from the power which they were able to gain for themselves for a third of a century . . . thirdly, the movement had no confidence in itself or in the nation; hence it was based more on foreign capital than on the people, and tended to dance to tunes played in foreign capitals . . .[125]

(c) The Development of the Arab National Movement after the First World War: The Role of Sati' al-Husri as a Theoretician of Arab Nationalism

The literary nationalism of the Arab Christians was politicised at the turn of the century. The ideological content of the movement in its first two phases—the literary, in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the liberal-political, which lasted until the end of the First World War—is clear. At first, the nationalists tried to point to the existence of an Arab people who were different from the Turks by referring back to classical Arabic literature. Then equality, and national cultural autonomy within the Ottoman Empire were demanded for this Arab nation. In both cases the advanced bourgeois society of the West was the model. This situation changed with the end of the First World War. The West, under whose colonial rule the Middle East had now fallen, could no longer serve as the model for the Arab national movement; on the contrary, it was now the task of the movement to fight the West in order to free itself from it and to become self-reliant. While Arab nationalism in the pre-colonial period, as formulated by the Syro-Lebanese Western-educated intellectuals, sought the introduction of liberal freedoms and bourgeois democracy on Western lines in the context of a secular Arab state, it developed into an apologetic, reactionary, populist and frequently aggressive ideology under colonial rule.[126] This new variation of Arab nationalism was formulated by Sati' al-Husri and Michel 'Aflaq both in the inter-war period and after the Second World War in a number of influential writings. Both these theoreticians influenced the whole course of Arab political thinking until the beginning of the 1960s in a particularly effective fashion.

Hans Kohn writes: 'Just as formerly French imperialism had roused German nationalism, and Austrian imperialism Italian and Czech nationalism, so, too . . . in the East, imperialism acted as the awakener of nationalism.'[127] In spite of the difficulty of comparing

phenomena rooted in different forms of historical experience, and regardless of the fact that the origins of Arab nationalism lie in the pre-colonial period, it can be safely concluded for the moment that Arab nationalism in the colonial period, which persists until the present time, is intellectually related to Italian and German nationalisms, which have been defined by C. J. Hayes as 'counter-nationalism'.[128] This is also evident from the fact that the reception of European liberalism by Arab nationalists in the nineteenth century and until the First World War underwent a change of direction. Arab nationalism, once francophile and partly anglophile, changed with the British and French colonisation of the area and became anti-British and anti-French, and germanophile. The germanophilia of Arab nationalism originated partly with the Arab nationalist officers of *al-'Ahd*, who were trained by German instructors,[129] and who shared their germanophilia with the Young Turks. These officers only took part in the pro-British Arab Revolt after considerable hesitation,[130] and the British 'betrayal' of the Arab cause once more strengthened their germanophilia, especially as German policy in the Middle East was always directed against British and French colonial intentions in the area, and was misinterpreted by the Arab officers as 'anti-colonial'. These officers also formed the nucleus of the Iraqi Army which was the first in the area to be nationally conscious.[131] This germanophilia however can also be traced to the influence of the works of Sati 'al-Husri. In fact, as will be shown, the germanophilia of Arab nationalism in the period after the First World War was based on al-Husri's ideas.

The Arab nationalist intellectuals' abandonment of francophilia and anglophilia and their espousal of germanophilia can however not be considered simply as the substitution of one set of ideas for another. It was of course closely connected with the historical circumstances which influenced Arab nationalism, which had undergone a radical change. Furthermore, the germanophilia was narrow and one-sided. The German ideology absorbed by the Arab intellectuals at this time was confined to a set of nationalist ideas which had gained particular currency during the period of the Napoleonic Wars. These ideas carried notions of romantic irrationalism and a hatred of the French to extremes. They excluded from consideration the philosophers influenced by the Enlightenment, such as Lessing, Kant, Hegel and others, on the grounds of what was considered to be their universalism. They were particularly attracted by the notion of the 'People', as defined by German Romanticism,

which they proceeded to apply to the 'Arab Nation'.[132] For the nineteenth-century nationalists, such as Adib Ishaq, the liberal national state was simply a means to emancipation; its democratic constitutional character was always taken for granted. The germanophiles of the post-First World War period however saw the national state as the apogee of the 'Arab Nation'—in other words, as an end in itself. It did not matter to them whether the Arab unity which they propagated would come about within the framework of a democratic state or a military dictatorship. In the post-colonial Middle East, this narrow-gauge fascism, already described by Fanon as a characteristic of the semi-independent state, has borrowed most of its ideological apparatus from this form of nationalism.[133] Charles Gallagher, who has also distinguished between the various different phases of Arab nationalism, mentions that an important feature of post-First World War nationalist writings is their narcissistic and ethno-centric character.[134] Although the terminology used is borrowed from Europe, these writings are permeated with an anti-European flavour.[135] The early liberals such as Nasif al-Yaziji and al-Bustani studied classical Arabic literature largely under the influence of European scholarship, in order to discover a cultural identity which would serve to distance them from the Islamically sanctioned rule of the Ottomans and thus provide them with a base to liberate themselves from it. The populist nationalists also studied classical literature in this way, but their position was no longer imbued with the liberal spirit and their idealisation of a mythical past narrowed the perspectives for progress.

