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The Genesis of Biopolitics and Modern Arabic Medical Discourse in Early Modern Egypt, 1805–1882

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Abstract

In this paper I argue that evolution in the political discourse of nineteenth-century Egypt are linked to the transformation of Egypt into a biopolitical state during and after the reign of Mehmed Ali (r. 1805–1848). I claim that the genesis and spread of European scientific and medical discourses that appear in Egypt after the first quarter of the nineteenth century are related to this change in the character of political sovereignty. These discursive transformations affect the way authors speak about the political subject, the remit of politics, the mechanisms that the state's political strategies should employ, and the ultimate goals of government. I highlight the fact that in comparison with premodern texts, nineteenth-century medical and political texts speak about the role of biological life in politics in new ways. I conclude that the science of public health combined with scientific theories about politics and political economy developed by French theorists at the end of the eighteenth century opened up spaces not only for secularising and liberal discourses that circulated widely in Egypt near the end of the nineteenth century. Finally, I suggest that biological life itself becomes the focus of political strategies and state security mechanisms in this era.

Keywords: biopolitics, science, medicine, bare life, nineteenth-century Egypt, physiocrats, public health

1. Introduction

The introduction of scientific discourses into Egypt in the nineteenth century by means of translations and summaries of European scientific and medical texts has long been reconised to have had deeply political ramifications. The process of introducting modern sciences into Egypt, driven mainly by his desire to modernise the army and navy,[1] was initiated by Mehmed

1 On the role of the army in Mehmed Ali's reform programme, see Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Makings of Modern Egypt* (Cairo: The American Univesity in Cairo Press, 2002).

Ali (r. 1805–1848), whose family ruled Egypt until 1952.[2] By 1815, Mehmed Ali was the undisputed ruler of Egypt. He set about to reform many features of Egypt's social and political organisation and its economic infrastructure. In order to serve the needs of the miliary and to create a cadre of skilled technocrats to staff the country's expanding and increasingly complicated bureaucracy, around 1815 Mehmed Ali began establishing several technical schools staffed by European scientists, among the most important of which was the medical school established in 1827 at Abū Zaʿbal, a garrison town about 15 miles North of Cairo.[3] Between 1834 and 1854 an extraordinary number of scientific and medical texts were translated into Arabic.[4] These texts constituted the basis of the Arabic scientific lexicon, and served as models for the scientific notation and styles of writing for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[5] It is not the case, however, that these texts were not used exclusively by scientists and technocrats educated in Egypt's new educational institutions. These texts and the words and ideas they contained were popularised in important non-specialists journals in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.[6] Efforts to translate scientific texts were hampered by a lack of consistent funding and scientific libraries. Nevertheless, Crozet observes that over the course of the nineteenth century we witness that science is inserted into Egyptian society, and that nationalist and reformist discourses crystallise around scientific concepts. Inspite of the fact that the period does not produce original research, Crozet avers that there is nevertheless "scientific activity," not only in the form of education but also "popularisation" in journals such as *Rawḍat al-madāris* (1870–1878), *al-Muqtaṭaf* (begins publishing in 1876) or the short-lived al-Ṭabīb (1884–1885) published in Egypt, Lebanon and Istanbul.

The question of whether Arabic was an adequate vehicle to express modern scientific concepts, was not a question posed by Arabic lexicographers and

2 For Mehmed Ali's rule and life, see Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
3 On the medical school, see LaVerne Kuhnke, *Lives at Risk: Public Health in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 33–48. Crozet notes that this programme was initiated by as early as 1815 with the founding of a school of geometry at Mehmed Ali's citadel in Cairo; Crozet, "Langue scientifique," 262.
4 Kuhnke, *Lives at Risk*, 41; Crozet, "Langue scientifique," 265.
5 Crozet, "Langue scientifique," 265.
6 For the popularisation of evolutionary theory in science journals in the era, for example, See Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

translators. Egyptian translators and literary figures such as Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī (d. 1873) took it for granted that modern science, literature and philosophy could be translated into classical Arabic and meaningfully conveyed to an Arabic-speaking audience, just as Arabic had been used to translate vast numbers of ancient Greek scientific and medical texts centuries earlier.[7] This was, rather, a question posed by European orientalists and colonial administrators, who linked the question of whether Arabic could serve as a scientific language to the hierarchy of civilisations within English and French colonial regimes. French and English colonial authorities claimed that Arabic was not fit for expressing modern scientific ideas, and used this claim to justify the cultural and even racial superiority of the colonisers over the colonised.[8] For example, an English colonial administrator, who knew no Arabic, categorically declared that the Arabic language, "in its poverty of technical phraseology and its rigidity and complexity of construction, is particularly ill-suited to scientific studies."[9] And French administrators would charge that Arabic could only really express ideas from the "epoch of the caliphs."[10] They alleged that Arabic's trilateral root system, which it shares with other semitic languages such as Hebrew, hampered the creation of technical vocabulary and neologisms. "It is a consequence of the fact that it is impossible to create words and the poverty of the language that results from it that Arabic translators of works — above all, of scientific works — are, for the most

7 Though encumbered by the fact that the fact that it is set within a narrative of "cultural decline," and by the assumption of "Western" and "Eastern" "cultural encounter" in and after Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798, the best introduction remains Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, *The Arab Rediscovery of Europe: A Study in Cultural Encounters* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963). For the translation movement from Greek to Arabic that spanned from the ninth to the eleventh centuries, see Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and early ʿAbbāsid Society (2nd-4th/8th-10th c.)* (London: Routledge 1998).

8 Pascal Crozet, "Langue scientifique et fait national en Égypte à partir du XIXe siècle," in *Les sciences coloniales figures et institutions*, ed. Patrick Petitjean (Paris: ORSTOM éditions, 1996), 274–7.

9 Crozet, "Langue scientifique," 276. Quoted from Douglas Dunlop, "Note with Reference to the Linguistic Basis of Instruction in the Egyptian Government Schools," in Evelyn Baring Earl of Cromer, *Report by Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration and Condition of Egypt and the Sudan in 1906* (London: HMSO, 1907), 108–15.

10 Ibid., 275.

part, extremely obscure."[11] These bureaucrats placed the blame squarely on the Arabic language itself, which they purported "does not supply the necessary terms for expressing exactly the ideas that the original works present."[12]

Scientific language was also tied to Egyptian nationalist aspirations. Egyptian intellectuals measured the ostensive progress and maturity of the Egyptian nation by the success of science in the country. French scientists claimed that transferring a scientific viewpoint, where they alleged it did not exist before,[13] would transform Egypt into a "new country (pays neuf)," allowing it to leave its place at the periphery of the civilised world. Egyptian scientists took studying science for science's sake, as it were, as a sign of the fact that Egypt had progressed from entertaining a shallow, merely utilitarian interest in science to a mature interest in the purely speculative aspects of scientific research.[14]

The question that interests me here, however, is different. Rather than survey the different political interpretations given to the appropriation and popularisation of scientific discourses, I shall examine how the permeation of scientific ideas and terminologies affected or even transformed how political ideas were conceptualised and articulated in the nineteenth-century Egypt. Rather than contextualising these shifts and transformations against the background of the inequalities of power created by the colonial regimes, I place these transformations within the rise of Egypt as a biopolitical state beginning in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

The reforms to Egypt's political and social institutions inaugurated by Mehmed Ali by as early as 1815 transformed Egypt into a biopolitical state, akin in many ways to the European biopolitical states of that era such as France and

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11 Ibid., 275. Quote from Marc Kabis, "Sur l'emploi de l'arabe vulgaire dans l'enseignement," *Bulletin de l'institut Egyptien* 1 (2nd series) (1882): 67–76.
12 Ibid., 274.
13 Pascal Crozet, "À propos de l'enseignement scientifique en Égypte: transfert et modernisation des sciences exactes. 1834–1903," *Égypt/Monde arabe* 18–19 (1994): 1–24, 6. Crozet says that French scientists at the time believed that, like in other "oriental" countries, the transfer of modern sciences would make a new country out a sort of "scientific void (vide scientifique)."
14 Ibid.

Britain. The Egyptian state came increasingly to rely on "security apparatuses"[15] for governing Egypt's native and foreign populations by applying technologies for regulating the circulation of people and goods in Cairo and Alexandria and port cities, for regulating public health by mass vaccination/variolisation, the construction of parks, widening thoroughfares and demolishing "diseased" parts of Cairo, for regulating the spread of disease at the borders, for regulating the the sources and concentration of agricultural land.[16] To many, these processes had changed Egypt virtually beyond recognition. For example, in an "apology" for the "enlightened despotism" of Mehmed Ali Pasha and his heirs, ʿAlī Mubārak refers to many of the transformations that resulted from the increasing use of biopolitical state mechanisms to govern Egypt's population.[17] If we were to compare, says Mubārak, Egypt prior to Mehmed Ali to Egypt as it was as Mubārak was writing in 1880–1881 on the eve of Aḥmad ʿUrābī's revolt against the British-backed Khedive Tawfīq (d. 1892), we would find that these two states of affairs "bear no affinity to each other nor do the epochs evince any [sign of] kinship."[18] Mubārak reviews the many stark contrasts between the new and the old Egypt: the number of Europeans in Egypt and the number of foreign languages spoken, the frequency of educational missions to Europe, the financial solvency of the educational institutions and the great strides made in agricultural reform, industry, education, public health and, of course, reforms to the military. Were it not for Mehmed Ali Pasha and his dynasty, says Mubārak, the "foreign potentates (*al-aġrāb al-musalliṭīn*)," namely the Ottomans, would still be plundering Egypt,[19] and the

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15 Michel Foucault, *Secruity, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–1979*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2007), 11.
16 See Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of the Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, **2002**).
17 Delanou, "Apologie par ʿAlī Mubārak du despotism éclairé," etc., 83–5 with French translation.
18 ʿAlī Mubārak, *ʿAlam al-dīn* (Alexandria: Maṭbaʿa al-ğarīda al-maḥrūsa, 1882), 1.316–9: *lā nisbata bayna l-ḥālayni wa-lā munāsabata bayna l-zamanayni*. Compare with Ami Ayalon's remarks about ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ğabartī (d. 1825): Ami Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East: the Evolution of Modern Political Discourse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 3.
19 See Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali*, 36–59.

incipient Egyptian "nation (*al-milla*[20])" would resemble the Berbers and the Arabs of the Levant and the Hejaz, who continue to practice the same traditions as their ancestors in the manner of the pre-Islamic era.[21] Thanks to Mehmed Ali Pasha and his family, avers Mubārak, these "reforms (*taǧdīdāt*)" were carried out with almost miraculous speed owing to the fact that people recognised that they were made to the universal benefit (*al-fawāʾid al-ʿāmma*) of Egypt's inhabitants.[22]

> These reforms were then compiled (*tuʾallafu hāḏihi l-taǧdīdāt*), and in a short time the conditions [in Egypt] as well as people's natures, their habits, morals and customs all changed as is the situation in Egypt now. For someone who had seen Egypt twenty years ago, and then saw it now would not recognise a single thing in it that he had seen before. He would, rather, observe that it was transformed (*inqalabat*) and had become a part of Europe, inspite of the fact that none of the regions that neighbor it had changed. Can there be any reason for this [remarkable success] save for the fact that the sovereign (*ṣāḥib al-waqt*) practiced [skillful] administration and governance and the fact that he acted on the advice of the majority of his advisors (*wa-mušāwaratuhu li-ǧumhūri riǧālihi*[23])?

Mubārak's account of the responsibility for the success of reforms to Egypt and the improvements in its condition is evidently biased toward the dynasty started by Mehmed Ali and in whose service he employed. Nevertheless, numerous studies of the military, public health, education, and political economy in nineteenth-century

20 On the various meanings of *milla*, see Ayalon, *Language and Change*, 19–21.
21 Mubārak, *ʿAlam al-Dīn*, 1.318.
22 Ibid., 1.319. Gilbert Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans dans l'Égypte du XIX^E siècle (1798–1882)* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1982), 2.633.
23 The "men (*riǧāl*)" referred to in the expression "… *wa-mušāwaratuhu li-ǧumhūri riǧālihi*," is probably a reference to what Schölch calls the "Privy Council (*maǧlis ḫuṣūṣī*)" that was used by the Khedive Ismāʿīl and Mehmed Ali's other descendents (Alexander Schölch, *Egypt for Egyptians! The Socio-Political Crisis in Egypt 1878–1882* (London: Ithaca Press, 1981), 14. The translation of *mušūra* and *mušāwara* as simply consulting or acting on advice without any politico-juridical sense is evident in Ǧabartī and other Ottoman writers, for example. See Bernard Lewis, "Meşveret," in *Political Words and Ideas in Islam*, ed. Bernard Lewis (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2007), 26. Marsot makes it clear that while Mehmed Ali frequently advised his children, nephews and grandchildren in person and in writing to consult with experts, it was more of a topos than actual fact; Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali*, 75–8.

