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# **Asad Rustum and the Egyptian Occupation of Syria (1831-1841): Between Narratives of Modernity and Documentary Exactitude**

## **Prologue**

I will begin with the tale of a document. In his classic *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (1962), Albert Hourani cites a number of pieces of evidence of the first spreading of modern ideas in the Arab world in the early nineteenth century. One of them is a proclamation by rebels in Mount Lebanon, in 1840, against the Egyptian forces then occupying the area, along with the rest of Ottoman Syria. This is the beginning of this document, as Hourani gives it in translation:

Patriots!

You all know of the injustices committed by the Egyptian government, the heavy taxes and extortions under which the whole of Syria is crushed, so that ruin has fallen on many families. In spite of their well-known spirit of independence the people of Lebanon have borne with patience the oppressions of tyrannical authority, out of respect for the Amir Bashir, and in the hope that at least this patience of theirs would secure their honour, freedom and existence.

If we have not taken up arms earlier to deliver ourselves from an oppressive power, it is because we have placed our hopes in the benevolent and patriotic intervention of our prince, which would have secured a respite from our sufferings.

Hourani writes that this text “brings us at a jump into the modern world of mass movements and national spirit.” He also surmises that it may show the influence of Europeans working with the Lebanese rebels.<sup>1</sup> And it does seem strikingly modern: its opening address to “Patriots!,” its references to “independence,” as well as “freedom” from “tyranny.” The text looks, on the face of it, like a good, surprisingly early piece of evidence for modern political ideas in Arabic, probably of European derivation.

There is only one problem: the document is a fake. When we look back at the Arabic original of this proclamation, as found in the British archives from 1840, it is worded rather differently. The address to “Patriots” is merely a mundane “Notice to all who see it” (*i'lām li-kull nāẓir 'alayhi*); there is no mention of the “spirit of independence” or even of the “people of Lebanon.” This is not to say there is nothing politically novel about it: the reference to the Greeks “who rose up before you and obtained perfect freedom from God” is striking enough.<sup>2</sup> But we are not, perhaps, entirely in “the modern world of mass movements and national spirit.”

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<sup>1</sup> Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 61.

<sup>2</sup> The National Archives, Kew, FO 78/412.

So what had happened? I must hasten to point out that the fake was not deliberate – Albert Hourani was not falsifying his sources. In fact, his instinct was right: there *was* a European hand behind his “modern” text. Already in 1840 there existed a French version of the Arabic original, probably made for the French consul Prosper Bourée, one of the Europeans sympathetic to the Lebanese uprising. He was doubtless trying to give it a modern gloss for his superiors in Paris, for it is an extremely free translation. It introduces the address to “Amis de la Patrie!,” the reference to the “caractère d’indépendance” of the Lebanese, and so on.<sup>3</sup> This French text was reproduced, along with other French diplomatic documents of the time, in the Baron de Testa’s *Recueil des traités de la Porte ottomane avec les puissances étrangères* (1866).<sup>4</sup> In 1910-11 Philippe and Farīd Khāzin then assembled, from Testa and other sources, a collection of diplomatic documents translated into Arabic. They back-translated Bourée’s French into Arabic, leaving the unwary with the impression that this was the original Arabic text.<sup>5</sup> It is this text, with all its modern features – and its pure literary Arabic, very different from the dialect-inflected original – that Hourani translated into English in 1962, citing both the Khāzins and Testa.

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<sup>3</sup> Both the Arabic original and French translation are in The National Archives, Kew, FO 78/412 (documents of 1840).

<sup>4</sup> Ignace de Testa, *Recueil des traités de la Porte Ottomane avec les puissances étrangères depuis le premier traité conclu, en 1536, entre Suléyman I et François I, jusqu’à nos jours*, vol. 3, part 1 (Paris: Amyot, 1866), 74-76. It had previously appeared in 1846, in an account emanating from French diplomatic circles: “Achille Laurent,” *Relation historique des affaires de Syrie: depuis 1840 jusqu’en 1842*, vol. 1 (Paris: Gaume Frères, 1846), 34-38.

<sup>5</sup> Fīlīb Qa’dān Khāzin and Farīd Khāzin, *Majmū’at al-muḥarrarāt al-siyāsiyya wa-al-mufāwaḍāt al-dawliyya ‘an Sūriyā wa-Lubnān min sanat 1840 ilā sanat 1910*, vol. 1 (Jūniyyah: Maṭba‘at al-Ṣabr, 1910), 3-4 (doc. 3).

Hourani, like other historians of his generation, was engaged in a search for modernity, of this European-derived variety: here, the political inheritance of the French Revolution. In the Khāzins' collection, he apparently found it, and looked no further. Another Arab historian thirty years earlier, however, had been more scrupulous – and more suspicious. In his collection of Arabic documents published in 1930, he printed the original Arabic of the proclamation, of which he had located an old copy in the British consulate at Beirut – helpfully adding a note to the effect that the text printed by the Khāzins was “an Arabic translation of the French translation.” At the same time, he listed the document under the title “The Proclamation of the Lebanese Rebels [or: Revolutionaries]” (*Nidā' al-thuwwār al-lubnāniyyīn*), giving it overtones of just the kind of narrative of modernity that Albert Hourani was to offer.<sup>6</sup>

The scrupulous editor was Asad Rustum, a Lebanese historian who dedicated much of his career to understanding the events of which this “proclamation” was a part: the occupation of Ottoman Syria by the armies of Mehmed Ali, governor of Egypt, in 1831; the rebellions against Egyptian rule over the succeeding decade; and the Anglo-Austrian-Ottoman military

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<sup>6</sup> Asad Jibrā'īl Rustum, *Al-Uṣūl al-'arabiyya li-tārīkh Sūriyya fī 'ahd Muḥammad 'Alī Bāshā = Materials for a Corpus of Arabic Documents Relating to the History of Syria under Mehemet Ali Pasha* (Beirut: American Press, 1930-1934), vol. 5, 102-3 (doc. 531). His use of *thuwwār* is ambiguous: it had the older meaning of “rebels” or (as in the 1840 French translation), *insurgés*, “insurgents,” but also more modern echoes of “revolution.” For an alternative account of the origins of this form of popular politics in Mount Lebanon, see Peter Hill, “How Global Was the Age of Revolutions? The Case of Mount Lebanon, 1821,” *Journal of Global History*, ahead of print, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022820000145>.

intervention which forced the Egyptian troops to withdraw in 1840-1841. He wrote on these events for both English- and Arabic-speaking publics, and across many genres, publishing editions of chronicles, documentary collections, scholarly studies, school textbooks, and a famous handbook of history. The contrast between the modern-sounding title *Rustum* gave the document and the scholarly scrupulousness which led him to question the Khāzins' version of it points to a certain muffled tension which ran throughout this work. This tension was between a vision of national "modernity" which demanded the discovery and celebration of its early signs in the Syro-Lebanese past, and another vision of modernity which required that the "scientific" historian stick to the objective facts of the documentary record, which alone would disclose the truth. This second vision can be traced back to *Rustum's* academic training, but was maintained (as we shall see) through his lifelong preoccupation with the painstaking collecting and editing of original documents. It also imposed a certain reticence regarding overtly ideological questions, political or religious.

The two impulses might appear to be thoroughly compatible: both, after all, were characteristic of early twentieth-century modernity at large and of its Arab manifestation, what *Rustum* referred to as the "nahḍa." The way *Rustum* handled that problematic proclamation of 1840 – quietly correcting the documentary record, but retaining a modern-sounding title – might be seen as a way of reconciling them. But through much of his work on the events of 1831-1841, we can feel the two imperatives – the search for modernity's origins and the present-day practice of modern, "scientific" historical method – pulling him in opposite directions. It is this tension that I will trace, in this article, through *Rustum's* major writings on the Egyptian occupation of Syria and his archival practices.

## Biography

Asad Jibrāʾīl Rustum was born in 1897 to a Protestant father and a Greek Orthodox mother in the village of Shuwayr, in the Matn to the east of Beirut. He grew up and was educated in the last years of the Ottoman Empire, attending the village school of Shuwayr and, from 1911, Beirut's Syrian Protestant College.<sup>7</sup> He finished his education and started his academic career at the start of the French Mandate. He was clearly a star student: he began teaching for the SPC after taking his BA in 1916, and in 1922 he received a special subsidy from Bayard Dodge, the President of the institution (now renamed the American University of Beirut), to study at the University of Chicago for a year.<sup>8</sup> There he received his PhD *summa cum laude*, and was the first Syrian to be inducted into the prestigious alumni association Phi Beta Kappa, reportedly with the comment: "If there are any [more] scholars like Doctor

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<sup>7</sup> His daughter, Lamyā Rustum-Shihāda, says in 1911: "Asad Rustum mu'arrikh al-kanīsa al-anṭākiyya wa-istikhdāmuhu manhaj muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth fī baḥth al-tārīkh," *al-Nahār*, 1 July 2007, available at:

<https://elaph.wordpress.com/2008/02/25/%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%AF-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%B1%D8%AE-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B3%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%91%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA/> [last accessed 7 September 2020]; an AUB webpage says 1912:

<http://online-exhibit.aub.edu.lb/exhibits/show/donations/asad-rustum-collection> [last accessed 7 September 2020].

