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Reproducing the Family

Biopolitics in Twentieth-Century Egypt

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The rapid growth in numbers.
In 100 years from now Egyptians would number 49,600,000.
In 300 years from now they would total 500,000,000.
In 425 years Egyptians would equal the present population of the earth at 2,000,000,000.
In 968 years Egyptians would occupy not only the whole earth but several other planets as well at 973,300,000,000.

—Wendell Cleland (1937)[1]

The "population problem" denotes both the population explosion of other peoples and too low a birth rate of one's own people. During the nineteenth century in France one's own people were French, the others German and British. In Prussia . . . the others were Jewish. Today the others are the Third World. In late-Victorian England, the others were the labouring classes.

—Ian Hacking (1990)[2]

Between 1936 and 1939, the Egyptian Medical Association held a series of forums on birth control and the population problem; the first full-length book on Egypt's population problem was published; the first life tables for Egypt were calculated; a group of university professors organized under the rubric of "The Happy Family Society" to discuss the need for planned families; the first religious edict (fatwa) on birth control in the twentieth century was issued by the mufti of Egypt, Sheikh ʿAbd al-Majid Salim; and the Ministry of Social Affairs was created, part of its mandate being the study of the population problem.[3]

The constitution of population both as an object of knowledge requiring observation and management through "numbers, statistics, material phenomena," and as a social problem to be modified for the progress of the human race, I argue, took shape in Egypt in the 1930s.[4] However, the parameters within which the problem of population was discussed during this time period were far broader than that of contemporary discussions, entailing fields of knowledge as varied as medicine, geography, and sociology, in part because of the embryonic nature of specialized fields of expertise such as demography and vital statistics. It is this convergence of overlapping fields of knowledge that took the calculus of life and death, of the fecundity of lands and bodies, into consideration and marked population politics and the scientific reform of society at this time.

Cultural historian of science David Horn has detailed this process for Italy in the 1920s and 1930s, focusing on the formation of reproduction and welfare as objects of social scientific knowledge and new social technologies "intended to confront the 'problem' of declining fertility." Anthropologist Ann Anagnost has explored the notion of China as a nation that is "excessively populous," analyzing how the meaning of the one-child policy in China expanded from a "remedy for under-development" to a "a sign of the modern itself." She notes that when the one-child policy was issued in 1978, population was posed not just as a problem, but also as a principal causal factor in China's failure to progress. Both authors treat population as a discursive construction. That is to say, they do not engage with the question of whether China is really overpopulated or Italy really underpopulated. Rather they treat demographic programs and their cultural meanings, neither as effects of objective crises, nor as "mere propaganda," but rather as solutions to a culturally constructed problem.[5] My intentions in this chapter are similar.

This chapter explores twentieth-century biopolitics in Egypt. It traces the origins of population discourse to the 1930s, exploring in depth how population debates revolved around the neo-Malthusian reduction of the birth rate (the problem of quantity), and the improvement of the characteristics of the population (the problem of quality). From the 1930s to the 1960s Egyptian population politics were inextricably linked to the state as the arbiter of social welfare, which was, first and foremost, an interventionist project—whether accomplished through a population policy, a program for land reclamation or social welfare, or the moral education of the demographic masses. By the 1950s and 1960s, a well-formulated

population control initiative that included national and religious appeals to family planning was firmly in place, along with the establishment of the Supreme Council for Family Planning. I locate a historical shift, however, in Egyptian population politics during the 1970s, after the economic liberalization policies of Anwar al-Sadat, in which socioeconomic development, rather than social welfare, became the object of state control. Increased demand for family planning was initially linked by the state to the process of socioeconomic development through its population and development program, which focused especially on rural communities. Later, in the mid-1980s and under pressure of international donor agencies, a more direct targeting of family-planning services was deemed necessary.

This chapter, therefore, delineates two distinct biopolitical regimes, including one spanning from the 1930s to the 1960s that was characterized by a more holistic approach to population policy, in which population concerns were embedded within larger social welfare programs that marked the health, wealth, and welfare of the population as their object. After the economic liberalization polices of the 1970s, however, population politics became tethered to socioeconomic development, and the holistic nature of the previous welfare regime was disaggregated into its constituent components. Thus, population control and family planning came to be isolated and pursued with a degree of efficacy previously unknown. Throughout the twentieth century, I argue, Islamic religious discourses were by and large complementary, rather than antithetical, to these modern biopolitical regimes.

Debating Population

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s population was viewed primarily in terms of the problem of the quantity versus the quality of the nation's inhabitants, and configured as a component of social welfare.[6] Population debates thus revolved around two points—both related to the problem of population as a problem of social intervention and engineering. The first issue was the debate over the neo-Malthusian reduction of the birth rate; this concern generated a flurry of empirical, statistical studies on historical demography, and debates as to whether Egypt was in fact overpopulated. The second

issue was the improvement of the characteristics of the population either through the encouragement and enhancement of "types" or the elimination of "defectives" through social welfare and eugenics. "Quality" encompassed the social uplift of the mother-child unit (often through maternal welfare programs) and the peasantry (through rural reconstruction projects)—and thus dovetailed with the concerns of rural reformers. What is unique about this time period, however, is the confluence of these two issues. Writers dealt with population as a "total social fact," that is to say, arguments regarding historical demography could not be separated from issues of social welfare.[7] The quantity of the population could not be divorced from its quality.

Prior to the middle of the 1930s population concerns were varied, with colonial figures, such as James Ireland Craig, expressing concerns about overpopulation or population maldistribution as early as 1917; and members of the indigenous intelligentsia, such as Mustafa ʿAmir, noting vast increases in population. But by and large, neither sustained debate nor consensus existed on the state of Egypt's population. Thus, for example, in the late 1920s debates on family law held that Egypt suffered from *underpopulation*, thereby providing a legitimization for polygamy.

