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The *Wahhabiyya* and Ethiopia, 1936–1948

HAILE SELASSIE'S LAST-MINUTE STRATEGY IN 1935 TO APPEASE Ethiopia's Muslims and mobilize them to help to defend the country proved a failure. The question of whether more outside Islamic help—like a token of friendship from the Saudi ruler of the holy places¹—could have made a difference is irrelevant. Mussolini's invading armies included over 70,000 Muslim soldiers from Somalia, Eritrea, and Libya. When hostilities began, many of the Emperor's Muslim subjects helped the Italians. Once the Italians occupied the country, local Muslim forces were entrusted with securing the new regime in sensitive places.²

The Fascists and the Politicization of Islam in Ethiopia

Mussolini's aim in launching his war, to reiterate, was twofold. First was the ambition to create an East African empire on the ruins of Ethiopia. Immediately after the fall of Haile Selassie, the very concept of the ancient Christian state was practically erased. The name "Ethiopia" survived officially only in the name of the local Orthodox Church and in the new title of the Italian king, now addressed also as the "Emperor of Ethiopia." What used to be the empire of Ethiopia, together with Eritrea and Italian Somalia, were declared Africa Orientale Italiana ("Italian East Africa"). Second, was the long-term ambition to build the East African empire as a springboard to the Middle East. By controlling the Blue Nile and strengthening his hold on the Red Sea, Mussolini gained some of the leverage he needed to revive the Roman empire in the eastern Mediterranean. This long-term

strategy also included a strong element of propaganda. Both Islam and Arab nationalism were to be manipulated by Italy in order, eventually, to incite anti-British and anti-French revolts in Egypt and the “fertile crescent” and to enhance Italian influence in Arabia. Though the word “Africa” was widely used, the Fascists’ comprehensive design was to prepare the grounds for their victory in the Middle East. In fact, the modern Italian conceptualization of Ethiopia was barely connected to the rest of the black continent. The leading Italian Ethiopianists of the time were orientalist, and some, like Carlo Conti-Rossini, Enrico Cerulli, and Martino Moreno, served in the administration of the new African empire. The leading Italian journal of Middle Eastern studies, *Oriente Moderno*, edited by Carlo Alfonso Nallino, covered Ethiopian affairs. Italian politicians, strategists, and scholars were all well aware of Ethiopia’s uniqueness, its ethnic diversity and its tradition of regional identities. They were equally aware of the history of Islam in Ethiopia and its dissimilarity from Islam in the Arab East. But Mussolini’s twofold Ethiopian–Middle Eastern strategy necessitated a strong emphasis on Islam. Consequently, the five years of Italian rule in East Africa were marked by an effort to enhance Islam and, as far as possible, to represent it as identical to Arabism. This was done in the tradition of divide-and-rule in Ethiopia proper and through propaganda in the context of the Arab East.

Italian East Africa was divided into six provinces according to ethnic and religious criteria. These were Somalia, including most of the Ogaden area; Harar; Galla [Oromo]–Sidama; Eritrea, including most of Tigre; Shoa; and Amhara. Shoa and Amhara were the smallest in size and were recognized as having both Christian and Amharic cultures. In Eritrea, the previous system of separating Christians from Muslims continued. In the other three provinces, Islam was declared the principal religion and culture. There, as well as in the capital, Addis Ababa, the Italians began to subsidize Islamic institutions, allowing Muslims to implement Islamic law and to rebuild their educational systems. In Galla-Sidama and other areas, they encouraged Christian Oromos to convert to Islam. Hundreds of new mosques were built throughout the country, including the great Al-Anwar Mosque in Addis Ababa (Mussolini personally saw to its completion). A new mosque in Harar was inaugurated on 13 December 1937.³ Most significantly, the use and teaching of Arabic were institutionalized. Arabic was declared an official language in the four provinces outside of Amhara and Shoa. Arabic newspapers and school textbooks were published. Radio programs in Arabic were introduced. All newspapers had to include columns in

Arabic.⁴ The Italians thus provided the historically divided and linguistically diverse Islamic communities of the Horn of Africa with an effective unifying factor.

The official Italian policy was of religious equality.⁵ In practice, the Italians discriminated against Christians in all respects. After many of the clergy resisted the occupiers, priests were massacred and church leaders were executed. The Italians intervened to the extent of cutting the historical ties of the Ethiopian Church to the Egyptian Coptic Church. In November 1937, the Egyptian Abuna Qerilos VI was replaced by Ethiopian Abuna Abraham, and the church, declared autocephalous, was placed under strict Italian control.⁶ At the same time, Minister of Colonies Alessandro Lessona instructed Governor Rodolfo Graziani to support Islam in a way that would be echoed throughout the Muslim world. The hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, was now reorganized by the Italians in unprecedented scope. Hundreds of Muslims from all over the country were encouraged—and subsidized—by the Italians to perform this ultimate religious obligation. The preparations for and sending of the hajj missions during the years of the Italian occupation became a major new framework for all-Ethiopian Islamic activities, connecting communities and providing participants with an inspiring religious experience. The Islamic community of Addis Ababa, mainly its some 1,400 Arabs from Yemen and the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, as well as other Muslims from India, were treated to special gatherings and were showered with compliments and promises.⁷ In December 1936, Graziani held an official *'Id al-Fitr* reception and, for the first time in Ethiopia, Ramadan cannons were fired.⁸ The recently destroyed Islamic Jimma was restored. Abba Jobir, grandson of Abba Jifar, accompanied the Italian column to Jimma in November 1936 and was put in charge of the region.⁹ He was later sent on a tour to spread the news in Arab countries. An Islamic high school, fully subsidized by the Italians, was reopened in Jimma.¹⁰ Similar gestures of support—symbolic, verbal, and practical—were made in various other Islamic areas. The dozens of pro-Islamic declarations by various Italian officials in Ethiopia were recycled by the Italians and their supporters in Arabia and the rest of the Arab world.¹¹ Mussolini's Islamic propaganda campaign climaxed in March 1937 when the Duce visited Libya, waving "the sword of Islam" and riding a white stallion, and declared that having proven his intentions in both Libya and Ethiopia, he was now the champion of Islam and its chief defender after the caliphate had been abolished.¹²

Harar was a major factor in this strategic Italian enterprise. During

the invasion, the Italians symbolically arranged for the ancient capital of Islam to be captured by the Muslim soldiers in their service. They also made sure that the backbone of the local garrison throughout the occupation would consist of Libyans and Somalis.¹³ The Italians had special plans for the town. Designed in Rome and repeated time and again by Graziani and others, Harar was now to finally fulfill its historical goal. "The sacred Muslim city of Ethiopia," Graziani promised, "is destined by the Italian government to a brilliant future and should become a great center radiating quranic study and Muslim civilization."¹⁴ Inspired and influenced by the Arabs of the Peninsula to become the center of Islam in East Africa for centuries, it was now Harar's turn to radiate interregional influence. Harar, the Italians promised, would become a revitalized center of Islamic scholarship, eventually competing with Egypt's Al-Azhar in inspiring learning in the Red Sea basin and Arabia.¹⁵ Beyond such declarations, the Italians did in fact invest in Harar's Islam. Arabic was declared the official language of the town and Islamic religious courts were fully empowered.¹⁶ Christians in Harar were openly told by Graziani (during his visit of 7–10 February 1937) that "they would have to give up all thought of retaining the social privileges they had enjoyed under the old regime."¹⁷ The local Italian-language newspaper, *Corriere Hararino*, included columns in Arabic. In May 1939, the leading Italian scholar of Ethiopian Islam, Enrico Cerulli (vice-governor of Africa Orientale Italiana as of December 1937) was appointed governor of Harar.¹⁸

Italian rule in Ethiopia was too short to demonstrate their true intentions and abilities. The idea of a scholarship center in Harar never developed. The *madrassa* that Haile Selassie opened hastily in 1935 with the help of Egyptian Al-Azhar remained small. Its head, Egyptian Shaikh Yusuf bin Yusuf, was most displeased with what he considered the Hararis' religious shallowness and preferred to remain in the nearby town of Dire Dawa.¹⁹ More substantial was the change in Harar's elementary education. The Italians subsidized the local Islamic schools and opened a general, modern "fascist" school. Of central importance to our story was their policy regarding the modern Islamic school that had been opened in 1933 by the local Islamic Voluntary Association. The Italians now supplied the school with new furniture, sports facilities, and teaching equipment. They facilitated the import of elementary Arabic-language textbooks from Egypt and also supplied the school with Arabic translations of Italian teaching materials. The school's headmaster, Shaikh 'Ali 'Abd al-Rahman ('Ali al-Sufi), retained his position and so did most of the teachers. However, they were now under direct

Italian control and salaried by the Italian administration. The Fascists allowed the Islamic Voluntary Association to continue its social activities and fundraising, but it was no longer permitted to interfere with the running of the school.²⁰

