"And so We have revealed to thee an Arabic Koran, that thou mayest warn the Mother of Cities [Umm al-Qurā] and those who dwell about it." (XLII, 5/7 – Arberry)

"This is a Book We have sent down, blessed and confirming that which was before it, and for thee to warn the Mother of Cities [Umm al-Qurā] and those about her." (VI, 92 – Arberry)
‘ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-KAWĀKĪBĪ’S
VISION FOR AN ISLAMIC RENAISSANCE: UMM AL-QURĀ

Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of
Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

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* * * * *

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This study has either found or confirmed the following characteristics of 'Ab al-Rahman al-Kawakibi's work "Umm al-Qura" ("The Mother of Cities" -- a reference to Makka): that al-Kawakibi was addressing the masses; that he was discussing general social issues, that nationalism in the Ottoman Empire was not yet formed, though principles such as accountability in government which are related to nationalism were applied to the ideologies of the reform movements; nationalism was potentially incompatible with Islamic reform due to the Islamic injunction to keep the umma united; though al-Kawakibi supported the nationalistic idea of local sovereignty, he was ambivalent about nationalism in its Western form; and that the debate over Turkish versus Arab cultural supremacy didn't start until after al-Kawakibi's death, at which point the issue of which ethnic group should control the caliphate became pivotal.

It's proposal for an Arab caliphate may have been inspired in part by a Young Turk plot to frighten the Sultan-Caliph Abdul Hamid into reinstating the constitution of 1876. However, as most of "Umm al-Qura" was written before al-Kawakibi's emigration to Cairo, it is likely he had not come into contact with that idea when he started writing it. Rather than having that purely political motivation, his primary motivation for writing it resided in his desire to reform Eastern society in general, in
addition to reforming the corruption in the Ottoman government, which he had personally witnessed.

Information about the social, cultural, political aspects of al-Kawakibi’s ideology can not be derived without taking into account the audience which he was addressing, and the character who was speaking at any given point in the text. The purpose of the book was to convince the people of a need for Eastern solidarity and a pan-Islamic spiritual union. The subaltern motive was to convince them that the caliphate, which would be at the center of this union, should be shifted into Arab territory by moving its seat to Makka and reinstating the old requirement that the Caliph should be a member of the Quraysh clan.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The intellectual discourse, and transmission of ideas on state and society, which occurred in the Arabic speaking communities of Syria and Egypt during the latter part of the 19th century, had in its scope a vision for reform which included an Islamic renaissance. This discourse had the same impetus as the cultural and literary renaissance which had been developing in the Arab community: contact with the West. Though the ideal of an Islamic union and revival never came to fruition, both movements, in combination and separately, led to major events in history, such as the Arab Revolt of 1916. The development of Arab nationalism went through stages of progression throughout the 19th century and became fully formed as the Young Turks became powerful, fully emerging in 1908 with the Young Turk Revolution and becoming permanent in 1924 with Atatürk's destruction of the caliphate. al-Kawākibī’s work The Mother of Cities, or Umm al-Qurā gives insight into the stage immediately preceding the Young Turk era, and the role of Islamicism in the creation of Arab nationalism.
Nascent Arab nationalism became tangible only after 1908, but until then the political side of that flow of ideas was addressed mainly by the Islamic reformers. Arab nationalism grew from the Islamic reform movement, and Arabism was a part of both the literary movement and the Islamic movement from the beginning; growing within the Islamic movement on the basis of the Arabs’ special status in Islam, while growing in the literary movement due to the strong support from both Christian and Muslim Arabs for reviving the language and culture. The most significant link to emerge between Islamicism and Arabism, besides the Arabic language itself, was the idea of an Arab caliphate; and, as ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Kawākibī through his work, *Umm al-Qurā*, was the primary founder of that link, he is often credited with being the originator of Arab nationalism.

*Umm al-Qurā* was the depiction of a Muslim congress with representatives from all over the Muslim world. That it influenced the thinking of future leaders and intellectuals is evidenced by the numerous Muslim and Arab congresses and societies which were formed in the years immediately following its publication¹. *Umm al-Qurā* was supposed to present a plan to bring about an Islamic renaissance,

which did not include or exclude Arab nationalism, as affirmed by the fictitious Indian emir, whose "interview" is in a supplemental section, and who is supposed to have read a transcript of the meeting: "... the hoped-for goal of the association is limited to the religious renaissance only, and it holds out hope that political order will come about as the result of Religion." Arabism, while strong, remained a subaltern agenda for the book, which was focused on the Muslim umma. His work may have influenced future nationalists, and he integrated European nationalist ideologies into an Islamic framework, primarily in relation to accountability in government, but one ought not to assume his original intentions when writing Umm al-Qurā or Taba 'i al-Istibdād were specifically aimed at nationalism. Rather, it is more the way Dawn has put it "He gave political content to Arabism." The nationalistic ideologies he included were a part of a larger strategy for increasing solidarity and resisting Western encroachment. The targets of opposition, in

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2 Muḥammad Jamāl Taḥhān, ed., Al-ʿAmal Al-KāMiLā L-AL-KawāKibi (Beirut: Markaz Dirāsāt al-Wadādat al-ʿArabiya, 1995). p. 394, paragraph 8. All references to al-Kawākibi’s work will be to this text.

3 Umma, or "Islamic Community," is also often translated as "nation," (See section 4.3 “The Meaning of the Word Umma in Umm al-Qurā” for an explanation of its meaning in Umm al-Qurā)

descending order of importance (not urgency), were the West, the corrupt ‘ulamā’;\textsuperscript{5} and the corrupt policies of the Ottoman government.

There has been a tendency to try to fit him into a category which might not be appropriate. For example, Ibn Khaldūn al-Husri makes an observation that the proclamation of the Arab revolt showed some similarities to the ideas in \textit{Umm al-Qurā};\textsuperscript{6} There might be enough evidence that al-Kawākibi’s work had a direct influence on the Arab revolt, but projecting later ideas onto al-Kawākibi’s work is not the best course of action, obviously. \textit{Umm al-Qurā} shows a much broader scope in its vision of reform and is motivated by a desire to change the Ottoman empire, rather than to push a nationalist agenda. In addition, Hūsayn practically scoffed at the idea of claiming title (though he used it pragmatically on occasion – see pp. 41, n71), takin the title “the King of the Arab country” instead\textsuperscript{7}.

\textit{Umm al-Qurā} may be considered a piece of Salafī literature because its formulation for reform is based on using the model of the salaf, or the earliest generations of

\textsuperscript{5} This is the plural form of ‘alim, or ‘ālim, meaning “scholar,” and though ‘alim or ‘ālim can mean simply “scholar” there is usually a specific discipline implied. In the context of the Ottoman Empire, the specific discipline would have been religion, rendering the meaning “religious scholar”).


\textsuperscript{7} Dawn, \textit{From Ottomanism to Arabism}. p. 43.
Muslims (ca. 632-708, g.), as a guide, and because is contains objections to forms of bid ‘a, or innovations, which are not based on the salaf example. In addition, the role of the Sunna, or the traditions of the prophet and his companions, becomes very important in the process of Islamic legal interpretation.

Other Salafiya reformers during the last part of the 19th century who were discussing an Islamic renaissance and who had a profound influence on al-Kawakibi’s reform ideology were Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and his student, Muḥammad ‘Abduh. They were determined to resist European encroachment and strengthen Eastern, and especially Islamic, culture. Many of his reform ideas and methods for persuasion reflect the work of al-Afghānī. Before al-Afghānī and ‘Abduh, there was another reformer basing his ideas of the model of the salaf, Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wahhab, whose 18th century movement was greatly influenced by Ibn Taymīya; and in particular, his condemnation of tomb worship. The Wahhabi concept of the

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9 According to Michael Zwettler, Sunna meant “well-worn path” to the pre-Islamic ‘Arabs, and referred to a path in the desert where the sand has been compacted and hardened by frequent foot traffic upon it. It came to symbolize and become the word for time-honored tradition. The modern usage of sunna refers those modes of conduct prescribed by the prophet or demonstrated by him through personal example, and it is also the second most important source of law according to most Sunni schools of thought, especially those which call themselves Salafiya.
avoidence of "hidden shirk," or the partnering of things with God, which violated Islam's first tenet of recognizing only one God, was another influence on Umm al-Qurā.

As they created the structure and placed limits on the government of the fictitious "Association for the Education of Monotheists" the 12th chapter may be considered as a constitution. It sums up the discussions with a list of ten general conclusions, which functioned as guiding principles (see below p. 17), followed by articles containing additional principles and statutes. In addition, in the supplemental section at the end, the Indian emir (who is supposed to have political expertise) gives his ideas for formulating an Arab caliphate, based on the conclusions he had drawn from reading the discussions of the conference. The emir suggests eighteen guidelines for the establishment of the caliphate which limit the caliph's power, requiring a 100-member shura10, or consultative body, whose number correlates to that of "The Association for the Education of Monotheists." The proposed caliphate would also rule the Ḥijaz region with a small army; and the Ḥijaz would have its own shura with similar statutes limiting the caliph's power, though

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10 He shows his support for democracy and limits on government in a way based on Islamic traditions by utilizing the concept of shura, rather than relying on purely Western models. Though his formulations for the caliphate are democratic in the spirit of Western democracies, it was important to his audience that they did not simply mimic the West.
that was where the temporal rule would end and the rest of the *umma* would conform only to his spiritual rulings.

Among the requirements which the emir lists are that the Caliph should be a member of the Quraysh tribe (see section 6, “The Conclusion of *Umm al-Qurā*”), and that the seat of spiritual authority should be moved to Makka, moving the center of spiritual power to Arab territory - additional reasons al-Kawākibi is often put in the category of “Arab Nationalist,” though his ideology was based on principles which included other nationalities as well. However, as Dawn has pointed out nationalisms was not yet a factor at the time he published *Umm al-Qurā* (1901-2), and Islam was still the main point of loyalty and solidarity. One principle of his, however, was that the provinces should have governors of local origins, and indicated a nationalistic bent. However, this was motivated by his opposition to the policies of the Ottoman administration at the time, more than an expression of true nationalism.

The *Salafiya* principle of following the example of the first generations of Muslims, or the *salaf*, first presents itself at the beginning of *Umm al-Qurā*, and underscores al-Afghani’s major thesis, and the *Salafiya* thesis in general, that science needed to be revived in order for Muslims to become equal players in the modern world:

11 Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism.*
"The problem of Islam's decline is a thousand years old, or more. The only thing maintaining the glory of this lucid religion for all those successive centuries has been the firmness of its foundation. Although the rest of the nations had been inferior to the Muslims in all areas, certain nations eventually surpassed us in the enlightening arts and sciences." (p. 280, paragraph 1)

It was necessary to re-appropriate science and scholarship in order to show that the East was inately superior to the West, to convince the people that the East had the same ability for achievement as the West, and the "firmness" of Islam's "foundations," he mentions, was a reference to the *salaf*. He then emphasized the need to avoid the repeated use of previous legal decisions, or *taqlid*, another *Salafi* mainstay. The entire text is an elaboration of the *Salafi* ideals, but also draws from other primary sources, as did the other 18th and 19th century reformers. For example, Ibn Taymiyya, from whom Wahhabī ideals were elaborated, was a major source for al-Kawākibi's condemnation of tomb-worship. A concept from Ibn Khaldūn, *‘asabīya*, or *esprit-de-corps*, was related to the cause of Muslim solidarity, was perhaps the highest priority for the 19th century movement. For example, in the first chapter the president says: "All of us know that our biggest issue is the cutting off of high civilization, or a path of domination which is not continuous, or a strength of *esprit de corps* which is merely folly gushing forth quickly, then oozing away quickly." (p. 283, paragraph 2)

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12 This is a translation of *umān* (pl. *umma*). When *umma* is made plural, it almost invariably means "nations" (See Section 4.3, "The Meaning of the Word *Umma* in *Umma al-Qur'ān".)
It was also necessary reappropriate science and to emphasize the glorious past because of the prevailing tendency among the masses to succumb to fatalism, and interpret the West’s technology as a sign of superiority; not to mention his desire to set the record straight: it was true that the West owed a great deal to the East for its science and philosophy. European historians, such as Bertrand Russell, have placed the well-known examples of Averōes and Avicenna as major contributors to Western philosophy, but less-recognized Islamic contributions continued to be very influential in Europe until at least the 17th century, even inspiring modern European political philosophy. For example, Ibn Tufayl’s story “Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān,” written in the 12th cent, was disseminated throughout Europe and there is evidence that it inspired John Locke’s major thesis, The Tabula Rasa, which led to fundamental theories in modern Western political philosophy. In this century, Arnold

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13 For more information about what al-Afghani said about the innate superiority of the East, the best sources are those which are in Persian, or have been translated from the Persian text (rather than Arabic.) See Nikki Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).