Egypt show that by the time Egypt became a British colony in 1882, Egypt was a biopolitical state on par with Britain and France. For in each of these countries, "the basic biological features of the human species" became "the object of a political strategy," or what Foucault calls "apparatuses of security": mechanisms used by the state to govern the population within a national territory by regulating movement, attending to the health and biological features of the whole population rather than individuals, and maintaining urban, rurual and environmental conditions so that physical processes related to distribution of wealth, abudance and scarcity of food, the spread of epidemic disease were permitted to run their "natural" course.[24]

It is well-known that the transformation of Egypt into a biopolitical state in the course of the nineteenth century was made possible in large part by the fact that the Egyptian state enthusiastically sponsored the introduction of scientific education and the use of modern scientific methods to govern the Egypt's populace.[25] Yet, the question of how scientific discourses influenced how nineteenth-century Egyptian thinkers thougth about politics deserve greater scrutiny. I do not claim premodern Islamic political philosophers assign no role at all to science in their political thought. Indeed, in Part Two, I examine passages from three well-known texts in Arabic political philosophy: *Themistius' Letter to Julian*, which was translated into Arabic in the late ninth or early tenth century,[26] Alfarabi's *Selected Aphorisms* (*al-Fuṣūl al-muntazaʿa*),[27] and finally Avempace's

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24 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 21–3.

25 See Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*; Fahmy, "Law, Medicine and Society in Nineteenth-Century Egypt," *Droits d'Égypte* 34 (1998): 1-28; Fahmy, "The Anatomy of Justice: Forensic Medicine and Criminal Law in Nineteenth-Century Egypt," *Islamic Law and Society* 6/2 (1999): 224–71; Fahmy, "Women, Medicine and Power in Nineteenth Century Egypt," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998): 35–72; LaVerne Kuhnke, *Lives at Risk: Public Health in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Amira Sonbol, *The Creation of a Medical Profession in Egypt During the Nineteenth-Century: A Study in Modernization* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991).

26 Arabic text is in Simon Swain, *Themistius, Julian and Greek Political Theory under Rome: Texts, Translations, and Studies of Four Key Works* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 134–58.

27 Arabic text is Alfarabi, *Fuṣūl al-madanī: Aphorisms of the Statesman*, ed. Donald M. Dunlop (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961).

Rule of the Solitary (*Tadbīr al-mutawaḥḥid*).[28] In all these texts, we see that medical science and the human biological makeup played an important role in delineating the proper realm and ends that belong to the politically qualified life. These passages show that medicine served as a model for the political art, but was wholly distinct from politics, politically qualified life was perceived first and foremost as the life of the soul, and that political activity was directed at the soul and the intellect rather than the body itself.

Examining Ḥusayn al-Marṣafī's *Essay on Eight Words* (*Risāla fī al-kalim al-ṯamān*), a well-known political texts written at the end of the nineteenth century, reveals that this Azharite reformer's views about government had little to do with the premodern tradition of Islamic political philosophy.[29] In Part Three, I examine the well-known text, Ḥusayn al-Marṣafi's *Essay on Eight Words* (*Risāla fī al-kalim al-ṯamān*). I show, first, that al-Marṣafī's concept of political liberty (*ḥurrīya*) is founded on an economy of obligations arising from personal property and exchange. In this way, al-Marṣafī's views are far from the traditional notions of liberty as articulated in medieval Islam. Second, Al-Marṣafī devotes a great deal of attention to the meaning of the word *al-ḥukūma* the meaning of which in al-Marṣafī's text is ambiguous. Despite his attempts to garnish his words with citations from Qurʾān and ḥadīth, there is no hiding the fact that al-Marṣafī propounds a skeletal version of social contract theory informed, it seems, by Hobbes' view of man in the thrall of his appetites. I argue that while this view of humans is commonplace in other genres of politic0-ethical literature in Islam, al-Marṣafī uses this pessimistic anthropology in new ways. Nor does the life of the soul feature prominently as the end of politics in al-Marṣafī's view. Other ends that are alien to the premodern Arabic tradition of political philosophical feature

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28 Arabic text is in Maʿan Ziyadah, "Ibn Bājja's Book Tadbīr al-Mutawaḥḥid" (Montreal: Ph.D. diss, McGill University, 1968).

29 Gilbert Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans dans l'Égypte du XIXe siècle (1798–1882)* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1982), 2.357–79. On the hybrid nature of al-Marṣafī's thought, see Ellen McLarney, Freedom, Justice, and the Power of *Adab*," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 48 (2016): 25–46, especially 40–1.

prominently. I show that al-Marṣafī's views on the nature of government (*ḥukūma*) is shaped, not only by European political philosophers, but also by a biopolitical conception of liberty as a phenomenon that is a given of the physical order, and is therefore subject to scientific analysis.[30]

Sherry Gadelarab has demonstrated how medical texts, too, can be used to show how nineteenth-century Arabic medical textbooks influenced nineteenth-century Egyptian political discourse.[31] Gadelarab has uncovered how medical ideas about female agency, sexual difference and sexual maturity put forward in physiology treatises by Antoine Clot and other author-translators made possible a nationalist discourses on gender, motherhood and domesticity in the Arabic press later in the century. In Part Four, I want to continue Gadelarab's form of argument. I show that the biopolitical formulations about the relationship between human life and politics are present in French medical textbooks translated into Arabic. I turn to a textbook on prophylactic medicine published at the Būlāq Press in 1834, or nearly 50 years before al-Marṣafī's *Essay on Eight Words*. The text is a translation of a French text written in Egypt by one Bernard, who, according to the introduction appended to the text by an Arab editor, was one of the French professors of medicine who accompanied Antoine Clot, or Clot Bey (d. 1868) from France to staff Egypt's first modern medical school and teaching hospital at Abū Zaʿbal, a military outpost some 15 miles North of Cairo. Passages from this text place medicine at the heart of governing the nation. The sovereign,

30 Gadelarab's *Medicine and Modernity in Egypt* is one of the few books to date to link in compelling fashion the new Arabic medical discourse on sex difference in nineteenth-century Arabic medical texts with the rise of a liberal nationalist discourse, especially with new ways of conceptualising womanhood and women's agency. Hibba Abugideiri takes up a somewhat similar task in *Gender and the Making of Modern Medicine in Colonial Egypt* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010). Yet, unlike Gadelarab, she is less interested in the language and concepts in the medical texts of the era.

31 Sherry Gadelarab, *Medicine and Morality in Egypt: Gender and Sexuality in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), especially chapters Two (45–73) and Three (74–107). Gadelarab's tragic death in 2013 took a very promising scholar from the world. For the nationalist political discourse on gender and domesticity, Omnia Shakry, "Schooled Mothers and Structured Play: Child Rearing in Turn-of-the-Century Egypt," in *Remaking Womanhood: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 126–70; Lisa Pollard, *Nurturing the Nation: The Family Politics of Modernizing, Colonizing, and Liberating Egypt, 1805–1923* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

who in previous eras guided his subjects to a virtuous soul and felicity by obeying the injunctions of philosophy, now obeys the physician's medical advice. I conclude that in these texts we are witnessing the emergence of a biopolitical discourse in which bare life is drawn into the realm of the politically qualified life. By making the regulation of human life the business and end of politics, these medical texts open up a conceptual space, as it were, for a secularised vision of the aims of political life, one that has been divested of its premodern vision that politics must bring virtue and felicity of the soul to citizens of the city.

2 Function of Life and Medicine in Premodern Islamic Political Philosophy

Medicine played an important part in classical Islamic political philosophy. Medical terms and concepts not only featured prominently as metaphors that guided analogies between the art of medicine and the art of statecraft. More importantly, the concept of man's life and the attributes of his biological makeup as distinct from from the forms of life he occupied in the city were derived from Hippocratic-Galenic medical texts. For Hobbes, the human in a state of nature is a violent being that is constantly falling prey to his appetites, seeking glory and domination over others, yet somehow manages to be rational enough to see the utility of entering into a social contract with the sovereign who will protect his life and property. This is not at all the view of human nature that informs classical Islamic political philosophy, nor does it characterise the forces that drive humans to form political communities.

This fact is evident, for example, in the Arabic translation of Themistius' (c. 317–c. 385 AD) letter to the Emperor Julian (d. 363 AD). The treatise opens by identifying the three different faculties that animate the human being. There is a nutritive faculty (*al-qūwa al-ġāḏiya*, also called the vegetative faculty (*al-qūwa al-nabātīya*) or the appetitive faculty (*al-qūwa al-šahwānīya*)) which is responsible for providing nutrition for the body's growth, providing food that engages the

body's natural heat and is also responsible for evacuating waste from the body. The vital faculty (*al-qūwa al-ḥayawānīya*) is responsible for voluntary movement (*al-ḥaraka al-irādīya*), sensation (*al-ḥiss*), respiration (*al-tanaffus*) but also for emotions such as anger (*al-ġaḍab*). Predictably, Themistius says that it is the third faculty, the "rational faculty that discerns (*al-qūwa al-nāṭiqa al-mumayyiza*)," that is the most noble, distinguishing humans for plants and animals.

While the rational faculty is ultimately the part of the human soul that benefits when humans form political association, the need to form into political association itself arises not, as in Hobbes, from man's predatory nature that is completely uninhibited in the state of nature, than from his elemental composition and the nutritional demands on nutritive faculty to secure the most basic processes of human life:

> ومن أجل أن الإن سان مصنوع في سطقسآت الإسط عة الأربة وجب اضطرارا أن يلحقه إنما الأشياء وهذه .والسيلان التغير أعني الإسطقسآت تلحق التي الأعراض والبرودة الحرارة أعني كيفياته في ينالها التغير فإن وحده الجسم تلحق يتحلل بما افيه ينالها والسيلان الكيفيات وسائر واليبوسة والرطوبة الطبيعية وبالحرارة بالحركة دائما ينحل الحيوان جسم أن وذلك .منه وفسد انحل وإلا منه ينحل ما مكان عليه يخلف أن إلى لذلك فيحتاج وبالهواء ما إلى احتاج فلذلك .وروح رطبة وأشياء صلبة أشياء منه يتحلل والذي وروح رطبة وأشياء بستيا أشياء من يكون أن منه يتحلل ما مكان عليه يخلف والتنفس والشراب الطعام وهي.
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> [...]
>
> الإنسان فإذن مضطر إلى الغذاء لما تفرغ منه جسمه ومضطر إلى اللباس والبرد الحر من ليصونه المنزل إلى ويحتاج يقيه جنة من معرى بدنه لأن ولما فيه التي الكيفيات لتغير العلاج إلى ويحتاج الآفات من ويحوطه الاتصال تفرق نم ينالها.
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> الإنسان ولأن الأشياء هذه يعمل بها التي والعلوم الصنائع إلى احتاج فلذلك بعض إلى الناس بعض احتاج كلها الصنائع يعمل أن يمكنه ليس الواحد.

بـ عـضهم وعاون واحد موضع فـ ي مـنهم كـ ثـ ير اجـ تمع بـ عض إلـ ى بـ عـضهم ولـ حاجة بـ عض من بـ عـضهم فـ يـ نال دنالـ م فـ اتـ خذوا والـ عطاء والأخـذ الـ معاملات فـ ي بـ عـضا الاجـ تماع إلـ ى يـ مـ يل بـ الـ طـ بع الإنـ سان خـ لق وجل عز الله ولأن قـ رب من الـ مـ ناف ع كـ لها الأ شـ ياء فـ ي الـ ناس من بـ نـ فسه الـ واحد يـ كـ تـ في لـ يس إذ والأنـ س.

Owing to the fact that the human is formed from the four elements, it is necessary that the attributes that characterise the elements characterise him as well, namely change and flux. These things [change and flux] characterise the body alone, for change affects him in its [the body's] qualities, namely heat, cold, moisture and dryness and all the qualities. Flux affects it owing to what dissolves from the body because of the flux. This is because the animal's body is always dissolving owing to the fact that body moves moves, to the natural heat, and to the air [it expels]. For this reason, the body needs something to replace what has dissolved from it, for if not, the body will dissolve and become corrupt. Solid things, moist things and pneuma dissolve from the body so the body needs something to replace what is dissolved, and it needs things that are dry, are moist and pneuma, which are none other than food, drink and breath … .

So the human is obliged to have food because of what is evacuated from his body, and obliged to have clothing because his body lacks a covering that protects him, and he needs a house to shelter him from the heat and the cold and to guard him from harmful things, and he needs therapy because the qualities that are in him change and dissolution of continuity affects him.

For these reasons the human needs the crafts and the sciences by means of which he carries out these tasks. Further, seeing that it is not possible for a single person to practice all the crafts, one person stands in need of another. Owing to the fact that some people need others, many of them form an association in one locality and assist each other in

> transacting business, receiving payment and paying out. They formed cities, therefore, so that some of them enjoy the benefit of others with ease. [They also formed an association] because God created the human with a nature that inclines to association and intimacy, for which reason a single person from humanity on his own is not self-sufficient in all things.

In this passage, the Aristotelian principle that humans incline toward intimacy from their nature appears as something of an afterthought in Themistius' mind. Far more important to Themistius is, one, the biological basic fact that man's nutritive faculty must attract nutriment to support the body's life and to expel waste. The basic, inescapable need to replenish what the body dissolves as it moves, sweats, breathes and evacuates waste, feeds the natural heat and repairs the wear and tear that affects it, is what forces humans to form political associations. The second factor that compels humans into a social formation is that humans are unable to master all the arts that are ancillary to providing for human well-being. Humans are weak, suffering easily from extremes in climate, and their bodies are prone to a terrifying number of mortal and disabling diseases or injuries. Thus, the arts for making clothes, weapons, armour and the art of medicine itself are necessary for maintaining human life. Since no single person can possibly master all these arts equally, humans form communities for the sake of providing mutual benefit to all members.