Many Muslims throughout Ethiopia welcomed the Italians and expressed their enthusiasm and gratitude for the changes they brought. The breaking of the Christian hegemony with all its discrimination against and humiliation of Muslims was accepted as a blessing that also had a taste of historical revenge. "So let the history of the world," declared Shaikh Ibrahim 'Abd al-Rahman of Harar in one speech, "record the great praise due to Italy for releasing us from the unbearable yoke which was around the necks of Muslims in the time of the brutal Negus. . . . Long live the Duce Benito Mussolini."²¹ Gradually, however, some resentment appeared among the Muslims. The Italians were happy to divide and rule in Ethiopia and spread their propaganda in the Arab Middle East, but they were not really ready to reconstruct Islamic independence, and surely not in the spirit that their propaganda implied. Their occupation was interventionist and often insensitive. By the end of 1936, the British consul in Harar already discerned growing dissatisfaction in the town. The Italians covered the beautiful walled city with barbed wire, opened bars next to holy places, and dictated everything without bothering to listen or consult.²² When Minister of Colonies Lessona visited the main mosque, he insisted on not taking off his shoes.²³ The Islamic Voluntary Association was practically ignored and stripped of its control of the modern school. The new administration centralized and controlled Harar's economic life, harming some local interests that had enjoyed commercial autonomy under the corrupt Ethiopian imperial regime.²⁴ The Muhammadali company, a Muslim-Indian-owned firm that, under Haile Selassie and with the indirect protection of British passports, had monopolized much of Ethiopia's long distance trade, began to collide with the authorities. Combining the Islamic upper commercial circles of Harar and Addis Ababa, and with branches in places like Jimma, it was targeted by the Fascists. In March 1937—much to the relief of Harar's small merchants—it had to cease its activities and its property was confiscated by the Italians.²⁵ In some cases of regional resistance, Muslims cooperated with Christians on equal footing. Following an attempt on Graziani's life in February 1937, Muslims, including the chief Muslim judge, were among those arrested.²⁶ Altogether, the Muslims' response to Italian policy was mixed. The British intelligence expert on Ethiopia, Colonel R. Cheesman, summarized the issue this way in his 1943 report:

In the early period of their occupation the Italians enjoyed a certain success in their policy of favoring the former subject peoples in the non-Amharic areas of the Ethiopian empire. That the subject peoples were to a large extent Mahometans was, however, an irrelevant consideration, however much the Italians may have played upon it. The Galla and Somalis welcomed the Italian occupation as offering a prospect of relief from Amhara oppression and as a novelty. The reasons of their dislike of the Amhara were, however, racial, administrative, social and economic, rather than religious.²⁷

In the same year, the British Foreign Office Research Department concurred with this underplaying of the religious dimension.

The customary role of Italy as the self-styled protector of Islam was expected to have especial advantages in a country where the dominant class was Christian and many of the subject peoples Moslem. . . . But the religious antagonism which these measures were intended to exploit did not in fact exist, for the Amhara had never put difficulties in the way of the practice of Islam.²⁸

In contrast, Alberto Sbacchi, a prominent historian of the Fascists' occupation of Ethiopia, concluded the following from a later perspective:

The support given by the Muslims to the Italians from 1935 to 1941 was indeed impressive as the Muslims for the first time enjoyed freedom of worship and liberal financial support for their schools and mosques. While the Italian rule lasted, the Muslims dreamed of making Ethiopia Muslim and the Italians hoped to become a Muslim power.²⁹

The Hajj and Saudi Policy, 1936–1941

After the Fascist occupation of Ethiopia, the importance of Saudi Arabia grew in Italian eyes.³⁰ Saudi Arabia's significance as the guardian of Islam's holy places, its being an independent state free of British or French control, and its proximity to their African Empire and the contacts they had already built there made it a potential pillar of the Italians' Middle Eastern dream. The Italians did their best to spread their influence in Saudi Arabia and conceived of the country as a prospective corridor to the core of the Middle East. In May 1936, just after their capture of the Ethiopian capital, they notified the Saudis that the Italian chargé d'affaires in Jedda had been promoted to minister plenipotentiary.³¹ On 29 May, six Italian airplanes landed in Jedda complete with

training crews, as a present to the Saudis. With the pioneer Saudi airmen already back from Italy, these planes were to represent the basis for an Italian-equipped Saudi Air Force. Their effort to thus create Saudi military dependency was combined with the intensification of their propaganda campaign. In Saudi Arabia, as in the rest of the Arab world, the Italians' focus was on their pro-Islamic policy in occupied Ethiopia and on their Arabization of Ethiopian Islam. Italian diplomats in Jeddah made an effort to convey this message to Ibn Sa'ud in person. During 1936, the Bari radio station was upgraded so that its broadcasts could be received in Hijaz.³² The Italian legation made extensive use of Arabic newspapers flown in from Libya, like *Al-'Adl*, *Raqib al-'Atid*, and *Barid Barqa*. These contained articles praising pro-Islamic Italian enterprises in both Libya and Ethiopia and were distributed regularly in Mecca and Jeddah.³³ Some of the articles were occasionally summarized and recycled in *Sawt al-Hijaz* (Jeddah) and *Umm al-Qura* (Mecca), though not with the regularity the Italians desired.³⁴

The hajj was undoubtedly the heart of the Italian effort to bridge both shores of the Red Sea in the service of their propaganda. Already on 10 May 1936, Perisco insisted on seeing Ibn Sa'ud to tell him that in the upcoming hajj season, some 1,900 Ethiopians would make the pilgrimage.³⁵ This was supposed to be good news for the Saudis whose financial situation was worsening for various reasons, among them the decline in the number of pilgrims throughout the 1930s due to the world economic depression.³⁶ In 1933, their number had reached the lowest point since the Saudi conquest of Mecca—19,500, only 11 of whom were from Haile Selassie's Ethiopia. In 1934–1935, only 29 recorded pilgrims came from Ethiopia, and in 1935–1936, only 7.³⁷ Now, the Italians declared they were ready to encourage Muslim Ethiopians to make the hajj and were furthermore ready to cover the transportation and travel expenses. In preparing for the 1936 hajj season, the Italians asked for Saudi authorization to open an Italian hospital in Mecca. In the end, they settled for a new dispensary with one doctor and five rented houses to see to the welfare of the Ethiopian pilgrims.³⁸ Estimates of their 1936 numbers ranged from 1,696 to 1,900, all subsidized, with the Italians having to exchange their Italian paper lire or Maria Theresa silver dollars for gold.³⁹ The new hajj enterprise in Ethiopia took the shape of a pioneering event, with missions organized in various provinces. In 1937, the momentum was only slightly lost, with the number of pilgrims reported from Africa Orientale Italiana as between 1,271 and 1,700.⁴⁰ Similar numbers were given for the remaining two years prior to Italy's entry into World War II.

The Ethiopian pilgrims were expected to serve the Italian cause during the hajj and many of them performed accordingly. During the 1936–1937 hajj, for example, author Muhammad Salim Batuq of Massawa made a speech in Mecca praising both the Fascists and Ibn Sa‘ud; his words were quoted in *Umm al-Qura* (of 22 February 1937). A group of twenty-five pilgrims from Harar were paid by the Italians to spread the word in Mecca about Haile Selassie’s anti-Islamic policy and the salvation brought by Mussolini.⁴¹ They were occasionally countered by anti-Fascist pilgrims from other countries and by exiled fellow Ethiopians. In the 1937 season, for example, Shaikh ‘Umar al-Azhari, the Harari who was one of the 1934 Ethiopian envoys to Saudi Arabia, worked to stem the pro-Italian propaganda. At the time, he was staying in Jibuti together with quite a number of other Ethiopian exiles, headed by Makonnen Habta-Wald, the chief Ethiopian Christian adviser on Muslim affairs of the now ex-emperor. In Mecca, ‘Umar al-Azhari praised Haile Selassie’s religious moderation and exposed Mussolini as a brutal imperialist.⁴²

For the thousands of Muslim Ethiopians who made the hajj under Italian auspices, it must have been a most inspiring experience. The episode, however, was short-lived. In 1941, Ethiopia would return to Haile Selassie’s hands and Christian domination would be intensively resumed. When World War II ended, the first hajj season of late 1945 witnessed a great revival of this all-Islamic institution, with the number of pilgrims that year exceeding 200,000 people (to compare, in 1937, there were 67,224; in 1938, 48,318; in 1939, 34,382).⁴³ Of these, only 57 adults and 5 children came from Ethiopia.⁴⁴ Yet, as we will see, in the long run the hajj connection during the Fascist occupation proved significant, especially in the Ethiopian-Wahhabi story in Harar.

One of the few pilgrims of the 1935 hajj season was Ibrahim Hasan, a leading member of the Islamic Welfare Association of Harar and a teacher in its school. In Medina, he made the acquaintance of Shaikh Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman Ibrahim, a fellow native of Harar. The latter, born in 1916, had made the hajj with his parents in 1928 and had remained in Medina. After completing his Wahhabi education, in 1935 he was appointed a teacher in the local Madrasat Dar al-Aytam. The bond between the two Hararis forged in Medina would have a significant impact on the history of Islam in their native town. Ibrahim Hasan was already fully ready to contribute to the demise of Haile Selassie’s Ethiopia. In Medina, he wrote an article exposing Ethiopia’s crimes against Islam and saw to its publication in one of the Arab journals. It included firsthand evidence by an Ethiopian citizen confirming the

accusations made by Shakib Arslan and many other Arab writers throughout the Middle East. Ibrahim Hasan remained in Medina for a while and returned to Harar after the Italians had occupied Ethiopia. Shaikh Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman left Saudi Arabia in 1938, spent a year in Asmara, and then settled in Addis Ababa, teaching Islam and importing Arabic books, mainly textbooks from Egypt.⁴⁵

Also making the hajj of 1935 was Syrian journalist Tayasir Zabiyan al-Kaylani. A lifelong friend of Arslan, he was already informed about and interested in the cause of Islam in Ethiopia. Like Arslan, Zabiyan was an admirer of Ibn Sa'ud and thought the king should lead the entire Islamic-Arab nation. In 1931, Zabiyan had established a newspaper in Damascus and called it *Al-Jazira* (The Peninsula), to emphasize the centrality of Arabia in Islam. Later in his career, he would move to Jordan where he would write on Saudi history and remain (until his death in 1978) a supporter of fundamentalist Islam and Wahhabism.