<sup>8</sup> Rustum-Shihādah, "Asad Rustum mu'arrikh al-kanīsa al-anṭākiyya." John L. Meloy, "Arab and Middle Eastern Studies at AUB: Between Local Concerns and Global Pressures," in *One Hundred and Fifty*, ed. Nadia El-Cheikh, Lina Choueiri, and Bilal Orfali (Beirut: AUB Press, 2016), 85-94, here 85.

Rustum in Syria, send them on to Chicago!”<sup>9</sup> In 1923 he returned to AUB, where he was soon appointed Professor of Oriental History.

For the next two decades Rustum would teach at AUB, before resigning in 1943 to become “eastern advisor” to the US diplomatic envoy to Syria and Lebanon, George Wadsworth (formerly an AUB professor), who was then playing an important role in negotiating the independence of both states from the French Mandatory power.<sup>10</sup> Rustum subsequently served as a historical advisor to the Lebanese army.<sup>11</sup> In the early years of the independent Lebanese Republic he returned to AUB, which was soon under the acting presidency of his former protégé and colleague from the history faculty, Qusṭanṭīn Zurayq (Costi Zurayk).<sup>12</sup> He also joined the faculty of the new al-Jāmi‘a al-Lubnāniyya (Université Libanaise), under its first Rector, his long-term collaborator Fu‘ād Afrām al-Bustānī.<sup>13</sup> In 1957 he suffered a heart

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<sup>9</sup> Anon., “The Beirut Alumni Association Revived,” *The Phi Beta Kappa Key* 4, no. 8 (May 1921), 472. Rustum went on to act as secretary of the Beirut-based Syrian chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

<sup>10</sup> Subḥī Abū Shaqrā, introduction to *Al-Maḥfūzāt al-malikiyya al-miṣriyya: al-fahāris* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1950), 6. Rustum-Shiḥāda, “Asad Rustum mu‘arrikh al-kanīsa al-anṭākiyya.”

<sup>11</sup> 1952-62, according to Rustum-Shiḥāda, “Asad Rustum mu‘arrikh al-kanīsa al-anṭākiyya.”

<sup>12</sup> Zurayq was Acting President from 1954-57, according to an AUB webpage: <http://online-exhibit.aub.edu.lb/exhibits/show/constantine-zurayk/constantine-zurayk-as-a-teache/1/aub-acting-and-vice-president-> [last accessed 7 September 2020].

<sup>13</sup> Rustum-Shiḥāda, “Asad Rustum: masīrat ḥayāt,” in *Min dhikrā al-mu‘arrikh ilā tashakkul al-dhākira (a‘māl al-ḥalqa al-dirāsiyya ḥawla Asad Rustum, Jāmi‘at al-Balamand, 16 Ayyār, 2003)* (al-Kūra: Manshūrāt Jāmi‘at al-Balamand, 2004), 11-22, here 18.



attack, which according to his daughter Lamyā Rustum-Shihāda influenced his subsequent move towards studying the Greek Orthodox Church; he died in 1965.<sup>14</sup>

### Scientific history

“If the sources are lost, history is lost with them.” The phrase served Asad Rustum as a watchword, and would be echoed by his acolytes.<sup>15</sup> The basis of his work on Syria in 1831-1841 would be the careful collection, collation, and editing of documents and chronicles. Such work was, as we shall see, extensively practised by the previous generation of Lebanese antiquarians, often Christian clerics. But Rustum brought to the field a new

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<sup>14</sup> Rustum-Shihādah, “Asad Rustum mu’arrikh al-kanīsa al-anṭākiyya.”

<sup>15</sup> It is the opening phrase of the first chapter of Asad Rustum, *Muṣṭalaḥ al-tārīkh, wa-huwa baḥth fī naqd al-uṣūl wa-taḥarrī al-ḥaqā’iq al-tārīkhiyya wa-īdāḥihā wa-’ardihā* (Beirut: American Press, 1939), 1. He used it in his co-authored prefaces to Amīr Ḥaydar Aḥmad al-Shihābī, *Lubnān fī ‘ahd al-umarā’ al-Shihābiyyīn: wa-huwa al-juz’ al-thānī wa-l-thālith min Kitāb al-Ghurar al-hisān fī akhbār abnā’ al-zamān*, ed. Rustum and Fu’ād Afrām al-Bustānī (Beirut: al-Maṭba’a al-Kāthūlikiyya, 1933), “tawṭī’a” (unpaginated); and to Ḥusayn Ghadbān Abū Shaqrā and Yūsuf Khaṭṭār Abū Shaqrā, *Al-Ḥarakāt fī Lubnān ilā ‘ahd al-mutaṣarrifiyya: wa-hiya shahāda durziyya ṣarīḥa fī makḥṭūṭa tulimmu bi-ḥawādith Lubnān wa-aḥwālihi yudlī bihā min ruwāt al-durūz shāhid ‘iyān wa-yusāhimu bihā wāḥid minhum li-awwal marrah fī tārīkh Lubnān*, ed. ‘Ārif Abū Shaqrā (Beirut: Maṭba’at al-Ittiḥād, 1952), preface by Rustum and ‘Umar Farrūkh, alif. It is quoted by Rustum-Shihāda, “Asad Rustum mu’arrikh al-kanīsa al-anṭākiyya,” and adopted by Naila Kaidbey as title for an essay on Rustum’s sources and Lebanese history: “Idhā ḍā’at al-uṣūl ḍā’a al-tārīkh: Asad Rustum muḥaqqaqan,” available at: <https://www.academia.edu/33376017/%D8%A7%D9%8B%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AE%D8%B6%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%D8%B6%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AA%D8%A5%D8%B0%D8%A7> [last accessed 7 September 2020].

emphasis on the methods of the modern, professional historian. On his way to Chicago to complete his PhD, in 1922, the young Rustum passed through Paris and met the French historian Charles Seignobos, who in 1898 had authored, with Charles-Victor Langlois, the standard French manual of professional history of his generation, *Introduction aux études historiques*.<sup>16</sup> Setting out the document-centred, “scientific” method of Rankean history, this was the textbook on which the *Annales* generation of French historians, also Rustum’s contemporaries, were raised.<sup>17</sup>

When Rustum returned to AUB from Chicago in 1923 he used Langlois and Seignobos, among other Western works, to teach historical methods, but came to feel the lack of a dedicated Arabic textbook. He therefore set out to write his own, published under the title *Muṣṭalaḥ al-Tārīkh* in 1939.<sup>18</sup> This drew heavily on Langlois and Seignobos, but added an Arab-Islamic twist. He found a close parallel to the sound principles of Rankean history in the works of Arab hadith scholars, in the subdiscipline of the “verification” or “acceptability” (*muṣṭalaḥ*) of *ḥadīths*, which he now applied to history: hence his title, *Muṣṭalaḥ al-Tārīkh*. One account of “*muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth*” by al-Qādī ‘Ayyād, which Rustum himself unearthed in

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<sup>16</sup> Rustum-Shiḥāda, “Asad Rustum: masīrat ḥayāt,” 15.

<sup>17</sup> But against which they reacted critically, unlike Rustum: see Lucien Febvre’s introductory note to Marc Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft*, trans. Peter Putnam (New York: Vintage Books, 1953), xiii.

<sup>18</sup> Rustum, *Muṣṭalaḥ al-tārīkh*, first page of preface (unpaginated); also *Muṣṭalaḥ al-tārīkh*, third edition (Ṣaydā and Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Aṣriyya, 1955), wāw, where he adds a history of historical method, culminating in Langlois and Seignobos. Cf. Ilyās al-Qaṭṭār, “Al-Manhajīyya ladā Asad Rustum,” in *Min dhikrā al-mu’arrikh ilā tashakkul al-dhākira (a’ māl al-ḥalqa al-dirāsiyya ḥawla Asad Rustum, Jāmi’at al-Balamand, 16 Ayyār, 2003)* (al-Kūra: Manshūrāt Jāmi’at al-Balamand, 2004), 103-14, here 109.

a manuscript in Damascus in 1936, he incorporated verbatim into his own textbook, noting: “in truth, the greatest historians of today could not write anything better than it, in some respects.” This showed strikingly that the “Western methodology” (*al-mīthūdūlūjiyya al-gharbiyya*) which Rustum was introducing into Arabic “is not foreign to the science of hadith verification” (*‘ilm muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth*). In fact, if modern European historians “had studied the books of the hadith specialists (*al-a’imma al-muḥaddithīn*) they would not have waited until the end of the last century to found the science of methodology (*‘ilm al-mīthūdūlūjiyya*).”<sup>19</sup> Bringing together the insights of “our ancient ‘ulamā’ and the ‘ulamā’ of the West of today,” Rustum offered the work as his “service to my country (*bilādī*) in its blessed awakening (*fī nahḍatihā al-mubāraka*).”<sup>20</sup>

Modern Western practices of professional history should thus replace the bad practice of recent and current Arab writers – Rustum has some sharp things to say about the latter, and would in fact, with his collaborators, redo a substantial part of the editorial work which the previous generation had accomplished.<sup>21</sup> But – as for other *nahḍa* writers – these good

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<sup>19</sup> Rustum, *Muṣṭalaḥ al-tārīkh*, zaḡn-wāw. *Muṣṭalaḥ* was popular among Egyptian historians. See Yoav Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers of the Arab Past: Historians and History Writing in Twentieth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 199-200. It has been through several editions, the latest in 2002, suggesting it is still in use (Ṣaydā and Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Aṣriyya, 2002). On Rustum’s reconciliation of his scientific methods with his religious faith, see Rustum-Shihāda, “Asad Rustum mu’arrikh al-kanīsa al-anṭākiyya.”