Themistius adopts his anthropology of the human who lives outside the city from Galenic medical theory. Yet, later in the letter, Themistius is clear that the proper remit of emperor Julian's role as statesman lies in cultivating the life of the soul, his own soul and the soul of his subjects. In the political writing of Alfarabi (d. ca. 950) the analogy between medicine and statecraft exerts a powerful influence on how Alfarabi thinks about the remit and practice of government and statecraft. In *Aphorisms of the Statesman*, health and disease of body and soul are defined in analogous ways with an eye towards the end that each is directed at. Yet,

the soul and its perfection is the utlimate end that bodily health is aimed at. The body's value as far as its health is concerned lies in whether it has a utility in allowing the soul to practice the virtues, which are for Alfarabi at bottom dispositions of the soul (*hayʾāt nafsānīya*). The consequence of this is that in the city medicine plays a crucial preparatory role by ensuring that bodies are healthy enough so that they have the physical capacity to perform actions. The aim of medicine is to ensure that conditions in the body are such that the acts of the soul that existing in the body and its parts are as perfect as they can be. The physician is not there, however, to that determine whether the actions performed by the body and soul are good or bad. According to Alfarabi, the statesman is charged with the task of ensuring that those same dispositions are good or to take measures so that the bad ones are eliminated.

> ويـ سمى الـمدنـي الإنـ سان هو لـ لـنـ فوس والـمعالـج الـطـ بـيب هو لـ لأبـ دان الـمعالـج هـيـ ئاتـها يـ جعل أن انلـ لأبـ دبـ علاجه قـ صده لـ يس الـطـ بـيب أن غـ ير الـمـلك ضاً أي هـيـ ئاتـها يـ جعل أن إنمايـ قـصد بـ ل سـ يـ ئات أو خـ يرات الـ نـ فس بـ ها تـ فعل هـيـ ئات كـانـت تـ كون، ما أكمل وأجزائـه بـ الـ بدن الـ كائـ نة الـ نـ فس أفـ عال بـ ها تـ كون هـيـ ئات يـ عالـج إنما الأيـ دي يـ عالـج الـذي الـطـ بـيب فـ إن .حـ سنات أو سـ يـ ئا الأفـ عال تـ لك أو الـ حـ سنات فـ ي الـ جـ يد الـ بطش ذلـك ا سـ تعمل سواء بـ ها الإنـ سان بـ طش لـ يجود ا سـ تعمل سواء الإبـ صار بـ ها يـ جود أن قـ صده إنما الـ عـ ين يـ عالـج والـ دي .الـ سـ يـ ئات لـ يس فـ لذلـك .ويـ قـ بح يـ نـ بغي لا فـ يما أو ويـ حـ سن يـ نـ بغي فـ يما ذلـك هذا عـلى مرضها فـ ي ولا الـ نـ فس حة ص فـ ي يـ نظر أن طـ بـيب هو بـ ما لـ لطـ بـيب بـ صـناعة والـمـلك الـمدنـ ية عقبـ الـ صـنا الـمدنـي ن فـ إ .والـمـلك ي لـ لمدن بـ ل الـوجه لا أن يـ نـ بغي منها صـنف وأي الأبـ دان يـ فـ يدها أن يـ نـ بغي أيـن يـ قر الـمـلك الـ صـناعات سائـ ر من حالـها والـمدنـ ية الـمـلك صـناعة صارت فـ لذلـك .يـ فـ يدها الـ صـناعات سائـ ر ن لأ الـ بـنائـ ين، من الـ بـنائـ ين رئـ يس حال الـمدن فـ ي الـ تي الـمدنـ ية بـ الـ صـناعة الـ غرض بـ ها لـ يـ تم وتـ سـ تعمل تـ فعل إنما الـمدن فـ ي الـ تي ويـ سـ تعمل الـ بـنائـ ين صـناعات من الـ رئـ يسة الـ صـناعة أن كما الـمـلك و صـناعة .مـقـصودها لـ يـ تم سائـ رها

> The person who provides therapy to bodies is the physician, and the person who provides therapy to souls is the statesman (he is also called the king). When he treats bodies, however, the physician's intention is not to make their [the patients'] states those by which the soul does good or evil actions. His aim, rather, is to make their states those by which the actions of the soul performed by the body and its parts are the most perfect, regardless of whether these actions are evil or good. For the doctor who treats the hands provides therapy so that the person strikes with them well, regardless of whether he he strikes well while performing good actions or evil actions. [Likewise,] the person who treats the eye aims to improve [the patient's] vision, regardless of whether he uses it [his vision] in things that are appropriate and good or in things that are inappropriate and evil.
>
> Therefore it is not the physician's responsibility insofar as he is physician to consider the health or sickness of the soul in this way. It is, rather, the statesman's and king's [responsibility]. For the statesman by the political art and the king by the royal art determine where it is appropriate for him to bring it [namely, health, sc. *ṣiḥḥa*] about in bodies, and in which of them [bodies, sc. *ağsām*] it is not appropriate to bring it about. For this reason, the art of the king and the statesman in relation to the other arts in the city is like the master-builder in relation to the other builders. For the rest of the arts in cities are employed so that statecraft and the art of kingship operate and are employed in order to bring their goal to completion.

In Alfarabi's thinking, then, medicine is clearly a proper element in statecraft (*al-ṣināʿat al-madanīya*), and that the physician's art provides the conditions of possibility for the success or failure of statecraft, for the souls rely on a healthy body to perform the kinds of acts that will inculcate virtuous dispositions in the

soul.

That is not to say that Alfarabi sees that the basic facts of human biological life belong to the realm of the politically qualified life. In Alfarabi's view (and in this he is in agreement with the the classical tradition) health (*ṣiḥḥa*) is clearly not a set of actualised, biological facts. Health is not, in effect, bare life. There is physical health or well-being, for Alfarabi, when the conditions of the whole body as well as the individual parts are characterised by states that "enable the soul to perform the activities that belong to it in the most complete and perfect manner." Thus, there is not a single fact, a set of facts or criteria for what health is. It is an end-directed process toward a practically unachievable "end (*ġāya*)" or "perfection (*kamāl*)." What is more, to a great degree, what physical health is depends to a large degree on what the good and evil dispositions of the soul are. An account of what physical health and well-being are requires first an account of what the states and activities in the soul arel. Yet it is these very dispositions that are the product of statecraft. For the question of what health and well-being are is not really any more objective than or different from the question of what they ought to be. Unlike the bare facts of the human biological makeup, health is a form of life, it is bare life inscribed inscribed in the political norms of the city that are directed toward realising the good life, that is part of the politically qualified life of the city.

Indeed, Alfarabi (d. 950) clearly perceived a distinction between, in effect, politically qualified life (*biōs*) and bare life (*zoē*), a distinction that runs through Aristotle's political thought.[32] Aside from the fact that Alfarabi could have consulted Aristotle's *Politics* because the book was never translated,[33] Alfarabi laboured under the fact that the Arabic word "life (*ḥayāt*)" can apply to bare life as much as it applies to life in the city. Yet, in the following passage, Alfarabi transforms this Aristotelian distinction between the notion of bare life, life as a

32 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 1–12.
33 Swain, *Themistius and Julian*, 14; Francis E. Peters, *Aristoteles Arabus: The Oriental Translations and Commentaries of the Aristotelian Corpus* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 53–5, 54.

biological actuality, and the political life, which is a life in potential that is actualised in the ultimate end of politics, namely virtue and the felicity of the intellectual life. Despite the fact that Alfarabi could not have read Aristotle's *Politics* or much of Plato, Alfarabi is, nevertheless, able to remark that there are two senses of life according to "Socrates, Plato and Aristotle." The first is the kind of life that is "sustained by food (*aġḏiya*) and all the external factors that we presently need for our subsistence." The second is a life that "sustains itself," "whose subsistence does not require any factors," and a life that "on its own is sufficient to remain preserved." Yet, just as Alfarabi makes the distinction between, in effect, bare life and political forms that it animates in the city, he withdraws it by claiming that both kinds of life exist in potency, in the sense that each only becomes actual by reaching a perfection (*kamāl*) that is proper to each. What Alfarabi calls the "city of necessity" is the city in which its citizens pursue the forms of life related to maintaining a life of bare necessities, a kind of minimal city in which the human collectivity aims solely at maintaining mere subsistence, and that counts as the good life of the city. The perfection that belongs to political life in the city of necessity is actualising all the virtues (*al-faḍāʾil*). The perfection of life in the virtuous city, on the other hand, is "ultimate felicity (*al-saʿāda al-quṣwā*)."[34]

فهي الضرورية، المدينة فأما. فاضلة تكون وقد ضرورية تكون قد المدينة
الإنسان قوام به يكون فيما الضروري بلوغ على أجزاءها تتعاون التي
أهلها يتعاون التي فهي الفاضلة، المدينة وأما. فقط حياته وحفظ وعيشه
وقوامه الحقيقي الإنسان وجود يكون بها التي الأشياء أفضل بلوغ على
.حياته وحفظ وعيشه

وقوم اليسار، أنه رأوا وآخرون باللذات، التمتع هو الأفضل ذلك أن رأوا فقوم
أن يرون فإنهم وأرسطوطاليس وأفلاطون سقراط فأما. بينهما الجمع أنه رأوا
نحن التي الخارجة الأشياء وسائر بالأغذية قوامها إحداها حياتان له الإنسان

34 Alfarabi, *Aphorisms of the Statesman*,, 104.

قوامها الـ تي هي والأخرى .الأولـ ى حـ ياتـ نا وهي قوامنا، فـ ي الـ يوم إلـ يهامـ فـ تـ قرون هي بـ ل عـ نها، خارجة أ شـ ياء إلـ ى ذاتـ ها امقو و فـ ي حاجة بـ ها يـ كون أن غـ ير من بـ ذاتـ ها لـ ه الإنـ سان وأن الآخرة، الـ حـ ياة وهي محـ فوظة تـ بـ قى أن فـ ي بـ نـ فسها مكـ تـ فـ ية الـ حـ ياة فـ ي ولـ كن الـ حـ ياة هذه فـ ي لا لـ نا يـ حـ صل إنما فـ الأخـ ير .وأخـ ير أول كمالان ، يـ فعل أن هو الأول والـ كمال .هذه حـ ياتـ نا فـ ي الأول الـ كمال فـ بـ لهاتـ قدم مـ تى الآخرة أن غـ ير من فـ قط فـ ضـ يلة ذا الإنـ سان يـ كون أن لـ يس كـ لها، الـ فضائـ ل أفـ عال الـ مـ لـ كات يـ قـ تـ ني أن فـ ي لا الإنـ سان يـ فعل أن هو الـ كمال وأن أفـ عالـ ها يـ فعل أن لا الـ كـ تابـ ة، أفـ عال يـ فعل أن الـ كاتـ ب كمال أن كما الأفـ عال، تـ كون بـ ها الـ تي لـ طبا يـ قـ تـ ني أن لا الـ طب، أفـ عال يـ فعل أن الـ طـ بـ يب وكمال الـ كـ تابـ ة، يـ قـ تـ ني هو وذلـ ك الأخـ ير، الـ كمال لـ نا يـ حـ صل الـ كمال وبـ هذا . صـ ناعة كل وكـ ذلـ ك فـ قط، [...] لـ ذاتـ ه الـ مـ شـ تهى الـ مؤثـ ر فـ هو الإطـ لاق، عـ لى الـ خـ ير وهو الـ قـ صوى، الـ سعادة سائـ ر دون فـ ضائـ ل ذوي خاصةً أهلها يـ تعاون الـ تي هي عـ ندهم الـ فاضـ لة فـ الـ مديـ نة والـ تمـ تع الـ يسار بـ لوغ عـ لى يـ تعاونوا أن أهلها قـ صد الـ تي الـ مديـ نة لأن الـ مدن، أن عـ سى بـ ل الـ فضائـ ل، جمـ يع إلـ ى غايـ تهم بـ لوغ فـ ي بـ حـ تاجون لـ يس بـ الـ لذات ربـ ما الـ ذي والـ عدل الائـ تلاف أن وذلـ ك واحدة، فـ ضـ يلة إلـ ى ولا يـ حـ تاجون لا الـ عدل يـ شـ به شـ يء هو وإنما عدلاً، بـ الـ حـ قـ يقة لـ يس بـ يـ نهم فـ يما اسـ تعملوه .الـ فضائـ ل يـ جانـ س مما نهمبـ ي فـ يما يـ سـ تعملونه ما سائـ ر وكـ ذلـ ك بـ عدل، ولـ يس

The city may be one of necessity or it may be one of virtue. The city of necessity is the one in which its members cooperate only in order to reach the things that are necessary for human subsistence, livelihood and preserving life. The virtuous city is the one in which its members cooperate in order to reach the most excellent things by means of which the human's true existence, subsistence, livelihood and preservation of life comes about.