In late 1937, Zabiyan's book *Muslim Ethiopia: My Experiences in Islamic Lands*, was published in Damascus.⁴⁶ It was an account of his visit to Ethiopia in June 1936. It all began in Mecca during the hajj of 1935, he wrote (pp. 10–11). There he met with pilgrims from Ethiopia who told him at length about the plight of Muslims in their country. He mentioned no names but, given there were only seven Ethiopian pilgrims that year and from the spirit of the conversations he described, it seems that Ibrahim Hasan and Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman were among those he met. Following these discussions, and on the strong recommendation of one of the pilgrims, Zabiyan decided to go to Ethiopia to see things for himself. He crossed the Red Sea in early 1936, but with the war in full swing, the Italians would not let him in. He returned to Damascus and on 12 May 1936 celebrated the fall of Haile Selassie with an article in *Al-Jazira* stating that it was fitting punishment for what the emperor had done to Lij Iyasu. It was only on 4 June that he arrived in Addis Ababa. (On 5 June 1936, *Al-Jazira* accused the British of saving the emperor's skin.)

Zabiyan's book is an interesting record of the state of Islam in newly occupied Ethiopia. His visit began with a long interview with the governor, Graziani (pp. 39–45), which repeats the Italian promises and plans mentioned above. Though somewhat reserved, the author nevertheless barely concealed his admiration for the strong-willed Fascist and his gratitude for his help to Islam. Zabiyan then proceeded to Harar and nearby Dire Dawa (pp. 50–69). His impressions of the Muslims he met and interviewed can be characterized two ways. First, he was much impressed with those Muslim outsiders who came to help to rebuild

Islam in Ethiopia. He visited the camp of the 15,000 Libyan soldiers stationed near Harar and met with their leader, a captain in the Italian army. The man was the epitome of Islamic devotion and bravery. Zabiyan also spent time with Shaikh Yusuf 'Ali Yusuf, the Egyptian scholar who served under the Italians as the head of the *madrassa* in Harar—the same man who had been sent from Al-Azhar to help Haile Selassie open the school. Nevertheless, he was a proud anti-imperialist, extremely critical of Haile Selassie's Ethiopia, and he shared with Zabiyan what he knew about Christian hegemony and the maltreatment of Muslims in Ethiopia's history. The Egyptian sent detailed reports to the head of Al-Azhar, Shaikh al-Maraghi (who, meanwhile, had become a supporter of the pro-Islamic Italian policy in occupied Ethiopia).⁴⁷ Zabiyan's book is full of similar reports that the author collected in Harar and Addis Ababa.

The second impression Zabiyan had was one of disillusionment with Ethiopia's Muslims. He said their Islam was shallow, full of superstition and ignorance. It contained too many Sufi influences of the worst kind. Zabiyan concurred with his Azharite host that the Muslims of Harar were lazy, self-serving, and shameless in their subordination to the Fascists. Their children wanted handouts, and their traders were eager for new opportunities. In Harar, Zabiyan also met with the president of the Islamic Voluntary Association, Abu Bakr 'Abdallah Ayyub, but the man left too small an impression to deserve more than a mere mention. Much more space was devoted to Zabiyan's meeting in Addis with Hajj Barasu, Haile Selassie's chief Muslim adviser and a member of the Muhhamadali company (p. 79). Hajj Barasu, an old womanizer, a heavy smoker, and a happy man of leisure, was the only local Muslim who told Zabiyan that the emperor had been fair to Muslims and to Islam.

Before publishing his book, Zabiyan wanted to interview Mussolini himself. When the Duce came to Libya in March 1937 to wave "the sword of Islam" and to proclaim himself its defender, Zabiyan hurried there from Damascus. He was granted the interview (pp. 13–16), during which Mussolini repeated his promise to liberate the Muslims of Ethiopia and enhance Islam there. Mussolini also assured Zabiyan that he had no plans to invade Yemen or to penetrate the Arab Peninsula. Zabiyan included this interview at the very beginning of the book. Though he stated that by relaying the words of Mussolini he was not necessarily endorsing them, the spirit of the entire book is fully supportive of the change in Ethiopia. This attitude was strongly boosted by an introduction to the book written by Arslan (pp. 4–7). Here again, the main example is Harar. What had been a proud Islamic sultanate was

reduced to slavery under Christian Ethiopia and now, with proper help, would face a new dawn.

Although there is no direct evidence of dialogues between Zabiyan or Arslan with Ibn Sa‘ud regarding the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, his book certainly reached the king and his men.⁴⁸ No doubt Arslan and Zabiyan remained in constant touch with Hamza and Yasin, who were close to Prince Sa‘ud. After the final collapse of Ethiopia in early May 1935, the British assessed that Hamza’s influence had skyrocketed. Rumor had it that Ibn Sa‘ud was considering a treaty with Mussolini. In July 1936, the king was reported to be disillusioned with the British. According to one source, Ibn Sa‘ud told his entourage that “due to the strength of Greater Italy, Britain and her empire will soon be swept away—like many other similar empires, the Roman and the Ottoman—leaving it only a matter of history. . . .” He exhorted his small audience to avoid British connection as best they could lest they fall victims to their game of chess. He asked them to be very cautious during these days and to make it a point to kill the very seed of British influence on any aspect in the country, but at the same time to show no outward opposition or hostility toward them. He told his audience that the Italian government had promised to give advice and help through their newly appointed minister at Jedda whenever needed and that “it would behoove his officials to look to the Italian representative at Jedda for guidance.”⁴⁹

As already mentioned, for Ibn Sa‘ud, the entire international issue was a British-Italian collision, not an Ethiopian war. Documents indicate that after the occupation of Ethiopia, the Saudi elite persisted in its inherent indifference to the fate of, and developments in, the land of the *najashi*. I found very little Saudi interest in the Italian propaganda that aimed to impress them with Italy’s pro-Islamic policy in Ethiopia. The only direct evidence of any interest was the retrospective words of Hafiz Wahba, the Saudi ambassador to Britain. On 22 January 1941, as the British were about to destroy Africa Orientale Italiana, he said that Italy had failed to impress the Arab world “with one important exception. The Italians have been treating the Muslims in Ethiopia comparatively well. Parties of pilgrims, to whom special facilities were given, had been organized by the Italians.”⁵⁰

By the hajj season of late 1936, Ibn Sa‘ud had apparently recovered from his initial surprise at the British sacrifice of Ethiopia. The British were now making it clear that they were not about to allow the Italians to actually challenge them in the Middle East.⁵¹ In Egypt, the British came to terms with the nationalist movements, and in Palestine, they

demonstrated their resolve to quell the local Arab revolt. In October 1936, the British and the Saudis signed an agreement on slavery, which strengthened their bilateral relations and was seen in Riyadh as a step toward the admittance of Saudi Arabia to the League of Nations (both the British and Italian legations in Jeddah continued to help a trickle of manumitted Ethiopian slaves return to their country).⁵² Moreover, Ibn Sa'ud's inter-Arab policy now needed the British on its side. In April 1936, he signed an agreement with Iraq, and in May, with Egypt, both still under British rule.

Of greater significance from our Red Sea perspective was the new Saudi dialogue with Egypt. Though Ibn Sa'ud needed Egypt's friendship to counter his old rivalry with the Hashemites of Transjordan and Iraq, his relations with the country of the Nile had been marred since 1926. In that year, his Wahhabi warriors attacked the *mahmal*, the annual procession that carried the gold-embroidered cloth covering the Kaaba from Egypt. The "*mahmal* incident"⁵³ created deep enmity between Ibn Sa'ud and King Fuad of Egypt, himself a rival candidate for leadership of the Islamic world and an admirer of Mussolini. The death of Fuad in April 1936 and the coming to power of a Wafdist government in May paved the way for Egyptian-Saudi reconciliation. Not only was the new government ready to sign an agreement with the British, but its new consul to Saudi Arabia, appointed in November 1936, 'Abd al-Rahman 'Azzam, was one of the most prominent antifascists in the Arab Middle East. 'Azzam, a long-standing admirer of Ibn Sa'ud and already developing into a major figure in inter-Arab relations (he would be the first secretary-general of the Arab League established in 1945), had never forgiven the Italians for their atrocities in Libya. In Islamic circles, he lost no opportunity to denounce Mussolini and his interference in Middle Eastern affairs.⁵⁴ Though now disillusioned with the British for their weakness during the Abyssinian Crisis, 'Azzam still considered London capable of preventing Rome from applying much harsher imperialism in the region.⁵⁵ Again, I have no direct evidence of 'Azzam's dialogue with Ibn Sa'ud during his stay in Arabia but can safely assume that he joined with Prince Faysal in talking the king out of any pro-Italian inclination.