<sup>20</sup> Rustum, *Muṣṭalaḥ al-tārīkh*, zaḡn; dropped from 3rd edition (1955).

<sup>21</sup> See Rustum, *Muṣṭalaḥ al-tārīkh*, zaḡn and 47-48; 54-57. Cf. introduction to *Al-Uṣūl al-‘Arabiyya*, 1: 4-7.

Western practices were not really foreign, for they found a close (and convenient) parallel in a classical Arab past.<sup>22</sup>

### **“The father of the modern *nahḍa*”**

The major domain in which Rustum sought to apply these methods of “scientific history,” in the first part of his career, was the study of Ottoman Syria, particularly the period 1831-1841. He both built on and went beyond three earlier, related, bodies of politico-historical work on the period. The first was a set of Europe-oriented accounts: views of events by European diplomats and other eyewitnesses, who had probably relied on Syrian dragomans or informants in composing their narratives; and collections of diplomatic documents.<sup>23</sup> In these, events in Syria and Egypt were viewed largely through the lens of Europe’s “Eastern Question”: the incursion of Egyptian armies into Syria and Anatolia (under the command of Mehmed Ali’s son Ibrahim Pasha) had provoked a diplomatic crisis among the Great Powers

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<sup>22</sup> For an early instance of the trope, see Khayr al-Dīn al-Tūnisī, *Aqwam al-masālik li-ma’rifat aḥwāl al-mamālik* (Tunis: Maṭba’at al-Dawla, 1867), 6, 11, 12, 21, 22; idem, *The Surest Path: The Political Treatise of a Nineteenth-Century Muslim Statesman*, trans. L. Carl Brown (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 76 and n. 11, 82, 85, 97, 99.

<sup>23</sup> See sources listed in Asad Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz, 1804-1841* (Beirut: al-Jāmi‘a al-Lubnāniyya, 1956, reprinted 1966), bibliography, 2: 239-48. According to Jonathan Frankel, much of the material published under the otherwise obscure name of “Achille Laurent” was assembled by the French consul at Damascus, Count Ratti-Menton, his chancellor-dragoman Jean-Baptiste Beaudin, and dragoman Shiblī Ayyūb. See Jonathan Frankel, *The Damascus Affair: “Ritual Murder”, Politics, and the Jews in 1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 416.

of Europe, culminating in Anglo-Austrian military intervention to restore the Ottoman Sultan's rule in 1840-1841.<sup>24</sup>

In the aftermath of this intervention, the fate of Mount Lebanon became a matter for dispute among European Powers, and this gave rise to a second body of partisan literature on Ottoman Syria: pamphlets by Maronite clergymen and their French sympathisers, aimed at attracting support for a French-protected Maronite entity in Mount Lebanon.<sup>25</sup> This took on a scholarly guise in the 1908 doctoral thesis of the Lebanist Būlus Nujaym, which rendered the 1840 uprising as part of a contest between a Druze-dominated "feudal" order and the revolutionary, "national," and "popular" forces of the Maronites.<sup>26</sup> The turn of the twentieth century also saw the printing of several Arabic manuscript accounts covering the events of 1831-1841, by authors who were almost all Christians, and often from Mount

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<sup>24</sup> The two crises of 1831 and 1840 in fact provoked the first uses of the term "question d'Orient" in book titles: Lucien J. Frary and Mara Kozelsky, "Introduction: The Eastern Question Reconsidered," in *Russian-Ottoman Borderlands: The Eastern Question Reconsidered*, ed. Lucien J. Frary and Mara Kozelsky (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 3-33, here 8-9 and n. 12, 23-24.

<sup>25</sup> Carol Hakim, *The Origins of the Lebanese National Idea, 1840-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), ch. 2; Andrew Arsan, "'There Is, in the Heart of Asia, ... an Entirely French Population': France, Mount Lebanon, and the Workings of Affective Empire in the Mediterranean, 1830-1920," in *French Mediterraneans: Transnational and Imperial Histories*, ed. Patricia Lorcin and Todd Shepard (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 76-100.

<sup>26</sup> M. Jouplain, *La question du Liban: étude d'histoire diplomatique & de droit international* (Paris: Arthur Rousseau, 1908), 218-19 (citing the French text of the proclamation referred to above), 304.

Lebanon.<sup>27</sup> Their publication was one aspect of the work of the remarkable generation of Syro-Lebanese antiquarians and historians – generally Christians, often clerics – which included ʿĪsā Iskandar Maʿlūf, Quṣṭanṭīn al-Bāshā, and Louis Cheikho. The perspective that emerged from these published accounts was one consonant with Nujaym’s Lebanism: the major local actors in the events of 1831-1841 appeared as the Maronite Church and community, and the Mount Lebanon emirate of Bashīr II al-Shihābī.<sup>28</sup>

It was against this background that Asad Rustum set out to study the Egyptian occupation of Syria – beginning, as prescribed by *Muṣṭalaḥ al-Tārīkh*, with the collection and publication of original sources. His sense of the significance of the events of 1831-1841 was influenced by the priorities of Europe’s “Eastern Question,” and the continuing tradition of diplomatic history devoted to studying this. But he also sought to highlight the responses of the inhabitants of Ottoman Syria themselves – most obviously, their many rebellions against the Egyptian regime’s attempts to disarm and conscript them, from 1834 onwards. These culminated in the 1840 uprising in Mount Lebanon which, along with European and

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<sup>27</sup> These editions include *Kitāb Tārīkh al-Amīr Ḥaydar Aḥmad al-Shihābī*, ed. Naʿūm Mughabghab (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Salām, 1900-1); Mīkhāʿīl Mishāqa, *Kitāb Mashhad al-ʿiyān bi-ḥawādith Sūriyā wa-Lubnān*, edited (aggressively) by Muḥam Khalīl ʿAbdū and Andrāwus Ḥannā Shakhāshīrī (Cairo: s.n., 1908); Mīkhāʿīl al-Dimashqī, *Tārīkh ḥawādith al-Shām, min sanat 1197 ilā sanat 1257 hijriyya (1782-1841 masīhiyya)*, ed. Luwīs Maʿlūf (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Kāthūlīkiyya, 1912). Tannūs al-Shidyāq’s important *Akhbār al-ʿiyān fī Jabal Lubnān* had previously been published by Buṭrus al-Bustānī, in 1859.

<sup>28</sup> As Hourani notes, much Lebanese historiography in this generation was clerical and “sectarian” in orientation. See Albert Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), 158-59, 166-69.

Ottoman military action, helped force the Egyptian army out of Syria. As Rustum commented modestly in 1924, introducing his translation of a chronicle of these rebellions by Nawfal Nawfal:

The amount of attention that was given to these revolts by Mehemet Ali Pasha and by his son Ibrahim, and their far-reaching effect upon the final settlement of the crisis of 1840-41, justify us (we hope), in giving them special consideration in this Introduction and in making them the subject of our research.<sup>29</sup>

Rustum clearly aimed, in English-language publications like this one, to speak to the continuing tradition of diplomatic and “Eastern Question” history. He would give one major documentary collection the English title *A Calendar of State Papers from the Royal Archives of Egypt Relating to the Affairs of Syria*, calqued upon the major British series of “Calendars of State Papers.” And Rustum was appreciated by some within this tradition: he is one of the dedicatees of *England and the Near East* (1936) by the Cambridge diplomatic historian Harold Temperley, who acknowledges Rustum’s assistance and scholarship. In the same year, Rustum thanked Temperley, in turn, for his aid with *The Royal Archives of Egypt and*

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<sup>29</sup> Asad Jibrail Rustum, “Syria under Mehemet Ali,” *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 41, no. 1 (Oct. 1924): 34-57, here 39. Only the first part of his translation seems to have appeared: Asad Jibrail Rustum, “Syria under Mehemet Ali - A Translation,” *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 41, no. 3 (1925): 183–91. He edited the Arabic text in AUB’s *al-Kullīyah*: “Makhṭūṭat Nawfal Nawfal al-Ṭarābulṣī,” *al-Kullīyah* 11 (1924-1925), nos. 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8: 36-42, 130-132, 170-174, 271-274, 366-371.

*the Origins of the Egyptian Expedition*.<sup>30</sup> Yet Rustum also wished to assert, to this community, the importance of local sources, his own specialism. In his introduction to Nawfal's chronicle, he notes that emphases of local accounts differ from those by foreigners – but for him, this shows the local sources' superiority:

Like the Western traveler of the present century, many of these European authors during their short stay in the Orient either failed to see what would have been evident to the Oriental himself or else saw what actually was not there. Syrian politics of the thirties of the last century were as personal as they are now, and European observers then were probably as superficial as they are at present.<sup>31</sup>

The single most imposing body of such sources from within the region was that derived from the ruling project of Mehmed Ali and Ibrahim Pasha; and this project's priorities also deeply marked Rustum's sense of the importance of the events of 1831-1841. The purpose of *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Origins of the Egyptian Expedition to Syria* – Rustum wrote in 1938 – was to offer “a provisional estimate of the point of view of Cairo on the important events of 1831 to 1833 in the Near East.”<sup>32</sup> The study, as its title indicates, was

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<sup>30</sup> Harold Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea, Volume 1* (London, New York, and Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1936), v, xxix, 416, 425, 438; Rustum, *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Origins of the Egyptian Expedition to Syria, 1831-1841* (Beirut: American Press, 1936), 3. Cf. Albert Hourani, “Asad Rustum's Corpus of Arabic Documents,” in *Asad Rustum al-insān wa-l-mu'arrikh (1897-1965)*, ed. Ilyās Qaṭṭār, Lamyā Rustum-Shihāda, and Jān Sharaf, (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-Būlusiyya, 1984), 48.