It was Sati' al-Husri who began this tradition of populist germanophile Arab nationalism. His nationalism was not mystificatory, fanatic or fascist, but he laid the foundations for the kind of fanatical nationalism formulated by his disciple Michel 'Aflaq, which has found expression in the semi-fascist military dictatorship in Iraq and Syria under the aegis of the Ba'th Party.

al-Husri was born into a Syrian family in Yemen in 1882.[136] His father, Mehmed Hilal Effendi, who had had a traditional Islamic education, was chief Ottoman *qadi* (judge) in the Yemen. al-Husri studied natural sciences at a number of Ottoman higher institutions, and was then given a scholarship to study in Paris. He studied education in Paris, Switzerland and Belgium. While abroad he had contacts with secret Arab national societies and with the Young Turks. He also made use of his time in Paris to study European

national ideas more closely, Rousseau and Renan in particular, but also Herder and Fichte whose theories were to be influential in directing his thought. As a young man, according to the literature,[137] al-Husri still supported liberal ideas, in contradistinction to Ziya Gökalp, the guiding spirit of the Young Turks and the Kemalists, with whom he was on friendly terms, who believed in the idea of the organic nation state.[138] In his description of the French idea of the nation, al-Husri admits that he had been attracted to it 'in his earlier days'.[139] It is not entirely clear when the change in the direction of his thinking began, but it probably took place during his stay in Europe, when he began to study the works of the German philosophers. The immediate reason for the growth of his interest in the idea of the organic nation-state seems to have been the occupation of Syria by French colonial troops which he himself experienced and described extensively.[140] Before the French troops marched from the Lebanese coast into Syria, al-Husri, as a representative of Faisal's short-lived kingdom of Syria (1920) met the arabophobe General Gouraud for negotiations. The General aroused in al-Husri a deep hatred for France which he was never able to overcome.[141] However his francophobia never developed into the general xenophobia which often appears as a disguised form of anti-colonialism. He never denied his connections with Europe and always emphatically acknowledged his debt to German, and thus European, sources.[142] A general xenophobia only appears with his successors, especially 'Aflaq, although he too is indebted to European ideas. On the other hand al-Husri was not as unreservedly open-minded towards Europe as the Syrian-Lebanese and Egyptian liberals had been. Thus he criticised Taha Husain, the spokesman of Egyptian nationalism,[143] and Salama Musa, the early Arab socialist,[144] on the grounds that their sympathies for Europe led them to an imitation of everything European, which almost became anti-Arab.

After his return from Paris, al-Husri taught for a time at a number of Ottoman schools and higher institutions. He also held senior administrative posts in the Ottoman Balkan provinces, where he keenly followed the national movements. During the First World War he was appointed Ottoman Director of Education in Syria. There he made contact with the Arab nationalists who were at the time cooperating with Britain and France to organise a Revolt through which the Arab part of Asia might be detached from the Ottoman Empire and become an independent national state. Britain

and France supported the Revolt because they hoped it would forestall the total mobilisation of all Muslims that might have taken place in response to an appeal from the Sultan-Caliph for a 'Holy War', since the Ottoman Empire was in alliance with Germany. As has already been mentioned, Britain and France had come to an agreement to divide the Arab provinces, excluding the Holy Places of the Peninsula, between themselves for purposes of colonisation at the same time as they were negotiating with the Arab nationalists.[145] The Arab Revolt, which began in June 1916, under the supervision of British officers, led to the detachment of the Arab provinces from the Ottoman Empire in 1918. Faisal, the son of Sharif Husain of Mecca, and the Arab nationalists in whose name he was negotiating with Britain and France, were forced to recognise that the Sykes-Picot Agreement was a reality and not the 'figment of a malicious Bolshevik imagination' which they had been led to believe. Faisal's attempts to negotiate with the Allies after the war proved fruitless, and as a result, regardless of Allied resolutions, the Arab nationalists declared Syria an independent constitutional monarchy and proclaimed Faisal King on 8 March 1920.[146] al-Husri, who had supported Faisal in his negotiations in Europe, now became one of his advisors and was made Minister of Education. The invasion of Syria by the French on 24 July 1920 and the declaration of the French Mandate over Syria quickly put an end to the Arab national state which had been initially advocated but not in practice supported by the Allies. Faisal and al-Husri immediately set off for Europe for further negotiations with the Allies, and in the same year, 1920, Faisal managed to get himself made King of Iraq under British Mandate. After a brief exile in Egypt al-Husri was appointed to senior posts in Iraq after 1921. He became responsible for Education and Archaeology and was also Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Baghdad.[147] In the course of his own teaching, and because of his influence on the educational system in general, al-Husri was able to make national education the focus of the educational and cultural policies of the British Mandate. He was able to do this because Iraq had a certain degree of autonomy in its internal affairs. In his first writings, which were published in the early 1920s, al-Husri transposed the German idea of the nation as formulated by Herder and later by Fichte, to the circumstances of the Arab World. His works were received enthusiastically and helped to create a germanophile Arab nationalist movement. In 1932, a year before the death of King Faisal, Iraq was granted

political independence and became a member of the League of Nations. al-Husri continued his activities in independent Iraq, where according to his memoirs his sole aim was to create a higher degree of national consciousness through national education.

Mandatory Iraq, which had had a form of internal autonomy since 1922, became the centre of the Arab national movement after it had gained political independence. Politicians and former Ottoman officers from Syria and Palestine were active in their periods of exile in Iraq. The core of the Iraqi Army in any case consisted of former members of the *al-'Ahd* secret society. In 1940 Iraqi politicians and officers, together with Arab nationalists from neighbouring countries then living in Iraq, joined forces to lay the temporary foundations of an Arab national party.[148] Following the creation of an alliance between the Hashimite dynasty and the Arab national movement there was an another disastrous pact between the secular nationalists and the feudal-religious forces, to whom the leadership of the movement was entrusted, in the person of Hajj Amin al-Husaini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, who had been able to obtain high positions not only in the Arab national party but in the movement as a whole, especially since the 1940s.[149] Under his aegis contacts were made and developed with the Third Reich and his private secretary 'Uthman Kamal Haddad was the contact between Baghdad and Berlin.[150] There is no evidence to suggest that al-Husri collaborated with the group around the Arab national party in Iraq. It is not mentioned in his memoirs, and Haddad himself does not mention al-Husri in any connection with the group in his own memoirs. However, these nationalists certainly knew al-Husri and were influenced by him, since his ideas were widely published in daily newspapers and magazines, though not yet in book form. As no other Arab political writer of the period was familiar with the German idea of the nation, al-Husri's nationalist contemporaries could only have been made aware of these ideas through his work. In April 1941 a group of Iraqi nationalists staged a coup with the aid of the Third Reich and fascist Italy. Rashid 'Ali al-Gailani was appointed Prime Minister of Iraq, which now went over to the side of the Axis.[151]