Ibn Sa'ud, to reiterate, had always been suspicious of Mussolini. In practice, he refused to recognize the Italian annexation of Ethiopia, at least not without British consent. The Saudi press reported that he was very pleased with the Italian initiative to send so many Muslims from Africa to the hajj, but beyond this, he showed no gratitude.⁵⁶ The Italian request, in March 1937, to build, staff, and finance a hospital in Mecca for the pilgrims from their colonies was never authorized. The Saudi

press was instructed to report that these were pilgrims from Somalia and Eritrea and thus avoid mentioning the Italian conquest of Ethiopia. Apparently to minimize the Italian propaganda effect, in 1936, for the first time, the king did not address the pilgrims who made the hajj at one huge banquet. Instead, four separate banquets were arranged: for Muslims from the Middle East, for Egyptians, for Indians, and "for all others" (including from China and Africa).⁵⁷ This arrangement remained in place in the coming years.⁵⁸

Mussolini's gestures helped only a little. By declaring in March 1937 that he was the defender of Islam, the Duce must have personally offended the ruler of the holy places. Ibn Sa'ud, the British reported in April and again in June, now humbled Hamza and told him to keep a low profile for a while. Rumors were spread accusing Hamza of taking bribes from the Italians. The king told the British that Mussolini was trying to squeeze tokens of support from him, but that he, Ibn Sa'ud, despised the Italian, who resembled the mad Roman emperor Caligula.⁵⁹ On 27 April 1937, three more Italian airplanes arrived and the Italians resumed their offer of more weaponry.⁶⁰ But Ibn Sa'ud began searching for a way to divest himself of the Italians' military involvement without overly offending them.⁶¹ In November 1937, he began negotiating secretly with Egypt about training his young pilots on their soil. In their correspondence with the Italians, the Saudis made it a point to refer to the king of Italy without mentioning that Vittorio Emanuele III was now officially also the emperor of Ethiopia. An Italian demand in January 1938 to correct the reference was politely rejected.⁶² In early 1938, the Italians made yet another effort to warm up relations. The famous orientalist Carlo Alfonso Nallino, editor of *Oriente Moderno* and a member of the Royal Italian Academy and of the Academy of Arabic Language in Cairo, landed in Jeddah on 9 February. Nallino came with his daughter Maria, an orientalist in her own right, and their declared aim was to enhance cultural relations between Italy and Saudi Arabia. In a book on Saudi Arabia that he published a year later, in Maria's articles, and in their private papers, their disappointment was evident. The visitors spent six weeks in the country but were not permitted to go to Riyadh. After weeks of pleading, Nallino was finally granted only a thirty-minute meeting with Ibn Sa'ud in Jeddah on 28 February 1938. The Italian scholar had to listen passively while Ibn Sa'ud lectured to him on Islamic history. The meeting ended with the arrival of the British minister, without Nallino having said a word.⁶³ Whatever message he carried from Rome, the response was a cold shoulder.

On 16 April 1938, the Italians and the British finally signed their

bilateral agreement. Of interest here is that it contained British recognition of *Africa Orientale Italiana* and a mutual commitment to retain the status quo in Arabia. In response, Ibn Sa'ud instructed Faysal in Jeddah to shower compliments on the Italian minister and "praise him more than usual."⁶⁴ He further telegraphed:

Write to him and thank him profusely and say that when you informed me of those things I was very grateful and said that is what we expected from Italy and that there is no doubt that they are our friends in all matters. We trust no one except first God and then them. . . . As for the British Minister, tell him that we are fully satisfied first with God and then with the British Government. . . .⁶⁵

Yet in spite of additional Italian offers of arms, the Saudis took their time about recognizing their annexation of Ethiopia. On 31 October 1938, they received word from the British that they could do so,⁶⁶ and on 29 November, Foreign Minister Faysal informed Rome of Saudi recognition in a laconic, dry letter.⁶⁷

By that time, it seems, Ibn Sa'ud was determined to throw in his lot with the British. He may have assumed that the British were still stronger in the Red Sea arena. In March 1939, the Italian flight trainers were told to leave and the young Saudi pilots left for Egypt. Italy still swallowed its pride and exchanged polite words with Ibn Sa'ud.⁶⁸ In late 1939 and early 1940, the Fascists even strengthened their propaganda campaign. More pilgrims from Ethiopia were sent to Mecca. More Islamic personalities were invited to tour Ethiopia, and their positive impressions of Islam there were relayed across the Red Sea.⁶⁹ When Italy entered the war in June 1940, Saudi Arabia remained officially neutral. Expressing some interest in Ethiopia, Hafiz Wahba in London told the British that while he understood that they were friends of Haile Selassie, his country expected Britain also to consider the various minorities there. In January 1941, as the British-Italian struggle over Ethiopia began, Wahba added that the Saudi's main concern in Ethiopia was the fate of the Islamic community in Harar.⁷⁰

Harar and Wahhabiyya, 1941–1942: Which Islam?

On 19 January 1941, the British invaded *Africa Orientale Italiana*. With the Suez canal in their hands, they enjoyed military superiority in the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. At that time, that was the only corner of the world where they could gain a victory, and they pushed forward on

all fronts. On 27 March, they captured Harar, and they took Asmara four days later. Addis Ababa was liberated on 3 May 1941, and Emperor Haile Selassie—who, with British guidance, had helped to inspire Ethiopian guerrillas—waited two days to enter his capital ceremoniously on exactly the same date on which it had fallen five years earlier. On 4 February 1941, the British government declared it had no territorial claims in Ethiopia and implied that it would restore Haile Selassie's authority within the previous borders. Though not all British military political officers were in agreement, the emperor's government was duly reestablished in all core regions, including the town of Harar.

Apart from Wahba's statement to the British in January 1941, I found no record of any direct Saudi interest in Ethiopia or its Muslims during the entire period discussed in this chapter. But indirect Saudi influence was very much in evidence. The thousands of Ethiopian hajj-makers who crossed the Red Sea courtesy of the Fascists were exposed to Wahhabi ideas and to Islamic political activism in the vein of Arslan and Zabiyan. Since the early nineteenth century, Wahhabi control over the hajj had been instrumental in spreading their influence in various corners of the Muslim world.⁷¹

Two Harari personalities have already been introduced: Shaikh Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman and Hajj Hasan Ibrahim, who had spent time in Saudi Arabia in the early 1930s and adopted Wahhabi concepts. Shaikh Yusuf, back in Addis Ababa in 1939, would indeed become the leading figure in spreading the *Wahhabiyya* in Harar and in Ethiopia. Below, we shall follow his activities throughout the period discussed here. In 1976, he would leave Ethiopia and return to Medina where he is still active (in 2005) as a Harari Wahhabi. It is also from his writings—and from those of his anti-Wahhabi Harari rivals—that we can reconstruct the story of the 1940s.⁷² A third Harari worth mentioning here was Hajj 'Umar Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahman, another member of the Islamic Welfare Association, which, as mentioned, was rather dormant under the Fascists.

After the British liberated the country, in the early summer of 1941, Shaikh Yusuf traveled from Addis Ababa back to his native Harar. He met with Hajj 'Umar and told him it was time to revive the Harari nation and to do so in the spirit of political Islam. Shaikh 'Umar, who had stayed in Harar under the Italians, was skeptical. He said that the Hararis were divided and too concerned with their own trivial interests. He spoke of their shallow, popular Islam in the same language as Zabiyan. Shaikh Yusuf, to his frustration, now saw firsthand how the better-united Christian Ethiopians had reasserted their governance. He

gathered some of the Islamic elders and approached the British provincial adviser in Harar, Colonel Dallas. Their petition for British backing to restore Harar's independence was flatly rejected, with the British not even bothering to invite them to sit down. It was after that offense, Shaikh Yusuf wrote, that he decided to lay down the infrastructure for a long campaign.⁷³ He began by making speeches in the central mosque, and after three weeks was in a position to gather all those who agreed to work for an Islamic state in Harar, many of whom were graduates of the Jam'iyya school.⁷⁴ They declared the establishment of a National Islamic Association (*Al-Jam'iyya al-Wataniyya al-Islamiyya*)—popularly known as *Al-Watani*, the national or the patriot—to replace the old Islamic Welfare Association. A twelve-man secretariat and other bodies were elected. All members of the leading bodies were *hujjaj*, persons who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. They all swore to free Harar from the yoke of Ethiopian colonialism and to rebuild an Islamic state on the historical model of Ahmad Gagn, centered on Harar and uniting—through the true Islam—its tribal Somali hinterland.⁷⁵

According to Shaikh Yusuf, in that summer of 1941 they all realized that they could not risk a frontal confrontation with the Ethiopians before intensive reeducation of Harar's Muslims. It was therefore decided that the Watani Islamic Association would focus on the revival of the Islamic school that had been established by the old Welfare Association. After three months of fundraising and preparations, Shaikh Yusuf wrote, the school was reopened under the management of Hajj 'Umar. Its curriculum was quite similar to that of the old school—classes in modern sciences combined with Arabic and Islam.⁷⁶ However, this time, it was Wahhabi Islam taught by Hajj Ibrahim Hasan.