<sup>31</sup> Rustum, “Syria under Mehemet Ali,” 52.

<sup>32</sup> Rustum, *Egyptian Expedition*, 2.



one of a number which derived from his work in the Royal Archives of Egypt at ‘Abdīn Palace, an archive which Rustum, like other historians, was able to access thanks to a historical project personally sponsored by King Fu’ād I of Egypt. Fu’ād commissioned first the publication of documents on Egypt under Mehmed Ali from European consular archives, and then a series of works drawing on the Royal Archives themselves.<sup>33</sup> The initiative aimed to provide a heroic lineage not just for modern Egypt but, more specifically, for the ‘Alid dynasty, particularly King Fu’ād’s own father (Ismail), grandfather (Ibrahim) and great-grandfather (Mehmed Ali).<sup>34</sup> Rustum seems to have been happy enough to work within this framework, especially as he had a genuine admiration for Mehmed Ali and Ibrahim. His collection of ‘Abdīn documents, like other works of this royalist school, carries a fulsome dedication to (and photograph of) the Egyptian monarch – though this is now King Fārūq I, Fu’ād having died in 1936.<sup>35</sup> Even Rustum’s more Syrian-focussed collection, *Al-Uṣūl al-‘arabiyya li-tārīkh Sūriyya fī ‘ahd Muḥammad ‘Alī Bāshā*, frames its object in terms of the Egyptian dynasty’s importance for modernity in the region. His introduction to it justifies his focus on Syria during the Egyptian occupation because Mehmed Ali was “the father of the modern *nahḍa* in the Arab East generally, and Egypt and Syria in particular” (*abū l-nahḍa al-ḥadītha fī l-sharq al-‘arabī ‘umūman wa-Miṣr wa-Sūriyya ‘alā l-akhaṣṣ*).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers*, 116-17.

<sup>34</sup> Anthony Gorman, *Historians, State and Politics in Twentieth Century Egypt: Contesting the Nation* (London: Routledge, 2003), 16-18; Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers*, 123-25.

<sup>35</sup> Asad Rustum, *Al-Mahfūzāt al-malikiyya al-miṣriyya: bayān bi-wathā’iq al-Shām wa-mā yusā’idu ‘alā fahmihā wa-yūḍihū maqāṣid Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Kabīr*, vol. 1, 1810-1832 (Beirut: American Press, and Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1940), unpaginated opening material and ṭā’-kāf.

<sup>36</sup> Asad Rustum, *Al-Uṣūl al-‘arabiyya*, 1: 1.

Yet Rustum would not go quite as far as some members of the ‘Abdīn project did in massaging the historical record to the benefit of the ‘Alid dynasty. While some royalist historians, Yoav Di-Capua argues, used the “impartiality” and “scientific” status of archival history to pass off their highly partial accounts as “universal truth,” Rustum remained more conscious of the limits of what a strictly “scientific” documentary method could show.<sup>37</sup> He urged historians to be wary of manipulations and forgeries, and claimed to have accepted the authenticity of the ‘Abdīn documents only after close examination of their paper, ink, handwriting, and literary style.<sup>38</sup> He was perhaps too tactful, or too mindful of his own status under Egyptian royal patronage, to call attention to the outright documentary “manipulation” being conducted by other participants in the ‘Abdīn project.<sup>39</sup> His personal contacts with other ‘Abdīn historians were doubtless valuable: in his prefaces to *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Origins of the Egyptian Expedition to Syria* (1936) and *Al-Mahfūzāt al-malikiyya al-miṣriyya* (1940) he thanks a number of royal officials and historians such as Angelo Sammarco, ‘Alī Māhir Pasha, Joseph Gelat (Yūsuf Jallād) Bey, and Georges Guindi (Jindī) Effendi.<sup>40</sup> He also thanks Fu’ād I for being so enlightened as to grant him “complete

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<sup>37</sup> Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers*, 133.

<sup>38</sup> Rustum, *Muṣṭalaḥ al-tārīkh*, 15-32, 86-95; Rustum, *Egyptian Expedition*, 12-13. Cf. *Al-Uṣūl al-‘arabiyya*, 1: 9-13. Di-Capua notes that Rustum displayed greater suspicion than Ghurbāl, though generally classing him with the ‘Abdīn historians. See Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers*, 200, 161-2.

<sup>39</sup> See Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers*, 128-30, 132.

<sup>40</sup> Asad Rustum, *Egyptian Expedition*, Prefatory Note (unpaginated); id., *Al-Mahfūzāt al-malikiyya al-miṣriyya*, 1: ḥā’. Cf. Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers*, 130, n. 127.

freedom” of access and to allow him to publish “without restriction or condition,”<sup>41</sup> as well as for “the atmosphere of free and unbiased thought which He has helped to create at Abdin Palace.”<sup>42</sup> Though Rustum may not have used his freedom to its fullest extent, he was willing to signal certain differences. He opens *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Disturbances in Palestine* (1938) by disagreeing pointedly with two distinguished members of the royalist school:

It would be a mistake to assume with Professor Muhammad Sabry of Cairo that Ibrahim Pasha was admired and was regarded everywhere in Syria-Palestine, in 1831, as a saviour. The Royal Archives of Egypt would not even allow us to say with Ambassador Charles-Roux that the Arab Moslems of the day showed “symptoms of partiality” in favour of Mehemet Ali Pasha or his son Ibrahim. On the contrary, there is abundant evidence in these archives to show that Ibrahim Pasha was regarded with antipathy in almost all circles in Syria and Palestine.<sup>43</sup>

Rustum himself clearly thinks this antipathy misguided: “Egyptians and Syrians [...] did not begin to see Mehemet Ali Pasha in his true light as a reformer until many years after his death.” He and Ibrahim “were certainly several decades ahead of their epoch.”<sup>44</sup> Yet he goes on to argue, in opposition to Sabry and the British historian Henry Dodwell, against any

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<sup>41</sup> Rustum, *Al-Mahfūzāt al-malikiyya al-miṣriyya*, 1: dedication to King Fārūq I (unpaginated).

<sup>42</sup> Rustum, *Egyptian Expedition*, Prefatory Note.

<sup>43</sup> Asad Rustum, *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Disturbances in Palestine, 1834* (Beirut: American Press, 1938), 13.

<sup>44</sup> Rustum, *Disturbances in Palestine*, 20.

notion that the 1830s Palestine “disturbances” were the work of Ottoman or Russian conspiracies.<sup>45</sup> Again, in *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Origins of the Egyptian Expedition to Syria*, Rustum notes Mehmed Ali’s ambivalence on the question of “independence” from the Ottoman Sultan, cautiously recommending that we “suspend our judgement until all the evidence has been brought to light and collected together.”<sup>46</sup> He also decidedly rejects any notion of popular Arab nationalist support for Mehmed Ali’s rule.<sup>47</sup> Still, he claims Ibrahim Pasha as the first “Moslem of rank in the Arab World who conceived of an Arab Nationalist Movement”: “In confidential correspondence with his father, he saw in the war with Constantinople ‘a national and racial struggle in which the individual must sacrifice his life for his people’.”<sup>48</sup>

As this suggests, Rustum’s scholarly reluctance to venture beyond what the documents would show was in tension with an impulse to see the events of 1831-1841 as part of a larger story of modernity, Egyptian or Syrian. Already in 1924, in his introduction to Nawfal Nawfal’s chronicle, he was casting these events as a clash between the “medieval Syria” of “feudal” social organisation and “personal” politics, and the shock of “westernization” introduced by Mehmed Ali.<sup>49</sup> “But in spite of the loud protests against Mehmed’s policy,” his introduction concludes, “this process of westernization has been going on; Mehmed

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<sup>45</sup> Rustum, *Disturbances in Palestine*, 27-35. Dodwell was another participant in the ‘Abdīn project and admirer of Mehmed Ali: see Di-Capua, *Gatekeepers*, 125, 136-7, 151-2, 156.

<sup>46</sup> Rustum, *Egyptian Expedition*, 59-62.

<sup>47</sup> Rustum, *Egyptian Expedition*, 51-52, 83-85.

<sup>48</sup> Rustum, *Egyptian Expedition*, 96, 94 (citing a letter from the ‘Abdīn archives).

