Introduction

On 1 January, 1858, in Beirut, the young Syrian poet Khalīl al-Khūrī published the first issue of his new newspaper. This was called *Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār*, the Garden of News, and it opened with a kind of manifesto, an open letter from the editor, Khūrī, to his readers. This letter contained a poem, entitled 'al-ʿAṣr al-jadīd', the New Age. It begins with these rousing words:

Arise: see how the universe orders itself by design; witness the age, how it smiles with refinement!

What was Khūrī thinking of, when he announced the birth of a new era in Beirut, in Ottoman-ruled Syria, in 1858? He might have been thinking of the astonishing growth of the port city of Beirut itself over the past three decades. From being a small backwater on the coast below Mount Lebanon, the city had become the main port of Syria, a major regional entrepot with regular steamship sailings to Europe and Egypt. He might have thought particularly of the rise to prosperity of Beirut's local merchants – Syrian Christians, Muslims and Jews, selling, notably, Lebanese silk in exchange for European manufactured goods. Indeed, one such merchant, the wealthy and cultured Mīkhāʾīl Mudawwar, was financing his paper. Or he might have had in mind recent political changes. In 1856 the Ottoman government had issued the Hatt-ı Hümayun reform decree, promising equality to all the religions of the Empire – and also heralding the Tanzimat programme of reforms. These would bring a greatly expanded bureaucracy, which Khūrī and other Syrians like him would join, new laws favourable to commercial development and an extension of state power into areas of life it had previously hardly touched. Ottoman Syria would have seemed – from the perspective of a comfortable man of letters in Beirut – well on its way to economic prosperity and political order, a context in which Khūrī, other intellectuals like him and their wealthy

merchant patrons could flourish. The universe was ordering itself around them, by a benevolent design.

There was a further dimension. The age was 'smiling with refinement', with cultural elegance. It was to this refinement that Khūrī, as a poet and man of letters, sought particularly to contribute. In his letter to his readers, he calls on the 'people of the country, young men of the homeland' to participate in the movement: 'stirred by cultural honour', they should 'storm forth to acquire knowledge and science'. He was urging them, that is, to take part in another trend which was well under way by 1858. This was the creation of new cultural institutions, of which Khūrī's newspaper was itself one – the first privately financed Arabic paper in Arab lands (the first anywhere had been founded a few years earlier in Istanbul).[1] Others included, in Beirut itself, the early Arabic theatre of the Naqqash brothers, schools run by foreign missionaries and others, and scientific and literary societies which held lectures and discussions. Classics from the heritage of Arabic literature were being printed, as were translations of modern European works of literature and science. There were similar developments, notably, in Cairo, where the presses and new-style schools of the government of Egypt, under the innovative autocrat Mehmed Ali and his successors, had been in operation for several decades, since the 1820s. And these would be joined by a growing number of new newspapers, presses, cultural associations, theatres and the like, as the century wore on. Khūrī was urging his readers to join the growing movement which would, by the early twentieth century, acquire the title of the Arab 'Nahḍa': awakening, resurgence or revival.

Although he seemed to be both harbinger and prophet of the birth of a new age with his new newspaper, Khalīl al-Khūrī in 1858, then only twenty-two years of age, might not have understood this phenomenon that others would later call 'the Arab Nahḍa'. Although the origins of this notion of 'Nahḍa' as a cultural and intellectual movement can be traced back into Khūrī's own time, the period which is the subject of this study – there are clear affinities, for instance, with his summons to 'arise' and take part in new cultural activities – the noun itself, used in

[1] This was *Mirʾāt al-Aḥwāl* (The Mirror of Conditions), founded by the Aleppine Armenian journalist Rizqallāh Ḥassūn in 1854 or 1855: see Ami Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution: Cultural Production and Mass Readership* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 29 and note 27.

this sense, seems to be of rather later vintage.[2] As a distinct term for the Arab cultural and intellectual 'revival' of the long nineteenth century, 'Nahḍa' seems to have been popularised mainly by the essayist and novelist Jurjī Zaydān (1861–1914), who gave to the final volume of his *Tārīkh Ādāb al-lugha al-ʿArabiyya* (History of Arabic Letters) the title *al-Nahḍa al-Akhīra*, 'the recent Nahda', as distinct from the earlier 'awakening' he considered to have taken place under the Abbasids.[3] It has since become established as a label for a set of developments recognisably similar to those described by Zaydān: the growth of Arabic newspapers and printing presses, of new schools, of literary and cultural societies; the spread of new, particularly Western-influenced, ideas and literary forms.