After the middle of the 1930s a veritable onslaught of publications, conferences, and debates on population took place both in the mainstream press (in newspapers and journals such as *al-Ahram, al-Hilal*, and *al-Muqtataf*), in specialized professional meetings and journals (the Egyptian Medical Association), in the women's press (*al-Nahda al-Nisaʾiyya* and *al-Marʾa al-Misriyya*), and within the religious establishment (*dar al-ifta*). Major establishment figures, including members of parliament and landowners, in keeping with their landowning class interests, argued that the cause of Egypt's poverty was overpopulation and poor public health and housing, rather than the unequal distribution of landed property.[8]

The emergence of population discourse was greatly facilitated by the development of a modern census regime in Egypt under the supervision of James Ireland Craig, who had initiated a statistical regime in which "data was provided which was abstract, quantifiable and transferable."[9] Thus, by 1936, Egypt's population would be thought of *not* as an agglomeration of disparate populations—Upper Egyptian peasants, Bedouin, Nubians, foreigners; but as a homogeneous mass whose quantitative and qualitative characteristics could

be observed, analyzed, in effect taken as an object of study—as a total social fact.[10] As such, population became subject to laws and regularities, which needed to be studied to effect the proper transformation of the social and natural world, to align the fecundity of bodies with that of the soil.

A key backdrop for the emergence of population debates in 1930s Egypt was the various international developments in demography, eugenics, and population studies. The convergence of international interest on the question of population in the 1920s and 1930s may be related to several factors—the disintegration of empire, the negative association of eugenics with fascism, European fears of depopulation, and the development and refinement of new forms of geopolitical representation, such as the use of aggregate and comparative statistical measures and the development of historical demography.[11] The interwar period witnessed the proliferation of international birth control movements and conferences, in which birth rates, rather than racial hygiene or eugenic merit, were the main focus of attention. For example, the 1927 World Population Conference held in Geneva under the organization of Margaret Sanger may be taken to mark the beginnings of the construction of population, first, as an international problem, and second, as an object of scientific prediction and management. In the words of one participant, "Production can only be rationalized if one undertakes to rationalize reproduction just as intensively and intelligently."[12] Widely read by the Egyptian intelligentsia, the conference proceedings were critical in the formation of Egyptian debates on population, and in particular regarding the question of the demographic optimum for population.

In contrast to the European colonial concern over depopulation and military expansionism, population debates in the colonial and postcolonial national context were deeply enmeshed in the bourgeois project of nation-building. Throughout the interwar period Egyptian elites mobilized nationalist arguments in debates on population. In 1936 as the Egyptian elite was aspiring to independence from the British, social planners were eager to assert their own controls over the realm of population—a new object of "governance" in the postindependence period. Population was to be rationalized as an object of knowledge and managed in the interest of the people. These concerns were especially salient given the imperialist ambitions of fascist nations like Italy and Germany, which made it apparent that population was a critical component of modern warfare and politics. With Italy on the borders of Cyrenaica and Ethiopia, such concerns were part of the recognition of the importance of numbers—or demographic weight—in the modern era.

Barren Land and Fecund Bodies

The first comprehensive treatment of the population problem of Egypt was Wendell Cleland's 1936 text of the same name.[13] Virtually all studies on Egypt's population problem take Cleland as an entry or reference point, and the enduring impact of Cleland's text on Egyptian population debates should not be underestimated.[14] Henceforth, the neo-Malthusian perspective (in which artificial mechanisms, such as birth control, are proposed to curb population growth so as to regulate the relationship between population and resources) achieved an unparalleled level of dominance in population studies.[15] As late as the middle of the 1960s, Cleland's groundbreaking book was still considered a hallmark of sociological writings on Egypt.[16]

Cleland's study, *The Population Problem in Egypt*, had concluded that based on a comparison between the growth of population and that of cultivatable lands, "the people appear to multiply more rapidly than the acreage."[17] Cleland argued that the density of population and scarcity of arable land and the exceedingly low standard of living and the high rate of unemployment among agricultural laborers were all indicative of overpopulation, the solution to which was an interventionist population policy advocating the use of birth control.[18] According to Cleland, the Malthusian "constant running ahead" of the fertility of man (and, hence, density of population) over that of the soil had led to the deplorably low standard of living and quality of the population.[19] Thus, "If the quality of people is of any importance, then somehow a limitation of numbers must be brought about."[20] For Cleland, the laboring poor and peasantry reproduced "unchecked," as "half-living listless people"—undernourished and debilitated by enervating diseases that "deplete[d] the vitality of the laboring classes," thereby reducing the efficiency of peasant labor.[21]

The issue of the labor efficiency and productivity of the population, particularly the peasantry, was a common concern among those espousing antinatalist positions, and was echoed at the 1937 Conference on Birth Control sponsored by the Egyptian Medical Association.[22] Several speakers, notably, Muhammad ʿAwad Muhammad, a professor of geography at the Faculty of Arts, one of Egypt's first professional geographers, and Mustafa Fahmi, a professor of social science and an official at the Ministry of Education, argued that high birth rates led to lower standards of living and lowered the productive power of the nation.[23] Such arguments had

become increasingly common in the second half of the 1930s. The year following the publication of Cleland's book, El-Sayed Azmi, a statistician at the Ministry of Finance, delivered a lecture at the American University in Cairo in which he characterized "rapid and continuous population growth" and population "mal-distribution" as among Egypt's most serious problems, going so far as to suggest the need for embarking on a population policy.[24] Several notable Egyptian public figures and social reformers, such as Mirrit Butrus Ghali (1908–91) and ʿAisha ʿAbd al-Rahman (1913–98), began writing about the problem of rapid population growth in relation to the dearth of agricultural land.[25]

Similarly, in a 1930 text Salama Musa discussed the population problem in Darwinian and Malthusian terms, noting that the more evolved the species, nation, or class, the less fertile its population.[26] High birth rates, Musa claimed, simply led to the general immiseration of the laboring classes, since a smaller laboring population would mean higher wages. ʿAbbas Mustafa ʿAmmar, a young social scientist, was among the first to explicitly call for a national policy on birth control on the basis of such an argument.[27] At the 1937 conference ʿAmmar presented his case for birth control as a philanthropic issue, targeting the rural and urban lower classes as the primary beneficiaries of a birth control program.[28] Evoking in Dickensian-like detail the life of the poor as overburdened with children, he argued that workers and peasants were the most fertile class, and that overpopulation was the root cause of Egypt's poverty.[29]