15 Gül Russel shows that Locke’s primary thesis in his “Essays” regarding the Tabula Rasa were derived from a discussion of the story. See Gül Russell, *The Interest of the Natural Philosophers in 'Arabick' in Seventeenth-Century Britain* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994).
Toynbee developed some of his concepts for interpreting of history from the work of Ibn Khaldun\textsuperscript{16}.

Matters of principle formed the basis of al-Afghani's reform ideology, but it was pragmatic, aimed at improving the economic and military resources available to Muslim countries through newly-acquired Western technology. Modernization, Social Justice, and Solidarity were the three goals of the Salafi movement of the 19th century. Modernization was needed for improving economic strength through industry, military strength through technology, and intellectual strength by re-establishing the value of knowledge other than religious. Social justice was needed in the form of accountability in government, appropriate interpretations of law suited to current situations, and accountability for the religious scholars. Solidarity was the Salafi weapon against Western encroachment.

His goal for modernization was aimed at those things which were giving Europe an edge over the rest of the world. Hodgson’s term, “technicalization,” accurately describes this type of modernization. It was particularly the economic aspect of modernization which al-Afghani saw as the reason why Europe was more advanced than the Muslim world, and why he supported the idea of bringing science back to the umma, or Islamic Community. However, he also said that reforming the process of Islamic law would be necessary to bring the umma to a societal readiness for modern means in governmental, industrial, and military matters. Islam needed to be revitalized by reinstating ijtihād, the practice of applying the primary sources of law, especially the Qur’ān and the Sunna, to present day situations. For the majority of Sunni ‘ulama’, the practice had been abandoned in favor of applying previous legal decisions. In the aspect of modernizing the process of law, his disciple Muhammad ‘Abduh was particularly in agreement, and was known for his temperance as the Grand Mufti, or Justice, of Egypt.


18 The potential contradiction in accommodating the new values of Islam lies in the problem of innovation being right in some cases, but wrong in others, This difficulty in the derivation laws according to the life of the prophet but in application to new circumstances is why ijtihād also means “to put forth the utmost effort.”
Besides the need for societal readiness, the push to reform Islamic law processes had another motivation: to refute the ‘ulama’ (plural for ‘alim, “religious scholar”), and to dissolve the negative and self-perpetuating situation they created, and eradicate their bad behavior which based on their desire to retain their special status in society and their influence in government. al-Kawākibī was a staunch defender of the practice of ijīthād, including among the delegates of Umm al-Qurā a mujtāhidī9 from Tabrīz. The numerous attacks on hypocritical, corrupt, even swindling ‘ulama’ in Umm al-Qurā were related to his general initiative to root out corruption in government, a cause for which al-Kawākibī had spared no efforts or personal expense in his home town of Aleppo (see APPENDIX A, “A Concise Biography of al-Kawākibī” by Adûnis.)

In the Shiʿi community (mainly in the Iranian territories) the practice of ijīthād was still alive, to which their continued use of the term mujtāhidīn (pl. mujtāhid) for religious scholars attested. al-Afghāni was from Persian Shiʿi origins (a fact which he hid using the name “al-Afghanī”20) which indicated his belief that his arguments would be more convincing if conveyed by a Sunni voice. The matter of “voice”

15 An Islamic scholar qualified to practice ijīthād.

20 Afghanistan was known as a Sunni region. See Nikki Keddie, Sayyid Jamal ad-Dīn "Al-Afghanī": A Political Biography (Scholarly Publishing Office, University of Michigan Library, 2002 [cited].
(that is, not only the message but the person who was conveying it) was a very important part of his strategy to persuade people. Why else would Afghānī feel the need to hide his identity, or discuss different topics according to the audience he was addressing?\textsuperscript{21} It also included taking precautionary measures when choosing what to say, and choosing content differently depending on the audience and their level of education. The delegates of \textit{Umm al-Qurā} exemplify al-Kawākībī's use of "voice" as well (See Sections 4.1, and 4.2 "Advantages of This Format" and "Purpose and Audience.").\textsuperscript{22} As al-Kawākībī read Persian fluently, he had full access to the thoughts of al-Afghānī and not just the Arabic texts or oral transmissions; he may have inherited al-Afghānī's methodology for reaching specific audiences in addition to aspects of his ideology\textsuperscript{22} (See sections 4.1 and 4.2, "Advantages of the Format," and "Purpose and Audience."). A comparison of their methods of persuasion would be a good topic for further research, though it is not within the scope of the present study. Another idea which al-Afghānī supported, was that peoples should be governed by someone local and of their own culture and background\textsuperscript{23}. This aspect of his

\textsuperscript{21} For more on al-Afghānī's use of taqiyya, or precautionary dissimulation of true beliefs, see Keddie, \textit{An Islamic Response to Imperialism}, p. 9, and chap. ii.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid. contains a translation of "Refutation of the Materialists" from the original Persian. See also APPENDIX A, "A Concise biography of Abd al-Rahman al-Kawākībī," on his linguistic abilities.

\textsuperscript{23} As a part of his overarching aim that the peoples of the East resist Western Imperialism. See Ibid.
ideology comes through in *Umm al-Qurā* in al-Kawākibi’s criticism of the Ottoman centralization policy, and in the federalists aspects of al-Kawākibi’s ideology. It becomes more focused when the topic turns to Arabs, the Arabian Peninsula and their unique qualities\(^{24}\), becoming full-fledged Arabism. But as a matter of focus, *Umm al-Qurā* was not about Arabism. Arabist viewpoints are gradually mentioned until they form an important part of the conclusions, giving the impression that they were arrived at objectively, and consensus, one of the most important Muslim values, is frequently indicated with cries of “*Marhabā*”, or “*Aye!*" The members of the association shout it in unison, which further establishes the total illusion of objectivity and just conclusions. Eventually the members of the association decide that the culture and spirit of Islam which began with Arabs ought to be maintained by them. In the first chapter, the president sums up the purpose of the committee in four goals, none of which mention Arabs (p. 280, paragraph 2)

However, by the end of the book, during the 12\(^{th}\) and last meeting, they formulate a constitution for the association which specifies the Arabs’ leadership role in the reform movement. Number 9 of the list of 10 guiding principles, which have already

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been mentioned indicates the subaltern agenda of promoting Arab solidarity within the umma.

1. Muslims are in a state of general deep-rooted apathy.

2. It is necessary to handle this apathy carefully and immediately, otherwise their esprit de corps will completely deteriorate.

3. The cause of this apathy is the negligence of the government, and of religious scholars, and of emirs.

4. The germ of the disease is general ignorance.

5. The most harmful manifestation of the ignorance: ignorance in religion.

6. The remedy is: first, the enlightenment of minds through instruction; second, to engender a desire for progress in the minds of the youth.

7. The means of treatment is the convening of educational and legal associations.

8. Those commissioned should be the wisest and the most distinguished of the valid ones and the scholars of the umma.

9. The ability to take steps to make apathy disappear gradually is particularly present in the Arabs.

10. The formation of an association vested with authority and prestige and conforming with the above-mentioned principles is necessary, and to give it the name: “The Association for the Instruction of Monotheists.” (p. 376, paragraph 2)

25 Pasteur’s “Germ Theory” was first presented in 1878. Louis Pasteur, "Germ Theory and Its Applications to Medicine and Surgery," in Scientific Papers : Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, Geology; with Introductions and Notes, The Harvard Classics (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1910). See also Keddie, An Islamic Response to Imperialism, where she confirms that the Salafiyya were aware of the germ theory: “In conversations with his followers Afgâni apparently said that the Koran hinted at such things as railroads and the germ theory- an argument later worked out with appropriate, if farfetched, citations by the pan-Arabist Kawâkıbil.” p. 42.
*Umm al-Qura* provided the *Salafiya* movement of the late 19th century with the only articulation of a detailed plan for reform. It included specific political system changes as well as the means for social reform. All ideologies of the *Salafiya* movement were a combination of theology and political ideology, but this plan reflected one whose comprehensive vision included an Islamic federation, and the feature of an Arab caliph. It is due to the latter distinguishing feature that al-Kawākibi’s reform ideology included Arabism, though it was an Arabism expressed in Islamic terms.
1.1 Religion as a Basis for Society and Politics

The late 19th century reformers of Islam needed to keep their cultural foundations, as their objectives were not only to reform and modernize, but also to resist European colonialism. They may have had a religious facade, but their targets for reform were actually society and government. Islam, as the basis for those things, was the most fundamental way to achieve their reform goals. This idea was not new, and runs parallel to the ideas of Ibn Khaldūn who wrote in the 14th century about Islam’s civilizing effects. Religion as the basis for society may sound like a formula for injustice and general backwardness in the context of Europe, or America, for whom Christian dogma has always been at odds with science, and many of the intellectual pursuits which bring progress. But it has not been a matter of Church dogma as much as a struggle between those in power fighting to retain status quo, and those people or activities which are agents for change. The separation of secular and religious has since become a given in Western politics, but it only gradually became that way, and in any case remains only an ideal 26. The reformers of Islam in the late

26 It is a comparatively recent idea that religion conflicts with state interests, and the argument that religion has the tendency to be utilized for obtaining and retaining power. Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) discussed the importance of religion within the state for social cohesion and morals, but recognized that the Church did not necessarily function towards this end. He initiated a progression toward nationalism; because in separating the role of the Church, Macchiavelli showed how church interests could run counter to national interests. Macchiavelli formed the major influence over Vittorio Alfieri, whose work “Della Tirannide,” which had a clear influence on al-Kawākibi’S Taba’i’ al-Istibdād. Niccolo Machiavelli, ed., Discourses on Livy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), Russell, Wisdom of the West: a Historical Survey of Western Philosophy in Its Social and Political Setting, Introduction.
19th century were trying to achieve an enlightened society according to that negative power structure by overcoming intransigent ‘ulama’ and corrupt rulers in a similar fashion to Macchiavelli in 15th century Florence.

They would retain religion as the basis for society and government rather than succumb to the idea that secularism was the solution, as the Europeans seemed to have done. However, religion continued to be considered a valid basis for government in the Islamic world; and, though the Christian tradition didn’t have a legal tradition to offer apart from Roman and Greek models, Islam did. Perhaps that is why the separation of spiritual and temporal rule has not been a conclusion accepted by the public in the Middle East27 until this day. The success of European powers was attributed, not to their secular lines of thought, but to their scientific progress. For science had flourished in Islam during its golden age – the Abbasid reign, and could again, if the corrupt statesmen and ‘ulamā’ could be removed or reformed. It is from this standpoint (always with comparison to Western development in the background) that the polemic against corrupt and overly conservative religious scholars was launched first by Rifa’ā al-Taḥtāwī, then Muḥammad ‘Abduh, and later ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākībī. al-Kawākībī

approached reform in a two-prong fashion intended to revive the society while
attacking corruption in government. According to al-Kawākibī, the umma had an
obligation to better itself via education, but also to overcome such human failings as
fatalism, and similar types of self-limiting attitudes (see 5.3 “Social Reforms as
Inner struggles”). “For these Romans, Greeks, Americans, Italians, Japanese, and
others are each of them umam which have reclaimed their origins” after complete
weakness and failure in every cultural requirement for a political life.” (p. 282,
paragraph 5) This speech by the president of the association revealed al-Kawākibī’s
belief that the public must meet certain standards before real political change could
occur.

