making, and one which Hitti first published in English, not Arabic:

I agree with you that what we should aim at is a Text-book. What I meant to say in my letter was that while we may not be able to capture the whole market with our text-boo, yet we should be able to more than make up for that by the sale to thousands of anxious readers.

On the day in which your last letter was received, Amin Bey Kisbany, the secretary of King Feisal, happened to be my guest and he expressed great interest in the proposed text-book. He mentioned to me the fact that the Educational Department in Baghdad has for some time been anxious to see some such book published with a view to its use in their schools. There is no doubt that the American University of Beirut, together with the many high schools in Lebanon, Syria and Palestine which follow its program of studies, will adopt the book.⁶⁵ Although Hitti’s interest was to address Arabic readerships, he followed Gibran by writing his *History* in English, professing his aim of publishing *History* in Arabic only a year later.⁶⁶

In a banquet in New York City taking place on January 5, 1929, six years after the publication of *The Prophet*, and on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the publication of Gibran’s first poems, Hitti honored Gibran personally, delivering a speech in English in front of the poet:

⁶⁴Box 15, FF 10

⁶⁵ letter dated May 20, 1997, Box 15, FF10

⁶⁶Box 15, FF 10

The influence which Gibran exercises in modern Arabic literature can be measured, in a way, not only by the multitude of people who have been benefitted by reading him but also by the big crop of would-be Gibrans, quasi-Gibrans, and Gibran imitators who have in recent years, mushroom-like, sprung up and flourished all over the Arabic speaking world. So much so that you can hardly nowadays pick up an Arabic paper printed in Beirut, Cairo, Baghdad, Sao Paulo, or Buenos Aires without finding somebody consciously trying to write Gibran-like.

Gibran's correspondences with the Hitti family preceded the publication of *The Prophet*, although by Hitti's speech to Gibran in 1929, both men had achieved some form of international acclaim—Gibran with *The Prophet*, and Hitti as faculty at Princeton.⁶⁷

Gibran's fame would only further grow following the utterance of these words, but Hitti's statement in 1929 gives clear indication of Gibran's influence in Arabic letters by the Depression, well before the poet's star had reached its zenith. Esteemed throughout the centers of Arabic literary production—cultural capitals not only in Beirut, Cairo, and Baghdad, but also in New York, Sao Paulo, and Buenos Aires—Gibran also generated imitators, itself evidencing his influence. His popularity amongst American audiences also made him a source of pride for the 'Syrians,' the New World Arabic-speaking minority plagued by both external prejudices and often by a lack of community consciousness owing to the identity fragmentation in the Arabic-speaking Levant. Hitti's speech to Gibran ends with:

As your fellow countrymen, we rejoice and pride ourselves tonight, and justly so, over your past achievements, both literary and artistic; and we hope and pray that the future will have greater and more numerous things in store for the honor of yourself and for the glory of the Syrian name which we jointly bear.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Jean Gibran and Kahlil Gibran, *Kahlil Gibran His Life and World*, 1974, pg. 387; Gibran corresponds with Hitti's family in 1922

⁶⁸ See "Gibran's Place and Influence in Modern Arabic Literature," 1929, II, 8: 30-32

Gibran's rise ultimately did not stop prejudices against the 'Syrians,' although it inspired other 'Syrian' cultural role-models, amongst them Hitti.

The second celebrity native Arabic-speaker whose imprint on Hitti was formative and formidable was the poet and writer Ameen Rihani, also a correspondent of Gibran's who preceded Gibran's arrival to the US by seven years. Born in the village of Freike, Mount Lebanon in 1876, a mere one hundred years following American independence, an eleven-year-old Rihani was an earlier arrival to the country than Gibran. In the US, Rihani would pioneer Arabic literature as well as English literature written by an Arabic-speaker ('Arab-American literature'), experimenting with a range of literary genres that included plays, newspaper columns, philosophy, novels, essays, history and poetry, often in both languages. Enjoying a fame in his own lifetime rivaling that of Gibran, Rihani was translated into eight languages before his death —more than any native living Arabic-speaker up to that time. (Gibran would achieve translation into more than forty languages, although this was a posthumous accomplishment). In his lifetime, Rihani authored some twenty-nine volumes in English and twenty-six books in Arabic, not including his hundreds of articles republished worldwide.⁶⁹

Rihani's rebelliousness predated and even exceeded Gibran's, for Rihani did not restrict himself to linguistic transgressions, but touched on even more sensitive cultural nerves. Rihani's open critique of religious establishments led to his excommunication from his own Maronite Church. In 1903, and at age 26, he published from New York his *al-muhālifat al-thlāthiāt fī al-mamlakat al-haiwānīat* ('A triple alliance in the animal

⁶⁹ See <http://www.ameenrihani.org/>, accessed September 1, 2014

kingdom'), an allegorical critique in the literary tradition of Aesop's fables which used a fox to show what he saw were the failures of religious establishments. Rihani's book was burned by clerics in Lebanon, but he continued undeterred. The following year, he published from New York the similarly allegorical *al-mukārī wa al-kāhin* ('The Muleteer and the Priest,') which articulated a new set of criticisms against religious establishments of all faiths.

The turning point for Rihani came in 1910, with the publication of his Arabic-language *Ar-Rihaniyat* ('The Rihani's'), a collection of essays providing both a window on his life in the US and his pride in the Arab heritage. Pioneering the essay-form in Arabic letters, these Arabic essays ranged from "From the Brooklyn Bridge," to "The Spirit of the Age," and "The Spirit of Language" and would secure nine printings by publishers in the Middle East alone (1910, original, 1922, 1942, 1950, 1956, 1963, 1968, 1978, 1982, 1987). "[This] poor man [Rihani]... has two spirits, one of birth and one of emigration," Rihani wrote in *Ar-Rihaniyat*, acknowledging his position as not simply as an Arabic writer but an international writer drawing from both heritages and injecting into Arabic his experience abroad.⁷⁰

Rihani simultaneously self-fashioned himself as an 'Oriental' representative for Western audiences, a role Hitti would subsequently assume. "I truly believe in an Arabian renaissance—the revival of Arabian civilization and glory," Rihani stated to the *New York Times* in a 1910 interview about the flowering of Arabic letters or *Nahda*.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Al-Rihani, Ameen, Excerpts from *Ar-Rihaniyat*, Notre Dame University Press-Louaize, 1998, pg. 54

⁷¹ "Syrian Poet's Muse in his Red Beads"

One year after the publication of *Ar-Rihaniyat*, Rihani published the English-language *The Book of Khalid* (1911), with illustrations by Gibran, a work that would have mediocre success in English, although one that further evidenced the transnational influences on his thinking. The English-language novel, considered the first Arab-American novel written in English, was not translated into Arabic for the next seventy-five years, probably on account of its lack of notable sales in English, although it reflected an intellectual hybridity of cultural influences evident in Rihani's other works. Set in Lebanon, New York, and Egypt, *The Book of Khalid* was an immigrant story narrating the life of two boys, Khalid and Shakib, who migrated together from Lebanon to the United States, where they became street-peddlers before returning to Lebanon. Offering contemplations on the differences between 'East' and 'West,' the novel is a unique reflection of Rihani: Written in English, the book begins with a chapter entitled "Al-Fatiha" or "the Opening," presumably following the *Suratu Al-Fatiha* ("The Opening") of the *Qur'an*. In the first page alone, the narrator alludes to Allah, the *Qur'an*, Karl Marx, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and Ibsen, revealing the international influences on Rihani's thinking.⁷² As the book was a product of two cultures, so was Rihani.

By the time Rihani visited Egypt in 1922, one year before the publication of Gibran's *The Prophet*, his reputation had not only restabilized, but skyrocketed. Although Rihani was not Egyptian, major newspapers in Cairo converged to witness his arrival,

New York Times, Sep 4, 1910; pg. 5

⁷² Rihani, Ameen, *Book of Khalid*, Brooklyn, N.Y. : Melville House Pub., c2012, unpagged (Rihani decided to exclude page-numbers)

and to celebrate the patron saint of the *Nahda*. In Egypt, “Ustez (Maitre) Rihani as the Egyptians say, is on every tongue...” noted the *Times* correspondent S.S. Sarkis, Editor of *Sarkis Magazine* of Cairo, in a two thousand word article. This overwhelming response to the visit of an American citizen of ‘Syrian’ descent, who had been naturalized in 1901, reverberated in the American press thousands of miles away, as the *Times* continued:

The tramcars to the Pyramids changed their schedules for the occasion and the taxi drivers marked it a red-letter day. People from distant lands and different nations attended. It was a blending of colors and fashions from Longchamps and the Mousky. Ladies in the latest Paris frocks rubbed elbows with ladies from the harem in white filmy veils; men in swallowtails strolled on the sands with grand sheiks in trailing silk robes; Europeans in gold habit and Egyptians in jullabiahs pressed against each other in the jam, and Arabs in gorgeous colors were serving tea to pashas and hanems and society buds. It was East and West again meeting in the most inspiring and the most auspicious atmosphere.

Rihani’s arrival brought Cairo “joy, such as the Sphinx seldom sees.” According to the *Times*, the only native Arabic-speaker who at that time could compare to Rihani in fame was Sa’ad Zaghlul, the ‘national leader’ of Egypt who would become prime minister in 1924, before being expelled from the country on account of his anti-British politics.

Besides the Arabic and foreign newspapers writing about Rihani, the Cairo publishing house *Al Hillel* even printed a separate literary work dedicated to the forty-six year-old Rihani, the 1922 *Amīn al-Rīḥānī: nāshir falsafat al-Sharq fī bilād al-Gharb : tārikh ḥayātihī, ḥafalāt takrīmihī fī Miṣr, mukhtārāt min manthūrihi wa-manzūmih* (‘Amin Al-Rihani: The Producer of Eastern philosophy in the Western countries: The History of His Life, His Banquet in Egypt, and A Selection of his Output). Before his death in 1940, Rihani was “the leading authority on Arab affairs throughout the whole Arab world and

in the West,” as one contemporary scholar recently noted—a surprising position of prestige for a naturalized American.⁷³ In 1980, four decades after Rihani’s death, his fame still evoked pride in the Arabic-speaking lands. The Egyptian intellectual Zaki Najib Mahmoud (1905-1993), Egypt’s cultural attaché in Washington and a notable cultural commentator in his own right, publically compared Rihani’s place in Arabic letters to Thoreau’s significance in American letters.⁷⁴ Not surprisingly, in his *History of the Arabs*, Hitti cited Rihani, the man “who interviewed all the kings of the peninsula.”⁷⁵

On Rihani’s arrival to New York City in 1929, Hitti offered a salute to his compatriot which acknowledged Rihani’s inspiration on him. Three months following his speech to Gibran, Hitti’s speech to Rihani is notable in retrospect partly on account of its opening line: “Of all the lands comparable to Arabia in size, and of all the peoples approaching the Arabs in historical interest and importance, no land and no people have perhaps received so little attention in modern times as have Arabia and the Arabs.”⁷⁶ The opening would also begin Hitti’s *History*, published eight years later.

⁷³ Hajjar, Nijmey, *The Politics and Poetics of Ameen Rihani: the Humanist Ideology of an Arabi-American Intellectual and Activist*, 2010, pg 13.

⁷⁴ "Ameen Rihani was to the Arab nation what Tagore was to the Indians, and what Emerson and Thoreau were to the United States of America." Zaki Najib Mahmoud, 1980, <http://98.139.21.31/search/srptcache?ei=UTF-8&p=Zaki+Najib+Mahmoud++Ameen+Rihani&fr=yfp-t-302&fp=1&u=http://cc.bingj.com/cache.aspx?q=Zaki+Najib+Mahmoud+Ameen+Rihani&d=4923103278148329&mkt=en-US&setlang=en-US&w=bomjPoc65bi-xOZ6uuIvWWAWnoGJaQOG&icp=1&.intl=us&sig=F.bEJrIdLAYtrL5bcrN2eA-->, accessed September 1, 2014

⁷⁵ *History of the Arabs*, pg 7

⁷⁶ Hitti, Philip “Rihani’s Contribution to Arabic Lore,” Apr. 1929, III, 10: 15-18, both in *The Syrian World*

In his 1929 speech to Rihani, Hitti praised the literary rebel as a role-model for ‘Syrians,’ stressing Rihani’s place as a champion of marginalized knowledge about a marginalized people:

We have come together tonight to do honor to a fellow countryman, who, through his travels, studies and writings—in both English and Arabic—has contributed to our knowledge of Arabia as a land, of the Arabs as a people, of Arabic as a language and of Islam as a religion. Mr. Rihani has pushed the wall a little back between the known and the unknown. His writings on ibn—al-Su’ud [founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia] and Najd are particularly illuminating. His name will probably be associated with the subject for many years to come. But above all, he will be remembered as one who did his share towards effecting a better understanding among the heterogeneous peoples who constitute the Arabic-speaking world. May others follow in his steps!⁷⁷

Whereas Gibran confined his literary endeavors to poetry, Rihani experimented with a much wider literary repertoire, even including travelogue literature. A number of Western Orientalists had visited and written about the Arabian Peninsula. Still, detailed writing about the ancestral homeland of the Arabs and of Islam apart from the religious sites were lacking, even in Arabic. Rihani would thus become an early ambassador of the Arabs and the Arabian Peninsula, at a time when the Peninsula was unifying into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1932), a consolidation that had been three decades in the making. “[It] is our excellent fortune to share the vision of the Oriental himself,” the *New York Times* printed in its review of 1928 *Maker of Modern Arabia*, a work about the new ruler of this entity, King Abdulaziz, sometimes known as Ibn Saud, and a book that established an Arabic-speaker presenting these lands.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ “Two Glimpses of Modern Arabia Through Eastern Eyes: Ameen Rihani”
By P.W. WILSON. May 13, 1928; pg. 58

In reimagining the desert Arabs to both Arabic-speakers and Westerners alike, Rihani was the ‘Oriental’ who succeeded in representing other ‘Orientals’ in both Western and Eastern languages, a role which contrasted with other representations of the East undertaken by Westerners. Rihani’s works included his *Ibn Sa’oud of Arabia* (1928), the *Maker of Modern Arabia* (1928), the *Around the Coasts of Arabia* (1930), *Arabian Peak and Desert* (1930) and their Arabic corollaries. Such books shared knowledge about the Peninsula and its peoples, addressing a desert population often stigmatized even by urbanized Arabic-speakers in cities like Cairo or Damascus. By writing sympathetically of the desert ‘Arabs,’ Rihani helped transform the ‘Arab’ designation into a more positive association.⁷⁹ Rihani was not alone in challenging prejudices against the desert Arabs; the literary surge known as the *Nahda* showcased other examples of Arabic writers and the new intellectual investment in the Arabs, although Rihani was unique in traveling to the Peninsula and documenting the cultures there during that nation’s rise. Without institutional support and financial fortune other than his family’s meager wealth, Rihani raised a new appreciation of the Arabs and their historical and social heritage, a consciousness Hitti would further propel and popularize from the pantheon that was Princeton.

⁷⁹ Khārij al-ḥarīm (1922), Mulūk al-‘Arab, aw, Riḥlah fī al-bilād al-‘Arabīyah (1926, 1929), Qalb Lubnān : riḥlāt ṣaghīrah fī jibālīnā 193-? (‘The Heart of Lebanon: A Small Journey Through Our Mountain’), Ta’rīh najd al-hadīth wa mulkahātihi (1928) al-Nakabāt, aw Khulāṣat tārikh Sūriyah mundhu al-‘ahd al-awwal ba‘da al-ṭūfān ilá ‘ahd al-jumhūrīyah bi-Lubnān (The Disasters, or (1928)

The arrival of Gibran and Rihani to the US preceded Hitti by more than fifteen years, and both became representatives of the larger community of Levantines in the US. Hitti would not only join them as leaders of this community; he would become a principle chronicler of its collective existence. More than simply a historian of the Middle East, Hitti produced nineteen works about Arabic-speakers in the Americas, even launching the field of Arab-American Studies with his 1924 *The Syrians in America*, a book that predated other scholarship in the field by forty years.⁸⁰ Distinguishing Hitti from all other Arabic-speaking intellectuals in the first half of the 20th century was both his institutional distinction as faculty at Princeton and his inclination to transcend Princeton, marked by his travels to places beyond that university. In the first half of the 20th century, transnational travel amongst Arabic-speakers was very rare, other than for persons relocating countries. Other than Arabic-speakers living in South America, for example, no major Arabic-speaking intellectual from the Middle East ever paid Brazil a visit other than Hitti—an initiative replicated with visits to more countries than any other Arabic-speaking intellectual before him. Hitti's place as an educational pioneer of Arabic and Islamic history led him to a range of countries. Hitti not only visited countries in Europe but also every country in the Arabic-speaking Middle East, as well as Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, Canada, Venezuela, and Brazil—with most or all of these countries, including Brazil, visiting at least twice. Perhaps the clearest indication of his hyper-

⁸⁰ Winder, Bayly, "Philip K. Hitti (1886-1978): An Homage," *Spectrum Magazine*, Immigration History Research Center-University of Minnesota, Vol 4, No. 3, Winter/Spring 1984, pg 2; Winder's calculation is that Hitti wrote 19 works on the community, although he does not list how he approximated this calculation

internationalism was his self-positioning as faculty at both Princeton and the University of Sao Paulo, as his book-jackets indicated.⁸¹

He had arrived to the US during the ‘golden age of Levantine migration’ (1870-1930), during a migration window which saw roughly one hundred and sixty thousand Levantines enter the country—amongst them Gibran and Rihani.⁸²

Table 1: Estimated population of Syrio-Lebanese Outside the Levant before 1926,
source: Kobei Hashimoto, “Lebanese Population Movement 1920-1939: Towards a Study,” in Hourani and Shehadi’s *The Lebanese in the World*, pg 105

Country of presence	Levantines in the Country
USA	165,000
Brazil	162,000
Argentina	148,000
Egypt	30,000
Canada	23,000
Mexico	16,500
Cuba	16,000
Australia	14,500
France	14,500
Chile	6,000
French Colonies (Africa)	6,000
Uruguay	4,000
Columbia	3,767
Venezuela	3,288
Paraguay	2,200
Turkey	1,728
Dominican Republic	1,582
Guatemala	1,070
Ecuador	1,066
New Zealand	951
Haiti	749
Palestine	733
Bolivia	640
West Africa	396

⁸¹ Hitti, Philip, *Islam and the West, A Historical Cultural Survey* Princeton, NJ, Van Nostrand, 1962

⁸² See Hourani, Albert, *The Lebanese in the World*, Centre for Lebanese Studies (Great Britain), 1992, p 105

Hitti was part of a much wider community of Arabic-speakers who kept in touch with other communities through a globally-circulating immigrant press, which became a lifeline of information for Arabic-speakers who more than often did not know the host language upon their arrivals in the New World. Before the US's Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, which exacerbated limits on immigration to the US, the country had been the most popular destination for Levantines. Despite the limits of this 1924 act, which made the US a more difficult country to enter, the rest of the hemisphere continued serving as a prime destination for Levantines. Only the Depression brought the era of migration to the hemisphere to an effective close, curtailing mass migration to the New World at least until the end of WWII. About a million Levantines entered the Americas between 1870 and 1930. This demographic transfer constituted the first mass migration of Arabic-speakers to the hemisphere. Being the first human bridge between the New World and the Middle East, Levantines in the Americas often acted as intellectual intermediaries between their home and host geographies, as the examples of Gibran, Rihani and Hitti show.⁸³

If the Depression sealed the era of New-World-bound mass demographic transfers, the steamship launched this new age of transatlantic travel, which relocated more than simply Levantines, and blurred the borders not only of the Americas. The popularization of the steamship signaled the age of transatlantic travel, an age that did more than simply alter travel ability, but opened up new intellectual horizons, as the new

⁸³ Other Middle Eastern groups preceded Levantines in migrating to the New World: the 'Amazonian Jews,' for example, came from Morocco starting at about 1810, establishing Essel Avaham, the first synagogue there by 1824. Still, the primary language of these Jews was Hebrew, Ladino and Haketia, not Arabic

ambitions of departing peoples showed. Previously an expensive and dangerous pursuit, trans-national transportation suddenly became a feasible undertaking, facilitating the search for a better life abroad. Previous wind-powered sailboats restricted sea-travel mostly to those with wealth, the desperately in-need, or the coerced. Transportation had thus been a difficult affair. “A sea voyage... is a sort of Purgatory under the best of circumstances,” wrote a certain William Young of Halifax, Nova Scotia of the sailing ship in 1839, on which traveling from Britain to Boston took an average of 45 days. Young and his fellow passengers enjoyed the privilege of travelling first class. “And yet, from a sea voyage, Good Lord deliver me.”⁸⁴

Although steamships predated the American Civil War (1861-1865), only following this conflict did they popularize as a common mode of crossing oceans. Like the railroads, which shared the same steam technology that became the symbol of industrialization, the steamship reduced travel expenses and left wider space for cargo and passengers. The result was that the “floating palaces” of the sea regularly cost less than one tenth the fare of sailing ships travelling an equal distance. Steamships also took far less time to reach their destinations. Before the American Civil War, sail-ships often took more than a month to cross the Atlantic. Steamships by 1870 could cross the Atlantic in just over seven days.⁸⁵ Carrying well over a thousand people, these modern transportation vehicles far outnumbered the carrying capacity of sail ships carrying a company of merely a few hundred passengers. With electric lights and toilets, a water

⁸⁴ 275 Fox, Stephen, *Transatlantic: Samuel Cunard, Isambard Brunel, and the great Atlantic Steamships*, New York, NY : HarperCollins, 2003, pg 275, 7

⁸⁵ 282, 272

supply, sewage, and restaurants—steamships resembled whole villages in the Levant travelling on water, steaming across the ocean. The ultimate symbol of modernity, steamships bridged once far distanced lands, and for they also bridged the future.

“It is rather safer to be in [the] vessel than on shore,” the American writer Samuel Clemens, otherwise known as Mark Twain, noted in 1872 upon travelling from Liverpool to the US, some forty years before the Titanic disaster put a cloud in the steamship image.⁸⁶ Though the steamships were in reality not without their dangers, they at least appeared safer than before. Sea travel, for the first time, had come within reach of entirely new classes of peoples.

Only a relatively small portion of those in the Middle East directly experienced this transport. The demand for steamship passage amongst Middle Easterners was tepid, at least until the mid-20th century. Yet Mount Lebanon represented the exception. On the mountain-range and its neighboring environs, the great frenzy for sea travel spread quickly, as did the appetite to visit the New World, an inclination tracing to the Christian majority in the New World as in Mount Lebanon. An estimated one-third of the inhabitants of the region departed during this Golden Age of migration. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, only the Irish manifested a comparably dramatic outflow of people relative to overall regional population, a resemblance which manifests in the description of expatriated Levantines as the “Irish of the East.”⁸⁷ Mass migration of Arabic-speakers to lands outside of the Middle East in general followed WWII, although Levantine mass

⁸⁶ Fox, Stephen, *Transatlantic: Samuel Cunard, Isambard Brunel, and the great Atlantic Steamships*, New York, NY : HarperCollins, 2003, pg 275

⁸⁷ Box 33, FF 2

migration prefaced general Middle Eastern migration. The Levant's uncommonly large Christian population, as well as the missionary presence in the area, made Christian Levantines more amenable to traveling to other Christian lands. Roughly 90 percent of the Levantine migration was Christian.⁸⁸

In general terms, Irish migration preceded Levantine migration and far outweighed the latter numerically.⁸⁹ Catapulting following the Great Famines of 1845-1852, the Irish departures included about three million Irish who left the island following the famine and before the start of the new century. The departures meant that by 1900, about forty percent of Ireland-born people were outside of Ireland. Although emigration from Ireland peaked directly following the famine, a more moderate migration from Ireland to the Americas manifested even a century before the onset of the famine, leading more than a million Irish to depart Ireland even before any signs of a famine. Proportional to residents of the country, Irish migration was the most dramatic of the 19th century.

In contrast, Levantine migration developed entirely in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and catalyzed owing to less dire circumstances. Economic opportunity, religious freedoms and evasion of conscription into the Ottoman army all figure in the written narratives of Christians who departed the Levant, while the fear of imminent death is not a notable theme as it is in the Irish migration following the Great Famine. The 1860 Civil War in the Levant left between ten to thirty thousand dead; while this

⁸⁸ For religious break-down of migrants, see *Lebanese in the World*, pg-83-84

⁸⁹ From 1840 to 1900, about three million Irish left Ireland, see Zimmermann, Klaus, *European Migration : What Do We Know?*, Centre for Economic Policy Research (Great Britain), 2005, pg 89

amounts to a substantial catastrophe, no doubt leaving a dark cloud over many villages in the Levant, the mortality figure is far lower than the death-toll of more than a million in the Irish famine. Financial aid arriving to Ireland from abroad to address the starvation often went to financing Irish emigration, much of it undertaken on sail ships before shifting to steamships.⁹⁰

“A country with inhospitable soil, as is the case with Lebanon, with a scarcity of mineral wealth, and with no industrial development is always threatened with over-population,” Hitti wrote about the impetus driving Levantine migration, which he established as chiefly economic. Mount Lebanon is so small that a “temporary drought or occasional failure of crops is enough to force the surplus to seek elbow room in other than its lands,” Hitti continued, citing the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 as sidetracking traffic from Greater Syria, and as spurring the migration, as were blights on silk-crop in the region in the 1870s, crippling the silk-based economy.⁹¹

The proliferation of foreign missionaries in the Levant also brought new worlds to the region before Levantines entered the New World. “While I was at school,” noted the Greek-Orthodox priest from Lebanon, Abraham Rihbany, who attended the American school at Suq al-Gharb as did Hitti, “I heard much about America. I studied its geography, heard of its liberator, Washington.” In *The Syrians in America*, Hitti reprinted these words, first written by Rihbany, adding his own interpretation about the new missionary influence affecting native populaces: “English speaking teachers and preachers never did

⁹⁰ Ibid, pgs. 89-110

⁹¹ Hitti, Philip, *The Syrians in America*, 1924, pg. 48-51

encourage, but always discouraged, departure from the country, but by teaching English and acquainting the people with the geography, history, and methods of life in the United States, they made it easier for them to come here.”⁹² American missionaries introduced new learning that inevitably attracted Levantines America-ward.

American missionary education in the Levant diverged from education in the continental US during the first years of the century. Industrialization in the US required a uniquely educated work-force, and the trend of education in the continental US following the Civil War liberalized, incorporating new subjects that diverged from the Greek-Bible-and-mathematics educational axis of before, subjects like economics, wood-crafting, and sewing, which could feed a growing workforce. In the early 20th century, American schools on all levels gradually cast off Church connections, or at least Church domination, giving way to a more ‘progressive education,’ incidentally championed by Hitti’s teacher at Columbia, Professor John Dewey, who became the symbol of the growth of American education in the early 20th century. In contrast, missionary schools in the Levant were highly focused on proselytizing. Although they accepted all denominations, “Most, if not all, of the missionaries’ effort and activity in Syria has been thus far directed to winning converts from the old oriental Christian churches,” as Hitti himself wrote around 1920. Still, missionary schools brought a hidden curriculum to the Levant. The mere presence of foreign-run schools inherently congregated new peoples, dislodged social structures and opened the way for further Western influence—a consequence that even the missionaries did not anticipate. Missionary education raised a new reference for

⁹² Hitti, Philip, *The Syrians in America*, 1924, pgs 54-55

a range of populations in Mount Lebanon, undermining the control of the old clerical establishments which had formerly dominated social life in the vicinity. Missionaries introduced new ways of life that they did not realize, and that Hitti's parents had never known.⁹³

Missionaries thus unwittingly facilitated the Levantine departures. The American missionaries began arriving in the 1820s, and by 1914, operated 675 schools in the region on all levels, with over 34,000 pupils.⁹⁴ The establishment in 1866 of the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut was considered the prized accomplishment for the American missionaries. From its inception, the college that became Hitti's alma mater welcomed Christian-Maronites like Hitti, none of whom the school succeeded in converting to Protestantism before dropping its evangelical orientation, adopting a secular identity, and renaming itself the American University of Beirut in 1920, finally giving way to the trend of secularization of education evident in the US.

Corresponding with the American influx of missionaries into the Levant, European and Russian missionaries increased their numbers in the region in the 19th century as well, thus importing a range of new foreign influences into the Christian-dominated geography. The officially Muslim Ottoman Empire did not discourage missionaries in the Christian-dominated Levant, so long as the missionaries did not

⁹³ Box 30, FF 11, "Words For Calm Reflection"

⁹⁴ Fruma Zachs, "Toward a Proto-Nationalist Concept of Syria? Revisiting the American Presbyterian Missionaries in the Nineteenth-Century Levant " in *Die Welt des Islams*, New Series, Vol. 41, Issue 2 (Jul., 2001), pp. 145-173

convert Muslims. In the 19th and 20th century, thousands of new missionary schools thus arose in the Levant. These new missionary establishments attracted Armenians, Christians, Druze, and subsequently Muslims and Jews from different locals and religious orientations; by 1908-1909, when Hitti first began to teach at the institution, the school claimed 876 students, including 128 Muslims and 88 Jews.⁹⁵ Missionaries taught new subjects, increased literacy, and helped to create a new class of people who were intermediaries in both Western and Eastern cultures, many of whom would in time find employment outside the Levant. In contrast to other Middle Eastern countries, where Muslims dominated and where missionary activity was subsequently restricted, missionaries in the Levant distinguished the vicinity culturally and intellectually, injecting Western influences into the region, even before Levantines travelled West-ward. Missionary institution produced what the first British Viceroy of Egypt, Lord Cromer, called “the intellectual cream of the Near East.”⁹⁶

Other lone arrivals in the Levant also spirited the mass Levantine departures. In 1876, for example, the Emperor of Brazil, Don Pedro II, visited Beirut, a milestone that helped launch Levantine migration to Brazil. The Catholic emperor—who studied and spoke Arabic as well as twelve other languages in addition to his own native Portuguese—visited Beirut’s Syrian Protestant College, where he gave a lecture about Brazil. In attendance was a student named Nemi Jafet (1860-1923), who would follow the emperor to Brazil a few years later, alongside four brothers and one sister,

⁹⁵ Anderson, Betty, *American University of Beirut, Arab Nationalism and Liberal Education*, pg 85

⁹⁶ *Modern Egypt*, Vol. II, p 218

establishing in Brazil what would become one of the richest families in the country, with a number of streets and avenues named after that household. Nemi Jafet's son, Ricardo, would also play a memorable role in Brazilian history, becoming the leading personal financier of Getulio Vargas's presidential campaign in 1950. As President of Brazil, Vargas would go on to name Ricardo Jafet as President of the Bank of Brazil in 1951.⁹⁷

The successful abolition of slavery across the Western hemisphere, beginning with Haiti (1804) and ending with Brazil (1888) raised the demand for a steady supply of workers who would both replace slave-power and aide in the hemisphere's industrialization. The bulk of New World arrivals were from Europe, where the advances of industrialization were displacing millions of laborers from traditional trades, and leaving them with grim prospects for employment. The case of the Scotland-born industrialist Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919), who immigrated to America in 1847, illustrated the attraction of the New World in general and the US in particular. Carnegie became a steel tycoon and the richest man in the world by the late 19th century, and one of the most famous philanthropists of his time. Carnegie's arrival in the US at age 12, owed to his father's need for a job, after technical advancements with mechanical looms rendered obsolete his former craft as a handloom weaver. While industrialization led to a labor surplus in Europe, the opposite trend manifested in the Americas, where emerging industries and relatively scant labor markets generated demand for immigrants. Carnegie epitomized the 'rags to riches' story, a seeming-fantasy symbolizing the potentials of the new age, a narrative that spread around the world, drumming up interest amongst the

⁹⁷ Khatlab, Roberto, *Mahjar, Saga Libanesa no Brasil*, Zalka, Libano : Mokhtarat, 2002

downtrodden, and attracting even larger numbers to the hemisphere. Between 1870 and 1930, of roughly fifty million entering the Americas in general, thirty million settled in the US. More would have entered the US, had immigration restrictions not stopped them; more would have entered the New World in general, had the Depression not generated New World migration blocks, directing a growing number of departing Levantines Africa-ward.⁹⁸

Figures for the number of Levantines in the Americas during arriving between 1870 and 1930 vary, due both to return migration to the Levant and the status of Levantines as Ottoman subjects before the dissolution of that Empire in 1918. Still, Hitti himself calculated that 200,000 Levantines entered the US before the Depression, and other sources approximate that 150,000 entered Brazil and Argentina during these years respectively.⁹⁹ While Levantines also migrated to Europe, Australia, Asia and Africa in the pre-Depression period, available figures leave no doubt that the overwhelming majority of Arabic-speaking migration during before 1930 was to the Americas, with the US, Brazil and Argentina being the leading destinations. The New World became the standard direction for Levantines leaving their lands, and the Americas thus represented a new hemisphere of Arabic-speaking existences.

Before the Depression, other Arabic-speaking departures to foreign lands were relatively limited: Approximately 15,000 Levantines were present in France on the eve of the Depression, a figure possibly representing populations in transit. Australia's 15,000-

⁹⁸ For migration directions of Levantines, see Wilkie, Mary, *The Lebanese in Montevideo, Uruguay : a study of an entrepreneurial ethnic minority*, University of Wisconsin, dissertation 1973

⁹⁹ Hitti, Phili, *The Syrians in America*, 1924, pg 65; also Rihani, Albert, *The Lebanese in the World*, pgs.

strong Levantine community by the Depression represents a tenth of the size of Levantine populations recorded in Brazil or Argentina by the start of the Depression. The roughly 30,000 Levantines in Egypt by that time is the highest concentration of Levantines in any country world-wide, excluding the Americas and the Levant. Arabic-speaking migration to West and South Africa, though progressing since the late 19th century, only reached comparably significant numbers following the Depression.¹⁰⁰ In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Arabic-speaking students, mostly from Egypt, reached Europe, although this predominantly educational-oriented migration was numerically miniscule and temporary. Before the Depression, Levantines in the New World were the most obvious expatriated Arabic-speakers on the world stage. To address Arabic-speaking migration before 1930 is most likely to address Levantines in the New World.

Mass migration of Arabic-speakers did not end with Levantine migration. On the contrary, Levantine mass migration only inaugurated Arabic-speaking migration, which dramatically increased after the Depression. In the post-Depression years, for example, migration from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia to France alone, exceeded five million people, dwarfing the earlier Levantine migration to the Americas in general. Following WWII, Arabic-speakers from throughout the Middle East migrated to countries throughout the world. Because of its sheer proportions and the geographic range of its starting and ending points, the post-Depression migration is thus a much more complicated and elusive demographic transfer than the earlier Levantine migration concentrated in the New World. Post-Depression mass migration established Arabic-

¹⁰⁰ Hourani, *The Lebanese in the World*, see 105

speaking communities in every country on earth, integrating substantially more people of the Middle East with the rest of the world, and raising bridges between every corner in the Middle East and every country in the world. The presence of Levantines in the New World before the Depression is thus modest in the overall scheme of Arabic-speaking migration. Still, even in its relative modesty, the Levantine migration illustrated early links between peoples and geographies, connections and intermediations which Hitti exemplified and illuminated. The bridges naturally forming between the Americas and the Middle East defied borders and distances, although scholarship has yet to recognize such interactions.

Standard histories about the Middle East fail to mention even a single name of an Arabic-speaker living in the Americas, and often omit any mention of even the existence of Arabic-speakers outside that region, forwarding instead the image of an isolated and independent Middle East, separated even from Arabic-speakers who defied this separation. Dominant scholarship has reinforced a Middle Eastern-confinement which ignores otherwise obvious interactions and influences on the region from beyond, as though an Iron Wall surrounded the Arabic-speaking lands, a barrier so standardized that it continues to evade identification. Even “Scholars [of Lebanon] appear barely to have noticed that a third of the people left the region [of Lebanon in particular],” as Lebanese historian and historian of Lebanon Akram Khater has noted in a 2001 book about the

Levantine migration.¹⁰¹ Though scholarship has shown occasional signs of acknowledging expatriated Arabic-speaking existences, as Khater's work evidences, the future of such recognition remains precarious and bleak; scholarship that continues to address the Middle East as a self-contained island will likely outweigh intermittent acknowledgements of Arabic-speakers beyond the standard Middle Eastern geography.

The orthodox textbook of Arab intellectual history, Albert Hourani's classic 1962 *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* exemplifies this Middle Eastern insularity. Republished in four editions in English and ten in Arabic, Hourani's text remains the most standard Arabic intellectual history to date.¹⁰² Although Hourani's text is neither the first nor the last work of Arabic intellectual history that ignores the Americas, it illustrates the orthodoxy of the geographic omission in the field, a gap still awaiting scholarly recognition. Hourani's text reflects the representation of the Middle East as a fundamentally closed geography with ties only to colonizing Europe. Originally appearing in English, Hourani's book remains standard reading in courses of Arab intellectual history. Hourani's work is "intellectual history at its best," noted one scholar in a 1997 review, a testament to the work's enduring indispensability.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ *Inventing Home : Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, 14.

¹⁰² English: 1962, 1983, 1970, 2007; Arabic: 1968, 1970, 1977, 1982, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1997, 2000, 2001,

¹⁰³ Quandt, William, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (Review), *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 5 (Sep. - Oct., 1997), p. 232

Yet Hourani passes over in complete silence any Arabic-speaker from the Americas, generating the mis-impression of New World silence in the modern history of the Middle East. Despite the appearance of over four hundreds Arabic-speaking intellectuals in the work, not a single Arabic-speaker in the New World appears. Critics of the work would have seemed keen to point out the hemispheric omission, although not even a book review has underscored what might otherwise appears obvious. Gibran, Rihani and Hitti rank as likely the most circulating writers in Arabic in the 20th century. To omit any one of them in a survey of Arabic-speaking intellectuals or in a history that passes itself as a survey of ‘Arab thought,’ would otherwise seem to perjure the record, or at least to evoke questions. Yet all three have been omitted in the standard work of intellectual history, without any notable academic objection.

Popular conceptions of a closed ‘Arab World’ illuminate the vulnerability of Arabic-speakers who reside outside this ‘Arab World.’ The mere phrase ‘the Arab World’ manifests the isolation at play. Such a title might otherwise elicit questions and critique if applied to other geographies. The population sizes of Europe, China and India, for example, all exceed the ‘Arab World,’ yet there is hardly ever mention of a ‘European World,’ a ‘Chinese World,’ or an ‘Indian World.’ Although these cognate terms are linguistically feasible, they enjoy no similar frequency or circulation, in popular or scholarly discourse. The ‘Arab World’ appears independent of other lands, even in scholarship; where the mediators linking the ‘Arab World’ to other lands raise questions about such disparate categories, these human intermediaries remain overwhelmingly mute, as though they never existed.

Within Hitti's own lifetime, tens of millions of Middle Easterners emigrated from the 'Arab World.' These migrations literally brought Middle Eastern history to every country of the world, and every country of the world to Middle Eastern history. Yet such cultural and intellectual mediators have yet to find any serious place in scholarship, and even in Arabic Studies—as Hitti's obscurity in contemporary scholarship suggests. Hitti was not only 'the most famous historian of the Arabs.' The range of sources in Arabic and Western languages claiming Hitti as such suggests that he was the obvious candidate for such a designation. Like Picasso in the history of modern art, or Einstein in the history of 20th century physics, Hitti was the Arab historian no one would deny or overlook. His orthodox was taken for granted. Perhaps the first question relating to his whereabouts in contemporary scholarship is the whereabouts of the wider community of expatriated Arabic-speakers with whom Hitti identified.

Even the *Titanic*, which left the United Kingdom in 1912, one year before Hitti left for New York, evidenced Arabic-speaking departures. At least seventy-six Levantines were present on the *Titanic*, out of 2,224 passengers—or three percent of the ship's company.¹⁰⁴ In the French port of Marseilles, which competed with Southampton as a transit point for Levantines seeking final destinations to the New World, the *Hotel de Syrie* provided furnished and unfurnished rooms, promising to facilitate safe-passage to such hotspots as the US, Brazil, and Argentina, the most popular destinations for Levantines departing the Middle East before the Depression.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴<http://www.themediaoasis.com/aaview/col04088.htm>

¹⁰⁵Khater, Akram, *Inventing Home*, pg. 55

American missionaries in the Levant observed the new outflows of Levantines to the Americas. In the 1890s, one American correspondent noted:

there are men, women and children from Zahle throughout the big cities of the New World... The chronicle of their experiences will write a curious chapter of the history of modern Syria. They have crossed the United States from North to South, they have travelled by land from Rio de Janeiro to Montreal and Quebec [sic], they have crossed the Pacific from island to island in small boats and many of them have circumnavigated the world by coming back via Jerusalem.¹⁰⁶

In 1920, the departures from Beirut gave no sign of abatement. Following the transfer of the Levant from Ottoman hands to French and British-control at the end of WWI, one correspondent in Beirut still observed the departures:

The stream of emigration to lands beyond the seas and the new World is continuous and unchecked. Every ship carries its full quota. The local government is contemplating plans for checking the tide by persuasion, but there seems to be little hope unless the means of livelihood through commerce, industry and agriculture are rendered abundant and unless public safety is assured. Otherwise, and at this rate, emigration shall prove a general disaster extinguishing the little that is left in the life of this country.¹⁰⁷

Far from simply signaling a mass departure from the Levant, the migration of Levantines to the Americas represented a new horizon for Arabic-speakers, as the 'New World' entered the consciousness even of Middle Easterners who had never left the region. The Levantine-American author and poet Mikhail Naimy arrived in the US in 1911 (after having spent time in Ukraine), became the Vice-President of the Gibran-led Pen League. Naimy called attention to the rise of the 'New World' as a news-source for Arabic-speakers:

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Clark Knowlton, "The Social and Spatial Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in Sao Paulo, Brazil," in *The Lebanese in the World*, ed. A. Hourani and N. Shehadi, p. 289.

¹⁰⁷ Hitti *Syrians in America*, 61

there was hardly a one who did not ask my father for detailed news of some relative in America: a mother asked about her son in Ecuador, a wife about her husband in Argentina...heedless of the distance between these lands and California, where my father had been. All but a few of these good people made no distinction between one part of the Americas and another. It was all one "Merica" to them. When they did distinguish, they referred to New York, meaning the United States, and Brazil, meaning the whole South America. Hence they fancied that someone in "New York" must know all his fellow-emigrants in the United States, and someone in "Brazil" must be in touch with all those throughout South and Central America¹⁰⁸

Contrary to the standard perimeters of Arab intellectual history, the New World emerged as a notable presence for Arabic-speakers by the first half of the 20th century, and Arabic-speakers emerged as a notable presence in the Americas, a visibility Gibran, Rihani and Hitti all personified.

The primary Middle Eastern population to depart its homelands before WWII, Levantines opened more than gateways between the New World and the Levant. "Our Lebanese and Syrian brothers in exile, have spread their influence across Egyptian literature," noted the Egyptian Muslim writer Mahmud Taymur around 1950, demonstrating that Levantine influence from the Americas transcended the geographic confines of the Levant. "I was fixated by the works of this school...it went beyond the boundaries of tradition," Taymur continued.¹⁰⁹

The narrative of the *Nahda*, or the "Awakening," commemorates the extraordinary flowering of Arabic cultural output from the late 19th to the early 20th century. Yet the Middle East was not the sole stage of the rise of Arabic letters. The

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Clark Knowlton, *Sirios e Libaneses*, pp. 29-30.

9. Michael Naimy, *A Lebanese Childhood* in Naimy, *A New Year* (Leiden, 1974), p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Imangulieva, Aida, *Gibran, Rihani & Naimy*, Oxford : Inner Farne Press, 2009, pg. 23

literary accomplishments of Levantines in the Americas represents a crowning chapter of creativity that would seem difficult to miss. Sources from the early 20th century corroborate the existence of powerful new Arabic influences emanating from the Americas, again suggesting Hitti's potency even before he plugged into the highly-amped electrical circuit that was Princeton. The Beirut-published eight volume *Muraja Mā nushira ba^cd al-harb al-^cudmā* ('A Post War Bibliography of the Near Eastern Mandates, 1919-1930,' printed in English and Arabic, explicitly states:

It is plain from the preceding tables that [the cities] where the inhabitants do not speak Arabic, have surpassed in the number of journals and magazines several capitals and famous cities in the heart of the Arabic speaking countries. This is due to the immigration of a large number of journalists and writers in the days of the Ottoman government to which they were subject. This government oppressed and persecuted the thinking and learned men of her country. She was afraid of their writing. The greatest credit is due to this journalistic renaissance to the educated men of Lebanon of whom hundreds of thousands migrated to all parts of the civilized world, especially America. These men carried with them Oriental civilization, commerce, and industry and also their love of the Arabic language which they honoured everywhere they went.¹¹⁰

According to this registry, by 1930, the US published 79 Arabic-language journals, Brazil published 95, and Argentina 58. In contrast, Palestine produced 82 periodicals, TransJordan 4, Algeria 28, and Morocco 14, respectively. These calculations suggest that Brazil produced more Arabic periodicals than any one of the cited Middle Eastern countries.¹¹¹ The presence of roughly 150,000 Levantines in Brazil by 1930 suggests that

¹¹⁰ *Muraja Mā nushira ba^cd al-harb al-^cudmā*, Beirut, 1933, (vol 1), pg 504; English edition: Furaiha,

Anis, *A post-war bibliography of the Near Eastern mandates*, Beirut : American Press, 1933

¹¹¹ Ibid.

the output of Arabic periodicals in Brazil was the highest in the world, relative to Arabic-speakers per country, although Brazilian Arabic writers continue to be denied any recognition or exposure in Western scholarship of Arabic Studies.

In the first decades of the 20th century, Arabic literary production originating in the Americas was remarkable both quantitatively and qualitatively in relation to the Middle Eastern output. The originally-1955 published Arabic anthology of Arabic-writers in the Americas *Adabuna Wa Udabauna fil Mahajir al Amerikiyya* [‘Our Literature and Literati in the American Diaspora’], for example, spotlights more than a hundred and eighty Arabic writers in the Americas—and it only includes poets.¹¹²

The poetic creativities of Gibran and Rihani figure in this catalogue, but Hitti has no place in it, since he was not a poet. The anthology thus spotlights only a segment of the literary activities of Arabic-speakers in the Americas. Tallying other New World Levantine accomplishments is both easy and difficult. It is easy because the contributions of Arabic-speakers in the Americas are so vast—in fields such as journalism, politics, business and history-writing. On the other hand, registering this vastness is also daunting precisely because the achievements of Arabic-speakers in the Americas were so expansive, naturally complicating the easy computation of their impact. The anthology’s profiles of a hundred and eighty Arabic personalities omits journalists, philosophers, playwrights, editors, historians, businessmen, dancers and musicians, and excludes those writers not publishing in Arabic.

¹¹² *Adabuna Wa Usabauna Fil Mahajir*, Dār al-‘Ilm lil-Malāyīn, 1964

Specialized scholarship has recognized at least a handful of Arabic poets in the Americas, but this recognition appears to merely underscore the deficit at hand. “A new chapter of the history of the Arabic language has opened its pages in the New World,” notes a 1966 scholarly article entitled “The Arabic Literature in America” about the developments of Arabic letters in the hemisphere, transcending the ‘America’ in the title. Written by the Hungarian Arabist Julius Germanus, this article was found amongst Hitti’s personal papers. It provides a scholar’s view of the intellectual environment enjoyed by Hitti and other Arabic-speakers in the New World, where they were able to enjoy liberties unknown in the colonized Middle East. Germanus acknowledges the literary dynamism of this New World Arabic presence: “It reminds us, in many aspects of the golden age of the Arabic spirituality in the 9th and 10th centuries in Baghdad and Spain.”¹¹³ Hitti’s arrival in the US in 1913 did not isolate him on the periphery, away from the rich currents of Arabic literary culture; on the contrary, it placed him in the vortex of such influence.

Germanus credits the unprecedented liberties Levantines found in the Americas with what he calls a new “golden age” of Arabic letters, a distinction which has yet to be acknowledged in scholarship but which suggests the new influences Arabic-speakers would inject into the Middle East: “The first thing that caught the attention of the immigrants was the apparent ruling equality in the New World... The immigrants were

¹¹³ Germanus, Julius, "The Arabic Literature in America," *The Islamic Literature*, February 1966

thrilled by the liberty which they enjoyed in the New World,” Germanus writes. The Americas produced “a valuable asset in world-literature. It produced not only bulky volumes and collections of poems (*diwan*), but exhibits, from the viewpoint of artistic value a respectable achievement of the Arab genius,” Germanus continues, acknowledging a range of Arabic writers on both continents in the hemisphere, with Gibran and Rihani being only two.¹¹⁴

Still, despite the recognition of select Arabic-speakers in the Americas in specialized scholarship, the vaster culture of Arabic-speakers in the hemisphere remains unclaimed and unrecognized. The vulnerability of Arabic-speakers in the Americas extends even to those who were once the most famous figures of this New World migration. Gibran has achieved enduring wide acclaim, partly owing to the fraternal, seemingly apolitical nature of his poetry which itself to application in various contexts. Yet *Adabuna*, the Buenos-Aires published anthology of Arabic poets in the Americas, devotes nineteen pages to Brazilian-Levantine Rashid Salim Khoury (1887-1984), a Muslim-convert from Catholicism only consumes one more page in the anthology than does Gibran, evidence of Khoury’s celebrity. The most spotlighted Levantine poet in the anthology, Khoury was one of the most widely distributed Arabic poets of the 20th century. Khoury was so renowned, in fact, that Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser even ventured to subsidize the poet’s livelihood. In a television show entitled *Rudud Al*

¹¹⁴ Ibid

Khubara ('The Response of the Experts') in Cairo circa 1955, Hitti also acknowledged Khoury, whom he met in Sao Paulo in 1925.¹¹⁵

Yet even Khoury is missing from Western scholarship in the field of Arabic Studies. The scholarly silence affecting expatriated Arabic-speakers is illuminating and instructive. The invisibility of the majority of even the 'obvious' writers, reflects blindspots which are conditioned. Western scholarship on Arabic Studies has produced rich lists of Arabic-speaking intellectuals, yet even towering Arabic figures from the US have managed to escape their notice. Given his once orthodox visibility in both Arabic and Western letters, how has Ameen Al Rihani—the 'Thoreau' of Arabic letters—not appeared in any Western-language anthology of Arabic-intellectuals for five decades? Within fifty years of Rihani's 1940 death, only one book focused on Rihani has been published in a Western language—the Beirut-printed 1978 *Where to Find Ameen Rihani*, written by Rihani's own brother, and incidentally a translation from Arabic.¹¹⁶ Despite Rihani's success in Western and Arabic letters during his own lifetime, Western scholars have consistently 'overlooked' Rihani. The absence of Rihani in Western scholarship of Arabic Studies reflects far more than the absence of an Arabic luminary.

Western scholarship especially has not only left the lives of expatriated Arabic-speaking luminaries unattended, but has even on occasion denied such creativities. One of the most cited scholars writing about Brazilian-Levantines, the American Clark Knowlton, has even asserted that "the interest in literature, poetry, and in the arts so

¹¹⁵ IHRC Box 33, Audio-Visual collection

¹¹⁶

characteristic of many Arab groups in the Middle East is not part of the culture of the Syrio-Lebanese colony in São Paulo.”¹¹⁷ Although Knowlton—who did not read Arabic—made that claim in 1955, for over fifty years, it still awaits challenge. Knowlton’s focus was not on Brazilian Arabic literary production, but on Levantine-Brazilian economic ascendance. Still, Knowlton’s scholarship reappears throughout the intervening decades in English and Portuguese, often representing Levantine-Brazilians in the leading anthologies of Arab Studies.¹¹⁸ The error is only partly his; Arabic scholars would seem primed to catch such a misrepresentation and counter it with a corrective to the historical record. Perhaps those who know otherwise have given up the protest.

Expatriated Arabic-speakers also often remain mute in New World literatures. Such writings in English, Spanish and Portuguese at times present native Arabic-speakers, but the characters remain functionally invisible. Their ostensible presence generally generates the false impression of visibility. A closer look reveals that these Arabic-speaking characters hardly speak at all; they are typically inexpressive. The poem “Os Turcos” [‘The Turks,’ 1962], for example, by the Brazilian modernist writer Carlos Drummond de Andrade, focuses on the ‘Turks,’ a common moniker for the ‘Syrians,’ who lived under Ottoman Turkish rule until 1918. The poem’s titular minority appears, although his voice is never heard. He is spoken about, but he does not speak, allowing

¹¹⁷ Clark S. Knowlton, ‘Spatial and Social Mobility of The Syrians and Lebanese in the City of São Paulo, Brazil’ (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1955), p.209. Published in Portuguese as *Sirios e Libaneses* (São Paulo: Editora Anhembi, 1960)

¹¹⁸ Knowlton’s work for example appears in Albert Hourani’s *Lebanese in the World* in an essay entitled “The Social and Spatial Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in Sao Paulo,” pg 285-213

others instead to define his own identity. The character of “Jorge” exists in one sense, yet is inexistent in another:

It is cheap! Cheap! Buy now!...
The encrypted language
in our world creates a world problem
like a knife thrust.
Who can understand the Turks?
my teacher corrects me: the Turks
are not Turks. They are oppressed Syrians by
the cruel Turks.
But here is Jorge the Turk attending by that name
And all the Turks are in this
portrait
Left forever ... ¹¹⁹

Is “Jorge” really his name? What would he say if asked about his origins? What would he reveal about his own whereabouts? Rather than engage with him and ask him questions, the narrator speaks about but does not allow Jorge to speak. The muteness of the ‘Turk’ in a poem entitled ‘the Turks’ suggests a wider invisibility than that of the visible Turk. Paradoxically, perhaps the ease with which the narrator glides over ‘Jorge’ says more about Arabic-speakers in the Americas than ‘Jorge’ could ever reveal.