'Nahda' is not the only word used to refer to these phenomena – enlightenment (*tanwīr*), modernisation and other terms have also had their vogue – but it is probably the most commonly accepted today. Nor has 'Nahda' – or these other terms – been used to talk only of the cultural, intellectual and literary sphere. 'Nahda' has been used also for movements of political, feminist, religious and (especially) national revival. It has also been expanded to include not just these conscious movements but also the wider changes that supported and enabled them: the transformation of economies, state apparatuses and everyday ways of living in the Arab world. Yet the tighter, cultural definition of the canonical Nahda retains its power. It still marks out, roughly as it did for Zaydān, a set of cultural institutions and formations with most, if not all, of the following characteristics: the use of print, not manuscript; an engagement with new knowledge and literature, often identified with the West; and intellectual activity that was not primarily religious, nor narrowly technical, in character.

As well as this definition of the Nahda, the period in which Zaydān was active – the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries – has bequeathed us two major frameworks for interpreting its significance. They may be thought of as meta-narratives: stories that are told to explain the progress and significance of the phenomenon. One is a heroic story: the Nahda was the founding moment of Arab modernity and Arab nationalism; its protagonists were pioneers, heroically

[2] For a word history, see Hannah Scott Deuchar, '"Nahḍa": Mapping a Keyword in Cultural Discourse', *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics* 37 (2017): 50–84.
[3] Jurjī Zaydān, *Tārīkh Ādāb al-lugha al-ʿArabiyya*, vol. 4: *al-Nahḍa al-Akhīra* (Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 1914).

forging a new era out of the backwardness, 'decadence' or 'decline' (*inḥiṭāṭ*) of the Arab and Ottoman past, which had allowed the Arab world to become dominated by European imperialism. The other is a tragic tale: the Nahda was the moment when Arab intellectuals and elites capitulated to European ideas; they abandoned their own Arab and Islamic traditions, becoming conscious or unconscious agents of the Western project to colonise their countries.

The first, heroic, meta-narrative was already powerfully present in the work of Zaydān himself and other writers of his time. It was continued by a strong tradition in Arabic through the growth and heyday of Arab nationalism in the mid-twentieth century: highlights include Raʾīf Khūrī's *al-Fikr al-ʿArabī al-ḥadīth: athar al-thawra al-Faransiyya fī tawjīhihi al-siyāsī wa-al-ijtimāʿī* (Modern Arabic Thought: The Influence of the French Revolution on its Political and Social Orientation), Jamāl al-Dīn Shayyāl's *Tārīkh al-tarjama wa-l-ḥaraka al-thaqāfiyya fī ʿaṣr Muḥammad ʿAlī* (History of Translation and the Cultural Movement in the Age of Muhammad Ali), and Mārūn ʿAbbūd's *Ruwwād al-nahḍa al-ḥadītha* (Pioneers of the Modern Nahda).[4] Early and important accounts in European languages also bolstered this meta-narrative, from George Antonius's classic *The Arab Awakening*, which makes the cultural Nahda part and parcel of the development of Arab nationalism, by way of Hamilton Gibb and Harold Bowen's *Islamic Society and the West*, to the field-defining and still influential *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* by Albert Hourani.[5]

This heroic meta-narrative continues to dominate public discourse in many Arab countries, experiencing a certain resurgence from the 1990s onwards under the heading less of Nahda than of *tanwīr*,