The Ottoman Tanzimāt reforms were becoming more apparent, too. These reforms
were a response to the West and came from the highest levels of Ottoman
administration as a result the military and economic deficiencies which were
becoming apparent. But the Tanzimāt reforms were differed from the Salafiya
ideology as the elite in Istanbul were more directly influenced by the current
European ideas of reform, than were their provincial counterparts. They received

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28 He uses a word here, nashāt, the possible meanings of which include: “rise, birth, formation,
genesis; origins; culture, refinement” - Hans Wehr, A Dictionary of Modern Standard Arabic, ed. J. M.
Cowan (Ithaca: Spoken Languages Services, Inc., 1994). This word and the sentence in which we
find it, give insight to the early formation of nationalist ideas in the Arabic-speaking public at the
time, or at least in the mind of the author. (See section 4.3, “The meaning of the word umma in
Umm al-Qura.”)
help from French diplomats in writing the two most significant rescripts of the Tanzināt, the Hatt-i-Sherīf of 1839, and the Hatt-i-Humayūn of 1856. These influential tracts were intended, not just to reform the Empire, but to Westernize it.

To al-Kawākibī these reforms were “blind imitation,” or taqlīd, but he was more aligned with the Ottoman mentality than his criticisms might make it seem. His friend al-Ghazi\(^\text{29}\) once warned him to avoid being perceived as a “Young Turk.” If he had lived to see the Young Turk revolution of 1908, which forced Abdül Hamīd to reinstate the constitution, he may have been on their side. It is not as clear, however, that he would have been on the side of the Arab negotiators at the Arab national congress in 1913 who wanted to sever the Arab provinces completely from the Ottoman Empire. By that time the pan-Turanist agenda of the Young Turks had surfaced\(^\text{30}\), but most of the participants at the meeting still wanted to remain within the Ottoman Empire\(^\text{31}\), and indeed, al-Kawākibī too wanted to remain within the


administrative framework of the Ottoman Empire. Through the voice of Sayyid Furâtî he refers to administrative problems, rife in the Ottoman government:

Some of these causes which I have mentioned are the ancient, tenacious ills of the Ottoman government’s administration since its beginning, or at least for centuries. Some of them are momentary symptoms which are disappearing due to the extinction of their originator. But perhaps enduring them could, if not cut into the heart – God forbid! – cut toward the heart, like that to which the president alluded in his opening speech. (p. 364, paragraph 3)

One can perceive a sincere interest in protecting the Ottoman state in Sayyid Furâtî’s words. The president’s opening speech to which he was referring issued the objective of “giving the community a grim, terrifying warning of the evil of the outcome enclosing upon it.” Dividing the country along national lines would have been seen as a failure.
CHAPTER 2

NATIONALISM IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

According to the traditional European view, in which nationalism grew out of a resistance to absolute powers (such as the Church) the Ottoman Islamic view didn’t coincide with the concept of nationalism. Because of the *millet*, or *djimmi*, system, the identity marker of religion had long been a delineation in the Ottoman Empire, and continued to be after that system was officially abolished in 1856 (the Hatt-i-Hümayun). Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire was inconsistent with European ideas of nationalism for several reasons:

First, the divides were along religious lines, before national lines. The official system of protection for each recognized religious community, called the *millet* system, established a type of officially recognized nation. Ottoman law differentiated between the communities, and, in theory, allowed them to administer their own laws within their community provided they complied with general Ottoman laws in addition to their own. As was shown in the Napoleon example,
this sort of pluralistic system was not acceptable according to the European notions of nation-state.

Second, many of the nationalist movements in Europe included a revival of folklore to raise the status of the vernacular. In the case of Arab nationalism, however, the special status of Arabic as the language of the Qur'ān, the need to unite across linguistic boundaries, and the fact that Classical Arabic had long been "standardized" as a literary form, caused the local dialects to be shunned in favor of Classical Arabic for literary language. So classical Arabic was not only an important identity marker for the Arabs, it was an identity marker for Muslims, as well.

Third, the Muslim population who were not directly in contact with ideas of European nationalism, remained loyal to the Empire, and were moderate in their nationalist tendencies. Even if they objected to the government's policies, their priorities put the umma and its authority (i.e. the Ottoman Sultan32) before their own people, making a nationalist uprising impossible as long as the sultan had religious authority. In relation to the Arab provinces, Dawn says this about the emir

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32 Toward the end of the century, during Abdül Hamid's reign, the concept of the Sultan-Caliph emerged, not just as a formality on official documents, but actively promoted it among the Ottoman subjects. See Hodgson, The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization. pp. 254-255.
of Makka, al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Ali, who led the Arab revolt of 1916: “a careful analysis of Ḥusayn’s policy shows that . . . [he] rose in conjunction with the Arab nationalists only after the failure of his efforts to find some accommodation within the framework of the Ottoman Empire,” (and only after sustaining financial and other support from the British.) In addition, Özoglu’s\(^{33}\) research shows that Kurdish nationalist progression fits the same model. Only the Kurdish notables who had spent time in European institutions of learning desired independence from the Ottoman state, while the majority of the population supported increased autonomy only (until after the Turkish State was formed.) Even the non-Muslims had been loyal to the Empire until the 19th century when the Ottoman Empire was becoming weak, and Europe’s support and protection (in the case of the Christians) encouraged them to seek independence.

Fourth, the Ottoman appropriation of European concepts of nationalism, or Ottomanism, became the official state propaganda, which was intended to create a unified, centralized Ottoman state, was largely based on an Islamic identity\(^{34}\), emphasizing the long history of Islamic civilization. Ottomanism, or Ottoman


\(^{34}\) See Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 1 ed. (Berkeley: University of California, 2003).
nationalism, was just one form of appropriation of European ideas used by the Ottoman government. For example, rather than emulating European ideas of the enlightenment in their national museums, they were used as a venue for displaying the new Ottoman identity with an emphasis on Islamic glory and military victories. This also contributed to their new identity by making a European institution uniquely theirs.
2.1 Arab Nationalism

Rather than consider the nationalist movements as series of reactions to European interference, it is helpful to remember the roots of nationalism in the Middle East, and the first form of it: Ottomanism. Ottomanism wasn’t only an attempt to Westernize, it was also an attempt by the Ottoman government to revive itself. Economic factors involved were significant, such as the lessened commerce in the cities of the Silk Road, due to Europe’s ability to bypass it with ships. There may have been other causes for the decay, as well; al-Kawākibī cites certain prevailing attitudes, such as apathy, preference for bureaucratic and military postings over industrial, and a lack of education and skills, for the economic malaise. Attempts at solidarity based on various factors took different forms in the Ottoman Empire towards the end. Eventually nationalist movements emerged, and as a response to the increasingly Turkish character of the Ottomanism coming out of Istanbul.

During the 19th century, however, there was very little desire for total independence among the Arab territories of the Empire, as in the case of the Ḥijāz mentioned above. In Syria and Egypt there was a budding form of nationalism, or wattaniya, “patriotism” in English, which was growing on account of two factors, discontent with Ottoman rule, and as a response to the threat from European powers. At the time when the Ottoman Empire was beginning to recognize Europe as a rival for World power, the state of the European concept of nation was becoming tied to state,
or potential statehood, and law\textsuperscript{35}, but statehood did not become a part of the goals related to Arab, or other provincial sovereignty until later. This had mostly to do with loyalty to the Muslim authority. To use the case of the Hijāz again, revolting against the Muslim authority was as morally unacceptable to emir Ḥusayn, as going without a major source of financial and military support was untenable. Without the combination of the declining caliphate, and the financial and military support from Britain, there would not have been an Arab revolt. Ḥusayn eventually made a claim on the caliphate as way to induce British support\textsuperscript{36} in the course of his correspondence with the British government, though he had resisted it and called it "blasphemous\textsuperscript{37}." It also became a claim which the Arab nationalist societies in Syria and Egypt were utilizing to rally support. Just a few years after al-Kawākibi's death the controversy over the caliphate became a Turk vs. Arab debate, and the issue of the caliphate became enmeshed in the history of Arab nationalism\textsuperscript{38}.

\textsuperscript{35} The establishment of nation-based boundaries led to later nationalist preoccupation with the nation-state.

\textsuperscript{36} Dawn, \textit{From Ottomanism to Arabism}. p. 42.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid. p. 41.

\textsuperscript{38} As a part of his response to Serafeddin Magmumi who wrote an article defending the Turkish Caliphate and criticizing the other ethnicities of the empire, Rashīd Riḍā in his newspaper "\textit{al-Manār}" said that Arabs were responding with rebellion to the Ottoman government as a result of general mistreatment and "the experiences of Muhammad Bāshā ‘Abd al-Wahhāb and the late Kawākibi." See "\textit{al-Manār}" and "\textit{Türk}," covered in Sükrū Hanioglu, \textit{Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). pp. 70-71.
CHAPTER 3

‘ABD AL-RAḤMĀN AL-KAWĀḴĪBĪ ON NATIONALISM

al-Kawāḵībī remained oriented in religion, though he was inspired by nationalistic principles. In chapter 2 of *Umm al-Qurā* (p. 294) Bismark and Garibaldi are praised for increasing the bonds of nationality which empowered their nations and led to unification. The delegate from Medina says that the severing of the religious bond (likening it to the national bond) is one of the major reasons for the apathy in the Muslim *umma*, but can’t be the only reason. Perhaps because of ambivalence, or confusion about nationalistic principles, the dialogue quickly returns to the topic of an Islamic renaissance. However, the incorporation of some Western ideas does not necessarily show that he was a nationalist.

A major obstacle to full-fledged nationalism was the Islamic value of keeping the *umma* united, which superceded ethnic, or regional loyalties. On page 292 the Anatolian delegate refers to this by quoting the Qur’ān: “Let there be one *umma* (nation) of you, calling to good and bidding to honor” (Arberry - III, 104). Rather than attempting to reconcile this and other Islamic values with new ideas about

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society government, many Ottoman intellectuals went immediately to the secular path, seeing the obstacles as insurmountable.

His vision for the future went beyond the Ottoman State, though he left a place for the Ottomans, and recognized all Muslim peoples and their territories. This view of the aqwām verged on nationalism; while his treatment of the Muslim umma, consisted of general notions and overarching principles, leaving it out of nationalism's scope. Qawm, or "people," is closer to "nation" in this context than umma, but without a concrete proposal for the creation of nation-states within the Islamic umma it is hard to say that they were considered anything more than peoples within a greater community. Umm al-Qurā provided a governmental structure which allowed for the various peoples of Islam to attain or increase their sovereignty, but the focus always remained on the umma, and thus Umm al-Qurā was not a part of a nationalist discourse at the time it was written.

Regarding his intentions towards the Arabs, his Arabism is intertwined with Islamism, based in large part on their status within the umma. Those who call him an Arab nationalist refer to his plan for an Arab caliphate. However, the bulk of Umm al-Qurā is about Islamic reform. In addition, the Arab caliphate which is

described distinguishes the Peninsular Arabs from Arabs at large, and only calls for independence for the Hijaz region. As much as his ideology was pro-Arab, his loyalty was to the Muslim umma first. Due to the distinction made between the Peninsular Arabs and Arabs at large, Umm al-Qurā can not be considered an Arab nationalist text. However, he supported self-determination for all of the nations of the umma, saw the Arabs in a leadership role within the umma, and therefore would perhaps have supported a type of Arab coalition, as Rashid Riḍa later did. Still, he never implies that possibility. In sum, being pro-Arab did not amount to nationalism - it only provided fuel for later nationalist movements.

The idea of Turkish cultural contamination of the umma which one of al-Kawākibi’s influences, ‘Abduh was purporting does appear to have had an influence on some of the arguments in Umm al-Qurā. In addition to unrightfully taking the caliphate, al-Kawakibi also claimed that the Ottomans were the only Islamic state that neither assimilated any of the local culture of the peoples it came to rule, nor to tried to inculcate them with its own culture. Sayyid Furātī attributes the distance between

40 Ibid. pp. 393-402.
41 Ibid. passim., and p. 390-392
'Arabs and Turks mainly to Turkish ideas of their own superiority\textsuperscript{44}. Then he apologizes to the Turkish delegate, for there were also Turks who did not display such behavior, and whom al-Kawâkibî did not want to offend. In the supplement, the Indian emir gives a litany of misdeeds by the Ottoman Sultans against the umma\textsuperscript{45}. The most bitter criticism against the Turks are directed at the Ottoman government, and not at the population in general; however, commentaries such as these indicate one of the components of the type of nationalism which was about to flare up after the "Young Turk" revolution: vilification of the "other."