Thus, the issue of population was discussed in terms of a material relationship between the number and quality of the nation's inhabitants and its national wealth and resources. This often metonymized in the image of a family, which could not sustain itself because it continued to grow although its income was fixed. As Cleland put it, "If capital and income are insufficient for a large national family, and the national family exists in misery, then the next generation should learn its lesson and limit the size of the family, so as to elevate its standards and remove its miseries. Surely a people can be as proud of the quality of its people as its quantity."[30] Cleland, Ghali, Azmi, Musa, and others, had posited a fundamental antagonism between the rate of population growth (quantity) and the standards of living of the population (quality), and therefore the productive power of Egypt.[31]

Uplifting Women and Peasants

What solutions existed for such a dire national situation in which population was purportedly outstripping resources? Cleland had proposed a plan for reducing births that included (1) raising the standards of living and hygiene, which would result in decreased fertility[32] and (2) promoting birth control clinics (3) and eugenic measures "to restrict propagation of the unfit, limit free social services and raise the age of marriage."[33] To control the peasantry's "natural" libidinal tendencies, Cleland argued, required social intervention, in the form of birth control, as well as moral education and psychological training. Many Egyptians at the Conference on Birth Control agreed. Muhammad ʿAwad Muhammad compared Egypt to China and India, noting favorably the Indian government's efforts to promote artificial birth control.[34] Kamal al-Din Fahmi, a sanitary engineer, presented a triumphalist history of the various birth control movements in Europe and Japan, in order to illustrate the acceptance that birth control had gained over time and place, despite the resistances encountered.[35]

Attempts to improve the standard of living, however, constituted the most successful population policy in the 1930s and 1940s. "Standard of living" encompassed all components involving the population's health and hygienic standards, ideally at a level that would optimize its ability to produce and provide for the needs of the nation. This included the provision of services for the social uplift of women and the peasantry, through maternal welfare programs and rural reconstruction projects.

Beginning in the middle of the 1920s, both private philanthropic organizations and government clinics tried to shape maternal practices and improve child welfare in order to reduce infant mortality.[36] Egyptian mothers were portrayed as ignorant of the principles of cleanliness and hygiene, and so children's dispensaries and maternal-child health clinics sought to instruct mothers "in the methods of cleanliness and the proper feeding and bringing up of their children."[37] In Egypt, as in Europe and the United States, education for working-class mothers addressed this so-called maternal ignorance regarding nutrition, diet, and sanitation through lectures, pamphlets, manuals, female health visitors, women's sanitary associations, and infant consultations.[38] Experts promoted the "scientific" protection of childhood, and Egyptian delegates were sent to attend international conferences.[39]

In addition to a focus on regulating the mother-child unit, experts concerned with the welfare and productivity of the population in the interwar years focused on the Egyptian peasant. According to Azmi, Ghali, Cleland, and others, the most fundamental component in any government population policy would be raising the standard of living of the peasantry. Wendell Cleland proposed a vision of structured, hygienic communities of peasants, living in a manner appropriate to the progress and civility of the modern world.

> In the following plan I see an average family of from three to five children with intelligent, literate parents, living healthy lives in solid, clean houses, very simply furnished, which will belong to well ordered, sanitary communities, all members having equal opportunities for plenty of clean water, electric light and power, a well balanced diet with enough protective foods, simple but adequate clothes, steady and sufficient work.[40]

The image of an average family living in ordered and sanitary communities was a powerful one, and one that many of Cleland's ministerial colleagues had been attempting to realize throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Such ideas had been operationalized in governmental programs and policies, such as the experimental village projects undertaken in the Delta between 1939 and 1941 by the Egyptian Association for Social Studies, as well as the model village projects of the Royal Agricultural Society.[41] It must be emphasized that projects such as child-welfare centers and rural reconstruction were essential components of interwar population discourse in Egypt, and thus the concerns of population theorists dovetailed with the concerns of social reformers.

As these discussions make clear, when theorists and social reformers framed reproduction, they rarely included women as agents of their own sexuality and fertility, as anthropologists Rayna Rapp and Faye Ginsburg have so persuasively argued.[42] The case of Egypt has been no different, as women there remained objects of population discourse and targets of intervention, effectively excluded from the public discourse on birth control until the middle of the century. Women's erasure from the discourse of birth control, however, did not go entirely unnoticed. Zahya Marzuq, a member of the Egyptian Association of Social Studies, reprimanded the audience of the 1937 conference on birth control for neglecting women's role in childbearing and childrearing. Marzuq argued that in order for women to provide proper childcare, they had to avoid the perils of early marriage, excessive childbearing, and unwanted children.[43] ʿAbbas ʿAmmar, another conference attendee,

addressed the liberation of women directly. Birth planning, he noted, would enable women to coordinate their household and societal duties, enabling them to undertake the necessary reform of Egyptian society.[44] He asked, how could women liberate themselves if childbearing took up all their time? For ʿAmmar, the choice was to be made by women—"the dividing line between her freedom and her enslavement" lay outside the home—in the reformist politics of the day.[45]

Eugenics: *Tahsin al-Nasl*

As noted, the primary conceptualization of the population problem in Egypt at this time was in terms of quality versus quantity.[46] Quality encompassed the general characteristics of the population (age, sex, number of individuals per family, growth rate), their standard of living (which included the level of health, hygiene, and sanitation), and the prevalence of hereditary illnesses, such as mental or physical disabilities. Positive eugenics entailed the propagation of the fit—those who could most contribute to the well-being of the nation; while negative eugenics called for the prevention of mentally or physically "inferior" individuals from reproducing.[47] Population politics during this period was embedded within the larger concern over the health, hygiene, and vitality of the population. The depletion of the social body by the presence of "idle and ill-fed bodies" had to be addressed and remedied through the uplift of the lower classes. Thus, the creation of sound families, the improvement of the characteristics of the population through the encouragement and enhancement of "types," and the uplift of the laboring poor and peasantry through social welfare projects were all crucial to these discussions.[48] The social reform projects discussed in the previous section, which encompassed sanitation, public hygiene, child and maternal welfare, and puericulture, were thus all part of *tahsin al-nasl*.