The marginalization of Arabic-speakers in the Americas is neither new nor exceptional, and it is also not a mistake. The pattern of the marginalization of expatriated Arabic-speakers suggests that intellectual resources are not invested in the study of such subjects. The invisibility of expatriated Arabic-speakers who were once so visible also suggests that the myopia reflects alterations in historical perceptual faculties, and not in the actual landscape of the past. The marginalization follows other patterns of geographic

¹¹⁹ Carlos Drummond de Andrade, *Poesia e Prosa*, p. 640-6.

dismissals familiar to historians studying the rise of nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries. The advent of nationalism in the 19th century, for example, produced histories understandably intent on emphasizing the glories of nation-states. Histories focused on exalting the nation-state did not simply often ignore the influences on those nation-states from beyond; intentionally or otherwise, it often institutionalized such blind-spots. In the late 19th century, one nationalist history in particular, Jules Michelet's 1855 *Histoire de France*, produced the idea of the "Renaissance," a chapter facilitating the emergence of 'modern' Europe but which had never before been articulated as such. Michelet coined the word 'Renaissance' as a historical chapter, a celebration of past European achievements which showcased French, and later European creativities. While the generic Italian term "rinascimento" (from "rinascere" to be "reborn") appeared in lower-case in previous centuries, only Michelet's nationalist history translated the term into French and transformed it into a historical era, a descriptor of all the artistic and intellectual achievements of the time. 'The Renaissance' came to reference the rise in arts in the 14th to the 17th centuries, although the narrative and categorization of 'the Renaissance' was only born in the nationalist crescendos of the 19th century.¹²⁰

In hindsight, Michelet's narrative of "rebirth" which was jubilant by definition, and which would later popularize beyond Europe, was not as tidy as its confident conceptualization suggests. Witch-hunts and religious wars also marked Europe between the 14th and 17th centuries. These calamities were simultaneous with the Renaissance's

¹²⁰ Panofsky, *Renaissance and Resuscitations in Western Art* 1969:38; Panofsky's chapter "'Renaissance—self-definition or self-deception?'"

achievements in the arts and sciences, which may have affected only a limited number of people during this time. The diversity of developments during these centuries, including overlapping yet unsynchronized developments in the arts, raises questions about whether a celebratory term should or could encompass and unify such fraught times, a point scholars in the last decades have aptly raised. Questions that strike at the heart of the concept of the Renaissance have led some scholars of the period to even forsake this term; the *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, for example, was renamed the *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* in 1996. A product of nationalism, the construction of the 'Renaissance' would experience another fate in the later 20th century, as a Renaissance of questions about the Renaissance emerged.

The canonization of the Renaissance also illuminated the significance of geography in historical registration, a criteria which applies as much to the fate of Arabic-speakers in the New World as it did to developments beyond Europe catalyzing the development in Renaissance art. Early Renaissance narratives emphasizing European creativities had little to say about outside influences on European affairs. Narratives of the Renaissance immediately following Michelet treated developments in Europe in relative geographical isolation, as an outburst of natural French, Italian, or other European genius, almost always overlooking the international developments spurring European growth in the arts and crafts. The arrival from the Americas of gold and new artifacts, of new information regarding plants, animals, natural resources, and peoples, catalyzed European imaginations and expanded coffers to fund the sponsorship of European learning. From the East, the fall of Constantinople in 1453 also fueled

European creativities by bringing scholars and new texts to the cities of modern-day Italy. The Renaissance was thus a product of much larger phenomena that transcended Europe—phenomena including the ‘discovery’ of new lands (even before European arrival in the Americas). In early narratives of the European Renaissance, non-European peoples and influences appeared marginally, if at all, a narrative-focus which echoes in contemporary narratives of the *Nahda*, wherein expatriated Arabic-speakers remain overwhelmingly missing.

When television reporter Mike Wallace interviewed Hitti in the early 1960s, a few years following the professor’s official retirement from Princeton, the conversation revolved not on Middle Eastern affairs but on the transforming social landscape of American higher education, a topic suggesting Hitti was not simply a prop at an American university, but one of its principal anchors. “As a college professor, how do you view this current student revolt?” Mr. Wallace asks, to which Hitti replies:

I am very much interested in it. My observation is this:... [The academy has] been slow to respond to changing conditions. There is a body of students who are interested sincerely and genuinely in seeking reform for these institutions with which they are connected. Their demands are not only legitimate but reasonable, and I think they will find response for them. They want for instance more participation in the government of academic life and policy; they want more classes, professors dealing with the outside world, with Africa, with black-people, and so on, all these are legitimate. [Before] they were not vociferous, articulate and organized. You see the difference is that students at the present time are organized, and they are articulate and they are vociferous.

At first glance, the slow and weighted words of the Princeton professor seem to complement Hitti's modesty of appearance. In fact, Hitti's appearance often belied the potency of his articulations, offering a surprising punch he also unleashed in his prose.¹²¹

"The phoenix, a bird of Araby, is rising again," he announced in *History*, inaugurating the offensive that would turn history, as it had been known both in the West and the East, on its head: "Arab scholars were studying Aristotle when Charlemagne and his lords were learning to write their names," he later continued. These words, which would be cited in reviews of his book, inverted established hierarchies of power that had been relegating Arabic-speakers to near oblivion, in scholarship in the West and the East. "Scientists in Cordova, with their seventeen great libraries, one alone of which included more than 400,000 volumes, enjoyed luxurious baths at a time when washing the body was considered a dangerous custom at the University of Oxford."

Other writings of the radical type existed in the 1930s. The second African-American PhD to have received that distinction from Harvard (after WEB Du Bois in 1895), Carter Woodson (1875-1950), for example, wrote in 1933 his classic *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, which similarly challenged the structure of Western education, exposing misinformation plaguing African-Americans. "Woodson holds that the Negro has been mis-educated because he has not been taught to value himself at his proper worth," noted the *New York Times* of the work which dared to illuminate a system of

¹²¹ Mike Wallace Interview, Box 33, Audio-Visual aids.

dispossession that long outlived slavery: “When you control a man’s thinking you do not have to worry about his actions,” Woodson famously claimed.¹²²

Hitti was not the only rebel in academia, although he waged his affront from Princeton. More than an academic trying to prove a point, Hitti’s challenge, articulated from the heights of Western academic power, held both poetry and irony precisely because it dared to question Western-centrism and exclusivity from the heights of Western academia.

Departing from Greater Syria which had roughly four million residents, he arrived in 1913 in a city—New York—which had six million residents, or roughly a fourth of the entire population of Ottoman Turkey at the time. Although his plan was never to stay in the US—a country of more than a hundred million—Hitti had become an internal exile because of the War, not able to return to a Lebanon which was in the midst of mass destruction. Besides pursuing a PhD, he had turned to other civil affairs, both aiding other foreign students in the US, and directing his energies to the Near East Foundation, dedicated to aiding Levantines in the homeland: “[My] dissertation on ‘The Origins of the Islamic State’ has been favorably, I might say enthusiastically, received by Orientalists in Europe and America,” he confessed to President Howard Bliss of the Syrian Protestant College in 1919, a few months following the end of the War, and one year before the institution’s name change to the American University of Beirut.

¹²²

Negro Education: THE MIS-EDUCATION OF THE NEGRO. By Carter Godwin ...
Feb 26, 1933;
pg. BR1

Explaining to Bliss his own accomplishments in the past six years of his stay in the US,

Hitti revealed some of his extracurricular engagements:

I have also been serving as the YMCA secretary for the foreign students in New York City.... This work has put me in touch with some of the leading and most prominent Americans and given me chance to study at close range hundreds of students from other lands who are themselves picked men and represent the future leaders of their respective countries.

During my summer vacations I have lectured extensively in the interest of Armenian and Syrian relief and have, for part time, acted as librarian of the Oriental Department of the New York Public Library. During the winter months I often lecture for the New York Board of Education.

While the Students Army Training Corps was maintained in the colleges, I had the privilege of representing the War Work Council at New York City College.¹²³ Even before he had become a patron of Arabic-speakers and Muslims in the American academy, he had become engaged with concerns that transcended his academic role.

There was poetry in the very presence of the self-identifying ‘Arab’ who had arrived at Princeton, poetry in the man whose middle name was ‘priest’ (Khoury), and who had become the priest of Arab and Islamic history. Hitti’s writing typically stood out for its idiosyncrasy: “Amrika fi Nazar Sharqi” (America through Eastern eyes (1924)), “The Arabic Sources of Dante” (1927), “The Origin of the Druze People and Religion” (1928). Yet Hitti did not stand out physically. The quiet-type, the wallflower, the un-descript passerby, Hitti rarely evoked attention visibly. One vignette about him shared by his son in law, Professor Bayly Winder also of Princeton and later NYU, tells of a Druze prince who came to visit Hitti in Lebanon one summer in the 1950s; upon seeing Hitti in

¹²³ Box 7, FF 2

his garden, the prince thought it was Hitti's gardener. Hitti was understated especially in his appearance, although when he wrote or spoke, he betrayed his understatement, as though the necessary energy had all been reserved for the performance, and as though his rebellion had waited until he was in the proper place to wage it.¹²⁴ Addressing the American Oriental Society in Boston on April 9, 1942, for example, his words were radical:

Islamic studies, Arabic included, have not been hitherto seriously cultivated... Certain immediate considerations make the United States a favored center for Oriental studies, Arabic and Islamic included, pending the full development of such centers in the Orient itself. The present turmoil in Europe and the widespread anti-Semitic movement tend to deflect the current of Asiatic and African students America-ward. For years after the present war, even if it were to cease tomorrow, European libraries, universities and museums will be too impoverished from the standpoint of personnel and finance to cope with the normal demands from local students and students from abroad. It may not be too much to assume that for our generation Europe seems culturally finished culturally. Asia is coming into its own, not only culturally, but economically and politically. From our point of vantage here we can view and teach Islam more objectively and detachedly. We have no imperial designs on any part of the world. Our universities have no government connections as is the case with the European universities. Near Easterners, especially since the First World War, have come to trust and respect Americans as they do not other Westerners. American colleges in Istanbul, Cairo, Beirut and other places provide valuable points of cultural contact as do the hundreds of thousands of Arabic-speaking immigrants scattered throughout the United States. The recent establishment of a scholarship for Oriental studies by the Syrian and Lebanese American Federation of the Eastern States points to hitherto undiscovered avenues of cooperation. Our aim should be so to develop our centers of Arabic-Islamic studies and so to promote their implementation that should the present cataclysm destroy or render impotent intellectual centers in the Old World we would be in a position to carry on in the New.¹²⁵

Hitti hoped other American institutions would help him transform the US into a bastion for Oriental Studies, modeled after the Princeton example.

¹²⁴ ¹²⁴Donner, Fred, "Pioneers in Medieval Middle Eastern Studies, *Al-'Usur al-Wusta, The Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists*, October, 1996, pgs 48-53

¹²⁵ Hitti, "The Arab Heritage" published 1942

Three years after addressing the Oriental Congress in Boston, Hitti flew from Princeton to San Francisco to attend the conference that would launch the United Nations, where he was elected by Arab governments to address the international body and present the Arab countries in that distinguished assembly. In the May 13, 1945 speech delivered in San Francisco, Hitti addressed the United Nations, introducing Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon to the wider congregation of over one thousand:

Why does the watch in your pocket have twelve hours marked on it? Simply because ancient Mesopotamians used duodecimal rather than the decimal system and the Phoenicians passed on this knowledge to the Greeks and from them to the Romans and the modern European peoples. Why is today called Sunday, tomorrow Monday, yesterday Saturday? Simply because in ancient Iraq the first day of the week was dedicated to the worship of the sun, the second to the worship of the moon and the last day to the worship of Saturn. And the ancient Lebanese transmitted all those to the West. Whence come these characters called alphabet with which we write our English or any other European language? Ultimately from signs worked out by the ancient Egyptians, developed and transmitted by Phoenicians to the Greeks and Romans on the one hand and to the Aramaeans and Arabs on the other. This is the alphabet, rightly described as the greatest invention of man. If the people of the ancient East bequeathed nothing but that, it is enough to mark them as... benefactors of mankind.

The United Nations represented a new congregation and platform for Arabic-speakers who had never enjoyed such representation in an international assembly. "On American soil," he announced, bringing native Arabic-speakers out of the invisibility they once inhabited, "the representatives of five Arab states join hands with other members of the United Nations in establishing a new world order. There is every reason to believe that the Arabic-speaking peoples, who in the past contributed so greatly to the enrichment of man, shall in the future continue to make their contribution to the progress and welfare of

humanity.” The native Arabic-speaker who had climbed to the peaks of Western respectability was announcing the arrival of Arabic-speakers alongside him.¹²⁶

In academia as well as outside it, Hitti presented and represented the previously discarded, an Arabic-speaking ‘Oriental’ subjectivity without any set place in the Occidental landscape. Other scholars had predated Hitti in advancing the study of the Arabic language and the history of Arabic-speakers in Western academia: At Cambridge, the English priest William Bedwell (1561–1632), pioneered the Arabic collection at the University of Cambridge. At Yale, Edward E. Salisbury (1814–1901) was appointed Professor of Arabic and Sanskrit in 1841, one year before the establishment of the American Oriental Society in 1842, an organization which almost completely skirted Arabic subjects before Hitti’s 1937 *History*. Despite the regular marginalization of Arabic and Islamic subjects, Western works concerned with Arabic-speakers existed, even though they were relatively isolated and specialized. Even extended studies of Arabic letters, such as the encyclopedic *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (1898–1902) (*History of Arabic literature*) by the German Semiticist Carl Brockelmann (1868–1956) represented an era in which Arabic subjects were subsidiary preoccupations. Brockelmann focused on Arabic texts and not on the social life behind those writings, never urging that such lives be addressed seriously and sensitively. Before Hitti, subjects related to Arabic or Islam were never a main concern at Orientalist conferences in Europe and the US, as the contents of Oriental conferences before the publication of Hitti’s 1937

¹²⁶ File: “Broadcast, Interviews, Reviews, Speeches” IHRC (unnamed box)

History of the Arabs clearly indicate. Oriental Studies before Hitti were generally—with few exceptions—invested in pre-Islamic heritages, preceding the 7th century, as the conference focuses reveal. The exceptions to the marginalization of Arabic subjects are notable, although the crowning exception comes at Princeton under Hitti, which triggered a new orientation for the Western academy.

Before Hitti, no scholar had yet planted the promise or ambition of elevating Arabic Studies into a distinct field of study, a discipline with its own journals, conferences and university departments. The marginalization or complete absence of such subjects from Oriental conferences led Hitti to organize Princeton's Arabic and Islamic Studies at Princeton, first in 1935, and later at 1938 and 1941, the first such conferences dedicated single-handedly to such subjects in Western academia. With Hitti's help, in 1930, Princeton even acquired an Arabic printing press—the linotype printing press, an acquisition that earned headlines in the *New York Times*: “PRINCETON TO PRINT TEXTBOOKS IN ARABIC”. Not surprisingly, Hitti's Arabic book *Kitāb al- I'tibār* ('The Memoirs of Usamah-Ibn-Muniqdh,' 1930) was the first book published.¹²⁷ Under Hitti, Princeton began to take seriously that which had been overwhelmingly marginalized.

Hitti was not the first scholar to work within the field of Arabic Studies, much less Islamic Studies, a more developed discipline, especially in Europe; Hitti's debt to previous scholars is great and undeniable. Yet Hitti established the 'discipline' of Arabic

¹²⁷PRINCETON TO PRINT TEXTBOOKS IN ARABIC: University First in America ... Oct 19, 1930; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010) Box 16, FF 2; See also Hitti, 'The Arab Heritage' (1942)

Studies, gathering the scattered gold nuggets that had been panned by assorted scholars in previous times and recasting them into a veritable Gold Rush, into a discipline that would become integral to the knowledge of world history in general. “Professor Hitti has written a much-needed book,” noted Joseph Skinner of Harvard reviewing *History of the Arabs* in January 1938; “to the end that Arabic studies, hitherto slighted in modern education, may take the position that their importance in world history merits.”¹²⁸ By Hitti’s own calculations, in his last year at Princeton, the school’s Oriental Department received roughly 600,000\$US just from outside sources—approximately five million dollars in contemporary dollars. According to Hitti, this sum exceeded the sum both England and France invested in all programs in Oriental Studies in 1937; by Hitti’s calculations, for example, in that pre-War year, England had invested 85,000 US dollars (17 thousand pounds) in Oriental departments, while France had invested 125,000 US dollars (25,000 pounds). Even readjusted for inflation, this sum fell considerably short of 600,000\$US in 1954, which did not include other sums the department received in previous years, much less monies the department received from the university itself. Soon following his departure from Princeton, his daughter and his son-in-law, Bayly Winder, would be hired by the department, before the latter launched the Kevorkian Center at New York University (1966), also dedicated to Middle Eastern Studies, a sign of the continuing development of the field. “It was Dr. Hitti, who as a young professor at Princeton introduced a whole new discipline into the universities of the United States,” wrote the

¹²⁸ *History of the Arabs* by Philip K. Hitti
Review by: Joseph Skinner
Speculum, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Jan., 1938), pp. 106-107

English-language Lebanese newspaper *Action* following Hitti's honorary degree at the American University in Beirut in 1969, continuing: "American universities were concerned naturally with Europe and to a smaller extent with the Far East. Professor Hitti introduced Arab and Middle Eastern studies at Princeton in the late 1920's."¹²⁹

His arrival at Princeton was partly an attempt to reform that institution. A few years before Hitti's 1926 hiring, Princeton had been publically and embarrassingly outed as a playground for the rich, an image alumnus and novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald popularized in his 1920 sold-out debut novel, *This Side of Paradise*, by describing Princeton as "the pleasantest country club in America." Six years following this novel, Princeton hired Hitti and established a Department of Oriental Languages and Literature the semester after his arrival, in the fall of 1927. "I cannot bear to think that our young men are merely living for four years in a country club and spending their lives wholly in a spirit of calculation and snobbishness," confessed Princeton President Hibben of Fitzgerald's disparagement, which Hitti's hire and the school's new focus on the Middle East inherently challenged.¹³⁰ In his tenure at Princeton, Hitti would transform the school from an establishment primarily catering to the nation's elite, into a sanctuary for the production of new narratives on the Islamic lands. "Hitti is well known to educated Muslims all over the world," the Indian scholar M. Salahuddin wrote in London's *Islamic Culture* in 1968, ascribing to Hitti a level of international celebrity perhaps unknown to any other Princeton professor at the time. "He is one of the few European orientalist

¹²⁹ *Action*, Thursday, May 15, 1969, Personalities of the Week, Dr. Philip Hitti, Box 1 FF 1

¹³⁰ <http://capitalcentury.com/1920.html>, accessed September 1, 2014

whose approach to Islamic religion and culture is marked by sympathy, understanding, and freedom from bias.”¹³¹ Hitti was an institution unto himself. “Used in hundreds of American colleges, [*History*] is by the greatest historian of the Arabs, and a member of the Princeton University faculty,” another media noted, and none would question the esteem.¹³²

His origins, so distant from Princeton, accented the poetry of his arrival. Born in a village of merely three hundred Maronites on Mount Lebanon, Hitti had first been expected to become a farmer. A childhood accident at age nine led his parents to instead enroll him in American missionary schools, in the hopes he would become a school-teacher. By age fourteen, he had become a school-teacher for the Druze religious minority in Lebanon, a group whose histories in Arabic and English he would later write. This job helped Hitti to pay for his first year of college, with the later years funded by scholarship rewards for academic excellence. Arriving in the US at age twenty-seven, with no family other than his kindred Levantine poets and other foreign students whom he befriended in the US, he immersed himself in educational endeavors. He soon wrote the famous *GuideBook for Foreign Students in the US* (1921) which sold twenty one editions before his *History*. Within fourteen years of departing the Levant and arriving in America, Hitti was not only ensconced as a highly reputed Princeton academic, he had also very visibly transformed the history of the Arabic-speaking lands, and with it—their future.

¹³¹ Box 13, FF 5, Islamic Culture, April, 1965,

¹³² Box 13, FF 5, not clear the name of the publication, but with a list of books

The scope and ambition of Hitti's *History* resounded in its first line, which merits emphasis: "Of all the lands comparable to Arabia in size, and of all the peoples approaching the Arabs in historical interest and importance, no country and no nationality have perhaps received so little consideration and study in modern times, as have Arabia and the Arabs." The opening established the deficit of information on the Arabs, underscoring a neglect which had been perpetuated by Western scholars. The opening line did not address who the Arabs were. Instead, it shifted attention to expose their marginalization, a deficit he would straight-on tackle.

In its clear language and its vast scope, and from the first line, *History* stood out in comprehensive scope from previous scholarship on the Arabs, as it stood out from subsequent histories on the subject. Bernard Lewis' *The Arabs in History* (1950), translated merely once into Arabic, begins with the more academic: "WHAT is an Arab? Ethnic terms are notoriously difficult to define..." Albert Hourani's *A History of the Arab Peoples* (1991), also translated only once into Arabic, opens with: "The subject of this book is the history of the Arabic-speaking parts of the Islamic world." The very title of Scottish Orientalist H.A.R. Gibb's *Mohammedanism* (1949) underscored the still conservative conventions marking the study of Islam in Western academia. The equation of Islam with 'Mohammedanism' appears to suppose that Muslims worshipped the Prophet Mohammad as Christians did Jesus, although Mohammed is a Prophet in Islam, and not a deity like Jesus is in Christianity. Hitti would subvert such language by reinforcing the substitution of "Mohammedan" with 'Muslim' in his department and in

his correspondences; “Islam,” Hitti wrote in 1945 to Julius Bloom, Director of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, “is preferable to Mohammedanism,” a substitution that already appeared in his previous works and epitomized his greater attentiveness to the sensitivities of Muslims.¹³³

The arrival of Hitti at Princeton represented a new configuration, the entrance of a native Arabic-speaker into a Western academy that had previously only occasionally addressed non-Western subjects, and even then typically in Western-centric ways. In its first line, Hitti’s *History* registered a decisive break from tradition, a breach that was widely apparent to both Western and Eastern audience. Hitti excluded “the bias with which the works of non-Muslim students of Islamic history are sometimes informed,” as British-Levantine George Antonius acknowledged in a review of *History*, a few months before the publication of his own Arab intellectual history, *The Arab Awakening* (1938), another trajectory of the development of ‘Arab thought’ which similarly mentioned no Arabic-speaker in the Americas.¹³⁴

“This is a real and successful attempt to tell the story of the Arabian peoples and the rise and spread of Mohammedanism ‘from the inside,’” noted another British reviewer in 1943 of *History*.¹³⁵ The *Times of India* concurred:

One day the librarian of Bombay University offered me a book to read. I finished it in three days, with mounting admiration. The next day it came for review, to my great delight. The blasé reviewer has seldom such luck; for it is simply the best introduction to what is generally called Islam that I have read...¹³⁶

¹³³ Box 10, FF 17, August 1, 1945

¹³⁴ *History of the Arabs*, Review by George Antonius, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (Jul., 1938), pp. 866-869

¹³⁵ Box 29, FF 6

¹³⁶

Hitti was not only an ‘Oriental’ Orientalist. He was a “Bridge Between Worlds” as the *New York Times* entitled one of his articles.

The presence of a Christian-Maronite professor in the United States welcoming students and scholars seeking to study the Islamic lands at Princeton was phenomenal given the still-insular nature of the ivory tower of Western academia. American race riots following the Russian Revolution of 1919, as well as the implementation of American immigration restrictions in the mid-1920s, evidenced an isolationism which came as a reaction to the immigration and globalization marking the times. In the post-WWI era of isolationism, the American educational system appeared insulated, unprepared to engage with lands beyond Europe. In the landscape of Western education, the appearance of an ‘Arab’ at Princeton and of a department dedicated to the Middle East operating already in the 1920s would have not seemed possible, had it not actually happened.¹³⁷

Hitti’s tenure at Princeton, stretching from the pre-Depression days to the post-World World War II years, saw the arrival of dozens of native Arabic-speakers through Princeton’s gates and into his department. In 1940, Levantines in the country commemorated their new star power, establishing the ‘Philip Hitti Fellowship’ at Princeton—a \$15,000 endowed scholarship fund (valued at around \$250,000 at 2014 inflation adjusted figures), which he mentioned in addressing the American Oriental Society in 1942, while not mentioning that the scholarship had really been dedicated to him, or more specifically to “[aiding] in the development of men of the type of Philip Hitti who would hasten the achievement of the harmonious blending of Eastern and

¹³⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_dWdcI5V3bI

Western cultures.”¹³⁸ The endowed scholarship continued following Hitti's death. “No one is more respected or beloved by those who call themselves Syrians or Lebanese than he,” noted Dr. Charles Malik, Lebanon's ambassador to the United States and representative to the United Nations. “No man has been more active in or more understanding of the affairs of [native Arabic-speakers] than Professor Hitti.”¹³⁹

Given the visibility of a self-identifying ‘Arab’ at Princeton—an institution that did not have a black student until 1942—one naturally wonders why the Hitti story has escaped coverage, especially in scholarship of Arabic Studies operating from the US. Have the lights gone off, and the attention faded, because of Hitti's workplace at Princeton, so outside the perimeters of the Middle East? Hitti was the focus of coverage in the Arabic, Urdu and Persian media as no intellectual before him, and perhaps none after. He received more exposure in the *New York Times* and in many other media than any Arabic-speaking intellectual before his death.¹⁴⁰ The hundreds of Arabic and Islamic scholars who converged at Princeton before his retirement in 1955 transformed the school into “a Mecca for visitors from amongst the political and intellectual elites of the Middle East,” as the Palestinian instructor Farhat Ziadeh, himself a Hitti recruit, wrote.¹⁴¹ The designation of Princeton as an intellectual ‘Mecca’ was ironic, although perhaps fitting given the regular appearance of the Saudi royal family at the institution.

¹³⁸ Box 29, FF 13, “East Meets West At Princeton,” *The Federation Herald*

¹³⁹ Box 29, FF 9

¹⁴⁰ *The New York Times* database generates over one hundred articles about, more than any other Arabic-speaking intellectuals before him.

¹⁴¹ Box 25, FF4

In 1945 the Minister of Iraq, Ali Jawdat Bey, was one arriving on campus to view this new factory for the production of Middle Eastern histories, and to salute Hitti, giving a speech about the new “spark” at Princeton: “As we inspected your buildings and equipment we were impressed by the fact that the people of the United States have since their existence as a nation devoted a great deal of time to peaceful pursuits. This institution stands as a symbol, a monument to this effort.” The dignitary concluded his public pronouncement with the hopeful announcement of cross-cultural cooperation: “We come here to catch this spark and shall pass it to our Arabic-speaking peoples.” By 1945, not only were narratives about the Islamic lands circulating from Princeton, but narratives about Princeton were also circulating in the Islamic lands, as the foreign press reveals.¹⁴²

The Iraqi minister was not the only state representative to meet with Hitti. Others arriving at Hitti’s residence on 144 Prospect Avenue in Princeton included the likes of Prince Al Saud of Saudi Arabia in 1942, who would later be crowned King, Prince Abdullah of Iraq in 1945, Prince Faisal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud in 1947, Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi of Iran in 1950, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia in 1954, King Hussein of Jordan in 1944, and President Celal Bayar of Turkey in 1954. Such a line of foreign dignitaries to a professor’s residence represented a phenomenon without parallel in the history of education.

Of two scholars in the United States to be beckoned for presidencies in the Middle East, two were living in the municipality of Princeton—Philip Hitti and Albert Einstein, incidentally until 1939 working at the same Jones Hall. Both declined the honor. Why

¹⁴² Box 4, FF 8, June 5, 1945

would I “be a dirty politician when I could be a professor in an American university like Princeton [?]” Hitti purportedly replied at the suggestion of political office around 1945, a few years before Einstein was offered the presidency of Israel, which he similarly declined.¹⁴³

Yet scholarship has ‘passed over’ Philip Hitti, almost as though he never existed. Both the basic chapters of his life, and the wider context of his life would surprise scholars even specializing in Arabic Studies, naturally raising the question of how what was once indisputably visible has become invisible. Even the Near East Foundation, Hitti’s longest-lasting philanthropic commitment, in which he became an executive director in 1921, has found no echo in contemporary narratives of Middle Eastern Studies. The organization’s credits in saving the lives of one fourth of the population of Great Syria—one million people before the Depression (a conservative estimate in itself)—has not succeeded in garnering any scholarly attention, in at least fifty years. Founded in 1915 to respond to the humanitarian crisis in the Levant during WWI, the Near East Foundation is the US’s first non-denominational international humanitarian relief organization. Levantines and Armenians in the US played a critical role in its mobilization, working with Americans of all classes and origins to aid this organization. The American organization enjoyed famous supporters, including Gibran and Rihani, both of whom also wrote about this philanthropy. *Al Nahar* newspaper from Beirut published these words in Arabic in commemoration to this American foundation dedicated to saving lives the Middle East: “The Americans collected not less than 100

¹⁴³ Spectrum, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1984, ‘Philip Hitti’

million dollars to help the peoples of the Middle East to diminish their miseries during and after World War I,” an amount that equaled over two billion dollars in inflation-adjusted currency.¹⁴⁴ Yet even this momentous, historic organization has fallen from scholarly radar. The wide support it sustained and the accomplishment it achieved was insufficient to guarantee the Near East Foundation’s memory.

The misimpression that Arabic-speakers in the US did not impact the Middle East reflects in the archives used to write Middle Eastern history. Critical archives in the New World remain largely unvisited precisely because of this misimpression, which in turn recycles the insularity of the Middle East further, diminishing the significance of such archives. The current narratives of Arabic printing reflect the lack of consultation with archives of expatriated Arabic-speakers. Scholarship has left invisible even the American influence on the history of Arabic printing, a technology which runs through Hitti’s life, and which constituted one of his principle accomplishments. The exportation of the linotype press from the US around 1930 would otherwise appear integral to the history of the flowering of Arabic letters. As it did previously for Western letters, the linotype technology allowed an Arabic newspaper for the first time to surpass eight pages. The commitment to the Middle East from a Princeton professor who became an international leader of Arabic-speakers would appear to attract wide scholarly attention. Yet Arabic scholars who have visited the Hitti archives in the last few years can be counted on one hand—ironically given the treasures in these archives. No “biography of Philip K. Hitti has been attempted—rather surprising in view of his significance,” the University of

¹⁴⁴ *Al Nahar* newspaper (Arabic), Lebanon, Box 24, FF 22

Chicago Professor Fred Donner has noted, himself acknowledging the dearth of data on Hitti.¹⁴⁵ The absence may not be as surprising as it appears, given the complementary ‘oversights’ of other expatriated Arabic-speakers. Much more than the absence of a single person, Hitti’s absence from the field of Arabic Studies reveals a learned and limited range of which has been given scholarly sanction.

Plentiful evidence exists to register the greater visibility of expatriated Arabic-speakers. The problem is not the lack or inaccessibility of information, but the inability or disinclination from acknowledging such a corpus of data. The financial gateway between the Americas and the Middle East would have been an obvious bridge challenging the scholarly moat that surrounds the Middle East, a barrier whose illumination might even reveal other barriers separating the region from the outside world. Hitti’s archives contain receipts from the remittances which he sent from the US to his family back in Lebanon. In the first five years in the US, he sent thirty individual payments, totaling about 3500\$, or upwards of \$45,000 in relative contemporary value. Observers in the Levant in the late 19th and early 20th centuries noted the great inflow of funds to the region coming from the Americas. Reports of the Presbyterian missions in the 1890s, for example, observed that the migratory fever was

a mania.... An unlettered man goes to America and in the course of six months sends back a cheque for US\$300 or US\$400...the money coming to Zahle from America has averaged from \$400 to \$500 daily, more than the salary of a teacher or a preacher for more than two years. Nearly all of this goes to pay old debts, to lift mortgages, and to carry other emigrants across the seas. We hear from the reports of

¹⁴⁵ Donner, Fred, “Pioneers in Medieval Middle Eastern Studies, *Al-'Usur al-Wusta, The Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists*, October, 1996, pgs 48-53

emigrants nothing but unstinted praise of America and its institutions.¹⁴⁶

The problem in documenting the influence of expatriated Arabic-speakers has never been a lack of historical evidence, but the lack of engagement with that data. The wealth of data showing the scope and span of the activities of expatriated Arabic-speakers only multiplies when considering Middle Easterners in other lands—in Europe, Australia, Africa and Asia. The evidence of Middle Eastern integration into the world community only expands the more one looks.

Hitti was “too well-known to need comment,” noted Albert Hourani of his senior colleague.¹⁴⁷ The statement rings with irony, given the otherwise lack of reference to Hitti and other Arabic-speakers throughout Arab intellectual histories, even Hourani’s.¹⁴⁸

In Hitti’s day, national and international media focused on the Hitti phenomenon with relish, tracing seemingly every detail of the “orientalist [who] is man of medium height (five feet six) and weight (147 pounds), and he has dark brown eyes and brown-gray hair.” The media doted on the “Christian... with...no political affiliations, [who votes] independently.” What was the secret behind a literary production whose mere bibliography exceeded thirty seven pages? ““Fourteen hours of work every day,”” read another. The minutia appeared unending: “rising each morning at 6 and somehow managing to get through the day mostly on fruit and milk, mild-mannered Professor Hitti

¹⁴⁶ The Right Place at the Right Time: Syrians and Lebanese in Brazil and the United States, a Comparative Approach, Oswaldo M. S. Truzzi, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Winter, 1997), pp. 5, originally from Clark Knowlton, *Sirios e Libaneses*, pp. 29-30.

¹⁴⁷ Lewis, Bernard, and Holt, PM, *Historians of the Middle East*, London : Oxford Univ. Press, 1962(1964), essay "Historians of Lebanon" by Albert Hourani, pg 241

¹⁴⁸ Hitti is absent in Hourani's *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*

has introduced [readerships] to lands ‘once remote as Mars,’” announced *Time Magazine*. Hitti was “the top Moslem intellectual authority in the US,” *Life Magazine* concurred.¹⁴⁹

Recognizing the Hitti phenomena, American media often dug into Hitti’s personal life, as paparazzi attempt to discover the life of the movie star:

Dr. and Mrs. Hitti live in a neat and modern one-story brick home at 144 Prospect Avenue, surrounded by the stately university fraternities. The house contains hundreds of momentos of a long and honored career—the many awards and citations, the books he has written, in addition to several paintings by Mrs. Hitti. A large model of an Eastern sailing vessel overlooks a sea of oriental rug [sic].

Their guest book contains the names of King Su’ud, Prince Faysal of Saudi Arabia, Shah Pahlavi of Iran, President Bayer of Turkey, King Hussein of Jordan, plus countless others.¹⁵⁰

The minute details were themselves evidence that something important was taking place on the American campus.

Scholars during Hitti’s own lifetime also chronicled the Hitti phenomena. In 1955, Professor Bernard Lewis, for example, then of the University of London, commended Hitti for challenging the “[still] present backward state of studies in this field [of Arabic Studies].” For Lewis, Hitti’s *History* was “a hymn to Arab glory” and Hitti, “a stalwart defender of Arab causes.”¹⁵¹ In his 1978 milestone study *Orientalism*, which offered a systematic critique of Western Orientalists, the late Professor Edward Said acknowledged Hitti as distinct amongst his Orientalist peers. Said even extended commendations to the Oriental department at Princeton, distinguishing Hitti’s Oriental department from centers at other universities: “Hitti’s presence at Princeton since the late 1920s [established] a Princeton department [that] produced a large group of important scholars, and its brand of

¹⁴⁹First quote Box 7, FF 3, Box 26, FF 8

¹⁵⁰Box 25, FF4, Box 29, FF 12

¹⁵¹ Box 16, FF 5, *Jewish Chronicle*, 1951

Oriental studies stimulated great scholarly interest in the field.”¹⁵² These words appeared in Said’s *Orientalism* when it was published just a few months before Hitti’s death. Yet where is Hitti in contemporary scholarship? Where is he in academic consciousness, in public consciousness? Where is he in the field he pioneered? In American history? Where is he in the history of Princeton University?

“He was one of them, he knew them, he was proud of them, he had written of them, and he was perhaps their principal leader,” observed Professor Bayly Winder, in 1984.¹⁵³ Winder referenced Hitti’s place amongst Arabic-speakers in the Americas. Published ten years before arriving at Princeton, Hitti’s first book in Arabic, *Anṭūniyūs al-Bish‘alānī : awwal muhājir Sūrī ilá al-‘ālam al-jadīd* (Antonius Bishalani, first Syrian expatriate to the New World, 1916) was a biography of the first Levantine known to be buried in the hemisphere, a work that demonstrated Hitti’s concerns for his compatriots in the US. Arriving alone in New York in 1854, Antonio Bishallany succumbed to tuberculosis a mere two years after entering the New World. “God sent disease to call him home,” read Bishallany’s tombstone in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn, which Hitti visited before publishing in Arabic the life-story of the man who had taken up service as a butler in the country, and did not live to see thirty years of age.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, pg Box 16, FF 5

¹⁵³ Immigration History Research Center, "Philip Hitti," *Spectrum*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1984

¹⁵⁴ Hitti, Anṭūniyūs al-Bish‘alānīh : awwal muhājir Sūrī ilá al-‘ālam al-jadīd, 1916; Hitti also wrote an English version: *Antonio al-Bishallany, the first Syrian immigrant to the US, 1919*

In lectures delivered in 1942, some twenty-five years following the publication of his Bishallany biography, Hitti acknowledged the contributions of his Levantine compatriots in the US as

the main source of stimulation [on the Middle East]. In New York City alone, there are today more Arabic presses run by Lebanese than throughout the Arabian Peninsula. The New York presses are linotype, those of Arabia are hand presses. A large part of the intellectual leadership of Arab society has been provided by graduates of the American University of Beirut, founded in 1866 and probably the most influential American institution of learning outside of the United States. Through the press, the platform and school the ideas of the most progressive thinkers, not only in English, but in French, too, have been made accessible in the original or in translation to the Arabic-speaking reader.¹⁵⁵

Such words themselves establish the significance of the US on Middle Eastern history, although the acknowledgement has yet to register in contemporary scholarship, much less in contemporary consciousness.

Hitti's role as exporter of the linotype press from the US to the Middle East illustrates his centrality even in issues beyond the scope of his own academic specialty. Similarly, when the widow of industrialist Nami Jafet in Brazil sought to establish a library at the American University in Beirut in memory of her husband, whom the Emperor of Brazil first met in 1876, she contacted Hitti. The roughly two hundred thousand and fifty thousand dollars that she contributed in 1946 in her husband's memory—a sum exceeding 3 million in today's figures—funded the building of the Jafet Library in Beirut and earned her and her late husband coverage in the *New York Times*.

¹⁵⁵ Hitti, "The Arab Heritage"

Hitti was a major fundraiser for various initiatives pertaining to Syrian education, on whose behalf he first travelled to Brazil in 1924.¹⁵⁶

In the US, organizations ranging from the Near East Foundation to the American Middle East Relief—the two largest humanitarian organizations dedicated to Arabic-speakers—regularly sought Hitti’s association, and he led these organizations in particular as an executive (NEF) and as president (American Middle East Relief). When *Reader’s Digest* wanted to start a publication in Arabic (*Al Mukhtar*, begun in 1943), it turned to Hitti, who supervised the initiative and became the publication’s chief consultant. At a dinner in 1946, held for Hitti at Princeton before a sabbatical trip to the Middle East, thirty guests arrived at Hitti’s residence. These included Princeton President Harold Dodds, US Supreme Court Justice Harold Burton, Senator Alexander Smith from New Jersey and Senator Leverett Saltonstall from Massachusetts, Congressman Karl E. Mundt of South Dakota, the ministers of Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan, and the Ambassadors of Iran and Turkey.¹⁵⁷ Newspaper men, like Mahmoud Abdul Fath Bey, owner of the Egyptian newspaper *Al Misri* (as well as head of the Egyptian newspaper association) visited Hitti at Princeton in 1944, while Emile Zaidan, son of Jurj Zaidan and himself the publisher of *Al Hillel* (which his father Jurj started), followed three years later.¹⁵⁸ At a time in which Arabic-speakers had no international spokesman, Hitti had become “the [world’s] leading interpreter of the Middle

¹⁵⁶ Box 29, FF 9

¹⁵⁷ Box 25, FF8, Box 16, FF 5

¹⁵⁸ Box 26, FF 8

Eastern past and its cultures,” as Professor Winder described him.¹⁵⁹As a Princeton professor with reigns to the world’s media, Hitti had become the new international authority on Arab and Islamic history, an authority who was periodically involved in the establishment of historical curricula in the Middle East and elsewhere. As the head of a center of unparalleled resources committed to studying the Middle East, Hitti was too powerful to ignore.

Hitti’s correspondences, preserved in his archives, represent a historical treasure-trove of unparalleled significance. In order to amass such a collection, one would require a dedicated staff of secretarial assistance, a task that few people would have the means or the initiative to carry out. Beyond the organizational aspects of such record-keeping, few Arabic-speakers rose to regional let alone international celebrity, a fame which itself reflected in the range of other celebrities who were Hitti’s correspondents. Hitti kept these letters with a historian’s care for preserving documents, often retaining their original envelope, as though mindful of the value of his own collection for future scholars. These correspondences came from Arabic-speakers and non-Arabic speakers, international media and local news agencies, students and scholars, and interested parties seeking everything from diplomatic requests, to autographs and advice on college admissions. A 1945 letter sent to Hitti by Ambassador Jamil Baroody, Saudi Arabia’s representative to the UN, for example, reveals Hitti’s standing amongst statemen in the Middle East:

¹⁵⁹For Walter Fischel, See Box 7, FF 7, Box 14, FF 2

The President [of Lebanon] asked me about you and I told him how proud we all are of our beloved Professor Hitti. He told me that he would like to invite you at the government's expense. Later in the conversation I found that you are expected to pay a price for his invitation. The President wishes to be invited by the US government and he is under the impression that you will advise your friends in the State Department to see he is officially invited to the States. I thought I should intimate to you my observations about this man.¹⁶⁰

As interesting as the insider details about the international political maneuvering of Lebanese President Bechara Khoury is the relationships Hitti held with politically-divergent personalities. Albert Einstein, Jewish historian Salo Baron, the liberal Rabbi Milton Steinberg as well as the conservative Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser all corresponded with Hitti, as did Kermit, Jacqueline, Eleanor, and Archibald Roosevelt, with the latter even confessing in his autobiography to wishing to buy a house at Princeton.¹⁶¹

“I wish to express you [sic] my innermost thanks for the friendly interest you take in my case,” wrote the Jewish Orientalist Giorgio Della Vida to Hitti in February 19, 1939, offering a glimpse at another side of Hitti's social engagements. Della Vida had lost his job at the University of Rome in 1932 for his refusal to pledge oath to the Fascist party. Della Vida continued: “If I shall succeed in settling in the US—which I chiefly desire for my daughter's sake, who is extremely depressed in consequence of the general situation here—I shall owe it to you more than to anybody else.”¹⁶² Succeeding to relocating to the University of Pennsylvania a few months later, a gesture facilitated by

¹⁶⁰Box 25, FF 10; picture 5437

¹⁶¹Box 26, FF 8

¹⁶² Rome, February 19th, 1939, Box 4 FF 8

Hitti himself, Della Vida would publish at least one book with Hitti during the War years.¹⁶³

Another correspondent, Princeton alumnus and American socialist leader Norman Thomas wrote Hitti during the 1956 War between Israel and Egypt, asking Hitti to intervene in the conflict: “I know you are in touch with Arab leaders and that you have as much influence as any American I can think of in trying to bring some reasonable solution into the Middle East.”¹⁶⁴ Such requests for political intervention appear repeatedly in Hitti’s papers, and explain perhaps his 1957 statement published in Lebanon’s *Le Jour* magazine: “Je deteste la politique; elle detruit tout ce qu’elle touche; la science me suffit’ (‘I hate politics; it destroys everything it touches; scholarship suffices for me’). The statement is misleading; Hitti was no less political than any other intellectual, although the politics that he endorsed defied predictable political constellations.

Following the 1973 “Yom Kippur” War between Israel and Syria and Egypt, an Israeli colleague at the *Encyclopedia Hebraica* wrote to Hitti that his son had been captured by Syria as a prisoner of War. Not only did Hitti contribute to the pro-Zionist *Encyclopedia Hebraica*, despite his personal and public objections to Zionism; Hitti even wrote that publication’s entries on the ‘Arabs’. More surprisingly, however, he also actively sought the release of the Israeli soldier captured at War: “Thank you very much for everything you did and planned to do for my son,” Israeli Aharon Ariel wrote to Hitti

¹⁶³ Box 4, FF8

¹⁶⁴ Box 6, FF3

from Jerusalem in early 1974. Twelve days later, Hitti returned Ariel's letter: "I am happy to learn the news about your son and I hope you will soon rejoice together with him. My guess was not bad." To whatever extent Hitti helped in the release of Ariel's son—the details of which remain unknown—Hitti's ability to secure such favor was without doubt and without question.

Hitti's name carried such weight that his association was periodically invoked even without his knowledge, let alone his approval. "My eyes has [sic] just caught the names of Dr. Philip Hitti in the list of members of the committee organized to raise contributions for the building of a mosque in Washington D.C.," Hitti wrote addressing the fund-raising activities for a mosque in Washington D. C. circa 1945. "This is the first time I have heard or knew that I was a member of that committee," he continued, explaining that he was in full sympathy with such a project, "but I am surprised to have my name appear without consulting me."¹⁶⁵ His very ability to secure the spotlight owed in part to his distaste for the spotlight, a disinclination that was genuine and ingratiating. Arriving to Montreal Canada on November 16, 1945, the Canadian Arab Friendship League sought to organize a dinner for Hitti, to which he responded in characteristic fashion:

Please accept for yourself and convey to all members of the League my heart-felt gratitude for your thoughtfulness and graciousness in arranging for an informatl bequest in my honor on November 30th at 7 P.M. But I have repeated written to Mr. Karam, beginning a year ago, that I can't accept such honors...

¹⁶⁵ 5427, Box 26, FF1, Box 5, FF 9

Again let me thank you and your comrades and apologize for what may seem rudeness on my part for accepting no banquets in my honor. But we as friends understand each other.¹⁶⁶

Such curt dismissals may reveal more about Hitti than the honors. Perhaps his understatement accelerated the reception of such attention, or perhaps he had received so much attention that the honors stopped meaning much.

With privilege, however, came responsibility. When a Palestinian student named Joseph S. Khoury wrote to Hitti from Nazareth, Israel in 1976, detailing his wish to acquire some of Hitti's publications that were no longer available, Hitti responded with a message and a packet of reading material, apologizing to Khoury for the referenced scholarship being out of print. With neither the tenth English edition of his *History* nor the fourth edition in Arabic in stock, Hitti sent Khoury copies from his own library—a personal, modest gesture that was repeated in various forms in other Hitti's correspondences.¹⁶⁷

Hitti's archives include material from a goldmine of personalities. American correspondents range from pilot Amelia Earhart and NAACP leader W E B Du Bois, to Nobel Prize winner and YMCA leader John Mott—who had co-sponsored Hitti's voyage to the US in 1913 (some thirty three years before winning the prize)—and Nobel Peace Prize winner Pearl S. Buck who won that prize in 1938. Buck personally invited Hitti in

¹⁶⁶ Box 5, FF9 , dated November 16, 1945

¹⁶⁷Box 5, FF6

1941 to her East and West Association, aimed at broadening understanding of the cultures of China and India, an organization Hitti joined that year.

Leading Muslim clerics like the conservative Hamad Jasir from Mecca wrote to Hitti, registering points about Arab history which Hitti accepted as corrections for forthcoming editions of his *History*.¹⁶⁸ Other Middle Eastern correspondents included leading Arab nationalist leaders such Sāṭi al-Ḥuṣrī, leading Syrian nationalist leaders like Antun Saadeh, and even Zionist national leaders, including Albert Einstein, who used Hitti's *History of the Arabs* in addressing Congress in his speech about Zionism in 1946. The very citations of Hitti's histories by Arab, Syrian and Zionist national leaders, suggests the expansive interpretations they yielded. Although Hitti's opposition to Zionism and his debates against Einstein became a public stance covered in newspapers worldwide beginning in the 1940s, his histories did not explicitly support any one political doctrine; the *History of Arabs*, for example, may have propped the case for Arab nationalists, although it was not specifically directed for such a cause. The bold presence of Jews and other minorities in that work defied the more limited agenda of Arab nationalists who often opposed Arabic-speakers undermining their political doctrine. Incidentally, Hitti's histories of Syria were also the bibles for Syrian nationalists who in turn often opposed Arab nationalists. Jews, Muslims, Christians, and atheists appeared both in Hitti's histories and in his department, whose very hallmarks were to register the

¹⁶⁸Box 15, FF 4; not only him, also From Tunisia the writer Kamil al-Baba—author of a number of books on local history—similarly wrote to Hitti an eleven-page synopsis of the work, to which Hitti responded, see also

religious, racial and political diversity in the Middle East instead of rejecting such diversity.

Perhaps the obvious absence in Hitti's archives was Mohtatma Gandhi, although only one degree of separation existed between the two. Gandhi never directly corresponded with Hitti, although G. Ramachandran, Gandhi's disciple and the secretary of the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi (Gandhi National Memorial Fund), arrived to visit Hitti at Princeton in 1953, six years before personally inviting and co-sponsoring the visit to India of Dr. Martin Luther King. More than simply an Indian nationalist leader, Gandhi also countered press censorships in Greater Syria, issuing a statement following the suspension of one periodical in Lebanon: "Not only do I protest in the name of Young India against the action of those who caused the suspension of Young Zahle [Zahle Al Fatat], but I wish to declare, and do hereby authorize you to make declaration in my name, that life can never be guaranteed any government or people without the freedom of the press."¹⁶⁹ Like Hitti, Gandhi's transgressions echoed.¹⁷⁰

Two letters Hitti sent to Brazil and Venezuela, countries he publicly visited, demonstrate his significance for Arabic-speakers in Latin America. In one letter, mailed on October 7, 1968, more than ten years following his official Princeton retirement, Hitti addressed the prominent philanthropist Nagib Jafet of Sao Paulo, Brazil. Nagib was

¹⁶⁹ "The Syrian World", September 1931, page 58

¹⁷⁰ Both from Box 6, FF 10

another son of Nemi Jaft, who died in 1923, shortly before Hitti arrived in Brazil for the first time. Hitti writes to Jafet, intervening on behalf of a friend in Caracas, Venezuela: “I understand that there is a business transaction between his and your firm which I am sure can be settled if you give it your personal attention.” In another correspondence sent on that very day, Hitti responds to the invitation of the head of a university in Caracas, declining the opportunity to devise that university’s program in Middle Eastern Studies:

How can I, in absentia (emphasis original), at a distance of thousands of miles and without knowing a thing about the course of study in your University work out “a programme for the course of five years on the history and culture of the Middle East nations, intended for students of International Relations (Diplomacy), Sociology, History and Geography?” If any scholar attempts such a program, without at first studying these particular courses at a close range..., he would not be the expert you take him to be. He will be imposing something extraneous (lazqah) rather than integrating the program into the organic university structure.¹⁷¹

Hitti had become the face of accomplishment, the symbol of achievement. Following the independence of Middle Eastern states beginning with Lebanon in 1943, Hitti received the highest civilian honors from the governments of Lebanon (1946), Syria (1954), and Egypt (1978) respectively, “for his work in Arab history.”¹⁷²

Perhaps the details that appear unimportant reveal more about Hitti than these honors. A speech Hitti gave to delivered to the 23-year old Mexican Captain Emilio Carranza reveals as much about his own vision, as it did about Carranza. Hitti had never been to Mexico, nor would he ever visit, although one does not need to look far to find

¹⁷¹ Both from Box 6, FF 10

¹⁷² Box 26, FF 8

him in the country, especially in its immigrant press.¹⁷³ Upon Captain Carranza's arrival to the US, the American Syrian Federation decided to host the Mexican celebrity, a bid presumably to establish the community's own attentiveness to outside affairs. To welcome the aviator who flew from Mexico, D.F. to Washington, DC, returning Colonel Lindbergh's visit to Mexico earlier that year, the community chose its star player to welcome Carranza. Hitti offered these words:

Within the last forty years or so, thousands of our fellow countrymen have found in your hospitable land a second home, a haven of peace and an asylum of economic refuge. The speaker has not had the privilege of visiting Mexico, but he knows from the reports received and from a trip he took years ago to South America that in no place in the world can a son of Syria feel more at home than in a Latin-American country, not only because of the plenteous sunshine, wide open blue skies and distant horizons which constantly remind him of Lebanon, Syria and Palestine, but because of the warm-hearted hospitality and courtesy of the Latin-American people developed almost everywhere by them to the point of an art...

As a representative of a great and progressive neighbor, we therefore as Americans, welcome you, Sir, to our midst and honor in you the young, forward-looking spirit of Mexico which is happily at the present time in best harmony and accord with the spirit of the youth of the United States; and we trust that this mutual sympathy will last forever.

But that is not all. There is one final reason as to why we should all find ourselves tonight rejoicing in this welcome. Captain Carranza is the harbinger of

¹⁷³ In 1941, for example, Hitti was featured on the cover of the Spanish-language *Emir* magazine from Mexico City, which included the article "La Ejemplar Vida del Maestro Hitti" (The Exemplary Life of Professor Hitti) (Box 30, ff 2) In 1966, more than a decade after Hitti's formal retirement, the Club Centro Libanes, the premier Lebanese establishment in Mexico, wrote to him in the hopes of building a monument to him and to his friend Gibran Khalil Gibran—an honor which he again declined. (Box 26, FF 1) Even after Hitti's Princeton retirement and relocation to Harvard in 1955, every Arabic newspaper in Latin America continued to print his pronouncements, his articles, his pictures, and his travels, with his words often appearing on the front page of those newspapers. (Box 6, FF 10)

a new era of international peace and international good will, not only between the two countries of his flight but throughout the whole civilized world. By annihilating distance and eliminating time, he and his intrepid comrades of the air are breaking down those barriers which have long stood in the way of better understanding, and bringing the people of the world into a new consciousness of kind. Captain Carranza does not belong to Mexico [He is] the common property of the new mankind.