His anti-centralization stance may have been an indicator of proto-nationalistic tendencies, and he blames, through the voice of, Sayyid Furâû, the "standardization of administrative and penal laws despite differences in the characteristics of the empire's provinces and differences in the native populations in regards to their races and customs,\textsuperscript{46}" for the stagnant state of the Empire. But his intention was to preserve the Ottoman Empire. His stance could be seen as coming purely from a desire to liberate the Arabs, but he did not want the Arabs to break from the Muslim umma, he wanted them to unite it. It calls to mind the page in Islamic history in

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid. p. 366, 2\textsuperscript{nd} paragraph.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid. pp. 395-396.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., pp. 361-362.
which 'Umar cited the same reason to convince Ansār of the need for a Qurashi successor to the prophet. The difficulty in discerning whether or not he was an Arab nationalist was that al-Kawākibī seems not only to have genuinely wanted to empower the diverse groups of the umma - religious, sectarian, and ethnic - he also wanted to empower the Arab community over the others. The answer to this lies in the question of his focus. Arab nationalism was part of a bigger picture for him, a grand scheme to take corrupt Ottomans out of power and to allow all of the “national” provinces within Islamdom to obtain increased sovereignty.

He used the power of agency to make his arguments more credible. By putting the words in the mouths of non-Arab delegates of Umm al-Qurā, he gave the impression of consensus, he makes his argument come across as common sense (see Section 4.2 “Advantages of This Format.”) Of course the pain-staking effort he went through, evoking other voices of the empire and the umma at large, only indicates his Arabism more apparently.

Though he was primarily an Islamic reformer, al-Kawākibī had the makings of a nationalist. His vision for reform, which could easily apply to any nationalist movement, included the following: the attempt to gain (more) sovereignty, the rise against those elite figures in society (the 'ulama') who would perpetuate status quo; and identity-based propaganda to strengthen solidarity (this was the purpose of both
Umm al-Qurā and Tabā‘i‘ al-īstibdād); and he compared the Muslim umma with other nations. Though his colleague, Rashīd Riḍa, eventually became an Arab nationalist, there was not enough evidence by the time al-Kawākibī died to indicate he would have been willing to give up his pan-Islamist ideals.

3.1 His Ideology

His ideas are founded on the major concepts of al-Afghānī; i.e., the need for science and solidarity in the umma, and the moral superiority of Muslims, though he further specifies that to Arabs, and blames the general state of apathy in Muslim communities. Though, al-Kawākibī goes into much further detail about the latter subject than Afghānī or 'Abduh. However, his Wahhabi sympathies\textsuperscript{48}, show how divergent ideas can be, which are held between different individuals considered to be in the same philosophical movement, as well as how they can change drastically over time, and through transmission. The harsh judgment of the Wahhabism which we know today sharply contrasts against the tolerant vision of Muslim solidarity which Afghānī and 'Abduh espoused, and the difference between Afghani and 'Abduh's ideas and the religious ideas of Rashid Riḍa is also substantial. It should be noted here that Riḍa later allied himself with the budding Wahhabī Sa'ūdī Kingdom\textsuperscript{49}, but it is not known to what degree al-Kawākibī had sympathy for Wahhabī ideology. al-Kawākibī condemned rigidity, and thus applied the Wahhabī concept of monotheism primarily to tomb-worship. However, as this concept was not Wahhabi in origin, having first been propounded by another Ḥanbali scholar, Ibn Taymiya,  

\textsuperscript{48} He proclaims monotheism to be the discriminating factor between Islam and Heresy, as a Wahhabi would (p. 353 5th paragraph). Sa'd Zaghlūl al-Kawākibī, 'Abd Al-Raḥmān Al-Kawākibī: Al-Sīra Al-DhatīA (Bayrūt: Bīsān, 1998). p. 176.

who was arrested in 1326 for writing an epistle condemning tomb worship and the cult of saints, al-Kawākibī may have been basing his theory directly on Taymīya’s work.
3.2 His Character

Attestations to his elite status were his schooling at private institution, his ability to speak multiple languages (though none European), and the multiple offices he held in government. Most of the Arab population during his time was educated in the madrasa tradition, though some who were Christians received training in missionary schools, and the elite went to Turkish public schools. al-Kawākibī was rare because he went to a traditional school which was started by his own prominent family, the al-Kawākibī school. He received private tutoring as well, and became fluent in Turkish and Persian (making him part of the 1% of the Arab population who spoke Turkish\textsuperscript{50}).

He grew up in Syria during a time when “education flourished” in the post Muhammad ‘Ali / İbrahim Pasha period whose support of education and Arabic publication had allowed an intellectual atmosphere, and open-mindedness to develop. Intellectual discourse was strong there and throughout the rest of the Empire, as well, where ideas about modernization were having a serious impact on government and society. The Ottoman constitution of 1876, was a culmination of the discourse happening within the Ottoman intelligentsia at the time. Unlike the many of the

Ottoman elite, who wanted to increase centralization, federalism was the common theme in al-Kawākibi’s vision for reform of the Ottoman State and the Muslim umma. Although he aimed to limit the power of the Ottoman government, not to destroy it, his anti-centralization stance indicated nationalistic tendencies.

As he could have used his elite status to further his position, rather than question corrupt practices, the need he felt to reform society was a credit to the nobility of his character. He was also known to have been charitable, having acquired the appellation “Father of the Feeble”\(^51\). The anecdotes Antonius provided in “Arab Awakening” give color to the same basic biographical facts which came from the obituary written in al-Manār by Rashīd Riḍa (from which the often-cited book by Tabākh\(^52\) was also drawn). No further information became available until 1952 when an article about him written by his son, Muhammad ’As‘ad al-Kawākibi, was published in “Ḥadith,” an Aleppan periodical. Adūnis provides a concise biography of him in the volume of al-Kawākibi’s works he edited with Khālida Sa‘īd in 1982, which draws from those, and other sources (see my translation of it in APPENDIX


\(^52\) Muhammad Rāghīb al-Ṭabākh, Noble Figures in the History of Aleppo (Aleppo: 1926).
A). It portrays an admirable character, while at the same time a controversial type which draws enemies from every corner.

When the Makkan professor, president of the association, advises secrecy and protection of identities of the members of the association, it is in the interest of allowing them to speak freely, and he recommends taking the manner of 'Umar in that endeavor, "by talking plainly and with sincerity about the religion, without dissimulation, or embarrassment, or consideration for the tastes of the masses, or the arrogant". This reflects al-Kawākibi's non-conformity, and his appreciation for genuine and direct discourse. However, his disregard for the "tastes of the masses" is also due in part to his aristocratic view of an ideal society, in which the learned class should lead and be responsible for the masses. A trait of his which is reflected in his style of writing, in which he "addressed the masses."54"


54 Adūnīs is perceptive when he says this concise biography of al-Kawākibi. See APPENDIX A, p. 88.
CHAPTER 4

UMM AL-QURĀ

In comparison with his other book, Taba‘i’ al-Istibdād, the format of Umm al-Qurā is quite different, that of a transcript. Here is a warning to the reader from the opening of the book:

“Whoever obtains a transcript of this meeting let him strive to circulate it amongst the monotheists, and let him keep a copy of it, and add to it that which he reads in issuances of the organization called “Pages of the Quraysh,” a consequence of which, God willing, will be the Islamic, scientific, and caliphal renaissance.” (p. 274)

Taba‘i’ al-Istibdād corresponds to the format and many of the ideas of Alfieri’s Della Tirannide, with many ideas in the form of a response to arguments presented in that work. Both formats are deliberately chosen, and have a particular effect on the messages of each work. Haim asserts he was simply plagiarizing55, but he may have had good reasons not to cite his Western sources (See section 4.2, “Purpose and

Audience.” One salient point in this regard is that he published Taba ‘i’ anonymously at first. Subsequent publications didn’t occur until after his early and unexpected death (see APPENDIX A, “A Concise Biography of al-Kawākibi” by Adūnis). al-Kawākibi may have been unoriginal in terms of his Islamic and political ideology⁵⁶, but the arrangement of ideas in Umm al-Qurā created a unique composition, and the transcript format gave it originality.

The first chapter contains the proceedings the foundation of the association, including the designation of the first president. After a suggestion from the Egyptian scholar, who says that the members are still too unfamiliar with each other to nominate someone, the Makkāni Scholar is suggested by Furāfī, the organizer of the conference. However, he clarifies that he would only appoint him with the consent of all of the members⁵⁷. After the president was chosen Furāfī designated himself secretary to “save the others of performing the task which I am quite capable of undertaking.” (p. 279, 2nd paragraph) This show of humility reflects the same etiquette found in all of the exchanges described in the book, and the value of consensus.

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⁵⁶ See Haim, Arab Nationalism: An Anthology,” p. 27.

⁵⁷ Tahhān, ed., Al-‘Amal Al-Kāmil L-Al-Kawākibī, p.279, paragraph 2.
4.1 Advantages of the Format

The format of *Umm al-Qurā* lends itself to presenting ideas without claim of ownership by the author. Thus the ideas in *Umm al-Qurā* represent different perspectives, which are not necessarily al-Kawākibī’s. According to the manuscript, a certain Euphratesian Lord, or Sayyid Furāṭī, is the keeper of the minutes for the meeting and thus the “author” of the transcript (See section 4.1 “Sayyid Furāṭī.”) Thus, he may be considered the voice for al-Kawākibī, while the other speakers in the text may or may not be espousing al-Kawākibī’s ideas, even if their words reveal something about what he thought. This barrier between himself and some of the opinions, helped him to avoid addressing controversies. The format allows the author to bridge the Sunni/Shi‘ī divide. By referring to Sunni-approved sunna sources, e.g., calling ‘Ā‘īsha the “Mother of the Believers,” and crediting her for providing half of the religious sciences, he placed the text of *Umm al-Qurā* within the Sunni tradition, and remained consistent with the Salafiya movement of thought as well. Mentioning the virtues of ‘Ā‘īsha as the authority of the bulk of Sunni-approved Ḥadīth texts, while trying to include the Shi‘ī in his vision for reform would have been problematic for some readers, but the text was obviously addressed to a primarily Sunni audience; hence his lack of concern.

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58 Ibid., p. 370, paragraph 6.
His first priority was to promote the idea of Muslim solidarity, and to convince the audience that unification was possible. Putting words of unification into a Shi’i delegate’s mouth; i.e., the Mujtāhid from Tabrīz, who quotes part of verse 13, sura 42, “Practice your religion, but do not allow divisions amongst you” (Arberry), helps to legitimize the idea that a real unification is possible, even across the Sunni/Shi’i divide.

The above-mentioned examples demonstrate a major advantage of the format chosen by al-Kawākibi. Using different voices from the umma, words of unification come across in a more conciliatory manner, showing tolerance for different points of view, while at the same time allowing him to ignore any arguments which would not help him convince his audience. He could take whatever element he wanted from other cultures or branches of Islam; For example, Ijtihād. He was able to pick and choose elements without having to reconcile them with what he didn’t want.

Then too, Western encroachment could be addressed without admitting the problem directly. The Orator from Qāzān first gives an account of a conversation between the master of jurisprudence (mufti) of Qāzān and a Russian orientalist, hinting at the prime mover of this movement of reform: contact with the West. This fictitious

59 Ibid., p. 356, paragraph 2.
dialogue nested within a fictitious dialogue, reflects the indirect way in which Muslims were participating in a dialogue with the West. They took arguments from the West and discussed them amongst themselves in a different manner than when they engaged the West directly.
4.1.1 Sayyid Furāṭī

It is clear that Sayyid Furāṭī represents al-Kawākibī himself for a number of reasons. First, the name "Furāṭī" was also the name of one of the newspapers he edited, and is thus a link to him. Second, Furāṭī refers to the Euphrates region, from which al-Kawākibī originated. Third, and most importantly, as the secretary, Furāṭī kept the minutes of the congress, thus producing the "transcript," and correlating him to its author.