Negative eugenics was discussed in the Egyptian context, for example at the 1937 conference, predominantly as the removal, through sterilization, birth control, or confinement, of mental and physical "defectives" from the body politic.[49] For Abd al-Hakim al-Rifa'i, a professor of political economy at the Faculty of Law, Kamal Fahmi, a sanitary engineer, Ali Bey Fu'ad, director of the Child Welfare Section of the Ministry of Health, and Mustafa Fahmi, a sociologist at the Ministry of Education, the sick or infirm needed to use birth control, and those with sexual diseases, the insane, and

the feeble-minded would require sterilization or confinement.[50] Repeatedly, they emphasized the importance of quality (*naw'*), not quantity (*'adad*).[51]

These concerns regarding the removal of mental and physical "defectives" were not simply the social Darwinist musings of a select group. In a series of articles in the popular journals *al-Hilal* and *Al-Muqtataf* in the 1930s, authors emphasized eugenic considerations for any population program.[52] For example, ʿAbd al-Wahid al-Wakil, a professor of hygiene at the Medical College and future minister of health, suggested medical examinations for couples before marriage to ensure the health of the couple and the absence of sexually transmitted and hereditary diseases.[53] Similarly, in an article published in the *Journal of the Ministry of Social Affairs* in April 1941, the future Muslim Brother and Islamist Sayyid Qutb proposed the reconsideration of a law in Egypt that called for the medical testing and certification of individuals before marriage by government physicians to ensure the sexual and reproductive health of the couple.[54] The law had been originally proposed to the Senate in March 1928 and was being resubmitted in a modified form in 1941 by the Ministry of Health.[55] This failed attempt to medicalize marriage was one component of state efforts to assert control over the reproductive process. As healthy childbearing became a "national duty," nationalist discourse increasingly took up the women's question, encouraging the mothers of the future to "reproduce less in order to reproduce better."[56]

"Is Egypt Overpopulated?"

Not all Egyptian theorists and reformers accepted neo-Malthusianism in the 1930s and 1940s.[57] For example, writing in 1942, Elie Nassif, a professor at the Royal Faculty of Law in Cairo, composed a critical book-length response to Wendell Cleland's proposition that Egypt was suffering from a population problem.[58] Nassif was one of many writers in Egypt at this time who directly criticized the call for birth control. Drawing on the work of Italian statistician Corrado Gini, he emphatically claimed that population doctrines, as well as population itself, had to be historicized.[59] Nassif denied the validity of a universal demographic optimum, that is, a population corresponding to the highest real individual income.[60] Following Gini, he maintained that in certain instances an elevated population density corresponded to economic (and other) advantages. Whereas some races did not require demographic pressure to stimulate a spirit of initiative (e.g., Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians), he

believed that others needed it as a stimulant to progress (Italy and one could add Egypt); for yet others, demographic pressure might have no effect (India and China).[61]

Nassif thus developed a perspective that would account for the historical and cultural determinants of population growth specifically for Egypt. Mobilizing a loosely Spencerian formulation, he sought to explain how the evolution of social structures accounted for Egypt's imputed overpopulation, and how Egypt's population growth was a necessary stimulant to its social, political, and economic development. Of particular concern, he argued, was the fact that the fertility and vitality of the lower classes was continuously outstripping that of the upper classes. Indeed, a crucial component of nationalist thought in the 1930s was the concern for the formation of a *classe dirigente* that would lead Egypt toward an indigenous modernizing nation-state. Social reformers remained concerned that any attempt at inaugurating neo-Malthusian practices would lead the "lower orders" to overwhelm, numerically, the productive and innovative middle classes.

Many opponents of birth control at the 1937 Conference on Birth Control agreed. Thus, Muhammad Hasan and leader of the Muslim Brothers Hasan al-Banna argued that it would be the educated middle classes that would heed the call to birth control, with harmful national consequences.[62] Similarly, member of the Chamber of Deputies and lawyer Abd al-Majid Nafi 'a, noted for his fervent economic nationalism, argued that the call for birth control was a "national crime and not a social necessity."[63] Arguing that birth control was antinationalist, and indeed a form of national suicide, Nafi 'a urged the reconsideration of Malthus's population doctrine. Instead, he called for a return to the belief in the strength of population numbers as the vital force of the nation. Population discourse thus entered what historian Roger Owen termed "the ideology of economic nationalism," which associated Egyptian national identity with the consolidation of independent economic interests in industry, agriculture, and finance.[64]

Elie Nassif disagreed with Cleland's analysis that assessed population numbers only in terms of *already* cultivated agricultural land. He saw no reason to assume that an increase in population would be problematic if the increase in the rate of agricultural production continued and innovations in irrigation, draining, and cropping techniques were incorporated.[65] The only "population problem" Nassif acknowledged was the imbalance in the spatial distribution of the nation's inhabitants. Foreshadowing what would effectively become, within a decade, a crucial part of Egypt's population policy, Nassif

suggested an internal colonization to obtain an optimal distribution of population.[66] Thus, at the same time that barren lands in the northern Delta were being reclaimed, he suggested, massive transplantations of people—a grandiose plan for interior colonization—could be coordinated, thereby contributing to the social evolution of the nation toward a better social future.

Religious Discourse

Thus far, I have concentrated on scholars whose discussion of the merits and demerits of population control was limited to concerns related to the health, wealth, and well-being of the population and the nation, and yet what of religious discourses? The first fatwa (nonbinding religious edict) issued in the twentieth century on birth control or birth planning was issued in January 1937 by Sheikh Abd al-Majid Salim.[67] It was issued in response to a question regarding the permissibility of child spacing as a safeguard against the inability of the inquirer to raise and care for his children, concerned that he might suffer from ill-health or a nervous breakdown, or that his wife's health might deteriorate due to repeated pregnancies. The fatwa explicitly sanctions the prevention of pregnancy in the circumstances cited in the inquiry, stating, "The husband or wife may with the consent of each other use contraceptive measures to prevent male semen from reaching the woman's uterus." The fatwa continues, "According to later jurists, either the husband or wife may use contraceptives . . . without the consent of the other party," out of fear that "the child born may act evilly because of the corruption of the age." Salim further elaborates on the Islamic position on abortion, noting that "although abortion has not been sanctioned as a rule, it has now been accepted that an exception may be made and abortion be permitted before the child is gifted with a soul, if the present pregnancy endangers the life of the previous child."[68]

Salim's fatwa was argued on both moral and material grounds. It expressed a fear that the newborn child might act evilly (because of general societal religious decline) or be improperly cared for (because of economic, health, or social stresses faced by parents). In this sense, it was consistent with older, premodern edicts, which emphasized fear of the child's moral corruption—whether due to religious decline or improper care—as the predominant motive for birth control.[69] It was within the Islamic discursive tradition, then, that a modern jurist, such as Salim, argued, usually extrapolating by analogy from the justification of coitus interruptus to modern methods

of birth control. However, throughout the twentieth century and within the context of the modernizing nation-state, the emphasis would increasingly come to be placed on *rational planning*—planning for a family and for the future in accordance with one's social and economic abilities, and planning for the nation-state in accordance with its resources. In this sense, Salim's fatwa may be considered modern.