Born in a land far away, to parents who never dreamed of sending Philip to a missionary school, Hitti had arrived in the US as had Carranza, as a visitor. Hitti saluted the man who had bridged distances not by steamships but by airships. The World War some ten years before had claimed sixteen million lives, although its mere destruction had given rise to men like Carranza and Hitti whose humanitarian pursuits flagrantly defied such destruction. Hitti ended his speech with the line “Above all nations is humanity,” a statement that became a Hitti mantra, evident in other speeches and writings he made. For his trip to the US, Carranza would pay with his life: The speech given in Brooklyn on June 28, 1928, came a mere two weeks before Carranza’s death on his return flight from the US to Mexico.

He is “not merely a historian, but . . . a statesman,”¹⁷⁴ wrote the German-Jewish intellectual Oskar Goldberg in Baltimore’s *Jewish Times* in 1944, describing the Princeton phenomena. Author of the 1935 *Maimonides: Kritik der jüdischen Glaubenslehre* (Maimonides: Criticism of the Jewish Doctrine of the Faith), Goldberg was a regular Hitti correspondent who had escaped to the US and had been previously a prominent member of the German-Jewish community of the 1930s who worked alongside such figures as Jewish-German philosopher Walter Benjamin, and the 1929

¹⁷⁴Box 12, FF7

Nobel laureate Thomas Mann. In his article for the *Jewish Times*, Goldberg did not mention Hitti's appearances in Congress earlier that year, nor did he mention Hitti's debates against Professor Albert Einstein over the question of Israel, waged both in the national press and at Congress. Instead, Goldberg focused on the advent of Arab nationalism, which was spreading in the Middle East in the 1940s, a response to contemporary developments in the region:

After the decline of the Ottoman Empire, her Arabic provinces were split into several little states. Through the jealousy of the powers, after the first world war, those little states succeeded partly in becoming nominally independent of Europe. And subsequently the pan-Arab movement arose which did not just lay stress on political unity of all Arab states but attached importance to a "more pronounced expression of cultural ideals."

Goldberg avoided comment on the War raging in Europe. He also evaded mention of Zionism, a movement which had found growing popularity amongst the Jewish community in the previous years, rapidly expanding since the 1936 death of Hitti's advisor, Richard Gottheil, incidentally the founder of the Zionist Organization of America in 1897. Other Jews also commended Hitti for the accomplishment of his *History*, which even appeared in the Yiddish press,: "I have sent you long ago a copy of my review of your marvelous—and I mean marvelous—History of the Arabs (sic) published in the Jewish Morning Journal on June 18, 1939," wrote H. L. Gordon, editor of that publication in Yiddish, which praised Hitti's book for parading Semitism where other works of its kind had not.¹⁷⁵

In 1966, the journal *The Arab World* published an article on Hitti entitled "The Singular Historian." The article quoted from his *History of the Arabs*: "Transmission,

¹⁷⁵Box 16, FF 3

from the standpoint of the history of culture, is no less essential than origination.” In its first page, the article presented the larger-than-life portrait of Hitti given by his students upon the professor’s retirement from Princeton. The portrait hangs in the department he established. Given that Hitti in early 1955 rejected the idea of a portrait, only acquiescing to its commissioning when told that it was to be given to his department at Princeton, the painting of a robed Hitti in regalia, looking squarely at the passerby, is both representation and misrepresentation. The article offers its own literary sketch of the professor: “One prepared to face a giant in Hitti would be at first surprised, later vindicated,” and continues to describes Hitti with the following description:

Small, somewhat fragile, the agility of his mind is betrayed at first more by a mobile face and inquisitive eye than by any more obvious physical trait. After only a brief exposure to his seemingly tireless energy, one notes his stillness in repose. He neither smokes nor toys with objects; his nerves seem to be all cerebral. Facing him is somewhat like facing a kindly gun about to fire a round of information...

He was an “almost contradictory personality,” the article noted about the professor who had risen in academia like a phoenix himself. He had become the establishment and the anti-establishment, the law and its transgression. The respect he was accorded and the awe in which he was held, reverberated far away, to places where the name ‘Princeton’ no longer held any resonance. The article continued:

Strangely enough, he dislikes bookworms, and is fond of paddling his red canoe on Lake Carnegie.... A true cosmopolitan, he holds a number of rather bizarre decorations, such as the Order of the Cedar, from his native Lebanon, yet his name was inscribed in the American common of the New York World’s Fair amongst those citizens of foreign birth who had “made notable contributions to our living, ever growing democracy.”¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶Box 18

Appearing a contradiction, Hitti at least appeared.

Chapter 2: Origins

The mountain range known as 'Mount Lebanon' rises steeply from the oceans to the heavens, with heights surpassing the Swiss Alps. "Lebanon... presents us everywhere with majestic mountains," wrote the French traveler the Comte de Volney (1757 – 1820) around 1793, describing the geography:

every scene we meet with scenes in which nature presents either beauty or grandeur, sometimes singularity, but always variety. When we land on the coast, the loftiness and steep ascent of this mountain ridge, which seems to enclose the country, those gigantic masses which shoot into the clouds, inspire astonishment and awe.¹

When the Swiss traveller Johann Ludwig Burckhardt (1784 –1817) visited Lebanon some two decades later, he noted the mountain range's vastness: "I never before saw any inhabited country so entirely mountainous" wrote Burkhardt, observing the lack of roads to the villages on Mount Lebanon: "to reach a place not more than ten minutes distant in a straight line, one is obliged to travel three or four miles, by descending into the valley and ascending again the other side."² Another mid-19th century American visitor stressed the nature-rich variety of the landscape:

The highest peaks are crowned with perpetual snow. Beneath the long white line, which for half the year lies dazzling under an ever-shining sun, vast ledges and bald crags belt the hills with a grayer girdle. Below these are forests of fir and oak, the hiding-place of wolves and jackals, and according to the natives of tigers and hyenas; but it is fair to say that the last-named animals are rarely seen, and more rarely killed. In the gorges, the black volcanic rocks contrast finely with the

¹ *Travels through Syria and Egypt, in the years 1783, 1784, and 1785.*, Volney, C.-F. (Constantin-François). [1788]. 434 pp. vol. Volume 1 of 2, pg 295

² *Travel In Syria and the Holy Land*, 184

silver threads of innumerable brooks and cascades, and the green, in various shades, of the orchards of fig and mulberry and olive.³ The most recognizable plant of Mount Lebanon were the Cedars of Lebanon, majestic Christmas-like trees of over one hundred feet tall, referenced by both ancient and recent visitors to the region. "The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon which he hath created," reads Pslam 104 of the Old Testament of the tree that was used by King Solomon for the construction of his Temple, and by the ancient Egyptians for the construction of their palaces.⁴ "The great cedars, at some distance, look like very large spreading oaks; the bodies of the trees are short, dividing at bottom into three or four limbs, some of which growing up together for about ten feet, appear something like... Gothic columns," wrote the British explorer Richard Pococke in his description of Lebanon in 1743.⁵ These trees naturally aroused the admiration of American visitors, who brought dozens of them to the US in the 19th and 20th centuries. In Hitti's honor, two cedars would be planted at Princeton circa 1940, in front of the Graduate School.⁶

Beirut and Shimlan both lie within Mount Lebanon, but even an early 20th century observer would have found few similarities between the two locales. The largest and most populous city in the 135 miles of the mountain-range, Beirut was a bustling and

³ *Mount Lebanon. A Ten Years' Residence, from 1842 to 1852 ; describing the Manners, Customs, and Religion of its Inhabitants, with a Full and Correct Account of the Druse Religion; and containing Historical Records of the Mountain Tribes, from Personal Intercourse with their Chiefs and other Authentic Sources* by Colonel Churchill Pages 69-90, in *The North American Review*, Vo. 81, No.168, July 1855

⁴ Winder, Viola, *The Land and People of Lebanon*, 1965, pg 13

⁵ Richard Pococke, "A Description of the East", pg 488-489 in *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in all Parts of the World*, John Pinkerton, 1811

⁶ **CEDARS OF LEBANON GIVEN TO ARLINGTON: Mrs. Roosevelt Accepts Symbol ...**

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

New York Times (1923-Current file); Apr 1, 1934; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times pg. 29; **CEDARS OF LEBANON.**

New York Times (1923-Current file); Apr 2, 1934; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times pg. 16

multicultural port city on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, sprawling over red hills with umbrella pines and olive trees. In contrast, the three-hundred person Shimlan, located about twenty miles from Beirut, was perched high atop a cliff, tucked in to the mountain side, and distant and dislocated from neighboring villages. While Beirut was a major urban center and trading nexus, Shimlan allowed minimal contact with outsiders. Hitti acknowledged the isolation of his hometown: “if you had been to Beirut in those days people looked at you as if you had gone to the moon... You had to arrange for a large carriage to take you down, what they called an *‘arabiye*, and a trip to the city required several days. Hardly anyone did it.”⁷

The name ‘Lebanon,’ derived from the Semitic root ‘white’ (l-v-n), a geographical name appearing in the Old Testament more than seventy times.⁸ The ‘white’ inscribed in ‘Lebanon’ referenced the snow-capped peaks of the mountains, a marker visible from hundreds of miles away. “The mountain is as characteristic of Lebanon as the desert is of Arabia,” Hitti described Mount Lebanon, continuing:

Its position radically affected its climate and rainfall, its elevation gave variety to its flora, fauna and scenery, and its structure hindered communication with the hinterland as it encouraged relationship with the West lands. No wonder its people have been always been oriented more westward than eastward. Of all the Arab lands between Morocco and al-‘Irāq Lebanon is the only one with no desert, no Bedouin population.⁹

Hitti also recognized the Mountain's place as a natural haven for persecuted peoples:

⁷ Fred Donner was the student who noted this, in his article “Pioneers in Medieval Middle Eastern Studies” in *Al-Usur al-Wusta* 8.2, October 1996, p. 48; also for description of Beirut see Winder, Viola, *The Land and People of Lebanon*, 1965, pg 16

⁸ http://maroniteinstitute.org/MARI/JMS/january00/Lebanon_In_The_Holy_Scriptures.htm

⁹ Lebanon in History, pg 7

Through the ages the Lebanon, thanks to its valleys and hills, has provided places of refuge for individuals with unpopular beliefs and for groups representing minorities. Christian anchorites, Moslem Sufis, Druze ascetics preferred its caves and recesses to the pleasures of the world....Maronite sectarians in the seventh century, fleeing Jacobite persecution in North Syria, find in North Lebanon a haven of peace. Druze devotees, considered heretic by orthodox Moslems, enter it in the eleventh century from the south. Dissident Shiites, escaping Sunnite fury, infiltrate at different times from different places. More recently Armenians and so-called Assyrians, remnants of communities subjected to Ottoman persecution, make their way into it. All are provided therein with an opportunity to live their own lives in their own ways.¹⁰

Beirut, which sits at Mount Lebanon's feet, had over one hundred thousand residents by 1900, three times as many as nearby Jerusalem.¹¹ Beirut was a heterogeneous and cosmopolitan center, contrasting with the roughly 1,500 villages in the surrounding region.¹² By the 19th century, Beirut attracted people from the surrounding areas, and from as far away as Europe and the US. Beirut was "a rare jewel in the sultan's crown," as German Emperor Kaiser Wilhelm II called it, upon visiting around 1898.¹³

In contrast, Shimlan was too small to evoke much notice. Mount Lebanon's difficult terrain of rocky cliffs, steep ravines and vast valleys, granted each community its own particularity and peculiarity. "[The] exact number of inhabitants of the Lebanon... is very difficult to reckon, or even to estimate," the 19th century American visitor to the region noted, continuing: "The villages are so numerous, the method of living so patriarchal... even if a foreigner could find his way through the intricate passages of the

¹⁰ Ibid, pg 8

¹¹ Usiel Oskar Schmelz, in *Ottoman Palestine, 1800-1914: studies in economic and social history*, page 35, Gad G. Gilbar, Brill Archive, 1990

¹² Ibid, pg. 2

¹³ **Beirut**, Kassir, Samir, pg 80; the date of this quotation is not in Samir's book, but it shows up elsewhere:

mountains, he would gain but little correct information from the natives.”¹⁴ While most residents of Shimlan never visited Beirut, Hitti made the voyage from Shimlan to Beirut when he was less than ten years old, following a childhood accident that almost claimed his life. This early episode in his youth anticipated the dramatic trajectory of his life.

Mount Lebanon’s pine forests and rocky slopes exposed foreigners to easy ambush, while offering plentiful hideouts to locals familiar with the mountainous terrain. Studded with hard-to-reach expanses, the rugged topography was naturally intimidating. In the 7th century, when the Arabs departed the Arabian Peninsula and conquered the geography contemporaneously known as the 'Middle East'—which was mostly Christian at this point-- Arabic and Islam spread rapidly in the wider region. Mount Lebanon, however, remained isolated from Arab influence. “Mount Lebanon, with its head lifted high in the sky, remained a Christian islet in the sea of Islam,” as Hitti described the vicinity.¹⁵ Even the Arabic language did not effortlessly penetrate Mount Lebanon. “[It] could not climb [Mount Lebanon's] heights. [Arabic] froze on the slopes, and villages in northern Lebanon maintained Syriac as the common language into the seventeenth century,” Hitti noted, underscoring the unique role of the mountain-range as a barrier to foreign influence.¹⁶

Mount Lebanon attracted populations seeking its seclusion. In the 6th century, the Maronites began departing from their origins in Antioch, in modern-day Turkey, and seeking refuge in Mount Lebanon, fleeing attacks by other disciples of Christ. The

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Hitti’s description of Lebanon: pg. 2 of his unpublished *From Lebanon To Princeton*, Box 20, FF 6; the description of Lebanon is from above source.

¹⁶ Hitti’s description of Lebanon: pg. 2 from *Lebanon To Princeton*, Box 20, FF 6.

Maronites were followers of St. Maron (died 410 A.D.), whose ascetic lifestyle and theological interpretations contrasted with more popular interpretations of Christ's lessons held by others in the Roman Empire. Charged with heresy, and victims of religious persecution and violent attacks, the Maronites sought Mount Lebanon's protective shield from physical aggression.¹⁷

During the Crusades of the 11th century, Europeans invading the region came into contact with the Maronites. The Crusaders stumbled upon a community cut off from other Christian populations for more than 400 years. The sudden rediscovery of the Maronites by Crusaders awakened Western awareness of the minority. In the following centuries, the Maronites developed relationships with Catholic Europe, and especially with the Vatican, which became the official protector of the Maronites. In 1584, Pope Gregory XIII established a Maronite College in Rome, paving the way for hundreds of Maronites to travel to Rome, most of whom returned to the Levant to run the Maronite sanctuaries on Mount Lebanon. Sustained Maronite contact with Europeans further distinguished this minority from other Arabic-speaking communities-- including those of other Christians.¹⁸ The Maronites were the only Arabic-speaking Christians to develop a union with the Vatican; other Eastern native Arabic-speaking Christian communities had separate institutional affiliations, and lacked formal religious associations with the Vatican.

¹⁷ *Eastern Christianity in the Modern Middle East*, Anthony O'Mahony; Emma Loosley, London ; New York : Routledge, 2010.

¹⁸ unpublished Hitti, *From Lebanon to Princeton*, pg. 15-30

The opposition on the part of the Hitti's from interacting with the Protestant missionaries arriving in the Levant in the 19th century reflected Catholic-Protestant divisions, as well as the Maronite persecution inscribed in Maronite liturgy and kept alive in public memory. Yet the violence of distanced centuries was not the only bloodshed visited on the Maronites. In the 19th century, more recent violence affected Maronites, provoking the relocation of the Hittis from their native village of Hadath in northern Lebanon, to Shimlan. In vast-scaled 1860, a Civil War erupted in the region, a conflict involving chiefly the Maronites and the Druze minority-- a violence that rendered the Hittis exiles from their native village of Hadath in northern Lebanon. The Druze were another religious minority originating in Egypt in the 11th century, who had similarly migrated to Mount Lebanon for protection following their own persecution in their homelands.

"There has been a bloody riot at a village in Mount Lebanon," wrote one American missionary to the *New York Times*, in September, 1859, continuing: "About twenty Druzes were killed, and of the Maronites, nearly as many. The matter has set all of Lebanon in a blaze, and there has been great danger of a general war in the mountains."¹⁹ The bloodshed only increased in the following months, claiming over ten thousand lives, and destorying dozens of villages and religious sanctuaries.

¹⁹ **Disturbances in Syria--Progress of Missionary Effort.**
New York Times (1857-1922); Sep 30, 1859; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times
pg. 2

The roots of this conflict traced largely to sudden foreign presence in the region. "Until the 1840s warfare in the mountain had been of the intermittent intestine variety,"

Hitti noted, continuing:

with Druze fighting against Druze, and Christian against Christian... Travellers and observers uniformly commented on the spirit of amity that characterized Druze-Christian relations. As late as 1840 Druzes and Maronites were signing joint declarations... and [in 1835 Alphonse] de Lamartine [wrote]: 'Scotland, Savoy and Switzerland do not exhibit to the traveller a busier scene of life, with more contentment and peace'...²⁰

In the 1830s, however, an ambitious and self-assertive Mohammad Ali of Egypt conquered the Levant, and disturbed power-relations between the Druze and the Maronites resident in the region. The Egyptian rule of the Levant attempted to suppress Druze uprisings by arming the Maronites against their neighbors. Whereas the Maronites in Lebanon flourished in the 16th-17th centuries under the reign of Prince Emir Fakhr-al-Din ibn Maan (1572–1635)—who was himself a Druze—the foreign influence in the 19th century facilitated the transformation of the mountain range from a refuge offering security, into a region riven by rampant bloodshed.²¹

Civil Wars in 1841, 1845 and 1860 between the Maronites and the Druze led the Hittis to Shimlan, lodged deeper within the mountain's natural protective barriers.²² 'Hitti' was a new name, acquired sometime after 1860—and probably as Philip relocated to the American school at Suq Al Gharb in 1895. 'Hitti' was a corruption of 'Hadathi,' meaning 'of Hadath,' the original dwelling of the Hittis before the Civil War of 1860. The

²⁰ History of Lebanon, pg 434

²¹ see Hitti, History of Lebanon, pgs..

²² Hitti, Philip, *Lebanon in History From the Earliest Times to the Present* London, Macmillan; New York, St. Martin's Press, 1957.

name 'Hitti' was a permanent marker of exile, a momento of the loss of the ancestral village of Hadath.

The Hitti's relocated to the existing village of Shimlan, located mid way into the mountain range, a locale where the family formed “a picturesque settlement,” as Hitti later wrote of his birthplace, located 2,300 feet above the sea, “with some forty houses hanging by their teeth... to the slope of the western ridge of the mountain.” The houses overlooked three seas, in fact: a green one of olive trees, another of red sand, and the blue waters of the Mediterranean, in which white sails roamed against the azure background of the sea, enhancing an already spectacular panorama. The range of vision from Shimlan stretched from near Tripoli in the north to near Sidon in the south, with Beirut sprawling in between. Shimlan’s limestone-walled, flat-roofed single rectangular houses faced mulberry orchards, concealing the village further from approaching parties.

“Nebuchadnezzar’s hanging gardens must have looked something like our terraces,” Hitti remarked about his native village, citing the Neo-Babylonian Empire of 2400 years earlier to evoke a certain timeless quality to his native village. Shimlan was a hidden promontory, providing a view of approaching threats from the outside, while keeping the village’s inner life hidden. Shimlan’s dislocation ensured the community’s sense of security, as well as the preservation of Shimlan's distinct culture.²³

Shimlan's church was its physical and cultural center. It was the public square for ceremonial weddings and funerals. It was the only public playground. It was the town

²³ *From Lebanon To Princeton*, pg. 8

theater in which the children—Philip included—regularly staged plays for the villagers’ entertainment—and it was the elementary school Philip attended as a child. The school-- located in the church courtyard-- consisted of a congregation of some two dozen students of varied ages, sitting around the elder monk who instructed in the essentials of life, offering lessons mostly in prayers.

At the time of Hitti’s youth, literacy was still rare in Shimlan. In recollections, Hitti noted the existence of newspapers trickling into Shimlan, although both of Hitti’s parents could not read. Hitti acknowledged that reading was rare even amongst religious men. He cited a villager who brought her pastor a written paper to read. Remembering that her husband was away, the priest picked up the document and started reading it as though it were a letter from the husband to the villager. When interrupted with the remark that the document was a property deed, the priest snapped back, “Why didn’t you tell me, so I would read it as such?”²⁴

Priests or monks could read certain religious texts, yet such literacy differed from the ability to read the emerging Arabic newspapers which intermittently also reached Shimlan. “Little did I suspect then that our teacher might not have felt at home in any other books,” Hitti later confessed. The school had no faculty other than the monk who acted as the teacher and the principal, as well as one of the Church elders. When students memorized certain prayers, they graduated.²⁵ Girls could attend the school as well, although their destinies were to become housewives, while the males had two options,

²⁴ *From Lebanon To Princeton*, pg. 3

²⁵ *Ibid.*

either becoming farmers or silk factory workers, like Hitti's father. As Hitti described, "by the time he reached his father's age, the little learning would have atrophied and he would enroll in a generation of illiterates. All that the tenants could call their own was on their backs or on the floors of their houses."²⁶

Shimlan was sparse in economic wealth, although it was rich otherwise, as Hitti described:

From the moment the early sun peeped from behind white-class [Mount] Sunnin, the second highest peak in the range, it spread rays that were always changing the varied patches of color on the hills, valleys and plains. In late summer afternoons you felt as if you were occupying a central seat in the tier of a gigantic amphitheater with the sun enacting its grand finale for your sole entertainment.²⁷

Only a broken arm at age eight broke this pattern of life and led Hitti away from the life he knew in Shimlan. Hitti described the momentous events that radically altered his fate:

A bright summer morning found an eight-year-old boy with his younger brother leading a donkey to fetch from a neighboring village (Kayfun) a sack of flour for the family. No sooner were they out of sight of their house than, in violation of their father's instructions, they set about mounting the donkey. To reach its back they climbed a wall by the roadside. The road—if it could be so called—was a steep, two-mile footpath that partook more of the nature of a stream of pebbles and stones thrown by owners of the fields on both sides. As we rode merrily along, we encountered a she-donkey. Ours began to bray and jump. Before we knew it, we were both on the ground. My brother Fuad escaped unscathed, but blood was flowing from my broken right arm at the elbow. A passerby helped us back home. The confrontation with Father worried me more than the compound fracture.²⁸

The wound strained the medical ingenuity of Hitti's mother, who had otherwise been the family doctor. The materials in her pharmacy—quinine, epsom salt, and castor oil—

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ *From Lebanon To Princeton*, pg. 8-9

²⁸ *From Lebanon To Princeton*, pg. 13

failed to remedy such an affliction. The fracture necessitated consultation with older women. Poultices of hot onions were prescribed by some, apricot-leaves by others, all to no avail. Equally fruitless were the curatives prescribed by the village shepherds. Experts arrived from surrounding villages. Saints were not spared. Acting on the dictum that a vow to a nearby church was not as efficacious as one to a distant church, uncles, aunts and neighbors walked barefoot to churches far from Shimlan, hoping that the price and pains of their vows would secure blessing and cure the third Hitti child.²⁹

Hitti's parents had been fearful of foreigners, and especially of the Protestants proliferating in the vicinity only since the 1820s. Observing that the Protestants did not cross themselves, celebrate mass, or honor St. Maron, Hitti's parents had doubted the Protestants' Christianity altogether.³⁰

Yet the Protestants would save Philip's life. Hearing the news of a sick boy who had been bed-ridden for months and whose family had reached out to neighboring villages for help, graduates of the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut paid a visit Shimlan to examine the nine-year old who lay on his sore back unable to move. A certain Dr. Iskander al-Barudi informed Philip's parents of their son's dire condition, offering a diagnosis that was as confident as his prognosis: gangrene—hospital or death. Carried on

²⁹ *From Lebanon To Princeton*, pg. 13-15

³⁰ Anthony O'Mahony; Emma Loosley, *Eastern Christianity in the Modern Middle East*, London ; New York : Routledge, 2010.

About name see page 14 in *From Lebanon to Princeton*

a bed about twenty miles to Beirut in an effort to save his life, Philip's only salvation was a hospital visit in the big city.³¹

Hitti owed his life to Dr. al-Barudi and the American physicians from the college, which-- unbeknown and unimaginable to him then-- he would later attend. The college's faculty registered Hitti at the Johanniter Hospital in Beirut, a missionary establishment itself founded following the devastation of the War of 1860, by German-speakers from Berlin. The hospital's surgeon, Dr. George Fost (New York University, 1876) operated twice on the boy. When the nine-year old Philip regained his movement, Sister Louise, head nurse and avid stamp collector, called on the boy to sort her collection. The nurses and doctors received no compensation from Hitti's parents for their devoted service—no fee had been charged, and none could have been paid. Only the boy's healing was the return compensation for the staff at the hospital who had taken such care in the third Hitti child. After surgery and six months confinement, the fragile, emaciated Maronite boy returned home, saved by the Protestants his parents had feared.³²

Upon Hitti's return to Shimlan, his parents held a community council. The elders determined that Philip could no longer become a successful farmer. They decided that he should become a teacher instead-- a profession proliferating in Beirut and elsewhere, and an idea that probably owed at least in part to the mushrooming schools around the region. The decision surprised Philip, who only later came to understand his father's sense of gratitude towards the strangers who had saved the third Hitti child. Philip also recognized

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

that his father had a new vision for his third son, and subsequently his other children: “[Father] saw for his sons a vision of a change in the prevailing pattern of life, a change through learning (‘ilm), not exactly education, for no such concept was then current. Arabic has no term for it. How he got the idea is not certain,” Hitti confessed,³³ acknowledging that the good-will of the feared foreigners challenged the sense of antagonism against the Protestants, and, perhaps made his parents more receptive to social change in general.

After a six month stay in Beirut in a foreign hospital, Hitti was destined for a new school-- one which no Shimlani could have previously imagined. The childhood accident paved the way for Hitti’s enrollment at the American Presbyterian establishment at Suq al Gharb—a foreign encounter which would have been unthinkable before the donkey accident which had nearly cost Hitti's life. Philip's enrollment at Suq Al Gharb would be as much a symbol of change for the Hitti's as for Shimlan which Hitti would come to represent.³⁴

The American school at Suq Al Gharb, about three miles from Shimlan, was too far away from Shimlan to expect a nine-year old Hitti to commute there on a daily basis. Attendance required that Philip board at Suq Al Gharb on the weekdays. Students wore Western clothes, sat on real seats, read a number of sleek and shiny textbooks in English and French, and Christmas was celebrated in late December, and not January 7th, as is the custom for Eastern Christians such as the Maronites. The physical and cultural dislocation from Shimlan appeared difficult for the youngster, as recollections suggest.

³³ *From Lebanon to Princeton*, pgs 8-14

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Years later, for example, Hitti acknowledged one instance of corporal punishment in his first year at the school, as the youngster tried to leave Suq Al Ghabr for Shimlan early one Friday afternoon: "Nostalgia drove me... to leave school unceremoniously... and go home. Monday morning I was summoned with other offenders to the principal's office in his home. After a harsh lashing of the tongue, he, whip in hand, ordered us out one by one. And as we turned our backs he cracked the whip."³⁵ Hitti's own education at an American missionary institution, however, was the decision of his parents, and as such, he was bound to comply. Receiving an education at the American school was a privilege and a responsibility entrusted to Philip by his family, authorities never to be questioned.

Hitti's parents are recurring presences in Hitti's private recollections. "Father was a strict disciplinarian," Hitti described of his family's tradition:

He had not been pampered by his parents and saw no reason to pamper his children. He expected reverence and obedience from them and received both as a matter of course. He had neither the time nor the inclination to play with his children—it was not customary in that society. His primary concern was to support a family of eight on a monthly salary of a hundred and fifty piasters (about 4.50\$). His working day started early and ended late, averaging twelve hours with a half hour for lunch...³⁶

Hitti also recorded the aphorisms of his father, expressions ranging from "Lower your voice and strengthen your argument," to "Cleanliness is an article of faith," and "A monkey in his mother's eyes is a gazelle." Hitti expands on his father's everyday religious reverence: "'Son,' he would say... 'you forgot to cross yourself before your meal.'"

³⁵ *Lebanon to Princeton*, page 31

³⁶ pgs 13-14

Hitti's mother reappears throughout his private writings: "She was the nearest thing to an angel I have ever known," Hitti described, continuing:

Solomon might have improved upon his characterization of the 'good woman', had he known her. In her dealings with others she could have taught Dale Carnegie a lesson in how to win friends—her knowledge, however, was instinctive rather than acquired. She followed the Confucian adage 'Better to light a candle than to curse darkness', without having ever heard of its author. A fellow member of the staff of the American University of Beirut (Warren Bristol of Connecticut), who shared with me a hospital room when I was wavering between life and death from typhoid, told me that she would inquire about his health before asking about mine.³⁷

Hitti's parents dominate in his writings even in scenes in which they were physically absent. In describing the arrival of Christmas at the missionary institution at Suq Al Gharb, for example, Hitti noted in his mementos:

December 24 came and we were marched in two up the garden path to the reading room of the girls' boarding school. As we stepping in, we were confronted with a pine tree aglow with candles and laden with colorful bags of bonbons. A choir of young girls sang hymns, one of them playing a mini-piano. It all seemed like a bit of heaven that had suddenly fallen on earth. Overcome with stage fright, I struggled to recite an Arabic poem the theater had made me memorize. Entitled *al-Uṣfur fī al-Qafas* (the bird in the cage), It had no relevance to the occasion unless it was meant for entertaining the audience as I lisped, making the s's [and] th's. In addition to a bag of candies, I received as a prize a toy rooster with colorful plumage which I treasured for years...

My parents saw no reason for attending the special ceremony. Neither they nor I could foresee the significance for my future of coming before the Christmas tree from under the oak.³⁸

As the first Shimlani exposed intimately to foreign cultural practices, Hitti experienced Protestant Christmas in late December, before celebrating Christmas with his family in early January, as is the tradition amongst Maronites, and other Eastern native Arabic-speakers. The Christmas festivities Hitti enjoyed in Shimlan bore similarity to a Levantine Christmas described in the *New York Times* in 1900: "the people stand on the

³⁷ page 20, *From Lebanon to Princeton*

³⁸ *From Lebanon to Princeton*, pgs. 11-12

stone floor. Most of the windows are without glass, and the wind howls and the rain beat fruitously (sic) outside...How many American Christians would attend service of this kind under such conditions?"³⁹ An unlikely patron of the Protestant institutions, Hitti impressed educators. After graduation, he would even be asked to become a 15-year old teacher for the Druze minority in the region, and eventually to continue his schooling at the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut. Before becoming an international presence, Hitti was a local phenomenon.

Little could Hitti's grandfather—the patriarch of the family—expect that Philip would branch so far out to the unknown. Little could anyone have expected that family law rooted in tradition and obedience would give way to new heritages, and new horizons. Little did anyone suspect that the third boy in the Hitti family would challenge Shimlan's isolation, not only mingling with the new American Protestant missionaries, but attending their schools and learning their language. The breach broke the commandment in the Hitti household, which was to avoid the Protestants:

[My grandfather charged Protestant] Christians with idolatry...[reasoning] that the Protestants could hardly be Christians... As the verbal war raged hotter, the patriarch threatened with excommunication any of his flock who patronized Protestant institutions. My father's family had given the church two patriarchs and he himself was a priest's grandson.⁴⁰

Hitti's grandfather contrasted with his grandson, who at fifteen years old would even become a teacher for the Druze minority on Mount Lebanon-- the very community

³⁹ **CHRISTMAS IN MT. LEBANON: Syrian Christians Celebrate in Their Own ...**

Foreign Correspondence NEW YORK TIMES.

New York Times (1857-1922); Dec 16, 1900; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times

pg. 17

⁴⁰ *From Lebanon to Princeton*, pg 10-11

against whom the Maronites fought in the mid 19th century. Philip undertook this initiative of teaching the Druze following his graduation from Suq Al Gharb, in efforts to pay for his first year at the Syrian Protestant College. Departing not just physically from Shimlan, but also intellectually, Philip became the representation of transgression, a symbol of change. In later years, Hitti would appear gentlemanly. The Princeton professor's buttoned-up respectability facilitated his passing through barriers which might have otherwise obstructed others. Hitti's soft-spoken mannerisms and his native erudition gave little indication of the distance he had tread in order to arrive at his destination. His first major step out of Shimlan, however, made him a revolutionary at a mere nine years old, a status he would refine in the years to come, and one that would become widely evident.

Chapter 3: Changing Lands

When Phillip Hitti's parents arrived in Beirut 1895 to visit Philip recuperating at the city's Johanniter Hospital, they encountered a crowded metropolis humming with activity. Iskander and Sa'da Hitti witnessed coffee houses, schools, and paved streets in Beirut. The port-city enjoyed waterworks installed in 1875, and gasworks in 1888 (electricity would soon arrive in 1909).¹ A Beirut-Damascus telegraph line was opened in 1861, and in 1863, Beirut was linked to Istanbul, and shortly thereafter to Alexandria.² Adherents of all the region's religions lived in Beirut in close proximity to each other.

Yet, Beirut's status as an urban center was relatively new. In 1800 A.D., Beirut had a population of only about six thousand. A century later, its population surpassed one hundred and twenty-thousand. Within a hundred years, Beirut's population had multiplied more than twenty-fold—a rate of demographic expansion unrivalled in the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century.³ In the same century, Constantinople (present-day Istanbul)—the capital of the Ottoman Empire—doubled in population, reaching about one million residents by 1900.⁴ Tripoli's population also doubled during this period, rising to roughly thirty thousand inhabitants, while Jerusalem increased roughly four- or five-fold to about forty or fifty thousand inhabitants by 1900.⁵

¹ Albert Hourani and Nadime Shehadi, *The Lebanese in the World*, in essay by Charles Issawi, "The Historical Background of Lebanese Emigration, 1800-1914," pg 28

² Ibid, 24

³ The populations figures are all approximations, See Fawaz, Leila, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*, toExcel, pg 1

⁴ Morris, Ian (October 2010). *Social Development* (pdf). Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University. Retrieved 5 March 2015

⁵ Hourani, Albert *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, London: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1992: pg 13-31

Beirut was not the most populous city in the region, nor did it gain the most inhabitants in real terms. The relative growth of Beirut, however, was exceptional, and both arrivals from abroad and from the surrounding villages acknowledged the port city's rise. Visiting Beirut in the late 1860s, Mark Twain (1835–1910) recognized “the beautiful city of Beirut, with its bright, new houses nestled among a wilderness of green shrubbery spread abroad over an upland that sloped gently down to the sea.”⁶ Relocating to Beirut from the village of Shuayfat, the native Christian Habeeb Risk Allah (born circa 1818) praised the city as well, underscoring its new-found dominance in the region: “Since the expulsion of the Egyptians, in 1840-1, Beyrout has rapidly risen into considerable importance; and it may now be considered the chief entropot of Syrian commerce.”⁷ Born a Greek Orthodox, and trained in American missionary schools before pursuing a medical education in England, Risk Allah wrote *The Thistle and the Cedar of Lebanon* (1843), in hopes of generating British philanthropy for medical-care in Mount Lebanon. The work in English is perhaps the most detailed description of mid-19th century Mount Lebanon written by a native Levantine.

The impressiveness of Beirut transcended its growth-spurt. The congregation of Muslims, Christians, Druze, and Jews in turn-of-the-century Beirut, along with roughly four thousand Western foreigners, was itself exceptional. Social strife still existed in Beirut, and chronicles of the city make no secret of its divisions and social diversity. In 1858, for example, the Irish banker James Lewis Farley (1823 - 1885) published a

⁶ Gordon, TJ, Gorton, Feghali, *Lebanon: Through Writer's Eyes*, London, Eland, 2009, pg 141

⁷ Risk Allah, Habeeb, *The Thistle and the Cedar of Lebanon*, London, J. Madden, 1853, pg 52

memorandum highlighting the social fragmentation in the city—a friction which saw no parallel amongst cities in Western Europe:

The fabled weakness [of] this beautiful country... has been, and still continues to be, sectarianism. Were the people united, the Turks could not hold the country for an hour... But the internecine feuds of the different sects have enabled the Turks to carry out the policy of most conquerors-- "divide and govern." The Jew detests the Samaritan; the Greek hates the Latin; and the Maronite condemns both. We have amongst our clerks in the bank a Greek Catholic and a Maronite. The latter one day said to me, in allusion to the former, "Do not place any dependence, sir, on __; he does not know what truth or honor is." The other on a subsequent occasion said, "You appear, sir, to place confidence in __ but you will be deceived, as he is scarcely a Christian." Besides the various Mohammedan sects, there are nine sects of Christians: Greeks, Greek Catholics, Latins, Maronites, Syrians or Jacobites, Syrian Catholics, Armenians, Armenian Catholics, and, of late, Protestants.⁸

Mount Lebanon had over the years accumulated religious refugees from throughout the region. In 1875, another description of Beirut by Lady Isabel Burton (1831– 1896), wife of the famous explorer Sir Richard Burton (1821-1890), confirmed Farley's image of Beirut as a cacophony of influences. Beirut is

demi-civilized, semi-Christianized, demi-semi-Europeanized town, with a certain amount of comfort and European manners and customs: it enjoys perfect safety, being on the coast, with soldiers and policemen, and ships lying under its windows; it has free communication with Europe by post and telegraph— in fact, it is somewhat more European, or rather, Levantine, than Oriental. Yet it is several shades more Oriental than Alexandria. As soon as you cross the Lebanon range, just behind it, you quit an old life for a new life, you leave the new world to make acquaintance with the old world, you relapse into the days of the Jewish forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob-- a purely Oriental and primitive phase.⁹

Impressions of the city also contrasted amongst each other, a perhaps understandable divergence given the city's unstoppable change. Whereas Mark Twain averred that

⁸ Farley, J Lewis, *Two Years in Syria*, London, Saunders and Otley, 1858, pg 179

⁹ Burton, Isabel, *The inner life of Syria, Palestine, and the Holy*, London : C. Kegan Paul, 1879, p 16

Beirut's women “cover their entire faces with dark-colored or black veils, so that they look like mummies,” the Levantine-American poet Gibran Khalil Gibran (1883–1931) compared Beirut to “a young girl who suns herself on the river-bank, letting her body dry after bathing in the spring”—an image suggesting the city’s youth and vigor.¹⁰ Still others decried the 19th century American presence in the city, transforming the Levantine educational landscape. Mount Lebanon “is so beautiful; I cannot recall ever having seen a more beautiful [country],” wrote the French writer and Catholic Maurice Barres (1862-1923) before WWI, adding: “Each day, from morning until night, I criss-cross Beirut, to the Brothers of Christian Doctrine, the Daughters of Charity, the Sisters of Nazareth, and those of Saint Joseph; or to the French Lay Mission, or to the Jews. That is to say, everywhere one is safe from the enemy, the American Protestants.”¹¹

In the 19th century, contradictions characterized the quickly growing city, as did endless spectacles and surprises. Beirut was “the door of Syria, a chromatic Levantine screen through which cheap or shop-soiled foreign influences entered; it represented Syria as much as Soho the Home Counties,” wrote T.E. Lawrence (1888 –1935)—otherwise known as ‘Lawrence of Arabia.’¹² The parallel between Beirut and London’s Soho, the entertainment district in London’s West End, captured the inherently vibrant nature of the Levantine port.

Social tensions persisted in Beirut, although interactions amongst and between strangers were also inevitable. The social contacts between populations of diverging

¹⁰ Gorton, TJ; Gorton, Feghali, *Lebanon: Through Writer’s Eyes*, London, Eland, 2009, pg 141, 209

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 149

¹² *Ibid.*, 150

origins likely surprised Hitti's parents, who had initially feared the growing presence of Protestants in the region. Visiting their son at Johanniter Hospital, Iskander and Sa'da Hitti found not only a modern hospital amidst an urbane port city, but a hospital that welcomed even Maronite patients like Philip, whose family had resented and resisted the Protestants proliferating in the region since the 1820s.

The civil war wracking the region in 1860 did not stall Beirut's growth. On the contrary, thousands flocked to Beirut seeking to escape the fighting.¹³ "Nearly the whole of the Frank inhabitants, and as many of the native Christians as could, had taken refuge on board the English, French, and Russian [ships]," noted the *New York Times* in 1860 of the Christians flooding the city, and the Anglo-American Relief Committee counted seven thousands Maronites streaming into the city, and some three thousand other Christian sects as well (no Muslims, Druze or Jews were recorded by this agency as arriving to Beirut during the fighting of 1860).¹⁴ The civil war of 1860 drove Hitti's grandfather to relocate to Shimlan, yet Beirut was the most popular destination. Thousands of refugees fleeing the war subsequently settled in Beirut.

The civil war of 1860 erupted "like thunder from a clear sky, as unexpected as it was startling," as one 1860 English-language source noted. In hindsight, the advent of war was not without warning.¹⁵ Seemingly random killings of Druze, Maronites, and other sects in the region predated the June and July violence of 1860, and bloody

¹³ "THE CIVIL WAR IN SYRIA." *New York Times* (1857-1922); Jul 21, 1860; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times*, pg. 2

¹⁴ Fawaz, Layla, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*, 55

¹⁵ Author unknown, *The massacres in Syria: a faithful account of the cruelties and outrages suffered by the Christians of Mount Lebanon, during the late persecutions in Syria; with a succinct history of Mahometanism and the rise of the Maronites, Druses*, New York, RM De Witt, 1860, pg. IIV

Levantine skirmishes in preceding years foreshadowed the much bloodier carnage erupting in 1860. Although the 1860 war began between the Druze minority and the Maronites, it drew other Levantine religious communities into the fighting. Muslims generally sided with the Druze, and other Christians supported the Maronites.

Oral culture prevailed in Mount Lebanon in 1860, leaving gaps in contemporary understandings of 19th century Levantine violence. Grassroots revolts over a landscape lacking a thriving press, is inherently difficult to analyze, and the region's relatively abrupt descent into anarchy complicates understandings of Levantine violence. Witness accounts of the grassroots violence exist, although most recollections were written by fleeing Christians. "It [is] the general belief among Christians that the massacres originated in a widespread conspiracy among the lower classes," a report published in 1860 vaguely notes of the violence which continues to challenge historical recollection. The 1860-publication New-York-printed account continued: "Reports had been industrially circulated, months before... to the effect that European Christians were about to invade the East, and make war on the Mohametaus (sic)."¹⁶ The paucity of written statements by perpetrators of the bloodshed leaves illumination of the bloodshed's roots both uneven and unsettled.

Perhaps the most comprehensive scholarly analysis of Mount Lebanon in the 19th century, *The Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon 1830-1861* (2000), written incidentally by Hitti's student, Caesar Farah (1929-2009), dedicates over eight hundred pages to the changing face of the Levant during these years. The work focuses on the

¹⁶ *The Massacres in Syria: a Faithful Account of the Cruelties and Outrages*, 84

events surrounding the war of 1860, explicitly acknowledging the gaps in available knowledge concerning such violence: "eyewitness accounts are coloured by emotion and [are] no doubt exaggerated... The number of those killed is hard to determine because hundreds simply disappeared... Figures submitted are as high as 8500."¹⁷ Yet other sources cite three times these numbers.¹⁸ Of the deadliest episode of bloodshed in 19th century Mount Lebanon, what appears certain is that little remains certain. Even the war's name, the 'Maronite-Druze Civil War,' is not completely accurate, as it does not reference other sects involved in the fighting.

As the number of casualties in the war remains disputed, so too does the conflict's birth-place, and even its birth-date. If the fighting of previous years influenced the war of 1860, then the birthplace of the fighting in 1860 was not the Levantine village of Deir Al Qamar—as is usually assumed. Similarly, if the events of 1860 were a continuation of previous bloodshed, 1860 was not the starting-place of this 1860 war.

Despite the blind-spots regarding the toll or trajectory of the violence in the Levant, the first recorded signs of bloodshed between the Druze and Maronites are identifiable. This violence traces to 1840, on the eve of the Egyptian departure from the Levant (1831-1840). Before the Egyptians conquered the Levant in 1831, social relations between the Maronites were relatively stable, and no recorded episode of mass violence appeared between these communities. In his *Lebanon In History*, Hitti noted that

Members of both communities [lived] amicably side by side. Druzes at times [accompanied] Maronites to churches, [made] use of the holy water and, if

¹⁷ Farah, Caesar, *The Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon, 1830-1861*, Centre for Lebanese Studies, London; New York: IB Tauris; New York, NY, pg 592

¹⁸ www.tanbourit.com/maronites_massacre.htm accessed March 30, 2015 "The Massacres of 1840-1860"

press[ed] by missionaries, [suffered] themselves to be baptized. Mariti, the Italian abbot who visited the country in 1760 shortly before Volney, observed that Druzes 'behave with great friendship to the Christians, and respect their religion."¹⁹

Hitti underscored that "[until] the 1840s warfare in the mountain... amity... characterized Druze-Christian relations."²⁰ One of the first books about the war, written by the British consul in Damascus two years following the conflict, *The Druzes and the Maronites Under the Turkish Rule from 1840 to 1860* (1862), went so far as to assert that "the Druzes and Christians lived together in the most perfect harmony and goodwill."²¹

The arming and mobilization of Maronites during the final days of Egyptian rule over the Levant spurred antagonism between the two Levantine communities. Conquering the Levant in 1831, the Egyptians introduced not only a new ruling authority into the Levant, but new rules as well—liberal laws according greater rights to disenfranchised minorities who had been traditionally been second-class citizens relative to the Muslim population. The Egyptians won favor amongst Christians by implementing progressive reforms which the Ottoman government embraced following the Egyptian departure from the region in 1840.

Yet before their withdrawal in 1840, the Egyptians also waged a military campaign against the Druze, raising an army of Maronites to crush the Druze insurgents who had defied Egyptian rule. Maronite support for such an endeavor succeeded on account of financial incentives provided by the Egyptians. "To crush the Druze uprising [against the Egyptians], which cost [the Egyptians] 15,000 casualties, [the Egyptian

¹⁹ Hitti, Philip, *Lebanon in History From the Earliest Times to the Present*, 1957, pg 408

²⁰ Ibid. 425

²¹ Churchill, Charles, *The Druzes and the Maronites Under the Turkish Rule from 1840 to 1860*, London: Saunders & Otley, 1862, pg 25

leader] armed 7000 Maronites... [This] episode sowed the seeds of the Maronite-Druze feud," Hitti wrote, a claim reappearing in contemporary scholarship as well.²²

The rift between Levantine communities, however, owed not simply to Egyptian militarization of the Maronites in 1840. New geopolitical developments in the 19th century also inflamed tensions in Mount Lebanon, and the Egyptian militarization of the Maronites was in reality only one catalyst in the escalation of friction in the region. The 19th and 20th centuries saw a number of secessions from the Ottoman Empire, as illustrated below:

Table 2: Ottoman Territorial Losses

from *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, Volume II, 1600-1914*, p. 767

Year	Territory
1811	Egypt
1812	Bessarabia
1817	Serbia
1828	Greece
1829	Abaza and Mingrelia
1856	Moldavia and Wallachia
1878	Kars, Ardahan and Cyprus
1908	Crete

In Greece and Serbia, Ottoman Muslims fought against Christian armies, raising tides of anti-Christian sentiments in the Christian-dominant Levant, even before the bloodshed of 1860. In his English-language autobiography *A Voice From Lebanon* (1847), for example, the Beirut-born Greek-Orthodox Assaad Kayat (b. 1811), noted the friction in the Levant accompanying the Greek Revolutionary War (1821 –1832). Rising from

²² Hitti, Philip, *Lebanon in History From the Earliest Times to the Present*, 1957, p 424; Other scholarship that supports this claim includes Caesar, *The Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon, 1830-1861* pg. 23

humble background, Kayat would become a translator for the foreigners in the city before eventually relocating to Britain, where he joined the British foreign service, which stationed him as a British commercial consul in Jaffa, Palestine. Kayat's lasting contribution to the Levant includes an autobiography depicting mid-19th century social life in the region. In the work, he details how Greek succession incited anti-Christian sentiments in Mount Lebanon in the 1820s:

[In] 1825, the Greek revolution broke out, and the danger was very great. The arch-bishop and clergy, and all the Christians in Beyrout, were thrown into prison, being suspected of adhering to the Greeks. Theophilus and I were concealed in a vault under ground, where we pursued our studies in secret; for the supposition that we had any knowledge of Greek would have been attributed to political motives, and might have been fatal to us. This seclusion was favourable to my improvement, and continued for six months. My poor teacher was softened by fear, and grew melancholy; and at length, disguised in female attire, and covered with a white veil, he escaped from Beyrout, and found refuge in a convent near Lebanon.²³

Already in 1825, Greek secession from the Ottoman Empire bred physical violence against the Greek Orthodox minority in Mount Lebanon—the second largest Christian community on the mountain-range, after the Maronites. Whereas the Maronites enjoyed religious and political union with the Vatican dating to the 12th century, the Greek Orthodox Church in the Levant had its own religious affiliations with other Greek Orthodox churches in Eastern Europe, Russia, and Greece. The Greek Revolutionary War against the Ottoman Empire raised suspicions and animosity against the Greek Orthodox community in Ottoman-controlled Mount Lebanon.

²³ Kayat, As'ad, *A Voice From Lebanon*, London, 1847, p 27

Kayat is not the only Greek Orthodox underscoring such international repercussions on Mount Lebanon. In his autobiography entitled *Origins: A Memoir*, the more contemporary Levantine writer Amin Maalouf, (b. 1949) also revealed the sensitive politics of the region whose religious communities often became connected to other communities outside of the Levant. Born in Beirut to a Maronite father, and a Greek Catholic mother, Maaluf researched his family history and found the impact of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 on both of these Christian communities. The war between Japan and the Russian Empire—sometimes described as "the first great war of the 20th century"—represents the first 'Oriental' victory over an Occidental power. The war consumed the attention of Levantines, as Maalouf acknowledged:

[The Russo-Japanese War's] impact far exceeded the territorial stakes involved or the scale of the fighting. It caused a cataclysm in the minds of men; they suddenly had to revise their view of the world. To their astonishment, they discovered that an Oriental country equipped with modern weaponry could triumph over a European power. The consequences were worldwide and, by history's yardstick, almost immediate. In under ten years, the Russian, Persian, Ottoman, and Chinese empires underwent upheavals from which they never recovered. This was before the Great War came and swept away whatever was left of the Old War.

In my village, however, events were interpreted differently than in the rest of the world. People spontaneously reacted according to their religious affiliations. The Orthodox branch of the family was violently pro-Russian while the Catholic branch, in 'mechanical' opposition, hoped for the czar's defeat and the mikado's victory.²⁴

Contemporary 20th century Arabic intellectual histories continue to exclude even the possibility that Far Eastern developments affected Arabic-speakers. Instead, Arab intellectual histories position Europe as the central foreign continent fixating Arabic-

²⁴ Maalouf, Amin, Temerson, Catherine, *Origins*, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2008, pg 85

speakers. Establishing the influence of affairs in the Far East on Levantines, Maalouf implicitly shows the Euro-centrism even of native Arabic-speaking scholars writing about the history of Middle East, historians who address Europe as though it was the only a focus of regional interest. In 1905, Indian leader Mohamtma Gandhi specifically called attention to the Russo-Japanese War a conflict that spurred “the people of the East,” into “waking up from their lethargy”—itself a recognition that the Japanese victory had resonance throughout Asia.²⁵ Illuminating the influence of a war on Christians in Mount Lebanon, Maalouf also illustrates the difficulty of narrating Levantine history on account of the many communities resident on the mount-range. The interconnections of Levantines with other communities beyond the Levant reveals the complications of writing Levantine history. Contrary to historical scholarship which continues to categorize Christians collectively as all endorsing the same international agenda, Christians in Mount Lebanon diverged in their allegiances relative to this war. Such a presumption that all Christians voted in a bloc is inattentive to the realities of Arabic-speaking Christians, and especially to the realities of the Levant.

Hitti's birthplace of Shimlan was also internationally-oriented. Physically, the three-hundred person village was isolated from international developments. Yet Shimlan's place as a Maronite village secured intellectual and political connections that defied this isolation. The Maronite Church's formal alignments with the Vatican, for example, resonated into Shimlan and the other Maronite villages. The Maronite

²⁵ Mishra, Pankaj, *From the Ruins of Empire*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012, pg 7

affiliation with Europe intertwined the Levantine community with affairs in Europe, as Hitti revealed:

France traditional protector of the Christians of the Levant, was the great favorite [amongst our villagers]. In might, wealth and culture, France stood supreme... France was the only Christian country to send troops to Lebanon on the occasion of the civil disturbance (1860). Ten years later when Napoleon III was taken prisoner by the Prussians, Maronite villagers from al-Damur (south of Beirut) marched to the Prussian consulate in Beirut singing

Unless you return al-Nabilyun,
Our village will rise against you.²⁶

Maronite-Catholic ties transcended religious bonds. In 1649, for example, Catholic monarch Louis XIV of France solidified the French cooperation with the Maronites, officially proclaiming that "the Consuls and Vice-Consuls of the French nation established in the ports and roads of the Levant...favour with all the means in their power... the aforesaid Maronite Christians." In 1737, Louis XV went a step further, issuing a new declaration that "the Maronite Christians established in Mount Lebanon... [are] under the protection of the Emperors and Kings of France."²⁷ In the 19th century, these bonds aided the economic development of the Levant, as commerce with France inordinately benefited Christians.