However, every member of the association is a vehicle for presenting a different viewpoint, and every member helps to define al-Kawākibī's vision for reform. The delegates, who represent Muslim-majority countries, and two non-Muslim-majority countries, England and China, create the structure of the exposition. Speeches and dialogues between the various delegates comprise every chapter, their topics coinciding with the topic of the chapter. Each delegate discusses topics appropriate to their region, or specialty. For example, the delegate from the Najd explains the Wahhabi idea of monotheism (see below.) The Kurdish mathematician covers topics appropriate to his specialty, such as demonstrating the need for science and math studies. The Law Deriver (muṭāhid) from Tabriz illustrates the benefits of the derivation of laws (Ijtihād), which is appropriate to both his region and his specialty.
4.2 Purpose and Audience

The target audience of *Umm al-Qurā* was the Muslim *umma*, especially the Arabs within it. As a consequence of this target, *Umm al-Qurā* did not cite its Western or Eastern sources. Two possibilities are pertinent here: doing so could have put his associates in harms way, and the primary audience of *Umm al-Qurā* would not be amenable to Western Sources. The intended function of *Umm al-Qurā* was to appropriate Western ideas and make them authentically Muslim. Citing the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, and influential poets (Mutanabī, Ḥasan b. Thabat, etc.) were all the authority he needed to make his arguments convincing. The lack of citation which Haim exposes in her articles about him, had to do with protecting some of his sources, his intended audience and the need to appropriate European concepts. The purpose was to disseminate ideas to the masses, rather than to take part in a scholarly discourse. In stead of making direct statements, the discourse presents many different arguments and counter-arguments, not all of which reflect the author’s personal opinion, but which are supposed to lead the reader to certain conclusions.

A subaltern audience may have been the Sultan and his court, as there is evidence to suggest that the purpose of *Umm al-Qurā* was to frighten Abdūl Hamid by making him think that there was an organized movement to create an Arab caliphate and to remove his status as caliph. Before *Umm al-Qurā* was serialized in al-Manār in 1902
it had already been in circulation, having been published in the Egyptian periodical al-Mu’ayyad, and more importantly, as a secret publication from Port Sa’id in 1316 (22 May 1898 to 12 August 1899). It was perhaps that circulation which was meant to be the shock to Abdul Hamid’s system.

Haim pointed out the irony that the idea of an Arab caliphate, which was to spark later Pan-Arab movements, may have started as propaganda for the Khedive, invented to frighten the Sultan into reinstating the constitution of 1876. Adunis confirms the status of al-Kawakibi as a propagandist, but according to the chronology provided by Adunis, which has not been contested by any later sources, he did not start receiving funding for that type of writing until after *Umm al-Qurā* was published (see APPENDIX A, p. 87). As such, there is no indication that *Umm al-Qurā* was sponsored by the Khedive. Rather, al-Kawakibi’s later travels were. In any case, the Khedive’s own ambitions to become Caliph were not supported by *Umm al-Qurā*, as the Khedive was not a Qurashi.

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60 Kedourie, *Arabic Political Memoirs and Other Studies*, p. 110.

4.3 The Meaning of the Word *Umma* in *Umm al-Qurā*

The reference of the word *umma*, in the vast majority of occasions of its use in *Umm al-Qurā* was to the Muslim *umma*. The ethnically, linguistically, or territorially based definition of “nation” didn’t apply, except for in a minority of cases. When peoples within the *umma* are mentioned, they are usually specified, using *qawm* (*pl. aqwam*), *ahāl* (*pl. ahl*), or sometimes *ajnās* (*pl. jins*), rather than *umma*, which reinforces the idea that *umma* had a more inclusive and general meaning than “nation.” The shift from the concept of a “people” to the concept of a “nation” had not happened yet in the Ottoman provinces during al-Kawākibi’s time. The concept only existed among the elite, mainly in Istanbul. When other religious communities are specified, in addition to *milla*, *umma* is used often. Peoples were put into two main categories, *umma* (*pl. umam*), and *qawm* (*pl. aqwām*). The Muslim *umma* had the widest range of the two, and often the referent of “us.” For example, the Tunisian delegate says: “some of the *aqwām* among us have grown accustomed to tyranny and enslavement.”

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62 Özoglu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries*. p. 62 on the centralization of government, and how it affected all the provinces, in particular the Kurdish province. This example reflects the general move toward centralization in the administration, and the removal of local indigenous rulers.

Though he was promoting a form of Islamic nationalism in many ways, I do not translate *umma* as “nation.” This is because a nationalistic theory on which he could base his plan for reform had not been fully formed yet. In the vast majority of the occurrences of *umma* in *Umm al-Qurā* “the Muslim community” (except when *umma* was plural, or used to refer to European communities) is the meaning of the word. In the cases where it meant just “the people,” it still referred to the Muslim community. On one occasion al-Kawākibi compares the Muslim *umma* to other nations\(^6^4\), which indicates a view of the Muslim community as a nation. However, it is an exception, and it may been to show the *umma* on the same level as Europe, rather than an attempt to define the Muslim community as a nation. It also may have been a throw-back to a time during the 19\(^{th}\) century when *umma* had a more secular meaning (see below.) One time in the text the Arab *umma* is discussed as a nation. The Indian emir explains that “there is no *umma* which upholds religious guidance and displays religious zeal like the Arabs\(^6^5\),” but its meaning is both political and religious.

\(^6^4\) Ibid., p. 282, paragraph 5.

\(^6^5\) Ibid., p. 393, last paragraph.
Ibn Khaldūn’s definition of *umma* shows how this concept of a nation based on religion works in the political sense. In his famous treatise, *The Muqaddima*, he describes the Arab *umma* in detail as a nomadic wild people. As he contrasts the Arab *umma* against other nations it is apparent that Khaldūn was using *umma* to mean nation, but *umma* does not lose its religious connotation even in reference to the Arab *umma*. The origin of that connotation is the Qur’an, in which *umma* referred to a people with the potential to receive a prophet called upon by God, and it remains in Ibn Khaldūn's writing, as well as in modern writing. Ibn Khaldūn gives *umma* a political meaning primarily, but he asserts that the Arab *umma* became civilized only because of the force of Islam acting upon it. Once a people has become an *umma*, they continue to be called *umma* as their contract with God is still binding, even if they lose their religion and civilization.

If being an *umma* means having received a religion, then it also means having had the potential to become civilized, according to Ibn Khaldūn’s steps of civilizational development, which are *esprit de corps*, religion, then settled civilization. The step from tribe to *umma* is based on receiving a religion, which harkens to the

Qur'ān, in which a religion "is not essentially a matter of personal piety; rather, the emphasis is on the communal aspects of religion. Muḥammad's fully matured spiritual life is unthinkable without the Muslims." However, Ibn Khaldūn explains how an umma can forget the communal life and "become ignorant of its esprit de corps with the people of the state."

Considering the traditional status of the ahl al-Dhimma in Islam, which defined communities according the "peoples of the book," umma can be described as a nation based on religion; milla, a similar word, used to refer to the ahl al-Dhimma in Turkish as millet, was synonymous with umma during the Ottoman period. However, as the Muslim community is geographically broadly inclusive, the rendition of the Muslim umma as "nation" is problematic according to the Western model, in which nations usually have a territory over which they claim sovereignty, and have the potential to gain nation-state status. The territorial aspect of

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70 Khaldūn, Al-Muqaddimah: Kitāb Al-'Ibar., p. 201.

71 see Versteegh, The Arabic Language, p. 175.

72 See p. 10 Özoglu, Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries. and also Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1991). This aspect of nationalism is an important delineation between movements for general solidarity, and specifically nationalist movements.
nationality is missing from *Umm al-Qurā*’s description of the Muslim *umma*, but is expressed through the representation of various territories and peoples of the *umma* by the delegates.

The meaning of *umma* changed from a more secular usage at the beginning of the 19th century to a more limited, Islamic meaning starting in the 1880’s. The movement toward solidarity and Islamic “national” pride toward the end of the century explains its later shift in meaning to *Umma* came to be used as “religious community,” the meaning most common in the Qur‘ān.

His treatment of the various peoples, or *aqwām*, of the Islamic community was closer to the nationalism, as his de-centralization stance was based on the nationalistic principle that the various peoples, or *aqwām*, should be governed by

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73 al-Kawākibī does attribute a territory to most of the *aqwām* who make up the *umma* (except England and China because they are not Muslim-majority countries.) Perhaps this was one of al-Husri’s sources when he formulated the new definition for qawmiya. See Sā‘ī al-Husri, *Ara‘ wa Aḥādīth Fī al-Qawmiya al-‘Arabīya* (Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm lil-Malā‘īn, 1964). p. 43 he says, “I have made a distinction which comes from many books by Arabs whose ideology utilizes the word al-qawmiya with this meaning.”


someone from their own community. However, considering that fifty years later Sati' al-Husri was working to introduce a working vocabulary for discussing nationalism in Arabic\textsuperscript{76}, it is likely the division was not yet defined very clearly.

CHAPTER 5

THE MAIN PRECEPTS OF *UMM AL-QURA*

Al-Kawākibī wanted the ‘*ulamā’* to accept pursuits other than religious studies, keeping the traditional educational system they had, but expanding it. The Tanzimat reformers, on the other hand, imported European scholars and created institutions based on European models. Al-Kawākibī condemned that as blind imitation of the West. For him it was a type of *taqlīd*, or blind imitation, in addition to the traditional reference of *taqlīd*, which was to the exclusive dependence on previous judgments without the use of intellect. The intellectual struggle to apply fundamental concepts to new situations is called *ijtihād* in the Islamic legal system. The promotion of this concept, as the opposite of *taqlīd*, would lead to reform of the culture of the religious scholars, who relied on past judgments almost entirely. *Ijtihād* uses reason by applying the Muslim sources of law; i.e., the Qur’ān, the Sunna, analogous judgments, and consensus of jurist scholars. When the *mujtāhid* from Tabriz states, “The *umma* has relied confidently on *taqlīd* while the ‘*ulama’* have occupied themselves with overly-meticulous investigations into religion.” (p
353, *Umm al-Qurā*, it shows al-Kawākibi’s keen interest in reviving the science of *ijtihād* in the Sunnī community, and his belief in the incorrectness of sole reliance on previous legal decisions.

However, al-Kawākibi was not promoting the idea of replacing *taqlīd* with unwarranted innovation. Rather, he was redirecting the use of imitation to the right path by using the examples of the *salaf*. Another way for reformers to attack something which they do not agree with, is to call it an unwarranted innovation, or “*bida‘*.” And though the aversion to unwarranted innovations seems to be at odds with the desire for reform, it is the definition of what is warranted and unwarranted which prevents this concept from being an obstacle to reform. The most vigorous reform movements of the past three hundred years; i.e., Wahhabism, and the 19th century *Salafiyya*, both have had the goal of going back to the original source of Islam, rather creating new forms of it which would be considered *bid‘a* (all of them could be called “*Salafiyya*” due to this factor.)

While most of the ideologies in *Umm al-Qurā* are based on the reform ideologies of al-Afghani, ‘Abduh, and other *Salafiyya* reformers in their intellectual circle, the primary Wahhabī interpretations of Islamic concepts are explained by the delegate from the Najd (pp. 310-330 – specific topics include: *shirk* on p. 311, monotheism on p. 313, places of *shirk* on p. 315, monotheism being the basis of freedom on p. 315,
the sources of *shirk* and graves on p. 317, and religion in the Arabian Peninsula on p. 328 - ). As it is an ideology which originated among Peninsular Arabs, its emphasis may have been a way to enhance the image of Arabs as the keepers of pure religion. Wahhabism's fundamental concept is that *pure* monotheism, and avoidance of any behaviors which would attest to a belief in things partnered with God, is the basis of Islam. The name of the association depicted in *Umm al-Qurā*, “The Association of the Education of Monotheists” (rather than “of Muslims”), may have alluded to the Wahhabi idea of purification.