Sheikh Salim's fatwa was not, however, taken as axiomatic, and several participants at the 1937 conference on birth control took it upon themselves to discuss the religious aspects of birth control or planning, most notably the supreme guide of the Society of Muslim Brothers, Hasan al-Banna.[70] For al-Banna, Islam was a total system, which encompassed all human affairs, practical and spiritual.[71] According to al-Banna and Issa 'Abduh, his fellow Muslim Brother in attendance at the conference, Islam ordered a continuous state of preparedness and strength for jihad as a religious duty.[72] For al-Banna, the logical corollary was that "Islam commands a multitude of offspring, it incites it and calls for it, and does not ask for control or lessening."[73] 'Abduh posited the encouragement of childbearing as the highest ideal for the Muslim family, arguing that Egyptian family life had become mired in a life of luxury and required a return to simplicity.[74] 'Abduh blamed the un-Islamic state that had neglected the fate of the family, leaving the head of the household to bear the social and economic burdens of the postwar period.[75] Indeed, social welfare projects formed the cornerstone of the Muslim Brotherhood's response to the economic difficulties of the interwar and postwar period, and the foundation of their critique of the secular state.[76] In point of fact, a focus on the family was a discursive thread held in common among all who debated the question of population control regardless of their specific position on birth control.

The Modern Family

At the same time that theorists and others constructed population as a statistical and material phenomenon—an object of knowledge requiring observation and management—nationalists and social reformers were in the process of transforming "the family" from a *metaphor* to an *instrument* of governance. That is to say, there was a shift away from the use of metaphors of homes and families to discuss the state of the Egyptian body politic, toward discursive practices that targeted actual families as objects of social intervention. As practitioners in their various fields, social reformers outlined the problem of

population as a problem of social intervention and engineering. Population discourse in twentieth-century Egypt normalized monogamous sexuality within the parameters of modern family life—bourgeois companionate marriage, small family size, and middle-class hygiene—while organizing reproduction within a framework of social reform.[77] This entailed the dual process of assigning women to healthy, modernized, and regulated reproduction and childrearing, while tasking men with the management of birth control, either in their domestic capacity as heads of household, or in their political capacity as social reformers.

Social scientific discourses emerged surrounding the optimization of the species body and its "biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity."[78] Such attempts at the "intelligent and constructive production of the human race" *necessarily* relied on a statistical and empirical notion of "population" as a quantifiable essence, but operated, predominantly, through the instrumentalization of the family. The two principal anxieties of this period, the problem of population and the regulation of women and the peasantry, crystallized in the concern for—and the determination to modernize—the family unit. Experts believed that creating the modern family (indeed modern citizens) required the construction of new dispositions (self-governance, self-improvement), new habits of cleanliness and hygiene, and the cultivation of new sensibilities appropriate to the order of the modern world.[79]

Planning the National Family

It is not difficult to imagine the scene in Tahrir Province, the definitive land reclamation project inaugurated under Gamal Abdel Nasser, upon the arrival of a high-profile visitor—such as the Yugoslavian ambassador or the representatives of the newly formed National Assembly, all of whom visited in 1957.[80] Former peasants appeared now as citizens: men dressed in gingham shirts and overalls, and women dressed in white shirts, black skirts, and printed headscarves, looking quite "picturesque" for the cameras. Early morning visitors would no doubt witness the call to attention, the daily salutes and nationalist songs sung in unison. Visitors would also surely note, as scholar Doreen Warriner did during her 1956 visit, that settlers had been subjected to "complete human reconditioning. . . . Every aspect of their lives was disciplined and standardized."[81] Visitors might also have remarked upon the rows of new houses, each identical to the other, "consisting of two rooms, a hall,

a kitchen, and a bathroom . . . a front terrace and a backyard," all "carefully planned and built according to health conditions."[82] The village itself, with its spacious and straight roads, and a main square situated in the center (with buildings for village administration, a cooperative center, school, nursery, and clubs for migrants and employees), would have appeared quite unlike any other "typical" Egyptian village in the Delta.[83] An especially astute observer might have also noticed the peculiar absence of any children running around the village—since all were safely ensconced in day care centers.

Land reclamation projects, such as in Tahrir Province, formed a cornerstone of the Nasserist conception of the population problem. These projects were launched in the 1950s to address the slow rate of expansion of cultivated land area relative to rapid population growth and to facilitate a better population distribution. The totalizing model of social welfare embodied in the Tahrir Province project recalled the multitude of social welfare projects developed in the 1930s in response to the "population problem" that marked women and the peasantry as targets of moral and material improvement. These attempts at the reconstitution of both the Egyptian mother-child unit and the peasantry focused on reconstructing bodies and minds: building and cleaning villages and homes, and producing healthy children, and thus constructing a "new Egyptian."

By the 1950s Egypt's political climate was characterized by a statist ideology of rational planning, scientific research, and social welfare. Even though population growth was considered a far larger problem than in the previous period, population politics under Nasser continued to frame social welfare (and not economic development) as the primary object of state concern. Government efforts focused both on reducing population growth through nascent family-planning efforts and on expanding horizontally to reclaim land. Here I focus on the government sponsored family-planning programs that mobilized ideologies of national and social progress and that emphasized family planning as an integral component of the welfare of the state and its people, a culmination of the discourse on social welfare of the 1930s.