[4] Raʾīf Khūrī, *al-Fikr al-ʿArabī al-ḥadīth: athar al-thawra al-Faransiyya fī tawjīhihi al-siyāsī wa-al-ijtimāʿ* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1943); Jamāl al-Dīn Shayyāl, *Tārīkh al-tarjama wa-l-ḥaraka al-thaqāfiyya fī ʿaṣr Muḥammad ʿAlī* (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī, 1951); Mārūn ʿAbbūd, *Ruwwād al-nahḍa al-ḥadītha* (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1966). For further references, see Jens Hanssen and Max Weiss, 'Introduction: Language, Mind, Freedom and Time: The Modern Arab Intellectual Tradition in Four Words', in *Arabic Thought beyond the Liberal Age: Towards an Intellectual History of the Nahda*, eds. Hanssen and Weiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 1–4.

[5] George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1938); H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1950–7).

Enlightenment. This includes much important new work: examples I draw on in this study include Māhir al-Sharīf's *Rihānāt al-Nahḍa fī al-fikr al-ʿArabī* (The Stakes of the Nahda in Arab Thought), the edited collection *Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī, rāʾid al-tanwīr* (Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī, Pioneer of Enlightenment), and Muḥammad Jamāl Bārūt's *Ḥarakat al-tanwīr al-ʿArabī fī al-qarn al-tāsiʿ ʿashar* (The Arab Enlightenment Movement in the Nineteenth Century).[6] This Enlightenment discourse also plays a particular role within Arab politics: it may have begun in the 1990s with the attempt to reclaim 'an intellectual legacy that seemed vibrant, hopeful and free';[7] but as Mona Abaza has argued, Arab governments soon embraced the notion of *tanwīr* to help create a united front of 'enlightened', broadly secular forces against the 'unenlightened' Islamists. In Egypt, this discourse has aided the state to co-opt a significant number of 'secularist and former leftist intellectuals' – and an important part of this enterprise has been the promotion of the heritage of the Nahda, through the commemoration of figures such as Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī, Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Salāma Mūsā.[8]

In the Western academy, this meta-narrative has lost some of its respectability since the 1960s. Yet it can still be seen peeping from the edges of studies such as Tarek El-Ariss's *Trials of Arab Modernity*, with its celebration of the self-fashioning of modern subjectivities, or Ussama Makdisi's *Artillery of Heaven*, with its notably sympathetic portrait of Buṭrus al-Bustānī as a humane liberal thinker.[9] A popularising account of Muslim reformist movements across the Middle

[6] Māhir al-Sharīf, *Rihānāt al-Nahḍa fī al-fikr al-ʿArabī* (Damascus: Dār al-Madā, 2000); Jābir ʿAṣfūr, ed., *Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī, rāʾid al-tanwīr* (Cairo: al-Majlis al-aʿlā li-l-thaqāfa, 2007); Muḥammad Jamāl Bārūt, *Ḥarakat al-tanwīr al-ʿArabī fī al-qarn al-tāsiʿ ʿashar: Ḥalaqat Ḥalab numūdhajan* (Damascus: Ministry of Culture, 1994).

[7] Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab, 'Summoning the Spirit of Enlightenment: On the Nahda Revival in Qadaya wa-shahadat', in *Arabic Thought against the Authoritarian Age: Towards an Intellectual History of the Present*, eds. Hanssen and Weiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 314.

[8] Mona Abaza, 'The Trafficking with *Tanwir* (Enlightenment)', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 30, no. 1 (2010), 34–6.

[9] Tarek El-Ariss, *Trials of Arab Modernity: Literary Affects and the New Political* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013); Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 212–3.

East, Christopher De Bellaigue's *The Islamic Enlightenment*, recently reasserted it in unreconstructed form.[10]

The second, tragic meta-narrative, of intellectual surrender and colonial domination, can also claim origins in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These lie not in the work of writers who celebrated the Nahda, such as Zaydān, but of others who were hostile to it or at least deeply apprehensive about many of its aspects, epitomised most obviously by the Syrian Islamist thinker Rashīd Riḍā (1865–1935). With its assertion that the Arab world has been subject to foreign cultural infiltration, this paradigm has been a central feature of Islamist thinking. Muḥammad Jalāl Kishk popularised, in the 1960s, the notion of an 'intellectual invasion' by the West. The legal historian Ṭāriq al-Bishrī followed suit in drawing a sharp distinction between the inherited (*al-mawrūth*) and the imported (*al-wāfid*) in the Egyptian legal system.[11]