<sup>49</sup> Rustum, “Syria under Mehmed Ali,” 56, 49.

only started it.” In a footnote, he clarifies his own relationship to the process. In present-day Syria, he writes, a traveller proceeding from east to west will already begin to perceive such “westernization” “on the edge of the desert in the form of Manchester calico which everyone wears”; he will see it increase as he approaches the coast, encountering the “Singer sewing-machine and the Ford automobile.” In Beirut itself, he might enter (“if he had had the proper introductions”) “modern houses that compare very favorably with Europe’s best mansions” and meet Syrians “who had had good university training, either in Beirut itself” – a nod to AUB – “or in the world’s most famous educational centers, such as Paris and Cambridge, Berlin and Vienna, to say nothing of Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Chicago.”<sup>50</sup> (Rustum himself had of course recently completed his doctorate at Chicago, and was writing in the Chicago-based *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*.) The notion of “civilisation” spreading outwards from Western centres, decreasing by stages as it passes from Beirut inland towards the desert, is another trope found in earlier *nahḍa* writers.<sup>51</sup>

Rustum’s identification with “westernization,” his eagerness to stress the present-day modernity of Syria, might seem to place him strongly on the side of Mehmed Ali, who – as Rustum claimed – first introduced it into this land. Yet at the same time, he is scrupulous in acknowledging the limits of his historical evidence on Mehmed Ali’s project of modernity – and in acknowledging that the inhabitants of Ottoman Syria, however misguided, had their own reasons for violently opposing it.

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<sup>50</sup> Rustum, “Syria under Mehemet Ali,” 57, n. 1.

<sup>51</sup> E.g. Fransīs Fathallāh Marrāsh, *Kitāb Riḥlat Bārīs* (Beirut: al-Maṭba‘a al-Sharqiyya ‘inda Ḥannā Najjār, 1867).

## A historian fallen among Lebanists

Back in Mandatory Lebanon, Rustum had become involved in another project of historical nation-building, which would continue – as Candice Raymond notes – into the early decades of Lebanese independence.<sup>52</sup> This was the publication, under the auspices of the Direction de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts, its Direction Générale des Antiquités, and later the Ministry of Education and the Université Libanaise, of a series of chronicles revolving around the Emirate of Mount Lebanon, and providing historical depth for a Lebanist vision of nationhood. In the 1930s, Rustum worked with Fu'ād Afrām al-Bustānī to publish chronicles of the two most celebrated rulers of the Mountain: that of Fakhr al-Dīn II b. Ma'n by his court chronicler Aḥmad al-Khālīdī al-Ṣafadī, and that of Bashīr II al-Shihābī (and his Shihābī predecessors) by his kinsman Emir Ḥaydar Aḥmad al-Shihābī.<sup>53</sup> During the 1950s, Rustum and his student and protégé Subḥī Abū Shaqrā edited the chronicle-autobiography

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<sup>52</sup> Candice Raymond, “Des guerres de papier: Ou la double vie des archives historiques libanaises de la Direction Générale des Antiquités,” in *Archiver au Moyen-Orient: Fabriques documentaires contemporaines*, ed. Christine Jungen and Jihane Sfeir (Paris: Karthala, 2019), 47-78, here 58-59.

<sup>53</sup> Al-Shihābī, *Lubnān fī 'ahd al-umarā' al-Shihābiyyīn*. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Khālīdī [al-Ṣafadī], *Lubnān fī 'ahd al-Amīr Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ma'nī al-Thānī, wa-huwa kitāb tārikh al-Amīr Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ma'nī* (Beirut: al-Maṭba'a al-Kāthūlīkiyya, 1936). Both were in the series “Al-Jumhūriyya al-Lubnāniyya: Manshūrāt Mudīriyyat al-Ma'ārif al-Āmma wa-al-Funūn al-Jamīla = République Libanaise: Publications de la Direction de l'instruction publique et des beaux-arts.”

of Mīkhā'il Mishāqa, another writer close to the court of Emir Bashīr al-Shihābī.<sup>54</sup> In the same year, 1955, Bustānī published the memoirs of yet another member of that court circle, Rustum Bāz; this edition inaugurated a series of publications of historical works and texts by the Lebanese University, of which Bustānī was the founding rector.<sup>55</sup> In this same series, Rustum's account of Emir Bashīr's reign, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-'Azīz*, appeared in 1956; in it, too, Rustum and Bustānī's earlier editions of Ḥaydar Aḥmad al-Shihābī and al-Khālidī al-Ṣafadī were re-issued in 1969.<sup>56</sup>

The selection of these chronicles for publication was clearly angled towards a particular vision of Lebanese history, with the Mountain Emirate – and its great rulers Fakhr al-Dīn b. Ma'n and Bashīr al-Shihābī – at its centre. One stern critic of this view, the Arab nationalist (and Sunni Muslim) historian Muḥammad Jamīl Bayhum, would see Rustum and Bustānī's chronicle and document publications as part of the promotion of a separate, non-Arab Lebanism by the "ruling class" (*al-fi'a al-ḥākima*) under the Mandate. Yet, he claims that "these two great historians" did not, in the event, follow this ideological imperative

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<sup>54</sup> Mīkhā'il Mishāqa, *Muntakhabāt min al-jawāb 'alā iqtirāḥ al-aḥbāb* (Beirut: al-Jumhūriyya al-Lubnāniyya, Wizārat al-Tarbiya al-Waṭaniyya wa-l-Funūn al-Jamīla – Mudīriyyat al-Āthār, 1955). This followed, in the Mudīriyyat al-Āthār's series "Nuṣuṣ wa-wathā'iq tarīkhiyya," the *dīwān* of Bashīr al-Shihābī's court poet Niqūlā al-Turk, which Bustānī edited in 1949.

<sup>55</sup> Rustum Bāz, *Mudhakkirāt Rustum Bāz* (Beirut: al-Jāmi'a al-Lubnāniyya, 1955, reprinted 1967).

<sup>56</sup> Al-Shihābī, *Lubnān fī 'ahd al-umarā' al-Shihābiyyīn* (Beirut: al-Jāmi'a al-Lubnāniyya, 1969); al-Khālidī [al-Ṣafadī], *Lubnān fī 'ahd al-Amīr Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ma'nī al-Thānī* (Beirut: al-Jāmi'a al-Lubnāniyya, 1969). The series, "Manshūrāt Qism al-Dirāsāt al-Tārīkhiyya," also contained Bustānī's new edition of another Mount Lebanon chronicle: al-Shaykh Ṭannūs al-Shidyāq, *Kitāb Akhbār al-a'yān fī Jabal Lubnān* (Beirut: al-Jāmi'a al-Lubnāniyya, 1970).

through: instead, the chronicles they published showed that the Ma'nīs and Shihābīs never sought anything resembling an independent Lebanese state.<sup>57</sup> They thus provided evidence for Bayhum's own position, that Lebanon had always been Arab.

Though he does not mention it, Bayhum probably had in mind not only the chronicles published by Rustum and Bustānī, but also their collaboration on a series of school textbooks, also for the Mandate's Direction de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts.<sup>58</sup> Their *Tārīkh Lubnān* series (1938) presented a vision of a distinctive Lebanese nation reaching far back in history, provoking a fierce controversy over its use in government schools.<sup>59</sup> It may well have been intended, indeed, as a deliberate riposte to a rival textbook which had appeared four years previously, by two Muslim writers, Zakī al-Naqqāsh and

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<sup>57</sup> Muḥammad Jamīl Bayhum, *Urūbat Lubnān: taṭawwuruhā fī l-qadīm wa-l-ḥadīth* (Beirut: Dār al-Riḥānī li-l-Ṭibā'a wa-l-Nashr, 1969), 83-84. See Kais M. Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State Under the Mandate* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 37-41, on Bayhum.

<sup>58</sup> Firro suggests, slightly misleadingly, that Bayhum was referring directly to the textbook. See Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, 39 and 218, n. 121.

<sup>59</sup> The best-known of the five books was Asad Rustum and Fu'ād Afrām al-Bustānī, *Tārīkh Lubnān al-mūjaz, li-ṭalabat al-shahāda al-ibtidā'iyya, 1937* (second edition, Beirut: [Maṭābi' Ṣādir Riḥānī], 1946). See Asher Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia: The Search for Identity in Lebanon* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 116-19; cf. Kamal Salibi, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1988), 202-4; Ussama Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019), 144, and 247, nn. 33-35. For more on the controversy, see Lamyā Rustum-Shihāda, Su'ād Slīm, Māhir Jarrār, and Nādir al-Bizrī, eds., *Asad Rustum: mu'assis 'ilm al-tārīkh fī l-'ālam al-'arabī* (Beirut: AUB and Dār al-Fārābī, 2015), 56-58, 182.



‘Umar Farrūkh, which presented Lebanon as fully integrated into an Arab Syria.<sup>60</sup> Farrūkh, intriguingly, would subsequently claim that Rustum had privately repudiated his own textbook’s exaggerations. According to Farrūkh, in his 1980 book *Tajdīd al-tārīkh*, Rustum had first been commissioned by the Syrian government, in 1938, to write a study of the Arabness of the region of Iskenderun (Hatay), which had just been annexed by Atatürk’s Turkey. (I cannot find that this was ever published, though, at least not under Rustum’s name.<sup>61</sup>) When Rustum did this, Farrūkh writes:

Emile Eddé (President of the Lebanese Republic, and client of the French) became angry, and asked Asad Rustum to write a “History of Lebanon” to be taught at the primary [school] level. Dr Asad Rustum told me that he was forced (*uḍṭurra*) to write this book, in collaboration with Fu’ād Afrām al-Bustānī, in order to avoid the political difficulties that Dr Asad Rustum might have been exposed to in terms of livelihood (*ma’āsh*) and position (*makāna*). Dr Rustum told me that he would write chapters, and they would then be altered [or: replaced] (*yuṭra’ ‘alayhā al-tabdīl*) during printing (at the Catholic Press in Beirut).<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Zakī al-Naqqāsh and ‘Umar Farrūkh, *Tārīkh Sūriya wa-Lubnān al-muṣawwar* (Beirut: Maṭba‘at al-Kashshāf, 1352 = 1933).