The Maronite-Catholic relationship also bred Maronite educational links with Catholic Europe. Founded in Rome in 1584, the Maronite College with some fifteen students, marked the beginning of the formal Catholic-Maronite educational relationship. Perhaps the most famous early graduate of the College was Gabriel Sionita (Jibrā'īl aṣ-

²⁶ Hitti personal Files, Box 21

²⁷ Churchill, Charles, *Mount Lebanon: a ten years' residence, from 1842 to 1852*, London, Saunders and Otley, 1853, pg 96

Şahyūnī, 1577– 1648), who would later become professor at the College Sapienza in Rome, and subsequently at the Collège de France, publishing work on both Syriac and Arabic. Sionita became a correspondent of French King Louis XIII, and together with Maronite Ibrahim al-Haqilani (1605–1664, 'Ecchellensis'), another student from the Maronite College, helped produce a Parisian Polyglot Bible in 1645. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Maronite Assemani family followed the lead of Sionita and Ecchellenis, contributing a line of faithful assistants to the Vatican, the most famous of whom was Giuseppe Simone Assemani (1687-1768) who in 1739 became First Librarian of the Vatican library. The Pope rewarded Giuseppe Assemani with this high-ranking position, following Assemani's acquisition of Syriac and Arabic manuscripts in the Middle East for the Vatican library.²⁸

Such connections between Europe and the Maronites developed a Maronite intelligentsia literate in Syriac, Arabic, Latin, Italian and French, amongst other languages, and versed in European and Middle Eastern cultures. This intelligentsia would have critical significance for the development of Arabic letters in the 19th and 20th centuries. Scholarship of the history of 19th century Arabic letters acknowledges Maronites as critical in the flowering of Arabic literary production which followed the popularization of the Arabic printing press in the Middle East. Yet scholarship generally ignores the Maronite or Christian heritage behind these writers. Christian intellectuals who became leading Arabic writers appear simply to be Christian incidentally, as though

²⁸ Stefano Evodio Assemani (1709-1782), nephew of Joseph Simon Giuseppe Luigi Assemani (1710-1782), brother of Joseph Simon Simone Assemani (1752-1820), amongst others

their religion did not shape their prominence in the sphere of Arabic letters. Scholars, for example, acknowledges native Maronites like (Ahmad) Faris Shidyaq (1804–1887), and Butrus Al Bustani (1819–1883)—giants of Arabic letters—for their respective roles as pioneers of Arabic journalism in the 1820s (Shidyaq) and the Arabic encyclopedia (Bustani).²⁹

Yet Shidyaq and Bustani were not simply Arabic writers, but Maronite intelligentsia, beneficiaries of rich Maronite educations. “[The] Maronites, who are in communion with Rome, cherish their institution of [learning]. While their women and peasants are at work in the fields and groves, their monks are pouring over Thomas Aquinas in the convents,” noted one 19th century source, underscoring the literacy of Maronite intellectuals.³⁰ The familiarity of Arabic-speaking intellectuals like Shidyaq and Bustani with the Catholic theorist Thomas Aquinas epitomized the broad literacy base of Maronite intelligentsia. Not only did Shidyaq and Bustani draw from Arabic writings but from European heritages.

In the 19th century, Arabic printing popularized in the region, elevating long forgotten Arabic writings from oblivion into prominence. Yet the printing of Syriac began in the Levant in 1610, through the help of Europeans bringing the Syriac printing press to Mount Lebanon. Preservation of the Syriac literary heritage opened for Maronites possibilities to engage with literary affairs much before foraying into Arabic letters. Whereas Hitti himself had risen from a family that did not read, Shidyaq and Bustani came from highly literate backgrounds-- enjoying an advantage over others from

²⁹ Hourani, *Arabic Thought in a Liberal Age*, Cambridge University Press, 1983

³⁰ *The Massacres in Syria: a Faithful Account of the Cruelties and Outrages*, 94

non-literary backgrounds.³¹ The common narrative of the flowering of Arabic letters in the 19th and 20th century benefitted from the flowering of Syriac and other 'Christian' letters in the preceding centuries.

Shidyah and Bustani had been educated at the Maronite college of 'Ayn Warqa, founded on the eve of the French Revolution (1789), a seminary that continued the legacy of the Maronite College in Rome, which incidentally closed during the French Revolution (1789-1799).³² Because of their physical situation in the Arabic-speaking lands and their allegiances with Catholics in Europe, the Maronite intelligentsia became intermediaries between geographies, and mediators of knowledge between peoples. Hitti also acknowledged the impact of this Maronite legacy on his own life, recognizing the place of his coreligionists in developing Arabic and Islamic Studies in Europe, an initiative he not only continued but perfected from the US.:

[Maronite] scholars... in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries introduced Oriental studies, including Arabic and Syriac, into Europe. There was, for instance, Jibra'il al-Sahyuni (Sionita) [1577 – 1648], who taught at the Sapienza in Rome, became interpreter to Emperor Louis XIII in France, and collaborated on the polyglot Bible. There was also Ibrahim al-Haqilani (Eccelensis), who for years labored as professor in Rome and Paris. Then there were four Sam'ani's of who [sic] the most established was Yusuf Sam'an Al Sam'ani (Asemani 1687-1768)...

This al-Sam'ani was connected with the Vatican Library. In that capacity, he was sent to the East in 1715-17 and again in 1735-8 in quest of manuscripts. There he ransacked the bookstores, bazaars, and private libraries of Damascus, Aleppo, Cairo and other cities, and acquired collections of Arabic, Hebrew, Ethiopic, Armenian and Persian manuscripts which became the nucleus of the

³¹ For printing history, see Staatsbibliothek Bamberg, *The Beginnings of Printing in the Near and Middle East: Jews, Christians, and Muslims*, Wiesbaden : Harrassowitz in Kommission

³² For history of Maronite education, see Jumayyil, Nasir, *Les échanges culturels entre les Maronites et l'Europe : du Collège maronite de Rome (1584) au Collège de 'Ayn-Warqa (1789)*, Beyrouth, Liban : Impr. Y. et Ph. Gemayel, 1984, Volume 1 and 2.

renowned Oriental library of the Vatican. Al-Sam'ani did not only collect but catalogued, studied and published. The results of his researches are embodied [sic] in his monumental Bibliotheca Orientalis which appeared in four huge volumes and is still considered one of the main guides to the study of the Eastern churches.

How I wish al-Sam'ani could visit our Princeton collection of Oriental manuscripts of which some ten thousand are Arabic!...I could imagine the interest with which al-Sam'ani would feast his scholarly eyes upon our collection. I could hear him exclaiming from time to time: 'Ah, here is a manuscript which I saw in Aleppo, but the proprietor would not part with it. There is one which I examined in Beirut, but the price was too high. And here is one about which I heard but could not see. Congratulations to Princeton which continued by the Hudson and the Atlantic what I started by the mid Mediterranean!³³

As Hitti notes, Maronite intellectuals mediated between otherwise estranged cultures, enjoying influences from multiple sources. The Maronite connection with Europe secured the arrival of a printing press to Mount Lebanon in Syriac, producing a Christian Psalter in 1610 in the Maronite Monastery of St. Anthony at Quzhayya in Northern Lebanon. This work was probably the first book ever printed in the Arabic-speaking lands.³⁴ Native Arabic-speaking Muslims did not have an Arabic printing press until Napoleon brought such a machine to Egypt in 1798, after which a literary ferment surfaced in Arabic as well.

Yet the Maronite-Catholic connection did not only expand intellectual horizons for Levantine Christians, as Hitti acknowledged. The Maronite heritage shaping knowledge in European universities, as Maronites worked in these institutions to expand knowledge of Middle Eastern heritages. Maronites were instrumental during the European period known as the 'Renaissance' in opening up Middle Eastern horizons for

³³ Box Untitled, Address given by "Philip K. Hitti at the Banquet After the Dedication of the Maronite Church of Our Lady of Lebanon, Brooklyn, NY, November 26, 1944"

³⁴ The work is assumed to be the first in *The Beginnings of Printing in The Near and middle East: Jews, Christians, and Muslims*, pg 22

Europeans, and thus in pushing the lines distinguishing the familiar and the unfamiliar. During the 'Renaissance' of American education in the early 20th century, Hitti viewed himself as a modern-day Assemani, occupying resources and a position at Princeton that would have rendered even Assemani envious—as it would have rendered envious any previous Arabic-speaker before him. Despite Hitti's humble origins, the the tradition of Maronite learning shaped a trajectory which landed him at Princeton. Hitti's own canonization of the Arabic heritage followed and reinterpreted the steps of his coreligionists, and perhaps eclipsed their own accomplishments.

International repercussions may have resonated anti-Christian sentiments in the Levant, culminating in the fighting between the Maronites and the Druze in 1860. The Crimean War (1853 –1856), for example, saw the Ottoman Empire fight against Christian armies, potentially igniting new currents of anti-Christian sentiments on the eve of the Levantine civil war of 1860. Besides the international resonances on the Levant, another relatively recent catalyst of Levantine social tensions, however, was the 19th century extension of rights and citizenship to Ottoman minorities. Beginning in 1839, the Ottoman Empire began gradually extending rights for non-Muslims. In hindsight, the gesture appears revolutionarily progressive. In reality, this initiative was revolutionarily violent. The extension of rights to minorities attempted to avert further cessions from the Ottoman Empire, although it bred a wave of internal conflicts in the Empire. Gradually enfranchising minorities, the Ottoman Empire granted in 1856 full citizenship to non-Muslim Ottoman subjects. In the Levant, however, the Egyptians inaugurated such progressive reforms early, during their conquest of the region (1831-1840). The granting

of rights to non-Muslims inadvertently fueled competition and animosities amongst Ottoman social factions.

The age of liberal reform bred bloodshed which had not manifested under pre-19th century Ottoman laws and social restrictions. The *New York Observer and Chronicle* announced in 1856: "The sultan says that he will consult only the capacity and merits of each. Very well. We shall see if these promises are kept."³⁵ The paper appeared doubtful about whether the exercise of such new laws would work in theory as in practice. The article continued:

The promulgation of this decree in Constantinople produced dissatisfaction among the old Turks... They view Islamism as exposed to perish, if the imperial decree is executed, and they would prefer to resist to the last, rather than consent to this fatal act. No doubt, these old Turks have an instinctive warning of the danger which hangs over their head.³⁶

New citizenship laws disrupted social hierarchies dominating for centuries, introducing friction between Ottoman communities.

In the US, the expansion of civil liberties for African-Americans in the late 1860s also bred new manifestations of social tensions. Following the Civil War (1860-1865), three amendments to the US constitution expanded the rights of blacks following the Civil War: the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery (1865), the Fourteenth Amendment (1868), which ensured equal protection of the law to all citizens, and the

³⁵ "REFORMS IN OTTOMAN EMPIRE."
New York Observer and Chronicle (1833-1912); Apr 17, 1856; 34, 16; American Periodicals
pg. 125

³⁶ Ibid.

Fifteenth Amendment (1870) which prohibited government from denying citizens the right to vote.

Yet these federal laws did not end racism or oppression against blacks, nor did they overturn American social hierarchies weighing against the minority. On the contrary, such federal laws catalyzed new grass-roots resistance to blacks— most visibly in the form of lynching, the Ku Klux Klan (begun in 1866) and local Jim Crow laws—all instruments of policing a new social order. The emancipation of blacks left many whites feeling disenfranchised, and the lynching of thousands of blacks represented aggressive attempts to subjugate the minority.

Similarly, the Ottoman reforms of the mid 19th century spurred new public expression of resentments against religious minorities. In 1868, one Muslim Levantine who witnessed the war of 1860 wrote an account of his impressions regarding its roots. Little is known about the life of Muhammad Abu'l'Su'ud al-Hasibi, other than that he wrote a twenty-some page manuscript after the war. This text, however, illuminates the new Levantine friction in the eyes of a Levantine Muslim.

Reflections by Christians on the fighting far outweigh recollections from Druze or Muslims, who had become allies in the war of 1860. Before the 19th century, the Druze were also a subordinate minority in the Ottoman State, although they were legally considered Muslims by the State. Providing a non-Christian perspective of the social strife in the region, Hasibi sees the conflict as driven largely by new emancipation of the Christians:

Every Christian had some relative who had acquired a foreign nationality, in most cases the French. Whoever had a claim against a Muslim would delegate it to one of these foreign nationals. If a Christian quarreled with a Muslim, regardless who the latter may be, he would say: "I am the subject of such-and-such a Power" ...

The Christians of Damascus used to be required to pay the jizya... They continued to do so until the Sublime State exempted them from them from the jizya... [Then] the Europeans gained free access to Syria and began to put the ideas into the heads of the Christians. They would tell them, for example: 'The [reforms have made] the Muslims and Christians one, as God created them. Why should not Christians dess like Muslims?' So it came about that when a Christian quarreled with a Muslim, the Christian would fling back at the Muslim any insults the latter used, and even add to them. If they brought their case before the government it would favor the Christian...³⁷

Hasibi's account references legal changes in the Empire, as he alludes to the "jizya," or the tax Christians and Jews paid as residents of the Ottoman State, a requirement that never applied to the Druze, or to other Muslims and a levy lifted as minorities became citizens of the Ottoman Empire.³⁸ Whereas Ottoman Muslims were legally superior in previous years, Hasibi sees Christians as the new masters of the Empire. He even seen Christians as supreme in the eyes of the Ottoman law.

The fighting of 1860, however, was not a religious war, as Hasibi stresses. This point becomes obvious in historical recollection as well, given the number of Christian-villages on Mount Lebanon which were left completely unscathed by the surrounding conflict.³⁹ Pre-existing relationship between Druze and Muslims and Christians may have

³⁷ Salibi, Kamal, "The 1860 Upeaval in Damascus as Seen by al-Sayyid Muhammad Abu'l-Su'ud al-Hasibi, Notable and Later Naqib al-Ashraf of the City," in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*, ed. Polk and Chambers, pg 185-202

³⁸ Donner, Fred McGraw, *The Early Islamic Conquests*, Princeton University Press, 1981, p 251

³⁹ For example, see Afif Tannous's description of Bishmizzeen. Tannous, Afif, "The Village in the National Life of Lebanon," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Apr., 1949), pp. 151-163, also Tannous, Afif "Group Behavior in the Village Community of Lebanon," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (Sep., 1942), pp. 231-239

benefitted these villages and sheltered them from attack. Neither did all Muslims or Druze fight Christians. On the contrary, at least one prominent Muslim even saved Christians, and Hasibi specifically alludes to the Muslim Abdul Qadir El Djezairi (1808 – 1883), an Algerian religious leader residing in Damascus at the time who risked his own life, which he came close to losing, in efforts to save an estimated 12,000 Christians from imminent death. The British consul in Damascus, Charles Henry Churchill, published a book about the honorable Qadir seven years following Qadir's defense of Christians:

He induced his immediate neighbours to vacate their abodes in order to give shelter to the unhappy fugitives... Not a hair on their head should be touched, he said, while he was alive... he parlayed with the [Druze and Muslim] Sheikhs, had reasoned with them, and by his personal influence and his persuasive arguments, had succeeded in turning them aside from their bloody errand.⁴⁰

Qadir was an anti-colonial fighter who had been exiled in the Levant for his role in fighting the French, who had conquered Algeria in 1830.⁴¹ In Damascus, Qadir protected Christians in his home, and in village and city wells. "The devotion of Abd-el-Kader to the Christian cause, has called forth commendation from all quarters," noted one source of the man who was revered by Moslems as by non-Muslims.⁴² Napoleon II, Abraham Lincoln and the Pope corresponded with Qadir, and he earned a town—Elkader—in Iowa named in his honor.⁴³

⁴⁰ Churchill, Charles Henry, *The Life of Abdel Kader, Ex-Sultan of the Arabs of Algeria: Written From His Own Dictation, and Comp. From Other Authentic Sources*, London Chapman and Hall, 1867, pg 315-316

⁴¹ *The Massacres in Syria: a Faithful Account of the Cruelties and Outrages*, pg. 70

⁴² *Ibid.*, 92

⁴³ Kiser, John W, *Commander of the Faithful, the Life and Times of Emir Abd El-Kader: A Story of True Jhad*, monkish Book Publishing Company, 2008

Although Hasibi focuses on the new legal reforms elevating Christian prominence in the region, this new stature of Christians did not derive solely from mid-19th century Ottoman reforms. New economic opportunities fueled the rising status of Christians in the Empire as well.⁴⁴ In the 19th century, new trade brought foreigners into the Levant. "At [the] period [of Egyptian occupation in 1831-1840] there were barely three or four European families established [in Beirut]," wrote Habeeb Risk Allah in his *The Thistle and the Cedar of Lebanon* (1853).⁴⁵ Risk Allah described Beirut's growth in the early 1840s, before relocating to England in 1847 for medical school. Of the changing situation in the region, he writes:

an English vessel only occasionally touched on the port; now, merchants, artisans (sic), and shopkeepers, from all parts of Europe have flocked into the town; and scarcely a week passes by without three or more vessels arriving in the roads from different parts of Europe. The roadstead presents a gay appearance on Sunday, when all the different vessels display the ensigns of their respective nations, and corresponding flags are hoisted from the tops of the consulates on shore. English, French, Sardinian, Austrian, American, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish ships are daily arriving at, or sailing out of the port, bringing manufactures from Manchester, colonial produce from London, sugar from Hamburg, assorted cargoes from France and Italy, and numberless requisites and necessaries from other parts of the world; whilst they export from Beyrout, silk reeled in the many factories situated in the immediate neighborhood and on Lebanon, grain from the interior, [and] raw silk...The population is rapidly increasing, the wealth augmenting, new firms are being established, fresh channels of commerce discovered, houses are being built, gardens enclosed, grounds purchased and planted, till the once quiet, secluded, and almost desolated Beyrout, many of whose decayed and dilapidated ruins crumbled into dust under the severe shocks of the great earthquake of 1821, has been rapidly metamorphosed into a pleasant and flourishing town, replete with handsome buildings and luxuriant gardens, presenting, as viewed from sea, one of

⁴⁴ Waldmeier, Theophilus, *The autobiography of Theophilus Waldmeier, missionary : being an account of ten years' life in Abyssinia ; and sixteen years in Syria*, London : S.W. Partridge & Co. ; Leominster : The Orphans' Printing Press, [1886?], pg 155

⁴⁵ Risk Allah, *The Thistle and The Cedar of Lebanon*, 52-53

the handsomest marine pictures possible for the pencil of the painter to depict, or the lay of the poet to celebrate.⁴⁶

Within his four-hundred page book, Risk Allah details how the Levant-- formerly a land of minimal attraction to Europeans, has attracted broad interests from foreigners.

Besides the militarization of the Maronites in 1840, Egyptian rule in the Levant physically expanded Beirut's harbor, an enlargement and modernization that allowed steamships into the city, transforming the Levant into an international gateway, "a commercial sea-port...[one almost surpassing] in every sense Smyrna, and even Stamboul [Istanbul]," as Risk Allah noted.⁴⁷

The massive urban project in Beirut paralleled other infrastructural expansions, especially in Egypt. Before sending his son to conquer the Levant, Egypt's Mohammad Ali (1805-1849), for example, modernized the port city of Alexandria in 1820.⁴⁸ Such reforms continued with Mohammad Ali's great-great grandson, Ismail Pasha (1830-1895), who opened Egypt's Suez Canal in 1869, after a ten year mega-construction costing thousands of Egyptian lives.⁴⁹ As the development of Alexandria and the Suez Canal signaled the changing economic landscape of Egypt, so too did Beirut's expansion signal the Levant's metamorphosis. A French-built road between Beirut and Damascus followed in 1856, and other minor roads appeared, interconnecting Levantine villages to each other.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Risk Allah, 53

⁴⁸ The Mahmoudiyah Canal in Alexandria was remodeled starting in 1817, and completed in 1820

⁴⁹ Karabell, Zachary, *Parting the Desert: The Creation of the Suez Canal*, Random House

Entering the Eastern Mediterranean in 1835, steam navigation spurred the subsequent regional transportation expansion.⁵⁰ Before steamships, the voyage from Beirut to Marseilles typically exceeded a month, depending on weather conditions. Two hundred tons was the limit for cargo on sail ships. The industrial nineteenth century permitted more than ten times as much cargo transported almost ten times as fast.⁵¹ The result would be first the increase of trade in the region, and subsequently the mass migration of Levantines who exploited the rising technology of the steamships to make money abroad.

Steamships facilitated international treaties, furthering foreign penetration of the Levant. In 1838, the Ottoman Empire promised France access to

all products, without exception, of the land or of the country's industries, either for internal commerce or for exportation. The Sublime Porte formally pledges itself to abolish all monopolies on agricultural products and on any other production within its territory. Likewise, it also renounces the custom of the *tezkere* [tax] exacted from local authorities for the purchase of this merchandise or the transport of it from one place to another when it was bought.⁵²

The new trade agreements increased the French presence in the Levant, inviting a new tide of French goods, people and capital favoring Christians over Muslims or Druze.

By 1866, of approximately 400,000 tons of cargo which entered Beirut, about 75% on steamships.⁵³

⁵⁰ Chevallier, Dominique, "Western Development and Eastern Crisis in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Syria Confronted with the European Economy," in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*, pg 206

⁵¹ Ibid, 205-206

⁵² Ibid, 208

⁵³ Ibid, 207

The new trade also furthered infrastructural changes in the Levantine landscape. "Around us it is hardly the Orient any more: nondescript landscapes and houses, telegraph wires along a road where carriages and coaches pass," described the French novelist Pierre Loti (1850–1923) upon visiting Beirut around 1895, acknowledging the changing physical appearance of Mount Lebanon.⁵⁴ "[The"] French road is... a splendid specimen... as smooth as a billiard table, crossing mountain, valley, and plain over a total distance of seventy-two miles," wrote Lady Isabel Burton, of approximately the same scene, which transformed in the 19th century into something unrecognizable.⁵⁵ Some decades later, the British diplomat and writer Robin Fedden (1908–77) described the "Beirut-Damascus road [that] crawls over a pass in the Lebanon Mountains. Between the snow-capped ranges on either side, it lies as smooth as velvet a pastoral invitation."⁵⁶ Previously, travelling from Beirut to Damascus took some ten days. By the end of the 19th century, steamships transported Levantines to New York, Sao Paulo, or Buenos Aires within this time-frame. For a Beiruti to reach New York in the early 20th century may have taken about the same time as for a Beiruti to reach Damascus a century earlier, an indication that time and geographical distances were radically changing.⁵⁷

The budding Arabic printing presses of the 19th century accompanied the new transportation infrastructure, feeding new information—often about distant lands—to previously distanced Levantines. Transportation advancements—including a rail

⁵⁴ Gorton, *Lebanon: Through Writers' Eyes*, 144

⁵⁵ Burton, Isabel, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine, and the Holy Land*, 17

⁵⁶ Gorton, *Lebanon Through Writers' Eyes*, 151

⁵⁷ Kayat, *A Voice from Lebanon, with the Life and Travels of Asaad Y. Kayat*, pg 70

transport between Beirut and Damascus opening in 1895—built also by the French—facilitated the communications revolution, as new books, newspapers and magazines spread throughout the region. Mohammad Ali's weekly newspaper *al-Waqa'i`a al-Masriya* (Egyptian Affairs, established 1828) was the first Arabic newspaper in the world. Although its issues may not have reached Lebanon, indigenous papers soon sprouted in the region. *Hadikat al-Akhbar* (*The News Garden* in English), the first daily newspaper in the country, began circulating in 1858.

The rise of the Levantine economy came at the heels of the booming European economy. The term “Industrial Revolution” was first coined in 1799, although industrialization was just beginning.⁵⁸ Following the Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815), new communications inventions including the Morse Code in 1838, the telephone in 1876, and radio in 1900, all interconnecting geographies, as did steamships and railroads. Hungry for raw-material fabrics to feed its emerging textile manufacturing industry, France became the world's leading importer of Levantine silk—a product that had since the 16th century been exported from the Levant, although in smaller quantities. Before 1840, silk amounted to a fraction of total Levantine exports.⁵⁹ In contrast, by the 1880s, silk became the country's leading export, and about 80% of the cultivable land on Mount Lebanon became dedicated to it.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Osterhammel, Jurgen, *The Transformation of the World*, Princeton University Press, p. 638

⁵⁹ Gates, Carolyn, *The Merchant Republic of Lebanon*, pg 12

⁶⁰ "House" to "Goddess of the House": Gender, Class, and Silk in 19th-Century Mount Lebanon Akram Fouad Khater, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Aug., 1996), pp. 325-348

The 19th century witnessed a silk boom internationally. The first factories for silk production opened in the US in Connecticut in 1829, and in 1843, the Levant acquired its first mechanized silk factory in the village of Btater, established by a French-man in the Matn district, Mount Lebanon.⁶¹ Other new factories followed—including one near Shimlan, where Hitti's father worked, launched in the 1840s.⁶² By 1867, Mount Lebanon boasted no less than 67 silk factories— all under the jurisdiction of the French consulate. By 1893, Mount Lebanon had 150 silk factories. The silk factory employees were roughly 70% Maronites, 25% other Christian sects and 5% Druze. These figures suggest the presence of 95% Christian, 5% Druze, and practically 0% Muslim in the silk factories of the late 19th century. Despite a fare portion of the population of Mount Lebanon being Muslim-- with the 1932 census of Lebanon claiming the country's demographics at more than 50% Muslims-- Muslims are completely missing from these figures.⁶³

Contrary to these figures, other sources reveal that a number of Muslim families did benefit from the silk industry expansion as well—specifically, the 'Itani, Agharr, Barbir, Bayhum families, etc.⁶⁴ Still, these were mostly established families, unlike Christians who rose from near poverty to claim political and economic emancipation by the second half of the 19th century. As significantly, the Druze and the Muslims who did benefit from the evolution of the silk trade benefitted as individuals or as families and not

⁶¹ For silk in the US, see *The silk culture in the United States*, pgs-9-10; for first silk-factory, see Khater, Akram, "'House' to 'Goddess of the House', pp. 325-348

⁶² Fawaz, Leila, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*, pg 95

⁶³ Lebanon census: Maktabi, Rania, "The Lebanese Census of 1932 Revisited. Who are the Lebanese?" in *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Nov. 99, Vol 26, Issue 2, pg 219

⁶⁴ Fawaz, Leyla, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*, 85-102

as religious communities, as did the Christians.⁶⁵ In reality, the vast majority of Christians by the 20th century remained poor—as Hitti's own family illustrated. Still, the collective privileges of Christians often distinguishing Christians in the eyes of non-Christians. The perceived preference for Christians by European employers diverged from the real position of Christians, although perceptions were more important than realities in determining social sentiments.

When fighting broke out in 1860, it was accompanied by rampant looting. “Books, bills, bonds, cash, jewels, goods, house, furniture, clothes, everything plundered,” noted one unnamed survivor, his account published in 1860.⁶⁶ The few existing reports of positions of Druze fighters acknowledged Maronite 'wealth' as driving the attacks: "It is well known to the whole world, and the ears of people in all lands have been filled with the report.... of their great numbers and wealth," read one Druze account gathered in consular reports around 1860.⁶⁷ The Maronites had once been a Christian religious community of little or no political or financial power. With greater European penetration in the region, they appeared "of great numbers and wealth," a description which would have surprised previous generations of Maronites.

The silk industry in the Levant rose so swiftly after 1840 that Risk Allah devoted about twenty pages of his book relating it in detail: "each one takes her basket, puts it on her head, or loads her donkey, and the gay cavalcade moves homeward, singing some

⁶⁵ Ibid
Tarābulṣī, Fawwāz, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 46

⁶⁶ *The Massacres in Syria: a Faithful Account of the Cruelties and Outrages*, 1860, 87

⁶⁷ *The Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon, 1830-1861* pg 546; this document is entitled "Druze Account of the Late Events in Lebanon"

plaintiff ditty; and thus ends a day which I know many of my Western readers would be not a little interested to witness," Risk Allah wrote.⁶⁸ The evocative pastoral scene of women working in the silk industry might seem romantic. The female labor practices he portrays, however, were a major transgression for the religious community. Before the 19th century, Maronite women were disallowed from working in the company of foreign men. By 1850, however, women began to be employed in silk factories. The acceptance of their new status was a sign of seismic shifts in Maronite cultural values.⁶⁹

Maronites had experienced segregation by gender in previous centuries. The Vatican representative, Father Dandini visited Mount Lebanon and published a profile of the Maronites in 1680:

They do not inhabit great cities and magnificent palaces, but little villages, whereof there is a great number, and in divers places. Their houses are mean and little worth, not but that they have noble and rich persons amongst them, but they are tyrannized so over by the Turks, that they are constrained to shun all manner of grandeur and ostentation; they make themselves poor, that they may shun ill treatment, and they affect also to go meanly glad. Their habit differs not from that of the other Levantines, which consists of a turban and little vest that descends down to the knees, or to the middle of the leg... they go ordinarily with their legs naked... They use no tables, nor stools to sit on, but instead thereof sit down cross-legged upon mats or carpets spread upon the ground...[they make] no use of napkins, knives, nor so much as forks... and when they drink, the glass goes around...

[The women] wear upon their heads a kind of linen veil, which covers all their hair both before and behind. If they meet by chance a man they do not know, they shun him, or cover their faces with their veil...They use not to curl their hair, nor to paint their faces, neither can you see other the like vanity amongst them; which is so much the more commendable in them as the contrary is blame-worthy in our European dames.

⁶⁸ Risk Allah, *The Thistle and the Cedar of Lebanon*, 366

⁶⁹ Ibid; House" to "Goddess of the House": Gender, Class, and Silk in 19th-Century Mount Lebanon Author(s): Akram Fouad Khater Source: *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Aug., 1996), pp. 325-348

When they come to church, they place not themselves amongst the men, nor yet where they may see their faces, for all the men sit at the upper part of the church, and they stay near to the door for to get first out as soon as service is done, to the end they may not be seen...There is no men stirs from his place till they all gone forth. The country is altogether free from debauched and common women, so that you can hear there no manner discourse of adulteries, or other the like vices, which is a particular favour of God.⁷⁰

Father Dandini observed that the Maronites shunned pomp and pageantry, and were worthy of example on account of their modesty—saluting the undecorated Maronite women in particular. Visiting the region about a hundred years later, the French traveler the Comte de Volney (1757–1820) similarly affirmed the humility of the Maronites, and stressed their frugality. Maronite elites and peasants both manifested similar modesty. The community rejected foreign integration on account of security concerns, as the Comte de Volney confessed:

They all live dispersed in the mountains, in villages, hamlets, and even detached houses... The whole nations consists of cultivators. Every man improves the little domain he possesses, or farms, with his own hands. Even the Sheikhs live in the same manner, and are only distinguished from the rest by a bad Pelifs, a horse, and a few slight advantages in food and lodging; they all live frugally, frugally, without any enjoyments, but also with few wants, as they are little acquainted with the inventions of luxury...[The] nation is poor, but no one wants necessaries; and if beggars are sometimes seen, they come rather from the sea-coast than the country itself... Each village has its chapel and its priest, and each chapel its bell: a thing unheard of in any other part of Turkey. The Maronites are vain on this privilege, and that they may not be deprived of it, will not suffer a Mohometan to live among them. They assume to themselves, also, the privilege of wearing the Green Turban, which, except in their territories, would cost a Christian his life.⁷¹

The persecution of the Maronites both preceded and followed their 12th century union with the Vatican. The Egyptian Mamluks, for example, waged several wars on the

⁷⁰ Dandini, *A Voyage to Mount Libanus*, 290-291

⁷¹ Volney, C-F, *Travels Through Syria and Egypt, in the Years 1783, 1784, and 1785 ...*, Volume 2, pg 17-21

Maronites in the 13th and 14th century, going so far as to capture and burn alive the Maronite Patriarch, Daneil el-Hadshiti.⁷² Before the 19th century, the Maronites not only lacked worldly pleasures—they rejected such pleasures, suggesting that their intellectual horizon avoided material goods or the acquisition of financial wealth. Pious, poor, plain, and rural, the Maronites maintained a distance even from other Levantine Christian communities—an alienation calculated to secure their physical protection, and to ensure the protection of their religious traditions.

Yet by the late 19th century, the Maronites appeared intermingling with other peoples of diverging origins and religious backgrounds. Thousands of Maronites lived in cosmopolitan Beirut, and many of those who did not live in Beirut absorbed news from the big city, suggesting the urbanization of the Maronites. Even in the villages surrounding Beirut, Maronite women worked in the industrial work-force, signaling the rising value of money which contended with the value of religious decorum. In 1866, Church administrators formally complained to the French Consul about the practice of employing men and women to work side-by-side in French-owned silk factories in the Levant.⁷³ The practice nevertheless grew apace, and by the early 1880s, 12,000 unmarried women and girls were working in factories. "[Men] and women, boys and girls, are engaged day and night in [the silk harvest]," noted the Swiss Theophilus Waldmeier in his recollections of life in Mount Lebanon, published in 1886.⁷⁴

⁷² Harb, Antoine Khoury Harb, *The Maronites, History and Constants*, 88

⁷³ House" to "Goddess of the House": Gender, Class, and Silk in 19th-Century Mount Lebanon Author(s): Akram Fouad Khater Source: *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Aug., 1996)

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, *The Autobiography of Theophilus Walmeier*, 266

The work of women in silk factories represented a major transgression for Maronites, yet perhaps the most publicized offence in Maronite history in the early 19th century came in the 1820s, in the Shidyaq family, one of the leading families of Maronite intellectuals. At least two Shidyaqs studied in the Maronite College in Rome (Francis, Elias).⁷⁵ Faris Shidyaq, would become one of the century's leading Arabic writers, known to any scholar of 19th century Arabic letters.

Yet the early 1820s saw As'ad Shidyaq (1797–1830), Faris Shidyaq's older brother, convert to Protestantism. After relocating to Beirut, and becoming an Arabic teacher, As'ad came into contact with the American missionaries around 1823, and converted—the first native convert known to embrace Protestantism.

As'ad's conversion followed his own initial resistance to the American missionaries. In Beirut, however, he began to doubt the Maronite Scriptural interpretation, especially

the very horrible *Neronian* doctrine, *that it is our duty to destroy heretics*. Now every one knows, that whoever does not believe that the pope is infallible, is a heretic in his opinions.

This doctrine is not merely that it is *allowable* to kill heretics, but that we are *bound* to it. From this I was more established in my convictions against the doctrines of the pope, and saw that they were the doctrines of the ravenous beast.⁷⁶

The perceived strictness of the Maronite Church towards heretics ironically exacerbated his own deviance, and branded As'ad a heretic. Rather than simply practicing his new Protestantism privately, however, As'ad continued to correspond with Maronites, going

⁷⁵ Jumayyil, Nasir, *Les échanges culturels entre les Maronites et l'Europe : du Collège maronite de Rome (1584) au Collège de 'Ayn-Warqa (1789)*

⁷⁶ Shidyaq, Assad, *Brief memoir of Asaad Esh Shidiak*, Boston: : Crocker & Brewster, printers., 1834. pg. 3-4

so far as to meet with the Maronite Patriarch to explain his new religious views.

Bewildered by the presence of such a notable Maronite assuming Protestantism, the Patriarch recognized As'ad as a heretic—a charge previously unknown in 19th century Maronite history. Once a prominent Maronite, As'ad earned the name 'Rab Shayul,' or 'Lord Of hell.'⁷⁷ As'ad persisted nevertheless:

[The Patriarch] asked me what I wished, whether money, or office, or whatever it might be, promising to gratify me, speaking of his love to me, and of his great interest in my welfare. These professions I knew to be sincere, but they are according to the world, and not according to the Gospel. I assured him that I wanted nothing of the things he had mentioned; that I was dismissive and obedient to him, and that if he thought of me that I had taken anything from the English, he was welcome to shut in my chamber as in a prison, and take from me everything that I possessed... The bishop and priest then begged from me in presence of the patriarch, to say that my faith was like that of the Romish church. I replied that I feared to tell a falsehood...

The Patriarch's allusion to money suggests the new relevance of finance, an influence noticeably absent in the Levant in previous years. The Patriarch is able to understand the attraction of money, although he is unable to comprehend As'ad's conversion to Protestantism. Not only had a Maronite converted to Protestantism—the convert had been a Shidyahq. Rather than debating with As'ad over Scripture, the clergy apprehended As'ad, confined him to a chamber, tortured him to death (1830), and disposed his body into the sea.

The end of As'ad's life did not mean the end of As'ad's legacy. As'ad's younger brother, Faris Shidyahq (1804 –1887), continued his older brother's transgression. Faris also came under the influence of the American and British missionaries in Beirut in the

⁷⁷ Makdisi, Ussama, *Artillery of Heaven*, Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 2008, Kindle edition, location 81

1820s. Fleeing to Egypt in 1825, and converting to Protestantism while in Egypt, Faris broke from tradition as well. For facilitating As'ad's confinement and death, Faris Shidyaq never forgave his other brother, Tannous, and his cousin Boulos Massaad—who later became Maronite Patriarch (1854-1890).⁷⁸

In Egypt, Faris Shidyaq became managing editor of the Arabic newspaper, *Al Waqa'eh Al Masriah* ('Egyptian Affairs'), the world's first Arabic newspaper. Faris Shidyaq's role in heading this weekly paper earned for him the moniker of 'father of Arabic journalism.'⁷⁹ As early as 1855, Faris publicly criticized the Maronite Church to which he had once belonged, and whose elders tortured his brother to death. Faris's public outcry against the religious order might have been even bolder than his conversion to Protestantism, as the latter had at least been a more personal and private affair. In his writings, Faris publicly protested that if his brother committed a crime, it was for the ruler, and not the Church to punish him, a position that became even more appropriate the following year, as the Ottoman Empire extended citizenship to Christian subjects.⁸⁰ This extension meant that Maronite clerics had killed an Ottoman subject, committing a crime theoretically against the Ottoman State.

Faris would relocate a number of times in his life. Following his move from Lebanon to Egypt, he moved to Malta, and subsequently to England, and later to Tunis, and back to the Levant. In England during the 1850s, he helped the Cambridge Orientalist

⁷⁸ Dib, Pierre (2001). *Histoire des Maronites: L'église maronite du XVIe siècle à nos jours, Volume 3*. Librairie Orientale. pp. 235–236

⁷⁹ Shidyaq, Ahmad Faris; Davies, Humphrey, *Leg Over Leg or The Turtle in the Tree, Volume One: Concerning the Fāriyāq, what manner of creature might he be*, 2013, see forward by Rebecca Johnson IX-XXX

⁸⁰ Yared, Nazik Saba, *Secularism and the Arab World*, 24

Samuel Lee (1783-1842) translate a number of Christian texts into Arabic. These translations rendered Scripture accessible to Arabic readers. Amongst these was an Arabic translation of the Bible. The language of Scripture for Maronites was traditionally Syriac and not Arabic, and for Greek Orthodox was traditionally Greek. Because Arabic was not the standard liturgical language for Christians, native Christian communities had to learn these foreign languages in order to read Scripture. Most Christians, however, had superficial knowledge of these languages. Faris Shidyaq's translations of the Bible gave Arabic readers an opportunity to independently grapple with Christian Scripture in Arabic, which was more indigenous to most Christian Arabic-speakers than Syriac or Greek.⁸¹ With the help of Shidyaq, the Protestants helped democratize knowledge about Christianity, allowing the Bible to be read by individuals without the need to consult clerics concerning its meaning. Select Christian publications in Arabic existed in Mount Lebanon predating the Protestant presence (less than forty works), yet the Protestants were responsible for promoting and disseminating the Arabic Bible. Translations of the Bible in Arabic also predated the Protestant arrival in the 1820s, although such works appear not to have been distributed in the Levant, and were commissioned by the Vatican.⁸² The distribution of the Bible in Arabic undermined the power of clerics to interpret the Scripture's meaning.

⁸¹ Shidyaq, Lee, etc, *New Testament in Arabic*, London : Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1851; Shidyaq, Lee, etc, *Psalter in Arabic*, 1850; *Kutub al-Muqaddasah : wa-hiya Kutub al-'Ahd al-'Atiq qad turjimat hadithan min al-lughah al-'Ibrānīyah al-aşlīyah wa-Kutub al-'Ahd al-Jadīd li-Rabbina Yasū' al-Masīh, qad turjimat hadithan min al-lughah al-Yūnānīyah al-aşlīyah ilā al-'Arabīyah bi-nafaqat al-Jam'īyah al-Inkilīzīyah al-ma'rūfah bi-Jam'īyat Tarqīyat al-Ma'ārif al-Masīhīyah*, Society for Promoting christian Knowledge, 1857-1861

⁸² Before the Samuel Lee/Shidyaq Bible entitled, *Kutub al-Muqaddasah* ('The Holy Books' Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge), 1857-1861, there was the 1671 Bible undertaken by Sergius Risi and Vincenzo Candido,

The subject of the death of As'ad Shidyah did not end with the life of the once devout Maronite. In 1860, another distinguished Maronite, Butrus al-Bustani (1819–1883), wrote a book *Qissat As'ad al-Shidyah* (The Story of As'ad al-Shidyah, 1860). Bustani was a graduate of the monastery of 'Ayn Waraq and had more than ten family who graduated from the Maronite College in Rome ('Abdallah, Ass'ad, Sebli, Daher, Elias, Hattar, Kanán, Yusuf, Girgis, Tanios, Girgis, Antun, Yusuf).⁸³ Working with the Protestant missionaries, Bustani would become the 'father of the Arabic encyclopedia,' producing in the 1870s *Al-Muhit al Muhit* ('The Ocean of Oceans'), and later an Arabic dictionary *dairat al-ma'arif* (dictionary of knowledge). Such works further opened up new non-theological oriented knowledge that Arabic readers of all religious denominations could enjoy. Perhaps the more notable transgression than the cultivation of such knowledge, however, was that Bustani also converted to Protestantism, likewise branding him a heretic.

The story of the Shidyahs and of Bustani epitomizes wider tensions in the 19th century Levant, as the role of Maronite clergy gave way to new influences amongst the populace-- and new, non-theological authorities. In reality, native conversions to Protestantism were rare; of well over a million people resident in Mount Lebanon by 1900, the number of conversions in the Levant in particular did not exceed hundreds, and

entitled *Bible Sacra Arabica*, by Catholic Church, Congregatio de Propaganda Fide; Publisher: Romæ, anno M DC LXXI. : Typis eiusdem Sacræ Congregat. de Propaganda Fide., 1671

⁸³ Jumayyil, Nasir, *Les échanges culturels entre les Maronites et l'Europe : du Collège maronite de Rome (1584) au Collège de 'Ayn-Warqa (1789)*

no recorded conversion took place from a student of the Syrian Protestant College.⁸⁴ Perhaps a better sense of the success in converting native Christians to Protestantism is can be gauged by the fact that at present, about 1% of Christians in the Levant self-identify as Protestants.⁸⁵ For Protestant missionaries, however, cases of conversion to Protestantism made good literary chronicles, providing hope and encouragement for future missionary work. A number of first-hand works on converts may give the impression that conversions to Protestantism were widespread—an intention that was deliberate. Converts usually earned gained the spotlight, and a platform. The publication of a work like Jessup Harris' *The Setting of the Crescent and the Rising of the Cross* (1898), about the conversion of Kamil Abdul Messiah, “a Syrian convert from Islam to Christianity,” indicates that conversions were trophies, and that there was not only a need but a responsibility to uplift future missionaries with such a story.⁸⁶

On the other hand, whereas religious conversion to Protestantism was not widespread, social conversions were standard, as new values began to infiltrate once stalwartly religious Levantine communities. Tens of thousands of Maronites found themselves in Beirut by the mid-19th century, and the new interactions challenged the power of the Maronite Church as the one and only authority in their lives. Some—like the Shidyqs—had come to innocently aide the missionaries, displaying an openness and a

⁸⁴ Anderson, Betty, *The American University of Beirut: Arab Nationalism and Liberal Education*, 2011, pg 56-74

⁸⁵ Lebanon's Geography: Christian Sects, see www.ghzai.de/christ.html accessed March 1, 2015

⁸⁶ Jessup, Henry Harris, *The setting of the crescent and the rising of the cross, or, Kamil Abdul Messiah : a Syrian convert from Islam to Christianity*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1898

curiosity that culminated with religious conversion. Others had arrived for work opportunities—in silk factories, in the ship dock, in the new restaurant or stores opening up in the region, or perhaps in the schools which provided resources and an education complete with subjects like science, mathematics, and European literatures. Still, others fled to Beirut during the fighting between 1840 and 1860, as Beirut with its heavy foreign presence offered protection from sectarian violence, a security unknown in the dangerous mountain-range. More than 30,000 refugees from around the region arrived in Beirut as the fighting escalated in 1860 alone—mostly Maronites.⁸⁷

Following 1860, more villagers arrived in Beirut than even before. By the eve of WWI, Beirut's population exceeded 200,000.⁸⁸ The War of 1860 culminated in a treaty signed by the Ottoman Empire, France, Austria, Great Britain, and Prussia, allowing 12,000 foreign soldiers to Lebanon in the subsequent years-- about half of whom were French-- furnishing the city with a sense of needed protection after the war.⁸⁹ In Beirut, opportunities awaited, possibilities enlivened by the new transportation and communication networks, and material richness from abroad. “I tell you, the world in your late grandfather’s and father’s day was not as it is now. In their day, there were no steamboats or railway tracks to bring close far-off tracts and create new pacts, to connect the disconnected, and make accessible what was once protected,” wrote Faris Shidyaq in 1855, underscoring the new times of the steamship, the railroads, and the Arabic printing press, which were all rearranging notions of time, place, and distance: “Then, one didn’t

⁸⁷ *The Massacres in Syria: a Faithful Account of the Cruelties and Outrages*, 84

⁸⁸ Kassir, Samir, *Beirut*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010, 80-96

⁸⁹ *The Massacres in Syria: a Faithful Account of the Cruelties and Outrages*, 84-85

have to learn many languages. It could be said of anyone who knew a few words of Turkish—Welcome, my lord! How nice to see you, my lord!—that he’s make a fine interpreter at the Imperial court.”⁹⁰ In a time when much seemed closer, the past seemed very different.

In 1860, while in the service of the Bey of Tunisia and after translating a slew of Christian literature into Arabic, Shidyaq even converted to Islam. Acquiring the name ‘Ahmad,’ Shidyaq epitomized the radical new possibilities of the day—possibilities that would have been as alien to previous generations as the sight of steamships, trains, or Arabic publications in profusion.

The new economic influences in the 19th century Levant, as well as the popularization of the Arabic printing press, drove a collective reinvention of the region. The first book of a non-religious nature printed in Arabic, the 1836 *Kitab Fasl Al-Khitab Fi Usual Lughat al-a’rab* (‘The Conclusive Discourse on the Rules of the Arab’s Language), written by the Greek Catholic Nasif al-Yaziji (1800-1871), represented a milestone in the trend to push religion from the public to the private sphere. The work made no reference to religion. Before the ‘Conclusive Discourse,’ individual religious communities printed their own books, which focused on religious matters. ‘The Conclusive Discourse’ ignores religious authorities completely, focusing instead on the knowledge at hand. Aimed at teaching schoolchildren Arabic, ‘The Conclusive Discourse’ was a grammar-book addressing knowledge of Arabic letters in clinical, non-

⁹⁰ Shidyaq, Ahmad Faris; Davies, Humphrey, *Leg Over Leg or The Turtle in the Tree, Volume One*, pg XI

devout terms, divorcing religion from the study of its subject.⁹¹ Its publication on the American printing press in Beirut illustrated the missionaries' tactics of minimizing the

Biographies of 19th century Levantines further evidence the transformation of the Levant. The parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents of Shuayfat-born Greek Orthodox Christian Habeeb Risk Allah (born circa 1818), who wrote *The Thistle and the Cedar of Lebanon* (1853), were likely born in the same village, if not in the same house. They may have worked in the same profession, married within set families, and perhaps never have left Shuayfat. Surely, skipping Church was unthinkable. Had anyone asked Risk Allah's grandparents where their progeny would be in subsequent generations, the answer would have been obvious: in Shuayfat. The tempo of their lives had been stable and standard.

Yet, born around 1818, Risk Allah became a doctor—travelling to England to get his education—an unprecedented fete. Following his studies in English, he returned to the Levant in aid of the region—a trajectory which his forefathers would have found incomprehensible. His co-religionist Assaad Kayat (b. 1811), eventually became a British Consul in Jaffa. This upward mobility and reinvention was not only extraordinary on account of its accomplishments, but on account of Kayat's origins.

Arabic printing catapulted in the 19th century alongside the new foreigners arriving in the region. Some of these foreigners, like the Americans and the Jesuits, enjoyed their own printing presses. Publications on a slew of topics exposed Levantines to new subjects and ways of thinking. Yet multiple types of literacy emerged in the 19th

⁹¹ *The Beginnings of Printing in the Near and Middle East: Jews, Christian, and Muslims*, pg. 28

century— not simply the ability to read and write, but a money-mindedness that had not dominated previously. George Haddad, a Levantine immigrant to the US who would publish an autobiography in English in 1916, described his first association with money, which itself became an object of veneration in the Levant in the 19th century. Haddad's autobiography, *Mt. Lebanon to Vermont*, contains a number of Syrian recipes, and was probably not written for the sake of mass exposure, but to impart to his immediate and extended family his origins. In the US, Haddad became a local fixation for the Oriental goods store he started in Vermont. As he confessed in his autobiography, Haddad first learned about money sometime around 1870, thanks to the arrival of foreigners in Mount Lebanon:

When I was about ten years old I was playing with my mates in front of the school when four tourists on horseback stopped and called me to them. They wished to know the way to the 'Arz' and I told them what direction to take and walked along a little way with them. For this they presented me with a coin... worth about forty-two cents. When I reported to my teacher, Mr. Assad, he patted me on the back and told me not to lose the money. After school I ran home and showed it to my mother, who kissed me and told me that she would invite some of my friends for a party to celebrate. My father was also glad... The next evening I had the party, and we enjoyed ourselves with singing and dancing, and games...⁹²

The appreciation of money appears to be a stepping-stone for Haddad's subsequent relocation to the US in 1892. The earning of money with a party may seem uneventful, but Haddad's memory of such an acquisition suggests the new value of this commodity. Relative to Maronite history, the new appreciation of money paralleled the phenomenon of women entering the factory in order to make money. The arrival of foreigners to the

⁹² Haddad, George, *Mt. Lebanon to Vermont; Autobiography of George Haddad*, Rutland, Vt, The Tuttle Co., 1916, p. 13

Levant opened new opportunities for money-making, not simply by working in the silk factory, but also in aiding and translating or exchanging goods with foreigners. If one really wanted to make money, the option was always to find it abroad.

Perhaps the clearest sign of reinvention in the late 19th century Levant was the mass migration—mostly to the Americas. Although the first migrant was Antonio Bishallany (1827-1856), incidentally the first biography Hitti wrote in Arabic (1919), the mass migration would follow the American Civil War. Bishallany was a Maronite peasant who would become the first native Arabic-speaker migrant to be buried anywhere in the Americas—in Brooklyn in particular. Born in the village of Salima, and relocating to Beirut around 1840, Bishallany eventually found employment as the assistant to the Italian consult in Beirut. He purportedly converted to Protestantism after finding a cheap missionary-published Bible in the city, printed by the missionaries. The Maronite clergy placed restrictions on reading such Protestant-missionary productions, yet the very prohibitions stimulated Bishallany, who acquired a copy and began to correspond with missionaries soon thereafter. All purportedly in 1855, he converted to Protestantism and relocated to the US for missionary school, hoping subsequently to return to the Levant to convert others. Even before Hitti researched Bishallany's life, the missionaries recorded:

[Early] in 1855, Antonio began to exhibit a strong desire for knowledge, which soon became intense. He began to study by himself, getting from time to time from his friends such aid as they could rend, and if I mistake not, commenced attending [school]

The book which he loved best to read and study was the Bible. If he called upon a friend, and was left alone a few moments, and there was a Bible in the room, he would be found reading it when you entered; and in all probability, after

the usual salutations... he would ask your opinion of some passage of Scripture...⁹³

The major milestone in Bishallany's life may have been his 1855 conversion, although he committed several 'infractions' even before his religious conversion. He bought a Bible, for example, and associated with the Protestants, suggesting that his mind was already set to exploration—probably a consequence of living in Beirut at mid-century. In the Maronite tradition, Bishallany had learned the Biblical Scripture from a young age, but mostly in Syriac. Protestants encouraged him to read a new version of the Bible in Arabic. With the Protestants, Bishallany learned to question much of what was once invisible and unquestionable in his previous religious practice.

Although Bishallany was a pioneer in migrating to the US, he was not a conscious pioneer of such a movement. Nor is there any evidence that future generations of migrants looked to him as a pioneer. Whether any Arabic-speaker in the US even knew of Bishallany before Hitti rediscovered him in the late 1910s is unknown and unlikely. Unlike Bishallany, who died within months of arriving to the US, the mass departures to the Americas owed mostly to other temptations—namely money. Yet in the broader sense, Bishallany and the subsequent migration of Levantines departing the region, as well as Hitti's departure to the US in 1913 shared a commonality: the force driving migration was the new influences challenging a traditional social order in the Levant. Hitti's voyage to the US was funded by the Syrian Protestant College which sought the educational enrichment of its native instructor. Had missionaries not arrived in the Levant

⁹³ Whitehead, Charles, *Sketch of Antonio Bishallany, a Syrian of Mount Lebanon*, American Tract Society, 18..., pg 84

and established the Syrian Protestant College in 1866, Hitti would not only have no benefactor to send him to the US—he would have surely died owing to his donkey accident at age nine.

In contrast to Bishallany and Hitti, the acquisition of financial riches dominates in the accounts of many Levantines who departed for the Americas between 1870 and 1930. In the US, Argentina, Brazil, and elsewhere, Levantine migrants often arrived virtually penniless, and started out as peddlers. They acquired small fortunes by selling dry goods across isolated communities—an occupation that also existed in the Levant at the time, and that appeared a far cry from the Maronite existence of the century before.

The Levantine departures to the Americas constituted roughly 90% Christians. Christians were more likely to travel to Christian lands. Christians also seem to have an upper edge in the Levantine work force, at least the one connected to Europe and foreigners.⁹⁴ Still, the Levantine departures at the turn of the century did not only affect Christians. The remittances arriving from abroad further disturbed a once static order, as did new stories from far-away lands entering the Levant through foreign publications (in Arabic and otherwise), and through personal contacts. Such resonances affected more than simply Christians. Undoubtedly, the departure from the Levant of approximately one third of the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon also left a strong impression on the two thirds who remained.