The narrative of capitulation to colonialism has also had considerable purchase in parts of the Western academy. It has been bolstered by anthropological work in the tradition of Talal Asad, but was established in postcolonial scholarship on the Nahda movement principally by Timothy Mitchell's impressive *Colonising Egypt*.[12] This work, 'not a history of the British colonisation of Egypt but a study of the power to colonise', projects a powerful image of a unified Western imperial project, extending from Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 to the early twentieth century, disciplining and 'enframing' Egyptians with great success. The continuing power of this model is seen in its

[10] Christopher De Bellaigue, *The Islamic Enlightenment: The Modern Struggle between Faith and Reason* (London: The Bodley Head, 2017).

[11] Muḥammad Jalāl Kishk, *al-Ghazw al-fikrī* [Cairo: al-Dār al-Qawmiyya li-l-Ṭibāʿa wa-al-Nashr, 1966]; Kishk, *al-Mārksiyya wa-l-ghazw al-fikrī* (3rd edn, Mafāhīm Islāmiyya, [Cairo: al-Dār al-Qawmiyya li-l-Ṭibāʿa wa-al-Nashr], 1969); and other works. Ṭāriq al-Bishrī, *Māhiyyat al-muʿāṣara* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2007).

[12] Talal Asad devotes the final chapter of his *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003) to nineteenth-century Egyptian legal history, drawing on al-Bishrī. For a response, see Khaled Fahmy, *In Quest of Justice: Islamic Law and Forensic Medicine in Modern Egypt* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2018), 21–6, 32–5. Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991 [orig. 1988]). For critical engagements, see Sami Zubaida, 'Exhibitions of Power', *Economy and Society* 19, no. 3 (1990): 359–75; Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Cambridge, MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 173–4, 180–1.

reproduction in works on the history and literature, of Egypt in particular, up to the present – such as Lisa Pollard's *Nurturing the Nation* or Michael Allan's *In the Shadow of World Literature*.[13] It has also exerted an influence on studies concentrating more on Syrian literati, such as Stephen Sheehi's *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, with its focus on Nahda writers' obsession with 'failure' and Western 'superiority', or Elizabeth Holt's recent *Fictitious Capital*, with its haunting sense of the Nahda as a project ruined before it had begun.[14]

Most tellingly, perhaps, the paradigm of colonial capitulation continues to dominate works whose empirical substance might appear to rebut it. Shaden Tageldin's study of translation into Arabic, *Disarming Words*, presents much detailed evidence of the complex ways in which European ideas and texts were rewritten into Arabic. As the author points out, this defies any straightforward notion of the 'unilateral imposition' of European culture.[15] Yet she finally reveals these modifications as Arabic *disguises* for what remain essentially European notions; they cannot be taken as evidence of the translators' agency in appropriating European ideas to their own ends. Rather, their function was 'seduction': to induce Egyptians to disarm themselves in the face of colonial power. Michael Gasper, similarly, notes at the end of his fine-grained account of the Egyptian literate middle class: 'Their attempts to maneuver within the emergent economic and political structures facilitated the colonial project's goal of remaking the conditions that shaped Egyptians' lives.'[16]

These two paradigms, the heroic birth of modernity and the tragic loss of identity, do not exhaust the range of approaches to the Nahda. What Stephen Sheehi has dubbed 'Nahda studies' has witnessed a great flowering since the early 2000s; and much of this new work lies outside

[13] Lisa Pollard, *Nurturing the Nation: The Family Politics of Modernizing, Colonizing, and Liberating Egypt, 1805–1923* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Michael Allan, *In the Shadow of World Literature: Sites of Reading in Colonial Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

[14] Stephen Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity* (Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2004); Elizabeth Holt, *Fictitious Capital: Silk, Cotton, and the Rise of the Arabic Novel* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017).

[15] Shaden M. Tageldin, *Disarming Words: Empire and the Seductions of Translation in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 288.