The superiority of Eastern morals over Western morals is reiterated in the text. Taḥtāwī and Afghani had set the tone for this argument long before al-Kawākibī. Morals were portrayed as the basis of Muslim strength and the ability to resist Western dominance. Muslim character was contrasted against Western morals. The extension beyond the Muslim *ummā* to Easterners in general (see quote in section 5.4, “Society and Women”) confirms again that the reaction to Western dominance was the major concern. Especially starting with al-Afghani’s activism, morals were used as a rallying point for the Pan-Islamic solidarity movement; not only Islamic morals, but Eastern morals in general, while the West was accused of being

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materialistic and greedy. However, the faults of the umma are not ignored, and the main purpose for their discussion is to find a way to fix the problems coming from within the umma. At the end of the 1st chapter the president of the association sums up the topics which the association will study and contemplate, using the metaphor of the umma as a body\textsuperscript{78} for many of them:


\textsuperscript{78} The society as a body was a metaphor used by Ibn Taymiya (who compiled all the Hadîths of Bukhari which discussed the “body politic”), taken up by Muḥammad Abduh in his article “Ḥajāt al-Insan ila al-Zawaj” published in Muḥammad Rashīd Rida, \textit{Tārikh al-Ustādh Al-Imām al-Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abduh}, by Rashīd Rida in 1931, and continued by al-Kawākibī here. (see Haim, "The Ideas of a Precursor, ’Abd Al-Rahman Al-Kawakibi (1849-1902)", p. 137.
1. The location of the sickness.
2. The symptoms of the sickness.
3. The germs\(^{79}\) of the sickness.
4. What is the sickness?
5. What are the measures for implementing the remedy?
6. What is Islamicism?
7. How could religious devotion be inherent in the Islamic measures?
8. What is hidden *shirk*?
9. How are unwarranted innovations to be resisted?
10. Drafting of a law to establish an educational association. (p. 284)

He saw far-ranging negative effects on society from the narrow Islamic education of the day, and he put most of the blame on the religious scholars for their narrow view of scholarship. In chapter 3 of *Umm al-Qurā*, the Kurdish Mathematician blames the societal apathy on the lack of science:

> In my opinion, the general reason [for apathy in our society] is that our scholars have confined themselves to religious science and a little mathematics, but they have neglected rest of mathematics and the natural sciences. (302, paragraph 2)

The detail with which the need for science is described, the ways in which it could be applied in order to improve the society and the economy make *Umm al-Qurā*

\(^{79}\) See note 25, p. 18.
unique among treatises emerging from the reform movements of the 19th century. His exposition, which breaks down every idea into its fundamental elements for easier understanding, is clearly aimed at a wide audience. This audience also might have been afraid of the implications of accepting science; i.e., Western infiltration, undesirable innovation, and other religious improprieties. Religious scholars had a great deal of influence on society from the upper class to the grassroots level, and he was purposefully striking there because of it.
5.1 Western Sources of the Text

Though al-Kawākībī may have been "an entirely derivative thinker," as Haim purports, his purpose was not to be an innovator; he was trying to educate. Fundamentally, *Umm al-Qurā* is a practical guide, an instructional tool for teaching Salafi ideas of reform, and it gives the steps which need to be taken in order to achieve the goals of reform.

He was exposed to the major European works and some of the minor ones as well. His major influence seems to have been Montesquieu, who said that a society’s moral character influences its government, a pervasive theme in *Umm al-Qurā*. Haim has pointed out that he uses the format of Alfieri’s book “Della Tiranide” to present his own opinion about Tyranny and its effect on Eastern society. In the introduction of his book “Taba’i al-Istibād” he infers that the study of tyranny is a way to solve the problem posed by “the sickness of the East,” a metaphor he used to describe the conditions of the East again and again. The book is uniquely his because he applied Alfieri’s concepts to the Eastern situation. al-Kawākībī looked to Italy, and Germany, and the increased power which their unifications achieved, for inspiration on how to strengthen his own community. By following the same

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80 Haim, *Arab Nationalism: An Anthology*, p. 27.

81 Haim, "Alfieri and Al-KawāKībī."
principles of unification and solidarity, perhaps the same level of independence could be achieved.

Haim has also said that al-Kawākibī took the ideas for *Umm al-Qurā* from Wilfrid Scawen Blunt’s book *The Future of Islam*, but many of the similarities may be explained by the fact that he and Blunt both knew Muḥammad ‘Abduh, and had the general acquaintance of his, and al-Afghānī’s ideas. As Hourani indicated in his book *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, Blunt received most of his ideas about Islam from Muḥammad ‘Abduh, which is corroborated by Blunt’s memoirs of his stay in Egypt before and during his writing of *Future*, *Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt*. It is true there are echoes of Blunt’s ideas clearly resonating within the text of *Umm al-Qurā*, and he would have done well to have cited his ideas, especially towards the caliphate, which Blunt called “pivotal to reform.” But the innovative format of *Umm al-Qurā* is enough to make it a work entirely his. Many of the similar ideas may be explained by the fact that he and Blunt knew Muḥammad ‘Abduh, and had the general acquaintance of his, and al-Afghānī’s ideas. al-Kawākibī’s description of Arab virtues match Blunt’s description quite well, but the idea of Arab cultural superiority versus Turkish cultural contamination of the *umma*

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causing the decline originally came from ‘Abduh, and was a major part of the Salafi movement\textsuperscript{84}. While Blunt does not go into as much detail as al-Kawākibi does, Blunt’s description of the stagnation of the Muslim world is consistent with the two major topics of \textit{Umm al-Qurā}, a return to \textit{Ijtihād}, and the problem of apathy among the masses:

“This closing of \textit{Ijtihād} by the Ottoman Sultans, and the removal of the seat of supreme spiritual government from the Arabian atmosphere of Cairo to the Tartar atmosphere of the Bosphorus, was the direct and immediate cause of the religious stagnation which Islam suffered from so conspicuously in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{85}”

al-Kawākibi’ may have borrowed without giving credit because citing Blunt would have run counter to \textit{Umm al-Qurā}’s purpose of promoting solidarity and cultural pride, and its objective of showing that ideas which seemed European were actually indigenous. While the text incorporates European ideas, indigenous sources form a large part of the ideology presented as well, and are used exclusively as the authoritative supports for his arguments; especially the Qur’an and the Sunna. That it wouldn't be necessary to become secular, as Europe apparently had, in order to embrace modernization, and that Islam already had every means necessary for progress and modernization, were the underlying messages of the text as a whole. In addition, his need to keep his identity concealed because of the precarious situation

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{84} Haim, \textit{Arab Nationalism: An Anthology}. p. 21. \\
\textsuperscript{85} Blunt, \textit{The Future of Islam}. p. 100.
\end{flushright}
he found himself on account of his standing with Ottoman government, compelled him to secrecy, which he mentions in opening letter of Taba'i’ al-Istibdād.

Haim misunderstood the purpose of *Umm al-Qurā*. In the introduction to Haim’s book *Arab Nationalism*, in which she says al-Kawākibī said that the Muslim umma is dead⁸⁶, she is probably referring to the very part of *Umm al-Qurā* in which he is asking people not to believe the umma is dead, saying: “We must not presume the correctness of the person who says: ‘We are a dead community.’⁸⁷” al-Kawākibī had not given up hope for the community, though he did believe it to be in grave danger, the character of the President saying that although the umma needed a severe warning of the impending disaster, “warnings may be of no avail⁸⁸.” She also said “al-Kawākibī gave currency to a secular view of politics,” but one should not equate modernizing political aspirations with secular aspirations. In the West the separation of Church and State has become a given in politics, causing us to see it as an innate part of the limitations on government.


⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 280, paragraph 2.
5.2 Islamic Nationalism: Reviving the *Umma*

The pro-Arab aspect of *Umm al-Qurā* has often caused al-Kawākibī to be put in the category of Arab nationalist, but nationalist concepts were applied to the *umma* to a much greater extent than to the Arab people. While the Muslim *umma* remained consistently his focus for a revival, the Arabs started out as just one of the many peoples of the Ottoman Empire, and of the greater Muslim community, and only gradually did gain special recognition throughout the discussions. Though this may have been a ploy to make it seem like the purpose of his book was not to promote Arabs, the greater extent of the content of *Umm al-Qurā* is about the Muslim *umma*, and it would be inaccurate to equate a bias toward Arabs with Arab nationalism.

In the Appendix each of the peoples of the *umma* is assigned a different role in the envisioned Muslim federation. Of course, the Peninsular Arabs are given a special place as religious custodians of the *umma*, but each of the major peoples of the *umma* is given an honorable duty for the federation as a whole:
"...the rest of the peoples [aqwām] equally have qualities and merits that afford each of them an important status in certain offices of the Islamic confederation. For example, the concern to maintain political life, and especially foreign relations, is assigned to the Ottoman Turks. The supervision of regulatory civil life may be properly entrusted to the Egyptians. The concern for the important matters of military life is befittingly made the responsibility of the Afghans, Turkmen, Khazaks, and the Caucasians in the East, and Moroccans and those of the African principalities in the West. The direction of scientific and economic life would best be entrusted to the people of Iran, and of Central Asia and India and those near them." (p. 390, 3rd paragraph)

While strengths are recognized for each of the peoples, criticism is aimed at the Muslim community as a whole; there is an entire chapter dedicated to it called "The Heedlessness of Muslims, and its Variations." If al-Kawākibī’s concern was for the strengthening of individual communities within the umma, rather than for strengthening the entire umma, he would have looked at the individual communities in more detail and perhaps found more points for improvement. The convergence of his Islamicism with Arabism is in his federalist vision of government for the umma.
5.3 Social Reforms as Inner Struggles

In the preface to her second edition of *Arab Nationalism*, Haim defines both Arab Nationalism and Pan-Islamism as forms of opposition to the West and Christendom: “The antagonism towards Christiandom and Europe has not been altogether forgotten, and the adoption of Arab nationalism serves to re-express in modern terms Islam’s view of itself.”^89 She points out that the call to *jihād* requires non-submission to non-Islamic powers had become unfashionable during the time when al-Kawākībī’s predecessors were writing. Indeed, the war-like aspect of *jihād* which she indicates, that of “word and sword”^90, was not the aspect which the reformists of the late 19th century were accentuating. On the other hand, the inner struggles which *jihād* refers to, especially in the form of effort to derive laws according to current context, or *ijtihād*, were major a part of the dialogue, usually translating to legal and thus social reforms. The dialogue in *Umm al-Qurā* places the inner struggle against apathy about the social and economic conditions of life in the Ottoman empire as the most important way to cultivate wide-spread social reform; especially by overcoming fatalism, and strengthening moral character. And from the other direction, reforms which begin at the social level; i.e. education, and upbringing, are also indicated as a way to increase motivation and productivity, thus

89 Haim, *Arab Nationalism: An Anthology*, pp. ix-x.

90 Here she cites Ibrihim al-Bishari from p. 92 of Ibid.
overcoming apathy at the personal level. The *jihād* against apathy is a major theme in *Umm al-Qurā*, and indicates al-Kawākibi’s focus on inner struggle rather than violent *jihād*.

Inner Struggles leading to Social Changes and vice versa in the terms set forth in *Umm al-Qurā* the elimination of fatalism, educational reform, the relinquishment blind imitation, *esprit de corps*, and a revitalized work ethic. The importance of taking pride in one’s work, no matter how lowly it may seem is emphasized. The ability to say, “I don’t know,” with out shame when an issue pertains to something beyond the scope of one’s profession, is another value which he tried to instill. The topic is discussed and the example of a traveling water salesman taking pride in his work is used to illustrate the philosophy.  

The apathy was also related to forgetfulness of one’s own influence over the lives of others (due to the sense of powerlessness), and one’s duty to others in the community. In order to achieve the goal of progress at a level which would make them competitive with Europe, the community would have to overcome what *Umm al-Qurā* shows to be an all pervasive stagnation which rested upon the entire Muslim community. He considered it a uniquely Muslim problem, excluding even the non-

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Muslim communities situated within a Muslim milieu. He justified this by noting the Christian communities were more advanced than their Muslim neighbors: "We find Muslims are less capable than their neighbors in their activity and their orderliness in all of their common daily activities; we find them less capable than those [non-Muslim] colleagues in precisely every art and craft."  