Besides natives, the economic growth in the Levant in the 19th century had another beneficiary who is often ignored in scholarship of the region's economic ascent,

⁹⁴ See Fawaz, Leila, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*, pgs 85-103

but one deserving special emphasis: the foreign missionary—and especially the Protestants, mostly from the US, the newest and most aggressive missionary presence in the region. Scholarship typically disassociates the rise of 19th century commerce in the Levant and the arrival of the missionaries, as though they are two different subjects. The simultaneity of these two forces, however, was neither accidental nor incidental. These two phenomena worked together in transforming a traditional Levantine social order. Without a robust missionary presence, there would have been a shortage of qualified and educated Arabic-speaking laborers to lead the reforms of the Levant, and without a booming economy, missionaries would not have found students stimulated enough to frequent missionary schools. Missionaries trained native Levantines for the new opportunities in the Levant, and Levantines sought to attend new schools inaugurated by the foreigners so as to qualify for these opportunities. A new economy encouraged new education, and the new education encouraged the new economy.

Hitti's parents sent him to an American school in the hopes of his becoming a civil-style teacher, yet other parents sent their children to missionary establishments in the hopes of becoming traders or translators, secretaries, or even medics—all new 19th century professions in the Levant. Literacy even advanced careers at the silk factory. Attempting to explain the decision of his own parents to send him to an American missionary school, Hitti noted that

[the] source of inspiration may have been Father's immediate superior in the silk factory, the general manager, a Beiruti name Abdullah Qimu. The Khawaja (Mister), as he was commonly called, was the only man dressed in Franji (Frankish, European style) clothes, with a high turbanless red tarboosh and a heavy watch chain dangling from his vest pocket. The Khawaja received four

times as much pay as my Father, who worked four times as hard. Reason: he could write grammatically correct letters and keep books, an achievement in Arabic in view of the wide gap between the written and the spoken forms of language.⁹⁵

The Beirut's prominence at the silk factory indicates the new values in the region, skills which were not necessary in previous years, lacking a booming economy.

Arriving in the region in the 1820s in the hopes of proselytizing native Christians to Protestantism, American missionaries witnessed religious conversions like the Shidyqs and later Bustani and Bishallany, yet these were a misleading start in the missionaries' quest to evangelize the general public. Still, missionaries failed to convert the wider region to Protestantism, although they succeeded in educating substantial numbers of Levantines for business or industry. In 1914, the Missionary Educational Union asked principals about the intentions of native students in attending their educational institutions. None of the fifteen asked responded that it was for reasons of religious tutelage or possible conversion. Practical reasons drove enrollment of native youth in the new Levantine missionary establishments. These practical reasons were expanded economic opportunities.⁹⁶

A 1837 letter from one missionary-wife, Miss Habard, regarding her husband's missionary activities in the Levant, reveals the education missionaries imparted in the region:

⁹⁵ Hitti, unpublished *From Lebanon to Princeton*, Box 32

⁹⁶ Missionary Educational Union, *Deputation Report on Boy's Secondary Schools in Syria and Palestine* (Beirut: Missionary Educational Union, 1914), p. 5.; from dissertation by Scholz, Norbert, *Foreign Education and Indigenous Reaction in Late Ottoman Lebanon*, 51
51 Ibid.

Mr. Hebard's principal attention is directed to the boarding school where we hope to train teachers and preachers of the gospel.... He has, for some time past, been engaged in giving weekly lectures on electricity and pneumatics which are fully attended. With the electrical machine and other philosophical apparatus he performs many interesting experiments which greatly astonish the people. At first they ascribed it all to magic, but he has taken great pains to have it made as simple as possible and they are beginning to *think* and see the reason of things a little. This is a great distinction for this people for they have long believed the most monstrous absurdities and taken everything for granted that was told them by their priests or head men, that they hardly know how to think or judge for themselves. By leading them to inquire into the causes of what they see we hope that this stagnation of mind will be broken up and some dormant powers awaken and brighten through exercise. In this way an interest in the subject of education will, we trust, be excited and we hope also it will lead to inquiries after truth in all its forms.⁹⁷

Within Miss Habard's patronizing suggestion that the native students do not know how to *'think'* (emphasis original), she indicates a new consciousness emerging about electricity, pneumatics, technology, and science. Missionaries introduced subject and skills critical to joining a new expanding work force. Knowledge of electricity, pneumatics, technology, and science could help produce teachers or doctors, electricians or factory managers—all occupations unknown to previous generations of Levantines.

On Hitti's birth year of 1886, the Swiss Quaker missionary Theophilus Waldmeier (1832-1915) provided statistics about schools in Beirut:

⁹⁷ William, Samuel, *Rebecca Williams Hebard of Lebanon, Connecticut, Missionary in Beirut, Syria, and to the Druzes of Mount Lebanon, 1835-1840*, pg 14

Table 3 BEIRUT SCHOOL STATISTICS, source *The Autobiography of Theophilus Waldmeier, Missionary*, pg 170⁹⁸

	Schools	Teachers	Boys	Girls	Total
Protestant schools, high and common	30	116	761	2281	3042
Orthodox Greek	15	33	928	425	1353
Papal Greek (Melchites)	3	11	227		227
Maronites	10	25	820		820
Jewish	3	7	125		125
Jesuit, high and common	14	29	1024		1024
Sisters of Charity	4	31		1110	1110
Sisters of Nazareth	2	18		340	340
Mohammedan	11	23	805		805
Total:	93	295	4770	4156	8926

Of a total of 93 schools in Beirut in 1886, about a third were Protestant schools.

Ironically, the Protestant schools dominated the city, even though the Protestants were the most foreign presence. Protestants had not existed in the Levant in the preceding century. Protestantism was also a relatively new Christian faith, born in the early 16th century as a protest to Church orthodoxy, a break-away from the Catholic Church. In the scheme of history, Jewish, Greek Orthodox, Maronite, Jesuit, and Muslim establishments were centuries older than the Protestant presence. Unlike many of these schools, Protestant establishments in the Levant also welcomed students of all religions—itsself a novelty diverging from more established religious institutions whose tenets were understandably

⁹⁸ Waldmeier, *The autobiography of Theophilus Waldmeier, missionary : being an account of ten years' life in Abyssinia ; and sixteen years in Syria*. London : S.W. Partridge & Co. ; Leominster : The Orphans' Printing Press, 1886

more unbending. About a third of all students attending school in Beirut frequented Protestant schools-- including Muslims, Jews, Christians and Druze, underscoring the prominence of the Protestant presence in Beirut which was inherently cosmopolitan, by virtue of demography.

Before the 19th century, the US had diplomatic representation in the Arabic-speaking lands, and occasional military conflicts with the North African Barbary pirates, dating to the days of the American Revolution (1765 and 1783). Yet the arrival of American missionaries to the Levant represents the first long-term interaction of Americans not associated with the government, with Arabic-speaking cultures. Before concentrating in the Levant in the 1820s, the American missionaries first hoped to penetrate the Holy Land of Palestine, congregating around Jerusalem in the 1810s. The Muslim majority in this geography, however, would not allow evangelization, since the Ottoman Empire barred evangelization of Muslims. This bar left the missionaries with no other opportunity in the Arabic-speaking lands than to shift their attention to the Christian-dominated Levant, and especially Mount Lebanon, which contains the highest percentage of Christians of any other land in the Middle East, with Maronites as the majority of Christians. Without any imperial interests in the Arabic-speaking lands, the American government was not associated with the missionaries' ventures.⁹⁹

The long-range goals of the Protestant missionaries was not simply to convert Christians, but to convert Muslims through the help of the converted Christians, as Henry

⁹⁹ For a discussion of missionaries' early discussion with the Middle East, see, Dodge, Bayard, "American Educational and Missionary Efforts in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 401, America and the Middle East (May, 1972), pp. 15-22

Harris Jessup (1832-1910), one of the founders of the Syrian Protestant College, noted in one publication in 1873: “”The present immediate object of missionary labor in the East is the conversion of the Oriental Christians, but the ultimate object is the conversion, through them, of the non-Christian populations of Western Asia and Northern Africa.”¹⁰⁰ Missionaries also recognized the fragility of the Ottoman State. One missionary wrote in a letter in 1842: “Every man knows that the Ottoman Empire of the present day would sink to the earth by inherent weakness, if it were not upheld by foreign powers.”¹⁰¹ The coming fall of the Empire energized missionary labors, as another letter of 1843 notes: “And when their power falls it will be so much done towards their conversion. That this event may happen soon there is every reason to believe.”¹⁰² The thought of an existence of a weak and crumbling empire soon to become Christian thanks to missionary efforts must have exhilarated many.

The Ottomans extended a welcome to the missionaries in the early 19th century, although by the end of the 19th century, some realized that their arrival was only exacerbating an already sundered Ottoman State. Ruling between 1876 and 1909, for example, Sultan Abdul Hamid II explicitly noted in his private journal the potential risks of these mission schools: "Private schools constitute a great danger to our nation. With unpardonable carelessness, we have allowed representatives of all sorts of nationalities to

¹⁰⁰ Jessup, quoted in “Monthly Concern: Syria,” FM 32, no. 7 (Dec. 1873): 204, taken from Scholtz dissertation *Foreign Education and Indigenous Reaction in Late Ottoman Lebanon: Students and Teachers At the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut*, footnote 3, page 58

¹⁰¹ Wolcott “Letter” *Missionary Herald* 37, no 2 (Feb. 1841): 91. Scholtz dissertation *Foreign Education and Indigenous Reaction in Late Ottoman Lebanon: Students and Teachers At the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut*, footnote 4, page 58

¹⁰² Smith, “Letter” *Missionary Herald* 39, no. 5 (June 1843): 247 from Scholtz dissertation *Foreign Education and Indigenous Reaction in Late Ottoman Lebanon: Students and Teachers At the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut*, footnote 5, page 58

build schools at all times and places. What a peril they are..." This realization came too late to stop the missionary incursion. By 1891, about 15,000 students were under the case of the American Protestant institutions alone.¹⁰³

At first, natives categorically rejected the American educators. Visiting the Levant before 1852, the British Catholic Bishop, James Laird Patterson (1822-1902) described the Protestant who "disseminate their Bibles and other books, but without much effect: the people take them for the sake of the covers, and burn the insides!"¹⁰⁴ Perhaps the inexpensive Bible purchased in Beirut by the first Levantine migrant to the US, Antonio Bishallany, was sold cheaply rather than given for free, in fear that the book would otherwise be exploited for its cover. Sources from the 1830s reveal that Americans travelled the Levant carrying "donkey-loads of Bibles."¹⁰⁵ Following the example of Jesus, however, who gained followers in part by healing the sick and wounded, American missionaries also brought along medics, offering medical services throughout the region to people of all faiths.¹⁰⁶

Missionary success in the region owed inordinately to the success of the medical staff accompanying missionaries. Risk Allah described the state of medical care in the Levant: "The natives, in the hour of sickness, have first of all recourse to simple herbal

¹⁰³ Barton, James L., *Educational Missions*, New York: Students volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1913, pg 162; found in Scholtz dissertation *Foreign Education and Indigenous Reaction in Late Ottoman Lebanon: Students and Teachers At the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut*, pg 1

¹⁰⁴ Patterson, James, *Journal of a Tour in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Greece: With Notes, and an Appendix on Ecclesiastical Subjects*, London : C. Dolman, 1852, 295

¹⁰⁵ Caesar, *The Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon 1830-1861*, pg 18

¹⁰⁶ Risk Habib, *The Thistle and the Cedar of Lebanon*, London, J. Madden, 1853. 41

remedies, which have been handed down through many generations, and are chiefly held in estimation by the old people of the villages. When these remedies are found to fail, then, and oftentimes only at the eleventh hour, they bethink them of the Franks inhabiting some convent in the neighborhood."¹⁰⁷ Risk Allah identified the gaps between Western medical-care and the Arabic-speaking lands, acknowledging the recourse to foreigners in dealing with sickness. Meeting the missionaries around 1828, like his fellow Levantines of all religions, Risk Allah initially felt indisposed to these Americans with whom he would later study. He had first personally met the Americans when a relative became ill:

A very near relative lay grievously ill at Beyrout--every effort of the native *hakeem* [wise man] to give him sleep proved abortive. Native astrologers came, and writing down the names and number of letters in each name of the patient of his mother, multiplied and divided the sum total, and then tearing up the paper into fine shreds, swallowed the whole; but even this magic failed. After much discussion, it was finally determined, much to the disgust of my clerical uncle, to summon the American doctor, with whom or with whose brethren my family had heretofore carefully avoided intercourse.¹⁰⁸

Thanks to the American medic, the Greek Orthodox relative of Risk Allah recuperated. This recuperation not only meant the recuperation of the relative but the recuperation of the missionaries' esteem in the eyes of Risk Allah's family. The American doctor's ability to heal the patient began a process of conversion—not in the religious senses—but in a social sense, as Risk Allah explained:

[the doctor] never intruded a single question or made any reference to difference of creeds; but when the patient was convalescent, and when he saw that his visits were no longer necessary, on taking leave of us the doctor distributed a few tracts on religious subjects, for perusal amongst ourselves and neighbours, begging us at our leisure to do so had he done this before we had become acquainted with his

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 377-378

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 45

intrinsic worth and merits, the chances are that these tracts would have been flung into the fire so soon as his back was turned. Now, however, we all felt persuaded that so excellent a man could never be guilty of propagating anything that was not good and moral. The result was that his gifts were treasured up and perused with attention, and whenever the doctor paid us a friendly visit he brought with him more delightful little stories; the print was so clear, the pictures and binding so pretty, that these tracts were much prized...¹⁰⁹

The ability to secure a patient's wellbeing through medicine and not by supplication to the Almighty must have been a shock to many. The missionary medics taught valuable lessons about the profits of science. As significantly, they taught natives about the alien, who had something to impart.

Besides the medics who accompanied evangelicals, the persistence of the missionaries was their other asset, as Risk Allah noted:

Bishops and priests [initially] warned their congregations to be on the alert, and guard against any efforts made by the Missionaries to convert the people; these admonitions and warnings were strengthened by reports spread by the crafty emissaries of the Pope, which were as false as they were calumnious. Had not the Americans been possessed of great Christian patience, and matured sound judgment, they could not possibly have succeeded; but time proved their deeds and actions to be of the purest; their morals, precepts and examples above praise... from that time on present, their schools have gone on progressing, and though they have not succeeded in making many converts, they have prevented much evil by their watchful care over the natives.¹¹⁰

Perhaps the openness on the part of the Ottoman Empire to allowing missionaries in the Sultan's domain owed not simply to the disinterest of the Empire in Christian affairs, but to the improbability of missionary success in such quarters.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 45-46

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 43

Amongst Levantines, the Maronites were the most steadfast opponents of the Protestants. The persecution of the Maronites from centuries before was not lost on the clergy. One American missionary in the Levant explained in 1841:

[The] Maronites, especially their patriarch and subordinate ecclesiastics, have ever been the deadly opposers of the mission in Syria. They have done all in their power to shut the missionaries from their villages: have excommunicated and persecuted, even to death, those of their own people who embraced the doctrines which the missionaries taught; and but lately wrote to the sultan at Constantinople, requesting that the missionaries might be expelled from the country.¹¹¹

In 1823, seven years before the death of As'ad al-Shidyaq, Maronite administrators demanded a refrain from interactions with the foreigners.¹¹² In 1826, the Maronite patriarch, Youssef VIII Hobaish (1787–1845), excommunicated Maronites from Hadath—the ancestral village of the Hitti family—for corresponding with the "Bible men"—an excommunication that demonstrates both the reach and 'successes' of the missionaries who managed to correspond with Maronites in such distant villages.

Patriarch Youssef VIII Hobaish, also issued a formal ban against the Maronites:

[The Protestants] clothe themselves with the cloak of piety while they are far distant from its power, according to the words of the Apostles, 'having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.' Thus they go about manifesting a zeal in compassionating their neighbors, that they may impose on the credulity of the simple and unlearned by means of fleshly allurements and worldly temptations. They supply people with money and protection, and show them other worldly attentions. And since they have found it impossible to maintain a residence in places inhabited by our denomination, they have sought an asylum among the heretics, wretched themselves, and have opened schools among them, and supplied them with instructors, all at their own expense. Here they take occasion

¹¹¹ Thomson, "Letter," *Missionary Herald* 38, no. 4 (Mar. 1842): 121 (Letter of Nov. 8, 1841)

¹¹² "Note sur l'etat actuel de la religion en Syrie," memoire du Chevalier Reynault, vice consul de France a Saida, au baron de Damas, ministre, secretaire d'Etat aux affaires etrangeres (Feb. 12, 1827), Doc. N° 2, in: Kuri, *Une histoire du Liban*, vol. 1, p. 16., quoted in Scholtz *Dissertation Foreign Education And Indigenous Reaction in Ottoman Lebanon*, pg 68

to spread abroad their books of discussion, that whoever is near them may be made to drink of their doctrines. Again they distribute among the people sums of money, sometimes as mere presents, sometimes by way of loan, especially among the poor, and when they have thus lent a sum of money to any one, and he finds a difficulty in paying it, they say, 'Come and join yourself to our fraternity, and we will say no more about the debt.'¹¹³

The very need to issue such a statement suggests the vulnerability of the Maronite clergy, whose power was being threatened not simply by the missionaries but by new economic influences in the region, which were turning once obedient congregations to the pursuit of money-making. Had the Protestants not posed any risk of luring Maronites into their reach, the clergy would have likely not issued such a statement. The statement suggests a rift in the Maronite community, as Maronites were no longer homogenously following the orders of the clergy. Instead, at least some Maronites were associating with Protestants, an interaction that would become potentially catastrophic. "You Protestant missionaries have ruined us," confessed an unnamed Maronite priest to the American missionary Henry Harris Jessup (1832–1910), sometime before Jessup's death in 1910. The Maronite priest continued: "Our people will not pay for masses as they once did, and if we threaten them with excommunication, they laugh at us and threaten to become Protestants."¹¹⁴

In her memoir of life as a missionary, *My Arabian Days and Nights*, which chronicles missionary life in the Arabian Peninsula from 1912 to 1955, the American Eleanor Calverley (born 1886) affirmed the initial resistance to the foreign presence on

¹¹³ Quoted in Bird, "Journal," *Missionary Herald* 24, no. 2 (Feb. 1828): 47 (Journal entry of Jan. 6, 1827), quoted in Dissertation *Foreign Education and Indigenous Reaction in Ottoman Lebanon*, pg 68

¹¹⁴ Jessup, Henry Harris, *Fifty-three Years in Syria*, New York, Chicago Fleming H. Revell Co. (1910), Volume 1, pg 84

the part of natives. Calverley related how her medical work eventually won the confidence of Muslims in Kuwait. When she first opened a medical clinic, the local women were hesitant to come to her for help. After she cured a few wealthy women, however, other women began to seek her counsel.¹¹⁵ Another missionary, Paul Harrison (1883-1962), travelled around Arabia in the early 20th century, caring for patients, and offered similar observations:

[When] they found out that [some food they were selling] would give nourishment to a hated infidel, [they] informed us that a hundred dollars would not buy [it.] However, they came to the doctor in large numbers for all sorts of treatment. They do not shrink from surgery, showing rather a nerve and courage and when necessary an indifference to pain... 'Oh infidel,' shouts one as he enters, where are you? I want some medicine.' When they come into the consultation room and submit to examination, they show at the same time a remarkable confidence in the doctor and a contempt for him religiously.¹¹⁶

Although these examples pertain to Muslims and not Maronites, the inclination to resist foreign missionaries was natural. With benefits other than religion, however, the missionaries attracted native Arabic-speakers who acknowledged at least some of the infidel's benefit. Returning to the Levant after securing his medical education in England, Risk Allah realized that the tables were turned as he treated a sick Muslim woman who was herself at first uneasy about his medical care. The patient must have reminded Risk Allah of his own antipathy towards the missionaries. He noted:

After a short conversation, in which she made many anxious inquiries relative to the Frank country and the English ladies, about whom I found she had very absurd notions, we came to the real object of my visit. I asked where the pain lay, and it will cause my readers to smile when I state her reply. She told me that I must cast her nativity according to Eastern customs, and thus discover the seat of

¹¹⁵ Calverley, Eleanor Jane Taylor, *My Arabian Days and Nights*, New York: Crowell, 1958

¹¹⁶ Harrison, Paul W, *The Arab at Home*, New York, Cromwell, 1924, pg 12

pain myself. I told her that the system of medicine which I had learnt in England did not admit of such practices, and went on to show her the utter fallacy of such doings. She answered me, that her own doctor in Circassia formally adopted this plan, and that, after ascertaining the star under which she was born, appropriate verses from the Koran were written upon three slips of paper: one was put in water, which she afterwards drunk; one was burnt with perfumes to drive evil spirits from the room; and the third was placed upon the affected part.

After some little difficulty I discovered the seat of her malady, and that she was suffering under a tumour. I then felt her pulse, and requested her to show me her tongue. Here another difficulty arose, as she could not show me her tongue without unveiling; but the old lady who stood by told her that the Prophet allowed it...¹¹⁷

Published in 1853, Risk Allah's book registered the native's initial incomprehension towards Western medicine, which might have resembled supernatural powers. The ability to cure somebody by providing a pill or undertaking a surgery was a great cultural shock that defied tradition and that raised questions about authority, power and learning, and about human potentials versus the powers of Providence of the Divinity. The ability of medicine to cure challenged thinking which held that only belief and miracles cured the sick.

Before Risk Allah became a doctor, he had been one of the first to meet American medics when his relative was sick. He had been doubtful of their effectiveness—a suspicion that reflected his own upbringing and that must have been dominant in the region, even amongst persons of different religions. Years after becoming a doctor, however, Risk Allah recognized a social change in the region, as foreign doctors were "looked upon as having the power of life and death in his hands: in the sick-room he is courted and treated with the greatest deference and respect; and even whilst passing in the

¹¹⁷ Risk Habeeb, 380-1

streets, the occupants rise to salute him."¹¹⁸ Although this was not a conversion of the religious kind, it nevertheless represents some sort of intellectual change, an openness to a new tradition of dealing with the sick.

Western medical care opened new doors not simply for doctors, but for new knowledge and thinking. Hitti's own description of the medical care provided to him by villagers in Shimlan differs from the multiple surgeries he underwent at Johanniter Hospital, surgeries that cured the boy from the broken arm and gangrene that had brought him in touch with such medics:

Mother was the family doctor but her home was as bare of drugs as that of a Christian Science practitioner. In an emergency, she could manufacture suppositories, not as precisely shaped but perhaps as effective as any Squibb product. The raw material came from carob molasses, dehydrated and mixed with ground cereal while solidifying. An uncle had a huge carob tree, and in those candy scarce days we children resented the raid for medicinal purposes on the jar of molasses he annually gave us.¹¹⁹

Before Hitti's relocation to the Johanniter Hospital in 1895, Hitti's parents were estranged from the Western medical practices of the missionaries. Villagers in Shimlan scrambled to nearby Maronite churches in the hopes that their efforts would secure a miracle for the third Hitti child. When Hitti's condition deteriorated, "experts were brought in from the neighboring villages," as Hitti described:

I still remember with horror an amazon of a woman from Bshamun who arrived riding on a donkey and holding a huge sheaf of weeds in her hands. Exposing my stiff arm to the boiling leaves' vapor, she exerted her muscular strength to bend the tortured limb at the elbow, assuming that once the elbow yielded, I would be

¹¹⁸ Risk Habeeb, 379, Also see "American Educational and Missionary Efforts in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries Author(s): Bayard Dodge Source: *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 401, *America and the Middle East* (May, 1972), pp. 15-22

¹¹⁹ Hitti, From unpublished manuscript *Lebanon to Princeton*, box 21, FF1, p22 23-24, box 21

cured. I fainted. I had been on my soreback for over five months by now. Even a heavy step on the thatched floor on which my bed rested caused pain all over my body.¹²⁰

The case of Philip Hitti, who was saved by American missionary medical care and then entrusted by his parents with a missionary education, exemplifies a much larger trend whereby medicine eroded local antagonism to the foreign presence.

Not only spurring new missionary schools, the arrival of American missionaries in the 1820s catalyzed the establishment of schools throughout the region--including village schools-- thus facilitating a widespread educational revolution that far transcended the students who studied in missionary establishments. Even Hitti's own elementary Maronite elementary school underneath the oak tree in Shimlan's church, owed indirectly to the missionary presence, as this school was itself a recent appearance. Although he did not know it then, even before he joined the American school at Suq Al Gharb, Hitti had benefitted from the American missionary presence.

The American missionary presence was aggressive and ambitious, and this arrival required the construction of new village schools. In 1890, for example, the American Protestants entered the mostly Greek Orthodox village of Bishmizzeen, and established an elementary school there, accepting students free of charge. This American school attracted students, as working mothers could leave their children at school while they labored in the factory. Yet villagers soon realized that the school was also an agent for furthering the Gospel of Protestantism in the region. In 1898, the school was physically

¹²⁰ Tannous, Afif, "Missionary Education in Lebanon: A Study in Acculturation," *Social Forces*, Vol 21, No. 3, March 1943, pp 338-343

attacked, an event commemorated by a 1898 Mission Report noting that "a mob of boys, [threw] stones at doors [sic] and windows."¹²¹ The school subsequently closed.

The initial success and popularity of the American establishment in Bishmizzeen propelled villagers to open their own village school, a requisite for protecting villagers from the potential avariciousness of missionaries who would have otherwise succeeded in attracting more students. "It is the unanimous testimony of intelligent natives of all sects that... most of the institutions now in existence in Syria, native and foreign, have grown out of them or have been directly associated by them," wrote one of the founders of the Syrian Protestant College, Henry Harris Jessup (1832–1910) summing up the American missionaries' accomplishments, which transcended simply the establishment of American schools.¹²² Through well-funded missionary work, American missionaries brought both *direct and indirect* consequences to the region, with the indirect consequences perhaps outweighing the immediate graduates of the missionary Protestant establishments.

In 1896, the Syrian Protestant College (SPC) published a catalogue about Beirut. The booklet underscored the recent changes to the city:

Beirut has a population of about 100,000 Moslems and Christians of various sects. It has water brought from the Dog-river six miles distant; gas, well-constructed roads, and a fine port. A diligence-road and a recently completed railway connect it with Damascus...

The Hospital, founded and supported by the Knights of the Johanniter Order of Germany, is under the medical and surgical care of the Medical Faculty of the College. It is situated near the College, and has ample accommodations for all branches of its administration. The Hospital proper is a state edifice in one of the most salubrious situations in the city. It contains sixty-three beds for patients,

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² Jessup, *Fifty Three Years in Syria*, 594

and is admirably furnished with all the conveniences and appliances necessary to its efficiency. The Nursing Corps consists of seven Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth, who are aided by native servants. About 500 patients are treated in the hospital during the year.¹²³

Thanks to new schools such as the SPC—the elite and best-funded school in Beirut—the city had become an educational destination by the time of Philip's arrival to the city in 1895. The SPC catalogue from 1896 boasted of the city as "a seat of learning... and it has now... ten or twelve large institutions for higher education, and a long list of smaller schools for both boys and girls."¹²⁴ Due to the largesse of its American benefactors, who had founded the institution with 100,000\$ in 1866, the school boasted unique resources. By 1896, the SPC annexed the German-founded Johanniter Hospital, and also claimed a science laboratory, three museums (Botanical, Geological, Archaeological) an observatory, a printing press, and various types of textbooks. There was also a library with 873 books in Arabic and Turkish, and another 7,348 books in other—mostly English. The physical dominance of such an institution in Beirut signaled the accomplishments of the American missionaries in the region.¹²⁵

Following Philip's convalescence, his parents decided to send him to the American school in the village of Suq al Gharb, established in 1877. Philip's parents likely imagined their child teaching at a village near Shimlan, leading a life close by to them but very different from their own. Hitti's trajectory was a major milestone for his village. Yet Philip's departure from Shimlan was not the first sign of change in the

¹²³ American University of Beirut, *Syrian Protestant College*, Beirut, Syria 1896, New York, WC Martin Printing House, 1896, pgs 9-43

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, pg. 9

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 9-43

village, but the latest event in a wave of changes in the Levant. Relating his own background, Hitti does not address the metamorphosis of the region that predated his own departure to the American school. He describes life in Shimlan:

In those pre-cocktail, pre-radio and pre-television days, conversation provided the best entertainment and was developed into an art. Winter evenings offered the right opportunity. The 'evening togetherness' (sahrah) for a kinship group was an institution. Sahrahs provided the chief relaxation from the humdrums of daily life. They were conducted with decorum. After a simple supper of bread, olives, laban (yogurt) zjaddarah (lentils with rice and onions cooked in olive oil) eaten while squatting on the floor from a straw tray and using morsels of bread for spoons, justifying the charge that we ate our spoons, Father, hubble-bubble (nargillah?) in hand, would proceed to one of his brothers' next-door homes. The old generation preferred sitting cross-legged, each on a small mattress leaning on a cushion, all encircling a metal brazier aglow with charcoal or an open fire in a three-sided clay hearth. No topic—local, national or international—could be alien to a sahra conversation. The flow of words was in inverse proportion to the information—usually meager—from a variety of sources. For local news the shopkeeper the baker at the public oven and the housewives at the public fountain were the principal sources. On the national level, muleteers and visitors returning from Beirut provided the raw material.¹²⁶

The Shimlanis whom Hitti describes here resembled Maronites from years past, Maronites whom Father Dandini and the Comte de Volney both commended when they visited Mount Lebanon around in the 17th and 18th centuries. Like preceding Maronites, the Shimlani villagers dine on the floor. They value each other's company. Only Hitti's reference to Beirut suggests a new intellectual horizon, as new circuits and currents of information arrive in Shimlan.

On the surface, the family of six living children seemed uncompromisingly traditional. Hitti's mother, Sa'da, awoke at 4:00 to attend mass, as Hitti described:

¹²⁶ Box 21, FF 1, From Lebanon to Princeton, pg 18-22

Watch her hurrying home from the early mass...first she folds the beds in which we slept on the floor without the benefit of bedsteads, and tucks them in a niche in the wall... Breakfast dishes done, she shoulders the pear-shaped jar and rushes to the public fountain, the only source of the village drinking water. Many a summer battle was fought among women disputing their respective turns as that precious thread-like stream flowed through the spout. Kneading the flour into dough to be carried on the head on a straw tray to be the public over, there again to await its turn to bake, came every third day. Saturday was laundry day. Laundry was done in the open-air fireplace with the clothes rubbed by hand.¹²⁷

Yet only Hitti's recollection of his mother's haggling with the peddlers arriving to Shimlan selling their goods reveals a new consciousness and confrontation. Even women in the region began dealing with money. "She sticks to her guns. He lowers his price... She raises her offer an equivalent amount. After a back-and-forth debate the two contenders would meet about halfway," Hitti wrote in his private papers, describing his mother bicker with the male about a price for commodities. The mother's bargaining was itself an indication of the new times, as was the reference to peddlers in the first place—a symbol of new market opportunities. Hitti's mother was unschooled and unlettered, yet these details did not impede her bargaining.

Father was "a strict disciplinarian," Hitti wrote of his other figurehead, Iskander Hitti, continuing: "[He] had not been pampered by his parents and saw no reason to pamper his children. He expected reverence and obedience from them and received both as a matter of course. He had neither the time nor the inclination to play with his children-- it was not customary in that society." Yet here again, Hitti's recollections reveal sharp changes in Shimlan:

¹²⁷ Ibid. 19-21

‘Son,’ he would say, ‘you forgot to cross yourself before your meal,’ or he would remind me to say al-hamdu lil-lah (thanks be to God) at the end, or to repeat the last formula after my drink, or to add inshallah [if God wills] when I said I was going to school tomorrow. I remember his saying, ‘pick up that morsel of bread-- for which you pray every day-- from the floor, kiss it and tuck it away, as no foot would fall on it.

Father regularly mentioned God's name in connection with birth and death, sickness and health, drought and rain. "On June 24, 1886, God in His gracious bounty bestowed on us a boy whom we named Philip' [Father recorded on my birthdate]¹²⁸

The name Philip was a foreign name, one that had been suggested by an English lady who summered in Shimlan one July—an excursion taken to escape the big city of Beirut for a small isolated village overlooking the Mediterranean coast, a village of three hundred, where things seemed quiet and uncomplicated. The middle-name Khoury— Priest (Latin, ‘Curate’)—referenced the religious connection of the family to the Church. ‘Hitti’—originally ‘Hadathi,’ or ‘from Hadath’—was a mark of dislocation. A recent invention, ‘Hitti’ appeared a suitable surname for the young child who would have been born in Hadath had a civil war not relocated the family to Shimlan. ‘Philip’ was foreign; ‘Khuri’ was traditional; ‘Hitti’ was nostalgic. The diversity in the name suited his future.

¹²⁸ Ibid, pg 14

Chapter 4: *Nahda*

When Napoleon conquered Egypt in 1798, he brought with him an Arabic movable-type printing press to the country. This technology subsequently spread throughout the Arabic-speaking lands, differentiating the 19th and 20th century Middle East from previous eras.

Printing in Arabic challenged a more traditional Middle Eastern order. Upon visiting the region for one year in 1910, Hitti's advisor at Columbia University, Richard Gottheil, noted the changes in society. In an article he published in the *New York Times*, Gottheil called attention to new social bonds between Arabic-speakers: "[The] tie that binds men together has [traditionally] been not love of a common country but religion," Gottheil announced in the *Times*, adding that "patriotism is a new idea [spreading in the Arabic-speaking lands]."¹ By Gottheil's visit to the Arabic-speaking lands in 1910, printed texts were bridging once isolated communities, creating new bonds between populations of different religions.

Born in 1886 to parents who were both unlettered and not formally schooled, Hitti was raised amongst these dramatic social changes. In Hitti's three hundred-person village of Shimlan on Mount Lebanon, the center of social life was still the Church. His elementary school "differed from the image of any school that word might evoke," he later wrote, describing the school's architecture: "It had no walls, but had a roof. The roof consisted of the overhanging, shady branches of a venerable oak tree." The venerable oak

¹ YOUNG TURK PARTY HAS REVOLUTIONIZED SULTAN'S LAND: Prof. Richard ... *New York Times* (1857-1922); Sep 25, 1910; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010) pg. SM6

tree at the Church yard was his schoolhouse. Rising like an open umbrella in the Church courtyard, it was at the heart of the Church. The teacher was a monk wearing a one-piece robe, resembling Hitti's own grandfather, who "looked like a patriarch from the Old Testament pages." The tight woolen aba, white beard, and black urban represented a sartorial style familiar amongst the older village males; no Western styles of dress appeared in Shimlan before the early 20th century. The straps of leather sewn together for shoes contrasted with the formal footwear Hitti adopted in 1904 as a student at the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut.²

The third boy in the Hitti household, Philip was initially expected to become a farmer, a common occupation in Shimlan in the late 19th century. Hitti's correspondent and compatriot, Ibrahim Tannous, described the geography of Mount Lebanon during this time:

The Lebanon mountains... rise abruptly to some twelve thousand feet from the eastern shore of the Mediterranean... Unlike the American rural community, each [village] is a clearly defined ecological and psychosocial entity. They are predominantly inhabited by farmers, who go to work in the fields in the morning and come back to the village in the evening. Between the villages no scattered farmsteads can be seen. Each village has defined clearly [its] boundaries.³

Tannous's representation of Mount Lebanon as a land of farmers still characterized the country in the late 19th century, although Mount Lebanon was quickly changing. The circulation of print material in the region even reached Shimlan, and ushered new

² Box 21 FF1 page 1 From Lebanon To Princeton

³ Tannous, A.I., "Group Behavior in the Village Community of Lebanon," *American Journal of Sociology* (1942), Vol 48, No. 2, p. 231 (American Sociological Association); A. I. Tannous worked for the US government as the director of the Foreign Agricultural Services, US Department of Agriculture

horizons for native Arabic-speakers, previously distanced from affairs and ways of life from beyond the local vicinity.

Hitti's departure from the village at age nine, prefaced the changes ahead. Following his graduation from the American missionary middle and high school in the village of Suq Al Gharb ('the Western Gate'), Hitti would proceed to Beirut's Syrian Protestant College in 1904, where he would become an instructor immediately following his own graduation from that establishment in 1908-- an honor he shared with only one other native graduate of the college. Five years later, he would be sent to the US, for a proposed one year of educational enrichment, a singular initiative for the college, and a worthwhile investment for the establishment which had not foreseen the World War around the corner.

Born into a religious Maronite-Christian family fearful of Protestant missionaries arriving in the Levant in the 19th century, Hitti would not only join Protestant establishments in the Levant, but inaugurate a department at the traditionally Protestant establishment. To add to the irony, the Princeton professor became the face of the Department of Oriental Languages and Literature, dedicated to the study of the Arab and Islamic lands—a center unique internationally in its investment and focus on these lands. By the mid-century, Hitti achieved a celebrity unparalleled amongst native Arabic-speakers. “The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia is interested in publishing an Indonesian version of [*History of the Arabs*],” read one letter sent to Hitti from Indonesia in 1951, one year following the independence of the Republic of Indonesia.⁴ The government of newly independent Iraq sent another letter to Hitti about a year earlier, voicing its “[eagerness] to use [*History*] in all its schools,” as Hitti revealed in another correspondence.⁵ Thousands of letters from around the world indicated Hitti's international stature—as did thousands of news articles from media circuits internationally. While Hitti's friend and compatriot, Gibran Khalil Gibran (died 1930), who relocated to the US in 1895, would become the most-sold poet in the 20th century, this accomplishment came posthumously in the

⁴ Box 15, FF 8

⁵ Box 15, FF 4, Box 5, FF 9

1960s, more than thirty years following Gibran's death (1930). Before 1960, Hitti even surpassed Gibran in booksales—and all within Hitti's lifetime.⁶ A cultural icon bridging communities in more than one sense, Hitti had made the impossible suddenly appear possible.

Printing transformed the Middle East, although the movable-type printing technology in Arabic was not entirely new when Napoleon introduced it to Egypt in 1798. The technology in Arabic existed since the early 16th century. Before the 19th century, however, the vast majority of movable-type printing presses in Arabic were located not in the Arabic-speaking lands but in Europe. Over sixty movable-type printing machines in Arabic operated in Europe before Napoleon's 1798 departure for Egypt.

The 1514 *Kitāb al-sawā'ī* ('Book of Hours') is credited as the first Arabic book ever produced anywhere on the movable-type printing press, and it was printed in the town of Fano, in modern-day Italy. The 'Book of Hours' was a devotional manual for Christians.⁷ Undertaken by order of Pope Julius II, the work was presumably meant for export to Christian communities in the Levant, and marked the beginning of Arabic book publication on movable-type—an initiative that would only reach native Arabic-speakers in the following centuries. Arabic printing in Europe continued in the 17th and 18th centuries, diversifying in character as Europeans printed different types of Arabic books, not only Christian devotional manuals.

⁶ For book-sales, see Box 22

⁷ For *Book of Hours* in general, see "Book of Hours and the Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages," by Paul Saenger, pgs 141-173 in *The Culture of Print*, edited by Roger Chartier, 1987; for history of Arabic printing, see Hsu, Cheng-Hsiang, *The First Years of Arabic Printing in Egypt, 1238-1267 (1822-1851): A Bibliographical Study with a Checklist By Title of Arabic Printed Works* (Dissertation), 1985; Hitti wrote an article about the book: Hitti, "The First Book Printed in Arabic," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 4 (1942) 5. For about this book, see Krek, Miroslav, "The Enigma of the First Arabic Book Printed from Movable Type" *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Jul., 1979), pp. 203-212

In 1840, when the French Orientalist Julius Zenker (1811-1884) compiled a bibliography of works in Arabic published in Europe, he identified over two hundred texts in Arabic that had been published on European Arabic movable-type printing presses—all preceding Napoleon’s 1798 departure for Egypt.⁸ The 1514 *Book of Hours* in Arabic was a religious Christian text especially intended for religious purposes, although most of the Arabic publications that Zenker identified were of a non-Christian and non-devotional nature. Zenker’s list of Arabic works published in Europe included works ranging from medical tracts to poetry and stories. These works were originally written by Arabic writers in the Arabic-speaking lands. Manuscripts of such works subsequently reached Europe, and were printed on the European printing machines, distributing hundreds of copies of such writings.⁹

The supplementary text in Latin on the majority of these European Arabic publications suggests that scholars in the Continent were the intended recipients. If each of these two hundred publications had a printing run of five-hundred copies (a conservative estimate for pre-18th century movable-type printing presses, even in Arabic script), then 1,000,000 Arabic texts existed in Europe by 1798.¹⁰ This hypothetical

⁸ Zenker, Julius Theodor (1811-1884) *Bibliotheca Orientalis [par] J. Theodor Zenker. Manuel de bibliographie orientale*, contenant parties I et II. Appendix, Moritz Steinschneider: Neu-persische Drucke der Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, Amsterdam, Oriental Press, 1966

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Consider for example that the printing presses of Ibrahim Muteferrika in present-day Istanbul which printed 17 works in 23 volumes, each had between 500 and 1,000 copies. See Alastair Hamilton, Maurits H. van den Boogert, Bart Westerweel, *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, Brill Publishers, Leiden & Boston, 2005, p.266
For Arabic script printing machines worldwide, see Krek, Miroslav, *A Gazetteer of Arabic Printing*, Weston, MA: Krek, 1977; Maktabat al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Āmmah, *The Arabic Books Printed in Europe*, Riyadh: King Abdulaziz Public Library, 2004; Hsu, Cheng-Hsiang, *The First Years of Arabic Printing in Egypt, 1238-1267 (1822-1851): A Bibliographical Study with a Checklist By Title of Arabic Printed Works (Dissertation)*, 1985; Fares, Huda, *Arabic Typography: A Comprehensive Sourcebook*, London: Saqi, 2001

number at least suggests the availability of Arabic publications in Europe even preceding Napoleon's arrival in Egypt. Such Arabic knowledge in Europe would later be critical in the 'rediscovery' of Arabic texts in the 19th century Middle East. A wide knowledge-base of the Arabic literary canon already existed in Europe before 1798. Such knowledge could easily guide Arabic publications in the Middle East, as Arabic printing popularized in the region subsequently.

In the Arabic-speaking lands, Christian monasteries were the first to acquire the Arabic movable-type printing press, although their printing productions were limited. Aleppo acquired an Arabic printing press in 1706. Aleppo thus became the first locale outside Europe to acquire the technology which was brought by pious Levantine Christians returning from Europe. Between the arrival of this technology in 1706 and Napoleon's arrival in the region in 1798, however, the Arabic printing presses in the Levant produced only Christian religious texts, resembling the *Book of Hours* printed in Fano in 1514.¹¹ In Aleppo, the Arabic movable-type printing press produced Christian Psalms and Gospel books in 1706. Before 1798, at least three other Arabic presses in the Levant produced some forty other titles, although the exclusive Christian nature of all of these texts limited their circulation and potential audience. Arabic printing thus catered to Christians, whereas Muslims generally remained insulated from such technology or from its consequences before 1798.¹²

Ironically, it was the French conquest—the first European invasion of the Arabic-speaking lands in over five centuries—that launched the technology of Arabic printing

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

in Muslim Egypt. Bringing the printing enterprise to the country, Napoleon employed the movable-type printing press to communicate through Arabic newsletters to his new Arabic-speaking domain. The Frenchman's 1798 arrival in Egypt with a movable-type Arabic printing press (Alexandria in 1798, Giza in 1800) meant printing's forceful advance into Egypt, a technology that might have been halted had Egypt's next ruler, Mohammad Ali (1769-1849), not favored printing as well.

The originally Albanian Ottoman military-officer-turned-ruler of Egypt following Napoleon's departure, also embraced the printing technology, ensuring its continuation in the country. A new-comer in the country, Mohammad Ali arrived in Egypt at thirty-two years of age, as part of the Ottoman expeditionary forces to reclaim and stabilize the country following the French departure. Ali's alien origins and his lack of knowledge of Arabic aided his embrace of the movable-type printing press in Arabic.

Filling the power vacuum in Egypt during this transitional period, and becoming Egypt's new ruler, Mohammad Ali would become the first Muslim leader to sanction a prolonged use of the movable-type printing press in Arabic. Bringing religious authorities under state control, Ali proceeded to embark on the ambitious quest of industrializing his new domain, an initiative which required printing—trains, canals, factories, and modern schools cannot operate without the quick mobilization of mass information which printing afforded. Ali secured the technology's deep integration into the country and its permanent place amongst Arabic-speakers. By the 1820s, Egypt acquired multiple Arabic presses, and these machines soon spread to other cities in the region (Baghdad, 1830; Algiers, 1832; Fez, 1845). The technology's operation in Muslim Egypt meant the

circulation of printed Arabic texts on all subjects, and to society at large, defying Arabic printing's previous limits as catering predominantly to European scholars or Levantine Christians.¹³

Table 4 Movable-Type Printing Presses in Arabic (partial geneology) from Miroslav Krek's *A Gazetteer of Arabic Printing* and Cheng-hsiang Hsu's *The first thirty years of Arabic printing in Egypt, (1822-1851)*

Fano (Italy)	1514	Milan	1632	Edinburgh	1770	Bulaq	1822
Paris	1517	Oxford	1648	Moscow	1777	Tehran	1823
London	1524	Berlin	1671	Rotterdam	1784	Singapore	1824
Palermo	1558	Bucharest	1701	Alexandria	1798	Esfahan	1829
Heidelberg	1583	Aleppo	1706	Giza	1800	Baghdad	1830
Hamburg	1587	Shwair, Lebanon	1733	Bombay	1801	Beirut (brought by Americans)	1834
Leipzig	1612	Beirut	1751	Delhi	1801	New York	1837
Jena (Germany)	1624?	Madrid	1760	Tebriz	1817/18	Jerusalem	1837

¹⁴

As the curtain rose on the 19th century, a deluge of printed material in Arabic was on its way to reaching both Muslims and non-Muslims, signaling an unprecedented media tide and a massive social and informational upheaval that would affect the lives of literate Arabic-speakers and the unlettered. Printing challenged traditional social structures. The new information arriving on these presses often contrasted with the information emanating from religious authorities, and included knowledge about Europe and other lands, about science, philosophy, foreign literatures, fiction, and Arabic letters

¹³ Miroslav Krek, *A Gazetteer of Arabic Printing*

¹⁴ Miroslav Krek, *A Gazetteer of Arabic Printing*, 1977

from centuries past. The new methods for information's circulation may have meant as much as the information itself. Before the 19th century, such literary vehicles as indigenous newspapers and magazines had not existed in Arabic. Producing news with frequency—often on a daily, weekly or monthly basis—these periodicals made a statement even before they were read.

New usages in Arabic vocabulary followed the arrival of Arabic journalism. The first use of the word '*Nahda*' ('Awakening') in an Arabic periodical dates to 1888, surfacing in the Arabic journal *Al Muqtataf* ('The Register'), printed in Cairo.¹⁵ The emergence marked the word's debut in Arabic journalism, although '*Nahda*' was not a new word in Arabic. On the contrary, '*Nahda*' appeared in Arabic texts since the 6th century.¹⁶ Upon its arrival in Arabic journalism in 1888, however, '*Nahda*' manifested a new significance which contrasted with the meanings it had previously carried. Appearing in *Al Muqtataf*, '*Nahda*' referenced the drugstores then manifesting in Egypt. This usage of '*Nahda*' diverged from the more humble meaning the word previously held. Before 1888, *Nahda* had been a modest word in Arabic, typically referencing the ascendance of a single man from sleep or a bird flying away. Pre-1888, '*Nahda*' marked ordinary, run-of-the-mill ascendances that are part of everyday life.

¹⁵ For the first use of '*Nahda*,' see Thomas Philipp's dissertation, "The Role of Jurji Zaidan in the Intellectual Development of the Arab Nahda from the Beginning of the British Occupation to the Outbreak of World War I" (6-7, 1971).

¹⁶ Imru' al-Qais bin Hujr al-Kindi (in the 6th century AD) is sometimes considered the 'father' of Arabic poetry. For uses of '*Nahda*,' see <http://www.alwaraq.net/Core/index.jsp?option=1> and type in '*Nahda*' (accessed 1/1/15); '*Nahda*' was used in the poetry of Obeid Ibn Al-Abrass (died 600 AD) in a 45-lines poem. This Line comes as the 39th line of his 45-lines poem. No title was given for these 45 lines.

Rather than reference ‘Awakenings’ of distinct individuals, ideas, or of birds, as *Nahda* had usually done, *Nahda*’s employment in *Al Muqtataf* in 1888 suddenly signified social awakenings of mass and collective enterprise, involving hosts of people and mass industry. The very word ‘*Nahda*’ was showing signs of ‘Awakening.’ Relative to its past uses as a man’s rise or a bird’s flight, ‘*Nahda*’ appeared bolder and grander, more extravagant.

‘*Nahda*’ was one of many Arabic words witnessing a second life in the 19th century, and manifesting a new significance. Published one year before the appearance of ‘*Nahda*’ in *Al Muqtataf*, the textbook *Kitāb al-Qawl al-ḥaqq fī tārikh al-Sharq* (‘The Book of Correct Statements in the History of the East,’ 1887), a popular textbook in Egypt in the late 19th century, illuminated another such Arabic word displaying new significance during these times.¹⁷ Reference to the Arabic-speaking lands as ‘as-*Sharq*’ or ‘the East’ may today appear natural, but such a title suggested both a new name and a new way of thinking about the region, which had never before been collectivized as the ‘East.’

Relative to England and France, the Arabic-speaking lands are in the East. Relative to India, however, they are in the West; relative to Sweden, they are in the South, and relative to South Africa, they are in the North. The acceptance of such a term like ‘the East’ to reference the region thus suggested the incorporation of Western

¹⁷ Maḥmūd ‘Umar, *Kitāb al-Qawl al-ḥaqq fī tārikh al-Sharq* [Miṣr] : Maṭba‘at al-Ṣādiq, 1305 [1887]

European logic into Arabic. References to the region as the ‘Near East’ (*Sharq Al Adna*, or literally ‘the Nearest East,’ or *Sharq Al Awsat*, or ‘the Middlest of the East’)—both of which subsequently standardized in Arabic as well—illustrated similar transformations in self-designation and thus in identity. Western standards were not only entering Arabic—Western words translated into Arabic were becoming regional names. The word ‘*Sharq*’ previously denoted simply the geographical direction where the sun set. In the 19th century, it became a new axis of identity, a positioning which had never existed in Arabic before.

The new meanings of words like ‘*Sharq*’ or ‘*Nahda*’ suggested new intellectual influences in the region. When the German Orientalist Martin Hartmann visited Egypt circa 1899, he observed these new emergences in the Arabic language, and decided to write a book about the emerging Arabic press. Impressed by the new production in Arabic letters aided by printing, Hartmann counted one hundred and sixty eight Arabic journals in Egypt, noted that dozens more awaiting publication, and also observed that the production of Arabic journalism often entailed a consultation with a more established European press which served as a model for Arabic periodicals: “The European press is always being studied by [the writers for the daily press] and often most unscrupulously ransacked. This constant contact with linguistic utterances in a decidedly foreign tongue, the very phraseology, construction, and expression of which are so utterly different from the best Arabic prose, has [entered Arabic],” Hartmann wrote, underscoring the European inspiration on literary Arabic during this new era of the printing press. Hartmann continued:

They write Arabic, they write it correctly; it reads easily and pleasantly; one comes occasionally upon happy quotations from the best records of native literature; but too often, alas, one meets phrases and expressions which are decidedly non-Arabic, foreign interlopers in fact, which look strangely out of place in their surroundings.

Hartmann also emphasized the popularization of alien uses of Arabic: “And the most remarkable thing is that the writers themselves have evidently lost all consciousness of this unfamiliar element.”¹⁸

New uses of Arabic vocabulary were not the only signs of foreign influences in Arabic letters. Arabic translations of European literary works proliferated beginning in the 19th century. Works by Voltaire and about Napoleon appeared in Arabic as did writings on Greek mythology, health-care, and engineering. Such literature in Arabic was new and would have naturally impressed an Arabist like Hartmann.

Arabic periodicals bore novelties in both the language they employed and in the subjects they covered. Foreign developments appeared in the press, as though Europe were around the corner, a far cry from the situation of Europe before the popularization of Arabic printing. Twelve years preceding *Nahda*'s appearance in 1888, for example, *Al Muqtataf* featured articles about the English biologist Charles Darwin on its inaugural 1876 issue. The spotlighting of Darwin in Arabic symbolized not only the new information entering the Arabic-speaking lands, but the boldness of the new information-channels. *Al Muqtataf* introduced Darwin and his theories of evolution to Arabic-speakers in the Middle East. Whereas even the American administrators of the Syrian Protestant College in the 1880s scoffed at the new biologist whose theories challenged the religious

¹⁸ Hartmann, Martin, *The Arabic Press of Egypt*, Publisher: London, [Leyden printed] Luzac & Co., 1899. Page 16-17, Hartmann also emphasizes that more journals are to come, pg 50

laws of creationism, *Al Muqtataf* decided to give Darwin a go. The editors of *Al Muqtataf* (both correspondents of Hitti's) broke not only from the wishes and sensitivities of the administrators at the Syrian Protestant College, but from religious decorum altogether.¹⁹

Printing impacted society by both making new information available to Arabic-speakers and opening new channels through which that information could enter. As Arabic lacked an indigenous newspapers before the 19th century, the media itself became the message. It made a statement on account of its very existence, and independent of its contents, as Hartmann observed: “[New] printing-offices, new books, new periodicals, and new men [follow] one another [in reading the press.]” This sight itself represented a revolution in social relationships and information-dissemination.²⁰ New information was not only emanating from new origins, but in profusion, as though a highway of knowledge had suddenly broken earth in the heart of the Arabic-speaking lands, spewing information that flowed to all corners of the region.