[16] Michael Gasper, *The Power of Representation: Publics, Peasants, and Islam in Egypt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 223.

or takes issue with this pair of meta-narratives. Kamran Rastegar, for instance, in his introduction to a special issue of *Middle Eastern Literatures* on 'Authoring the Nahda', identifies the same pair of paradigms, and asserts that he and other contributors are offering different approaches.[17] He points principally towards more finely grained accounts of particular intellectuals, giving due weight to their agency. Dyala Hamzah, introducing another set of essays on *The Making of the Arab Intellectual*, similarly identifies a heroic and a tragic paradigm, identified respectively with Albert Hourani and Timothy Mitchell; while she notes that many dissent from the latter approach, she seems to indicate that the task before Nahda scholars is to complete the 'paradigm shift' away from Hourani's view, which Mitchell has begun.[18]

Much of this recent work also pushes the boundaries of the 'canonical' Nahda, which Zaydān and Hourani helped to frame. To give only three instances, Samah Selim has shown us a vernacular Nahda of popular fiction and translation, Kathryn Schwartz a set of Sufi-affiliated scholars adopting print for religious ends, Bernard Heyberger an early modern Catholic movement which foreshadows many features of the later canonical Nahda.[19] It may be that scholarship will increasingly move beyond both the focus on the canonical,

[17] Kamran Rastegar, 'Introduction', *Middle Eastern Literatures* 16, no. 3 (2013): 227–31.

[18] Dyala Hamzah, 'Introduction', in *The Making of the Arab Intellectual (1880–1960): Empire, Public Sphere and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood*, ed. Hamzah (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), 3–6.

[19] Samah Selim, 'The Nahdah, Popular Fiction and the Politics of Translation', *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies* 4 (2004): 71–90; Selim, 'The People's Entertainments: Translation, Popular Fiction, and the Nahdah in Egypt', in *Other Renaissances: A New Approach to World Literature*, eds. Brenda Deen Schildgen, Gang Zhou, and Sander L. Gilman (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 35–58. Kathryn Schwartz, 'Meaningful Mediums: A Material and Intellectual History of Manuscript and Print Production in Nineteenth Century Ottoman Cairo' (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2015); Schwartz, 'The Political Economy of Private Printing in Cairo as Told from a Commissioning Deal Turned Sour, 1871', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 1 (2017): 25–45. Bernard Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique, Syrie, Liban, Palestine, XVIIe-XVIIIe Siècles* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1994); Heyberger, 'Livres et pratique de la lecture chez les chrétiens (Syrie, Liban) XVIIe - XVIIIe siècles', *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, no. 87–8 (September 1999): 209–23.

elite and print-based, movement and the terminology of 'Nahda' altogether – and that this will not be a great loss. Yet retaining them for the time being, as I do in the present study, may allow us to interrogate these two Nahda paradigms more closely, and to challenge them more clearly. Because, for all of the many-faceted work of recent scholars, and their dissent from particular aspects of these paradigms, on the level of meta-narrative, when it comes to offering an overall view of the significance of the Nahda, they have hardly been displaced. One powerful reason for this is undoubtedly the neatness with which they reproduce a major divide in Arab politics: that between the forces who lay claim to *tanwīr*, 'enlightenment' and secularism, clustered around the authoritarian and often military state; and those who claim *aṣāla*, cultural-religious 'authenticity', incarnated in a range of Islamist movements and forces. In the phase of counterrevolution and conflict that followed the Arab uprisings of 2011, this polarisation has reasserted itself with renewed force; and the heritage of the Nahda movement has played a role. Arab states continue to trumpet the heroic narrative of *tanwīr* in combat with its unenlightened enemies;[20] while the tragic counter-narrative of 'intellectual invasion' by the West remains Islamist orthodoxy.[21]

These two meta-narratives are, on the face of it, starkly opposed. Yet they can also be seen as two sides of the same coin. Both direct our attention, centrally, to the *provenance* of ideas and cultural practices. The tragic narrative tends to frame this geographically: ideas and practices are either from here, our Arab-Islamic world, or from there, the West. The heroic narrative favours a temporal model: ideas and practices are either old, with a traditional origin somewhere in the mists of time, or new, with their origin in a notional point of the advent of modernity. But the focus on origins is common to both narratives, as