However, by May 1941 the Regent of Iraq, 'Abd al-Ilah, who had fled after the coup, returned and overthrew the Gailani regime with the help of British troops. Those associated with the regime were either exiled or imprisoned. al-Husri was deprived of his offices and his Iraqi citizenship and deported to Syria.[152] al-Gailani fled to

Germany where he remained until the end of the war. In Syria al-Husri worked as a teacher, and when the country became independent in 1945 he already held important positions in education and continued to play a major role in the formulation of an educational syllabus in which national education once more featured prominently.[153]

In 1947 he went to Egypt, where he worked in the Cultural Department of the Arab League, and ensured that a unified educational policy on the basis of national consciousness was implemented in all Arab countries. At the Arab League he founded the Institute for Advanced Arab Studies in 1953, where postgraduates were given a nationalist education. He himself had the chair of Arab Nationalism at the Institute, and was also its permanent dean. The works which he published in and before his Cairo period were to be among the most influential writings in the Arab world in the years which followed. They became compulsory reading in schools and universities and for members of nationalist parties. al-Husri was hailed as the 'philosopher of Arab nationalism'.[154] Leading political writers even called him 'The Arab Fichte'.[155]

In 1966 al-Husri left Egypt to return to Iraq, where he died on 24 December 1968 at the age of 86. The splendid funeral which he was given, and the period of national mourning which was declared gives some indication of al-Husri's significance for the Arab regimes of his day.

When al-Husri uses the term 'Arab nation' he no longer confines it to the Arab part of Asia, as the early nationalists had done, but extends it to include the whole of Arabic-speaking North Africa. He hoped to create this 'Arab nation' through national education within the school system. It was only with Michel 'Aflaq, the 'Arab Mazzini'[156] who was under al-Husri's spell, that the idea of the Arab nation thus defined became the obligatory and guiding principle of a political organisation, since Rashid 'Ali al-Gailani's early group had had no political programme.

In the following chapters al-Husri's notion of populist Pan-Arab nationalism will be analysed in detail. The intellectual history of the Arab national movement since the First World War, which was deeply influenced by al-Husri's writings, will also be elaborated, and the development of Arab nationalism after al-Husri will be sketched in the Postscript.

Part III Sati' al-Husri's Theory of Populist Pan-Arab Nationalism and its Philosophical Origins

8 Pan-Arab Nationalism versus Pan-Islamism: The Role of Islam in al-Husri's Writings

(a) Preliminary Remarks

In the course of a long life (1882–1968) al-Husri was able to ensure that his ideas gained maximum publicity. He published frequently, and also managed to spread his theories in the course of his employment as an educationalist in various Arab countries. The application of his general theory to the specific conditions of the Arab world appeared in the form of painstaking historical works on the genesis of the Arab national movement, as well as in polemics and controversies with representatives of other political currents in the Arab Middle East.

The general framework of the Arab national movement has already been described. Accordingly, this section will concentrate on al-Husri's exposition of the phenomenon, and on his discussions and disagreements with other Arab nationalists, notably the Pan-Islamists, the Egyptian nationalists, and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party.

al-Husri's systematic account of the history of the Arab countries under Ottoman rule[1] is a classic of its kind. He gives a detailed description of the way in which the Arab lands became a part of the Empire[2] and an account of the general stagnation into which the Arab world fell under Ottoman rule,[3] as a result of characteristics inherent in the social structure of the Empire. According to al-Husri, the wave of modernisation during the Tanzimat period[4] particularly affected the Arab countries, because the modernisation of social institutions was accompanied by a more rigorous political centralisation, which included a more systematic and hence more effective

Turkification of the Arab provinces. This tendency was given further impetus by the Young Turks, who followed a Turanian nationalism[5] which had the effect of creating a national opposition among the Arab populations whom they dominated. Hitherto, the peoples of the Ottoman Empire had been loyal to Ottoman rule because it appeared to represent the continuity of the Islamic caliphate. However, the rise of Turanianism weakened this loyalty, since Ottoman rule now seemed to have lost its Islamic content. al-Husri considers the Arab Revolt of 1916 to be the high watermark of the political consciousness of the 'Arab nation'. He sees the Arab state of Greater Syria, founded after the 1918 rising, as the 'first modern Arab national state', and devotes considerable attention to it. The invasion of Syria in 1920 by French colonial troops, who had been in occupation of the Lebanese coast since 1918, and who defeated the Syrian army at the battle of Maysalun on 24 July 1920 is the subject of al-Husri's lengthy work, *Yawm Maysalun* (The Day of Maysalun).[6] He believes that this day of defeat was one of the 'most important days in the modern history of the Arab nation'.[7] For al-Husri, who witnessed it, it was significant not only as a biographical detail but also because of its decisive importance for the whole Arab national movement. With the 'Day of Maysalun' a new phase in the movement began, that of francophobia and germanophilia, and this is also apparent in the book, where his animosity towards France is expressed in his description of French colonial rule.