While Shaikh Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman was busy running the Watani Association, the moving spirit in the school was Hajj Hasan. As testified to by one of his students, he not only taught the Wahhabi doctrine in school, but also organized evening classes in his home. It was the result of his example and endeavors, Yusuf Isma'il wrote fifty-six years later, that the *Wahhabiyya* spread and that he managed to attract and unite its followers. In preaching against the popular Islam of Harar, Hajj Hasan told his students they had to purify their faith, that they were drowning in superstitions and vanity like followers of grave cults. He told them that what they called Islam verged on polytheism (*shirk*).⁷⁷ Instead of worshipping the grave of Abadir, the founder of Harar, the school began educating its students in the Islamic militant spirit of Gagn. Gagn's history as the holy warrior who united all Muslims around Harar and destroyed Christian Ethiopia became one of the school's messages. It was recycled

in poems, in the school's hymn, and in parades and ceremonies organized by the Watani Islamic Association.⁷⁸ Shaikh Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman, himself an owner of a bookstore in Addis Ababa, imported Arabic textbooks from Egypt. These included copies of *Al-Qira'a al-Rashida*, the standard elementary Arabic textbook introduced in the 1930s in the core countries of the Middle East, as well as copies of Wahhabi literature.

The initial response of the Ethiopian government was tentative. Though the "Gragn trauma" was now, after the Fascists' work, more relevant than ever, the Christian authorities were still disorganized. Harar, however, remained a focus of the emperor's attention. From his own history, he knew that the town was an important key to all-Ethiopian influence and power. His favorite son, Lij Makonnen, was restored as the "Duke [*leul*] of Harar" (he had been given the title in 1934) and resided in the town. Haile Selassie's son-in-law Ras Andarge Masai was appointed governor of the province. Both busied themselves with rebuilding their administration, this time also answerable to a new Ministry of Interior in the capital.⁷⁹ They were also busy reconstructing the old network of economic and commercial monopolies in collaboration with the local upper circles and at the expense of the middle class that the Italians had upgraded. Their men in Harar did pay some attention to the activities of the Watani Association. Shaikh Yusuf wrote of a policeman who removed the sign over the Jam'iyya school. Sometime during the 1941–1942 school year, an education inspector (Kebede Mikael, later minister of education) visited the school. Having listened to translations of the hymns praising Gragn, he forbade the singing of them. He then forced the school to reintroduce Amharic as the principal language.⁸⁰ Naturally the Ethiopian government remained most suspicious of and attentive to information regarding Islamic affairs. Haile Selassie's chief adviser on Islamic affairs, Makonnen Habta-Wald, who had long been in touch with the community of Harari merchants and dignitaries in Addis Ababa, coordinated activities aimed at restoring full Christian hegemony throughout the country.

The real confrontation that followed was not between the Ethiopian authorities and the Wahhabi-inspired Watani Association, but between the latter and their local Muslim opponents. The majority of Harar's inhabitants, though resentful of the renewed Ethiopian intrusion, were not ready to begin a costly struggle against Ethiopia, nor were they really inclined to adopt that kind of fundamentalist Islam. As mentioned above, Harari Islam, though it preserved the collective memory of political independence and of anti-Ethiopian jihad, was rather a pragmatic mixture of Sunni moderate orthodoxy and Sufism. It was a flexible, apo-

litical Islam capable of coexisting with other cultures and, by the 1940s, long-adapted to accepting Christian Ethiopian hegemony. Harar's culture was highly permissive, in many ways revolving around popular cults of grave visitation and ecstatic ceremonies of saint worship, *zīkr*. It was strongly based on the Sufi principle of *tawassul*, reaching Allah through intercession. Side by side with a tradition of Sunni orthodox learning and law, Harar was also a producer and exporter of qat, the narcotic that influenced and reflected Harar's Sufism as well as the town's leisure life and pragmatic commerce. The *Wahhabiyya* categorically rejected all these. It had developed in the Arabian desert of Najd, not in an intercultural environment like Ethiopia. Imported into Harar from Saudi Arabia, in large part due to the Fascists' enterprise, and feeding also on the resentment of some local middle class circles, *Wahhabiyya* was able to take root by reviving the local legacy of Gagn and giving it a new theological interpretation. But it collided with the equally resilient legacy of Shaikh Abadir—that of Harar's relatively popular, flexible religiosity, adaptability, and pragmatism.

The man who now rose to oppose the *Wahhabiyya* in Harar was Shaikh 'Abdallah ibn Muhammad ibn Yusuf. Born in Harar in the 1910s, he received an orthodox education and became associated with the local *Qadiriyya* Sufi fraternity. Further pursuing his studies, he spent time in Jimma where he became affiliated with the *Tijaniyya* fraternity. 'Abdallah was also said to be visiting Islamic centers in Wallo and other Ethiopian regions.⁸¹ Before and during the Fascist occupation, Shaikh 'Abdallah spent most of his time in Addis Ababa where he integrated into the local Islamic commercial circles led by figures like Hajj Barasu and the agents of the Muhammadali company. These circles, which included strong Harari representation, had cooperated economically and even socially with the imperial regime prior to the Italian conquest. During the Italian occupation, some of them, like Hajj Barasu, remained in contact with Makonnen Habta-Wald and Shaikh 'Umar al-Azhari in Jibuti and Paris. Shaikh 'Abdallah spent considerable time in Addis Ababa's *mercato*, in bookstores, in coffee houses, and at qat sessions, gaining fame as a Sunni scholar and widening his circle of admirers. His strong character and charismatic personality indeed paved the way to a long career. He would leave Ethiopia at the end of this period and begin to build his scholarly prominence in the Middle East. In our concluding chapter, we shall return to Shaikh 'Abdallah at the beginning of the twenty-first century when he is the head of an all-Islamic, international association, which is arguably the more effective opponent of the *Wahhabiyya* in the world of Islam.

In Harar of 1941–1948, Shaikh ‘Abdallah began his lifetime rivalry with Shaikh Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman. Upon hearing of the establishment of the Watani Islamic Association, and the activities of the renewed school, Shaikh ‘Abdallah organized the opposition to the *Wahhabiyya*. He initiated provocative disturbances during the meetings of the association and met with students of the school to deter them from the Wahhabi doctrine. One of those students, Yusuf Isma‘il, testified that the shaikh was, at that time, also critical of the modern aspects of the school’s curriculum, including the pictures in the imported textbooks and geography lessons that taught that the world was round.⁸² His rivalry with the Wahhabi group soon turned into enmity, and the Harari community split along personal and theological lines. When Hajj Ibrahim Hasan quoted a Wahhabi interpretation of a quranic verse that implied that Allah sat like a human being, Shaikh ‘Abdallah made public mockery of it. He made speeches against the Wahhabi’s personification of God and their worship of the Quran to the extent of betraying the true spirit of the Sunna. He appealed to the Hararis to define themselves as *Ahl al-sunna wal-jama‘a* (the community of orthodox Islamic beliefs) and to declare the Wahhabis infidels. In late 1941, heated discussions in coffee houses and qat sessions turned into street fighting. Shaikh ‘Abdallah called on the Hararis to boycott the school even after the Ethiopian authorities had modified its curriculum. Sometime in late 1941 or early 1942, following one of his provocative actions against the school, he was even arrested and held in custody for a while.⁸³ The arrest may have been staged by the government, which undoubtedly supported Shaikh ‘Abdallah. Back in Addis Ababa, the shaikh was said to have informed the government about Hajj Ibrahim Hasan’s 1935 article in the Arab press that denounced Christian Ethiopia in general, and Haile Selassie in particular. Hajj Hasan and the other Wahhabi teachers in the school were duly arrested and tried. Hajj Hasan was sentenced with others to exile from Harar to another part of Ethiopia, where he died 23 years later.⁸⁴ Shaikh ‘Abdallah was now appointed the Mufti of Harar, and the Wahhabi activists in Harar had to keep a low profile and bide their time. Their next opportunity for organizing would come in 1947.

The “Fraternal Strife of the Club” and the Fall of Political Islam in Harar, 1947–1948

Throughout 1942–1947, the proponents of political Islam in Harar, like elsewhere in Ethiopia, had to come to terms with the resolidification of

Haile Selassie's regime. The Ethiopian imperial government was now determined to fully revive Christian hegemony and punish Muslims who had collaborated with the Italians.⁸⁵ In 1942, the Church's Egyptian connection was resumed, with the return of Abuna Qerilos V from Cairo. In 1946–1948, this ancient church bond underwent modernization when the Egyptian Copts agreed to the appointment of five Ethiopian bishops and declared that the next *abuna* would be an Ethiopian. Meanwhile, the translation of the Bible into Amharic had been completed. The church regained its economic assets and, under the emperor's close control, reasserted much of its traditional influence throughout the country. The swift recuperation of Christianity as the country's hegemonic culture was multidimensional. It also proved helpful in the emperor's new campaign to annex the territories of the fallen Italian empire, those lying outside of Ethiopia's pre-1935 borders. With the end of World War II in 1945, a diplomatic struggle over both Eritrea and Italian Somalia began. The Ogaden region, which according to Anglo-Ethiopian agreements of 1942 and 1944 was to be returned to Ethiopia, was still temporarily in British military hands.