[20] For the Syrian official media's constant contrasting of the culture of *tanwīr* with the Islamist notion of 'takfīr', see, for instance, 'al-Mashārīʿ al-fikriyya fī al-ʿālam al-ʿArabī ḍimn muḥāḍara fī thaqāfī Shahbā bi-l-Suwaydāʾ', Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), 6 June 2017, https://sana.sy/?p=567702; Muḥammad Khālid al-Khiḍr, 'Nadwat thaqāfat al-tanwīr wa-taḥaddiyyāt al-mustaqbal tunāqish dawr al-shabāb fī mashrūʿ al-nahḍa', SANA, 14 January 2018, https://sana.sy/?p=691937.

[21] For the phrase's populariser Muḥammad Jalāl Kishk, see Ellen McLarney, 'Reviving Qasim Amin, Redeeming Women's Liberation' in *Arabic Thought against the Authoritarian Age*, eds. Hanssen and Weiss, 270–1, 283–4. Recent works drawing on the trope include Ṣāliḥ Ḥusayn Raqab, *Wāqiʿunā al-muʿāṣir wa-al-ghazw al-fikrī* ('Ammān: Dār al-Maʾmūn: 2015); 'Abd al-'Aẓīm Dīb, *Ḥawla al-ghazw al-thaqāfī wa-al-fikrī* (al-Duqqī: Dār Dawwin, 2013).

is their tendency to define ideas and practices in terms of opposed genealogies: the traditional-inherited versus the modern-imported. This basic similarity is perhaps best shown by the fact that Islamists, supporters of the nationalist state, and others have in fact long sought to entwine these genealogies – to offer an authentic Islam that is nevertheless enlightened, or an Enlightenment project that preserves cultural-religious authenticity.[22]

This genealogical way of thinking, with its focus on provenance, was a notable feature of the later stages of the Nahda movement itself.[23] Intellectuals of the 1880s and 1890s, or of the early twentieth century, wrote of the need for 'awakening' (*nahḍa*) and 'modernity' (*ḥadātha*) and the sloughing off of bad old traditions, while others (or the same ones) insisted on the dangers of 'Europeanisation' (*tafarnuj*) and the differences between 'Western civilisation' and Arab-Islamic 'heritage' (*turāth*). It is only natural, perhaps, that scholars working on this period should incorporate these categories, or something like them, into the terms of their own analysis.

It has also seemed plausible, for many, to project back these categories, with the central place they accord to genealogical thinking, into an earlier stage of the Nahda. This is partly due to a quirk of the historiography. Most studies of the Nahda concentrate on the later period of the movement, from the 1870s or 1880s to the early twentieth century. The earlier phase, from the 1830s to the early 1870s – the heyday of what Albert Hourani called the 'first generation' of the movement – appears, if it does appear, as a brief prelude, leading up to the more substantial, major events after 1875. As a result, this earlier period receives little attention, but also tends to get assimilated into the later period. Its differences from what came later are elided, as it is read mainly for events, texts or phrases that seem to foreshadow what came afterwards – meaning, very often, a concern for cultural genealogies.

[22] See Abaza, 'The Trafficking with *Tanwir*', 35; McLarney, 'Reviving Qasim Amin', 284; and as an instance of the cooptation of the religious establishment into the Syrian state's discourse of *tanwīr*, 'Ḥassūn: Ḍarūrat muḥārabat al-fikr al-takfīrī bi-l-fikr al-tanwīrī', SANA, 9 October 2017 (a speech by the Grand Mufti of Syria), https://sana.sy/?p=640442.

[23] To avoid confusion: I am not thinking here specifically of 'genealogy' in the sense defined by Michel Foucault ('Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow [New York: Pantheon, 1984], 76–100) – although this has been influential in postcolonial criticism such as Talal Asad's. I mean more simply a style of thinking that focusses on the provenance of ideas.