However, al-Husri does not see the emergence of the Arab national movement purely in terms of a reaction against Turkification, which tried to force the Arabs to abandon their cultural heritage entirely: it was also and principally the result of the Arab cultural revival, which had been fostered by the Christian missions.[8] Even the Wahhabi revolt, although essentially an archaic religious movement, has, according to al-Husri, contributed indirectly to the Arab national movement, in that it sought to weaken the Ottoman Empire and to strengthen the Arab element in it.[9] The rise of Muhammad 'Ali also served national aspirations: it 'performed a great service for Arab nationalism . . ., because it made possible the existence of a modern state in an Arab country, where an Arab intellectual and literary renaissance could take place'.[10] However, the most crucial contribution to the Arab renaissance came from the Syro-Lebanese intellectuals, particularly the Christians, in the second half of the nineteenth century. Because of their religious affiliation, they did not feel any particular loyalty

towards the Ottoman Empire, and it was thus much easier for them to press for an independent secular Arab state.[11] In contrast, their Muslim contemporaries had to suffer a severe conflict of loyalties before they could free themselves from the Empire and Islamic religious thinking. Hence, in the beginning they sought to harmonise the idea of the nation with Islam by advocating an *Arab* caliphate, as was done for instance by al-Kawakibi,[12] or by confining themselves to demands for national cultural autonomy for the Arabs within an Ottoman Empire sanctioned by Islam.[13] It was not only that the Arab Christians belonged to a religion different from the one which functioned as the state ideology which facilitated their espousal of secular nationalist thought: a further decisive factor was the education they received from the European and American missions. Here al-Husri excludes the French Catholic missions, who at first taught only in French, and who taught the Syro-Lebanese Catholics that they needed the protection of France against the Muslims, and thus actually ensured the loyalty of their pupils to French colonial rule in advance. The Russian Orthodox[14] and the American Protestant missions thought in somewhat longer terms.[15] They addressed themselves to all the Arabs, whom they sought to win over through the revival of Arabic language and culture, and thus to separate them from the Ottoman Empire. In this they eventually became so successful that even the Jesuit missions occasionally taught in Arabic.

The Arab Christian and Muslim nationalists who gathered in Paris in 1913 expressed their desire for national independence, although they were prepared to settle in the short term for the achievement of this autonomy within the framework of the Ottoman Empire. The Young Turks initially accepted these demands, but only to give themselves breathing space, as was to become evident later, when they liquidated the leaders of the Arab national movement who had organised the Congress in Paris.[16]

Apart from the Arabian Peninsula, those parts of the Arab world which became European colonies after the First World War (North Africa having already reached colonial status at various times in the nineteenth century), developed, as al-Husri frequently admits, in a number of different political directions. He accuses those Arabs who have developed a form of nationalism confined to their own region, such as the Egyptian nationalists, of not having grasped the fact that the borders they defend have been drawn by colonialism. '*We rebelled against the English and the French; we rebelled against those*

who conquered our homeland and who tried to subjugate it . . . but when we had liberated ourselves from them, we began to hallow the borders which they had drawn in our country . . .'[17] al-Husri reduces the various political schools which are opposed to Pan-Arabism to (1) local patriots of all kinds, (2) those who mourn the passing of the Ottoman Empire, and (3) cosmopolitans and internationalists. He fights with equal vehemence against all three currents, both in outright controversies and in writings about Arab culture and language, which seek to prove, along the lines of the German idea of the nation, that a unitary Arab nation exists; it only lacks a united national state.[18]

(b) al-Husri's Interpretation of al-Afghani

Pan-Islamism, founded by al-Afghani as a political and religious response to colonialism, has already been defined as the ideological weapon of Islamic modernism. It has also been mentioned that al-Afghani gave up the notion of Pan-Islamism as a national state as soon as he realised that 'Abd al-Hamid II was misusing this ideology to consolidate his own rule against the rising national movements in the Ottoman Empire. In his later writings he no longer postulated a Pan-Islamic state as the institutional framework for Islamic society, and began to see Pan-Islamism as an expression of Muslim anti-imperialist solidarity. However, al-Afghani did not simply reduce Pan-Islamism to this formula; at the same time, he began to recognise the sub-Islamic national structures of the Persians, the Indian Muslims and the Arabs, although this development in his thought has been systematically ignored by supporters of Pan-Islamism. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Pan-Islamic Caliphate movement, which united all conservative forces and accused the Arab national movement of being responsible for the downfall of the Empire, claimed al-Afghani as its spiritual father. This claim not only fails to take al-Afghani's later development into account, but also suppresses the fact that his main aim was to fight against colonialist influence in the Muslim world. The post-war Caliphate movement, on the other hand, was in overt alliance with the forces of reaction and imperialism.[19]

al-Husri's argument with Pan-Islamism, which he saw as a challenge to Pan-Arab nationalism, was conducted on two levels. In the first place, he refers back to the spiritual sources of Pan-

Islamism. Although he points out the different stages in al-Afghani's political thinking, he misinterprets him in the same manner as the Pan-Islamists. Unlike them, however, he stresses the significance of his later work and glosses over his early Pan-Islamist period. Secondly, al-Husri argues with the Pan-Islamists on a general theoretical level, and as usual quotes his own theories to refute their views.

Before discussing al-Husri's interpretation of al-Afghani, it is useful to examine al-Afghani's political theories in greater detail. According to al-Afghani, mankind consists of various communities, whose existence is vested in the will of God. The individual can only exist in the community. Each community (*umma*) is 'like a living organism, with its own limbs, which are directed by a single soul, so that every community is like a man, who is different from all other men in the stages of his life, his concerns, his fortunes and his misfortunes'.[20] He distinguishes between the two forms of social commitment which hold such organisms together, the national and the religious bond. He gives priority to the religious bond: Islam is more integrative and culturally loaded than any national commitment. 'Muslim history from the rise of Islam to the present day shows that Muslims have acknowledged the bond of religion over and above any racial bond or national group solidarity. This is why the Turks and the Persians have no objection to the rule of the Arabs, and the Indian subordinates himself to the Afghan . . . as long as the ruler follows the *shari'a*.'[21] Hence he does in fact acknowledge the existence of nationalities, although with a different degree of emphasis in each of his writings. But he always stresses that it is only Islam which can be the foundation of nationality for the Muslims, because it has proved itself superior to other forms of association. Hence the pre-Islamic Arabs did not manage to generate major cultural achievements, and were even unable to unite themselves on the basis of a common Arab identity: these primitive tribes lived in constant feud with one another. It was only Islam 'which could, in a short time, raise the Arab nation (*umma*), deeply rooted in savagery (*tawahhush*) and barbarism, to the highest level of wisdom and civilisation'.[22]