Some say that this most excellent thing is enjoying pleasures. Others say that it is being well-off. Others say that it is combining both of them. Socrates, Plato and Aristotle are of the view that the human has two lives, one of which is sustaining it with food and all the other external

things that we presently need for our subsistence. This is our first life. The other is sustaining life in itself without there being any need for external things to sustain it in itself; it [this form of life] is sufficient in itself to remain safe. It is the afterlife.

[Socrates, Plato and Aristotle also] hold that humans have two perfections, the first perfection and the final perfection. We do not achieve the final perfection in this life, but in the afterlife when the first perfection is achieved in this life of ours beforehand. The first perfection is that one does all the virtuous acts. This does not mean that the human being merely possesses a virtue but does not do virtuous acts. [These philosophers hold too] that perfection is that the human acts not merely to acquire the dispositions that bring about [virtuous] acts, just as the the perfection of the writer is that he performs the acts of writing, and does not merely acquire the capacity to write. Likewise, the perfection of the physician is that he performs the acts of the medical art, and does not merely acquire the capacity for practicing the medical art. Likewise in the case of every art. By means of this [first] perfection we achieve the final perfection, which is ultimate felicity, the unqualified good, and the thing that is esteemed and desired in itself [.…]

According to them [Socrates, Plato and Aristotle], then, the virtuous city is the one in which its members cooperate to reach the final perfection, ultimate felicity. For this reason, its members alone possess the virtues, not in any other cities, since the city whose members cooperate to be well-off and enjoy pleasures do not need all the virtues in order to reach their objective. Indeed, it is possible that they do not need a single virtue, for it is possible that the collegiality and justice that they practice among themselves is not really justice, but rather resembles justice without being justice in fact. The same is the case for all the other

acts that resemble virtues that they practice among themselves.

Alfarabi only seems to be able to envision a scenario in which bare life plays anything more than the teleological role of an end to be sought by the members of the city of necessity. In Alfarabi's thinking, then, bare life is an transcendent element in the life of the city rather than an immanent one. In this passage, Alfarabi clearly articulates the different meanings that "life" has in the Socratic-inspired philosophical tradition. He is able to conceptually pry apart, in effect, bare life from from the different forms that it animates in the political life of the city. He is clear on this point in spite of the fact that he uses numerous words to speak about life, such as *ʿayš*, *ḥayāt*, and *qiwām*, all of which, in this passage, are ambiguous between a life as actualised biological fact and as politically qualified life, existing between actuality and potentiality, and directed toward happiness and ultimate felicity in the afterlife. Yet, to my mind, Alfarabi is inconsistent in saying that bare life, that life which he labels as what is "sustained by eating" and external factors that are necessary to support biological life is the life that is pursued in the political realm in the city of necessity, the ultimate perfection of which is purportedly the practice of "all the virtues (*al-faḍāʾil*)." For on the one hand, Alfarabi is clear on the fact that there are dispositions (*malakāt*) that serve as the bases for virtuous character and acts. Yet, these are dispositions of the *soul*, whereas in the city of necessity the goods and perfections sought belong to providing for the well-being and upkeep of individual bodies and the bodies o of the other members of the city. Bare life is a life of pure, actualised biological fact, whereas the life Alfarabi describes as the life that is perpetually sought and coming to be in the city of necessity is a life of the the soul that is directed at inculcating virtue.

In Alfarabi's thought we have seen that medicine plays a crucial role in governing the city. To a large degree, moreover, the physician's craft provides the conditions of possibility for the statesman's success because a healthy body and constitution are required in order for the the soul to be able to perform virtuous acts

in the first place. We have also seen that in Alfarabi's thought, whenever the spectre of bare life appears in his thought, he immediately introduces it into his end-directed vision of political life in the city, either as health in the first instance discussed earlier or as the transcendent end of a minimalist political association committed to preserving basic human well-being and virtue without any commitment to achieving the happiness or ultimate felicity that can be obtained in the virtuous city or the afterlife.

What about the individual who lives outside any political association, however? In Alfarabi's view, it would appear that in the absence of the statesman, the typical person will have neither a criteria for distinguishing nor even a capacity to recognise virtuous acts of the soul from those that are not. For even in the minimalist city, in which only the bare necessities are sought by its members, there is a perfection that the political ways of living are directed at, namely performing virtuous actions. Without a city, without "ways of living," as in Avempace's (d. 1139) nomenclature, there is no means to these perfections, and without the statesman, there is no way of identifying which disposition of the soul are virtuous and which are not, no way to imitate the virtuous behavior of the philosophers and no laws to encode the norms of the virtuous way of life. In such a scenario, the forms of life — the ways of living proper to the individual or group that are directed toward living the good life — collapses into bare life. In this situation, according to Alfarabi's theory, the perfections that can be achieved in the minimal city cannot be achieved, much less the perfections and ultimate felicities of the virtuous city.

This was a controversial thesis, which, despite the enormous influence that Alfarabi exerted on him, was largely rejected by Avempace (d. 1139).[35] Indeed, he characterises his book, *Government of the Solitary* (*Tadbīr al-mutawaḥḥid*), as a

35 On the relationship between Alfarabi and Avempace, see Miquel Forcada, "Ibn Bājja on Taṣawwur and Taṣdīq: Science and Psychology," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 24 (2014): 103–26.

guidebook for pursuing intellectual felicity that can be used by the person who lives outside a political association, whom Avempace somewhat curiously calls, "weeds (*nawābit*, sg. *nābit*)." [36] These are people who, in Avempace's understanding of this class of people, in spite of the fact that they live alone or in cities that are not virtuous, recognise true and false opinions for what they are. Then, on their own initiative and stemming from their own insight, they shape their personal way of living so it stands in accordance with this personal knowledge.[37]

> أمر لـ حـ قه قـ د أنـ ه وبـ ين الـ مـ توحد، الإنـ سان هذا تـ دبـ ير نـ قـ صد الـ قول هذا فـ ي ونـ حن
> يـ قول كما وجوداتـ ه، أفـ ضل يـ نال حـ تـى يـ تدبـ ر كـ يف فـ نـ قول الـ طـ بع، عن خارج
> صحيحًا يـ كون حـ تـى يـ توجه كـ يف الـ مدن هذه فـ ي الـ مـ نـ فرد الإنـ سان فـ ي الـ طـ بـ يب
> هو الـ قول هذا كذلـ ك .... زالـ ت إذا يـ سـ ترجعها بـ أن وإما ... صحـ ته يـ حـ فظ بـ أن إما
> عن يـ زيـ ل كـ يف أو موجودة، تـ كن لـ م إذا الـ سعادة يـ نال كـ يف وهو الـ مـ فرد لـ لـ نابـ ت
> بـ حـ سب إما مـ نها، يـ مـ كـ نه ما نـ يل عن أو الـ سعادة، عن تـ مـ نعه الـ تي الأعراض نـ فـ سه
> بـ حـ فظ شـ بـ يه وذلـ ك حـ فظها، وأما .نـ فـ سه فـ ي ا سـ تـ قر ما بـ حـ سب أو رويـ ته غايـ ة
> يـ صـ نعه الـ ذي فـ هذا ... مـ نها تـ ركـ ب وما الـ ثلاث يـ رالـ س فـ ي يـ مـ كن فـ لا الـ صحة،
> هذيـ ن أن فـ بـ ين .الـ مـ عا شرات طب والـ حـ كومة الأجـ سام، طب وذلـ ك الـ نـ فوس، طب
> .الـ عـ لوم من يـ عدا لـ م فـ لذلـ ك الـ كامـ لة، الـ مديـ نة فـ ي جمـ لة يـ سـ قطان الـ صـ نـ فـ ين
>
> The government of this solitary human being is our objective in this discourse. It is evident that he an unnatural condition has befallen him. We shall discuss how he should govern himself in order to attain the most virtuous forms of being, just as the physician in these cities tells the solitary person how he should conduct himself in order to be healthy, either by safeguarding his health or by restoring it when it is no longer present. In like manner, for the solitary weed this discourse says how to attain felicity when it does not exist, how to do away with the traits in the soul that prevents felicity or from obtaining what he can of it to

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36 For the origins of this term in Alfarabi's political writing as well as in other authors, see Ilai Alon, "Fārābī's funny flora: al-Nawābit as 'Opposition,'" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 121/2 (1989): 222–51.

37 Avempace, "Ibn Bājja's Book *Tadbīr al-Mutawaḥḥid: An Edition, Translation and Commentary*," (MA diss., McGill University, 1969), 13 (2nd series), l. 7–4, l.6.

> commensurate with either the degree of his contemplation, or with what resides in his soul. Safeguarding the soul, which is analogous to safeguarding health, is not possible in the the the three ways of living and what is a combination of them. What this one [namely, the weed] does is the medicine of souls; what that one [namely, the physician] does is medicine of the bodies, and government is the medicine of life lived in association (*ṭibb al-muʿāšarāt*). It is evident, then, that these classes [of people, namely, the weeds and the physician] do not exist at all in the perfect city, for which reason they [namely, medicine of the souls and medicine of bodies] are not classed as sciences.

The analogy between personal government or "medicine" of the soul practiced by the weed and the "medicine of bodies" practiced by the physician plainly emerges in Avempace's imperfect state. Like the philosopher in Alfarabi's perfect or virtuous city, the weed is able to distinguish virtues and vices in his soul (and by extension in his physical actions) and to act accordingly. Unlike the philosopher in the virtuous city, the norms that the weed's government applies to are his soul only not to every member of the city. Unlike Alfarabi's physician whom Alfarabi assigns a place in the virtuous city, Avempace's physician is only required to govern the body in imperfect cities. Whereas here and in other instances in *Tadbīr al-mutawaḥḥid*, Avempace holds, against Alfarabi, that medicine does not exist in the virtuous city.

Thus, Avempace still believes that the person who lives outside the city, the person who possesses, in effect, no more than bare life, he still believes that there is a form of government that dictates the manner in which the individual lives. The state of nature, a free-for-all state, in which man's living and ways he lives are one, is unthinkable for Avempace. Even in the exceptional scenario envisioned by Avempace, in which a person lives outside any form of political association, Avempace insists that there is lifestyle (the weed's lifestyle) that he imposes on

himself that leads him to a kind of virtue and even a type of felicity. Bare life cannot exist in this way of thinking without being immediately inscribed in a form of life; in Avempace's case, in a way of life directed by the intellect to virtue in obedience to the individual weed's personal insights.[38]

> وأما من يفعل الفعل لأجل الرأي والصواب، ولا يلتفت إلى النفس البهيمية
> ولا ما يحدث فيها، فذلك الإنسان أخلق أن يكون فعله ذلك إلهيًا من أن يكون
> إنسانًا، ولذلك يجب أن يكون هذا الإنسان فاضلاً بالفضائل الشكلية، حتى
> متى قضت النفس الناطقة بشيء لم تخالف النفس البهيمية، بل تكون
> قضت بذلك من جهة أن الرأي قضى به، وتكون النفس البهيمية بهذه
> الحال هي التي لها الفضائل الشكلية، فإن الفضائل الشكلية إنما هي تمام
> النفس البهيمية، فلذلك كان الإنسان الإلهي ضرورة فاضلاً بالفضائل
> الشكلية، فإنه إن لم يكن فاضلاً بهذه الفضائل وخالفت النفس البهيمية فيه
> العقل، كان ذلك الفعل إما ناقصًا أو مخرومًا أو لم يكن أصلاً، وكان عنده فعله ذلك
> الفعل مكرهًا وكان عسيرًا عليه، لأن النفس البهيمية سامعة مطيعة للنفس
> الناطقة، إلا في الإنسان الذي على غير مجرى الطبيعي.
>
> The person who performs an action for the sake of [right] opinion and what is correct, and does not give heed to the animal soul nor to what comes about in it [of appetites and desires], it is fitting that this person's act be divine than human. For this reason it is necessary that this person has virtue with regard to the moral virtues such that whenever the rational soul makes a judgment, the animal soul does not oppose it. It makes a judgment from the perspective that [sound] opinion made this judgment. When the animal soul is like this, it means that he has attained moral virtue. For the moral virtues are the final cause of the animal soul, and therefore it is necessary that the divine human is virtuous in respect of the moral virtues. For if he were not virtuous in respect of these virtues and the animal soul oppose the intellect, this act would be defective and

38 Avempace, (2nd series) 20, l.8–1, l.11.

> incomplete, or would not exist at all, this act would be performed in a forced manner and would be difficult for him because the animal soul by nature listens to obeys the rational [soul] except in the human who is in an unnatural condition.

It is, thus, a basic fact of the human psychology that the lower faculties, the nutritive and the appetitive, naturally obey the dictates of the rational faculty. Avempace does not harbour the pessimistic view of the human, who selfishly pursues his appetites and personal glory until some external force is put in place to restrain him. Rather, the human who behaves like a beast is, in Avempaces's mind unnatural and to that extent exceptional. It is unnatural for the animal soul to overcome the rational soul, such that the person is always in accordance with his animal soul rather than with the rational soul. This clearly tendentious psychological principle is all that underwrites Avempace's novel political theory of self-autonomy.[39]

2. Sovereignty, Government and the Realm of Politics in Husayn al-Marsafī (1815–1890)

Ḥusayn al-Marṣafī was educated at the Azhar. Yet, his writings in politics, pedagogy and Arabic literature evince the fact that he supported at least limited reforms along European models, particularly in education and politics. Delanoue labels him as one of the "*ʿulamāʾ* who supported enlightenment (*ʿulamāʾ* partisans des lumières)." Indeed, his political activity during the ʿUrabi revolt suggests that identifying him as a supporter of reforming Egypt on European models, but reform that, in effect, made Egypt for Egyptians. His most important political writing is *Essay on Eight Words*, in which he discusses the meanings of key terms that were circulating in Egypt in political debates that were inspired by European models and political language.