In 1953 the minister of social affairs, Dr. 'Abbas Mustafa 'Ammar, submitted a memorandum to the Permanent Council for Public Services highlighting the gravity of Egypt's population problem and its implications for the health, education, and welfare of the people.[84] The memorandum inaugurated an official state discourse on population and family planning and urged the formation of a National Commission for Population Questions. The memorandum stated, "It is essential for the responsible authorities to

take a definite attitude towards the population problem and to play a positive role in alleviating all evil consequences. . . . In our opinion, any reforming and welfare policy which disregards population growth is but a short-sighted policy."[85] The commission's charge was to study population trends in Egypt, the impact of population growth on economic development, and the methods that influence population trends "in such a manner that may advance the welfare of the individual, family and society," and to make recommendations for a national population policy.[86]

The commission's first meeting, held in January 1954, included twelve members, among them ministers of social affairs, public health, and agriculture, as well as economists, demographers, statisticians, and physicians. The tasks of the commission were distributed among demographic, economic, and medical subcommittees that placed heavy emphasis on social planning and scientific research. Significantly, the medical subcommittee was "to help spread sex-education at different levels through audio-visual aids; to inaugurate family planning clinics for the purpose of experimentation with various contraceptives to determine the actual degree of acceptability and effectiveness."[87] These were among the first programs of their kind in the Middle East.

In 1954, during a press conference, Lieutenant Colonel Husayn al-Shafa'i, a member of the Free Officers who later became a minister of social affairs, was asked his opinion on birth control policies and replied,

> Not only do I approve of birth control, but I also believe that it has become a social necessity. Over-production in population, as well as in other fields, becomes waste. Human waste, which has resulted from unlimited reproduction, has created complex social problems.[88]

Al-Shafa'i conceptualized population as a component aspect of production, arguing that biological reproduction was outstripping material production. Similarly, in the same year at a speech given at al-Azhar, on the second anniversary of the revolution, President Nasser declared, "Our greatest calamity, a legacy of the past, was continuing to live on limited resources which did not increase. It was similar to a family whose children were continuously increasing, on a constant income that never grew."[89] Nasser's comparison of the state to a family that could not feed itself highlights the paternalist, etatist role of the state, and underscored the idea that population growth was a process related to a set of fixed resources. It followed from this, then, that efforts would concentrate on either territorial expansion in the form of land reclamation or on reducing birth rates.

Scholars have noted that population work in the 1950s was more experimental than operational and was not characterized by an explicit birth control agenda as part of the state's population policy. Indeed, in those years birth control work was done "quietly on the side" by private voluntary organizations run mostly by women.[90] It would not be until 1962, when Egypt's National Charter was officially promulgated, that the state would shift toward a more explicit family-planning agenda.[91] Egypt's 1962 National Charter enshrined the family as "the first cell of society" and demonstrated the importance of "modern scientific planning" and the state's drive toward increased production, with population growth increasingly articulated as a national threat.[92] The Charter articulated this position:

> Population increase constitutes the most dangerous obstacle that faces the Egyptian people in their drive towards raising the standard of production in their country in an effective and efficient way. Attempts at family planning deserve the most sincere efforts supported by modern scientific methods.[93]

The declaration was heralded as a breakthrough regarding the scope of state responsibility for family planning; henceforth limits on the provision of contraceptives would be lifted, mass media efforts would be mobilized, and research efforts aimed at enhancing the public promotion of family planning would be inaugurated.[94]

By 1964 a ministerial committee composed of demographers, sociologists, educators, psychologists, journalists, and theologians was organized to plan and evaluate the dissemination of family-planning information.[95] Social science research on family structure, ideal family size, and reproductive behavior patterns; demographic analysis of census data and vital registration; and biomedical research on contraceptive acceptability all became vital enterprises. In addition, universities vastly expanded training for specialized fields such as demography, statistics, and medical social work, laying the groundwork for the formulation of a population control strategy.[96]

In public speeches at this time, President Nasser, explicitly associated population control with the nation's progress:

> The prime minister Zakariah Mohieddin presides over the Birth Control Council. . . . Listen to his plans in the field of social development. . . . We will be unable to provide a decent standard of living to a family that produced many children. There is no need to produce many children at the expense of the mother's health. . . . We know that God provides. God of course said that although he is dependable, we should work. The prophet appealed to our

> rational thinking and told us to stop being fatalistic. … If you do not, you are lost and the plan will be equally lost.[97]

Nasser also became more direct in his appeals for the practice of family planning and, according to Haifa Shanawany, "assumed the role of educator, supporting his speeches with Qur'anic and prophetic recitations and emphasizing the importance of maintaining the nation's health."[98]

In 1965 the Supreme Council for Family Planning was founded in order to establish a complete strategy for family planning in the country; to study and coordinate all population affairs, including medical, statistical, social, economic, and all other scientific studies pertaining to family planning; and to develop cooperational links between the various organizations participating in the program's organization.[99] The council was to expand family-planning clinics and services to all parts of the country in order to reduce population growth. The plan became a reality in 1966 with an allocated budget of one million Egyptian pounds.[100] By April 1968 some 2,631 clinics were providing contraceptive services to over 230,000 women.[101] In 1968 a "family planning week" was sponsored, the first time family-planning efforts received widespread media attention.[102]

Historian Beth Baron has argued that the formation of the Supreme Council for Family Planning signaled a process of "reorganization, centralization, and nationalization."[103] The increased centralization of family-planning efforts eventually led to a top-down approach characterized by a medical and technological, rather than a sociologically or culturally oriented, method. Tracing various attempts to deliver contraception through private voluntary organizations run by women, she notes how community work run through social advocacy eventually gave way to a statist approach in collaboration with large foreign funders: "Egyptian female reformers were sidelined and an opportunity for female-centered family planning was for the moment lost."[104] Yet, at the same time, women's activism had shifted the position of women in this domain. No longer simply objects of population discourse, women were now "reproductive subjects" and active participants in what was being cast as a national struggle for the well-being of society.[105]

Moreover, religious discourses, along with secular state discourses, began to debate family planning and the population problem in terms of the coordination of biological and material production. In 1950 Islamist Khalid Mohammed Khalid, an Azhar graduate, discussed the importance of

"planning both the materials and human production of society if a balance between them is to be achieved." Hence he stated,

> There is no hope of improving the standard of living so long as birth-rates are increasing. … The problem is complicated by the fact that our society does not realize that it is facing a crisis which may threaten its welfare and progress. … This crisis is due to our misconception of religion. Islam permits birth control in the interest of society and for the welfare of the individual.[106]

Religious discourse during the Nasser era shifted in focus toward planning. Within the historical context of state socialism and the modernization of reproduction, family planning fit neatly into the nationalist scheme of planning: planning for a family, planning for the future in accordance with one's socioeconomic capacities and needs, and planning for the nation-state, in accordance with its resources.