These ideas form the general framework of al-Afghani's political thinking, whose substance changed according to the historical situation. In the period when he was co-operating with Abd al-Hamid II[23] al-Afghani postulated a state for the Islamic *umma*, which he considered to have been brought into being in the Ottoman

Empire, and sanctioned by Islam. After his disenchantment with Abd al-Hamid's despotism, he renounced Ottomanism[24] and considerably altered his notions of the state framework of the Islamic *umma*. The believers, whom God has made brothers, should unite 'to enable them through their unity to create a dam to protect them from all the floods streaming towards them! But I do not mean to insist that all Muslims should have a single ruler, since *this would probably be difficult to achieve*. I demand, however, that their supreme Lord should be the Qur'an and that religion should be the basis of their unity.'[25] It is only this unity, within the framework of an Islam based on the achievements of modern science and technology, that is, of a modernised Islam, which can protect the Muslims from the colonial system and ensure them the ultimate victory over their colonial rulers. 'The colonial powers direct their gaze towards those countries with rich resources and fertile soils, whose populations are sunk in ignorance, and have reached such a state of idleness that they no longer do a hand's turn, and are no longer prepared to engage in conflict.'[26]

Having turned away from the Ottoman abuse of Pan-Islamism, and having reduced the Pan-Islamic bond to a primarily anti-colonial form of consciousness, al-Afghani was now in a position to address the individual Islamic peoples, and to mobilise their national feelings against colonialism. Accordingly he supported the national struggle of the Egyptians against the British colonial system. 'If the Egyptians united themselves and raised themselves into a nation (*umma*) which would fight for its independence, and if they refused to accept anything else, and could endure the repression which the struggle would bring . . . then one could almost congratulate them on their independence in advance.'[27] He also defends the Arab cultural heritage against Renan's accusations that the Arabs, like all Semites, are not a creative people; Arab philosophy, Renan says, has been developed by Muslims of non-Arab origin.[28] Clearly, as in his early phase in India, al-Afghani's writings on this subject inevitably have an air of pragmatism. Nikki Keddie points out: 'It is within the context of pragmatic anti-imperialist and anti-foreign goals that one can make sense of Afghani's contradictory writings on national versus religious ties.'[29] The Egyptian author 'Ammara has wrongly interpreted al-Afghani's later writings on nationalism as showing 'national maturity'.[30] This explanation in some sense also contradicts his own more or less correct interpretation of al-Afghani's rejection of Ottoman Pan-Islamism,

which 'Ammara sees not as a rejection of Pan-Islamism as such but of the Ottoman Empire, in order to formulate a theory of anti-colonialism.[31] For al-Afghani, Islam remained the guiding principle throughout his life. In contrast to 'Ammara, Keddie has succeeded in making an accurate and comprehensive assessment of his work. 'His main role was rather to use Islam as an ideology—to strengthen its position as a focus of identity and solidarity against the attacks of the Christian West, and to use it as a rallying point for the repulsion of Western Conquerors.'[32] In short, al-Afghani's political theory is an 'Islamic Response to Imperialism', in the words of the title of Keddie's selection of his writings.

As has already been noted, al-Husri makes no mention of the fact that before he broke with Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid, al-Afghani recognised him as the Caliph of the Muslims and the Ottoman Empire, and the Ottoman Empire as the institutional framework of Pan-Islamism. He begins his exposition of al-Afghani's ideas by quoting extracts from articles which the latter had published in 1884 in the short-lived review *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* (The Unbreakable Bond) during his exile in Paris together with his pupil Muhammad Abduh.[33] These articles contain the sentence which has just been quoted, in which al-Afghani emphasises that he does not intend Pan-Islamism to mean that all Muslims should live in a single state under a single ruler. al-Husri uses this quotation as the evidence for his allegation that al-Afghani never demanded a state framework for Pan-Islamism. Indeed he is supposed to have been 'very far away' from this idea.[34] For al-Afghani, Pan-Islamism means 'friendships, solidarity, compromise, and exchange of ambassadors'.[35]

al-Husri refers to a number of passages in al-Afghani's writings in which the latter deals with the difference between national and religious communities. al-Husri correctly states that al-Afghani does not deny the existence of nationalities in general, and points out that he also emphasises that Muslims can do without the national bond because they possess in Islam a superior form of social commitment, which implies that the national bond is in some way in conflict with the principles of the Islamic *shari'a*.[36] al-Husri tries to show that this interpretation changes in the course of al-Afghani's intellectual development. al-Husri quotes passages in which the reader almost hears al-Husri himself speaking, for instance in his description of al-Afghani's definition of language as an integral part of the cohesion of every social group:

> We can observe that the populations of many lands which have been conquered by foreigners have maintained their national language in spite of foreign rule. In the course of their history, these peoples have been able to rise and regain their freedom, and unite all those who speak their language. The course of this development is entirely determined by the fate of the language. If these peoples had lost their language, they would have lost their history at the same time, and forgotten their glory, and would have ended in a state of servitude . . .[37]

Such a formulation could easily have come from the quill of either Herder or al-Husri. However, al-Husri uses it for his own purposes and isolates it from the main stream of al-Afghani's thought. It is important to emphasise that al-Afghani was not a political philosopher in a strict sense, but more of a political agitator. His political writings are either in the form of occasional works, dictated to a secretary, or notes of his lectures taken down by his pupils. He never seriously attempted to put down his political ideas in the form of a systematic theory. In spite of this, all his works contain a single common feature: they are *an appeal to the Muslims, as the objects of colonialism, in an attempt to mobilise them against European colonial rule*. This dimension seems to have escaped al-Husri entirely. He confines himself to an imprecise analysis of the texts, only citing passages which would prove his own case. Here al-Husri attaches particular significance to a newly discovered work of al-Afghani's which first appeared in Persian: this was translated into Turkish in 1913, and only became more widely known through a French translation published in 1958.[38] Its precise date cannot be accurately established. In it al-Afghani says that language is the basis of nationality, and that it provides a firmer basis for social commitment than religion. There are many peoples who have changed their religion without having lost their identity, which would not be possible if they had lost their national language.[39] al-Husri tries to prove that since this text was translated into Turkish, al-Afghani must have been considered a pioneer of Turkish nationalism by the Turkish nationalists themselves, while the Arabs know him primarily as Pan-Islamist.[40]

According to al-Husri, al-Afghani's thinking went through three stages of development: first, an overemphasis of religious as against national bonds; second, the recognition of the existence of nationalities as homogeneous structures; third, the recognition of a greater degree of homogeneity of nationalities as cultural communities based on a national language as against the homogeneity of social groups united on the basis of religion. al-Husri accuses al-Afghani of a general inability to distinguish between reality and wishful thinking. For al-Husri, reality is the existence of nationalities; wishful thinking is the notion of a homogeneous Islamic *umma*. He also alleges that al-Afghani's writings are not well reasoned and are full of mistakes,[41] which illustrates his own failure to understand that these writings are primarily demagogic in character.