These social changes all act on the inner level and represent acts of will and individuals' inner struggles. The oath spoken to conclude the 'abd, or covenant, to the association shows the way in which loyalty can be viewed as an inner struggle:

"He who has made a pledge to God to enact the jihad exalting God's word, and to be faithful to the brothers of monotheism, members of this blessed association, will then declare it by saying: 'On the authority of God's covenant, by way of struggle and faith. He who doesn't follow the covenant has thus separated himself from us.'" (pp. 278-279)

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92 Ibid., p. 285, paragraph 3. With respect to what he believed their representation should be in government, he would have wanted to go back to a shari'a-based system of law, which would reinstate special status for the people of the book, or the milal. In chapter 7 Sayyid Fūrū'ī condemns the Ottoman methods of government, and especially modernizing reforms (pp. 361 – 363), which included doing away with the millet system.
5.4 Society and Women

The Arab-Muslim response to European society was one of initial shock, then acceptance, while non-Muslims assimilated European technologies and ideologies comparatively easily. In general there was an appreciation of the successes taking place in Europe, while at the same time a desire not to be engulfed by European dominance and cultural hegemony. The issues relating to the status of women became symbolic of this struggle.

In addition to the support of women’s rights and the discussion of their place in society by male writers such as Qāsim Amīn, there were women who were, and had been, debating social issues related to the role of women. The most famous of them was Baḥīthat al-Badiya, daughter of an Islamic scholar of the same mentality as Muḥammad ‘Abduh, and an acquaintance of his.93

Education for women and the veil were two topics which were fiercely debated as a result of Qāsim Amīn’s publication in 1899 of Tahrīr al-Maw‘a, or The Liberation of Woman. To Amīn veiling, or hijāb, was related to male, female segregation in general, in addition to the covering worn on the head and body.

Though women’s rights were an afterthought in al-Kawākibi’s plan for Islamic reform, a response to the the issues raised by Qāsim Amin is in Chapter 8 of *Umm al-Qurā*. The Liberation of Woman had been published just three years before the publication of *Umm al-Qurā*. In a speech by Sayyid Furāfī which comprises the short Chapter 8 the issue are addressed:

There is another important reason for our moral decline in connection to women, which has left them ignorant. As opposed to what it was like for our ancestors, inasmuch as what was there for our women; as in (the case of) the Mother of the Believers, ‘A’isha (God be satisfied with her) from whom we acquired half of our theology; and as in (the case of) hundreds of the female companions and those who came later: the female transmitters of hadith and the female scholars of legal interpretation. To say nothing of the thousands of female scholars and poets whose presence during the first era is without a doubt irrefutable evidence which flies in the face of those who would claim that the ignorance of women protects their chastity (not to mention the evidence they have doesn’t support their claim.) so as to confirm the judgment that learning induces licentiousness as ignorance induces chastity is true. Certainly! Ignorance induces chastity, and perhaps the learned woman is more capable of licentiousness than the ignorant woman, but the ignorant woman is more likely to venture it.”

“The damage of women’s ignorance on sons and daughters is an obvious matter, with no need for clarification. Yet the calamity of its effects on the morals of husbands, about which there is some secrecy, necessitates discussion. So I say this: Men are influenced by the character of their wives. Women are absolutely more capable than men in the moral field of mutual attraction. Only someone who has the idea of his wife’s deceptiveness ingrained in him imagines the opposite, inasmuch as he imagines she is poor and weak, subjected to his control. The actual state of affairs being in truth,

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that she is holding his rein and directing him however she wishes. In other words, he deludes himself that he is before her and she is his subordinate. So he thinks that he is her driver, but the truth which is seen by all the people around them, apart from him, is that she walks behind him in the capacity of a driver, not in that of a subordinate."

"Nothing surmises the guile of women better than Islamic law, in as much as it ordered veiling and confinement [to the home], strictly confining laws limiting their influence and devoting them to the management of the household. So they were ordered to fastidiously cover themselves, being strict so as to account for the possibility of revealing their zîna\textsuperscript{95} to near-by men, and to account for their coming into contact with them in private, or for other than necessities. So they were ordered not to leave the house, unless covered. Opening the door to licentiousness is the only thing which could be behind these restrictions, and the restriction is but an accommodation to males, and an apportioning of the duties of life.

The Chinese, being the most ancient of civilized mankind, require foot-binding for their daughters, in order to impede them from any advancement or movement on the path which ruins the honorable life. That is the honor which is one of the most important of Easterners' aims, as opposed to Westerners for whom nothing matters but expanding their material possessions and their comforts.

The Shari'a enjoins us to pay heed to compatibility in marriage, and that too is an accommodation of males. But the majority of the authorities of jurisprudence ignore rules requiring suitability on the part of the woman for the man, and they require only that he be suitable for her lest she "ruins" him with her haughtiness and domination of him. However, the attention to suitability on the part of the woman for the man is also one of the important family obligations, which include: preference for submission, and for raising children. Lenience in those things is a huge part of the decline of morals in the cities. For marriage with women who are ignorant of the codes of conduct or morals, or those lowly by nature or ordinary, or with women of another ethnicity or slaves, is a complete disaster. Because a man willingly,

\textsuperscript{95} The meaning here includes an allusion to a controversial verse in the Qur'ān, XXIV, 31, in which zîna refers to women's "adornment." The exact meaning of zîna in this context remains a subject of debate, precisely due to its possible implications on Shari'a law (see more below.)
or unwillingly is drawn to his wife and has the morals of his wife, so inevitably, if she is vile he becomes vile. If she is a foreigner she makes him hate his kin and his people, and forces him into the rules of her people and the molding with their morals. No doubt, this disaster will be more pronounced in the children than in the husband. (pp. 370-371)

From the above statements made by Sayyid Furâti, let us presume that we learn al-Kawâkibi’s alignment on women’s issues. His mention of the “guile” of women is a good example of his treatment of a topic with awareness to the perceptions of the public. Though he didn’t use the word “kayda” to mean “guile” as is used in the Qur‘ân, he was alluding to the passage from the Sura of Joseph which was commonly used to support this belief about women. There are similar implications for his allusion to the Sura of Light (see note 95) which contains the verse often cited as the Qur’anic injunction for women to wear the veil. The common understanding in al-Kawâkibi’s time was that it required full veiling (though one could argue that the verse requires only modest dress.)

While he seems misogynistic compared to modern feminist standards, he was liberal for the time in that he agreed with Qāsim Amin that education for women would improve society. He supported the veil and segregation, but explained it as a part of

96 Though it is the Pharaoh who says to the women of the story “This is of your women’s guile; surely your guile is great.” (Arberry, XII:27), and not God, the audience was not aware of that distinction. My advisor, Dr. Michael Zwettler, made me aware of the relevance of this passage in the Qur‘ân, due to the common perception that it is God who said women have guile.
the different roles men and women had in society, and presumably for protecting
“the honorable life” he described in his example of foot-binding. This stance on the
veil is not very distant from his female contemporary Baḥīthat al-Badiya, who
considered the European way of dressing to be immodest and valued the
conservation of traditional Muslim dress, partly as a way of retaining culture and
resisting European hegemony. Conversely, Qāsim Amin condemned the veil,
considering it a part of the segregation which kept women from participating in
society. That al-Kawākibī used a Chinese example made the Eastern aspect of
Muslim identity important. Indicating a pan-Eastern solidarity, he showed his
affinity with al-Afghānī’s ideas of solidarity in which the sole object was to resist
the West.
CHAPTER 6

THE CONCLUSIONS OF *UMM AL-QURĀ*

*Umm al-Qurā* ends with 10 guiding principles for the newly-formed association (see above, pp. 18-19), followed by 48 articles, most which explain the structure and organization of the new association, and codes of conduct, but they also include statutes which resemble general precepts more than laws; such as in article 17, “The association is to make its religious conduct well-suited to the moderate manner of the *salat.*” (p. 380, paragraph 3)

The association is to be comprised of 100 members, 10 directing, 10 consultative, and 80 honorary members. Three years after its establishment, the association is to make an effort to persuade the local sovereigns of the Muslim world to help organize a an official congress at Makka, and to send a delegate.

Weakness of the *umma* due to disagreements, called for a single spiritual authority, and Makka was already a spiritual and unifying center, due to the Pilgrimage. The
idea of moving the caliphate to Arabia had been one the British had been advocating since Wilfrid Seawen Blunt popularized it. In his book, *The Future of Islam*, Blunt makes the point eloquently: “Mecca, in fact, is a necessity to Islam even more than a Caliph; and whoever is sovereign there is naturally sovereign of the Mussulman world.” al-Kawākibī took the idea from there, or perhaps they both had the same source, but in fact many of their principles are the same in regard to the caliphate.

However, al-Kawākibī goes beyond the caliphate by proposing a Muslim federation of states, all with specialized functions within the greater Muslim *ummā*. The “interview” with the “Indian emir” in the supplement affirms that the caliphate was al-Kawākibī’s primary goal, and his main purpose for writing *Umm al-Qurā*. It provides the rebuttals to various arguments against an Arab caliphate, and proves again the advantage of the format of *Umm al-Qurā*. For he wasn’t compelled to present arguments for which he did not have an appropriate counter argument. The Indian emir explains the role of Caliph in 18 points (pp. 397-398 – paraphrase):

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97 Blunt, *The Future of Islam*, p. 119; The Ottomans and later the Arabs of the Hijāz used the European perception of the caliphate to their advantage. “At the end of the 18th century it had proved convenient to the sultans to take advantage of Christian confusion about the caliphate in diplomatic negotiations.” Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, p. 254; Ḥusayn’s initial reaction to Lawrence when he suggested claiming the caliphate was to call it “not only grammatically absurd but blasphemous,” then later he used the title in his requests to the British government. Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism*, p. 41; Also above, note 37, p. 31.

1. Establishing an Arab Qurashi caliph possessing some ties to Makka.

2. The political rule of the caliph would be limited to the Ḥijazī region and tied to a Hijazī shura [consultative assembly.]

3. The one who leads the general Islamic shura will act as the caliph’s deputy.

4. The form of the general Islamic shura consists of a hundred selected members, delegates before the group of Islamic sultanates and emirates. Their functions are confined to religious, public, and political matters only.

5. The shura would meet for a period of two months every year shortly before the beginning of the pilgrimage.

6. The location of the meeting is to be Makka when the pilgrimage occurs in winter, and Ta‘if when pilgrimage occurs in summer.

7. On the first day the entire shura would cast votes regarding the allotment of the role of president and the Caliph would appoint him.

8. Functions of the shura will be appointed by specified law which they would draft, and which the sultans and emirs would sanction.

9. The bay‘a [nomination] of the caliph is tied to special conditions which comply with shari‘a law, a fundamental aspect of the structure, however, is that if he violates one of the requirements, his bay‘a will be revoked. In addition, every three years the bay‘a must be renewed.

10. The election of the caliph is the responsibility of the general Islamic shura.

11. The caliph is to give an account of the decisions of the shura then supervise their execution.

12. The caliph is categorically not to meddle with any political or administrative matter residing in the emirates or sultanates.

13. The caliph will approve of the appointments of governors, sultans and emirs who follow shari‘a law honorably, taking into account their old, inherited codes of conduct for government.
14. Military troops will absolutely not be under the caliph’s command. His name is to be mentioned in the *khutba* [Friday Sermon] before the names of the sultans, but not on coins.

15. Maintaining security in the Hijaz region is to be dependent upon a military force, comprising two thousand to three thousand mixed troops, sent on the part of all of the sultanes and emirates.

16. The general leadership of the Hijaz troops will be entrusted to a commandant acting in the name of one of the small emirates.

17. The commandant is to be under the command of the *shura* when it is in session.

18. The *shura* is to be under the protection of the mixed troops.

“Spiritual Caliphate” is a way to describe al-Kawākibī’s vision, though it would not be spiritual and the sense of being above concrete manifestations of power, as its decision-making capabilities would influence *Shari’a* law everywhere in the *umma*.