<sup>61</sup> An online exhibition notice from AUB mentions his “pioneering work on Iskenderun” as featuring in his personal archive: <http://online-exhibit.aub.edu.lb/exhibits/show/donations/asad-rustum-collection> [last accessed 7 September 2020]. But I did not come across it when working on the Rustum Collection.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Umar Farrūkh, *Tajdīd al-tārīkh fī ta’līhi wa-takwīnihi: “i‘ādat al-naẓar fī l-tārīkh”* (Beirut: Dār al-Bāḥith, 1980), 96, n. 1. Farrūkh may have been taught by Rustum at AUB: on p. 30 he refers to Rustum as “*ustādhnā*.”

Whatever the truth of the matter, the episode seems to have marked the strongest point of tension between the Lebanist national project and Rustum's principles of "scientific history," as his own work was laid open to political manipulation. He continued, nonetheless, to collaborate with Fu'ād Afrām al-Bustānī, who remained an unabashedly political Lebanist, and would become a leading member of the Front Libanais during the Civil War (1975-1990).<sup>63</sup> The "textbook controversy" would itself return to prominence in that war and its aftermath, as "historiographical conflict" over the shape of the Lebanese nation – and its confessional components – sharpened.<sup>64</sup> The "unification" (*tawḥīd*) of Lebanon's history textbooks would be written into the 1989 Ṭā'if Agreement which brought the Civil War to an end – a provision which has remained unfulfilled.<sup>65</sup>

Rustum's other notable compromise with political imperatives came in 1955, when he and his former student Subḥī Abū Shaqrā were entrusted by the Direction Générale des

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See also Youssef Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography: Historical Discourse and the Nation-State* (London: Routledge, 2003), 127 and 167, n. 10.

<sup>63</sup> Walid Phares, *Lebanese Christian Nationalism: The Rise and Fall of an Ethnic Resistance* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), 110; Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia*, 117.

<sup>64</sup> See James A. Reilly, *The Ottoman Cities of Lebanon: Historical Legacy and Identity in the Modern Middle East* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 4-5, 29-30.

<sup>65</sup> "Wathīqat al-wifāq al-waṭanī – ittifāq al-Ṭā'if," available at:

[https://www.un.int/lebanon/sites/www.un.int/files/Lebanon/the taif agreement arabic version .pdf](https://www.un.int/lebanon/sites/www.un.int/files/Lebanon/the_taif_agreement_arabic_version_.pdf) [last accessed 13 April 2021]. Nemer Frayha, "Lebanon," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Conflict and History Education in the Post-Cold War Era*, ed. Luigi Cajani, Simone Lässig, and Maria Repoussi (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 351–61.

Antiquités, now of independent Lebanon, with producing an edition of Mīkhā'il Mishāqa's autobiographical chronicle, *Al-Jawāb 'alā iqtirāḥ al-aḥbāb* (1873). This contained not only some rude (and often very funny) mockery of religious figures of all sects, from Mishāqa's sceptical youth, but also his vivid accounts of the sectarian violence of 1860 in Damascus, in which he suffered personally, and of other bloody episodes in Mount Lebanon. All of these passages were left out of Rustum and Abū Shaqrā's edition, presumably in the interests of interconfessional harmony, and to spare some clerical blushes.<sup>66</sup> But they did not go as far as the historian and diplomat Adel Ismail would in the 1970s when publishing French diplomatic documents on Lebanon, also for the Direction Générale des Antiquités. To conceal the traces of sectarian strife these contained, he made both cuts and alterations, without any indication to readers of what he had done.<sup>67</sup> Rustum and Abū Shaqrā at least signalled the passages they omitted and printed the remainder of the text accurately; and they called the volume "Selections (*Muntakhabāt*) from *Al-Jawāb 'alā iqtirāḥ al-aḥbāb*."

Like the textbook incident, this indicates some of the limits encountered by Rustum's Rankean ideal, to assemble and publish all the relevant evidence, which would then add up to the truth. The aspiration comes through clearly enough, though, in another project he was associated with, in 1952. Here he joined forces with none other than 'Umar Farrūkh, the author of the rival "Arabist" textbook of the 1930s, to co-write a preface to 'Ārif Abū

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<sup>66</sup> See Wheeler N. Thackston, Jr., in his introduction to his English translation of the full text of *Al-Jawāb: Murder, Mayhem, Pillage, and Plunder: The History of the Lebanon in the 18th and 19th Centuries by Mikhayil Mishaqa (1800-1873)* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1988), xvii. Thackston's notes locate the omissions. The full Arabic text has never been published.

<sup>67</sup> See Raymond, "Des guerres de papier," 62-64.

Shaqrā's edition of *Al-Ḥarakāt fī Lubnān*. This was a rare account by a Druze eyewitness of the Druze-Maronite violence of the 1840s and 1860, breaking the Christian quasi-monopoly on narratives of these events. It was edited by the eyewitness's grand-nephew, the Druze writer and scholar 'Ārif Abū Shaqrā, and published not by the Ministry of Education or the Lebanese University, but by Maṭba'at al-Ittiḥād.<sup>68</sup> Farrūkh and Rustum cite, in their preface, Rustum's previous *Al-Uṣūl al-'arabiyya* and *Muṣṭalaḥ al-tārīkh* on the importance of gathering *all* the documents and their "scientific – not political" publication, that the whole truth may become known. And they conclude:

Each new Lebanese (*al-lubnānī al-mutajaddid*) who loves Lebanon and strives for its happiness ought to attend to what all the witnesses say on the issue of the three risings (*ḥarakāt*), in a spirit of impartiality (*tajarrud*) and justice (*'adl*), which must be kindled in us if we want to live, and our children to live after us – "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."<sup>69</sup>

The truth is still singular, "a complete, indivisible unity" (*waḥda tāmma lā tatajazza*) – rather like a nation.<sup>70</sup> But whereas in Egypt this might be simply read off from a set of

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<sup>68</sup> Abū Shaqrā and Abū Shaqrā, *Al-Ḥarakāt fī Lubnān*, alif-bā'. Ussama Makdisi has noted the almost unique status of this account, in the absence of other Druze narratives. See Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 14.

<sup>69</sup> Abū Shaqrā and Abū Shaqrā, *Al-Ḥarakāt fī Lubnān*, bā'. The Biblical quotation is John 8:32.

<sup>70</sup> Abū Shaqrā and Abū Shaqrā, *Al-Ḥarakāt fī Lubnān*, alif.

official archives, in Syria and Lebanon it had to be distilled from a far more complex set of competing narratives.

### **The documentary obsession**

One reason for this was the lack, in Ottoman Syria and the Mandatory and national states which succeeded it, of a unitary set of official archives like the Egyptian ones King Fu'ād I had gathered at 'Abdīn Palace. A major part of Rustum's effort, in the interwar years especially, was devoted to remedying this deficit. On this quest he traversed both the French and British Mandates, frequenting Church and diplomatic institutions, *sharī'a* courts, notable families, individual clerics and antiquarians, assiduously gathering original documents, taking photographs, and copying texts out by hand. The notable families whose papers he drew on for the still enormously valuable *Al-Uṣūl al-'arabiyya* included, he tells us in the introduction: Bayhum, Jumblāṭ, Khāzin, Abū Ghūsh, Nakad, 'Abd al-Hādī, Zaynī, and 'Abbūd. He thanked especially Maronite Patriarch Ilyās Ḥuwāyik and Mufti of Jerusalem Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, as well as two heads of the Syrian Mandatory government and an array of British officials.<sup>71</sup> His contacts with these notables and religious leaders of all stripes doubtless came in useful after 1943, in his role as "oriental advisor" to George Wadsworth,

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<sup>71</sup> Rustum, *Al-Uṣūl al-'arabiyya*, 1: 18-20, V-VI.

the US envoy to Syria and Lebanon at a crucial moment of negotiations for full independence.<sup>72</sup>

Yet these collections remained – and remain – decidedly plural, even after Rustum’s best efforts to gather them together. As Candice Raymond notes, many of the original documents Rustum gathered went to Maurice Chéhab’s Direction Générale des Antiquités, but this project, with its Lebanist notion of a history centred on the Mountain emirate, was uninterested in such important sources as the *sharī’a* court records of cities like Tripoli.<sup>73</sup> Rustum’s photographic copies of the court records, not just of Tripoli but also of Aleppo, Antakia, Hama, and Damascus, found a home – like many original documents he collected – in his own institution, AUB, and he would draw on these *sharī’a* court documents substantially in his published collections.<sup>74</sup> Many of the originals which he copied and published, meanwhile, remained in the hands of their owners, scattered over Bilād al-Shām. And some original documents Rustum gathered failed to make it, during his lifetime, into any institutional holdings, but remained among his own private papers. The latter, now held

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<sup>72</sup> It is unclear what role Rustum played in Wadsworth’s activities, but for these, see Irene L. Gendzier, *Notes from the Minefield: United States Intervention in Lebanon and the Middle East, 1945-1958* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 68-69; Robert B. Newman, “The US Diplomatic Role in Lebanon’s Struggle for Independence during the Second World War” (MA diss., Princeton University, 1990), <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a223440.pdf> [last accessed 7 September 2020].