It has already been made clear that Arab nationalism in the 1920s, which was strongly influenced by al-Husri, has its primary ideological roots in the political theories of the German Romantics. In the discussion of al-Afghani's political ideas it has been shown that neither he nor al-Husri considers the individual as a separate entity, but rather as a member of a community. For al-Afghani, this community is religious, while for al-Husri it is cultural. Due to the affinity between these two definitions, the question must arise whether, in fact, al-Husri's notion of community does not after all contain some Islamic features, and is not a mere reproduction of the German notion of the national spirit. Sylvia Haim, who has done research into the Arab national movement, has produced a study of the notion of community in the works of both al-Afghani and al-Husri. In her view, al-Husri's notion of *umma* can be unambiguously translated as 'nation' in the European sense, while al-Afghani's *umma* cannot be directly translated into modern terminology.[42] She shows that similar ideas already existed in classical Islamic political philosophy. Ibn Taimiyya, who died in 1328, denied the separate entity of the individual, and compared the body of Muslims to an organism which he called the 'Islamic *umma*'.[43] Hence al-Afghani's notion of the *umma* may not be of exclusively European origin, although his thinking shows strong European features. However, these European influences are only accepted by al-Afghani to the extent to which they are compatible with Islam, as has been noted in Chapter 4. In contrast, al-Husri's nationalism can be said to have been little influenced by Islam—if his debt to Ibn Khaldun is excluded, and in any case, Ibn Khaldun is hardly representative of traditional Islamic thought. Haim correctly stresses that al-Husri's ideas 'are only to be understood in the light of romantic European thought . . . but the Islamic tradition apparent in the extracts from Jamal al-Din and Muhammad 'Abduh is still too strong to allow one

to give ready made European equivalents to the Arabic expressions which confront the reader.'[44]

A closer comparison of al-Husri's and al-Afghani's definition of the *umma* shows that Haim has correctly concluded that the most important difference lies in the fact that al-Husri sees the *umma* as an autonomous entity while al-Afghani derives it from the Will of God.[45] A further difference, which is closely connected to this, is that:

> Traditionally, a Muslim has to be solidary (sic) with the *umma* because the Qur'an dictates it and Islam expects it. But Sati' al-Husri bases his doctrine on individual feelings. It is the individual who feels the call of tradition, it is he who feels that he must answer it, it is he who does not feel fulfilment and total realisation if he does not lose himself in his nation. *Fichte and not the Qur'an inspires Sati' al-Husri.*[46]

It can therefore be asserted that al-Husri's definition of the *umma* is not a secularisation of the orthodox Islamic concept, as formulated systematically in the political philosophy of Ibn Taimiyya, and restated in modernised form by al-Afghani. It is a term of modern origin, which derives from European thought, although its affinity to the Islamic definition of the *umma*, and especially its denial of the separate existence of the individual, has greatly contributed to its applicability to the circumstances of the Arab world.

(c) al-Husri's Discussion of al-Kawakibi's anti-Ottomanism and 'Abd al-Raziq's Critique of the Caliphate

Long before al-Husri had developed his definition of the *umma* in the European sense of the nation, 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, (1849–1902), a follower of al-Afghani and 'Abduh, had interpreted the Islamic notion of the *umma* in a manner which amounted to secularisation, although this was very far from his intention. al-Kawakibi claims that as well as the Islamic *umma*, an Arab *umma* also exists as an independent community. In this way, according to Sylvia Haim, he 'made more than one step to meeting Western secularism, and indeed al-Kawakibi worked out an almost racial theory of nationality while remaining an orthodox Muslim . . .'.[47]

al-Kawakibi,[48] who was born in Aleppo, received a thoroughly orthodox Islamic education in his native city. As a young man he fought against the despotic rule of 'Abd al-Hamid, and suffered under his repression. He eventually fled to Cairo, where he worked in the circle of Muhammad 'Abduh and his disciple Rashid Ridha until his death. He published many of his articles in *al-Manar* (The Minaret), a review edited by Ridha, which was a focus of Islamic modernist revivalism. al-Kawakibi later collected these essays in two volumes, called *Umm al-Qura* (Mother of the Villages)[49] and *Taba'i'al-Istibdad* (Features of Tyranny).[50] In *Umm al-Qura* his criticism of the Ottomans goes as far as to question their capability to uphold the Islamic Caliphate; he pleads for the return of the caliphate to Quraish, the tribe of the Prophet Muhammad.[51] In addition to taking on a national character, al-Kawakibi's version of the caliphate contains other modern features. He suggests, for instance, that the caliph should be elected every three years. His power is to be limited; he is neither allowed an army, nor the opportunity to interfere in the affairs of the prospective autonomous sultanates. For their part, the sultanates would have to recognise the spiritual authority of the caliphate. Haim underlines the secular and national implications of this interpretation of the caliphate: 'A pious Muslim as he no doubt was, he unconsciously adopted the Western fallacies about the temporal and the spiritual powers of the caliph, and carried the distinction so far that he had justified through it the setting up of an Arabian caliphate.'[52] The unintended consequence of this was, as Haim continues, that 'the general weight of all al-Kawakibi's arguments . . . inclines towards a theory of Arab nationalism'.[53]