Two fatwas issued during this period exemplify the extent to which the issue of family planning was embedded within the social welfare discourse of the time. A fatwa issued by Sheikh Mahmud Shaltut in 1959 dismissed the possibility of an obligatory birth control policy. Rather, he stated that birth control might be allowed under special circumstances for

> women who bear children too quickly in succession, or suffer from contagious diseases, and for the minority whose nerves are weakened and cannot face up to their manifold responsibilities and do not find assistance from their government or the wealthy members of their society that would enable them to shoulder their responsibilities. In such cases, where birth control is individual and specific, it is a remedy designed to avoid well known evils and through which strong and righteous progeny may come into being.[107]

Sheikh Hassan Ma'mun issued a fatwa in 1964, published in the daily newspaper *Akhbar al-Yawm*, along similar lines. Ma'mun began by elaborating upon the original intent of the Islamic call for procreation and multiplication, as being both legitimate and suitable at the time, "as its early followers were few and weak in the midst of a vast majority of aggressive and oppressive people." He continued by stating:

> But now we find that conditions have changed. We find that the density of population in the world threatens seriously to reduce the living standards of mankind to the extent that many men of thought have been prompted to seek family planning in every country, so that the resources may not fall short of ensuring a decent living for its people and to provide public services for them. Islam … has never been opposed to what is good to man. … I see no objection from the *Shari'ah* point of view of the consideration of family planning

> . . . if there is a need for it, and consideration is occasioned by the people's own choice and conviction, without constraint or compulsion.[108]

These fatwas are similar in their emphasis upon the household unit as the level at which the issue of family planning was to be decided, and indeed, in relying upon the Islamic tradition for argumentation, all the fatwas emphasize maternal and familial health and welfare, as well as issues of morality and virtue. What differentiated these fatwas from earlier edicts was the shift in emphasis from familial health to the welfare of the nation-state. Thus, the discussion shifted toward the world's ability to sustain a population that could enjoy a reasonable standard of living, while the emphasis remained upon the general welfare of the people. Family planning, thus postulated, became a concern tied to the viability of the welfare of the nation and its citizens.

What remains clear is that family-planning discourse during the 1950s and 1960s, both religious and secular, was embedded within a social welfare model of governance, wherein family planning was one constituent component of a larger holistic vision for national welfare, addressing psychological, social, and economic issues all at once.

Population and the Discourse of Development

The 1970s, marked by a transition to economic liberalization and an influx of foreign aid, would herald an epochal shift in Egypt's population politics. After the open-door economic policies of Anwar al-Sadat known as *Infitah*, a global shift occurred in which local and international agents (such as the representatives of the state bourgeoisie and capitalist interests in the state apparatus; global multinational corporations with local liaisons; and USAID) actively incorporated Egypt into a neoliberal capitalist regime while dismantling the welfare state. In this environment, socioeconomic development rather than social welfare became the state's primary object of governance. This led to the demonization of "the people," now defined as constituting a population threat to be curbed (or redistributed to uninhabited parts of Egypt) rather than as a national resource to be cultivated.

The principal manifestation of this shift was a new and intense focus on socioeconomic development as a precursor and condition for demographic change. Egypt's official "National Population Policy" was formulated in 1973 and related population growth directly to socioeconomic factors, while its

main programmatic expression was the Population Development Program. This phase of population policy (1973–85) emphasized the significance of raising the general standard of living, expanding functional education, upgrading the status of women and increasing their labor force participation, mechanizing agriculture, extending social security, and informing the public of family-planning services, as important factors in, first, spurring economic development and, then, reducing fertility rates.[109]

By 1975 three dimensions of the population problem were emphasized: reducing the growth rate; achieving better geographical distribution of population; and improving the characteristics of the population.[110] The bedrock of these policies was a rural community program, formalized in 1979, that aimed to increase awareness of the population problem, improve knowledge and availability of family planning, and stimulate socioeconomic development.[111] The fundamental premise of these programs was to break the links between low levels of socioeconomic development and high fertility coupled with low rates of labor productivity.[112] Program employees, using "Knowledge-Attitude-Practice" studies, began to track such factors as "cultural attitudes" toward family planning, and, in particular, resistance to family planning.[113] Throughout the 1970s the use of mass communication techniques rapidly expanded and aimed not only at the dissemination of family-planning knowledge, but at the inculcation of small family size norms. For instance, the Ministry of Education introduced population education into the national curriculum in 1974. President Sadat stated, "Probably our failure in solving this [population] problem is due to our over-reliance on the medical aspects alone without making efforts to convince the masses of the value of family planning."[114]

Yet by the early 1980s policymakers, under pressure from international donors such as USAID, began to see the population/development formula as too oblique a means for targeting rapid population growth. Consequently, policies shifted toward family-planning delivery, the National Population Council was founded in 1985, and a new National Population Plan was issued in 1986 and revised in 1992.[115] The 1985 plan emphasized "the rights" of families to decide the appropriate number of children, to obtain information about the means to enable them to achieve this decision, and to migrate internally and externally. The plan also addressed long-standing concerns such as the dissemination of family-planning services, female education and literacy programs, and population redistribution strategies.[116] Overall, the policy shift inaugurated in the mid-1980s highlighted the individual's and

family unit's right to reflexively monitor itself; and mass media and educational programs were directed to disseminate new norms of small family size, changes that signaled a new relationship between the individual and the state.[117] As anthropologist Kamran Asdar Ali has argued, this enabled the constitution of new kinds of families imbued with liberal notions of individual rights within the nuclear family.