<sup>73</sup> Raymond, “Des guerres de papier,” 56.

<sup>74</sup> These are held in AUB library as mss., both under call no. 956.9:B111bA:c.1: “Ba’ḍ wathā’iq tārikhiyya tata’allaq bi-ḥukūmat Ibrāhim Bāshā al-Miṣrī, 1246-1255 h., jama’ahā Asad Rustum” (Tripoli), and “Ba’ḍ wathā’iq tārikhiyya tata’allaq bi-tārikh Sūriya fī zamān Ibrāhim Bāshā al-Miṣrī, 1246-1255 h., jama’ahā Asad Rustum” (Aleppo, Antakia, Hama and Damascus, copied in 1927).

by AUB but only sketchily catalogued, include a substantial if miscellaneous *fonds* of original documents in Arabic and Ottoman Turkish, going back to the seventeenth century.<sup>75</sup>

This personal archive gives us a glimpse into the vast amount of labour Rustum put into this work of collection, fuelled by what Raymond aptly calls his “documentary obsession.”<sup>76</sup>

Pasted into scrapbooks are photographs he took of documents, generally with notes on the format of the original, and sometimes on their provenance. In 1925, for instance, he photographed a document owned by Ḥārith Bey Nakad in ‘Abay; in 1928 two owned by Father Luwīs al-Khāzin in Beirut.<sup>77</sup> He took many photographs from the British consular archives in Beirut and some from the Maronite Patriarchate at Bkirki.<sup>78</sup> He copied out many other documents, and indeed large parts of manuscripts, such as one of Mikhā’il Mishāqa’s *Al-Jawāb ‘alā iqtirāḥ al-aḥbāb* held by a descendant in Cairo.<sup>79</sup> He possessed typed copies of French documents on the 1840 events, probably from the French diplomatic archives.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Asad Jibrail Rustum Collection, American University of Beirut Archive, AA:6.2.18, Jafet/ASC (hereafter AJRC).

Worth noting are: some of the earlier documents are in AJRC 2B/1; a large series of commercial letters of Ḥājj ‘Umar Bayhum is in AJRC 2A/1-2, 2B/2-4; AJRC 11, 12; and business correspondence of Ahmed Manikli Pasha and Yūsuf Mishāqa in AJRC 9.

<sup>76</sup> Raymond, “Des guerres de papier,” 51.

<sup>77</sup> AJRC 3/6/24 (Nakad). This was published in *Al-Uṣūl al-‘arabiyya*, 5: 195 (doc. 583). AJRC 3/5/18; 3/6/22 (Khāzin).

<sup>78</sup> AJRC 3/5/11, 3/5/17, 3/6/38, 12/4 (consulate); 2A/3/35 (Bkirki).

<sup>79</sup> AJRC 2A/3, 3/2-5, 11/1 (documents); 6, 14/2, 29 (chronicles). AUB ms., call no. MS 956.9:M39jA:c.1, contains his 1925 partial copy of the Mishāqa ms., plus part of another chronicle of 1840 by Arsāniyūs Fākhūri, from a ms. in ‘Īsā Iskandar Ma‘lūf’s library.

<sup>80</sup> AJRC 14/2.

Rustum faced numerous obstacles in this work of collection. Many of the great notable archives, like those of Bashīr al-Shihābī, the Jumblāṭs, and the ‘Imāds, had been lost or destroyed in the many wars and upheavals between the 1840s and the 1920s. Many foreign consular papers had been seized by the Ottoman government or burnt. Other notables, even when “not too suspicious of the collector,” were “too indolent to open up old ‘bags’ of family archives,” and “no amount of social and political pressure or persuasion” could overcome such indolence.<sup>81</sup>

He was evidently drawing, in this work, on the traditions of – and his own links with – the largely clerical antiquarian tradition of an older generation of Syro-Lebanese scholars. In his introduction to *Al-Uṣūl al-‘arabiyya* he thanks, for instance, Father Būlus Qar’ālī and Jirjī Yannī, as well as Sulaymān Abū ‘Izz al-Dīn (author of another study of the Egyptian occupation of Syria).<sup>82</sup> For help with his edition and translation of Nawfal’s *Kashf al-lithām*, in 1924, he had thanked not only his teachers at AUB and Chicago, but also the Jesuits Louis Cheikho and Henri Lammens at the Université Saint-Joseph.<sup>83</sup> He also worked with Qar’ālī

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<sup>81</sup> *Al-Uṣūl al-‘arabiyya*, 1: 13-16, VI-VII. Su‘ād Slīm gives further details, for instance of families realizing their documents might be valuable and asking astronomical prices – but it is unclear from what source. See Su‘ād Slīm, “Al-Uṣūl al-tarīkhiyya wa-l-fahāris al-‘ilmiyya fi ‘amal Asad Rustum al-tarīkhī,” in *Min dhikrā al-mu‘arrikh ilā tashakkul al-dhākira (a‘māl al-ḥalqa al-dirāsiyya ḥawla Asad Rustum, Jāmi‘at al-Balamand, 16 Ayyār, 2003)* (al-Kūra: Manshūrāt Jāmi‘at al-Balamand, 2004), 123-34, here 130-31.

<sup>82</sup> Rustum, *Al-Uṣūl al-‘arabiyya*, 1: 15, 19.

<sup>83</sup> Rustum, “Syria under Mehemet Ali,” 35.



on the publication of two chronicles of the Egyptian occupation period.<sup>84</sup> A scrapbook among his papers contains clippings of newspaper articles on the Egyptian occupation by the great antiquarian ʿĪsā Iskandar Maʿlūf.<sup>85</sup> One original document bears the note “property of Qusṭantīn al-Bāshā” on the back – perhaps Rustum forgot to return it.<sup>86</sup>

### The Summa

In 1956, before moving away from the Egyptian occupation period to study the Greek Orthodox Church, Rustum published the two volumes of *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-ʿAzīz, 1804-1841*. This densely documented work functions, in one sense, as a summa, or *mukhtaṣar*, of its author’s immensely industrious work of source collection and publication. Large sections of it fall into a style reminiscent of the nineteenth-century chronicle-histories by Tannūs al-Shidyāq or Ḥaydar Aḥmad al-Shihābī: a blow-by-blow narration of events, closely following the sources.

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<sup>84</sup> Asad Rustum and Būlus Qarʿālī, eds., *Ḥurūb Ibrāhīm Bāshā al-Miṣrī fī Sūriyā wa-l-Anāḍūl* (Miṣr al-Jadīda: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Sūriyya, 1927); Anṭūn Katāfākū, *Futūḥāt Ibrāhīm Bāshā al-Miṣrī fī Filasṭīn wa-Lubnān wa-Sūriyā = Les Conquêtes d’Ibrahim Pacha d’Egypte en Palestine, au Liban et en Syrie d’après les rapports et correspondances d’Antonio Catafago*, ed. Būlus Qarʿālī, with notes by Asad Rustum (Ḥarīṣā: Maṭbaʿat al-Qiddīs Būlus, 1937).

<sup>85</sup> AJRC 6.

<sup>86</sup> AJRC 2A/1/52.

Where it broadens out into more general claims, however, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz* reveals all the themes of Rustum’s work which we have discussed above: Lebanism, the heroic figure of Mehmed Ali, the Eastern Question, and the *nahḍa* or “national awakening.” “Lebanon” is strongly in evidence from the first paragraphs of his preface. Fakhr al-Dīn II b. Ma‘n, we learn, sought “independence” from the Ottomans, who never managed to dominate “Lebanon’s internal affairs”; his ambition was revived by Bashīr II al-Shihābī.<sup>87</sup> A further prefatory note explains his focus on the period starting in 1804 in these terms: 1804 saw the death of Jazzar Pasha of Acre, previously the dominant figure in “barr al-Shām.” This allowed “Lebanon” to “return” to its dominant position in the politics of the Syrian region, based on its military might and the “character” of its ruler, Emir Bashīr al-Shihābī.<sup>88</sup> It could assert, notably, its right to adjacent regions, like “its dear Biqā’ ”;<sup>89</sup> one section, on this, bears the title “The Biqā’, Lebanese land” (*al-Biqā’ arḍ lubnāniyya*), echoing the claims of Lebanists ever since Nujaym for inclusion of such areas beyond Mount Lebanon within a “Grand-Liban.”<sup>90</sup>

At the same time, Rustum’s Lebanism now nestles within “barr al-Shām”: the Lebanese were a unique, and ideally dominant, force in the whole zone “between Taurus and Sinai.”<sup>91</sup> Like some early Lebanists, he can portray Lebanon as the central region of Greater Syria –

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<sup>87</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 1: alif.

<sup>88</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 1: prefatory remark (unpaginated).

<sup>89</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 1: alif.