In the essays in *Taba'i'al-Istibdad*, al-Kawakibi formulates a pointed criticism of despotism, alluding to the Ottoman despotism of 'Abd al-Hamid II. He shows the way in which such rule is destructive to man, although he is opposed to fighting it by force because this will not guarantee the removal of the basis of despotism, which is the ignorance of the subject. Despotic rule can only be ended by education and enlightenment, however long this process may take.[54]

al-Husri eagerly quotes al-Kawakibi's work since he can use it to support his own theories. He can now point to an orthodox Muslim critic of the Ottoman caliphate, and he can even make use of some of al-Kawakibi's arguments to prop up his basic thesis of a unitary Arab nation. In his writings on al-Kawakibi, he stresses that he was

'an Islamic scholar, and that Shaikh Rashid Ridha, the editor of *al-Manar*, publicised and supported his views',[55] although this is clearly questionable, because al-Kawakibi and Ridha developed the ideas of their teacher Muhammad 'Abduh in completely opposite directions.[56]

al-Husri does not limit himself to quoting the orthodox Muslim al-Kawakibi to support his arguments against the Pan-Islamists and his critique of the Ottoman Caliphate. al-Kawakibi, incidentally, certainly contributed a great deal to the development of Arab national thought, but can be regarded more as an Islamic revivalist than a conscious nationalist. al-Husri went one step further by making use of the arguments of an equally orthodox Muslim, 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq, in order to question the political form of the Caliphate as such.

As has been indicated at the beginning, al-Husri's dispute with the Pan-Islamists takes place on two levels, first on the level of a philological interpretation of al-Afghani's political writings, to prove that al-Afghani never actually postulated a political framework for Pan-Islamism, and secondly on a general theoretical level, in which the main issue is whether a religious community can also be a national one. It is clear that al-Husri has not dealt accurately with his source material. He ignores the early al-Afghani, the state ideologue of the Ottoman Empire under 'Abd al-Hamid II. Hence his theoretical differences with the Pan-Islamists still need to be investigated.

In the discussion of the general theoretical framework of al-Husri's work, it was concluded that, following Ibn Khaldun, religion plays only a secondary role in the formation of nations, and that, following the nineteenth-century German Romantics, it can only be of real significance if it is a national religion. Hence the gist of al-Husri's controversy with the Pan-Islamists, on both theoretical and practical levels, is that Pan-Arabism is easier to put into practice than Pan-Islamism.[57]

al-Husri says that the universal religions of Christianity and Islam have been unable to achieve a political unity of peoples speaking different languages, and if this has taken place, it has done so only for brief historical periods within a very limited framework.[58] From this he concludes that irredentist movements cannot be successful if based on religion, but only if based on a common culture, language and historical heritage. He knows that such secular ideas would be bitterly opposed as heretical by the influential Islamic '*ulama*', and

he therefore makes tactical allowances in order to avoid open conflict with them. He attempts a definition of Pan-Islamism which does not conflict with the political assumptions of his own theory. He explains that he always uses unity in the sense of the unity of the national state; he is only opposed to Muslim unity where it implies a single national state, and he is not opposed to Islamic solidarity and brotherhood as such.[59] He suggests that there should be a strict distinction between Pan-Islamism and Islamic solidarity, and that the first should be given up for the sake of the second, particularly because the creation of an Islamic national state as postulated by Pan-Islamism is impossible.[60] However, he does not seek to force this idea upon the Islamic '*ulama*':

> I am aware that my words will displease many Islamic scholars. I know very well that the historical facts which I mention cannot shake the belief of the '*ulama*' because they argue without reference to history or geography. They have never been able to distinguish between the implications of 'religious brotherhood' and 'political bond' and they have even accustomed themselves to confuse the moral category of 'Islamic solidarity' with the political category of Pan-Islamism. I see no reason why I should attempt to convince the '*ulama*' that their belief is wrong, but I do consider it necessary to ask them to apply reason and logic in this matter. As far as I am concerned, they can maintain their belief in Pan-Islamism as long as they grasp that Pan-Arabism must be realised even if only as a step towards the realisation of the Pan-Islamism in which they believe. It is impossible that they should oppose Pan-Arab activities under Pan-Islamic pretexts.[61]

He repeats this argument in his dialogue with the former rector of al-Azhar, Shaikh Muhammad Mustafa Maraghi, who declared, in answer to a question put by al-Husri: 'I have nothing to say about Pan-Arabism . . . I am not concerned about it . . . I am neither for it nor against it.'[62] al-Husri comments ironically on this answer: 'If someone were to convey these words to me, and were to ask me to guess the nationality of the speaker, I would assume that he belonged to one of those nations lying far away from the great Arab world, . . . between Sweden and Transvaal, Tibet and Alaska . . . That these words should come from the mouth of Shaikh Muhammad Mustafa Maraghi, the head of the oldest academic

institution in the Arab world, who has the weighty historical task of maintaining Arab culture, astounds me . . .'[63]

Ultimately al-Husri was unable to avoid incurring the hostility of the '*ulama*', especially as he made no secret of the fact that he was not well disposed towards them. He considered them a serious obstruction to the maturation process of the Arab national movement. In his view, they had become instruments of the Ottoman Empire in its struggle against the Arab national movement by insisting that nationalism was in contradiction to Islamic teaching, and that every Muslim had the duty of obedience to the Sultan-Caliph.[64]

It is significant that al-Husri either uses arguments inherent in Islam or secular notions derived from Islamic scholars in the course of his controversy with the '*ulama*'. He first seeks to prove that Ottoman historians have falsified history by claiming that the last 'Abbasid caliph, al-Mutawakkil, transferred the caliphate to the Ottomans,[65] from which they derived their rights to be its heirs. al-Husri considers that this manipulation of history vitally contributed to their success in securing the loyalty of the Arabs to the Empire, and delayed the rise of the Arab national movement.[66] However, he is not content simply to question the right of the Ottomans to the caliphate, but he also challenges the role of the caliphate as the cornerstone of the Islamic polity. In this context he quotes the work of 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq, a professor at al-Azhar, who spoke out against the misuse of Islam in the name of the caliphate.