The Ethiopian campaign to regain Eritrea proved successful. The Ethiopians played their international diplomatic cards well, and, with the help of the Church (and through systematic intimidation and manipulation), managed to win most Christian Eritreans over to their cause. In late 1947, the Eritrean Unionist Party was instrumental in persuading the UN's fact-finding commission sent to gauge public opinion in the former Italian colonies. In 1952, Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia and was fully annexed in 1962. I shall return to the Eritrean story in the following chapters.

Ethiopia's aim and methods with regard to Italian Somalia (under British military rule) were similar. At the UN, the emperor demanded the entire former Italian colony, and his diplomatic team included Somalis from Harar and Ogaden—namely, Hajj 'Umar al-Azhari and Hajj Farah. The Italians countered by requesting restoration of their colony, including the Ogaden. No diplomatic solution was worked out in 1946–1947, and the issue, connected to the Eritrean problem, awaited the same UN fact-finding commission.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, a third element had appeared forcefully on the scene. Back in 1943 an authentic Somali nationalist movement, backed by the British and strongly anti-Italian, was established in Mogadishu. Called the Somali Youth Club, it began working for Somali independence and quickly spread through all Somali-inhabited areas.⁸⁷ In 1946, the British estimated its membership at over 25,000. In 1947, anticipating the UN commission, the movement

changed its name to the Somali Youth League and established branches in the Ogaden. The 1947–1948 momentous rise of Somali nationalism reenergized and added a new dimension to the Ethiopian-Islamic story revolving around Harar.

The Ethiopian government responded to the new developments by trying to use Harar's Somali connection as a springboard to the Ogaden and to the whole of former Italian Somalia. Hajj Farah was sent to establish a new Somali Mutual Relief Association, which was also sponsored by the Harari community in Addis Ababa (headed by Hajj Barasu) and worked openly to mobilize Somalis in support of unification with Ethiopia. Its emblem was a combination of a cross and a crescent, and its membership cards were printed in Amharic. To combat any potential anti-Ethiopian Islamic dynamism, the government announced that no pilgrims from Harar would be allowed to leave for Mecca in the forthcoming Hajj season.⁸⁸

However, in spite of the Ethiopian money distributed in Harar and in the Ogaden, the Somali Mutual Relief Association scored only minor success.⁸⁹ No doubt Haile Selassie knew he needed a better Trojan horse among the Somalis, one comparable to the Eritrean Unionist Party. Because some leading Somali tribal leaders in the Ogaden proved ready to benefit from both Somali nationalism and Ethiopian favors⁹⁰ (Maqtil Tahir, heading the league's branches in the Ogaden had the imperial Ethiopian honorific title of *Qannazmach*), the plot then weaved in Addis Ababa was to try to convert the anti-Italian Somali Youth Club into an Ethiopian tool.

In early 1947, the Ethiopians enabled the Somali Youth Club (the old name persisted) to open a branch in Harar as well as elsewhere in Ethiopia. According to British reports, the Harari branch was soon a success; 800 members registered in August and over 1,000 in October. Their political and religious energies, however, were not really controlled by the Ethiopians. As the future of the area was being debated, many Hararis began to emphasize their Somali identity and roots, and in return were harassed by the Ethiopian police.⁹¹ In late 1947, the British reported that the Ahmad Gragn spirit in town had been wholly revived. The air was filled with slogans calling for Harar's independence and its annexation to a free Islamic Somali state. Pictures of various Arab kings and drawings of Gragn—the Islamic holy warrior who had united Hararis and Somalis against Ethiopia—were posted on walls,⁹² and the rumor spread that Harar would soon become the capital of an Islamic, Somali state.⁹³ At first most members of the Watani Islamic Association were suspicious of the club. Their agenda was local Harari-Islamic, not

Somali (indeed the modern Arabic term *wataniyya* implies local patriotism rather than ethnic nationalism). But having lost their game in 1941–1942, the renewed Somali momentum of 1947 seemed yet another option to revive Islam's political identity and remove the Ethiopian yoke. By 15 November 1947, all members of the Watani Association, in spite of the wary disapproval of Shaikh Yusuf, then in Addis Ababa, had also joined the Somali Youth Club.⁹⁴ With word spreading that the UN fact-finding commission was to visit Mogadishu the following January, tension in Harar grew.

On 24 November 1947, the Ethiopian deputy governor of Harar made his move. He was none other than Blata Ayele Gabru, who back in 1935 led the last Ethiopian mission to Ibn Sa'ud. No doubt he still carried the memory of his humiliation by the Wahhabi state and of the paternalistic way that Ibn Sa'ud ignored Ethiopia in her hour of plight and helped Mussolini. Ayele Gabru had been educated in the Capuchin Mission school in Harar (the one attended by the emperor in his youth) and was most familiar with the new developments and the personalities involved. He now hastened to arrest the club's chairman, Hajj Khalil, and replace him with his local agent, Ibrahim 'Abd al-Salam. He then convened a gathering of dignitaries and made them apologize to the emperor for evoking the Gragn spirit and for wishing to secede from Ethiopia.⁹⁵ Shaikh Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman recalled that it was Shaikh 'Abdallah—undoubtedly in close touch with Ayele Gabru—who pulled the strings and tried to manipulate the club.⁹⁶ Judging by the ensuing events, however, it is clear that the Ethiopians now had better intelligence on the club's activities, but no real control over it.

In January 1948 it all exploded. Examining the British reports, the recollections of Shaikh Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman and of Yusuf Ismail, and papers by Harari students in Addis Ababa University (based on oral testimonies) provides the following picture. When it was established that the UN commission was coming to Mogadishu, the club's leadership talked the Watani Islamic Association members into traveling together to Mogadishu to meet with the international diplomats. A similar call came from the Somali Youth League in Mogadishu. Shaikh Yusuf recalled that he warned against such a move, fearing Ethiopian provocation. A delegation was secretly organized consisting of four original Watani members, eight club members, and one independent person. By mid-January, they managed to cross the lines and reach Mogadishu, where they were enthusiastically received in the streets but managed to receive little attention from the international committee. They were flatly told by its members that Harar, as an Ethiopian town, had nothing to

do with the issue of former Italian colonies. After two more months in Mogadishu, the delegates were ordered by the British to leave. They had applied for asylum in various Arab countries and obtained it from Saudi Arabia, most probably through the connections of Shaikh Yusuf. They were then hosted in the Saudi town of Ta'if for two months and enjoyed the hospitality of Prince Faysal. The latter arranged for their transportation to Egypt and for their reception by his old friend 'Abd al-Rahman 'Azzam, now secretary general of the Arab League. True to his old pro-Ethiopian policy 'Azzam told the Harari delegates that the Arab League, occupied with the war in Palestine, would not deal with the issue of Islamic Harar. However, Hasan al-Banna, the leader of the Muslim Brothers, was ready to take care of their maintenance in Cairo.⁹⁷

Meanwhile, on 21 January 1948, the Ethiopian secret police arrested 52 members of the Watani Association and the Somali Youth Club. A general strike was called for the next day, and a delegation of 50 elders approached the governor. They were all arrested. A public gathering was proclaimed under the governor, only to end with more arrests. By February 1948, the number of detainees stood at more than 200 and all were subject to investigation. By March, most of the detainees, after begging for imperial forgiveness, had been released. Haile Selassie was apparently more considerate toward the Youth Club members and their Somali irredentism than toward the Hararis and their Islamic political orientations. Eighty-one members of the Watani Islamic Association, its leadership and backbone, were all sentenced to exile. Divided into three groups, they were sent to other parts of Ethiopia (to Jimma, Gore, and Gojjam). Most were allowed to return after one year.

Simultaneously, in December 1948, the emperor, fearing that the whole issue would ignite anti-Ethiopian sentiments in the Arab East, sent conciliatory messages to those who fled to Egypt, and nearly all returned.⁹⁸ Having asked for imperial pardon, most of those activists preferred now to settle humbly in the capital. Meanwhile, on 23 September 1948, Ethiopia regained the Ogaden and thus sealed its full control over Hararge province. However, Haile Selassie's plot to use the Somali Youth League to gain Italian Somalia as well proved illusionary.

The events of January 1948 in Harar marked the end of the Islamic political revival in Ethiopia that began in 1936. They can be viewed together with the simultaneous victory of the Christians over the Muslims in determining the future of Eritrea. Revived Ethiopia regained both the Ogaden and Eritrea and reasserted Christian hegemony over their Islamic communities. Beyond the similarities, there were also significant differences. The Muslims of Eritrea had been integrated into

that entity by the Italians in the late nineteenth century. They had hardly ever been under Christian Ethiopian rule and now were not even partially assimilated into the all-Ethiopian fabric. Rather, they would soon associate themselves with revolutionary Middle Eastern pan-Arabism, create a modern liberation front, and from the end of the 1950s, fight for the establishment of an Arab-Eritrean identity.