The availability of new information was itself avant-garde, like roads suddenly interconnecting distant villages. In Hitti's own life, the priest was the trusted authority for information and truth. The priest's lessons carried their own sacred status. A Christian minority in a corner of the Ottoman Empire, Hitti's community of Maronites remained isolated from the affairs of the wider empire. Visiting Mount Lebanon around 1680, the

¹⁹ For the conflict at the college relating to Darwin, see Juha, Shafiq and Khal, Helen, *Darwin and the crisis of 1882 in the medical department : and the first student protest in the Arab world in the Syrian Protestant College* (now the American University of Beirut), American University of Beirut Press, 2004

²⁰ Hartmann, *The Arabic Press of Egypt*, Introduction, unpaginated

Italian-speaking Reverend Jerom Dandini described the priest's role in the community, in a depiction which could have represented Hitti's Shimlan in the late 19th century:

There live... upon their mountains no other than the Christians, which they call Maronites, who have taken their name from a certain abbot called Maron... They do not inhabit great cities and magnificent palaces, but little villages, whereof there is a great number, and in diverse places. Their houses are mean and little worth... they make themselves poor, that they may shun ill treatment, and they affect also to go meanly clad...

They highly respect their priests, and when they meet them they kiss their hand, and the priest gives them the benediction, forming the signs of the cross, accompanies with certain words over them. If they have a priest at their table, they make him drink first; besides, he drinks also last... and no body is suffered to drink after him. If they mount on horseback to go some journey, they present themselves civilly to a priest, praying him to grant them the benediction, and recite over them some prayers before they set forth on their journey... If at any time a person of quality comes amongst them, or one of principal degree in the church, a priest goes before to receive him with incense.²¹

The Maronites were a people who had suffered religious persecution, an oppression dating to the 4th century which had first brought them to the hard-to-read Mount Lebanon. The humble community of Maronites whom Father Dandini observed may have been unique in their social isolation relative to other religious communities in the Arabic-speaking lands. Still, a less extreme form of social segregation marked other groups in the Middle East in the age preceding printing. In the Middle East in general, occasional interactions existed between members of distinct religious communities, although the lack of printing meant the lack of public media interconnecting communities at large.²²

²¹ In *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in all Parts of the World; Many of which are now First Translated into English*, edited by John Pinkerton, London, 1811. Page 290-291; in chapter to "A Voyage to Mount Libanus" pages 272-304

²² coffeehouses, for example, appeared in Mecca, Demascus, and Cairo starting in the early 16th century, and these could serve as avenues for social interactions from representatives of different communities, often even different religions, although these were exceptions. For coffee-houses, see Bernard Lewis, *Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire*, University of Oklahoma Press (reprint, 1989), p. 132. Still, coffeehouses were the exception; for

Without public media to distribute information between different neighborhoods, religious communities generally remained isolated, and religious authorities exercised great power over their populaces. The histories and traditions shared and the stories rehearsed and passed down to progeny, were community-based. In the Ottoman Empire before the reforms of the mid-19th century (Tanzimat Reforms, or ‘Reorganization,’ 1839-1876), confessional communities included those for Muslims, Christians, and Jews. Each of these denominations had great autonomy in the Empire. These communities set their own laws and collected their own taxes, and the interference of the Ottoman State was generally minimal, leaving even residents of the Empire distanced from the affairs of the government. Before the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire was an empire of distinct confessional communities (known as ‘millets’ or ‘nations’). Without State-mandated conscription in the army, or even a State newspaper, the Ottoman Empire lacked presence in the lives of most of its inhabitants.

Only in the 19th century did the Ottoman State take a drastic turn and mandate State centralizations in an effort to exert its authority throughout its domains and to actively break down barriers between confessional communities, instating a new social order. This initiative to reorganize followed the French Revolution (1789-1799). Napoleon’s conquest of Ottoman Egypt was a wake-up call that would return again and again. The new State-centralizing initiatives included printing, although printing was not

millets, see Sachedina, Abdulaziz Abdulhussein (2001). *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism*. Oxford University Press; Stanford J. Shaw, "Dynamics of Ottoman Society and administration", in Stanford J Shaw; Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*," Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1976-1977

the only such measure. The French Revolution—which was really a European Revolution with the French army parading throughout the Continent—spurred rising tides of nationalism throughout Europe.

Such new alignments by factions of the Ottoman Empire compromised the future of the Ottoman State. The Serbian Revolution beginning in 1804 followed by the Greek War of Independence (1821-1832) signaled threats of Ottoman disintegration. The Ottoman State responded by reforms which included the granting of equal citizenships to religious minorities (1839), and new mandates for military conscription (1843-1844). Only such measures to create an Ottoman consciousness could protect the Empire during times of increasing internal and external pressures. Little did the State anticipate that the mere mobilization to coalesce Ottoman citizens would drive other social solidarities—including amongst Arabic-speakers who began identifying as ‘Syrians,’ ‘Arabs,’ ‘Egyptians,’ etc.²³

As a child, Hitti self-identified as a Maronite. Within twenty years, he would adopt the ‘Syrian’ (Suri) identification, a social association which grew in reaction to Ottoman centralization. The Syrian identity marked a relatively new identity and alignment—one that meant little when native Arabic-speakers faced division into distinct religious communities. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the new ‘Syrian’ identity not only included Maronites, but Muslims, Druze, Jews and others. This non-religious identity required new histories to justify such an association—historical elaborations Hitti would

²³ For Tanzimat, see: Cleveland, William L & Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*: 4th Edition, Westview Press: 2009

provide in his own writings. Hitti was not the only historian interpreting the new identities arising at the time, although he would become the most canonical historian of the region-- despite not even living in the region. Studied in every corner of the Middle East and beyond, Hitti would become the historian par excellence of the Arabic-speaking lands. Hitti's literary canon—ranging from *The Syrians in America* (1924), to “Syria (In the 1926 Edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*)” (1926), “Are the Lebanese Arabs?” (1931), and “Iraqis and Syrians,” (1931) appeared in a range of languages, and focused on establishing identities which had not existed as such before the standardization of printing in the Middle East. New interconnections meant new communities, which in turn demanded new histories.

Whereas Hitti learned about his own people's past from the village priest, he would narrate the history of Arabic-speakers in new social categories that transcended the theological associations maintained by religious leaders. The theological bonds of before were not necessarily disappearing, although they were progressively co-existing with other broader associations such as the 'Syrian,' 'Arab' and 'Ottoman' associations, which came to include people of different religions. Before his admission to middle and high school in the village of Suq Al Gharb, Hitti identified as a Maronite from Shimlan. By his move to Beirut in 1903 to attend the Syrian Protestant College, Hitti self-identified as a 'Syrian'. Around 1927, Hitti would not only self-identify as a 'Maronite,' and a 'Syrian,' but as an 'Arab' as well.²⁴

²⁴ The date of Hitti's conversion to an 'Arab' occurred between the publication of his 1924 *Syrians in America* and the publication of the 1931 “Are the Lebanese Arabs?” in the *Syrian World*. The year 1927 is an approximate year, and it is the year he begins *History of the Arabs*, which would suggest that he adopted the Arab self-identification in this year

The age of reform included the rise of Arabic literacy. Before Arabic printing's spread in the Middle East, few Arabic-speakers needed to know to read, and the small reading class in turn raised no need for spreading the Arabic printing technology in the Arabic-speaking lands. One historian has estimated literacy at only one percent of the population before the 19th century, and between 5 and 10 percent of total adult Arabic-speakers by 1914. Still, the very growth in literacy in Arabic was remarkable—increasing exponentially every generation.²⁵ Cairo and Alexandria are credited as enjoying about twenty percent literacy by the 20th century, and Lebanon has been credited with an estimated 50 percent literacy before WWI—partly owing to a strong missionary presence which popularized formal education in the region in high concentration.²⁶ As was the case with news spreading about Darwin, the printing press produced information that often contrasted with information relayed by religious elites.²⁷ Mohammad Ali in Egypt himself had a government newspaper at his disposal (*Al-Waqa'i`a al-Masriya*, 'Egyptian Affairs'), a mouthpiece no previous Muslim leader enjoyed, and one that could directly address Arabic readers of different faiths and neighborhoods, competing with, and often supplanting the information emanating from religious authorities. Without printing, news spread slower, and the circulation of news depended on a line of intermediaries who were likely to transform the message

New printing technology inherently raised new social relationships, both amongst readers and non-readers, who formed new relationships with readers to acquire

²⁵ Cyril E. Black and L. Carl Brown, *Modernization in the Middle East*, 1991, Darwin Press, 138

²⁶ Elsharky, Marwa, *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860-1950*, The University of Chicago Press, pg 22

²⁷ Shakry, page 79; originally taken from *Reading Darwin in Arabic 1860-1950*, from W. Fraser Rae "The Egyptian Newspaper Press," *Nineteenth Century* 32 (1892): 20-21

information. Words like ‘*Sharq*’ and ‘*Nahda*’ spread beyond readers—at least as their contemporary orthodoxy suggests. The new social trends manifesting in words like ‘*Sharq*’ or ‘*Nahda*,’ however, were not simply a product of new printing technology. Other changes in the region expedited the new circuits reshaping the lives of Arabic-speakers, and the new contacts for Arabic-speakers in general—correspondences which were uniquely a 19th and 20th century phenomenon in the region.

Telegraphs, trains, roads and canals-- with the Suez Canal completed in 1869-- all marked the 19th century and accelerated in the 20th century, redrawing distances for Arabic-speakers both geographically and intellectually. The migration of Levantines, mostly to the Americas in the 1870s, represented only part of the new age of travel. In his *History of the Arabs*, Hitti himself acknowledged the increased travel to and from the region by explorers such as Johan Burckhardt, who discovered Petra in 1812, before visiting Makkah and al-Madinah, and writing about his voyage.²⁸ The new travellers sparked curiosities, and raised new interests both amongst native Arabic-speakers and non-Arabic-speakers, interests which inherently challenged intellectual borders and that benefitted Hitti’s own writings.

Civil-style schools in the Middle East also catalyzed new circuits of information and information-flows. Before the 19th century, schools in the Middle East generally belonged to religious establishments. Hitti described his own elementary school at the neighborhood Church in Shimlan:

²⁸ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 10th edition, pg 7

[The oak tree] served as our elementary school house. Its thick foliage sheltered us against sun and rain. Its lighting and ventilation systems were matchless in efficiency, unequally in low cost. In incomplement weather we had only to move to the rear of the church, reserved for women worshipers and separated from the front by a lattice screen. There we squatted on the straw-matted floor.

Our seats outside were adjustable and movable, having been personally selected by each student from among the rocks in the contiguous mulberry orchard. They were arranged in a semicircle around the huge tree trunk. Our long-bearded teach, a monk, sat on a low backless straw chair set against the trunk.

Summer and winter he appeared in the same black woolen garb in the traditional style worn by the founder and patron of our church, St. Maron (d. 410)...

The school was co-educational and there was no tuition, but most villagers saw no point in sending their daughters. Before long they would be married and what good would reading and writing be?²⁹

Hitti's family had only arrived in Shimlan in the early 1860s. Their ancestral village was in Northern Lebanon, in the city of Hadath- hence, 'Hitti,' which was a corruption of 'Hadathi.' Still, the school in Shimlan represented a traditional order, preserving Maronite religious and social harmony. In the school, Hitti congregated with other Maronites and studied from the Maronite priest. The subjects of study focused on Syriac, the liturgical language used by Maronites, and Arabic, the common language which enjoyed newspapers even available in Shimlan. Hitti did not personally know any members of religious groups other than his own. If not for the arrival of Arabic newspapers into Shimlan by the close by the century, as well as the habitual visitor to Shimlan, Hitti's world would have been an entirely isolated Maronite social order.³⁰

A broken arm at age eight, however, led Hitti from this school and into the American missionary establishment at Suq Al Gharb, about five miles from Shimlan.

²⁹ unpublished, Box 21, FF 1 *From Lebanon to Princeton* pg. 1-10 (depending on edition)

³⁰ Ibid.

This school would not only comprise of new subjects taught at school, but of a more diversified student body, including Maronites, and other groups in the region, as well as American teachers. Social lessons came unplanned, and independent of the formal curriculum in the classroom. With a cafeteria, a library, American teachers, and a distinct playground reserved for students from various religious and social backgrounds, the American middle school at Suq al Gharb contrasted with the traditional Church school in Shimlan. “Nothing in the new school reminded me of the old,” Hitti later wrote, describing the new Protestant educational establishment:

We sat at benches arranged in rows, facing the teacher seated behind a desk. The teacher was a soft-spoken, neatly dressed young woman. Especially striking to me were the colored pictures spread map-like over the walls, illustrating biblical stories: Moses receiving the Ten Commandments, David slaying Goliath, the Holy Family on its way to Egypt, Christ healing the blind. The textbooks were the product of the American Mission Press of Beirut (founded 1834), one of the best equipped presses in the area. I was introduced to slates and blackboards. More exciting was the introduction to a new language—English. Little did I then dream that some day I would be writing a book in so difficult and different a language.³¹

The rise of civil-style schools in the region came from national governments in the Middle East, as well as missionaries from abroad whose schools proliferated in the 19th century. The Ottoman government established more than 570 schools in the Arabic-speaking lands by the 20th century, enrolling some thirty-thousand students.³² By WWI, American missionaries alone catered to some 30,000 students as well, some 2,500 of them in colleges—and at least one, Philip Hitti, teaching in college (as one of two native

³¹ Ibid.

³² Cyril E. Black and L. Carl Brown, *Modernization in the Middle East*, 1991, Darwin Press, 129, 138

lecturers at the Syrian Protestant College, 1908-1913).³³ In one article published in 1924, Hitti described his alma mater, which was rechristened the American University of Beirut in 1920, as holding

representatives of the following nationalities: Syrians, Palestinians, Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Persians, Armenians, and Greeks. Of a total enrollment of 934 students for the current year, 333 students in this University are Muslims, 67 Jews, 31 Druzes, 8 Baha'is, 1 Karaim, and the rest Christians of the following denominations: Greek Orthodox, Protestants, Gregorians, Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, Copts, Maronites, Chaldeans, and Syriacs.³⁴

Although Hitti did not specify the small but growing female demography, the American University of Beirut had begun to accept women in 1921 as well, with men and women in the same classrooms—an avant-garde advancement that symbolized the changing times.³⁵ Such a diversity of students interacting on a daily basis represented a cosmopolitanism even unique for Beirut at the time. In other writings, Hitti revealed the regimented nature of the curriculum of the Syrian Protestant College in the institution's early years; the school lacked textbooks and its curriculum was decidedly Euro-centric, with no subjects on the history of Arabic-speakers, for example. Still, the school's focus on teaching foreign languages, and a smattering of science, as well as the school's social demography, gave native Arabic-speakers lessons that may have escaped them elsewhere.³⁶

Napoleon's invasion of the Ottoman-ruled Arabic-speaking lands in 1798 spurred broad reforms in the Ottoman Empire and the Arabic-speaking lands in particular, the

³³ Ibid., 137

³⁴ Hitti, Philip, "Student Thought in Syria," *The Student World*, July, 1924, pgs 131-135 Box 26, FF 2

³⁵ for women at AUB, see Betty Anderson's chapter 4 "Making Women," in *American University of Beirut: Arab Nationalism and Liberal Education*, University of Texas Press 2011

³⁶ For comments on his own education, see Box 21, FF 1 *From Lebanon to Princeton*, and interview "A Talk With Philip Hitti," interview with John Starkey, July/August 1971, <http://www.aramcoworld.com/issue/197104/a.talk.with.philip.hitti.htm>, accessed 1/2/2015

most blatant of which may have been the spread of Arabic printing. The invasion, however, not only marked a milestone in Arabic printing, but also in the emergence of Europe as a concern for Arabic-speakers. Napoleon's invasion brought Europe and its technological and military progress within sight of Arabic-speakers and Ottomans, rendering the 19th century a time of greater interactions with Europe. The expeditions to Egyptian students whom Mohamad Ali sent to Europe, beginning in the 1820s, followed similar expeditions sent by his Ottoman counterparts, a few years earlier.³⁷ Such educational migrations from the Middle East to Europe underscored the new appeals of Europe. The employment of French in Ottoman military schools in the early years of the century, as well as new Ottoman administrative costumes that resembled the Napoleonic Code, further suggested new European orientations in the region.³⁸

Europe became more than simply an inspiration for Easterners, however. European rule soon came to replace Ottoman rule, as European colonialism spread throughout the Arabic-speaking lands. The French conquest of Egypt, beginning in 1798, lasted three years, but a new phase of European colonialism followed. By 1900, European colonialism claimed more than half of the Arabic-speaking lands, and it would soon claim more than 99% of this region by the end of WWI in 1918. Such a European presence in the region was unprecedented. During the Crusades (1095-1291), Europeans sought to capture the holy city of Jerusalem, although this invasion by Europeans was

³⁷For Ottoman reforms, see: Lewis, Bernard, "The Impact of the French Revolution on Turkey," *Journal of World History*, 1953, Issue 1. For Egyptian migrations, see Hewowrth-Dunne, J, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*, London, Cass, 1968

³⁸ Lewis, "The Impact" and also Cleveland, William L & Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*

geographically isolated and poorly organized. The Crusades targeted Jerusalem, lacking systematic financial or military backing.³⁹

The 19th and 20th centuries, in contrast, ushered in new European governmental-sanctioned conquests not driven by religious zeal but by the enterprise of Empires, supported by mass sums of money, armies, and administrative infrastructure. The French in Algeria (1830-1962), Tunisia (1881-1956), Morocco (1912-1956), Syria and Lebanon (1920-1943); the British in Egypt (1882-1954), Palestine (1920-1948) and Trans-Jordan (1921-1941); and the Italians in Libya (1911-1943) rendered Europe a looming presence in the minds of Arabic-speakers in general.

Europe had previously been distanced from Arabic-speakers. In the century immediately preceding Napoleon's departure for Egypt in 1798, for example, no known Arabic text explicitly addressed Europe or its past. The lack of such writing suggests the distance of Arabic letters from Europe in the century before 1798. The horizons of Arabic letters thus changed dramatically in the 19th century. Hundreds of Arabic-speakers travelled to Europe in the 19th century alone. A new genre about travels in Europe not

³⁹ Riley-Smith, Jonathan. *What were the Crusades?* (Fourth Edition ed.). Ignatius Press. p. 27

only emerged, but proliferated. Europe appeared closer, and the circulation of Arabic works on Europe benefitted from Arabic printing.⁴⁰

When examined in isolation, the 1888 *Al Muqtataf* article employing the term ‘*Nahda*’ to denote the rise of Egyptian pharmacies may appear to comment simply on Egypt’s new pharmaceutical industry. Yet when examined in relation to Arabic letters in general, as well as to the broad social changes evident in the wider region, the article revealed considerably more. Like the new meaning of the word ‘*Sharq*’ (East), the shift in the usage and significance of ‘*Nahda*’ reflected new intellectual currents amongst Arabic-speakers.⁴¹

The appearance of a word for social ‘Awakening’ in 1888 did not mean that social ferments were new to the Arabic-speaking lands in the late 19th century. On the contrary, there had been other social ‘Awakenings’ amongst Arabic-speakers before 1888. In the 7th century, for example, Islam was revealed to the Prophet Mohammad (570-632 AD), and subsequently spread first in the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. The extraordinary rise of Islam could also be described as a time of social ‘Awakening,’ or ‘*Nahda*’.

⁴⁰ In the 19th century, the following books constitute some of the literature by Arabic-speakers travelling to Europe: Fikri, Irshād, *al-alibbā’ ilā maḥāsini Ūrūbbā*, Maṭba‘at al-Muqtataf, 1892; Zaki, Ahmad, *al-Safar ilā al-mu’tamar*, Būlāq, al-Maṭba‘ah al-Kubrā al-Amīriyah, 1894; Aḥmad Fāris Shidyāq, *Kitāb al-Riḥlah al-mawsūmah bi-al-Wāsiṭah ilā ma’rifat Māliṭah : wa-Kashf al-mukhabbā ‘an funūn Awrubbā*, Maṭba‘at al-Dawlah al-Tūnisīyah, 1283 [1867]; Dīmītrī ibn Ni‘mat Allāh Khallāt, *Kitāb siḥr al-safar ilā ma’riq al-ḥaḍar*, Maṭba‘at al-Muqtataf, 1891; Salīm ibn Mūsā Busturus, *Kitāb al-Nuzḥah al-shahīyah fī al-riḥlah al-Salīmīyah*, 1856: Salih, Nakhlah, *al-Kanz al-mukhabba lil-siyahah fī Urubba*, al-Qahirah : s.n., 1876; Bājūrī, Maḥmūd ‘Umar, *al-Durar al-bahīyah fī al-riḥlah al-Urūbbāwīyah*, Maṭba‘at Maḥmūd Afandī Muṣṭfā, 1891; Sarkīs, Khalīl, *Riḥlat mudīr al-Lisān Khalīl Sarkīs ilā al-Istānah al-‘Alīyah wa-Ūrubbā wa-Amūrkā*, Beirut, al Matba‘ah al-Adabiyah (1893?)

⁴¹Use of the word ‘*Nahda*’ in its new meaning signifying ‘collective emergences’ continued to proliferate after 1888, gradually emerging as a full-scale historical period by the early years of the 20th century.

Similarly, episodes of literary dynamism appeared in Arabic writings preceding the 19th century. Yet no standard word in Arabic ever commemorated social 'Awakening' before *Nahda's* new employment in 1888. No episode of dynamism in the Arabic-speaking lands received any title that meant anything resembling social 'Awakening.'

The existence of social ferments before 1888-- and the lack of any Arabic word to describe such 'Awakenings'-- suggested that the *Nahda's* new meaning owed not simply to social 'Awakenings'. Instead, it owed to new modes of thought in the region, a product of the intellectual currents that were arriving into the Arabic-speaking lands and which drove the new meaning of other words like 'Sharq.' The *Nahda's* new significance was identifiably foreign, echoing the 'Renaissance' trend popularizing internationally at the time. Jules Michelet coined the 'Renaissance' as a historical category in his 1855 *Histoire de France*, although the Renaissance would soon become the word's most popular historical anthem of Rebirth, a narrative students in France and outside France both came to know, and one that would soon reorganize the story of the past not simply in Europe but internationally.

By the 1880s, the 'Renaissance' was an global fixation.⁴² The original Renaissance spawned many Renaissances, as other scholars sought to coalesce the previously dispersed artistic and intellectual accomplishments in their own backyard under one roof. A search in an international database for publications printed within the

⁴² For variations on the 'Renaissance': Wolski, Kalikst, *The Regeneration of Roumania, or, The Days of Renaissance Amongst the Roumanians*, London, 1880; Alexander V G Allen's *The Theological Renaissance Of The Nineteenth Century* (188?)

years 1855-1900 yields almost ten thousand titles bearing the French word ‘Renaissance’—more than three times the number surfacing for the word ‘Biology’ (or ‘biology’) in this time-frame.⁴³ The late 19th century marked the age of Renaissance-formation. The 8-9th century Carolingian Renaissance and the 19th century Hawaiian Renaissance both took the original European Renaissance's cues, and many other such organizations of history followed, restructuring the study of the past around the Renaissance rubric. The use of the word *Nahda* in the Middle East followed in this vein.

Unlike German, Japanese, English and Hebrew, Arabic never adopted the French term ‘Renaissance’ into its lingo. Instead, the word ‘*Nahda*’ became its translation. In Arabic, even the European Renaissance became *al-nahḍa al-Ūrubiyya*.⁴⁴ Without a modifier, however, ‘*Nahda*’ is understood as the dynamism amongst Arabic-speakers in the 19th and 20th centuries. ‘*Nahda*’ coalesced the creativities of the age of the Arabic printing press under one identifiable narrative. As the Renaissance references Europe's artistic dynamism between the 14th-17th centuries, so too does the ‘*Nahda*’ references the ‘Awakenings’ of Arabic-speakers in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Commonly translated as the ‘Arab Awakening(s)’ or the ‘Arab Renaissance,’ the *Nahda* is a standard narrative all students of and in the Arabic-speaking lands study.⁴⁵ Paradoxically, however, the *Nahda* regularly excludes any mention of Arabic-speakers

⁴³ Look for example at Worldcat, inserting the word ‘Renaissance,’ for title for the years 1855-1899, versus ‘Biology.’ Many of the results may be duplicates, although the overall picture suggests a far greater frequency for ‘Renaissance’ than even for ‘Biology,’ despite the rise of Biology during this same time period.

⁴⁴ For the European Renaissance, see: *A tar al-‘Arab wa-al-Islām fī al-nahḍa al-Ūrubiyya*, [al-Qāhira], al-Hay’a al-Miṣriyya al-‘Āmma li-al-Kitāb, 1987. For the Meiji Restoration, see *Nahḍat al-Yābān wa ta’īr rūḥ al- umma fin-nahḍa* (1925); *Nahḍat al-Yābān* (2007); *Nahḍat al-Yābān fī ‘ahd al-Mijī min manzūr ‘Arabī-Islāmī* (2013)

⁴⁵ For the *Nahda* in school textbooks, see Schank, Alex, *Developing Renaissance: Nahda Discourse in Jordanian Humanities Textbooks*, MA thesis Georgetown University, 2014

beyond that region. Whereas the *Nahda*'s very meaning was Western-influenced, Arabic-speakers in the West would be systematically excluded in *Nahda* narratives. This exclusion suggests that the *Nahda*'s contents were not chosen based on merit alone. The influence or creativities of Arabic writers were not the sole factor in forming this narrative of artistic and intellectual accomplishments of the era. Instead, geography dictated the selection of the *Nahda* material. Geography played a part in who or what was included in this '*Nahda*' category-- and certainly who or what was excluded.

In the stretch of Arabic letters, the transformation of '*Nahda*' into a historical period was extraordinary, its articulation itself a sign of new times and novel influences in the region. The transformation of a word signifying a bird's flight into a historical era, was as curious as the emergence of a narrative that would circulate amongst Arabic-speakers en masse—a population that was too divided before the age of printing to speak as one community. In Arabic letters, no Arabic periodization before the late 19th century even resembled the '*Nahda*' category. Following the rise of Islam in the 7th century, standard periodization in Arabic normally followed a set course: Arabic-speakers referenced different periods by alluding to a notable ruler from the relevant time period. '*Ayyam bani l-Abbas*,' for example, meant 'the days of Abbas' (8th-16th centuries)⁴⁶. The use of an inherently jubilant term like '*Nahda*' to reference the 19th and 20th centuries, suggested not only that an alien periodization had emerged in Arabic, but that this periodization was at home in the language.

⁴⁶ alternatively, '*al-dawlah l-'Abbasiyyah*,' meaning 'the rule of the Abbassids'; thank you to Professor Michael Cooperson at UCLA for consultation on this insight.

Independent of the geographical exclusions of this new ‘*Nahda*’ historical category, the very articulation of this ‘*Nahda*’ historical category suggested novelty. In the 6th century, when Arabic was only a language spoken within the Arabian Peninsula, ‘*Nahda*’ appeared in the poetry of Arabian poet Obeid Ibn Al-Abrass (died 600 AD)—referencing a bird’s flight.⁴⁷ Use of *Nahda* predated the Divine Revelations of the *Qur’an*, which Muslims believe came to the Prophet Mohammad between 609 AD and the Prophet’s death in 632 AD. Soon following the Prophet’s death, Arab armies departed from the Arabian Peninsula, conquering the lands outside this geography, and introducing Arabic and Islam to new populations. This expansion of Arabic and of Islam into lands beyond the Arabian Peninsula could be called itself a ‘*Nahda*,’ although Arabic-speakers of the 7th century would probably not understand such a reference.

The Arab conquests enlarged the demography of Arabic-users exponentially. Before the Arab conquests, Greek, Aramaic, Coptic, Demotic, and Syriac constituted the main languages of the lands directly beyond the Arabian Peninsula, where Christianity was the majority religion. Arabic and Islam soon overtook the region. The written Arabic language, however, spread even beyond the new populations of Arabic-speakers, to populations who did not even speak Arabic. Written Arabic, known as ‘literary Arabic,’ was and continues to be the standard universal written language for Arabic, transcending ‘spoken Arabic,’ which is really an umbrella term consisting of varied Arabic dialects bearing considerable divergence from each other and from literary Arabic.

⁴⁷ ‘*Nahda*’ was used in the poetry of Obeid Ibn Al-Abrass (died 600 AD) in a 45-lines poem. This line comes as the 39th line of his 45-lines poem. No title was given for these 45 lines. See footnote #17

Literary Arabic spread even beyond spoken Arabic's reach, planting 'Nahda' even amongst speakers of other languages. Following the Arab conquests of modern-day Iran in the mid-7th century, for example, the masses continued to speak Persian (Pahlavi, Persian). Still, Persian writers often adopted literary Arabic as a medium of written communication. Muhammad Al Tabari's *Tarih Al Rusul Wa Al Muluk* ('History of the Prophets and Kings,' (circa 915 AD)), for example, was written in Arabic despite the author's Persian background. The word 'Nahda' appeared twenty-nine times in this work.⁴⁸ Had Al Tabari been born a century before, Arabic would have been a completely foreign and alien language to him. Persian's adoption of the Arabic script by the 9th century suggests Arabic's influence on Persian. Turkic-speaking peoples also adopted literary Arabic as a standard medium of writing, and Turkic languages adopted Arabic script as well.

Departing the Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century, the Arabs interconnected a geography that would by the early 13th century become the largest empire in demographic size in recorded history. The Arab-ruled domain eventually stretched from the borders of modern-day India to modern-day Spain. Literary Arabic became the *lingua franca* of this realm, comprising an estimated 30% of the world's population.⁴⁹ Becoming the principal written language in this geography, literary Arabic aligned otherwise distant literary heritages in this territory-- becoming an intellectual bridge the likes of which had never before existed. The canon for Arabic writings swelled, owing to a process of translation

⁴⁸ See <http://www.alwaraq.net/Core/index.jsp?option=1> accessed 1/1/2015

⁴⁹ Only the Qing Dynasty in China (18th century) would be a larger empire demographically (approximately 37% of the world's population), although this followed the Ummayad Caliphate, which comprised roughly 29% percent of world's population), according to: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_largest_empires, accessed 1/1/2015

into literary Arabic hitherto unknown in any language's history. Literary Arabic conserved and preserved alienated heritages. Its literary canon incorporated and included poetry, theology, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, science, and science fiction, amongst other subjects, as well as inspiration from other cultures and language-groups.

The invention of paper aided this expansion of the literary Arabic canon. Developed in China in the early years of the millennium, paper reached Arabic-speakers in the early 8th century. Preceding the Arabs, the most successful conquerors in world history were the Achaemenids of 550-330 BC, and the Sasanians of 224-652 AD. These groups, however, neither enjoyed paper nor did they conquer a landmass as demographically and geographically large as that of Arabs.⁵⁰ The possession of paper and the reach of the Muslim conquests facilitated literary Arabic's unprecedented expansion.

Before Gutenberg's invention of the movable-type printing press circa 1450, literary Arabic carried "more works, philosophical, medical, historical, religious, astronomical and geographical... than... any other tongue," as Hitti described.⁵¹ The Arab presence in the Iberian Peninsula beginning in the early 8th century meant that this intellectual wealth reached Europe. Even the writings on and of Aristotle arrived in Europe in Arabic, entering Córdoba and introducing scholars from throughout Europe to the Greek heritage. Córdoba harbored up until the 15th century the largest library in the world, and the city attracted scholars from throughout the Continent. Arabic was the

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 10th edition, pg 4

international language of science, and for a large portion of this period, and Córdoba became the hub for scholars seeking to expand their intellectual horizons.

The evidence of the influence and transmission of Arabic writings into Europe is overwhelming, and the contributions manifest even in everyday English-language. "On a hot summer day you wear your cotton suit. Cotton comes from Arabic *qutn*," Hitti wrote in the chief publication of the Indo-Arab Association of Bombay, explaining the Arabic influence on the English language:

The plant is an ancient one that grew in India and evidently introduced into the Near East about 700 BC by the Assyrian Sennacherib [King of Assyria]... You sit on a sofa (from Arabic *suffah*) or divan (from Arabic *diwan*, through Turkish) that has a mattress (from Arabic *matrah*). The mattress is covered with satin damask. 'Satin' is derived from Arabic *zaytun*, a corruption of Chinese *Tzu'ting*, name of a town in China which in the middle Ages was famous for its silk factory. 'Damask' perpetuates the name of another city, Damascus. You then open a magazine (from Arabic *makhzan*, through French) and read a story about Gibraltar and the admiral of the British fleet. 'Gibraltar' is a corruption of Arabic *Jabal Tariq*, the mountain of Tariq, the general who in 711 crossed over and conquered Spain; 'admiral' stems from Arabic *amir al-bahr*, commander of the sea.

Hitti went on to illuminate other Arabic derivations, including coffee (*qahwah*); sugar (*sukkar*); alcohol (*al-kuhl*); soda (*suda*-splitting head); to alchemy (*al-kimya*), algebra (*al-jabr*); and the number zero (sipher), all demonstrating that the very Western heritage owed to the Arab heritage as well.⁵²

The first book confirmed as printed in England—the 1477 *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*—was originally an Arabic text. Originally written by the 11th or 12th century Cairene named Mubashir ibn Fatik, it was subsequently translated into English

⁵² Hitti, "A Perfect Arabic Day," Vol. 2, No.1 January 1948, *Al Urwah*, Box 26 FF 2

and published on the printing press in England.⁵³ Even the appearance of paper in Europe in the 13th century owed to Arabic-speakers who had transported the technology Westward. Without the paper invented by the Chinese and transported thousands of miles east, the movable-type printing presses in Europe would have been inconceivable. As Hitti pointed out in the publication of the Indo-Arab Association of Bombay, the very word 'ream', a corruption of Arabic *rizmah* (bundle), evidenced the Arabic introduction of the paper to Europe.⁵⁴

Hitti's *History of the Arabs* established these connections between the 'Arab heritage' and the 'Western heritage': "Moslem Spain wrote one of the brightest chapters in the intellectual history of medieval Europe," he wrote, tracing this migration of knowledge from Arabic-speakers to Europe. He cited achievements in algebra, geometry, astronomy, architecture, botany, medicine, art, music, pharmacology, philosophy, and charted the routes of these contributions into Europe:

Among the cities of southern France deserving mention are Marseilles, where Raymond in 1140 drew up planetary tables based on those of Toledo; Toulouse, where Hermann the Dalmatian completed in 1143 al Majarti's translation of Ptolemy's Planisphaerium; Narbonne, where Abraham ben Ezra translated in 1160 al-Biruni's commentary on al-Khwarizmi's tables, and Montpellier, which in the thirteenth century became the chief centre of medical and astronomical studies in France.⁵⁵

⁵³ *Mukhtār al-ḥikam wa-maḥāsīn al-kalīm*, see *Here endeth the book named the dictes or sayengis of the philosophres*, Westminster : Printed by William Caxton, not after 18 Nov. 1477

⁵⁴ Hitti, "A Perfect Arabic Day," Box 19

⁵⁵ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 10th edition, 589

Hitti was not the first to suggest an Arab inspiration behind the ‘Renaissance.’ Others had offered segments of this story, in short articles in Arabic and European languages and in scholarly treatments often geared for specialists literate in Arabic.⁵⁶

Yet *History* offered the most comprehensive presentation of the Arab heritage yet in existence—and the most comprehensible. Hitti presented the Arab legacy to wide and international acclaim, representing a milestone for Arabic-speakers and for the field of history in general, which in Western languages had been an insulated field, focused mainly on the US and Europe. Although acknowledgements of Arab contributions occasionally appeared in specialized Orientalist scholarship in both Western languages and Arabic, *History* pushed such contributions into the mainstream, elevating them in major newspapers worldwide, from the *New York Times* to the *Irish Time* and the *Times of India*, and securing a visibility rare amongst scholarship in general, to speak nothing of scholarship focused on ‘Oriental’ subjects in particular.

With a thunderbolt of history, Hitti challenged the illusion of European supremacy—a notion enjoying legitimacy in academia of the time. Hitti's initiative defied historical rules and historical studies of the first half of the 20th century. Standard histories published in the West and securing international audiences in this age of racial segregation and exclusion overwhelmingly reflected the limits of the time. They routinely ignored the points-of-views of minorities and non-Westerners. In the US, the most

⁵⁶ Interest in Muslim Spain appeared more than a century before his *History*, in Louis Viardot's *Essai sur l'histoire des arabes et des Mores d'Espagne* (1833), for example. In Orientalist scholarship in the decade preceding Hitti's *History*, De Lacy O'Leary's *Arabic Thought and Its Place in History* (1922) acknowledged parts of the Arab legacy as well, though major names, like the philosopher and sociologist Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), remained absent in this scholarship. A Turkish translation was prepared by Ziya Pasha and published in Istanbul, under the title the title *Endelüs Tarihi*, in A.H. 1280 (1863—64 AD)

consecrated and institutionalized history in mid-20th America, for example, was *The Growth of the American Republic* (1930, 1934, 1936, 1937, 1940, 1942, 1943, 1945, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956...etc). On the one hand, the work acknowledged the US as a nation of immigrants, dedicating an entire chapter to Immigration (VIII), “the oldest and most persistent theme in American history.” On the other hand, the work disparaged immigrants: “The Italians, Magyars, Slovaks, Hebrews, Czechs, Croats, Poles and others who came over in the booming years of the eighties and the nineties wer generally illiterate, ignorant, and poor, and unable to strike out for themselves in a new country.”⁵⁷ The work’s comments regarding African-Americans epitomized its racial limits: “The majority of slaves were adequately fed, well-cared for, and apparently happy. Competent observers reported that they performed less labor than the hired man of the Northern states.”⁵⁸ This text dominated in the American historical landscape and in American classrooms well past Hitti’s official retirement from Princeton in 1955.

Amongst Hitti’s company, others had attempted to challenge such limits from the heights of American academia—and especially limits plaguing Semites. Hitti’s colleague and confidante, Salo Baron, published his own *A Social and religious History of the Jews* (1937) the same year as Hitti’s *History*. Besides the personal connection to Richard Gottheil (Baron was also a protégé of Richard Gottheil, who hired Baron at Columbia in 1929), Baron and Hitti shared narrative focuses. Baron provided an overview of Jewish

⁵⁷ *Growth of the American Republic*, pg 174, 181 (1942 edition)

⁵⁸ *Growth of the American Republic*, by Pulitzer-prize winner Samuel Eliot Morison (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 537-539

history that established him as ‘the architect of Jewish history,’ as one contemporary scholar has identified him. Producing a work that resembled Hitti's in its epic scope, Baron's history also included Arabic-speaking Jews, as did Hitti's.

Yet Baron's classic work was a history of a minority, and even the *New York Times* failed to do it justice—granting it no reviews, perhaps on account of its scholarly appearance. Told that he would not even sell one hundred copies, Hitti, in contrast, spurred more reviews than perhaps any history until that date—since *History* was covered in all mainstream and specialized newspapers covering history from the US to England, and from India to Iran. “Orientalists have already recognized Professor Hitti's history a more complete and rounded work than any other now in existence,” noted the *New York Times*, which called the work “a magnificent and dramatic story, rich in the amenities and luxuries of a people fond of peace and leisure, as they were of valor and conquest—a civilization that had an incalculable influence on East and West alike...”⁵⁹

Baron's work was of incontestable scholastic value, yet it enjoyed minor sales. Such figures are unknown, although statements of disappointing circulation came from Baron himself.⁶⁰ “That there is no direct correlation between the *fate* of Jews and that of Judaism has often been observed” (emphasis original),⁶¹ Baron began his work, employing a more an academic tone in line with convention, contrasting with the

⁵⁹ “The People of Arabia: Scholarly and Authoritative History”

By H. I. KATIBAH

New York Times (1923-Current file); Jul 11, 1937; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times
pg. 78

⁶⁰ Of its disappointment to Baron, see Liberles, Robert, *Salo Wittmayer Baron, Architect of Jewish History*, New York : New York University Press, 1995, pg. 172

⁶¹ Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Volume 1, pg. V

intimacy marking Hitti's opus, a sign that he was not only prepared to break rules, but to break them flagrantly.

In both his subject-matter and the tone he exercised in its exploration, Hitti rejected the authority of Western historians who had dismissed such a large part of the human past as though it were inexistant: "The Bedouin... represents the best adaptation of human life to desert conditions," he wrote of the Arabic-speaking desert-dwellers whom Professor James Breasted, of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, addressed in 1922 as "wild nomads who had not paid any taxes to the Turks for fifteen years." Breasted had commended the "admirable work...[of the British] in civilizing" this desert minority, whereas Hitti humanized the Bedouin:⁶² "Nomadism is as much a scientific mode of living in the Nufud as industrialism is in Detroit or Manchester,"⁶³ Hitti countered, without referencing Breasted, and continuing:

The keen competition for water and pasturage, on which the chief causes of conflict centre, splits the desert populace into warring tribes; but the common consciousness of helplessness in the face of a stubborn and malignant nature develops a feeling for the necessity of one sacred duty: that of hospitality. To refuse a guest such a courtesy in a land where no inns or hotels obtain, or to harm him after accepting him as a guest, is an offence not only against the established mores and honour but against God Himself, the real protector.

Hitti invested in what many historians of the time considered a complete non-presence.

Imbuing the Bedouin Arab with a humanity that would have evoked envy, Hitti painted a picture of desert life:

⁶² Breasted, James, "The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago: A Beginning and a Program" pg. 241 of 233-328

⁶³ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 10th edition, 23

In time of emergency either an old camel is killed or a stick is thrust down its throat to make it vomit water. If the camel has been watered within a day or two, the liquid is tolerably drinkable. The part which the camel has played in the economy of the Arabian life is indicated by the fact that the Arabic language is said to include some one thousand names for the camel in its numerous breeds and stages of growth, a number rivaled only by the number of synonyms used for the sword. The Arabian camel can go for about twenty-five days in winter and about five days in summer without water. The camel was a factor in facilitating the early Moslem conquests by assuring its masters more mobility than, and consequent advantage over, the settled people.⁶⁴

Such details revealed more than simply the affairs of the Sahara or Arabian Deserts:

These lines suggested that the history of Arabic-speakers transcended mere translations of Arabic writings, as was the custom amongst Orientalist scholarship at the time. Even the affairs of an animal as overlooked as the camel shaped the histories of Arabic-speakers, whose lives would need to be taken on their own terms if scholarship were to realistically reflect their histories.

From the very first line, the work not only challenged authority, but issued an expose of the limits of existing authority: “Of all the lands comparable to Arabia in size, and of all the peoples approaching the Arabs in historical interest and importance, no country and no nationality have perhaps received so little consideration and study in modern times, as have Arabia and the Arabs.” Hitti not only underscored the richness of the Arab past, but its lack of registration amongst the very scholars entrusted to upkeep it.⁶⁵

Hitti’s perspective was as irreverent as it was relevant, with consequences far transcending the subject of the Arabs. The story Hitti personally enacted at Princeton was not simply the Robin Hood tale on the stage of academia, nor did it only serve Arabs.

⁶⁴ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 10th edition, 22

⁶⁵ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 10th edition, pg 3.

Within his pages the reader met Arabic-speaking Jews, Berbers Copts, Persians, Assyrians, Syrians, and many other previously underattended populations. Beyond introducing Western readers to subjects long muted in the historical landscape, however, *History* introduced Europe to Europeans.

Oxford Professor H.A.L. Fisher's three-volume *A History of Europe* (1935), for example, published two years before Hitti's *History*, ranks amongst the most canonical scholarship of the 20th century, although it had very little to acknowledge about contributions to Europe from beyond Europe, let alone from Arabic-speakers within Europe. Fisher's work enjoyed translation into a range of languages, including Arabic, despite its cursory comments about the Muslim Iberian Peninsula. The existence of specialized scholarship on the Arabs preceding the 1930s failed to awake historians like Fisher concerning the historical contribution of Arabic-speakers. Fisher's history comprised of over three thousand pages, in three volumes. Yet not a couple of paragraph was spared to Arabic-speakers living in the Iberian Peninsula. Fisher noted that the Iberian Peninsula was "a conduit of Arab civilization, and later the splendid metropolis of a great and powerful empire."⁶⁶ The glibness of this reference implicitly reduced Muslim Spain to a footnote in European history.

Hitti's claims turned historical hierarchies on their head. His assertion that the "influx into Western Europe of a body of new ideas, mainly philosophic, marks the beginning of the end of the 'Dark Ages' and the dawn of the scholastic period," underscored that Arabic-speakers were neither minor nor mute in European history, and

⁶⁶ HAL Fisher *A History of Europe*, Publisher: Boston ; New York : Houghton Mifflin Company, 1935-1936, pg?

that the dismissal of the histories of Arabic-speakers impaired any accurate understanding of Europe proper. Fisher's complete blocking out of Córdoba epitomized the limits of the field of history. Hitti never singled-out for criticism his Oxford colleague who had also incidentally become a Minister of British Parliament, although Hitti made Fisher's work appear backwards.

“The phoenix, a bird of Araby, is rising again” Hitti stated in *History*, never mentioning the recent popularization of printing in the region, which was one reason behind the new rise of Arabic letters in the 19th and 20th centuries. In turn, one reason for the diminution of the ‘Arab heritage’ had been the rejection of Arabic printing in the Middle East in the 15th and 16th centuries. Despite the publications of some segments of the Arabic canon in European printing machines beginning in the early 16th century, only a fraction of Arabic writings saw publication. Without publication, the full range of Arabic writings was impossible to conserve generation after generation. The eclipse of many Arabic writings was inevitable—especially in the Arabic-speaking lands before printing's spread. In contrast, the advent of the movable-type printing press in European vernacular languages, launched a dramatic expansion of European letters— raising new preoccupations for European literatures which addressed new concerns and commitments.

Yet the fate of Arabic letters did not only owe to the rejection of the printing press in the 15th century Middle East. According to Hitti, literary Arabic by the 15th century was the most voluminous literary canon in history, although even before this time, the

situation of literary Arabic as an international literary medium had shown signs of retreat. The Christian Crusaders arriving from Southern Europe, and attempting to capture Jerusalem, returned to Europe in defeat in 1291, following the fall of the last Christian stronghold at Acre. Yet a more crippling blow befell the Abbasid capitol in Baghdad. The Mongols invaded Baghdad in 1258, inflicting the Arab domain with significant destruction. The Mongols burned Baghdad's libraries to the ground, killing between 200,000 and one million people in the city. Although the Mongols soon embraced Islam—adopting the religion of their vanquished foes—the destruction of human life and literary riches was a milestone in world history. Following the Mongol devastation, Arabic ceased being a language of popular literary discourse for Persian-speakers, who generally forsook Arabic and embraced Persian, at least for the writing of history (*tarikh*).⁶⁷

Shockwaves also arrived at the Western end of this empire. In the 15th and 16th centuries, 'the Catholic Monarchs,' Isabella I and Ferdinand II launched a religious offensive against non-Christians in the Iberian Peninsula. The Monarchs expelled Muslims and Jews from this geography, ending an Arabic-speaking presence in the Peninsula which had last more than seven centuries. A few years later, the Ottomans invaded the rest of the Arabic-speaking lands, ushering a centuries-long Ottoman presence into the region. Hitti expressed the changing situation in the region:

With...the establishment of the Turks on the Bosphorus the focus of Islamic power shifted westward. In fact, by this time the centre of world civilization had moved to the West. The discovery of America and of the Cape of Good Hope transferred

⁶⁷ Francis Robinson, *The Mughal Emperors And The Islamic Dynasties of India, Iran and Central Asia*, pgs 19, 36

the world's trade to new routes, and the entire realm of the eastern Mediterranean began to sink into the background.⁶⁸

Following these invasions of the Arabic-speaking lands, Arabic writings still continued. Arabic writings even appeared in new lands, like South-Eastern Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and India, for example—geographies that had never been conquered by the Arabs. Still, literary Arabic ceased being the *lingua franca* of all literary communication as it had once been. Remaining a language for writings on Islam, literary Arabic faced competition from Persian, Ottoman Turkish and European languages, amongst other literary media. Other languages helped unsettle literary Arabic's dominance as a language for literary communication on non-religious matters.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the popularization of Arabic printing presses in the Middle East changed the rules of the game for languages sharing Arabic's script. Printing not only reenergized these languages, but popularized them, undoing restrictions weighing against these languages. By the 20th century, not only had 'Nahda' acquired a new 'collective' significance for 'Awakening.' Because of printing, this new significance popularized quickly. Arabic texts circulated far wider than Arabic texts had ever circulated before.

Printing industrialized Arabic writings. Preceding the 19th century, (re)producing Arabic writings was a hand-craft. Copying a single manuscript took weeks, months, or even years. A number of Arabic libraries existed in the Arabic-speaking lands, carrying a

⁶⁸ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 705

wide range of texts; one scholar has counted 190 private libraries in Egypt in 1740.⁶⁹ Still, the existence of libraries said little about the circulation of Arabic texts amongst society at large. More than often, libraries existed in the care of religious authorities, leaving literary collections distanced from the general readership. Manuscript-production by hand was too burdensome to allow the reproduction of more than a comparatively few Arabic writings to engage the reading public year after year. The dominance of scribal culture naturally restricted the range of Arabic writings known to Arabic readers, leaving even prized Arabic works in oblivion.

On the movable-type printing machine, in contrast, printing one thousand texts required minimally more effort than printing two copies; the brunt of the toil in printing entailed laying the font on the printing press, not in the quantity of copies produced subsequently. Printing thus permitted the exponential expansion of Arabic writings, and subsequently of the repertoire and the subject-matter of Arabic writings. The dramatic growth of texts in Arabic as well as Persian and Ottoman in the 19th and 20th centuries meant the dramatic growth of these literary languages themselves. Such expansions signaled ‘Oriental Renaissances’ during these times, as texts in Arabic script appeared in profusion.

The reproduction of older writings in Arabic script, as well as contemporary texts and translations of foreign-language writings, all became available in relatively remarkable quantity in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the post-WWI years of this

⁶⁹ Hanna, Nelly, *In Praise of Books*, Syracuse, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, 2003, pg. 85

intellectual revolution, Hitti would emerge as the most popular authority of the Arabic-speaking past in this new flood of information, occupying a unique role in this capacity. The Arabic press in Egypt “prints anything for me at its own expense,” he announced in a private correspondence in 1927, shortly following his arrival at Princeton.⁷⁰

By 1940, Hitti was not only a department head spewing out the new histories of and for Arabic-speakers. At Princeton, he also enjoyed a scholarship named after him, the Philip Hitti Scholarship Fund, to “aid in the development of men of the type of Dr. Hitti who would hasten the achievement of the harmonious blending of Eastern and Western cultures,” a sign that underscored his emergence as a symbol for the native Arabic-speakers who had sponsored this honor.⁷¹ The scholarship which covered tuition at Princeton for a number of Arabic-speaking students represented “the first major move on the part of the Syrian and Lebanese immigrants to co-operate with an American institution in promoting such studies and in making their culture more favorably and more widely known,” as Princeton media acknowledged.⁷² Five years later, Hitti’s contribution to the Arab Conference in 1945 in Cairo, signified his status amongst Arabic-speakers in general. Hitti’s demand over “upholding [of] the right of selfdetermination (sic) for all the Arab peoples,” was delivered by Prime Minister of

⁷⁰ Box 15, FF 10

⁷¹ Box 17, FF 3

⁷² Box 17, FF 3

Egypt Nokrashy Pasha (1888 - 1948), who wrote a letter of gratitude to the Princeton professor for his contribution in the conference.⁷³

America's prominence by the 20th century benefitted Hitti's own prominence. In the first half of the 19th century, the US occupied a minimal presence in the Middle Eastern media, a situation that would change by the end of the 20th century.⁷⁴ The Egyptian Muslim cleric the Imam Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, for example, underscored America's 'invisibility' in his famous chronicle of his five-year stay in France (1826-1831). In his 1834-published *Takhlīṣ al-ibrīz fī talkhīṣ Bārīz aw al-dīwān al-naḥīs bi-Īwān Bārīs* (*A Paris Profile*), Tahtawi described the cultures of France in detail, introducing the country to his countrymen, some of whom had even witnessed the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798. "If I were to have a final divorce from Paris," Tahtawi wrote in one of his poems about France, despite the French invasion and killing of other Arabic-speakers in Algeria in 1830, continuing: "it would only be to return to Cairo/Each of them is a bride to me."⁷⁵ The US, on the other hand, was "a land of infidels" for Tahtawi—an interesting claim given the similar Christian backgrounds of both the US and France.⁷⁶ Sent to France as a religious cleric for the Egyptian students dispatched by Mohammad Ali's government, Tahtawi represented a new vision of Europe for Arabic readers. Returning to Cairo and becoming the head of a School of Languages (1835), Tahtawi supervised the translation

⁷³ Box 29, FF 10

⁷⁴ For perceptions of the US in the Middle East, see for example "American Educational and Missionary Efforts in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," by Bayard Dodge, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 401, America and the Middle East (May, 1972), pp. 15-22

⁷⁵ Newman, Daniel, *An Imam in Paris*, pg 160.

⁷⁶ Newman, Daniel, *An Imam in Paris*, translation of Al Tahtawi, *Takhlīṣ al-ibrīz fī talkhīṣ Bārīz aw al-dīwān al-naḥīs bi-Īwān Bārīs*, 2004, pg. 122

of over two thousand works from European languages. This initiative was the first mass mobilization to introduce European literatures to Arabic readerships.

By the early 20th century, however, the status of the US in Arabic media had catapulted. This transformation partly owed to a substantial Arabic-speaking Levantine presence in the US, which accelerated starting in the 1870s (and began publishing Arabic journalism in the 1890s), and partly to rising American power on the world stage.