'Abd al-Raziq was one of the most distinguished Islamic scholars of the 1920s. He taught traditional Islamic studies with an infusion of modern European thought, in the tradition of Muhammad 'Abduh, and in contrast to his colleagues was thoroughly familiar with Islamic political philosophy as well as with the Qur'an and the Hadith. In his epoch-making work *Islam wa Usul al-Hukm* (Islam and the Foundations of Rule),[67] which appeared in Cairo in 1925, he complains that the study of politics has always been grievously neglected in Islam. The reason for this has been the fear of rulers of the possible outcome of such studies. 'The study of politics is the most dangerous science for governments, because it reveals the forms, characteristics and systems of power. Hence the rulers have always been opposed to this science and have barred their subjects' access to it.'[68] He saw his own work as an Islamic contribution to the study of politics, which would throw light on the question of the caliphate. The content of his work was so revolutionary for the '*ulama*' that they dismissed him from the postgraduate department of

al-Azhar, stripped him of all his academic titles and his judicial office and declared him a heretic.[69]

The core of 'Abd al-Raziq's thought is that the caliphate is a form of government. Here he follows Ibn Khaldun, who explains in the *Muqaddima* that every form of government is an expression of domination, and that domination is based on power.[70] 'In Islam the caliphate has always been based on brute force, and except in rare cases, this has been material power. The caliph consolidated his position with the help of spears and swords, a well equipped army and its overall might. He legitimated his rule and obtained security on this basis alone.'[71] 'Abd al-Raziq modifies Ibn Taimiyya's notion that obedience is due to the political ruler, and limits the duty of obedience to the relationship between man and God. Hence 'it is natural that those Muslims who stand by liberty in their thoughts and deeds, and who subordinate themselves only to God will refuse to subordinate themselves to human beings in the way that rulers demand from their subjects . . .'[72] He aims to show that Islam is innocent of the misdeeds of the caliphate, and that those misdeeds which have been committed in the name of religion by the rulers and the powerful cannot be laid at the door of Islam, since 'it is a fact that the caliphate is based on power'.[73]

For 'Abd al-Raziq, the powerful empire which the Muslims constructed in the course of the spread of Islam is the state of the Arabs. They have built this empire, they were its 'rulers and colonisers'.[74] 'The new state which was founded and governed by Arabs was an Arab state. In contrast, Islam in the way I know it, is a religion for all mankind. It is neither Arab nor foreign.'[75] Finally he says: 'In fact, Islam is not responsible for what the Muslims have suffered under the caliphate: it is not responsible for the mis-deeds, the tyranny and the lust for power that went with it.'[76] This view is of course potentially secular. 'Abd al-Raziq reduces Islam to a spiritual formula, to a direct relationship between God and man, without any need for a mediator. However, like al-Kawakibi, who declared the Arabs to be an independent nationality and demanded an Arab-Islamic caliphate for them, 'Abd al-Raziq himself remained an orthodox Muslim. For him secularism is merely the result rather than, as for al-Husri, the aim, of his thinking. al-Husri, who is far removed from 'Abd al-Raziq's politico-theological arguments, and even differs fundamentally from him in his demand for obedience not to God but to the nation, does not hesitate to make use of his ideas and his eminence as an Islamic scholar for his own ends. He

declares to the Pan-Islamists who mourn the passing of the Ottoman Empire—following his own and al-Kawakibi's historical research—that the Ottomans had no legitimate claim to the caliphate, since it rightly belonged to the Arabs. He further confronts them with the thesis, derived from 'Abd al-Raziq, that true Islamic orthodoxy does not recognise a caliphate, nor for that matter any religiously sanctioned form of earthly government.[77] However al-Husri by no means fails to appreciate the significance of Islam for the Arabs. He considers that without the Qur'an the Arabic language would have suffered the same fate as Latin, but he also stresses the part played by the Arab Christians in rescuing classical Arabic, since they recite the Bible in Arabic. Fundamentally al-Husri accepts Islam as a part of Arab national culture, but he does not consider that Islam alone constitutes Arab culture. He vehemently attacks the claim of the Pan-Islamists and the Islamic historians that Arab history only began with the rise of Islam, and that before that the Arabs lived in primitive feuding tribes. The highly developed literary form of pre-Islamic poetry proves the contrary:

> It is true that the advent of Islam marked a new and significant period in Arab history, but it is wrong to claim that the Arabs before Islam were an uncivilised or primitive people. Historical research has proved the falsity of this view. But even if we leave aside the results of this research and simply examine the Arabic language of this period more closely, it becomes clear to us that this is not the language of a primitive people . . . on the contrary, it is a language which shows a high capacity for abstraction, which could not have been achieved without the foundation of an intellectual tradition. Thus we must insist that the denial of a pre-Islamic culture and of the existence of a spiritual tradition among the Arabs in no way corresponds to the historical evidence.[78]

It will be evident from this discussion that al-Husri's theory of the nation is secular in the European sense, and that its affinity with Islamic political philosophy is *accidental* and only occasionally formal. But it was precisely this affinity which created a fertile soil for the diffusion of al-Husri's theories in a profoundly Islamic society, together with the pioneering work of the early Syro-Lebanese Christian nationalists, and those orthodox Muslims who unintentionally secularised Islam.

On the basis of this analysis, it is possible to refute the claim that

Pan-Arabism is the historical continuation of Pan-Islamism. There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that Pan-Arabism and Pan-Islamism are two rival political movements.[79] This is also clear from the fierce hostility expressed by the still powerful Muslim Brethren towards the Arab national movement. In spite of all this evidence, the facile thesis that Pan-Arabism is the continuation of Pan-Islamism continues to be aired in the literature, not only in popular writing[80] but also in academic journals.[81]