In addition, limitations on the authority of caliphs has been a tradition in Islamic law since al-Mawārdi’s time⁹⁹. This is what the emir says about the proposed scope of power:

“As for the duties of the general assembly it is required that they don’t go beyond examining the essentials of religious matters, which is an important connection to policy in the *umma*, and a strong influence on the moral character and activity of the *umma*.” (p. 398, after numbers)

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⁹⁹ Mawārdi wrote a treatise on the caliphate, its laws of succession, and its administrative functions. In addition to these written laws which limited (or increased) his power, the caliph’s power was curtailed by the emirates in his territory, and was challenged by distant Islamic kingdoms such as the Fatimids and the Andalusian kings. H.A.R. Gibb, "Al-Mawardi's Theory of the Khilafah," *Islamic Culture*, no. 11 (1937).
The most apparent segue from Islamism to Arabism, the assertion that the Caliph should be a member of the Quraysh tribe, could also be seen as proof that al-Kawākibi had less concern for an actual Arab state as he did for a shift a power within the existing Ottoman state. For he did not give the Arabs at large equal status with the Peninsula Arabs, thus precluding the solidarity required for any national goals to be achieved. Rather than basing Arab identity on descent form the Arabs of the Peninsula, later Arab nationalists chose to base it on the Arabic language and culture, as the ramifications of descent-based cultural identity would have been problematic in many ways. al-Kawākibi, who wanted solidarity among all of the Eastern peoples in general, would not have gone about nationalism in an overtly divisive way.

With respect to ultimate goal of *Umm al-Qurā*, the values and motivations of his audience must be taken into consideration before one can judge what the vision in *Umm al-Qurā* entailed. Being Arab, they may have been receptive to the idea of Arab supremacy. What is known from the popularity of al-Afghāni’s ideas, however, is that many of them were receptive to the idea of consolidating power (Muslim and
non-Muslim alike\textsuperscript{100} and resisting Western encroachment, which is why in some parts \textit{Umm al-Qurā} addressed unification as broadly as Eastern solidarity.

Many of the topics mentioned above addressed the cultural self-questioning induced by contacts with the West. It is my hope that presenting these topics as they were discussed in \textit{Umm al-Qurā} will make possible further insights into the cultural, political, and social developments in the Middle East at the end of the last century and the beginning of this one.

APPENDIX A

*CONCISE BIOGRAPHY OF AL-KAWĀKIBĪ*

-by Adūnis

al-Kawākibī\(^{101}\) was related on his father’s side to ‘Afi b. Abī Ṭalib, and on his mother’s side to Muḥammad al-Bāqir b. ‘Afi Zayn al-‘Abdayn b. al-Imām al-Ḥusayn al-Shahīd\(^{102}\).

His father was Aḥmed Bihāʾi b. Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-Kawākibī, born in the year 1245 (h.) and his Mother was Lady ‘Aṣīfā, daughter of Masʿūd Al al-Naṣīb, who was a judge in Antioch.

\(^{101}\) This is my translation of the concise biography from Adūnis, ed., *Al-Kawakibi: Ikhtīār Al-Naṣṣ wa Qaddam Liḥā, Diwān Al-Naḥḍā* (Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm li l-Malāyīn, 1982).

\(^{102}\) [MW] The origins of the name al-Kawākibī may be from a distant ancestor whose occupation was astronomy. See al-Kawākibī, *ʿAbd Al-RahMāN Al-KawāKibī: Al-SīRa Al-Dhātī* A.p. 28


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'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī was born to these two parents in Aleppo on the 23rd of Shawāl in 1271 (h.)/1854\textsuperscript{103} (g.) Doctor 'As'ad al-Kawākibī delivered him\textsuperscript{104}. His son mentioned later that his father “performed the work of ‘correcting’ the year [of his birth] because of the advent of elections in Aleppo, so that his birthday became 1265/1848.” Due to that fact, he counted the first date as the correct one as regards al-Kawākibī’s birthday. al-Kawākibī’s mother died in the year 1276/1859 when he was six years old, so his father sent him to his maternal aunt, the Lady Ṣafīa, daughter of Mas‘ūd Al al-Naqīb, in Antioch who provided him with good care. He spent three years there learning Turkish reading and writing.

His father brought him back to Aleppo and required him to study the language arts in Persian, Turkish, and Arabic, for the care the father provided for his son was extraordinary. However, al-Kawākibī returned to Antioch again in the year 1281/1864 when he was eleven years old and enrolled in a private school in the city, where some of his teachers were related to him on his mother’s side: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-‘Ulābī and Sir Naṣīb al-Naqīb, his mother’s paternal uncle.

\textsuperscript{103} [MW] Actually 1855.

\textsuperscript{104} [Adûnîs] “Hadith” magazine, Aleppo, September 1952, pp. 542-554.
al-Kawākibī stayed in Antioch one year, after which he returned to Aleppo (once he had turned twelve) and was entered by his father into the Kawākibī School, of which his father was the director. Thus, the son was tutored by his father, as well as by the Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥubbāl [or Ḥabbāl] for religion, and Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Afi al-Kaḥayl105 in the fundamentals of the Faith and Arabic.

He took courses in the contemporary sciences by his professor, Khūrshid, who was one of the most cultured and famous Turks, and he perfected his oral and written Turkish and Persian.

In addition, he devoted himself to reading the Istanbul newspapers, which would carry excellent translations of Western though and literature, and to participating in the rarified cultural environment surrounding him at Aleppo.

At twenty two years of age he became the unofficial editor of the newspaper “Furāt”106, which was a government newspaper published in both Turkish and Arabic. After one year he became the official editor of this paper. He then initiated


106 [MW] Taḥān puts this date at 1872, but does not have the date at which he became the official editor, saying only that the was unofficial at first and then official. “Furāt” is a term which refers to the Euphrates region.
a newspaper which he named “Shahaba”\textsuperscript{107},” in partnership with Hāshim al-‘Awṭār, which was the first [exclusively] Arabic newspaper published in Aleppo. The professor Kāmil al-Ghazzi\textsuperscript{108} writes, “This journal was the first publication which made the people aware of this ingenious man.” He also said, “Its fate was sealed as soon as it began; it didn’t last more than a few short days.” The newspaper was closed after the fifteenth issue by Kāmil Pāshā al-Qubruṣī, the famous Ottoman Grand Vizier, who was then wāli of Aleppo and was known for his antipathy to freedom.

In the year 1879 al-Kawākbī started the newspaper “Moderation” in Arabic and Turkish, then the Wāli Jamīl Pāshā, the most senior minister of the Ottoman Government, abolished it because it reported the startling new idea of freedom, which al-Kawākbī had embraced in the articles and opinions he submitted to the press, considered strange at the time.

al-Kawākbī had been writing in the Aleppan press for five years by the time he had reached 25 years of age. Then he was designated an honorary member of the council

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\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{107}]\textit{Adūhīs} According to Tabākh, in “Noble Figures,” al-Kawakibi started this newspaper in 1878/1290. [MINE] “Shahba” is an epithet for Aleppo meaning “Grey.”
\item[\textsuperscript{108}]\textit{Adūhīs} “Haith” magazine, Aleppo, 1929.
\end{itemize}
of finance and the council of public relations on the 9th of March 1879. Then, after a year, he was designated likewise an honorary member of the council on public works, then made drafter of contracts. Thereafter, he was appointed as chief of the bureau of court ushers in the province of Aleppo. He also became an honorary member of the council of the bar examinations when he turned twenty nine. Then the government made him honorary director of the official provincial press in the year 1881, then honorary chair of the council on public works, then member of the mercantile court of the province of Aleppo, then enforcement commissioner in 1886. It was during that same year, as a result of the increasing pressure on him from the authorities, that he resigned from his most recent position and opened a private law office.

After numerous disagreements between him and the Wālī, Jamīl Pasha, which were related to the conditions in Aleppo and the backing of the prevailing tyranny there, the Wālī, Jamīl Pāshā, was dismissed from Aleppo, and sent as a wālī to the Ḥijāz. The Ottoman Pāshā al-‘Araj took his place. It was at this time al-Kawākibī was appointed head of the district, and undertook innumerable constructive measures. And, through the diversified range of his experience and his genius, he initiated types of reform. He set about his work as was most appropriate for each type he undertook. Then he was appointed after that, through the mediation of ʿUthmān Pāshā, to be in charge of the chamber of commerce, and was given supervision of the
agricultural treasury. He reformed and organized both of them in his competent and expert style. Then, eventually, he resigned from these positions, and went to Istanbul. Intending to visit the city as a tourist, he traveled in disguise, as it was a place in which he didn’t want anyone to recognize him. However, news of him got out, and Abū al-Hudā al-Sayyādī found him and took him in as a guest.

Then after some months he returned to Aleppo, and took it upon himself to direct the fiscal affairs of the governmental tobacco monopoly, and to organize it and purge it of incompetents. He directed it to a successful outcome. However, circumstances were against him.

In the year 1894 he was appointed to the position of lead writer for the Shariʿa court of law in Aleppo. As was his wont in every matter, he organized activities related to the court. He also went about eliminating financial errors by providing funds from his own pocket, remaining in that position for two years. Then was removed from his position, due to the influence of envious people, enemies, and riff raff.

He was appointed thereafter to numerous positions, including supervisor of public land sales, and head of the chamber of commerce. In every post he attained, he was a model of the virtues of integrity, honesty, and loyalty, thus inspiring the jealousy
of the powers-that-be, who were accustomed to bribery and exploitation. As a consequence, the judge and the wali conspired to push him aside.

He could no longer live in Aleppo\textsuperscript{109}, as the double dealing surrounded him on every side and turned against him. So he left, unbeknownst to anyone, in the year 1899, when he had turned 47, setting out for Egypt. Then he met kinsmen and friends among the Syrians who had fled before him, he joined forces with them, and the bond between them strengthened out of fondness. In Egypt he made the acquaintance of the Shaykh Rashid Riḍā, Muḥammad Kurd ‘Ālī, Ibrahim Safim al-Najjār, Ṭahir al-Jezā‘īrī, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Maghribī, Rafiq al-ʿAtḥam, ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Zahrāwī, and many others, especially in the journalistic circles.

In Egypt he published his book \textit{Umm al-Qurā}. The Khedive ʿAbbas II, who aspired to the caliphate, summoned him to undertake propaganda writing on his behalf, in exchange for a monthly stipend of 50 Egyptian pounds. So al-Kawākibi traveled all over the Orient in 1901 and penetrated the heart of the Arabian Peninsula. He brought back abundant data about the conditions of the Arabs in those regions and documented important data about the social and agrarian life, and the mineral wealth which was present in that peninsular region. He crossed the Peninsula

eastward and went to India, and then returned to travel about in Egypt, after having visited Sudan, Ethiopia, Zanzibar, the eastern and western African deserts, and the coastal region of the Indian Ocean.

He stayed in Egypt for almost two years, during which his star was constantly rising on account of his fame, and was realized through his political articles, and his new ideas about freedom, which he addressed to the masses in his articles.

On the evening of Thursday, the 14 of June, 1320/1902 he was stricken by a pain in his gut after he drank a cup of coffee. The pain worsened and finally overwhelmed him without any remedy availing, until it finished him off (it is said he was assassinated by poison’s being administered to him.)

The Khedive was shaken by the news of his death and he commissioned the burial on his private account; and so he was buried in the burial ground at the base of the Maqatțana [range of hills east of Cairo.] Sir ‘Ali Yusef, owner of the newspaper “al-Mu‘ayyid,” tended to the burial arrangements, ad fetched the Qurra’ to recite the Qur’ān for 3 days and nights.

His mortal remains were laid to rest, after a short period for religious ceremonies, in a private cemetery for certain male notables. This cemetery is located at the end of
‘Aṣfili street, in the district of the Viziers’s court. On the tomb there was a couplet written by Ḥafiz Ibrāhīm, “The Poet of the Nile”:

“Here lies a man of the world. Here lies a holy man. Let them stop, recite the Fātiha, and greet him. Because this grave, is the grave of al-Kawākibi.

Here the most unjustly treated; and here, the finest author.

Besides Ḥafiz, Muṣṭafa Ṣadiq al-Rafa‘i gave a eulogy, and also the newspaper played a big role in commemorating his important contribution, and explaining his influence on political life, the community and intellectual discourse.
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