American GDP by 1890 rendered the country the richest not only in the world, but in world history (and considerably richer than its closest European competitors).⁷⁷ The US was also the most populous Western country. The US had over seventy five million people by 1900—and this number was quickly growing. The whole of the Ottoman Empire had about twenty million in the same year.⁷⁸

The presence of an American president who addressed Arabic-speakers also aided America's perception amongst Arabic-speakers. Woodrow Wilson, who had been a Princeton alumni (Class of 1879), as well as president of the university (1902–1910), became president of the United States (1913–1921), and would be critical in generating American esteem in the Middle East, both through his support of American relief efforts to Arabic-speakers (American Near East Relief began in 1915, with Wilson's public support), and through Wilson's 1919 demand of "autonomy" in the lands ruled by the Ottoman Empire—a pronouncement he made following the World War. In Egypt, "the principles enunciated by President Wilson [in his 'Fourteen Points Speech' of 1919]"

⁷⁷ Engerman, Stanley and Robert Gallman, *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States/Vol 3 The Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, 2008

⁷⁸ Resident Population Data. "Resident Population Data- 2010 Census" www.census.gov. Retrieved February 22, 2013.

produced an immediate and decisive effect on Egyptian opinion," noted the colonial administrator Lord Alfred Milner in 1922 (1854 –1925). "The acceptance of the idea of self-determination appeared to give international sanction to sentiment which had long been maturing among the educated classes."⁷⁹ In 1928, King Saud, the founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, publically revealed Wilson's popularity again, crediting Wilson "for awakening the small oppressed nations of the world. Wilson showed them the way to freedom and independence. He has infused, especially into the people of the East, a new spirit."⁸⁰

Ironically, Wilson's racial limits during his tenure as President of Princeton University (1902-1910) contrasted with his global-mindedness as American President (1913-1921). As Princeton President, Wilson gave little indication of the internationalism which would become synonymous with his name. Wilson as American President, for example, endorsed the international body of the League of Nations, which the US Congress ultimately decided against joining. In contrast, as Princeton President, Wilson radically reshaped Princeton, increasing the faculty from 112 to 174, and also acquiring some two hundred acres of real estate for the institution, although he appeared restrained in his desire or potential to radically alter the racial make-up of the school.⁸¹

⁷⁹ "EGYPT AND AMERICA: New Government Looks to Us for Development" *New York Times* (1857-1922); May 21, 1922; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times pg. 102

⁸⁰ "Two Glimpses of Modern Arabia Through Eastern Eyes: Ameen Rihani" ... By P.W. WILSON *New York Times* (1923-Current file); May 13, 1928; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010)

⁸¹ For Wilson's tenure at Princeton, see http://etcweb.princeton.edu/CampusWWW/Companion/wilson_woodrow.html accessed 1/1/2015

Princeton was especially limited on racial matters—much more so than other northern institutions. Wilson personally rejected propositions to accept African-Americans or ‘Orient’-born students at the school, despite opportunities to accept both black and Chinese students (the latter on a Boxer Rebellion indemnity fund which promised their subsidy). "I fear," Wilson wrote in 1902 in response to the prospect of having students from China studying at Princeton, "that our present social organization at Princeton would be sure to result in making any Chinese students... feel like outsiders... set apart for some reason of race or caste which would render them most uncomfortable. There is no door that I can see... by which they could really enter our university..."⁸²

Princeton differed from Columbia, Harvard or Yale—all of which did accept African-Americans and Chinese students already in the 19th century.⁸³ Established in 1746, the institution that would become Princeton predated the independence of the United States (1776) by twenty years. In relation to both existing institutions and institutions founded subsequent to it, however, Princeton was distinct geographically and demographically. Princeton was located outside an urban area, distinguishing the school from Harvard (founded in Cambridge (1636)); the College of William and Mary (founded in Jamestown in 1693); Yale (founded in New Haven (1701)), and Columbia (founded in New York City as King’s College (1784)). Such geographical isolationism in turn led to its demographic peculiarity, as only students capable of paying Princeton’s tuition and boarding cost could afford the education.

⁸² PWW: 14: 299 (December 19, 1902) from Axtell, *The Making of Princeton University*, Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2006, pg 10

⁸³ Ibid, 7

Wilson acknowledged Princeton's demographic distinction: "[While] there is nothing in the law of the university to prevent a negro's entering, the whole temper and tradition of the place are such that no negro has ever applied for admission." Five years later, G. McArthur Sullivan, a student at the black Baptist Virginia Theological Seminary and College, wrote Wilson: "I want so much to come to your School at Princeton. I am a poor Southern colored man from South Carolina, but I believe I can make my way if I am permitted to come." Wilson's reply for his secretary read: "Regret to say that it is altogether inadvisable for a colored man to enter Princeton." Wilson's more sensitive secretary excluded any mention to the man's race, and wrote instead: "If you wish to attend a Northern institution I would suggest that you correspond with the authorities of Harvard, Dartmouth, or Brown; the last being, as you undoubtedly know, a Baptist Institution."⁸⁴

Despite such limits domestically, Wilson helped spur America's positive reception internationally. The foundation of the American University of Cairo in 1919 indicated America's rising star in the region. The oldest educational institution of higher learning in the Arabic-speaking lands was itself an American institution—the 1866 Syrian Protestant College—Hitti's alma mater, which changed its name in 1920 to the American University of Beirut, reaffirming the visibility of America in the region.⁸⁵ Despite the school's religious orientation before 1920, the institution lacked success in

⁸⁴ Ibid, pgs 8-9

⁸⁵ AUB predated the second oldest institutions of higher learning in the Levant, which had also been launched by foreigners-- the Université La Sagesse and Université Saint-Joseph both by nine years (1875)

securing any conversion of a native Arabic-speaker to Protestantism, facilitated the college's secularization and its name change in 1920.

More than twenty years before his own publication of the first history of the Americans in Arabic in 1946 (*Tārīkh al-sha‘b al-Amīrikī*)—Hitti offered an introduction of America in one Arabic article about the country. Published in Cairo in a 1924 edition of *al-Hilal* magazine, Hitti offered a personal view of the US, whose citizenship he already acquired in 1920: “The first thing that attracts your attention as a visitor to America is how extremely lively Americans are,” he wrote two years before his start at Princeton, continuing:

The minute you arrive by boat in New York, the US port, you will be greeted with the sight of a series of skyscrapers on the horizon, tall buildings with 50 or 60 floors. You will feel as though you have arrived in a country whose inhabitants are giants among men. When you enter the city and walk among the people, you will be struck by how eager Americans are to go to their work, how quick their pace is, and how active and energetic they are. You will then realize that you are not in a country like others, and you are not among a people like others, but rather among a people superior in their qualities, distinguished in their vitality, and unique in their abundance of energy. The matchless skyscrapers, the quick pace of life, the ability to focus on one’s work, are none other than the manifestations of the dynamism of a nation that is full of youth and pulsating with tremendous energy.⁸⁶

In *Al Hilal*, Hitti made no mention to American racial discriminations which he addressed almost simultaneously elsewhere. A few months following this Arabic article, for example, Hitti wrote to the *New York Times* to challenge American race prejudices by contesting the (mis)representation of Brazil in the American media. Noting that Brazil was “much discussed through your columns,” Hitti stressed that “[whether] one is a

⁸⁶ translated as “America in the Eyes of an Easterner, or Eight Years in the United States,” in *America in an Arab Mirror*, edited by Abdel-Malek, Kamal, and Kahla, Mouna, pg 49-50

Catholic, a Protestant, a Jew or an atheist had nothing to do with his social standing [in Brazil]”. He continued to expose and challenge American racial limits even in popular American literature aboard the ship carrying him to Brazil:

In the library of the S. S. Pan America, which plies regularly between New York, Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo and Buenos Aires, there wasn't a single book this Summer (sic) on South America or any of its countries. Of the 'move' films shown on board this and its sister ship, the American Legio, many exalted some North American hero at the expense of some one of the Iberian race. Surely such things are not conducive to inter-American relations!⁸⁷

In his article describing America in *Al Hilal*, however, Hitti evaded mention of American racial relations, and instead spotlighted American work-ethic and industry. Neither did Hitti reveal that he—an 'Easterner'—had also become one of the most famous educational leaders in the US.

Hitti's article in *Al Hilal* made no mention of his stature in the US, although he had already become one of America's top educational leaders—already enjoying a status and a visibility in the American press unknown to any other Orient-born academic. Hitti's *Guide Book To Foreign Students in the United States* (originally published in 1921), was the Bible of foreign students arriving in the country for higher level education. Hitti had risen to become a leader of foreign students in the US shortly following his arrival in the US. Within one year of his arrival in the country, Hitti had become President of the Cosmopolitan Club of New York—the largest foreign student organization in the country. Hitti would be associated with raising the funds to purchase the land for the International House of New York City, securing these funds from John F. Rockefeller

⁸⁷ BRAZIL A TRUE MELTING POT
PHILIP K. HITTI,

New York Times (1923-Current file); Oct 25, 1925; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times

Jr.⁸⁸ Simultaneously, Hitti also founded and presided over the Syrian Educational Society (1915), which raised money for more than forty American-Levantines to attend college, and became secretary of the War Council of New York (1915), and secretary of the Syrian-Mount Lebanon Relief Committee (1915), alongside Gibran Khalil Gibran (who was also secretary), and Ameen Rihani (assistant chairman).

The World War I years pushed Hitti into the spotlight. “I am prepared to speak on The Part the Turkish Empire is Playing in the European War [underline and emphasis original]” wrote Hitti in 1916, one of many letters showing his wish to address American audiences concerning the affairs of his homeland. “This subject, presented by one who has lived in the Turkish Empire almost all his life, should, I dare say prove a novel and attractive factor on your programme,” Hitti continued.⁸⁹ Another letter sent two years later to the New York Board of Education indicates that he had already spoken to the Board, but that he wished to address the Board again: “Within [the Ottoman] boundaries entire nations—Armenian, Syrian, and Greek, are either wholly exterminated or threatened with extermination,” he noted in the 1918 letter, and continued to describe himself:

My life has been devoted to the study of the problems, literature and history of the Turkish Empire. I was born in Mr. Lebanon, educated in the American Christian University of Beirut, and since taking my PhD in Columbia in 1915, I have been lecturing on Oriental history and language.

⁸⁸ The date of the successful acquisition of these funds was 1920, as noted in a pamphlet International House, New York, Box 25, FF 8

⁸⁹ Box 9, FF 5, February 14, 1916

In the letter, Hitti acknowledged that his lecture had “been delivered in various universities, churches, clubs, camps, etc., and has, I dare say, been always enthusiastically received.”⁹⁰

Contents of the lectures, which exceed twenty pages of hard-to-read hand-written notes, indicate his focus on the Armenian and Syrian massacres during the War. A “declaration of holy war... was intended to arouse all the Moslem world against their Christian rules,” read Hitti’s lecture notes, continuing:

On Nov. 12, 1914 the Sultan Calif issued a manifesto to the army and many calling them for jihad... or holy war... Although the *Jihad* intended to arouse the faithful Moslems against the unbelievers... [only] the... Moslems only by name and for political reasons [took the] the opportunity to exterminate the Christian subjects ... The unfortunate Armenians [at least had] Lord Bryce bring their case upon the attention of the ... world. But the woes of the Syrian Christians have not yet found a Lord Bryce.⁹¹

The War which kept Hitti in the US, which in turn allowed him to pursue his PhD, raised his political activism.

Two post-WWI projects which Hitti never mentioned again in subsequent notes, evidenced his meteoric rise on the national and international stages. In 1919— six years in the country— Hitti was undergoing a hospital stay in New York City, where he wrote a fourteen page manifesto in pencil regarding the "Educational Reconstruction in Syria" following Ottoman rule of the country. "Educational reconstruction in Syria to be successful must take into consideration the old system of education that prevailed," Hitti wrote in his own handwriting, outlining in detail the future educational course for the

⁹⁰ Box 8 FF 12, April 5, 1918

⁹¹ Box 21, FF 9

Levant, including the new types of education that should become investments. He again underscored the affects of the War on the Levant:

The War had brought more misery, and devastation than we fully realize. The manhood of the country has been practically depleted, fewer babies were born and of those still fewer have survived. The future student class of the country will therefore be greatly thinned. The generation will face a long period of poverty, misery, and scarcity and natural inefficiencies...

Narrating the old, religious-based systems of education in the Levant, and the types of investment in education that should be undertaken in the years ahead—Hitti also emphasized the attraction of Syrians towards Americans and American education in particular:

It can be safely asserted that the modern intellectual awakening in Syria... owes its origins to the influence of the American missionaries.... Those of us who were studying and teaching in Syria remember the great enthusiasm and zeal which actuated the mountaineers of the Lebanon and the poor farmers of the plains of Syria as they insisted on sending their boys to [American] high schools and colleges. I knew of a Druze Sheikh from Aramun who was so anxious to see his son go to college that he accepted the job of a nightwatchman in Beirut in order to defray his expenses. And when one day he discovered he did not have enough money to buy his books, he went on foot from Beirut to his olive orchard in Aramun picked fresh olives to fill a large basket which he carried back walking to the market in Beirut.⁹²

The subsequent fate of the fourteen page statement concerning the educational course of Syria remains unclear. Whether it ever reached other company is completely unknown. Still, the manifesto suggests Hitti's ambition in reforming education in the Levant in general—an initiative that was clearly on his mind seven years before joining Princeton.⁹³

Another project undertaken around the same time and that again underscores his educational-mindedness was the attempt to found a new university, the University of the

⁹² Box 6, FF2, written on April 24, 1919

⁹³ Box 6, FF2, written on April 24, 1919

Nations to accompany the League of Nations emerging in 1920. A newcomer to the US, Hitti became the chairman of this proposed university, which was to be located next to the League of Nations in Geneva, and was dedicated, as the university's mission statement read, to

The principals of sound democracy, the creation of world statesmanship, the development of the truly international mind, the training of leadership for all nations, and the production of public sentiment which will help to make a League of Nations successful make sure the establishment of 'Peace on earth and good will among men.'⁹⁴

The project included names like Stephen Duggan (1870 – 1950), who founded the Institute of International Education in 1919, and Hamilton Holt (1872- 1951), a founding member in 1909 of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Both Duggan and Holt worked under Hitti as Vice-Chairman. The establishment of the university failed shortly following the rejection of the US Congress from joining the League of Nations. Hitti's place amongst such a congregation of leaders, however, showcases his influence and recognition in the country. One 1921 letter distributed amongst the company of founders of this university described Hitti:

Dr. Philip K. Hitti is a man of unusual ability. From the time he was sent to school from his home on Mr. Lebanon, Syria, he has taken highest scholastic honors throughout his entire educational career until the receipt of his degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Columbia University in 1915.

Following that he gave courses in Arabic in Columbia University and last summer was very strongly urged to become head of the Semitic Department in Columbia during the absence of Dr. Gottheil in Europe.

From 1914 to 1920 Dr. Hitti was President of the Cosmopolitan Club of the City of New York which is composed of students of fifty or more nationalities

⁹⁴ Box 8 FF 10

attending various colleges and universities in this city. I am told by certain authorities in this club that Dr. Hitti's splendid work in this connection is largely responsible for the fact that the club is now in possession of three very valuable lots near Riverside Drive upon which it is planned to erect a half million dollar club house as a sort of home and social center for the foreign students while studying in New York and for those passing through this city en route to other institutions.

Following this work Dr. Hitti was employed by the Friendly Relations Committee of the YMCA and has spent a good deal of time travelling up and down among the colleges and universities in the eastern half of the United States studying the problems of the foreign students in America and helping them to establish wholesome and helpful points of contact with American homes and American life. An article in the 'News Letter'...speaks rather specifically of Dr. Hitti's successful work. (sic).

During the war Dr. Hitti was very active on the Syrian Section of the Liberty Loan Committee for Greater New York (I think he was chairman) and was awarded a medal by the United States Treasury Department for his effective service in this connection.

During this years in New York City Dr. Hitti has become known to some of the most influential men in the city who respect him very highly and believe that he has a large future before him. I might go into further details but I think I have said enough to justify my nomination of Dr. Hitti for the position suggested. I may add that I am not the only one on our Executive Committee who believes that there probably are few if any men better qualified [than is he]...⁹⁵

Amongst the dozen or so names working on behalf of the university from the US, Hitti's was the only non-American born. The place of a foreigner to the US achieving such status as to lead a university, only one year after the reception of his American citizenship, and eight years following his arrival in the US, underscored his distinction.

In the years ahead, Hitti's exposure in the Arabic and American press only skyrocketed-- especially following his 1926 arrival at Princeton.⁹⁶ So far as history-writing for Arabic-speakers was concerned, no one could ignore Hitti. The patron of over

⁹⁵ Box 8, FF 10; letter of February 11, 1921

⁹⁶ Box 15, FF 4

three dozen PhD students—or three times as many as any previous Orientalist— Hitti convened hundreds of scholars to Princeton.⁹⁷ At least six of his students returned to the Middle East and became heads of departments or universities. These included Constantine Zurayk (1909 –2000, PhD 1930), who became President of the Syrian University in Damascus; Jabrail Jabbur (1900-1990, Princeton PhD 1947), who became head of the Department of Arabic Studies at the American University of Beirut; Nabih Fairs, Chairman of the Department of History at the American University of Beirut; Louis Awad (1915 – 1990, PhD Princeton 1953) chairman of the faculty of letters at Cairo University and the literary editor at the word's most circulating newspaper in Arabic, *Al Ahrām*; David D. Dodge (1922 –2009), President of the American University of Beirut (1981-1982); and Malcolm Kerr (1931 –1984), President of the American University of Beirut (1981-1984).

In his first days in the country in June, 1913, Hitti incidentally met Jessie Wilson (1887 –1933), President Wilson's middle daughter. The encounter would have personal and symbolic value for him, representing the potentials of the new country. Sent in 1913 by the Syrian Protestant College to the Student Christian Federation Conference at Lake Mohonk, New York, Hitti attended the congregation of over one hundred other Christians from all around the world. Hitti represented the Maronites in this congress of Christians—the sole such representative of the minority. Descending from the Hudson River liner, and into the Lake Mohonk Mountain House, Hitti was greeted by the figure

⁹⁷ Louis Massignon (1883 –1962), for example, had nine. Six, François, *Louis Massignon*, Paris, Éditions de l'Herne, 1970. Richard Gottheil had less than a dozen. These include William Popper, who started the Near Eastern Studies at Berkeley and Zionist leader, Stephen S. Wise- the most notable names.

of twenty-six-year-old Miss Wilson, the American delegation to the conference. One year Miss Wilson's elder, Hitti noted that Miss Wilson behaved—and was treated—no different than any other delegate. For a poor man like himself to have somehow managed to get a college education—was incredible. To travel to the US was unbelievable.⁹⁸

Yet meeting American royalty in the form of the President's daughter defied imagination. Before his cruise on the Hudson liner, Hitti had never seen a river before ("the rivers in Lebanon were really brooks," he wrote in hindsight).⁹⁹ The menagerie of nationalities aboard the ship left Hitti feeling like he was on "a humanized version of Noah's Ark," as he later confessed.¹⁰⁰ The presence of giant hotels effortlessly suspended over the water seemed to defy the properties of physics. Yet the most memorable aspect of the event for Hitti was the presence of the President's daughter amongst a company which included himself. Hitti's encounter at Lake Mohonk represented for him a cherished memory, and convinced him that he witnessed a piece of heaven at the site, a sentiment in accord with the native-American translation of the site's name, "lake in the sky." This introduction to America prompted the young visitor to commit never to return to Lake Mohonk. He did not want to disturb the image of the place that he forever preserved in his mind, a memory that he hoped to keep untarnished.

Within a few years, Hitti would become a celebrity himself. Hitti is "the outstanding Arabic scholar in America today," Princeton etymologist Harold Bender wrote to Princeton President Dodds in 1933, of the new scholar at Princeton,

⁹⁸ Box 5, FF 2

⁹⁹ Ibid

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

continuing:¹⁰¹ “He [is] a combination of productive scholar, teacher, administrator, and gentleman....” Bender was enthusiastic about the soft-spoken newcomer at Princeton who could be seen at Firestone Library at 4:00 am each morning, and was changing Princeton's image of upper-class isolationism single-handedly. Of course, Princeton had afforded Hitti the resources necessary for such a transformation, although resources alone could not secure the changes Princeton would see in the years ahead. “[He] is distinctly outstanding at Princeton, and has won recognition in the United States, England, the Continent, the Near East and wherever Arabic and Semitic studies are pursued,”¹⁰² Bender continued.

Answering why he wanted to study at Princeton, the devout Egyptian Muslim Abdoh El-Kholy revealed Hitti's prominence on his 1955 application for graduate study at Princeton: “Princeton University is one of the oldest American Universities. It has a school of oriental studies which is matchless in any other university and which is headed by a broadminded professor who has wide knowledge about many of the ancient and contemporary eastern trends of thought.”¹⁰³ The statement from a religious Muslim like El-Kholy reflected Hitti's popularity amongst communities very different from his own. A representative of the 10th century-founded mosque of Al Azhar in Egypt who had noted in his Princeton application that he had memorized the Qur'an, El-Kholy would become one of two Azhar students in Hitti's department, a center which hired a Professor from Israel only a year earlier, also under Hitti's tenure-- and with Hitti's personal sponsorship

¹⁰¹ Box 7, FF3

¹⁰² Ibid

¹⁰³ Princeton University Archives,

(Raphael Patai, 1954). The quiet, ‘Oriental’ professor controlling an Oriental center at Princeton appeared noticeably understated-- but it was his very understatement that accentuated his distinction.

The burst of institutional validation for Arabic-speakers coming from Princeton was extraordinary by any calculus. Contrary to presumption, during colonial times, ‘Arab’ pride was not an omnipresent movement in the Middle East, as it would later become, and the evidence of ‘Arab’ pride emanating from Princeton had no parallel even in literary works produced in Arabic. Despite the existence of segments of the population explicitly self-identifying as ‘Arab’ by the 1930s, the ‘Arab’ association also found notable opposition in the Middle East and elsewhere—especially from elite Arabic-speaking intellectuals.¹⁰⁴ Although no polls exists from the time covering such public sentiments regarding the ‘Arab’ identification, intellectual arbitors of the time suggests that the ‘Arab’ identification was still a controversial identification, a status that contrasted with its orthodoxy amongst the following generation of Arabic-speakers.

“Egypt was always part of Europe,” Egypt’s leading intellectual, Taha Hussein (1889- 1973) wrote in his famous *Mustaqbal Al Thiqafa* (‘The Future of Culture in Egypt’) in 1938.¹⁰⁵ The association of Egypt with Spain, Italy, or Germany in 1938 was especially ironic given the depravities already manifesting in those countries in this time. Such a Eurocentric statement from a leading Egyptian intellectual echoed the sentiments of Egyptian notables far before the 1930s, and did not adequately reflect Hussein's own

¹⁰⁴ Antonius, George, *The Arab Awakening*, pg 18

¹⁰⁵ Taha Husayn, *Mustaqbal al-Thaqafa* (Cairo: Matba'at al Ma'arif, n.d. Preface, 1938). Pg 26

humanitarianism.¹⁰⁶ Still, Husein's statement reaffirmed the Eurocentrism which may have been as strong in Egypt amongst some segments of the population, as in Europe.¹⁰⁷ The Coptic Egyptian Salama Moussa (1887 –1958) who also became a leading writer in Egypt, relayed his 'anti-Arab' sentiments even more explicitly: "Our task now is to break with the [Arab] past and to outline a new course for the future, because the spirit of this past is out of harmony with our own spirit, We must awaken ourselves by detaching ourselves."¹⁰⁸ In the American Syrian press to which Hitti normally contributed, a 1927 article entitled "Fanaticism of the Arabs" revealed in English: "O you who clamor to have the Arabs rule over all Arabic-speaking countries, we have had enough of your boasting of the Arabs and their virtues." Both in the Middle East and outside of it, the statements of many other Arabic-speakers could paint a vivid picture of rabid anti-'Arabism.'

The anti-Arabism and racism in Western academia was not unfamiliar to Arabic-speakers. The works of Ernest Renan (1823-1892), for example, categorizing different racial groups and their characteristics, achieved wide currency in the Arabic-speaking lands, published in Cairo in 1929. Renan's *De la part des peuples semitiques dans l'histoire de la civilization* (1862) and his *Historie generale et systeme compare des langues semitiques* (1855) have been described as significant works embraced by Arabic-speaking intellectuals.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ See Hourani, Albert, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, Cambridge University Press, 260-324

¹⁰⁷ Box 23, 'The Syrian World'

¹⁰⁸ Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs, The Search for Egyptian Nationhood, 1900-1930*, Oxford University Press, 1986, pg 109

¹⁰⁹ Gershoni and Jankowski, 101-102

The defence of the Arabs by an intellectual like Hitti represented a decisive verdict for the 'Arab' identification movement. Although a number of Arabic-speaking Jews, Christians and Muslims already embraced the 'Arab' identification by the 1930s, the identification lacked institutional and intellectual support, as contemporary Western scholars have recognized: “Egypt’s national consciousness and national movement in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th were Egyptian and not Arab...” one contemporary scholar has described of Egypt during the time, underscoring the anti-Arab antipathies that reigned in Egypt before the country became the paragon ‘Arab’ representative, continuing: “the idea [of Arabism] was still extremely strange in Egypt.” Another scholar has arrived at similar conclusions, noting that “[not] until 1956 did Egyptians, for the first time in modern history, declare themselves to be Arabs.”¹¹⁰ ‘Arab’ pride faced stigmas even on the part of native Arabic-speakers— stigmas Hitti challenged from Princeton.

In describing his own education in colonial Kenya in the early 20th century, the African writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o (born 1938) has noted that in British-controlled East Africa, the “earth moved around the European intellectual scholarly axis.”¹¹¹ Schools in colonial Kenya emphasized British literature instead of Swahili writings, as Thiong’o acknowledged: “English was the official vehicle and the magic formula to colonial elitedom.”¹¹² Thiong’o's description of intellectual colonialism in Kenya applied in the

¹¹⁰ Gershoni, *The Emergence of Pan-Arabism in Egypt*, [Tel-Aviv]: Shiloah Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel-Aviv University, 1981, pgs. 1-40

¹¹¹ Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, London: J. Currey; Nairobi, Heinemann Kenya, 1986, 93

¹¹² *Ibid*, p 12

Arabic-speaking lands as well. Institutions and writers faced foreign influences, and the anti-colonial movements in the Arabic-speaking lands often faced pro-colonial support as well. Western affairs were in reality never wholly removed from Easterners. The prominence accorded to Western letters was critical for the circulation of Hitti's message.

Chapter 5: 'Orientalist Renaissance'

The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed a literary revolution in the Middle East, as Arabic printing spread in the region. Yet vast transformations of knowledge were not only underway in the Middle East, nor simply in languages bearing Arabic script. Napoleon's 1798 penetration into the Arabic-speaking lands stirred up a massive trove of texts and artefacts bound for Europe, energizing new intellectual Western currents as well. The enormous collection of spoils entering Europe exemplified and electrified new Western interest in 'the Orient.'

A corps of French scientists and scholars accompanied Napoleon during his Egypt campaign. Their efforts resulted in new European publications about the Arabic-speaking lands. The magisterial multi-volume series *Description de l'Égypte* ('Description of Egypt') was one such work. Published in Paris between 1809 and 1829, *Description* was the largest work ever printed in any language. Surpassed in length even the grandly-conceived European encyclopedias of the 18th century, *Description* stood out on account of its scope, its subject-matter, and its international distribution.

Dedicating over twenty volumes to ancient and modern Egypt, *Description* illustrated the rising Western interest in non-Western subjects. A milestone in European intellectual history on account of the enormity of its scholarly investment in a non-European region and population, *Description* was also a sign of emerging trends, an implicit declaration of expanding Western intellectual horizons. Involving some 160

French scholars and scientists who had accompanied Napoleon to Egypt in 1798, as well as over 2000 artists in France, the work evinced the place of a national government in bolstering such intellectual pursuits. The work had been achieved and published on Napoleon's orders. Without France's invasion of the Arabic-speaking lands and the French government's investment in such a scholarly pursuit, the work would have been inconceivable.

Description facilitated the metamorphosis of Oriental Studies in the 19th century, as the field broke from the Biblical Studies foundations which had previously defined it to address wider geographical expanses. Before Napoleon's entry into the Middle East, 'Oriental Studies' was a handmaiden of Biblical Studies. Hebrew, as a biblical language, was the discipline's primary focus. In London's International Congress of Orientalists in 1874 (*Congrès International Des Orientalistes*), the second such congress ever convened (after the 1873 Congress in Paris), Professor Max Müller of Oxford University cited Hebrew's traditional dominance in Oriental Studies, and assailed the scholarly neglect shown toward other languages and cultures of the 'East':

[With] the exception of Hebrew, [Oriental Studies] stand still outside the pale of our schools and universities, and are cultivated by the very smallest number of students... We have a chair of Hebrew...for the language and antiquities of Egypt and Babylon, for Chinese, for Turkish, nay even for Arabic, there is nothing deserving the name of a chair.¹

" ORIENTAL LITERATURE.: THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ORIENTALISTS,"*New York Times*, 01 Oct 1874: 3.

Müller decried the absence of professorships in Arabic and other Oriental languages. Chinese Studies at Oxford began only in 1876, and Turkish followed WWII.² Contrary to Müller's statement, however, Oxford had an Arabic professorship since 1636. Müller's indication of an absence of such a professorship served to underscore Arabic's marginalization in the academic landscape at Oxford and elsewhere.³

Despite the existence of an Arabic professorship at Oxford, the position was a subsidiary of Hebrew, whose professorship at the school began ninety years before, in 1546. Christian concerns elevated Hebrew to prominence in Western academia, although in truth, the Western curriculum was not so much Hebrew-centric as it was Bible-centric. The Hebrew-language *Talmud* and the *Kabbalah*, for example, received scant attention in Western academia preceding the 19th century, as these writings did not directly relate to Christianity.⁴ The Hebrew Bible, on the other hand, reigned as a major concern for Christian scholars, given the text's centrality to Christian scripture. Jews were absent in

² at Oxford, the first professor of Chinese was missionary-scholar James Legge, and Turkish was Geoffrey Lewis

³ the Laudian Professor of Arabic

⁴ There are few non-Jewish publications about the *Kabbalah* in Western languages preceding the 19th century. One exception is the work by the Hebraist Wilhelm Schickard (1592–1635), in Latin *Bechinath Happeruschim hoc est examinis commentationem rabbinicarum in Mosen prodromus vel sectio prima complectens generalem protheoriam, de textu Hebraico, targum Chaldaico, versione Graeca, Masoreth, Kabbalah, Peruschim*. Of the *Talmud*, there is more literature, although scant in relation to non-Jewish literature on the Old Testament. See, for example, Lancelot Addison's 1676 *The present state of the Jews: wherein is contained an exact account of their customs, secular and religious: to which is annexed a summary discourse of the Misna, Talmud, & Gemara. Also, Johann Eisenmenger's 1748 Rabbinical literature : or, the traditions of the Jews, contained in their Talmud and other mystical writings. Likewise the opinions of that people concerning Messiah ... with an appendix, comprizing Buxtorf's account of the religious customs and ceremonies of that nation ; also, a preliminary enquiry into the origin, progress, authority, and usefulness of these traditions ; ... By the Revd. Mr. J.P. Stehelin, F.R.S. In two volumes.*

England between their expulsion in 1290 and 1656, when they were allowed to return, although the Old Testament secured Hebrew's prominence in Western academia. Arabic appeared complementary to Hebrew, as though to illuminate the desert contexts in which the Hebrew Bible emerged. Works like the 1649 *A Discourse on the Orientall Tongues* (sic) focused on Arabic and Hebrew jointly, acknowledging the benefits of the study of one language on the other, especially given their similar grammars and vocabularies.

Traditionally, however, European universities treated Arabic and other 'Eastern' languages as secondary to Hebrew, leaving Arabic's place in the history of the intellectual life of Europe undiagnosed and unclaimed. At Oxford, professors of Arabic were traditionally Church clerics or priests entering into the study of Arabic through the study of Hebrew. Of the ten professors who held the Laudian Professorship of Arabic at Oxford before WWII, five also held the complementary Hebrew professorships.⁵ A number of Laudian Professors of Arabic at Oxford did not even publish a single work on Arabic—restricting their writings instead to subjects like Hebrew.⁶

The French publication of *Description d'Egypte* (1809-1829) was an early and notable text breaking the Biblical focus of Oriental Studies. Much of *Description* focused on Egyptology, and thus on heritages preceding the Arab conquest of Egypt in the 7th century. Still, the focus on subjects transcending Biblical Studies challenged the previous religious focus of Oriental Studies. This significant digression in *Description* signaled wider changes that would become more apparent in the subsequent years. The 19th

⁵ These are: Edward Pococke (1636-1691); Thomas Hyde (1691-1703), Thomas Hunt (1738-1774), Joseph White (1774-1814), Wyndham Knatchbull (1823-1840)

⁶ Consider for example Edward Pococke (1636-1691); Thomas Hyde (1636-1703); John Wallis (1674 or 1675 –1738

century witnessed dramatic educational breakthroughs, and Oriental Studies in general reflected this metamorphosis. The launching of Princeton's Oriental Department in 1927, one semester following Hitti's arrival at the institution in 1926, echoed the new educational initiatives.

Princeton hired Hitti following the school's acquisition of some ten thousand manuscripts, a collection first purchased in Europe by Princeton alumnus Robert Garrett (Princeton class of 1897), a cache that was instantly deemed of worldclass value. "Rare Arab Library Given to Princeton: World's Largest Collection of Manuscript Is the Gift of Robert Garrett," the *New York Times* printed of the "largest collection of Arabic manuscripts in the world," which had been deposited at Princeton's library in the early 1920s, prefacing and precipitating Hitti's own arrival at Princeton.⁷ "Among the Arabic and Islamic manuscripts, which cover the entire range of Oriental thought and life from alchemy to horse-breeding," noted the *Times*, which also alluded to "Dr. Hitti [who] pointed out that it was most important that the collection had been brought to the country away from possible war damage that has wiped out other collections. He said study of the manuscripts might well become vital in the understanding of the civilizations from which they came."

Garrett was the son of a banking family and the grandson of John W. Garrett (1820–1884), a confidante of President Abraham Lincoln, whom Lincoln publically identified as the "right arm of the Federal Government," thanks to the funds Garrett lent

⁷ "Rare Arab Library Given to Princeton: World's Largest Collection of Manuscripts is the Gift of Robert Garrett," *New York Times* (1923-Current file); Jul 21, 1942; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: pg. 17

the Union during the Civil War (1860—1865).⁸ As his grandfather had supported the Union, Robert Garrett supported Princeton. Robert Garrett (1875-1961) would first become famous as an Olympic athlete (1896, Athens), competing in the first and second Olympic Games, and securing gold medals for his country while still an undergraduate.

Robert Garrett was the captain of the track and field team at Princeton. In 1896, in the summer interim between his junior and senior years, Garrett traveled to Europe to compete in the Olympic Games taking place in Athens, never even having attempted the discus throw sport which he would win. Itself revived in the modern Olympic Games of 1896, the discus throw competition lacked proper description in the books then existing at Princeton library at the time. Travelling to the Games alongside three other Princeton friends, all of whom secured medals, and whose voyage Garrett personally sponsored (Francis Lane, Herbert Jamison, and Albert Tyler), Garrett ultimately enlisted in a the discus throw as well as other sports categories, and earned two of the twelve golden medals, one of which was in the discus throw (and two more silver medals). Garrett reaffirmed his love for the older traditions by purchasing manuscripts, inheriting a love of such acquisition from his father, despite often not even being able to identify the language of the manuscripts. Garrett's also acquired Chinese, Spanish, Hebrew, and Ge'ez manuscripts (Ethiopian), amongst others. His Arabic manuscripts, however,

⁸ *John W. Garrett, President, B & O Railroad* from the US National Park Service Monocacy National Battlefield website (http://www.nps.gov/mono/historyculture/john_w_garrett.htm, accessed 1 November 2014)

amounted to his largest collection. This acquisition of the Arabic manuscripts provided an even more substantial gold for Princeton's future.⁹

"No other institution has any other collection to rival it," wrote Hitti's colleague, Princeton Professor Howard Bender directly to Robert Garrett in 1926, emphasizing the value of the collection whose value Garrett was unable to assess. Bender underscored the significance of Garrett's acquisition and its value not only to Princeton's future, but to history in general. At twenty-seven years old, Garrett had already become by 1902 a Princeton University trustee, under the 13th President of the University, Woodrow Wilson. Bender wrote to Garrett, hoping that Garrett would continue to support the new Oriental Department which the school set to inaugurate the following semester:

[The manuscripts] should be one of the university's greatest assets, and I firmly believe that if you give your consent, the new department can help you to do something tremendously worth while (sic) for Princeton. New Oriental developments are taking place at Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Pennsylvania, Hopkins and elsewhere: these things are in the air at present; but we have an opportunity at Princeton that none of the others has.

Next to you, it is chiefly upon Professor Hitti that this opportunity depends. You have had dealings with him and doubtless know his qualifications, but I could write you pages if you wished: I collected a great deal of material, all of it highly favorable, when [Princeton] President Hibben authorized me to select and secure a new man in Semitics. Among many other, [Columbia Professor] John Dyneley Prince, writes: 'I have never seen a student with a better formed philological or historical sense than Mr. Hitti, and [Columbia Professor] Williams Jackson: 'The PhD examination passed by Mr. Hitti was the best examination in the Oriental Department at Columbia University,' and [Columbia Professor] Richard Gottheil, 'I envy you having him at Princeton. Dr. Hitti is one of the [world's] best Arabic scholars'... [Hitti] is the author... of a large number of books and articles, an accurate and original scholar of high rank, born into the Arabic and Syriac tongues, trained under the best philologists at Columbia, and a fine fellow withal. In my opinion, and I have made many enquiries, he is far

⁹ NYT 1942, July 21; for history of Garrett's acquisitions, see Garrett, Robert, "Recollections of a Collector," The University Library Chronicle, Volume X, Number 3, April 1949, pgs 103-116

and away the best man... to make [the manuscripts] generally available, and I had that possibility in mind when I engaged him...¹⁰

The only PhD-carrying native Arabic-speaker with American citizenship, Hitti was the one American scholar capable of sifting through these manuscripts with requisite authority. Arriving at Princeton in order to catalogue the manuscripts and in anticipation of the foundation of the Oriental Department in 1927, Hitti would become the doyen of these manuscripts, which spanned more than a thousand years of written history.

Some seventeen years following Bender's correspondence with Garrett, the 15th President of Princeton, Harold Dodds (1889 –1980; term (1933-1957)) affirmed the new direction Princeton was undertaking under Hitti's direction. "While there are many universities in this country which have been cultivating Oriental Studies," President Harold Dodds publicly announced in 1943, describing Princeton's investment in Arabic and Islamic Studies; "Princeton has been the first to emphasize Arabic and Islamic studies," Dodds proudly proclaimed of the world's first institution that made a commitment to developing knowledge about the Arabic-speaking and Islamic lands, continuing:

Our Summer Seminar in this field [first convened in 1935], held every three years, is the only one of its kind...In our Garrett Collection of Manuscripts which you are to see this afternoon, we have 10,000 Arabic manuscripts and several hundred Turkish, Persian, and other Islamic manuscripts. At our University Press... we have an Arabic linotype machine which is the only one possessed by any American university press. Our press has already published a number of important works in Arabic and Turkish... and others are scheduled for further publication... All of these facts constitute evidence that in this University we

¹⁰ Box 10, FF 5, 26 June, 1926

have the highest regard for the importance of Arabic and Islamic culture. And, I should add, we have plans to develop studies in this field to an extent not yet known...¹¹

At least ten American universities offered courses in Arabic even before 1927—including Harvard, Yale, the University of Chicago, and the University of Pennsylvania. Yet rather than simply offering one course of graduate instruction in reading Arabic, as was the standard, Princeton decided to create an entire department dedicated expressly to venerating such study, and to producing new knowledge about these lands and cultures. Although Princeton President Dodds left Hitti's own place as the leader of this department unmentioned, the investment in such studies at Princeton came with a personality whose place at Princeton was as unique as the manuscripts themselves: an 'Oriental' was the department's architect, and he was put in a position to hire faculty and to accept graduate students—to develop Arabic and Islamic Studies to worldwide prominence and respectability.

The larger 'Orientalist Renaissance' which included the creation of Princeton's Department of Oriental Studies, owed more than to simply Napoleon's invasion of the Arabic-speaking lands, or even to a growing European colonialism in the 'Orient.' The very Olympic revival in 1896 suggested the prevalence of such 'Awakenings' in the 19th and 20th centuries. The 1896 Olympic Games were not the first such festivities named after the 8th century BC Olympic Games. In 1850, for example, such games were already taking place in the English village of Much Wenlock, and other such games were held in Greece and in cities in the US before gaining international prominence in the modern

¹¹ Box 21, FF 8 , November 6, 1943,

Olympic Games in 1896.¹² Although the first modern Olympic Games would officially begin in Athens in 1896—and represented part of Greece’s reinvention following the Greek War of Independence in 1821—their roots were deeper and wider.

Technological developments facilitated the revival of classical heritages worldwide. Communication and transportation breakthroughs changed historical narratives and geographic distances, bringing the past and the future simultaneously closer together. Cheaper and more efficient wood-pulp paper in the 1830s replaced paper made out of rags before, spurring the so-called “golden age of the printed world” and “the Golden Age of the novel.” Tolstoy (1828 –1910), Dostoevsky (1821–1881), Flaubert (1821-1880), Emile Zola (1840 –1902), Victor Hugo (1802 –1885), Charles Dicken (1812 –1870), all benefitted from these 19th century technological developments, as did a number of American writers. Emily Dickinson (1830 –1886), Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), Mark Twain (1835 –1910), Ralph Emerson (1803-1882), Herman Melville (1819 – 1891), Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), Walt Whitman (1819-1892), and Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) all made their literary debuts in the 1850s, representing what has been termed the 'American Renaissance' of the time, a ferment which in reality transcended the US, as cheaper paper energized the world of letters worldwide.

Cheaper paper—as well as the advent of pens, mass-produced pencils, type-writers, telegraphs, and new printing presses, such as the linotype technology which came

¹² Mullins, *Pierre de Coubertin and the Wenlock Olympian Games*, “To Revive Graceo-Roman Games,” *New York Times* (1857-1922); Feb 17, 1893; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* pg. 3; “The Olympic Games,” *New York Times* (1857-1922); Sep 19, 1886; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: pg. 7; Young, David C. (1996). *The Modern Olympics: A Struggle for Revival*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press

in Western letters in the 1880s— facilitated new outlets for publication, and thus a decrease of publication barriers. In the first years of the 19th century, writers were relatively few, since the obstacles for publication were high. With the increase of publications venues, and the decrease of publication hurdles, the number of writers grew exponentially, as did the subjects they addressed. Even the availability of newspapers was a new phenomenon in the 19th century. Few daily newspapers existed before the 1830s. New technological advancements drove the “newspaper revolution,” as the newspaper assumed a centrality in daily life in the US and elsewhere. Newspapers not only proliferated—they became dailies (they had mostly been weeklies before), and the price of newspapers fell from around 10\$ a year to about 3\$ a year (the penny newspapers), despite the daily frequency of their publications. The advent of new process of producing paper, as well as other technological advancements, allowed the newspapers of the mid-19th century to carry news of varied subjects—also differentiating the ‘every man’ newspaper of the mid-19th century from the more aristocratic early 19th century media which was a luxury, and which catered mostly to businessmen and politicians.¹³

Technological advancements like paper-production, steam-powered printing presses and ink pumps circulated worldwide, as did an ever-growing flow of literary production. This circulation of ideas paralleled the new vastly scaled human migrations of tens of millions of people, enabling new personal interactions which had not existed in such frequency previously. Industrialization created new economic conditions—

¹³ Douglas, George’s *The Golden Age of the Newspaper*, Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, 1999, pgs 2-5

permitting new forms of entertainment—including the Olympic Games, which represented the new potentials of the time. Students of the *Nahda* and of other cultural ferments regularly learn of such ‘Renaissances’ as organized and independent chapters reflecting a particular community’s dynamism and development. Such ferments, however, always belonged to a larger story, as the simultaneous flourishing of ‘Renaissances’ coined in the 19th and 20th centuries suggests.

New governmental social authorities in guided the international dynamism. The French Revolution was one milestone in the 'secular' revolution of the 19th century. Unlike the previous American Revolution or the English Revolution (1642–1660) which targeted select rulers in a bid to establish a new national authority, the French Revolution (1789-1799) guillotine a whole class of aristocracy and clergy-men, announcing its mission on behalf of 'the people.' Despite the contradictions of the Revolution, this upheaval with its bold message spurred an age of nationalism even beyond French borders. The Revolution transcended France, becoming in reality an intellectual Revolution of international consequences. French armies swept across the Continent and even invaded Egypt and Syria. The French State took powers away from the Church, confiscated Church lands, mandated new schools outside of church control, and guillotined Christian clerics, launching a new regime that supplanted the power of religious authorities and transfered it to the State. These ‘modernizations’ echoed internationally. The Ottoman State, for example, established new schools in the 1840s, a

new dress code for governmental employees, and new equal citizenship for all male subjects, sharply resembling the reforms in France.¹⁴

The 19th century rise of science, symbolized by Darwin's publication in 1859 of *On the Origin of Species*, further challenged the religious-based curricula of before. Darwin's publications, which raised questions about the creationism still taught in religious establishments, did not go unchallenged; in 1925, for example, the US state of Tennessee prohibited the teaching of any theory contradicting the lessons of the Bible, a law that became canonized in the State's law code. Still, subjects like biology, chemistry, and physics were assuming prominence in institutions of higher learning internationally, where such subjects had not existed a century before.¹⁵

The transformation from a Biblical-centered educational curriculum stressing Greek, Latin, the Bible and oratory, and a smattering of mathematics, into a scientifically-inclined, secular-leaning academic system, did not happen overnight, and was uneven at best. Yet in Europe and the US, this academic trajectory represented a widespread trend.

The first institutions of higher learning in the US had been church institutions, founded even before American independence in 1776. Harvard College (founded 1636), the College of William and Mary (1693), Yale College (1701), and the College of New Jersey (1746, renamed 'Princeton' in 1896) were all established as bastions of their

¹⁴ For emancipation of the Jews in France, see Joseph Lémann's 1988, *Les juifs dans la révolution française : la prépondérance juive, ses origines (1789-1791)*, Paris : Avalon

. Marxists.org. Retrieved 2015-02-17.; equal rights to non-Muslims came in the Tanzimat Reforms in the Ottoman Empire

¹⁵ Butler Act of 1925

respective churches. By the late 19th century, all of these institutions broke from the Church-curriculum of before. Psychology, biology and chemistry— were all new 19th century disciplines, as was the field of history. Although history was studied at Western institutions before the 19th century, it was formerly in the service of other subjects, namely Greek or Latin. Histories of Greece and Rome, for example, usually accompanied the study of these languages.¹⁶ No independent course in history existed in American institutions of higher learning before Harvard instituted one in 1838. Only in 1857 did a course in the contemporary era of history emerge.¹⁷ Upon the opening of the American Historical Association in 1884, there were only some twenty full-time teachers of history in American higher education— and all concentrated in American or European history. The tide of humanities in Western institutions had tacit but well-understood Western boundaries.¹⁸

Itself a discipline undergoing a dramatic growth-spurt in the 19th and 20th centuries, Oriental Studies was the exception within Western academia, addressing non-Western lands and cultures. “At first the study of Oriental literature was a matter of curiosity only, and it is so still to a great extent,” Professor Müller explained in his opening remarks at the second International Congress of Orientalists in 1874. “We now

¹⁶ William Smith's *A History of Greece* (1854), and *A Smaller History of Rome* (1865) were two such standard works. See <http://www.howard.edu/explore/history-dept.htm>, accessed 2.19/2015

¹⁷ see, Roberts, Jon H., Turner, James, *The Sacred and Secular University*, Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2000, pg 79

¹⁸ For history of historical studies, see *The Howard University Department of History, 1913-1973*, Michael R Winston, Publisher: Washington, Dept. of History, Howard University, 1973. <http://www.howard.edu/explore/history-dept.htm>

know that in language, and in everything that is implied by language, India and Europe are one.” Müller called attention to the growing recognition of linkages between the East and West, continuing:

The curtain between the West and the East has been lifted, and our old forgotten home stands before us again in bright colors and definite outlines. Two worlds, separated for thousands of years, have been reunited as by a magical spell...our languages, our alphabets, our figures, our weights and measures, our art, our religion, our traditions, our very nursery stories, came to us from the East.... We live indeed in a new world—that barrier between the West and East, that seemed insurmountable, has vanished. The East is ours, and we are its heirs, and claim by right our share in its inheritance.

New ways of accessing the past spurred Western scholarly interests in the “Orient.”

Advances in technology and research methods facilitated the exploration of previously unknown vistas. In 1811, the Englishman Claudius James Rich adopted new archeological practices to excavate the Nebuchadnezzar Cylanders dating to about the 6th century BC in modern-day Iraq, and brought the Mesopotamian antiquities he unearthed back to England. The 1822 deciphering of the Egyptian scripts of the Rosetta Stone by the French Orientalist Jean-François Champollion (1790 –1832) energized modern Egyptology. The French would have brought the Rosetta Stone back to France, had Britain not seized it beforehand, and brought it instead to London, where it remains. By 1886, there were some 15,000 items in the sections for Africa and Oceania in the Ethnological Museum in Berlin. By the 20th century, the museum housed four times this number.¹⁹

¹⁹ Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge II: From the Encyclopedie to Wikipedia*, Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA : Polity, 2012, location on Kindle 713

The invasion of Asian and African countries by European powers in the 19th and 20th centuries facilitated the expansion of Oriental Studies in Western universities. Colonial rules in 'Oriental lands' provided professional opportunities for Orientalists specializing in these lands. Colonialism also benefitted Oriental Studies by aiding the very acquisition of materials, such as the Rosetta Stone, the Elgin Marbles from Greece, the famous bust of Nefertiti currently in Berlin, and many other appropriations. The scope of 'Oriental Studies' included focuses spanning over four thousand years of history, although colonial rule over the 'Oriental' lands aided 'Oriental Studies' both directly and indirectly, providing new opportunities to engage new historical materials.

“India has been the scene of repeated conquests during a period of many centuries,” stated the *New York Times* in 1874, continuing:

[Yet] Asiatic civilization [did not] visibly impress its mark upon (sic) the manners, customs, language, or literature of the West. It was not till after the British gained possession of the country, that light began to be cast upon the value of India as a region for scientific research... Previously [India] had received no attention. The nations of Europe knew little more of it than its existence. They had large ideas about its material wealth, but they gave little heed either to the country or to its people. The one they regarded, when they thought of it at all, as almost beyond reach; the other they esteemed only as savages of the outer world, who were beyond consideration.

But during the current century all this has changed. We now see in India a link between the present and the prehistoric past. In the Hindoo (sic) mythology may be traced evidences that connect it with the mythologies of Greece and Rome, perhaps of Crete. Nor would it be safe to affirm that it does not contain affinities to the creed of the Christian. In the newe unspoken Sanscrit is testimony of its connection with the classifcal language of the West.²⁰

²⁰ ORIENTAL LITERATURE.: THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ORIENTALISTS. ...
New York Times (1857-1922); Oct 1, 1874;

By 1858, the British Crown controlled the entire Indian subcontinent, spurring interest in this geography and opening it to study by Western scholars. The status of Max Müller, whom the *New York Times* described as “the leader of English Orientalists,” illuminates the rising Orientalist interest in India. Müller was principally a Sanskritist specializing in India, and not a Hebrew or even Biblical scholar, as were Oriental scholars of before.²¹ The rise of a Sankrit scholar as the leader of English Orientalism represented the new Orientalist focuses, academic interests which emerged only in the late 19th century.

New Oriental departments mushroomed in Europe. In 1795, France established the *Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales* (INALCO) (National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations) specifically noting in the school's mission statement its quest to offer living languages “of recognized utility for politics and commerce,” stressing practical aims behind endorsing Oriental Studies. Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838), who taught Arabic at the new school, also advised the French government on Muslim affairs, and served as the first president of the *Société Asiatique* (the ‘Asiatique Society,’ founded 1822) dedicated to developing and diffusing knowledge about Asia in general.

In 1916, England followed suite, establishing the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, benefitting the new class of ambitious scholars interested in careers relating to the ‘Orient,’ an advancement made possible by

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010)
pg. 3

²¹ AN APPRECIATION OF MAX MULLER.
New York Times (1857-1922); Dec 1, 1900;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New

colonialism's new horizons. Across Europe and the US, Asia-focused learned societies emerged in the 19th century, such as *Societe asiatique* (1822), the *Royal Asiatic Society* (1823), and the *American Oriental Society* (1842)—which, contrary to its name, was not simply oriented towards 'Orientals,' but to "the cultivation of learning in the Asiatic, African and Polynesian languages."²² International conferences were launched as well, such as the International Congress of Orientalists (1873), as well as countless other international fairs and expositions (1855- the Exposition Universelle in Paris; 1857, the Arts Treasures Exhibition in Manchester; 1876- the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, and at least one hundred others in the 19th century alone).²³ These developments heralded the so-called 'Orientalist Renaissance' which saw radical increases of information about the 'Orient' from Western scholars. The 'Orientalist Renaissance' paralleled the 'Oriental Renaissances' tracing to printing's expansion in the Middle East.

The Oriental and Orientalist Renaissances were not only simultaneous, but intertwined, as Hitti's own example shows. An 'Oriental' Orientalist, Hitti was critical in navigating the new avalanche of knowledge emanating from the Middle East, and well as in the West, at least as that knowledge related to Arabic-speakers and Muslims. Hitti's first publication was the English-language "Characteristics of Syrian Students," in 1911,

²² THE AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY.: It History, Objects, Results--Annual ... New York Times (1857-1922); Jun 17, 1858; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* pg. 2

²³ . Scholarly focuses went hand-in-hand with territorial expansion in the area. Silvestre de Sacy (1758– 1838), the foremost Orientalist scholar of his generation, advised his government on Islam and the Orient, as did the Dutch Orientalist scholar Snouck Hurgronje (1857– 1936), and the countless other examples would not begin to address Orientalists who served the Empire indirectly through their scholarship.

two years before travelling to the US, suggests his role as a representative for Syrian students even while he was a lecturer at the Syrian Protestant College in Lebanon. This article was published in French in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul), in English in London, and in Arabic in Beirut—all in 1911.²⁴ Hitti normally wrote either in Arabic or in English, and almost every work published in one language appeared in the other. Benefitting from both Western and Eastern literary ferments, Hitti mediated between tides of knowledge, translating and transmitting narratives from one sphere to another. While the Oriental and Orientalist 'Renaissances' regularly appear in scholarship to be separated, Hitti himself was proof that they were linked.