<sup>90</sup> Kais M. Firro, “Lebanese Nationalism versus Arabism: From Bulus Nujaym to Michel Chiha,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 5 (2004): 1–27, here 15; Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, 21, 25, 32, 32, 105-6, 113, etc.

<sup>91</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 1: alif.

and his selection of this period assists his aim.<sup>92</sup> Yet as the book's title proclaims, Bashīr al-Shihābī's domination, even of Lebanon, was hardly uncontested: he sat, often uncomfortably, "between the Sultan and the 'Azīz" – the latter referring to Mehmed Ali, known as 'Azīz Miṣr, "the Mighty One of Egypt." Rather than the aggressively separatist sentiment of some earlier and later writers, Rustum seems open to the dialogue between a still strong "Phoenician" Lebanism and a moderate notion of Arabness which could be found in the quasi-national think-tank, the Cénacle libanais.<sup>93</sup>

Rustum's admiration for Mehmed Ali is also visible from the preface onwards: Emir Bashīr recognised his "genius" (*'abqariyya*) and allied with him against the Ottomans.<sup>94</sup> Indeed, as Rustum's narrative unfolds, Bashīr al-Shihābī "the Great" recedes somewhat from the foreground, to be replaced by Mehmed Ali and Ibrahim (the Ottomans, of course, are the forces of "decadence").<sup>95</sup> This is reinforced by Rustum's reliance, especially in this central part of the study, on his Egyptian documentary collection, drawn from the coherent state archives of 'Abdīn. His portrait of Ibrahim's rule over Syria is glowing;<sup>96</sup> those who initially

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<sup>92</sup> Firro, "Lebanese Nationalism," *passim*; Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, 23-29.

<sup>93</sup> In 1946-47 the Cénacle had held a series of discussions of Fakhr al-Dīn b. Ma'n and Bashīr al-Shihābī, emblems of Lebanese independence and unity: Rustum contributed a talk entitled "Fakhr al-Dīn Sulṭān al-barr." Amin Élias, "Le Cénacle libanais (1946-1984): une tribune pour une libanologie inscrite dans son espace arabe et méditerranéen" (PhD diss., Université du Maine and Université Saint-Esprit, Kaslik, Liban, 2013), 61, <https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-00954897/document> [last accessed 7 September 2020].

<sup>94</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-'Azīz*, 1: alif.

<sup>95</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-'Azīz*, 1: alif.

<sup>96</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-'Azīz*, 1: 108.

oppose Ibrahim he sees, as in 1938, as misguided victims of their own Ottoman and Islamic religious prejudices – though he does also recognise the harsh guise, of taxation and conscription, in which Ibrahim’s regime appeared to them.<sup>97</sup>

Rustum then turns to diplomatic history, and a wealth of published European sources, to give an account of the unfolding of the Eastern Question crisis of 1838-41.<sup>98</sup> Finally, the last major actor in the plot appears: “Lebanon,” in the shape of the Christian and Druze rebels of 1840, outraged at Ibrahim’s attempt to “steal their liberties.”<sup>99</sup> As he claims in his preface, “Lebanon” asserted its “honour” and “humanity,” first by allying with the Egyptians to reject the Ottomans, and then by rejecting Egyptian rule in the 1840 *ḥaraka ‘āmmiyya*.<sup>100</sup> His final chapter frames 1840-41 as marking an epoch in the growth of “civilisation” (*‘umrān*) and “national awakening” (*al-yaqza al-waṭaniyya*) – which would, presumably, resume after the interruption of the sectarian troubles of 1841-1861, cast in the preface as a period of “chaos.”<sup>101</sup> In this final chapter Rustum sketches, in essence, the outlines of the Arab *nahḍa*: the influence of modern Europe of the industrial revolution, the arrival of Western missionaries, Ottoman and Egyptian state reforms, and the growth of modern education and culture. The “national awakening” began, he says, in Lebanon, with the adoption of “the modes (*asālib*) of modern Europe,” and only from there spread to the rest of Syria.<sup>102</sup> He

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<sup>97</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 2: 117-20.

<sup>98</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 2: 146-68.

<sup>99</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 1: bā’.

<sup>100</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 1: bā’, 2: 173-80.

<sup>101</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 2: 225, 232; 1: bā’.

<sup>102</sup> Rustum, *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*, 2: 232.

ends with a contrast between the work of the Lebanese Christian schools (plus a few sponsored by Druze notables in Mount Lebanon) and the decadence and immobility of Muslim and Ottoman education. We are back, it seems, with something like Rustum's vision of "westernization" of 1924, gradually diffusing itself from Beirut and the coast into inland Syria. 1840-41 has become at once a culmination – of the reign of Emir Bashīr and the salutary shock of Egyptian rule – and (despite the setback of 1841-61) a new point of departure for Syro-Lebanese modernity, "national awakening," and "civilisation."

### Envoi

This vision, shared by Rustum's older contemporaries such as Sulaymān Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, would also exert a powerful influence on the following generation of historians of Lebanon and Syria: Albert Hourani, Charles Issawi, Dominique Chevallier, William Polk.<sup>103</sup> A version of it still persists: William Harris's 2012 history of Lebanon since 600 AD is divided into two halves, "Foundations" and "Modern Lebanon;" the latter begins in 1842.<sup>104</sup> Even an account like Ussama Makdisi's of 2000, which sees the "modernity" of this moment in the altogether

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<sup>103</sup> Sulaymān Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, *Ibrāhīm Bāshā fī Sūriyā: huwa tārikh bad' al-nahḍa al-ḥadītha fī l-Sharq al-Adnā* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2009 [1929]). Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914: A Book of Readings* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1966), 38-40, 205-47; Dominique Chevallier, *La société du mont Liban à l'époque de la révolution industrielle en Europe* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1971); William R. Polk, *The Opening of South Lebanon, 1788-1840: A Study of the Impact of the West on the Middle East* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), vii-ix.

<sup>104</sup> William Harris, *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

darker terms of violent sectarianism, continues to take the Egyptian occupation and the events of 1840-41 as “the dawn of the modern age.”<sup>105</sup> One reason for the aura of modernity around this moment has been its association with the entry of French-revolutionary ideas into the region, based, in some accounts at least, on the Khāzins’ misleadingly back-translated version of the rebels’ “proclamation,” with which I began this article. Its modern-sounding phrases fitted neatly into a variety of narratives of modernity: Nujaym’s Lebanist image of Maronite “revolution” against Druze “feudalism”; Hourani’s narrative of the origins of Arab liberalism and nationalism; or the account of subaltern rebellion offered by Axel Havemann’s 1983 study *Rurale Bewegungen im Libanongebirge*.<sup>106</sup> Asad Rustum, back in 1930, had been exposed to a similar impulse to discover origins for Syro-Lebanese modernity. But he was also in the grip of another impulse: the wonderfully naïve ambition to uncover “the whole truth” by the assiduous gathering and study of documents. The two did not always line up.

We may leave the final demonstration of this point to ‘Ārif Abū Shaqrā, the Druze historian for whose edition of *Al-Ḥarakāt fī Lubnān* Rustum and ‘Umar Farrūkh had written the preface in 1952. Five years later, he took to the pages of *Al-Ādāb* to review Rustum’s *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz*. He rebukes Rustum sharply for his blatant “affection for Bashīr

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<sup>105</sup> Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 51.

<sup>106</sup> For Hourani and Nujyam, see above, nn. 1, 42. Axel Havemann, *Rurale Bewegungen im Libanongebirge des 19. Jahrhunderts: ein Beitrag zur Problematik sozialer Veränderungen* (Berlin: K. Schwarz, 1983), 157. The Khāzins’ text is also cited in Philip K. Hitti, *Lebanon in History: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (London, New York: Macmillan, St Martin’s Press, 1957), 425; Issam Khalifé, “Les révoltes sociales au Mont-Liban (1820-1859),” in *La Révolution française et l’Orient: 1789-1989* (Paris: Cariscript, 1989), 49-61, here 56.

al-Shihābī” (*‘aṭīfa Bashīriyya-Shihābiyya*) – he counts 61 places where the Emir is referred to as “*al-Kabīr*”; for overlooking certain sources, not least *Al-Ḥarakāt fī Lubnān*; for favouring the Maronites and disparaging the Druze; and for the dubious claim that “the Biqā’ [is] Lebanese land.”<sup>107</sup> As against these lapses, Abū Shaqrā holds up an image of careful, impartial historical practice. The historian, he says, should avoid “boasting and competition” (*al-mufākhara wa-l-munāfasa*) in favour of “historical verification and exactitude” (*al-taḥqīq wa-l-tadqīq al-tārīkhiyyayn*); “proving facts (*ithbāt al-ḥaqā’iq*) requires the use of all the narratives (*i’timād al-riwāyāt jamī’ihā*).”<sup>108</sup>

Abū Shaqrā had good authority for his critique. In support of these statements he footnotes a book called *Muṣṭalaḥ al-Tārīkh*, by one Dr Asad Rustum.

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<sup>107</sup> ‘Ārif Abū Shaqrā, “Al-Nitāj al-jadīd: *Bashīr bayna al-Sulṭān wa-l-‘Azīz* bi-qalam Asad Rustum,” *Al-Ādāb* 7 (July 1957), 49-50.

<sup>108</sup> Abū Shaqrā, “Al-Nitāj al-jadīd,” 49.

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