In comparison, the demise of political Islam in Harar was more significant. Harar was both an integral part of Ethiopia (after 1887) and, for centuries, the capital of Islam in the Horn (most Eritrean Muslims had adopted Islam in the 1820s). No wonder the Fascists considered Harar a springboard to their Middle East-oriented imperial vision. As we have seen, Harar was a center of local, *habashi*, popular and flexible Islam, but was also a center of learning and hajj, maintaining contact with Mecca and Arabia since Harar's medieval incipience. The town was also the historical capital of Gagn, always carrying the legacy of the anti-Ethiopian jihad. This was a legacy of holy war based on the unification of Somalis, Adaris, and other local groups, as well as on Arabian inspiration and help. It was this Harari-Gagn dimension, indirectly revitalized by the Fascists and more directly through their hajj enterprise, that had the potential of combining with the *Wahhabiyya* and its fundamentals. Moreover, the stricter principles of Wahhabi Islam appealed to some of the local traders, long deprived by the regime-connected leading families, as a potentially suitable ideological platform for local revival. Importing the Wahhabi doctrine and militancy from Saudi Arabia made Harar of the 1940s a challenge to Ethiopian culture, both Christian and Muslim. At the same time, as we have seen, Harar had always had an equally strong, or perhaps even stronger, dimension, that could not coexist with Wahhabism. Forcefully and successfully, it resisted the imported doctrine.

Shaikh Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman, the leader of the *Wahhabiyya* in Harar, temporarily had to acknowledge defeat.⁹⁹ From the beginning he wanted local, Harari fundamentalization, not the overt anti-Ethiopian, Gagn-like militancy of cooperating with non-Hararis. After 1948, with the dismemberment of the Islamic National Association, the school in Harar was put under the direction of Ahmad Kibu, a loyal functionary of the imperial regime. Shaikh Yusuf, who thought that patient education of Hararis was the key to Islamic victory, went on teaching the school's standard Amharic-based (with some Arabic) curriculum. He spent most of his time in his Addis Ababa bookstore and in time would usefully serve the government. He would become a member of Parliament, as well as the head of the imperial Hajj Committee, which regulated the

pilgrimage to Mecca under the watchful eye of the regime. Shaikh Yusuf would also find himself helping the emperor with the ultimate stage of the Ethiopianization of the country's Muslims, namely the translation of the Quran into Amharic.¹⁰⁰ As long as Haile Selassie was in power, the country saw no real sign of Wahhabi revival or of any other effective manifestation of political Islam. Only in 1976, after the rise of the communist regime in Ethiopia, did Shaikh Yusuf return to Medina. As we shall discuss below, he stayed in Saudi Arabia until 2004, helping and inspiring the Wahhabi followers of today's Ethiopia. He returned to Harar in the summer of that year.

Also in 1948, Shaikh 'Abdallah left Ethiopia. As one of his younger associates testified, Haile Selassie accused him of foiling the dream of annexing Italian Somalia.¹⁰¹ He passed through Mecca and then spent time in Jerusalem and in Damascus. In 1950, he moved to Beirut, where in 2005, he is still active. In the 1980s, he established his Association of Islamic Philanthropic Projects (*Al-Ahbash*), which by the turn of the century had become an important movement in the all-Islamic context, leading Sunni Islam in Lebanon and participating in the moderate Islamic struggle against Wahhabism on all continents. We shall return to this later. The rivalry between Shaikh 'Abdallah al-Harari and Shaikh Yusuf al-Harari has indeed become a dynamic reflection of what troubles Muslims not only in Ethiopia but also in the entire world.

In their current Wahhabi-"Ethiopian" polemics, the two old shaikhs and their followers often return to the formative events in Harar of 1941-1948. Shaikh 'Abdallah and his men claim that the shaikh was an Islamic patriot who hated Haile Selassie and his Christian domination, that he stood for the true, sober and moderate Islam, the Ethiopian-Islamic version, capable of coexisting and prospering with moderate Christians. They deny that Shaikh 'Abdallah plotted with the imperial government against Harar's independence.¹⁰² It was because of the *Wahhabiyya*, they charge, and because of Shaikh Yusuf and his friends who imported this fanaticism from Saudi Arabia, that such a disaster befell the Islamic community in Harar. Shaikh Yusuf, they claim, was the instigator of the self-destructive strife,¹⁰³ and Wahhabi fundamentalism led inevitably to reckless militancy. The Wahhabis in today's Harar, on their part, call their 1941-1948 trauma *fitnat al-kulub* (the *fitna* of the club). *Fitna* in Arabic has various meanings, including a fratricidal war, as well as provocation, temptation, enticement, and heresy. In the eyes of today's Harari followers of Shaikh Yusuf, nearly all those meanings are applicable. They were disastrously tempted to immaturely join an overt, regional anti-Ethiopian cause (and many radical Hararis would be

tempted to repeat this mistake—to the regret of Shaikh Yusuf—in the late 1970s and as of the 1990s). They were provoked to do so by those who sought a self-defeating fratricidal strife. It was ‘Abdallah, “the instigator shaikh,” they insist, who thus betrayed the Islamic nation of Harar to his Christian masters.¹⁰⁴ His kind of Islam, maintain the Wahhabis, is a heretical prescription for Islamic humiliation and defeat. Only the *Wahhabiyya*, they claim, and persistent spreading of Islamic fundamentalism, is the key to the salvation of Ethiopia and all of Islam.

Notes

1. The title “Custodian of the Holy Places” was adopted officially by the Saudis in 1986 only.

2. For general analyses of Islam in Ethiopia during the Fascists occupation, see Borruso, *L’Ultimo Impero Cristiano*, pp. 194–197, 229–232; Borruso, “La crisi politica e religiosa dell’impero etiopico sotto l’occupazione fascista,” pp. 57–111; Buonasorte, “La politica religiosa italiana in Africa Orientale dopo la conquista,” pp. 53–114. For a succinct summary, see Sbacchi, *Ethiopia Under Mussolini*, pp. 161–166.

3. FO 401/35, Stonehewer-Bird to Eden, 4 January 1938, “Report on Events in Ethiopia During 1937.”

4. FO 371/20202, “Italian Policy Regarding Arabs in Ethiopia and the Near East,” by Mr. Roberts, Addis Ababa, 18 August 1936.

5. See detailed declaration in “Manifestation of Loyalty,” *Giornale di Addis Ababa*, 12 August 1936, in FO 371/20202. See also FO 371/20200, Barton to Eden, 17 June 1936.

6. See Erlich, “Identity and Church,” pp. 23–46.

7. FO 371/20202, “Italian Policy Regarding Arabs in Ethiopia and the Near East,” by Mr. Roberts, Addis Ababa, 18 August 1936.

8. FO 371/20927, “Italian Regime in Ethiopia: Question of the Mohammedan Element,” by Mr. Roberts, 22 December 1936.

9. FO 371 20940, “Records of Leading Personalities in Abyssinia,” 4 May 1937.

10. FO 401/35, Stonehewer-Bird to Eden, 4 January 1938, “Report on Events in Ethiopia during 1937”; FO 401/35, Roberts to Eden, 3 November 1936.

11. For this effort in Saudi Arabia, see “Annual Report 1937,” *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, pp. 555–560.

12. See Claudio Segre, “Liberal and Fascist Italy in the Middle East,” pp. 199–212.

13. *Giornale di Addis Ababa*, 12 August 1936, in FO 371/20202.

14. *Giornale di Addis Ababa*, 12 August 1936, in FO 371/20202.

15. FO 371/20202, “Italian Policy Regarding Arabs,” and FO 371/20927, “Italian Regime in Ethiopia.”

16. The reintroduction of Arabic as an official language in Harar was well-received throughout the Arab world and to the credit of Italy. The Italians made an effort to give it wide publicity in the Middle East. See ASMAI, EFG, Busta 113, "La Lingua Araba Ristabilita nell'Harar," Cairo, 18 June 1936. See also FO 371/20056, Calvert to Eden, Jedda, 5 September 1936.

17. FO 371/20928, Report by British Consulate, Harar, Acting Consul T. Wikeley, 11 February 1937.

18. See Ricci, "Cerulli, Enrico," pp. 708–709.

19. Zabiyan, *Al-Habasha al-muslima*, pp. 50–52.

20. Yusuf, *Qissat al-Kulub*, pp. 42–45.

21. FO 371/20928, "Extract from Corriere Hararino of 15 May 1937— Translation of Speech Made by Shaykh Ibrahim ibn Mohammed Abdurrahman," in Bird to FO, 14 June 1937. See more examples in ASMAI, EFG, Busta 113, Ciano to Pilotti, 25 August 1936; FO 371/20202, "Manifestations of Loyalty," attached to "Italian Policy Regarding Arabs"; FO 401\35, Roberts to Eden, 3 November and 29 November 1936; FO 371/20929, "Marshal Graziani's Tour," in Helm to FO, 6 October 1937.

22. FO 401/35, Wikeley to Bond, 9 February 1937; FO 371/20928, Wikeley to FO, 11 February 1937.

23. FO 371/20928, Bond to Thompson, 1 March 1937.

24. FO 401/35, Wikeley to Stonehewer-Bird, 17 May 1937; FO 371/20929, Ellison to FO, 2 November 1937.

25. FO 401/35, Drummond to Eden, 25 March 1937; Helm to Eden, 14 September 1937.

26. FO 371/20928, Stonehewer-Bird to FO, 9 March 1937.

27. FO 370/1287, Howe to Eden, 5 July 1943.

28. FO 371/35626, "Draft Paper on Ethiopia" (for the Italian Handbook), by Mr. Bernard Wall (Research Department, FO) to Mr. Howard, 4 June 1943.