Contrary to the standard Middle Eastern-isolated picture of development amongst Arabic-speakers, the borders of the literary ferment were never set, and Arabic-speakers in the 19th and 20th centuries were highly attuned to inspiration from beyond the Middle East. *Nahda* narratives give platform and preference to Arabic writers in the Middle East, although the new reading material in Arabic included many non-Middle Eastern writers—as well as foreign writers whose works appeared for the first time in Arabic. Even the writings of European Orientalists, for example, were published in Cairo in Arabic, beginning in the 1830s, with the writings of the French Orientalist Silvestre de Sacy.²⁵

²⁴ "Characteristics of Syrian Students," *Report of the Conference of the World's Student Christian Federation 1911*, London, 229-30; same article in Arabic: "Mu'tamar Jamīyat al-Talibah al-Masihīyin fi al-'Alam", al-Kulliyah ii, 7 May 141-2; in French: "Traits spéciaux aux étudiants syriens", *Compte-rendu du Congrès International de Constantinople*, Robert College, 24-28 avril 1911, 183-4

²⁵ *Hādihi Fihrist tašmilu ġamī' mā ihtawat 'alayhi al-Maqāmāt min mufradāt al-alfāz al-luġawīyya al-mašrūha wa-al-am tāl al-'Arabīyya wa-al-'lām al-mašhūra [...]* by Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy, baron; al-Qāsim b 'Alī al- Ḥarīrī; Publisher: al-Qāhira, [ca. 1833]

Canonical *Nahda* writers themselves reveal interactions and inspiration from Westerners, including Orientalists, further challenging the comfortable separation between the 'Orientalist Renaissance' and developments in the Arabic-speaking lands. One often-cited historical work of the 20th century in Arabic, for example, *Tarikh Al Tamaddun Al-Islami* ('A History of Islamic Civilization'), by the Levantine Christian writer Jurji Zaydan (1861-1914), lists seven European sources for Islamic history within its first three pages. Such referencing suggests that even Zaydan's historical consciousness was being shaped by Orientalist inspiration. Zaydan cites works by Frenchman Gustav Le Bon (1841 –1931), the Austrian Orientalist Alfred von Kremer (1828-1889), the English Orientalist Stanley Lane-Poole (1854 - 1931), and the German August Müller (1848-1892).²⁶ The example of Zaydan's book suggests that the 'Orientalist Renaissance,' at least in part, also inspired the 'Arab Renaissance.'

Even the publications of Arabic-speakers in the US evidence the centrality of Orientalists in shaping the consciousness of Arabic-speakers in the country. "Noted Orientalist at the University of Chicago," read an article in the New-York-based *The Syrian World* in May 1929, relating the transfer of the Orientalist Albert Olmstead (1880-1945) from the University of Illinois to the University of Chicago. The article suggests the once obvious significance of Orientalists for Arabic-speakers:

The Oriental Institute is especially interested in the earlier history of the Near East, and has excavations and other work going on in the field in Egypt, Palestine, Asia Minor, and Mesopotamia. It has, besides, much research work going on at home at the University of Chicago. This institute is one of the foremost American

²⁶ Zaydān, Jirjī, *Tārīkh al-tamaddun al-Islāmī*, Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 1958

institutions specializing in such work, and many discoveries and field expeditions may be laid to its credit.

Professor Olmstead is the author of several authoritative works on the history of Assyria and has spent several years in Syria engaged in field work and study. Readers of the *Syrian World* (sic) will recall his generous assistance in the translation of articles describing the many interesting antiquities in the Beirut Museum.²⁷

Orientalist discoveries often echoed beyond Europe or the US.²⁸

In speeches about the Orientalist advancements given in the 1870s, Max Müller cited Indian scholars working alongside Orientalists,' further suggesting that the 'Orientalist Renaissance' transcended Western borders: "The indefatigable Rejenda Lal Mitra is rendering most excellent service in the publications of the Asiatic Society at Calcutta, and he discusses the theories of European Orientalists with all the ease and grace of an English reviewer."²⁹ Such interactions between Orientalists and 'Orientals' contrasts with the representation of segregated and confined groups of intellectuals, who are only presented as intermingling with other closed and intimate company. As librarian at the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, Rajendralal Mitra (1823 or 1824 – 1891) is regularly considered critical in the 'Bengali Renaissance' of the 19th and 20th centuries, which parallels the '*Nahda*', although he was also a beneficiary of the 'Orientalist Renaissance'.

The new inspiration from the 'Orient' naturally fueled the Orientalist Renaissance in the West, although the fascination with Eastern subjects did not exactly translate to

²⁷ "Noted Orientalist at the University of Chicago," *The Syrian World*, May 1929
pg 53-54

²⁸ For an in-depth study of the correlation of Orientalists with 'Orientals,' see Ronen Raz, *The transparent mirror: Arab intellectuals and Orientalism, 1798-1950*, Dissertation 1997

²⁹ ORIENTAL LITERATURE.: THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ORIENTALISTS. ...

New York Times (1857-1922); Oct 1, 1874;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010)

pg. 3

positive relations with Easterners. In an article published in 1907, the *New York Times* suggested the popularity of Chinese and Japanese art in particular:

Conspicuous this year in every branch of art is the influence of Oriental ideas... whether it pertain to household decoration or personal adornment, is looked upon as a much-to-be-prized possession. Shops devoted to the sale of Japanese and Chinese articles have never been so numerous in this part of the world as at the present time, while even Japanese horticulture is being studied and the somewhat stiff English and Dutch gardens done away with for the essentially picturesque effects until recently seen only in China and Japan.³⁰

An examination of the *Times* around this period reveals ample advertisements announcing the sales of 'Oriental art.' Such advertisements suggest that the purchase of Arabic manuscript by Robert Garrett was in line with elite cultural practices and tastes of the day.³¹ Such new inclinations transcended the art of China or Japan. The Olympic Games, and the new obelisks and 'Egyptian theaters' emerging around the world, inspired by breakthroughs in Egyptology, revealed other signs that 'Oriental' heritages were penetrating the West.

Paradoxically, however, artistic fetishes contrasted with social exclusions of 'Orientals' in other fronts-- including on the home front. In the US, for example, immigration restrictions as well as prejudices against 'Orientals' were canonized into American law in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This law barred the entrance of Chinese laborers to the US, and represented a new development in American immigration policy as federal law targeted a specific nationality for the first time. The Immigration

³⁰ "Various Styles of Dress this Season Show the Influence of China and Japan in Embroidery, Coloring and Workmanship," 29 December 1907: X8

³¹ See 14 March 1877: 5 "Sale of Oriental Art Works,"; 10 December 1876, "A Sale of Oriental Art Works," 23 June 1875: 2, "Oriental Art: Sale of Curious Articles of Ornament."

Act of 1924 expanded the immigration limits, limiting the arrivals of Asians collectively. Besides such laws, social limits often barred Orient-born scholars from assuming elite faculty positions in European or American institutions of higher education.

In the early 20th century, European institutions rarely hired foreign-born scholars as faculty, partly owing to the structure of European higher education as a nation-state enterprise. Prior to the late 20th century, there were no private European universities. Hitti's elevation in the the American academy saw no parallel in European establishments of the time. Private American institutions like Princeton were independent both financially and academically from the government. Flexible and free to set their own paths, such schools could even hire their own faculty with no consultation with any other authority.³²

The rise of American formal education following the Civil War (1860-1865), was extraordinary, and it facilitated Hitti's own success. New social circumstances following the Civil war (1860-1865) mandated unprecedented investments in education. The foundation of Johns Hopkins University in 1876—on the nation's one hundredth birthday—was calculated to venerate the country almost torn asunder by a War, a nation challenged in the post-War era by unprecedented migration to American cities, from both abroad and from the South and other rural areas. The launching of Johns Hopkins

³² See "A Lebanese Orientalist" in *The Syrian World*, pg 45, May 1932; There are exceptions to the rule in Europe-- in the late 1920s, for example, the Maronite priest by the name of Michael Faggali, serving the Maronite community Paris, became a lecturer of Arabic literature in the University of Bordeaux , although Faggali-- about whom little is known -- never became chief architect of a department, nor did he publish any work that I found. A more notable example may have been Safa Abdul-Aziz Khulusi (1917–1995) who became a professor at SOAS in 1945.

University marked the rise of American research universities, a requirement for the quickly industrializing nation. “Public men are now turning to the university for guidance,” President of Johns Hopkins University Daniel Gilman (1831-1908) stated to the *New York Times* in 1892, a claim that described the age in general.³³ As unparalleled immigration beckoned the nation, new generations in the US would migrate to the nation’s classrooms.

Founded in 1746, Princeton itself endured a remarkable growth-spurt following the Civil War, evidencing this educational revolution in the country. Established as the College of New Jersey in 1746, Princeton preceded the establishment of the United States by twenty years, although the school only achieved its contemporary configuration in the post-Civil War development. Only 264 students attended the school 1868, when the school's curriculum still revolved around Latin, Greek and Biblical Studies. The institution's demography more than doubled by 1888, more than doubled again by 1902, with 1200 students, and more than doubled again by Hitti's arrival in 1926 to around 2,400 students—almost ten-fold increase within six decades. The 5,000 undergraduates attended the school by the year 2000, indicated that Princeton was still expanding. Columbia University, which started with 200 students in 1754, would show even more dramatic growth in terms of its demography, with more than thirty thousand students by 1930 alone.³⁴

³³ ADVANCE IN EDUCATION: AN INTERESTING ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT GILMAN. HIS ... *New York Times* (1857-1922); Feb 28, 1892; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times pg. 11

³⁴ Princeton students see pg 36 in Axtell, under McCosh; <http://www.princeton.edu/pub/presidents/wilson/> For Columbia Students see *New York Times*, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY OBSERVES A BIRTHDAY: COLUMBIA STUDENTS OF 1859

Some five percent of Americans between the age of 17 and 20 attended college in 1917—an already unprecedented number internationally. By 1937, 15 percent were attending college.³⁵ As more immigrants entered the US following the Civil War, formal education in the country sprouted on all levels, as schools became a unique avenue for upward mobility in the nation of newcomers. The lack of aristocratic class or gentry in the US made formal education the standard passport for advancement. Whereas in more stable societies and times, family name, connections, or social caste dictated occupational trajectories, during times of instability, the high school and college or university diploma increasingly meant a passport to a profession.


American education attracted international prominence by the 20th century. By Hitti's arrival to the US in 1913, the presence of over ten thousand students from outside the US studying in American institutions of higher learning, suggested that the US had become an educational destination.³⁶ "There are thousands of foreign students registered in the institutions of higher learning in the United States," noted the Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors, in May 1922.³⁷ "And the number is constantly increasing. There can be hardly any question that the United States has supplanted Germany as the rendezvous of foreign students." The number of faculty between 1870 and 1940 skyrocketed more than twenty-six fold, an indication of the growth of education in the US.

³⁵ Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, pg 205

³⁶ see Institute of International Education, *Guidebook for Foreign Students in the United States*, 1921

³⁷ "The Foreign Student on the American Campus" dissertation, Anne Neely, University of Chicago 1922

Table 5



YEAR	INSTITUTIONS ^a	FACULTY ^b
1870	563	5,553
1880	811	11,522
1890	998	15,809
1900	977	23,868
1910	951	36,480
1920	1,041	48,615
1930	1,409	82,386
1940	1,708	146,929
1950	1,851	246,722
1960	2,008	380,554
1970	2,528	573,000
1980	3,150	846,000

^a Prior to 1980, excludes branch campuses.
^b Total number of different individuals (not reduced to full-time equivalent). Beginning in 1960, data are for the first term of the academic year.
NOTE: Beginning in 1960, includes Alaska and Hawaii.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Digest of Education Statistics: 1982* (Washington, D.C.: 1983), pp. 105, 107.

Source: From: Burton R. Clark,
The Academic Life 1987, p. 12³⁸

The dramatic growth of American establishments of higher learning required faculty from abroad, making Europeans standard presences in American academia by the beginning of the century. The opposite was not the case in educational institutions in Europe.

³⁸ Taken from Dagmar Riedel's "Oriental Languages in America of the Gilded Age: Richard Gottheil and A.V. Williams Jackson"

Whereas Europe-born faculty regularly appeared in American institutions of higher education, however, social prejudices and immigration quotas limited Asian-born scholars from faculty positions in American educational establishments. Before Hitti's emergence at Princeton, a number of Asian-born scholars had managed to break into American academia as faculty, although only a handful in comparison to European scholars at American institutions. At Harvard, Shanghai-born Ko K'un-hua (1838-1882) became a Chinese lecturer in 1879, "a stranger in the fullest sense of this word," as the Dean of Harvard's Divinity school described the scholar, underscoring K'un-hua's foreignness. Beyond Hitti, the most high profiled 'Orient-born' academics in the US were two Japanese scholars, who achieved prominent representation despite social hurdles plaguing the minority. Japan's victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 – 1905 established Japan as a world power, and one paradoxically represented at Yale and Stanford.³⁹ In 1910, Asakawa Kan'ichi (1873 – 1948), for example, began teaching at Yale, and Yamamoto Ichihashi (1878–1965) held a position endowed by the Japanese government at Stanford, beginning in 1913.⁴⁰ Both Kan'ichi and Ichihashi pioneered Japanese Studies in the US. Still, Ichihashi's internment alongside over one hundred thousand Japanese-Americans during WWII signaled hurdles for these Japanese scholars.

The rise of Ichihashi and Kan'ichi on the stage of American academia owed to Japan's prominence on the world stage. In contrast, Hitti's rise owed to the invisibility of Arabic Studies in the wider Western curriculum, and to his own racial ambiguity, as a

³⁹ consider for example the Japanese-Gentleman's Agreement of 1907

⁴⁰ who would share alongside Hitti an inscription in 1940 at the New York World's Fair as the only Orient-born American "who have made notable contributions to the living, ever-growing democracy of the United States"

nondescript member of a minority that was demographically smaller than the Japanese or the Chinese in the US at the time. The response given to Hitti by his European publishers in 1937, before the publication of *History of the Arabs* that sales would not exceed one hundred copies, illustrated the expectations in the field of Arabic and Islamic Studies. Orientalist writings on the Arabs and on Islam predated Hitti, yet such writings attracted a minute audience.⁴¹

Contemporary scholarship on the development of Arabic Studies in the West has curiously 'overlooked' Hitti, while fixating on writers whose writings circulated in the hundreds of copies at best, not in the hundreds of thousands or copies, or in the millions, as would Hitti's. Underscoring the marginalization of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Orientalist framework, Hitti himself addressed the invisibility of these subjects:

In his presidential address at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in 1922, Nathaniel Schmidts, himself a Semitic scholar, surveyed Oriental studies in Europe and America without making a single reference to Islam or to its study in America. On a similar occasion in 1938, Professor Waterman, also a Semitist, delivered his address entitled 'Oriental Studies in the Present World Picture,' in which neither the word 'Islam' nor 'Arabic' occur. The same could be said of the presidential address of Professor Theophile J. Meek, entitled 'The Challenge of Oriental Studies to American Scholarship,' which was delivered in 1943 before the Oriental Society.⁴²

Hitti also stressed the isolated nature of scholarship on the Near East. His critiques of Orientalist scholarship revealed his own vision for 'popularizing' the field beyond specialists:

⁴¹ In the US, the most prominent Arabist before Hitti was probably Yale's Charles Cutler Torrey (1863–1956) who interviewed Hitti presumably in 1913, as paralyed to me by Professor Benjamin Forester at Yale

⁴² Hitti, 'The Arab Heritage'

Hitherto the typical Semitist has isolated himself in his graduate department, which—like all other graduate departments—is watertight, ministering to the intellectual needs of a few select candidates for the doctorate and carrying on his own researches unmindful of the fact that his discipline can and should serve to enlarge the academic horizon [at large]... and interpret the present-day world order to the intelligent layman outside the university walls. Like all specialists he left the results of his researches to the popularizer, who is often a vulgarizer, and to the propagandists. Nor should the Arabist be content with book knowledge. Unless supplemented and vitalized by the personal experience which results from trips to the Orient, contacts with native scholars in Asia and Africa and exchange of students and teachers between East and the West, such knowledge tends to lose its spark of life. To be a student of the Moslem world is not enough; one has to be a student *in* the Moslem world [emphasis original].⁴³

In these words, first articulated in 1942 (and published in 1944), Hitti emphasized that his vision transcended simply writing about Arabic and Islamic subjects. Instead, such studies had to be taken on their own terms-- a requirement that in turn meant transcending the dry conventions in which these subjects were written. Elsewhere, Hitti specified the dismal situation before WWII for Arabic and Islamic Studies, noting that the "rare courses in [Arabic and Islamic Studies] were limited to a few graduate schools and offered as subsidiary to Semitic studies and as contributory to philology or linguistics. Nowhere were such courses given for their own sake or as a key to further investigation of Arab history, Islam and Islamic culture."⁴⁴ Hitti would challenge the marginalization of Arabic and Islamic Studies both through his own writings and by creating the infrastructure at Princeton to attract hundreds of other scholars to the study of these subjects.

⁴³ "America and the Arab Heritage," pg 15, *The Arab Heritage*, by Nabih Amin Faris; Philip K Hitti, Publisher: Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1944

⁴⁴ *History of the Arabs*, 10th edition, preface

Aside from academia, Arabic-speakers in the Americas also produced a notable literature in multiple languages, introducing the cultures of the East to Western readerships if only by single-handed attempts at such an initiative. Before his death in 1940, the Levantine Ameen Al Rihani, who arrived in the US in 1888, for example, wrote the first travel narratives of the Arabian Peninsula by an Arabic-speaker. "The real contribution of Rihani," Hitti wrote of Rihani in 1926, "consists in having given us in both Arabic and English what may be considered the most vivid and interesting account of common-life as it is lived at present in the hitherto little known Arabia." To Hitti, Rihani's "contribution to our knowledge [was] of a land about which our information is out of all proportion to its geographical significance and to [its] historical importance..."⁴⁵

Yet Rihani did not have Princeton. In contrast to Rihani, Hitti had backing and support unavailable to any other Arabic-speaker. With the ability to buy books and manuscripts, to hire faculty, to convene conferences, to accept graduate students—and even to publish Arabic writings on the new linotype press that the university acquired in 1930—Hitti's stature was historic even before he produced his famous histories.

In the US, other regional centers for addressing the 'Orient' predated Princeton's. The first 'Semitic' center in the US was at Columbia in 1887, under Richard Gottheil, who headed the center as a 27-year old professor with a PhD from Leipzig, earned only the year before (1886). In 1926, one semester before the establishment of Princeton's Oriental Department which would focus on Arabic and Islamic Studies, Columbia University inaugurated its own new Oriental center—a "Chinese Centre... To Interpret

⁴⁵ "Book Review by Dr. Hitti" (box untitled)

the Culture of China and Present the Sweep of Chinese History.” This establishment at Columbia represented the second center in the US dedicated to China, after the University of California (at Berkeley) inaugurated a one-person department in 1896 under former missionary John Fryer. At Columbia, the American Professor Lucius Porter (1880-1958) and the French Professor Paul Pelliot (1869-1936) taught Chinese Studies.⁴⁶

Yet an 'Oriental' with practically unrestricted powers at an American institution was unimaginable. In a speech delivered to the American Oriental Society in 1942, Hitti addressed the Western academy directly, revealing the embattled field of Arabic and Islamic Studies within wider academia.:

Oriental studies drew their inspiration from interest in the Bible. Starting with Hebrew they diverged in the middle of the last century—after the decipherment of cuneiform and hieroglyphic writings—into Assyriology and Egyptology. In the early stages the value of Arabic... was not fully recognized....

Formal Arabic studies in Europe had not only a late but an unfavorable start. Throughout the continent and on the British Isles they were conditioned by missionary activity and interest and by world politics. The European as a rule wanted to study Islam either to convert its followers or to further imperialistic interests. Western chauvinism, religious zeal and sheer ignorance played their part. Long persistence of legends about Muhammad, the founder of Islam, hostile prejudice of Christians toward a rival and aggressive faith, and the unpleasant memories of the crusades, reinforced by the ever present fears of the growing power of the Ottoman Turkish Empire, militated against an objective or dispassionate—not to say sympathetic—study of Islam. Martin Luther held the opinion that the Turks constituted a punishment from God. He would ‘not read from Mohamet’s Alkoran..., which openly permits murder, adultery, unchastity,

⁴⁶ COLUMBIA CHINESE COURSES: Professor Porter of Peking to Enlarge Scope of the Department. *New York Times* (1857-1922); Sep 13, 1922;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: , with the Chinese J.C.S. Tung hired at Columbia’s university extension. About fifty years before, another Chinese man, Ge Kunhua was hired at Harvard as an instructor, although racial exclusion laws and native prejudices impaired Chinese from assuming university positions in the US until after WWII (Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat (1788-1832). It was two hundred years ago that Abel-Rémusat was appointed to the first academic post for Chinese studies in the West, a chair in Chinese and Manchu language and literature created at the Collège de France.

<http://ceas.yale.edu/events/abel-remusat-and-secret-history-sinologys-origins#sthash.qYIHW8iN.dpuf>

the destruction of marriage and other shameful abominations and deceptions.’ The first English translation of the Koran appeared in 1649, ‘translated out of Arabique into French... And newly Englishized, for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the Turkish⁴⁷

Explaining that "European textbooks in history are on the whole written from the national, provincial, point of view, and hardly ever give Arabs their rightful place," Hitti also criticized American textbooks like James Robinson's *Medieval and Modern Times*-- "probably the most widely used textbook of its kind"—and one that similarly excluded Muslims from any serious acknowledgement.⁴⁸ The speech evoked a letter from Jewish colleague, Salo Barron at Columbia: “Let us hope that your plea for more Arabic studies in this country will be headed.”⁴⁹

In the Western academy, Arabic and Islamic Studies lacked not only coverage, but respect, as Hitti underscored in his 1942 speech. In the 19th century, for example, the leading French Orientalist Joseph Ernest Renan (1823 –1892) disparaged ‘Semites’ in general: “One sees that in all things the Semitic race appears to us to be an incomplete race, by virtue of its simplicity. This race—if I dare use the analogy—is to the Indo-European family what a pencil sketch is to painting.” Elsewhere, Renan stressed the “inferiority of Mohammedan countries, the decadence of states governed by Islam, and the intellectual nullity of the races that hold, from that religion alone, their culture and their education.”⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Hitti, "The Arab Heritage," 2-24

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Box 9, FF 12

⁵⁰ entitled “Islam and Science,”

Such prejudices reverberated into the 20th century: “The Arab mind, whether in relation to the outer world or in relation to the processes of thought, cannot throw off its intense feeling for the separateness and the individuality of the concrete events,” noted Oxford Arabic professor Sir Hamilton A Gibb (1895-1971), only two years following Hitti’s chiding of Orientalists for their arrogance at the American Oriental Society. Ironically, Gibb was also the editor of the *Encyclopedia of Islam*. His position at such a publication did not impair him from also disparaging Muslims: “It is this, too, which explains—what is so difficult for the Western student to grasp—the aversion of the Muslims from the thought-processes of rationalism.”⁵² Twenty years later, UCLA’s Gustave Von Grunebaum, the first president of the Middle Eastern Studies Association, voiced similar Islamophobic sentiments, professing that “Muslim civilization is a cultural entity that does not share our primary aspirations. It is not vitally interested in the structured study of other cultures, either as an end in itself or as a means towards clearer understanding of its own character and history.”⁵³ Such defamation suggests the dominance in the West of prejudices against Arabic-speakers and Muslims.

Still, Hitti was himself a Westerner and a native Easterner, and as much a beneficiary of the ‘Arab Renaissance’ spurred by the popularization of printing in the Middle East, as of the expansion of Western academia in the 19th and 20th centuries. Hitti saw himself as a bridge, a mediator between cultures. In his recollections, for example, he addressed his own experience at the American school at Suq Al Gharb,

⁵¹ "Discours prononcé à l'inauguration de la statue d'Ernest Renan à Tréguier", Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, Vantage Books, 1979, pg 85

⁵² Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, Vantage Books, 1979, pg 106

⁵³ Ibid., pg. 297

which he attended approximately from nine years of age until the age of fifteen.

Describing the strictures of the school, despite its rich material resources, Hitti suggested the remarkable distance he had traveled to be able to address the American Oriental Society:

Arabic, English and French formed the core of the entire school curriculum. Arithmetic... did not include algebra. History had nothing to offer on the modern period. Nor did geography include the [Arabic-speaking lands]. Such studies were on the black list of the Turkish authorities. Calligraphy, limited to the lower classes, was scheduled for the last hour of the day/ Oratory, the concern of the upper classes, was scheduled for Saturday forenoon in a full session of the school. Bible classes were a daily requirement throughout the four years. The day opened and closed with short religious exercises chaired by the principal...

In class exercises a student-teacher dialogue was as rare as one in the Roman Catholic mass of pre-Vatican-Council II days. The teacher- student pipe flowed in one direction only. The 'why' on a student's lips was as uncommon as the 'because' on those of a teacher. If the father, the priest, the ruler, were infallible, why could not the teacher be? Such a person would not feel it necessary to explain or justify his deeds. For an instructor to seek a pupil's or a parent's opinion was as ludicrous as for a physician to ask his patient's cooperation in writing the prescription.⁵⁴

The Principal, Oscar Hardin, would be critical in facilitating Hitti's admission to the Syrian Protestant College following Hitti's studies at the American School at Suq Al Gharb. As a child, Philip had been told never to associate with Protestants. Yet the Calvinist principal became a chief authority in his life:

[Mr Hardin stood] over six feet [tall], [wearing] a short red beard and an untrimmed moustache that masked his long mouth. His mannerism featured a nervous shaking of both legs as he struggled to enunciate his Arabic words, for which he evidently had genetic difficulty. In theology Mr. Hardin was more Calvinistic than Calvin. He scared the light out of us one day in a sermon he assured us that on judgement day stones and trees bear witness against the sinner. His difficulty in enunciating uvuar, pharyngeal and guttural letters, in which Arabic is rich, at times serves to relieve tensions and cause merriment. He could not one Sunday understand why his audience giggled as he preached a sermon on,

⁵⁴ Box 21, *From Lebanon to Princeton*, pg 21

‘My son, give me thine heart’ (Prov 23:26), pronouncing qalb (heart), kalb (dog). The word mu`allim (teacher) he pronounced as mu`allim (pain-giver) which, we thought, was quite appropriate.⁵⁵ These descriptions reveal much about Hitti himself, since they suggest that he was able to acclimate and persevere in such situations which were uncomfortable for him as a child. Despite his feelings of alienation, Hitti was able not only to excel at the American school of Suq al Gharb, but to excel with honors, even earning admission to the Syrian Protestant College. Success at school—so far distanced from his origins in Shimlan—suggested an openness to novelty, even when that novelty was difficult to bear.

“Hitti considered and proudly and publicly proclaimed himself to be an Orientalist,” wrote his son-in-law-Bayly Winder five years following Hitti's death.

Winder continued:

Latter-day critics of this tradition may perhaps consider that as a man of the Near East he had been co-opted by an exploitative tradition aimed at maintaining the dependency of, inter alia, the Near East. Such a view is inaccurate in view of Professor Hitti's powerful defence of Near Eastern peoples especially Arabs and Muslims... Orientalism meant scholarship—as objective, accurate, and sensitive as a mere person living in some particular time and place could make it.⁵⁶ Addressing the American Orientalist Conference in 1942, Hitti again illustrated his inclination to bridge otherwise estranged company.

Not all Europeans deprecated ‘Orientals,’ and dominant prejudices of Western scholars in the 19th and 20th centuries never completely negated interactions with ‘Easterners’. The French Jesuit nobleman Abbé Carré, for example, flouted such condescension against Arabs, publishing the following words in 1672:

⁵⁵ Box 21, FF1, pgs 30

⁵⁶ Box 32, Bayly Winder

we regard [Arabs] as savage and rough. They shame most of our rich Christians in Europe, who often refuse a piece of bread to poor pilgrims and strangers without means. Such are the manners and ways of living so different from those in our countries, where pomp, luxury and eagerness to amass wealth, blind so many of us. Come with me to this desert. I will show you a nation, Arab and barbarian, that can teach us the valuable lesson that we must rid ourselves of mad and extravagant ambitions for wealth, palaces, fine furniture, sumptuous clothes, perfumes, dainties and the like, which pervert the brains of the greatest men in European countries.⁵⁷

Carré explicitly acknowledged that he was an exception in his appreciation of the Arabs, relative to his generation, although he also suggested variety amongst his time and place.⁵⁸

In the 19th and 20th centuries, as Arabic printing spread in the Middle East, the establishment of Middle Eastern heritages often entailed consultations with Orientalist publications in Europe. As European journalism guided the nascent Arabic journalism in the 19th and 20th centuries, so too did the existing European Orientalist corpus of published Arabic texts aid the re-establishment of the Arab heritage in the Middle East.

Hitti's own dissertation on the 10th century Arabic text entitled *Kitâb futûh al-buldân* (translated as 'Origins fo the Islamic State') followed the discovery of a text found in a European library and published in 1866 by the Dutch Orientalist.⁵⁹ Such writings popularized in the Middle East after being discovered in Europe. The 14th century Tunisian Ibn Khaldun (1332 -1406), and the 9th-10th century Persian 'Ali ul-Isfahâni (897–967), author of *Kitab Al Aghani*, experienced similar fates, being

⁵⁷ 28 Peter G. Bietenholz, *Desert and Bedouin in the European Mind* (Khartoum, 1963), p. 8. In this treatise there is an accurate scholarly exposition on most of these early explorers. Also page 325? In jabbur's book.

⁵⁸ Another notable 'exception' is *17th Century Defender of Islam: Henry Stubbe (1632-76) and His Book*, P.M. Holt

⁵⁹ Michael Jan de Goeje (1836-1909) first published this text. *The origins of the Islamic state: being a translation from the Arabic, accompanied with annotations, geographic and historic notes of the Kitâb futûh al-buldân of al-Imâm abu-l Abbâs Ahmad ibn-Jâbir al-Balâdhuri*, by the Persian Aḥmad ibn-Jâbir al-Balâdhuri (died 892 AD)

discovered by Europeans before entering the consciousness of Middle Easterners in the 19th and 20th centuries. New Arabic texts were even discovered in Princeton's Arabic collection, before being distributed in the Middle East. The manuscript *Al iklil* ('The Crown')- by the Yemeni Abu al-Hamdānī (893-945 A.D), for example (whose writings were themselves rediscovered in the mid-19th century in Europe⁶⁰), was published in Arabic on the linotype press at Princeton in 1940, before spreading in the Middle East.⁶¹ Persian letters also benefitted from Orientalist breakthroughs: The 6th century BC Persian Cyrus the Great, for example, had already enjoyed a voluminous literature about him in English by the 16th century, at a time when he had entered oblivion in Persia. Although Cyrus is presently a mainstay in the consciousness of Persian-speakers in contemporary times, the first book about him in Persian appeared in 1914.⁶² The establishment of 'Oriental heritages' continues to be imagined in scholarship as strictly an 'Oriental affair,' confined to the Middle East, although the establishment of the 'Arab heritage' was in reality an international cooperation.

In his own recollection of life in France undertaken between the years 1826 and 1831, the Egyptian cleric Rifa'a al-Tahtawi acknowledged Europe as a place of new knowledge-creation:

⁶⁰ *Geography of the Arabian Peninsula (Sifat Jazīrat ul-Arab)* was published by A. Sprenger in his *Post- und Reiserouten des Orients* (Leipzig, 1864) and further in his *Alte Geographie Arabiens* (Bern, 1875), and D.H. Müller (Leiden, 1884; cf. Sprenger's criticism in *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, vol. 45, pp. 361–394).

⁶¹ *Al-Iklīl* (al-Juz'al-Thāmin) by al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad Hamdānī; Nabih Amin Faris; Princeton University. Library.

⁶² *Sīrūs-nāma; yā kitāb-i Dāstān-i tarbiyat-i Kūrus*.

As for the learned men among the Franks and their scholars, they have a different approach to things. Besides studying a number of subjects to perfection, they devote their efforts to a special branch of knowledge. They discover many things and provide unparalleled advantages, which is why they are considered scholars... The pre-eminence of these Christians in these sciences will become clear to you....

One of [their] libraries is the Bibliotheque Royale, which contains all books—both printed works and manuscripts—the French have been able to collect in every field of science and language. The total number of printed books at this library amounts to 400,000 volumes, which also includes a great number of Arabic books that are rare in Egypt or indeed anywhere else. There are a number of Qur’ans, the like of which cannot be found anywhere else. These Qur’ans kept by the French in their libraries are not at all treated with disdain, but preserved with the utmost care, even though their respect for them does not have a particular purpose.⁶³

Tahtawi even personally illustrated the 'Oriental' interactions with Orientalists by sharing correspondences with Orientalists Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838), Armand-Pierre Caussin de Perceval (1795–1871), and Joseph-Toussaint Renaud (1795-1867), the first two of whom read and commented on his 1835 Arabic book *A Paris Profile*.⁶⁴ The legacy of Orientalists on those from the Orient was not left unnoted: In 1898, the Egyptian poet Ahmad Shawqi illustrated the upside of the relationship between ‘Orientalists’ and Orientals, dedicating his poem ‘Dear Nile’ [Ayaha Al Nil] to the Orientalist David Margoliouth, Arabic professor of Oxford (1858-1940).⁶⁵ In the acknowledgement

⁶³ Tahtawi, Rifaá, *An Imam in Paris*, translated by Daniel Newman, *Takhliṣ al Ibriz fī Talkhīṣ Bariz aw al-Diwan al-Nafīs bi-iwan Baris*, Saqi press, 2004, pg 255

⁶⁴ The most famous encounters written testaments between Arabic-speakers and Orientalists were those made by the Persian Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Afghānī (circa 1838 –1897), the Levantine Ahmad Shidyaq (1804 –1887), the Levantine ...

⁶⁵ *al-Shawqīyāt*,

Miṣr : Maṭba‘at al-Ādāb wa-al-Mu’ayyad, 1898

sections of his more than twenty books, Hitti recognized of scholars like Professor A T Olmstead, Walter Wright, Costi Zurayk, Henry Savage, Albert Elsasser, George Miles, Butrus Abd-al-Malk, Edward Jurji—and many others—suggesting the role of Easterners and Westerners in canonizing the ‘Arab heritage.’

Printing gave Europeans an advantage in distributing knowledge, not solely in terms of Arabic documents, but in the production of scholarship in general, much of which would enter Arabic in the 19th and 20th centuries. Before the popularization of Arabic printing in the Middle East, the French Comte de Volney (1757 – 1820), who resided in Egypt and Greater Syria between 1782 and 1785, saw the printing technology as the main differentiator between the cultures of Europe and the Arabic-speaking lands. In his *Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie* (1787), Volney described the consequences of the lack of movable-type printing press:

In these countries every book is a manuscript, the writing of which is necessarily slow, difficult, and expensive. The labor of many months produces but one copy. It is impossible therefore for books to multiply, and consequently for knowledge to be propagated. If we compare this state with what passes among ourselves, we cannot but be deeply impressed with the advantages of printing. We shall even be convinced, on reflection, that this art alone is possibly the main spring of those great revolutions, which, within the last three centuries, have taken place in the moral system of Europe. The press, by rendering books common, had diffused a more equal share of knowledge through every class; and, by rapidly communicating ideas and discoveries, has produced a more speedy improvement

After centuries of obscurity, Ibn Khaldun was rediscovered by Barthelemy d'Herbelot de Molainville in *Bibliothèque Orientale* in 1697., Omar Khayyám was rediscovered in the 1850s by Edward Fitzgerald (1809 –1883). Also see Poole, Ruymeke, Martin, Mason, *Fitzgerald's Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám : popularity and neglect*, New York : Anthem Press, 2011.

and more universal acquaintance with the arts and sciences... By printing, every writer becomes a public orator, who addresses himself not only to his city, but to his nation...⁶⁶

For Volney, the printing presses of Europe differentiated European cultures from Arabic-speaking cultures. The lack of a movable-type printing press in a country like Egypt facilitated the persistence of religious elites as authorities over Arabic letters, and subsequently over information dissemination.

Europe was not simply a repository of much of the Arab heritage, but of many other Eastern heritages. “You have not even read the history of India,” Gandhi’s English mentor, Mr. Frederick Pincutt, similarly told the future Indian leader around 1890, on Gandhi first arrival to London as a student, illuminating the place of Europe as a gateway to Eastern knowledges. Recounting Mr. Pincutt's words in his autobiography, some forty years following his meeting with the Englishman, Gandhi acknowledged the ironic roots behind his own ‘Awakening.’ “And every Indian ought to know Indian history,” Mr. Pincutt continued.⁶⁷

Hitti arrived in US academia amidst these new intellectual currents, as America was entering its ‘American century,’ and as American education was undergoing a dramatic expansion. Four years before the new century, the College of New Jersey changed its name to Princeton University, and Columbia College became Columbia University. The new ‘university’ statuses of these schools paralleled the larger expansions of their curricula.

⁶⁶ Volney 1787:2:267-68

⁶⁷ Gandhi, Kindle location 1423, chapter “My Helplessness”

Three years preceding Hitti's arrival in the US, his future advisor, Richard Gottheil (1862 – 1936) visited the Arabic-speaking lands. Returning to the US, Gottheil published in the *New York Times* an article of over three thousand words about his impressions of these lands. An Englishman by birth, Gottheil noted some benefits of the British presence in Egypt, especially in aiding Egypt's economy, although he bewailed the aloofness of the colonizing presence, who did not appear to him genuinely concerned about the lives and interests of native Egyptians:

The trouble is that the Englishman has directed Egyptian affairs entirely from the outside. There has been no real human intercourse between the educated Englishman and the educated Egyptian.

Even in art and science the two races do not meet. The French have been prominent in archaeology; the Germans in the Egyptian libraries; the Austrians have been active in work for the conservation of Coptic monuments and Arab art. In no movement of this kind have the English heartily taken part. New nations or other nationalities meet scholarly Egyptians and discuss with them affairs in which they are mutually interested, while the Englishman meets the people he rules only in an official capacity.

Such work as the British Exploration Fund has done in Egypt—and it is a splendid work—has been done not by men who lived in Egypt and identified themselves with the country, but by scientists who came from London for a brief visit and then hastened back as soon as their actual labor in the field was completed.

The situation is most curious and unfortunate. It is true that many of the agitators are men who have been stripped of their orientalism without acquiring the point of view of the [natives], and so hover between the two races with no place in which they exactly fit.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ YOUNG TURK PARTY HAS REVOLUTIONIZED SULTAN'S LAND: Prof. Richard ... *New York Times* (1857-1922); Sep 25, 1910; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010) pg. SM6

The German-born American-naturalized Gottheil bemoaned the “curious and unfortunate” dislocation of Orientalists, “who have been stripped of their orientalism”—a word whose connotation Gottheil still equated as positive.⁶⁹ Published before Gottheil met Hitti, Gottheil’s article suggested the uniqueness of a native Arabic-speaking ‘Oriental’ becoming an Orientalist.

Hitti’s origins appeared to attract Gottheil, whose wife Emma was herself born in Beirut.⁷⁰ “His fine sense of the niceties of Arabic expression has often enabled him to get through a thicket that is impenetrable to us Westerners,” Gottheil wrote in 1916 of Hitti.⁷¹ Seven years later, Gottheil penned the introduction to Hitti’s 1923 book *Origin of the Druze People and Religion*, one of the canonical texts relating the affairs of the Druze religious minority in the Levant through their own writings. “Professor Hitti is probably better fitted to making this attempt than any other scholar,” Gottheil wrote of his younger protégé, continuing: “Born in the Lebanon Mountains, Arabic is his native tongue.”⁷²

Recognized as the ‘native Arabic-speaker’ of the Western academy, Hitti publicly addressed his origins only once in his career. In a banquet in his honor in 1960, in which he acknowledged his support-base throughout the years, he thanked the “cloud of

⁶⁹ Found in *Leaders of the Meiji Restoration in America*, 1931, pg 274

⁷⁰ See Jewish Woemn’s Archive article about Emma Gottheil (1862-1947) <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/gottheil-emma-leon>

⁷¹ See Gottheil’s introduction to Hitti’s *The Origins of the Islamic State*, New York, Longmans, Green, 1916

⁷² Hitti, *The Origins of the Druze People and Religion*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1928, preface

witnesses, the host of men and women, Eastern and Western, young and old, who should share credit for whatever has been accomplished and without whom the measure of success attained would have been impossible.” He saluted foremost his mother, who had died in 1942 while he was in the US. Hitti described his mother:

With good will toward all, that saintly mother cheerfully went about her daily task from dawn till late at night, caring for six living boys and two girls, and saving from the pittance of an income of her husband to send her son to a neighboring American high school, when no one from that village had been through that school before....⁷³

Upon learning of these words, the Jewish Orientalist, Giorgio della Vida wrote Hitti from Rome, revealing insight into Hitti’s reception amongst colleagues. “I... was moved by [the words],” Della Vida began, “never before had I realized that it is that [which] makes your personality so unique in its unparalleled charm: that happy blend of accomplished scholarship and humane understanding, of western education and inborn oriental wisdom.”⁷⁴ Della Vida’s lack of knowledge of Hitti’s background suggests that the public knew about the generalities of Hitti’s own foreign background, but not the details.

Before Hitti, prominent Orientalists specializing in Islam included the Jewish-Hungarian Ignaz Goldziher (1850 –1921), Theodor Nöldeke (1836 –1930) of Germany, and the Dutchman Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857 –1936), amongst others. Still, despite the notable scholarly advancements of such scholars, their work was specialized.

In different universities and in relative isolation, Goldziher, Nöldeke, and Hurgronje did not enjoy the same resources as Hitti. Neither of these three scholars

⁷³ Box 32

⁷⁴ Box 25, FF 10

convened a single conference to inaugurate their subject to the broader academic limelight. Neither did they enjoy a periodic journal dedicated to their discipline. These scholars predated the independence of the Arabic-speaking lands or of any Muslim country. Between the three, Goldziher, Nöldeke, and Snouck Hurgronje appear to have had two PhD students—incidentally both Nöldeke's.⁷⁵

A private institution without financial restrictions by the government, Princeton could depart from tradition and create a newly-conceived Oriental Department in 1927, focusing on Arabic and Islam. Such an initiative distinguished Princeton from Middle Eastern indigenous civil-style institutions, which were relatively new (the university that would become Istanbul University (1900) was the first indigenous civil style university in the Middle East), and constrained.

Institutions in the Arabic-speaking lands in particular faced restrictions. Censorship by colonial authorities was one such obstacle, although others abounded. The new university at Cairo, founded in 1908, which would become Cairo University, is considered the first civil-style institution of higher learning in the Arabic-speaking lands, and it predated other similar institutions, including the University of Algiers (1909), the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1925), Alexandria University (1938), and Tunis University (1945).⁷⁶ The new Cairo institution resembled American or European

⁷⁵ Charles Cutler Torrey and Friedrich Zacharias Schwally

⁷⁶ For comparison of universities, see Reid, Donald, *Cairo University and the Making of Modern Egypt*, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pg 4

institutions in its civil orientation, offering courses in civil law, the natural and social sciences, and medicine.

Yet ‘indigenous’ in one sense, Cairo’s new university was foreign in its faculty—as were all other establishments in the Middle East. In 1929, Cairo University’s School of Law included nine faculty, only two of whom were Egyptian; the School of Science included seven faculty, only one of whom was Egyptian, and the School of Medicine included sixteen faculty, only five of whom were Egyptian. Leading Orientalists included the Italian Carlo Nallino (1872-1938), the French Louis Massignon (1933-1934), the French Gaston Wiet, the English Sir Keppel Archibald Creswell (1931-1951), and the German Enno Littman.⁷⁷ Europeans governments also supplied the library of these institutions. The Italian government, for example, donated 500 volumes to the university and sent Vincenzo Fago from the University of Rome to organize the library, and other nations echoed the gesture.⁷⁸ Before WWI, at least a portion of the students at the university were Westerners-- with one source claiming 20% of those enrolled were Westerners. Westerns subjects were the core of the university: geography, philosophy, ancient history, Islamic history (taught through Western sources), Arabic, English, and French literature.⁷⁹

The production of new histories was a costly operation, a difficult initiative given also the indigenous political instability plagued Middle Eastern educational

⁷⁷ Reid, *Cairo University*, pgs 37-43

⁷⁸ Ibid, 39

⁷⁹ Ibid. 45

establishments. Hired to teach at the university in 1910, the Levantine Christian Jurji Zaydan (1861–1914), never entered the classroom on account of protests over a Christian teaching Islamic history. Even the Muslim Taha Hussein (1889 – 1973), was dismissed from his post at the Cairo establishment in 1931, owing to the controversies he engendered, raising doubts about the accepted origins of early Arabic poetry.⁸⁰ New influences in the region often left great divisions, manifesting in institutions of higher learning especially.

Princeton benefitted from its independence—especially in the post-WWI period. The War devastated Europe and much of the Middle East. The sixteen million European lives lost in the First World War were disproportionately university-age men, a loss of human life that contrasted radically with the roughly one hundred thousand American dead in the War. “Everywhere the number both of instructors and of students has been tremendously reduced,” noted a young Rhodes scholar living in England in 1915.⁸¹ France listed 42,000 students in January 1914, dropping more than 75 percent by the end of the year. A German newspaper estimated that by August 1916, 77 percent of male German students were in the military service.⁸² In contrast, the growth of faculty at American institutions of higher learning was steady in the 1910s. American colleges and universities hired roughly 36,000 faculty in 1910, while 48,000 taught in 1920, as the

⁸⁰ In another incident at the same institution in 1939, thirty students rebelled over a staging of George Bernard Shaw’s play “Saint Joan”—a foreign encroachment
Until WWI, five successive German Orientalists governed the Egyptian National Library, and in Syria, the Arabic Academy of Damascus (Majma’ al-Lughah al-‘Arabīyah bi-Dimashq), which began operating in 1918, fell under colonial French control by 1921, limiting publications from subverting colonial interests.; Hussein’s controversial book was *Fil Sha’ir Al Jahily* (On Pre-Islamic Poetry)

⁸¹ Rudy, Willis, *Total War and Twentieth-century Higher Learning: Universities of the Western World in the First and Second World Wars*, Rutherford : Fairleigh Dickinson University Press ; London ; Cranbury, NJ : Associated University Presses, 1991, Pg 15

⁸² *Ibid.*, 17

aforementioned table "Growth of Institutions and Faculty" from Burton Clark's *The Academic Life* in table five indicates.⁸³ Some ninety more institutions of higher learning emerged between 1910 and 1920, suggesting the continued expansion of American education during the decade. The production of knowledge-- and the expansion of the field of history in particular-- required resources and a stability that were present in the US in the first half of the century, and especially at an institution like Princeton.

Although the War's devastation on European universities was greater than that on American institutions, the fighting appeared to change artistic—and academic—conventions. Addressing the effects of the World War on the sphere of art, the Russian-French painter Marc Chagall noted: "The war... totally absorbed us, [reforming] our forms, destroy[ing] the lines, and [giving] a new look to the universe."⁸⁴ Such effects also echoed amongst academics. "The longer I live, the greater grows my grief and indignation at the wicked cutting-short of all those lives... [My writing] has been one of my responses to the challenges that has been presented to me by the senseless criminality of human affairs," noted Hitti's British colleague, the historian Arnold Toynbee, of the war that killed about half of his schoolmates.⁸⁵

The First World War changed articulations of knowledge. The brunt of the writings of Goldziher, Nöldeke and Hurgronje preceded the First World War and evidenced a scholarly detachment that Hitti flouted. With some half of Mount Lebanon

⁸³ See footnote 38

⁸⁴ Cohen, Aaron, *Imagining the Unimaginable, World War, Modern Art, and the Politics of Public Culture in Russia, 1914-1917*, Lincoln : University of Nebraska Press, ©2008, quotation from front-cover

⁸⁵ Lang, Peter, *Arnold Toynbee and the Western Tradition*, New York : Peter Lang Publishing, Inc,

perishing during the War, Hitti embraced social commitments in and outside of his scholarship.

“The Syrians [agree] that what they want is a free Syria, able to develop its material resources and intellectual possibilities” Hitti wrote to the *New York Times* in 1918, as Ottoman rule gave way to new European colonialism in the Levant, a sign of his emergence as a community leader.⁸⁶ Hitti’s work and words signaled his own transformation from a foreign student in the US, to the chief representative of the Arabic-speaking part of the Arabic-speaking lands of the Ottoman Empire, a geography that had no ambassador, much less any formal representation in the US or elsewhere. In 1918, a few months following the articulation of Wilson’s Fourteen Points, Hitti asserted his own prominence again by protesting to the *New York Times* over the “artificial importation of Zionists flooding [Palestine] against its natural capacities.” Hitti’s statement came in response to the Balfour Declaration of 1917 which declared England’s “favour [for] the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”⁸⁷ Such remonstrations in the *Times* came despite his close ties with Zionists, including Columbia’s Richard Gottheil, who had not only founded the Zionist Organization of America (1898), but incidentally was also a correspondent of Lord Balfour, the former British Prime Minister (1902-1905).⁸⁸

⁸⁶ For the Disabled Soldier.: The First Chinese Merchant Ship. THE ...
HARRY BIRNBAUM.T. HSIEH.R.A.C. SMITH.OSCAR STRAUS.LLOYD TAYLOR.
New York Times (1857-1922); Dec 16, 1918;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (18
⁸⁷ OPPOSE ZIONIST PLAN.: Syrians Adopt Resolutions of Protest at Brooklyn Meeting.
New York Times (1857-1922); Nov 9, 1918;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010)

⁸⁸ "MRS.R.J.GOTTHEIL, A ZIONIST WORKER: Widow of Columbia Professor"

The gradual break from authority became his hallmark. In 1926, Hitti wrote to the immigrant paper *The Syrian Word* about the representation of Syria and the Druze in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, again revealing his noncompliance: “With 150 years of revision, addition and growth behind it, it now forms the foundation of a cultured man's library... The place it has carved for itself is, indeed, second to none...,” he began, before assailing the encyclopedia he would come to edit in a few years. “What a mess!... How could such uncritical, unscholarly, and highly fantastic work find a place in [the work]?” Hitti critiqued Western Orientalists in the same paper, noting that they “draw their data wholly from books and not from the first-hand sources—contacts with the actualities of life,” a protocol that would contrast with his own historical depictions from the others.

His point-of-view was distinctly intimate: “Almost any civilized man can claim two countries: his own and Syria,” he wrote in his *History of Syria* (1951), a work which was itself described by native authorities as “nothing comparable to it in any language.”

⁸⁹ Hitti’s twelve small words raised into question the concept of ‘civilization’ as it had been practiced and taught until that point, as European-exclusive.

His own ‘Awakening,’ his personal *Nahda*, had varied roots.

New York Times (1923-Current file); Jun 13, 1947; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times
pg. 23

⁸⁹ Reviews of Hitti’s works echoed one another. “No other work... equals this authoritative treatment of the Arabic-speaking peoples” wrote another Western reviewer of *History of the Arabs*. “It is a landmark in American scholarship.” See Box 14, FF4

Philip, what are you going to do next year?" Principal Hardin, the 'Calvinistic' head-master at the American school at Suq Al Gharb, asked Hitti upon his graduation from the school.

Replying that he did not know, the fifteen year old Philip was surprised to hear a proposition from the stiff and fear-inducing Principal. Hardin proposed that Philip teach in the Druze village of Dayr Qubil, halfway between Shimlan and Beirut, about ten miles from Shimlan, in order to save for a year of college at the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut.

"I'll give you one pound a month. You save five pounds and at the end of the year, you'll go on to the college," Hardin said.

The fifteen-year-old Hitti would earn a pound a month salary, save five pounds to use for board and tuition at the Syrian Protestant College. The regular college fees were seventeen pounds a year, although Hardin would make sure that only five pounds were charged for the boy whose family could not afford more.

Yet how was Hitti supposed to get to the Druze school? And how was he to teach at this school? There were no highways between his home and his destination, and no concrete landmarks but vineyards and olive orchards. Tracking his way back and forth between Shimlan and the village became a nightmare that haunted the teenager for years. He had to become a pathfinder in more sense than one; first, there was the challenge of finding Dayr Qubil. Then there was the challenge of reaching the students, "all boys, all

illiterate, rang[ing] from four to fourteen. They attended when they pleased. The impersonal, informal, flexible open educational system, with ‘integrated curricula [became our approach],’ Hitti later wrote of the experience which had been a milestone in his own education.⁹⁰

At the Druze school, Hitti broke from the stiff missionary instruction he had known as a student. His life-long pedagogical objective would be, as he later stated, to “revolt against intellectual lofitness with its isolation from the realities of life”—a lesson he had learned from unexpected company.

While he had learned valuable pedagogical skills by the end of that summer at the Druze school, Hitti had failed to save the five pounds needed for college. His brother the carpenter and his father the silk factory worker had contributed to the four pounds he had saved, money his mother had wrapped in a handkerchief for the principal.

"Here are four pounds. I'm sorry I couldn't finish out the year," Philip told Principal Hardin. The good-hearted Principal struck his hand into his pocket, taking out a shining gold pound to put on top of the four, making the total five. "All right, this is five pounds," Principal Hardin said. "I'll write to the college and they will accept you."

“If Mr. Hardin had not--, well that is one of those ‘ifs’ in history which no one can answer,” Hitti later acknowledged. The one pound Mr. Hardin provided made all the difference.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Hitti, *From Lebanon to Princeton*, pg 20-24

⁹¹ Ibid.

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