39 Makram Abbès, "Gouvernement de soi et gouvernement des autres chez Avempace," *Studia Islamica* 100/101 (2005): 113-60.

Despite the fact that several of the words that al-Marṣafī discusses in the *Essay* are common in medieval Islamic political texts and despite peppering his discussions with quotations from Qurʾān and ḥadīth, al-Marṣafī's understanding of politics belongs very much to the end of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. His understanding of liberty (*ḥurrīya*) is a case in point. Premodern Muslim jurists, philosophers and ṣūfī mystics had understood liberty as a set of "exemptions and privileges that attached to a person."[40] Franz Rosenthal notes that the classical Islamic political philosophers such as Alfarabi did not really conceive of liberty as a political concept.[41] Al-Marṣafī insists, on the other hand, that liberty is a political term, in the sense that the condition of political liberty is a consequence of life lived in association.[42] What is more, it is apparent that the foundation of liberty in al-Marṣafī's view is personal property and the obligations that arise between individuals that accompanies personal property. In this way, al-Marṣafī shows his views to be in line with process by which the principles of private ownership became the foundation for state sovereignty in Egypt's capitalist agricultural markets.[43] What is more, his views are consistent with the views of prominent French physiocrats, such as François Quesnay's (d. 1774) student Pierre-Paul La Mercier de La Rivière (d. ca. 1794). The latter, for example, held that property rights are a simple a fact of nature. "It is from nature," says Le Mercier, "that the human has property that belongs exclusively to him, as well as those things that he acquired by seeking it and from his labour."[44] Le Mercier

40 This is how Michel Foucault characterises the premodern notion of liberty: Foucault, *Territory, Security, Population*, 48. Likewise, see Franz Rosenthal, *The Muslim Concept of Freedom* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960); and Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 65: "The Islamic term for "free," until the eighteenth century, had a primarily legal, and occasionally social, significance, and meant one who, according to the law, was a free man and not a slave. Neither term, "free" or "slave", was used in a political context, and the familiar Western use of the terms "freedom" and "slavery" as metaphors for citizen's rights and oppressive rule is unknown to the language of classical Islamic political discourse."

41 Rosenthal, *The Muslim Concept of Freedom*, 121.

42 Al-Marṣafī, *Risāla fī al-kalim al-ṯamān*, 36, l.1.

43 Mitchell, *Rule of the Experts,* 54–79, especially 76–9.

44 Pierre-Paul Le Mercier, *L'Ordre naturel et essentiel des sociétś politiques* (London: n.p., 1767), 12: "C'est donc de la nature même que chaque homme tient la propriété *exclusive* de sa personne, [et] celle des choses acquises par ses recherches [et] ses travaux.." On the idea of the necessity and naturalness of private property, see Mitchell, *Rule of the Experts*, Chapter Two [54–79].

makes a distinction between metaphysical freedom (liberté métaphysique) which is simply the capacity to form acts of will (la faculté de former des volontés)" and "physical liberty (liberté physique)", which is the freedom to act in the social order. The physiocrats understood the advantages and abilities that personal property bestowed on its possessor in France at the end of the eighteenth century served as the foundation of liberty. Le Mercier explains that he calls it "physical liberty" "because it is only realised in the physical actions that it has as its purpose. It is evident, then, that this is the only type [of liberty] that is of any concern in society. For in society everything is physical. What is more, the social order is essentially and necessarily established for the sake of the physical order. Such is the idea that social liberty should be based on, this liberty that is completely inseparable from the right of property."[45] Al-Marṣafī, likewise, says:

> والـ تعامل الـ تعاوني الاجـ تماع الإنـ سانـ ية الـ حـ ياة ضرورة من كان حـ يث
> حق هذا يـ كون حـ تى تـ قريـ ره سـ لف كما الاخـ تـ صاص من بـ د لا وأن الارتـ فاقـ ي
> وكان عـ لـ يه وما لـ ه ما عرف فـ إذا وعـ لـ يه لـ ه محالـ ة لا فـ الإنـ سان فـ لان حق وهذا فـ لان
> عـ لـ يه ما لـ تأديـ ة وانـ قـ يادلـ ه لـ يس ما لأخـ ذلـ ه ما يـ تجاوز أن يـ مـ نعه نـ فس شرف لـ ه
> حرا كان عـ لـ يه لـ يس ما اغـ تـ صابـ ه من يـ قـ يه وإبـ اء... .
>
> Seeing that association in which there is mutual assistance, cooperation and camaraderie is is necessary for human life, and further, seeing that there must be ownership (*al-iḫtiṣāṣ*) … such that this is so-and-so's and that is so-and-so's, it is necessary that there things that the humans possesses and he has obligations. When he recognises what he possesses and what he owes, his personal nobility stops him from overstepping the bounds of what he possesses in order to take what he does not possess, he complies by paying what he owes and his pride (*ibāʾ*) prevents him from seizing what does not belong to him, he is a free person… .

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45 Le Mercier, *L'Ordre naturel*, 32: " … ce cette liberté qui est tellement inséparable du droit de propriété… . "

For al-Marṣafī, then, liberty is a truly political concept in the sense that it is a necessary concomitant of living in a political community. What is more, liberty for al-Marṣafī is set within the context of private ownership. He seems to believe that without private ownership — without, in other words, the ability to assign possession of things to individuals — there is no way of recognising ownership relations that arise naturally between people who live in political association, and then submitting to and obeying these relations. Outside of relations of private ownership and a political community, al-Marṣafī argues that liberty is all but meaningless.

Likewise, al-Marṣafī's brief discussion of justice (*ʿadl*), injustice (*ẓulm*) and administration (*siyāsa*), which were commonplace words in medieval Islamic political philoosphy, but which are in al-Marṣafī's text assigned with an entirely new meaning in light of contemporary debates influenced by French political and economic thought. Like his conception of freedom, al-Marṣafī's ideas about justice and administration have little to do with the traditional meanings assigned to them by classical Islamic philosophers. Justice was traditionally understood as trait of a human being whose character had been refined to a point that all the faculties of his soul were in balance, and, consequently, all his actions were virtuous. *Siyāsa* referred to a mode of government that applied to how a person, not just the sovereign, should manage his wealth and property. Yet, it also referred to how the person should conduct himself and refine his soul, and how he should manage his family members and the other people who made up his household, such as servants and slaves.[46] Al-Marṣafī's discussion bears little resemblance to this traditional usage.[47]

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46 For the classical statement of this notion of *siyāsa*, see Avicenna's "On Governance (*Fī l-siyāsa*)," in Jon McGinnis and David. C. Reisman eds., *Classical Arabic Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2007), 224–37. See Bernard Lewis, says (Lewis, Political Words and Ideas in Islam, 39–40) that the sense of *siyāsa* is normally political, and means *statecraft* among Arabic philosophers, a claim which, given Avicenna's well-known text, is not terribly compelling. Ayalon is closer to the mark when he says that the "traditional term" *siyāsa* meant "management of sate or of other affairs"; Ayalon, *Language and Change*, 129.

47 Al-Marṣafī, *Essay on Eight Words*, 35, ll. 17–21.

> ت الق ع شرائ ال ته ل ب وق قول ع ال إن العدل أن ال عمل ي كل أحد له عم الذي عود ي فعه ن
> على الناس ال كاملا وأن يه فو ي الناس ال يمة ق ذلك العمل ال كاملة. إذا ف م ل عمل ي لب وط
> يمة ق أو عمل صا ناق طل بو كاملة قد ف م ل ظ. وإذا عمل م ل و فه ي الناس ال يمة ق له عم
> قد ف لموه ظ. سياسة وال د حدي ت الأعمال ر قدي ت و يم ق ال وإلزام ال كل ال عمل ال ب
> ية وف ت و يمة ق ال ما ب أن كلاً منهما رض ف لزم ي ته أدي ت إن ف م ل ؤده ي فسه ن ب وجب
> إلزامه.
>
> The laws say — and it [namely, the following definition] is accepted by intellects — that justice is that when a person performs work whose benefit returns to all people, people repay the worth of that work completely. Thus, if he does no work at all but seeks its value anyway, or his work is incomplete, but he seeks the complete value [of the work], he is unjust. When, on the other hand, he does work but people do not recompense the value of his work, they are unjust. Administration (*al-siyāsa*), then, involves delineating work, assessing values [of products and work], compelling everyone to work and to provide compensation of the value in full, such that whenever each of them [the work and its value] has been determined, it is necessary for each to be discharged, and if [one party] does not discharge it [his obligation], it is necessary to compel him.

Al-Marṣafī's comments, therefore, recall much more definitions that define these words in terms of rights, obligations, and personal property or property acquired from labour that come from nineteenth-century texts. For example, in *L'Ordre naturel* Le Mercier justice is defined as an "order of obligations and rights" that arise necessarily from nature. Likewise, he strongly ties injustice to a violation of the "natural, necessary order" of private ownership.[48]

Al-Marṣafī's discussion of government (*ḥukūma*) shows its strong affiliation to nineteenth-century political thinking. The way that al-Marṣafī defines this term

48 Le Mercier, *L'Ordre naturel*, 45: "Who are those who neither recognise nor comprehend that they are born with the obligation as well as the right to provide for their survival, that personal property is a natural right for them, a right that is necessarily given to all who breathe, a right that is essential to their existence, and which they are not able to strip from anyone without committing injustice?"

makes clear the contrast between the concept of political man and the nature and scope of politics in pre-modern Islamic political philosophy and the European models he was relying upon. It is apparent, in fact, that aside from peppering this discussion with quotes from Qurʾān, ḥadīth and the sayings of famous Muslims of the past al-Marṣafī's thought counts as a break with the tradition of Islamic political philosophy in this essay.

Themistius was a political optimist, for he held that man forms political associations not only out of the pragmatic concern for self-preservation but also because human nature inclines to intimacy and living in association. Alfarabi and Avempace were also optimists, for they held that the end of politics in the city and even self-government when the person lives outside any political community was inculcating virtues and to achieve, as far as possible, happiness and even "ultimate felicity." Hobbes was a pessimist, as he felt that the reason why people carved out political communities for themselves and placed virtually omnipotent sovereigns at their head was so that the ruler could protect their lives from the unconditional threat of death in the state of nature. As we have seen, according to pre-modern political philosophers in the Islamic tradition, humans formed cities because they needed to fulfill mutual needs, to feel intimacy with other humans and to pursue virtues and to achieve felicity, Hobbes' paradigmatic human is a brutish animals who, when left unchecked, pursues the fulfillment of his lusts with unrestrained violence.

Of course, medieval Islamic texts frequently repeat the account of why there is evil and corruption in human affairs. The appetites, normally understood as faculties of the soul, are largely to blame. For example, Themistius says:[49]

ل لقوة منه واذ يةالشه ال قوة قهرت إذا ن فسه من الإن سان على ي دخل ال شر
ي كن لم الحال هذه إلى صار ومن ضبطها على الممیزة ال قوة ت قدر ولم الممیزة
ال شرف ي وقوعه من ي تحفظ أن الإن سان وي تهيأ ... ف رق ال بهائم وب ين ب ينه

---

49 Swain, *Themistius, Julian, and Greek Political Theory*, 144.

> عاقلة ناطقة نفس من شيئين من مركب أنه وعلم تأمل فضل نفسه تأمل متى مشتهية والنسك التقى إلى مائلة للفضائل محبة للخير مؤثرة مميزة شديد فاسد متحلل أرضي بدن ومن الصنائع، واستنباط العلوم في للنظر البدن أن وعلم ... والالتذات الشهوات في بالانهماك مطالب والاستحالة التغير البدن جهة من لا النفس جهة من إنسان هو إنما وأنه النفس آلة.
>
> Evil afflicts the human from his soul when the appetitive faculty dominates the discriminative faculty and the discriminative faculty is not able to restrain it. There is no difference between someone in this condition and animals. The human has the capacity to guard against falling into evil when (1) he ponders deeply and knows that he is composed from two things: (a) from a rational soul that restrains[50], discriminates, favours the good, loves virtue, inclines to piety and zeal, desires to undertake speculation into the sciences and to derive the crafts; and (b) from a body that is from the earth, that is dissolving and becoming corrupted, that changes and transforms radically, and that seeks to engross itself in appetites and pleasures. [He guards against falling into evil] when (2) he knows that the body is an instrument for the soul, and that (3) he is human with respect to the soul, not with respect to the body.