29. Sbacchi, *Ethiopia Under Mussolini*, p. 165.

30. See Pizzigallo, *La Diplomazia dell'Amicizia*, pp. 94–95.

31. Yusuf Yasin to King, 31 May 1936, *SASIR*, p. 166.

32. "Annual Report 1937," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, pp. 555–560.

33. FO 371/20056, Calvert to Eden, 28 September 1936.

34. Perisco to Ministero, 10 July 1936, ASMAI, EFG, Busta 115; "Report for October 1937," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 127.

35. FO 371/20056, Ryan to FO, 13 May 1936.

36. For a general analysis of the hajj and its place in Saudi history, see Teitelbaum, "The Saudis and the Hajj."

37. FO 371/20055, "Report on the Pilgrimage of 1936 (A.H. 1354)," in Calvert to Eden, 3 August 1936.

38. "Report for March 1937," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 171; "Annual Report 1937," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, p. 555–560.

39. "Report for December 1936," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 147; "Report for February 1938," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 264; "Annual Report 1937," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, pp. 555–560.

40. *Oriente Moderno* (Rome), March 1938, p. 136; FO 401/35,

Stonehewer-Bird to Eden, 4 January 1938, "Report on Events in Ethiopia During 1937."

41. "Annual Report 1937," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, pp. 555–560.
42. "Report for February 1938," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 265.
43. *Oriente Moderno* (Rome), March 1940, p. 138.
44. "The Pilgrimage, 1946," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 8, p. 587.
45. Yusuf, *Al-Rasa'il al-thalath*, pp. 60–61.
46. Zabiyan, *Al-Habasha al-muslima*.
47. FO 371/27532, Lampson to Eden, 7 March 1941.
48. At the same time, Zabiyan's brother and closest associate, Adnan Zabiyan al-Kaylani, wrote a book entitled *Bloodstained Palestine*. He sent copies to Umm al-Qura. See "Report for February 1938," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 259.
49. See also FO 371/20056, Calvert to Eden, 28 July 1936.
50. Report by R. A. Butler, 22 January 1941, in *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 7, pp. 240–241.
51. See "Italy" in "Annual Report, 1937," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, pp. 555–560.
52. "Report for October 1936," *JD*, vol. 4, pp. 127–134; "Annual Report 1936," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6.
53. See Teitelbaum, "The Saudis and the Hajj."
54. See Coury, *The Making of an Egyptian Arab Nationalist*, pp. 22, 292–299, 415–416. Also, Kramer, *Islam Assembled*, pp. 131, 135–136.
55. *Al-Ahram* (Cairo), 23 November 1935.
56. "Report for February 1937," *JD*, vol. 4, pp. 165–166.
57. *Ibid.*
58. "Report for February 1938," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 266.
59. "Annual Report 1937," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, pp. 555–560; "Report of April 1937," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 184; "Report of June 1937," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 195.
60. "Annual Report 1937," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, pp. 555–560.
61. "Annual Report 1937," *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 6, pp. 555–559; Faisal to King, 6 November 1937, *SASIR*, vol. 7; "Report for December 1937," *JD*, vol. 4, p. 230.
62. Fu'ad Hamza to King, 7 January 1938, *SASIR*, p. 288.
63. See Nallino's report, "Viaggio a Gedda, Relazione al Ministro degli Afari Esteri e appunti sul viaggio nell'Arabia Saudiana (1938)"; see also *Oriente Moderno* (Rome), April 1938, p. 174; Nallino, *L'Arabia Saudiana*.
64. King to Faysal, 22 April 1938, *SASIR*, p. 296.
65. King to Faysal, 24 April 1938, *SASIR*, pp. 298–299.
66. FO 371/22415, Bullard to FO, 31 October 1938.
67. ASMAI, EFG, Busta 165, Feysal to Ministro, 22 November 1938, in Sillitti to Ministro, 29 November 1938.
68. Ibn Sulaiman to King, 25 and 27 March 1939, *SASIR*, pp. 306–307.
69. FO 371/ 24635, British Consulate, Addis Ababa to FO, 26 January 1940.
70. Report by R. A. Butler, 22 January 1941, in *Records of Saudi Arabia*, vol. 7, pp. 240–241.

71. See Peters, *The Hajj*.

72. Our discussion below of the period 1941–1948 focuses on the story of Harar, Wahhabi influence, and the rivalry between the two local shaikhs, Shaikh Yusuf and Shaikh ‘Abdallah. Apart from the British reports, it is based mainly on the recent writings of these shaikhs and their followers. See Muhammad Yusuf Isma‘il, *Qissat al-Kulub*, pp. 126. (The author had been a follower of Shaikh Yusuf and later turned against his Wahhabi tendencies.) Shaikh Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman Isma‘il, *Al-Rasa‘il al-Thalath*, 148 pp. (written in response to *Qissat al-Kulub*). These books are available at the *Institute of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa University. We shall return to Shaikh Yusuf and Shaikh ‘Abdallah in the conclusion.

73. Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa‘il al-Thalath*, pp. 3–4.

74. Rahji Abdella, “The Kulub.”

75. Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa‘il*, pp. 4–7. The names of the members are on p. 6.

76. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

77. Yusuf Isma‘il, *Qissat al-Kulub*, pp. 14–15.

78. Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa‘il*, p. 9.

79. FO 371 35626, “Ministry of the Interior, Annual Report (for the year ending 10 September 1942),” by D. A. Sandford. For a detailed analysis of the administration of Harar and Ethiopian security in those periods, see Tim Carmichael, “Approaching Ethiopian History.”

80. Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa‘il*, pp. 9–10.

81. On ‘Abdallah’s early life, see also his rival’s description in Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa‘il*, pp. 46–52.

82. Yusuf Isma‘il, *Qissat al-Kulub*, pp. 15–16.

83. Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa‘il*, pp. 10–11, 30–34; Yusuf Isma‘il, *Qissat al-Kulub*, pp. 7–21, 124.

84. Yusuf ‘Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa‘il*, p. 53; Yusuf Isma‘il, *Qissat al-Kulub*, pp. 7–21.

85. See descriptions in Al-Ithyubi, *Al-Islam al-jarih fi al-Habasha*. See a review of this book in Ahmed, “The Historiography of Islam in Ethiopia,” pp. 15–46.

86. For background, see also Spencer, *Ethiopia at Bay*, chap. 9.

87. For general background, see Lewis, *The Modern History of Somaliland*, pp. 120–125, 129–131, and Carmichael, “Approaching Ethiopian History,” chap. 5.

88. FO 371/63216, Curle to FO, 24 November 1947.

89. FO 371/ 63216, Curle to FO, 8 October 1947; War Office (hereafter WO) 230/236, Howe to WO, 30 October 1947; FO 371/63216, Curle to FO, 24 November 1947.

90. For an analysis based on documents from Harar’s archives and oral evidences, see Carmichael, “Approaching Ethiopian History,” chap. 5.

91. Rahji Abdella, “The Kulub.” The study was also based on records of Harar’s police archives. See more in Carmichael, “Approaching Ethiopian History,” chap. 5.

92. FO 371/63216, Curle to FO, 27 August 1947; British Legation, Addis

Ababa to Bevin, 3 September 1947; "Somali Youth League" by British consulate, Harar, 5 September 1947; Curle to FO, 24 November 1947.

93. Rahji Abdella, "Kulub."

94. Yusuf Isma'il, *Qissat al-Kulub*, p. 62.

95. FO 371/63216, Curle to FO, 24 November 1947.

96. See his description in Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa'il*, pp. 11–17.

97. See details (including names of the delegates) in Rahji, "Kulub." See also Mahdi Shumburo, "The Hannolato Movement and the Culub Insurrection."

98. FO 371/69423, Lyon, British Consulate, Harar, to British Legation, Addis Ababa, 16 January 1948; WO 230/236, Dolan to GHQ, 20 January 1948; FO 371/69423, H. M. Consul, Harar to Chargé d'Affaires, Addis Ababa, 24 January 1948; Lyon, Harar to Chargé, Addis, 31 January 1948; WO 230/236, Mogadishu to WO, 31 January 1948; FO 371/69423, Lyon, Harar to Chargé, Addis, 7 February 1948, 12 February 1948, 14 February 1948, 15 February 1948; Legation, Addis Ababa to Bevin, 6 March 1948; WO 170/1454, Addis Ababa to FO, 5 April 1948; FO 371/73677 "Treatment of Harari Muslims by the Egyptian Government," an article from *Journal d'Egypte*, 13 December 1948. See also Carmichael, "Approaching Ethiopian History," chap. 5.

99. See Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa'il*, pp. 20–22.

100. Yusuf Isma'il, *Qissat al-Kulub*, pp. 42–49; Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa'il*, pp. 60–61.

101. Yusuf Isma'il, *Qissat al-Kulub*, pp. 68, 122.

102. *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 50–96.

103. "Al-Wahhabiyya ayqazat fitnat Yusuf al-Harari," in *Manar al-Huda* (Lebanon), number 31, annexed to Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa'il*, pp. 122–123.

104. Yusuf 'Abd al-Rahman, *Al-Rasa'il*, pp. 25–45; also Dimashiqiyya, "Al-Ahbash du'at takfir."