The man who is in the thrall of his appetites appears clearly in this passage. Yet, Themistius' aim in it is to highlight the rational faculty's intrinsic superiority and natural inclination to the good and to contrast it with the appetitive faculties that are responsible for evil creeping into human affairs. Ultimately, Themistius wants to justify the existence of kings whom "people require to manage and govern them (*wa-anna l-nāsa muḍṭarrūn ilā tadbīrin wa-siyāsa*)" in order to maintain the balance in the political realm established by the sovereign who obeys the dictates of reason.[51] His aim is not at all to justify why humans formed political

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50 Reading *ʿāqila* with T against *ʿāmila* in the edition.
51 Swain, *Themistius, Julian, and Greek Political Theory*, 146.

associations in the first place, but to show how the sovereign is required to enforce the rule of the rational faculty in human affairs.

Thus, in addition to the fact that he puts forward a straightforward social contract theory, the anthropology that al-Marṣafī uses to undergird the rationale for human political formation owes more to Hobbes' pessimistic assessment of the human condition than it does to the optimistic assessments found in texts that were influential in the Islamic political tradition. Turning to the question of government itself, in the *Essay* al-Marṣafī characterises *ḥukūma,* or government, in two different categorically different ways in his essay. He first defines it as power (*qūwa*), in which case *ḥukūma* means something closer to *sovereignty*. This first definition is more in line with *ḥukūma*'s lexical meaning in classical Arabic. Later in the section on *ḥukūma*, however, al-Marṣafī characterises *ḥukūma* as a set of *duties* that must be fulfilled by the sovereign in order to safeguard the harmony and well-being of the people in the city in the face of disparate and conflicting individual appetites and aims as dictated by their human natures, which is closer to the meaning of *ḥukūma* in modern standard Arabic. According to al-Marṣafī when people in in his day spoke about "*ḥukūma*," they were speaking about "a power (*qūwa*) that comes about when a group of people from the nation (*ṭa'ifatun mina l-ummati*) forms an association (*iğtimāʿ*) in order to carry out the things that nature requires in a manner that comes close to achieving the contentment of all (*li-imḍāʾi muqtaḍayāt al-ṭabīʿati ʿalā wağhin yaqrubu min riḍāʾi l-kāffati*)." At first glance, the ends that al-Marṣafī says people seek when they form into a political community do not seems so far from Themistius' idea that people form in political communities in order to obtain mutual benefit for all members. This conclusion, however, would be premature. Reading further, it is clear that al-Marṣafī does not have cooperation and intimacy in mind as ends, but rather he sees sovereign power as necessary for preventing discord, corruption and violence. Indeed, the human inclination for pursuing animal appetites is so strong that the sovereign must only

seek to contain uninhibited pursuit of lusts, since they cannot be prevented outright.

> فإذا عارضت تلك القوة الطبيعة في ذلك فمنعت الناس من تمام الانتفاع
> بأعمالهم كان ذلك سببًا لمفاسدة عظيمة، منها شدة الغم وسوء الخلق وإغمار الشر
> لأهل تلك القوة وطلب الكسب بطرق قبيحة كالسرقة والغصب والاختلاس
> والزنا وهو الطامة الكبرى إذ يكون منه ذرية فاسدة غير مكفولة بعلاقة الأبوة
> والبنوة تخرج في الناس بين ردائة التربية وخباثة الطبيعة فيكون منها شر عظيم
> في الاجتماع النوعي ولذلك ترى تشديد الشرائع في أمر الزنا.
>
> If this (sovereign) power opposes what is natural in that [namely, in the appetite for food, sex, clothing, etc.] such that it prevents people from benefitting fully from their occupations, that becomes a source of great discord. [It generates] for example, intense anxiety and bad character. Evils become profuse thanks to those who possess this power, and people will seek to earn money in sordid ways such as in theft, wrongful seizure, embezzlement, and fornication, which is the greatest calamity of all since it leads to corrupt offspring [whose the well-being] is not secured by ties of paternity or filiation, mingling with people with their corrupt upbringing and repugnant natures, which generates great evil in the association of the species (*al-iǧtimāʿ al-nawʿī*, possibly meaning the *ethnic* or even *racial community*). This is why laws against fornication are severe.

Later in the passage, al-Marṣafī identifies competition for goods that are scarce as an important source of turmoil. The sovereign's intervention (*al-muḥāǧaza*) is required not only to set just wages and monitor prices, but to prevent people from "annihilating" each other.[52]

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52 Ḥusayn al-Marṣafī (1815–1890), *Essay on Eight Words*, 30, ll.13–22. See also al-Marṣafī, *Essay on Eight Words*, 31, ll.1–6: "If you were to examine, on the one hand, what pleasure, delight and great enjoyment that fine clothes, beautiful faces and succulent foods cause while, on the other hand, considering how very rare they are, you would recognise that it is impossible to ensure that everyone has sufficient amounts of those things [fine clothes, good food, beautiful women and boys, etc.]. This is especially true since avarice and desire for what is beyond what necessity demands are melded into human natures. It is necessary, therefore, for there to be

ف يكون هم رضا من ي بعد لا أن معناه "الكافة رضاء من ي قرب وجه على" وقول نا
ال ترغ يب زيادة الأمم رؤساء من ت سمع ولذلك ممكن غ ير الكافة ور ضاء .جورًا
ال نعيم من ال صابر ل لراضي أعدما وب يان عليه والحث وال صبر الرضاء في
م ت فاوتة المناف ع خلق سبحانه العالم خالق أن ذلك ومنشأ .المقيم وال ثواب
الداعية تمكين ف يه والحكمة .جدًا قليلًا منها الطيبات وجعل الناس ي راه ف يما
ب ذلك ف انتظمت ل لغايات الوصول في أملأ والمشاق الم تاعب لم باشرة
الحاكم وكان .المراتب وتعينت ال ترت يب وجاد الأعمال وتواترت الأحوال
وقوة المزاحمة شدة المناف ع في ال تفاوت ذلك اق تضى حيث والمحكوم
.وت فانوا ل تهالكوا اتهمو شهو وخلوا وأهواءهم الناس ت ركف لو المغال بة،

The meaning of “in a manner that comes close to achieving the contentment of all” is that the manner [of fulfilling the requirements of nature] does not take happiness out of their reach lest it become oppression. Achieving contentment for all is not possible, for which reason you hear the heads of nations earnestly attempting to arouse in [people] contentment and patience, and entreating them to [be content], and elucidating the joys and valuable reward prepared for the person is content and patient.

The basis of this is that the Creator has created goods so that they differ in degrees in people’s eyes, and of them he has made the excellent ones very rare. The wisdom in this is that elevating the things that incite the person to undergo toil and hardship is what is most suited to realising objectives so that conditions are put in order, works are carried out uninterrupted, and the ranks [among people] are appointed. Seeing that this difference in degrees if the good entails struggle that is intense and strength that overwhelms, were people permitted their desires and left to their appetites, the one who rules and those who is ruled would destroy

intervention between people and to fix the value of wages for intellectual and physical labour. This is the meaning of government.”

and annihilating each other.

Whereas in the pre-modern Islamic political philosophy, the reason why the majority of people would not be happy or reach ultimate felicity was because the cities were not perfect or virtuous cities. For that reason, people would not be able practice virtue but, to the contrary, many would be devoted to pursuing a life of vice. In al-Marṣafī, the reason why it is "impossible" for the majority of people to be happy and content is owing to the fact that it is by Divine decree that goods and resources are scarce, and contention, discord and turmoil are the natural result of this fact. Where the wise sovereign in the pre-modern tradition is expected to guide people to lead a life of virtue so that they will be happy, the effective sovereign in al-Marṣafī's view is the one who is most effective rhetorically at making people grudgingly accept misery and put off happiness until the afterlife.

Finally, given how prominently medicine featured in accounts of sovereignty and statecraft in pre-modern Islamic political philosophy, al-Marṣafī's account is striking for the fact that medicine is completely absent, either as providing an analogy between the art of medicine and the political art, as providing an analogy between the ends of medicine — physical health and well-being — and the ends of statecraft — health of the soul, or as an important element in statecraft itself. Indeed, virtue and vice and the life of the soul are irrelevant to al-Marṣafī as far as as the telos of political association is concerned. The above passages from the *Essay* make it clear that the objectives of the political art in al-Marṣafī's view are: (1) keeping violence and human appetites within reasonable bounds, (2) keeping people happy enough so that they do not revolt against the sovereign, (3) ensuring that growth and national development is not interrupted, (4) ensuring that scarcity remains to a degree that competition for resources continues to drive work and development, (5) setting just criteria for wages earned in return for labour performed, (6) nurturing the development of the sciences (*al-maʿārif*) and industry (*al-ṣināʿa*), (7) promulgating laws that ensure that proper moral conduct is

practiced in public spaces, and (8) laws that ensure that relations of paternity and filiation are established and that responsibility for the upkeep of children is known. Al-Marṣafī has left the pre-modern Islamic philosophical tradition far behind.

3. Biopolitics in Bulaq

Nineteenth-century literary and scientific journals in Egypt and the Levant summarised the cutting edge European theories of science and political economy for an Arabic-speaking audience. It is likely that by these media, French and English theories of politics and political economy influenced the political thought of Ḥusayn al-Marṣafī. To some extent, it comes as no great surprise that the thought of the French physiocrats might have found a welcome home in nineteenth-century Egypt, for, among others, these economic theorists upheld the view that "a country's social and economic relations can be pictured in terms of agragian property," a view which suited an Egyptian economy that was based primarily on the export of agrarian products.[53] Though the physiocrat "sect" was relatively short-lived, François Quesnay's attempt to make economics into a rigorous, quantified science whose analytical parameters were drawn from the natural order was one of the group's enduring legacies. As is well-known, another of its most important legacies is the notion of economic and political liberalism that it evoked, in which personal or "social" liberty is defined in terms of unihindered disposal of personal property.[54] In this way of thinking, the political agent is no longer the human being who possesses a soul that requires reformation in order to free its rational faculty to acts in the way that is most favourable to its life in the city. The political agent is, rather, one who is endowed with the right of untramelled disposal over his personal property.

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53 Mitchell, *Rule of the Experts*, 85.

54 As we have seen already, this was Le Mercier's view in *L'Ordre naturel*. Quesnay seems to have defined liberty in terms of the individual agent having free will at the moment when he is confronted with a choice. See Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *The Origins of Physiocracy: Econommic Revolution and Social Order in Eigtheenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), 85.

Where Quesnay sought to use his infamous "Tableau Économique" as the basis for a science of economy, the great theoretician of biopolitics, Jean-Baptiste Moheau (d. ca. 1794) seems to have wanted to create a *political* science or, more properly, a science of government, based on statistically quantifiable properties of human populations.[55] In *Recherches et considérations sur la population de la France*, Moheau includes properties of the France's population such as birth and death rates, air, water and climactic conditions, food, religious practices, marriage conventions as elements that are relevant to political calculation. Linking the nation's population with its wealth,[56] Moheau's idea of politics takes the regulation of natural life of the human population in a territory as the ultimate end of politics. Moheau opens his final chapter, saying that it is not just by means of police regulations, founding institutions and offering advantages that favour the state of marriage that the sovereign can boost the population. For "it appears", he says, "that the entire natural order (l'ordre physique) is likewise under [the sovereign's] control."[57] Even if it is beyond their capacity to alter climate conditions, he admits, "they are at the least capable of directing the population toward states that are contrary and that are the most favourable to it [population]."[58] Moheau continues:

> All the events in the political order (l'ordre politique) influence the population. The creation, transformation, and abolition of every type of religious establishment, administration, magistracy, finance, commerce, industry, draw forth and concentrate the [nation's] population, and strips it [population] from neighbouring countries … These mechanisms for directing and changing the outcomes of the population are in the hands of the government. It's power is, therefore, all the more extensive. More

55 Foucault calls Moheau the "first great theorist of what we could call biopolitics, biopower." Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 22.
56 Jean-Baptiste Moheau, *Recherches et considérations sur la population de la France* (Paris: L'institut national d'études démographiques, 1994), 56.
57 Moheau, *Recherches et considérations sur la population de la France*, 305.
58 Ibid.

> often than not, it is up to [the government] to change the air temperature and to improve the climate. Creating a route for stagnant water, planting or burning forests, mountains destroyed by time or by continual cultivation of their surface — [all these] generate new soil and a new climate.[59]

In other words, in this late eighteenth-century discourse on politics, political government is carried out in the natural order itself. The object of government mechanisms and political strategies is the life of the human population itself; and government's ultimate objective is to direct, regulate, modify, grow and improve the life of the human population that constitutes the nation's wealth.

Moheau sees, however, his political science as a quantified, data-driven science in the manner of physics or economics in his day. Yet, in the nineteenth century there appears to have been a tendency to assign the science of public medicine many of the tasks that Moheau assigns to his science of government, and to see government as essentially enacting the rules laid down by the science of public health.

An example of this trend is apparent in the nineteenth-century medical textbook on public health entitled The text entitled *Gifts for Governing the Preservation of Health* was written in French by an otherwise unknown French medical professor named Bernard (given the honorific Ḫwāǧa Bernard in the text) who was a colleague of Antoine Barthélémy Clot. The text was published by the Būlāq press in 1834 just two years after the press published its first book in 1832. It was to serve as medical textbook in public health in the medical school in Abū Zaʿbal that Muḥammad ʿAlī founded in 1827. Medical texts featured prominently in the Būlāq press' catalogue, the first text to be published by the Būlāq press was a book on human anatomy and physiology, and medical texts were published frequently and consistently at Būlāq for decades thereafter. *Gifts* is thus one of this

59 Ibid., 306. Cf. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 22.

set of texts translated from French for use in an Arabic medical school and whose writing and translation was commissioned by Muḥammad ʿAlī.

According to the introduction by Muḥammad al-Harawī, the Arabic text that was eventually published was written in several stages. First, it was written by Bernard at Clot's behest. Then it was translated into Arabic by one George Vidal of Aleppo in a rather literal fashion. Finally, the first Arabic translation was corrected and recast into proper Arabic idiom by al-Harawī himself.[60] Owing to the fact that the original French text is no longer extant, it is difficult to assess the quality of the translation or the techniques that the translator and editor used to convey the meaning in Bernard's French original. Nevertheless, it is apparent, at least by examining the introductory sections of the text, that there are frequent deviations from the original text. These transformations are precipitated by two primary factors, as we shall see. (1) Al-Harawī feels the need to modify the text so that it is suited to the tastes of the Muslim students who will use the text and possibly Muḥammad ʿAlī who commissioned the text and its translation in the first place; (2) al-Harawī adds clarificatory glosses — frequently substantial glosses — where a technical term would have conveyed nothing or very little to the medical student who is reading the text in Arabic for the first time, and whose exposure to Arabic scientific lexicon is extremely rudimentary or is based on the medical Arabic scientific lexicon based on the medieval translations of Greek medical texts.[61] My general impression is that al-Harawī's intrusions into the text, despite his suggestions to the contrary, are substantial, particularly in the less technical passages that introduce the main divisions of the book.

Gifts differs completely from a medieval Islamic medical encyclopaedia such as Avicenna's (d. 1037) *Canon of the Science of Medicine* (*al-Qānūn fī ʿilm*

60 This process process of translation was common in the early translations of scientific texts into Arabic, from 1815 to around 1835; see Crozet, "Langue scientifique," 264.

61 Gadelarab says that the scholars involved in the production and translation of these early textbooks, almost all of whom, such as Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Rašīdī, were drawn from the Azhar, and were familiar with the Graeco-Arabic medical tradition; see Gadelarab, *Medicine and Morality in Egypt*, 49.

al-ṭibb), in structure, medical theory and medical lexicon. For example, there is no real equivalent of public health. For example, public health is based on the health of populations of people. On the other hand, the chapters that treat prophylactic medicine (*ḥifẓ al-ṣiḥḥa*) in the *Canon*, Book One deal almost exclusively with developing the theory for personal regimens on the basis of the six "non-natural" factors external to the body that influence health such as surrounding air, food and drink, sleep, waking, exercise and rest, and mental states.[62] There are texts on "epidemic diseases," such as the Hippocratic *Epidemics*, that were translated into Arabic in the ninth century.[63] These might be thought to resemble public health in some way. Yet an examination of these texts reveals that they are often case-studies about individuals who are affected by the air or climate of an island or geographical region rather than discourses about how natural conditions affect the health of a population existing within the borders of a nation.

This text also differs from its medieval Islamic forebears in terms of medical theory and medical lexicon. For example, the idea of continuous blood circulation (*dawrat al-dam*) is a commonplace in this text, whereas, despite claims to the contrary, blood circulation was unknown in the premodern Islamic medical tradition.[64] The word used to refer to the systems (*ǧahāz*, pl. *aǧiza*) to which each of the internal organs belong was not used in the premodern Islamic medical tradition. For example, *Gifts* refers to the respiratory system (*al-ǧahāz al-tanaffusī*), the reproductive system (*al-ǧahāz al-tanāsulī*), and the digestive system (*al-ǧahāz al-haḍmī*), whereas in the premodern Islamic tradition, the main parts of the body (*ʿuḍw*, pl. *aʿḍāʾ*) were not organised into systems each of which was directed toward accomplishing the overarching needs of higher-order biological functions. Even the way the word "organ (*ʿuḍw*)" in this text is used

62 Peter E. Pormann and Emilie Savage-Smith, *Medieval Islamic Medicine* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 44.
63 Manfred Ullmann, *Die Medizin im Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 30.
64 Pormann and Savage-Smith, *Medieval Islamic Medicine*, 47–8. On Ibn al-Nafīs, see Nahyan Fancy, *Science and Religion in Mamluk Egypt: Ibn al-Nafīs, Pulmonary Transit and Bodily Resurrection* (London: Routledge, 2013).

differs from usage in the premodern tradition. In this text *ʿuḍw/aʿḍāʾ* refer to *internal* organs such as the heart, liver and kidneys, each of which belongs to a different system, or *ǧahāz*, in the body. In the premodern tradition, however, *ʿuḍw* refers simply to parts of the body such as the head or the leg, not necessarily *internal* organs.

A final example of the differences between this text and the premodern medical tradition is one of the words used for sex (*ǧins*) in the text, which in the premodern Islamic medical and philosophical tradition referred to genus in the sense of *kind* or *type*.[65] In a preliminary theoretical section, Bernard says that all the biological events (*al-ḥawādiṯ al-ḥayawīya*) in the human physiology fall under three general processes in the body. The first process encompasses all the nutritive processes, which are directed at preserving the individual and growth. The second has to do with those processes that have to do with assimilating (*tašbīh*) and circulating nutrition in body. The third process encompasses all the biological events in the body that are directed at reproduction (*al-tanāsul*). Each of these process, according to Bernard, is influenced by factors that introduce diversity into these processes. Nutrition, assimilation and reproduction are affected in different ways by the age of the individual, his habits, temperament, his trade, predispositions he inherits and "being male and being female (*al-ḏukūra wa-l-unūṯa*)."[66] In the title of the section in which the author discusses how these processes are affected by the individual's sex, the title reads "The Second [Source of Diversity] is Sexuality (sic, *al-ǧinsīya*)."[67] The novelty of using the word *ǧinsīya* to refer to sex is made evident by the fact that the translator , or more likely the editor al-Harawī, adds the gloss " … by which I mean maleness and femaleness (*aʿnī l-ḏukūrata wa-l-unūṯa*)."[68] What is more, the well-known emphasis on sexual

65 Afsaneh Najmabadi, "Genus of Sex or the Sexing of *Jins*," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45 (2013): 211–31.
66 Bernard, Vidal, al-Harawī, *Gifts for Managing the Preservation of Health*, 6, l. 20.
67 Ibid., 9.
68 Ibid.

difference in the nineteenth century in opposition to its ambuguity in premodern texts is also apparent.[69] It is well-known that nineteenth-century European authors strongly emphasised the physical difference between men and women, which scholars have shown to serve the political ends of political leaders in Europe and in Egypt.[70] For example, Moheau, waxing poetic, is moved to say that "the principal distinction that exists in humanity is that of sex. It constitutes an immutable principle that, at all times of existence, imparts a disposition to existence, [and] a way of being; to illnesses it imparts a degree of strength; to qualities [it endows] a form; and to personal preferences, lifestyle, rights, privileges and duties that differentiate it [sex] essentially it [endows] a character, spirit and heart."[71] And Bernard says, in Arabic translation, that there is "a natural difference (*iḫtilāf ṭabīʿī*) between the male's and female's composition (*tarkīb*)."[72] In spite of this difference in the physical order, however, according to Bernard the health injunctions that apply to men and women as far as medicine is concerned are nearly identical. "In reality," says Bernard, "the age of puberty (*zaman al-bulūġ*) is the time that is crucial," at which time special care and attention to health injunctions related to females (*al-ināṯ*) is required.[73]

Perhaps the most noteworthy way that this text shows its intimate connection to nineteenth-century European medical and political thought in the likes of Le Mercier or Moheau, however, is the link that its author draws between medicine, health, and political sovereignty. Bernard anachronistically believes that the connection between sovereignty and public health regulations was present in the

69 Sherry Gadelarab, "Discourses on Sex Difference in Medieval Scholarly Islamic Thought," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 66 (2011): 40–81. See Gadelarab, *Medicine and Morality in Egypt*, Chapter One. On sexual difference in the premodern tradition see Nahyan Fancy, "Womb Heat versus Sperm Heat: Hippocrates against Galen and Ibn Sīnā in Ibn al-Nafīs's Commentaries," *Oriens* 45 (2017): 150–75. Ahmed Ragab, "One, Two or More Sexes: Sex Differentiation in Medieval Islamicate Medical Thought," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 24/3 (2015): 428–54.

70 Gadelarab, *Medicine and Morality in Egypt*, Chapters Two and Three.

71 Moheau, Recherches et considérations," 91 in Chapter Seven, entitled "Division of the population by sex and by age."

72 Bernard, Vidal, al-Harawī, *Gifts for Managing the Preservation of Health*, 9, ll. 20–1.

73 Ibid., 9, ll. 21–23.

ancient world among primitive tribesmen to ancient civilisations in India to Greece. He ties the political power practiced by the Romans to their programmes to develop infrastructure wherever they went.[74]

> فإن العمومية بالصحة زائدا اعتناء ويعتنوا يلتفتوا أن للحكام فينبغي
> مجاري يبوترت الأماكن وعمارة المدن تموين كانت الرومان بين التفات غاية
> مياه وتنشيف الفلاحة أراضي وتجهيز للقاذورات ومصارف للمياه وقنواة
> وغاية. الشأن لهذا العجيبة التراتيب لوضع سببًا ذلك وصار ذلك وغير الآجام
> إلى الشخص تقود أنها العيسوية الكنائس من ترتبت التي النواميس
> في الإفراط اعأذو عن وتبعده العقل يقبلها أشياء بواسطة نفساني إتقان
> وأما .وبالقناعة الرذائل واجتناب الفضائل باستعمال فنأمره الأمور
> الغريبة الأشياء ظهور بسبب بينهم فيما للصحة صار فقد المستجدون
> يكون لأن سببًا كان عظيم شأن العلوم تقدم القرون بعض مدة في حصلت التي
> .المتقدمين على والشرف الفخر لهم
>
> It is therefore necessary for rulers to give their whole mind and turn their full attention to public health for Roman rulers aimed to provide cities with supplies, to erect public places, manage waterways, canals and sewers for waste, to provision the agricultural lands belonging to the peasants, to draining water from forests, and the like. This was a reason, too, for why the political [political] organisations they put in place were extraordinary to this degree. The laws that organised the Christian churches (*al-kanāʾis al-ʿīsawīya*, namely the religious orders of monks) aimed to lead the individual to perfect his soul by means that the intellect deemed acceptable and that would draw him [the monk] away from being excessive in his affairs. Thus, we command him (*naʾmuruhu*, the individual, sc. *šaḫṣ*) to practice virtues, avoid vices and be content. Owing to the extraordinary things that have appeared over some of the centuries

74 Bernard, George Vidal, Muḥammad al-Harawī, *Gifts for Managing the Preservation of Health* (*al-Minḥa fī siyāsat ḥifẓ al-ṣiḥḥa*) (Būlāq: Maṭbaʿat Būlāq, 1834), 121, ll.12–21.

> and to the fact that the sciences have progressed, health has earned a high rank among modern rulers (*al-mustağiddūn*, rulers, sc. *ḥukkām*), on account of which they [modern rulers] have earned glory and merit that surpasses the ancients.

Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century sovereigns such as Napoleon, in whose army Bernard may have served,[75] were distinguished therefore from their ancient forebears by the fact that they allotted more attention to governing the physical order of nature encoded in the regulations of public health than previous kings, caesars or shahs. Yet, consistent with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ideas about the remit of politics, the political order should not only include the order of nature, but the moral order encoded in the ethico-legal injunctions of Jewish and Islamic law.[76]

> ابـ تداء من الـ شعوب وأنـواع الـ قـ بائـ ل لـ جمـ يع الـ مـ قـ صودة الـ غايـ ة هـ و الـ صحة حـ فظ وجهوا والـ قـ بائـ ل الـ شعوب تـ دبـ ير بـ هم أنـ يط الـ ذيـ ن الـ رجال تـ جد ولـ ذا الـ زمان فـ ي أمـ ثالـهم حظ إ صلاح بـ ها الـ تي الـ وا سطة هذه فـ ي هم فـ طـ نت وجمعوا هـ تهم فـ جعـ لوها بـ ه يـ هـ تم ما عـ لى الـ صحـ ية الـ و صايـ ا أن لـ هم تـ بـ ين قـ د لأنـ ه الـ بـ شرة والأجـ لاف الـ جهـ لة الـ قـ بائـ ل عن الـ حـ فظ غايـ ة محـ فوظة لـ تكون ديـ نـ ية نـ وامـ يس أن عل قـ ادريـ ن غـ ير كونهم بـ سـ بب عـ لـ يهم ويـ حكمون يـ سوسونهم الـ ذيـ ن الـ صحـ ية الـ و صايـ ا من كـ ثـ ير الأول الـ مـ لل فـ ي دوج فـ قد مـ نـ فعـ تها يـ سـ توعـ بوا غـ سب فـ إن بـ ها الـ قاطـ نـ ين الأقـ الـ يم فـ ي الـ مـ لة تـ لك أهل إلـ يه تـ حـ تاج لـ ما موافقًا وتـ حريـ م والـ صوم الـ لحوم بـ عض وتـ حريـ م والـ خـ تان الـ ماء و صب الأعـ ضاء بـ عض والا سـ تحمام الأ سد بـ داء الـ مـ صابـ ين وتـ جـ نب الـ مـ شروبـ ات وبـ عض الأغـ ذيـ ة بـ عض لأجل الأقـ ارب زواج وامـ تـ ناع الـ محرقـ ة الأقـ الـ يم حرارة شدة من ضروريًا صار الـ ذي حـ كم صحـ ية قـ واعد إلا لـ يس ذلـ ك ونـ حو الـ موروثـ ة الأمراض وإزالـ ة الأجـ ناس تـ غـ ير و سـ لم عـ لـ يه الله صـ لى محمد و سـ يدنـ ا مو سى سـ يدنـ ا الـ شريـ عـ تـ ين وا ضعي عـ لـ يها الـ مـ شرق أهل لـ شعوب مـ نها بـ د لا ضروريـ ة أمور بـ أنـ ها.

75 See Sonbol, *Creation of a Medical Profession*, 32–51.
76 Bernard, Vidal, al-Harawī, *Gifts for Managing the Preservation of Health*, 120, ll.8–21.

> Preserving health is the aim that all tribes and kinds of nations have sought since the beginning of time. For this reason, you shall observe that the men who are entrusted with governing (*tadbīr*) the nations and the tribes have turned their attention and directed their intelligence to this device [public health] by means of which the state of their fellows in humanity is rectified. For it has become evident to them that injunctions related to health are what one should have the greatest concern for. For this reason, they made them religious laws (*nawāmīs dīnīya*) so that they would be obeyed to the fullest by ignorant tribesmen and the boorish men who lead them and pass judgments among them because they are not able to comprehend the benefit it has. In previous religious communities there were numerous health injunctions that were in agreement with what the people of that religious community needed in the regions they resided in. For washing a certain body part, pouring water, circumcision, forbidding eating certain meats, fasting, forbidding certain kinds of food and drink, avoiding people who contracted leontiasis, bathing, which is necessary because the heat in burning climates is intense, proscribing the marriage of relatives so that the human kind undergoes alteration and inherited diseases are avoided, and the like — [all of these rules] are no more than principles relating to health that our masters Moses and Muḥammad set down in their respective systems of religious law owing to the fact that they are necessary things, which are indispensable for every Eastern people.

In Bernard's view, public health should be used by the sovereign as the chief instrument of government. Just as eighteenth-century French political and economic thinkers linked population with the success of the nation and the success of government, in like manner Bernard links successful government with the extent that the sovereign turns his attention to maintaining the health of the society

(*iǧtimāʿ*). And just such as Moheau urged the French sovereign to govern the population by regulating the order of nature and the moral order, so Bernard urges that Egyptian sovereign, Muḥammad ʿAli, to imitate the Romans by undertaking works that regulate the natural order, and to imitate the Persians and the directors of the Christian monasteries by creating regulations that intrude in the moral order of Egyptian society.

We have thus seen how, in Bernard's view, politics should encompass the physical and moral order of society. The objects of political governance are no longer individual souls, but the health of the Egyptian population. The end of political governance is no longer caring for, refining and guiding the huan soul so that it becomes virtuous and reaches felicity, but that the nation's wealth is preserved and augmented by regulating the health and wellbeing of the population. This suggests, in short, that there is not in Bernard's mind much difference between the objects and aims of politics and statecraft on the one hand, and medicine on the other.[77]

> ال صحة سياسة ت تضمن الأولى مقالات أربع على مرتب ال كتاب وهذا
> وحده؛ منذ فردا كونه باعتبار بالإنسان المتعلقة الصحة أعني الانفرادية
> باعتبار بالإنسان المتعلقة أعني الاجتماعية الصحة ت تضمن الثانية
> العامة بالأمور المتعلقة وهي عمومية إلى ت نقسم وهذه .غيره مع مجتمعا كونه
> ب فصل ي تعلق ما وهو الشرعي الطب وإلى عمومًا الناس صحة بها التي
> السياسة فإن .غيره أو قصاصًا الطبية الأمور من الناس بين الخصومة
> بالصحة ت تعلق التي والأشياء الطبية، المعارف من قوانينها تكتسب
> الاجتماع حالة هو عليه نبنيت الذي منها الرئيس به يهتم ما أعظم هي العمومية
> والاعتقادات الأفعال في والرق والحرية الأحكام وأنواع الأقاليم واختلاف
> البلاد وبناء الصحية والنواميس والعوائد والطبائع الدينية والأعمال
> السير وأماكن الأجسام ورياضات الملاعب ومحال السلطانية والعمارات
> .وغيرها والفلاحة والتجار السجن ومحال والمارستانات

77 Bernard, Vidal, al-Harawī, *Gifts for Managing the Preservation of Health*, 3, l.25–4, l.11.

> This book is arranged into four discourses. The first encompasses the management of personal health, by which I mean the health that pertains to the human being insofar as he is a single individual. The second [discourse] encompasses [the management of] social health, by which I mean [the health] that pertains to the human being insofar as he lives in association with others. This [social health] is subdivided into public health, which is what pertains to public conditions that affect the health of people in general, and forensic medicine, which is the aspect of medicine that pertains to making a decision about punishment or the like in [legal] disputes between people by retribution or something else.
>
> For the canons of government are acquired from the medical sciences. The things pertaining to public health are the factors that demand the greatest attention, the chief among them upon which [public health] rests being the health conditions (*ḥāla al-iğtimāʿ*) of society, differences between regions, kinds of law, freedom or bondage in actions, belief and religious practices, physical constitutions, habits, and regulations relating to health, constructing cities, royal buildings, grounds for recreation and exercising the body, sites for traffic, hospitals, and lands for imprisonment, trade, agriculture and so on.

This statement about the relationship between medicine and political government is stronger than the analogy in premodern Islamic political philosophy that states that the art of medicine is to the body as statecraft is to the soul. Public health is a science for governing the health of the population, and forensic medicine is a medical science that is used to manage legal disputes among the people. More remarkable still is the claim that the political art (*al-siyāsa*) derives its norms (*qawānīn*) from the medical sciences. This claim has several important consequences. First, that the aim of statecraft is nothing more than the aim of public health. Leaving the aims of virtue, vice and happiness far behind, in the

author's view, the objective of government is to ensure that health and well-being are managed effectively in the population, as clearly the aim of public health is not to eliminate disease and harm from the populace, but merely to manage them efficiently. Second, medical techniques and medical knowledge become the primary means for achieving the ends of politics. Three, the citizen of the city effectively becomes, according to this line of thinking, the patient in the hospital. The political subject, the person whose politically qualified life in the city is as far as possible directed by laws and the sovereign toward the good life is identical to the patient whose biological processes, which constitute living itself, are, as far as possible, directed by therapeutic regimens or the physician-king towards health and well-being.

Despite his anachronistic view of the relationship between sovereignty and public health, Bernard seems to perceive the difference between his conception of the relationship between medicine and statecraft and the traditional viewpoint from the premodern philosophical tradition. The passage above recalls the so-called "ship of state" metaphor in the Book Six of Plato's *Republic*. As he often does, Socrates compares the political art to crafts such as sculpture, medicine, music, and in Book Six of the *Republic*, 488D, to the art of navigating a ship. Plato argues that just as navigation requires certain types of knowledge to steer the ship correctly, statecraft too requires philosophical knowledge in order to properly govern the city. Like the ignorant people of a city that do not recognise the merit of the philosophers, unruly sailors do not recognise the merit or their own need for the true helmsman. By this allusion to Plato's *Republic*, Bernard says that just as the helmsman must know the conditions of the stars, seasons, sky and so on, the successful contemporary statesman must have the knowledge of the health in the population as well as knowledge of how health is impacted by climate, laws and regulations, religious customs and beliefs, architecture, traffic and circulation, hospitals, and zoning laws. Indeed, Bernard believes that the medical science

"turns the physician into a philosopher (*ṣayyara l-ṭabība faylasūfan*)" king of Plato's *Republic*, Book Five (473C–E).[78] After noting that prophylactic medicine has the primary aim (*ġāya*) of preserving health and the secondary aim of curing illness, Bernard says sets out two general principles for achieving both goals.

> Achieving these ends only comes about by avoiding things that cause harm and employing things that are beneficial. These are only known by means of this science. The means that this science utilises are all the natural agents, by which I mean the substances that have an effect on the human body, not pathological substances. In this case, then, this science in its entirety is associated with nature as well as all the human sciences, for preserving health is, in reality, the aim of what every person strives for. Likewise, the science of nature [namely, physics], chemistry, botany, anatomy, physiology and all the natural sciences without qualification only merit attention insofar as through them one learns about the human being and about the things that benefit him. Furthermore, were there nothing in these sciences specific to the human being and what benefits him, investigation [into these sciences] would be fruitless. The case is the same in the arduous crafts, for the aim in most of them is preserving health. The fine arts, too, which are greater in providing leisure and preserving human life, have an effect on health. Belles-lettres falls under this category also because it familiarises us with the benefit that lies in all the virtues, such as contentment, restraining the appetites, being balanced in one's purposes and having a tranquil soul, which is the foundation of belles-lettres. Thus, thanks to this science [namely, medicine], the human preserves his health and perfects his capacity, and of all the things that surround him he learns to use the ones that bring him benefit and how to avoid the dangers that attend excess and going to extremes.

78 Ibid., 5, l.8–6, l.4.

> When this science, then, is linked to individuals who have formed a universal association, the physician in practicing medicine becomes a philosopher, and directs the ruler's soul to the laws, the armies are healthy during wars, and because of this military operations are successful, it produces freedom and felicity among the subjects, and preserves the kings' kingdom and glory. Finally, after the human being has learned from this science how to guard his life and has lived a life that is free from diseases, this science leads him to a death that is natural and is not accompanied by pain and suffering.

As we would expect, the mechanisms that this subdiscipline of medicine utilises to reach its dual objectives operate strictly in the natural world. In its desire to moderate human habits, personal conduct and ways of living in the world, however, medicine also shares its aims with the humanities (*al-ādāb*). Yet, a change takes place as soon as the medical science — in this case prophylactic medicine — is applied to people insofar as they form a political community. As soon as the medical science is turned away from individual health and toward health as a phenomenon that arises from the formation of a political association, the medical science is transformed into a political science of the natural and the moral order. Consequently, medicine comes to serve the political aims of the state, regulating human life by medical techniques itself becomes the object of political strategy, and the sovereign, formerly the philosopher who created laws and guided individual souls to felicity in the city, uses the techniques of the medical science to govern the population.

As refining a virtuous soul and attaining eternal felicity to serve as the aims of the ways of life permitted by the state recedes into the background by the end of the nineteenth century in Egypt, the ultimate ends of the political art are realised strictly in the physical order of nature. With the ends of the political art increasingly relegated to the physical order of the medical science as well as those

aspects of the moral order that affect human health and well-being, a new political space is opened up, one that is occupied by human life itself rather than the soul. We can see arising, simultaneously, a *secular, political* and a *religious, non-political* order. The secular-political order includes biological life and excludes the soul and ultimate felcity from political calculation by virtue of the fact that they lie, as it were, outside the physical order. At the same moment, a *religious, non-political* order emerges in which the the soul and ultimately felicity are included by virtue of the fact that they lie outside the physical order. In late nineteenth-century Arabic texts, we can see, too, the convergence of the idea of personal liberty as the natural right to use priviate property in an unconstrained manner and bare life as the locus of political strategy and the basis for state sovereignty and wealth. The discourses of personal liberty, rights and freedoms that abounded at the end of the nineteenth century are based on a new vision of the human agent who acts in the physical order of society by owing and managing private property. Likewise the traditional forms of social hierarchy are re-inscribed within the order of private property.

4. Conclusion

The years following Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 until the turn of the century witnessed extraordinary transfigurations in Egypt's political, social and economic landscape. Egyptian reforms recognised the era of Mehmed Ali until the invasion of Egypt by the English in 1882 as a particularly dynamic period in Egypt's history. It was during this period that the foundations of modern Arabic scientific and political lexicons was established. I have argued that the background of the genesis of the Arabic political and scientific discourses is the evolution of Egypt into a biopolitical state, where the "basic biological features of the species became the object of a political strategy."[79] Earlier scholars have documented in great detail how the rise of the biopolitical state required remarkable demographic,

79 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 1.

economic, political, social, and military changes. I have argued that Arabic texts produced during this period express the political ideas of important French and English scientists, economists and philosophers. These texts turn their back on the premodern tradition of Islamic political philosophy, which takes the human soul and happiness as its goal. These nineteenth-century texts place the realm of politics within the physical order nature and the moral order of human customs and habits. I suggest that, based on the influence of French demographers and economists, we find that bare life, or life itself, becomes the object of state political strategising. New ideas about the remit of politics, the political subject, the goals of politics as well as understanding the techniques of statecraft as largely medical techniques emerge from these texts, laying the groundwork for secularised notions of government and state that belongs to the *physical* order, and sacralised notions of soul and happiness that belong to a *non-physical or religious* order.