Two tactics that exemplify the type of shift that occurred in population strategy are the Contraceptive Social Marketing Project (CSM) and the expansion of the Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) program. Social marketing refers to "programs which use commercial marketing techniques, mass media, and existing commercial networks to distribute, promote and sell products, but in which all activities are undertaken with the consumer and larger social objectives in mind."[118] The CSM program aimed to broadly distribute and market contraceptive products throughout rural and urban Egypt. Through these programs, the family-planning user was thus reconceptualized as an individual consumer imbued with liberal choice. The IEC program was established in 1979 in order "to create general awareness of the population problem in Egypt, to develop useful strategies for promoting the benefits of family planning, to give legitimacy to the concept of family planning in Egypt, and to raise the level of family-planning acceptance through dissemination of effective knowledge on contraceptives and socio-cultural contraindications."[119] IEC activities were divided between mass media campaigns and face-to-face or interpersonal communication. Initially, IEC focused on general awareness campaigns, but after the mid-1980s, program goals focused on the attitudinal changes necessary for acceptance of family planning.[120] IEC programs focused thematically on emphasizing the health benefits of family planning, as well as its consonance with religious precepts, while dispelling misconceptions and rumors about family planning. Community-based activities targeted individuals in leadership roles, such as religious figures and village leaders and often took the format of community meetings, for example with a local sheikh, medical doctor, and social worker, all presenting information, followed by extensive question-and-answer sessions.[121] Mass media efforts focused on television and radio programming that promoted small family norms or distributed family-planning messages.[122] These ranged from the commissioning of a television serial to short, targeted television advertising spots.[123]

Islamic religious discourse played an essential role in media efforts as well, oftentimes advocating small family size and validating family planning as a

religiously valid option. Religious leaders emphasized Islam's compatibility with the goals of modernity—namely, the creation of a healthy and productive citizenry—but differed from earlier religious pronouncements as they explicitly linked family planning with modernization. State-sponsored religious leaders, such as Sheikh Tantawi, a mufti of Egypt, explicitly called for a smaller population:

> Once more we say: Welcome to a good, big, strong, productive population, but not to a weak, poor, and big population that goes astray from the right path and depends on others for its necessities. A smaller population is far better.[124]

Similarly, Gaafar Abdel-Salam of al-Azhar University assessed the legal aspects of family planning at the conference "Bioethics in Human Reproductive Research in the Muslim World" in December 1991, and stated:

> On the one hand we find that family planning is closely linked to human rights such as those concerning the sacrosanctity of the body, the right of the person to marriage and other wide-ranging rights. Family planning is also linked to the rights of society to secure the existence of strong and productive families. … The term "family planning" taken up by this conference represents one of the important issues for all societies especially in the developing world as it is used to urge individuals to maintain birth control in such a way as not to harm family members i.e. father, mother, children and family as a whole.[125]

In this same period, al-Azhar, among the oldest religious establishments of learning in Egypt and the Muslim world, launched an International Islamic Center for population studies, with research on population education as one of its main activities. The center aimed to highlight the "relevance of population knowledge in training Islamic theologians and preachers."[126] Likewise, religious leaders such as Jad al-Haq, then grand imam of al-Azhar, noted the need for the wider use of "mass media and other educational channels for showing the advantage of a small family, with easier availability of contraceptives."[127]

In Egypt, orthodox religious discourse attained a remarkable degree of centralization throughout the course of the twentieth century, in part through efforts under Nasser to "control closely the religious institution [of al-Azhar] and to appropriate religion, without making it disappear from the public sphere."[128] In the case of family planning, orthodox Islamic values are disseminated in the form of religious edicts and pronouncements throughout the social body via the mass media (both print media and television), as well as in health and family-planning clinics, and through population education programs in schools and universities.

This is not to suggest that such discourses have been universally accepted or that their hegemony was never contested. Kamran Asdar Ali has noted in his ethnographic research that Islamist discourses, such as those put forth by the Muslim Brotherhood, and even everyday popular discourses, have often critiqued state-sponsored family-planning programs and their orthodox religious spokesmen. Criticism has been leveled on the grounds of geopolitics, domestic politics, and moral reasoning. Critics have noted that family planning expresses a Western desire to reduce the population of Muslims, that state corruption should be blamed for the inequitable distribution of resources, and that widespread contraceptive use will lead to sexual promiscuity.[129] Yet despite these differences of opinion regarding the proper orthodox position of Islam toward family planning, both proponents and opponents of family planning argued precisely on the basis of the religious disciplining of bodily practices as it intersected with the needs of the modernizing nation-state. Thus, for example, all groups involved agreed on the importance of modern health and hygiene and on the need for state and nonstate actors to regulate them, a testament to the dominance of biopolitical regimes within both secular and religious understandings of individual welfare and the welfare of the nation.

In sum, the biopolitical regime that marked the 1970s onward tethered population politics to socioeconomic development. In this context, policymakers effectively isolated and targeted population and family planning to a degree previously unknown. New techniques, such as contraceptive social marketing and the state's mass media program, began to specifically target the use and implementation of contraceptive methods. As seen through the trajectory of Egyptian biopolitics the discursive shift that occurred during the 1970s marked the entry into a population regime that worked not by delineating the specificity of health and hygiene practices to mothers, children, and peasants, reconstituting villages by reconstructing them, or reclaiming land and people through resettlement, but rather through the use of media to construct the population problem. In addition, the family unit was continuously monitored through the assessment of total fertility rates, contraceptive prevalence rates, and population densities, in order to meet the operational targets of socioeconomic development. Finally, with the rise of neoliberalism, and the concomitant abdication of the role of the state as guarantor of social welfare, economic inequalities and poverty rates have soared within the neoliberal biopolitical regime.

Conclusion

By all conventional accounts Egypt's population program has been a success, with total fertility rates dropping from 7.1 (1960–65) to 3.9 (1990–92) to 3.1 (2000) to 2.77 (2007).[130] It is tempting to portray this decline in total fertility rates as the triumphant product of an incremental and evolutionary population policy; yet that would belie the crucial distinctions between two fundamental moments of population policy. Such a perspective would also diminish the distinctions between varying ideas about the individual and the collective, as well as various orientations toward social justice and income inequality embedded within each population regime. Indeed, this chapter has delineated two distinct biopolitical regimes. The first, spanning from the 1930s to the 1960s, was characterized by a more holistic approach to population policy in which population concerns were embedded within larger social welfare programs that marked the health, wealth, and welfare of the population as their object. After the economic liberalization polices of the 1970s, however, population politics became tethered to a new objective: socioeconomic development. The holistic nature of the previous welfare regime was disaggregated into its constituent components, and efforts focused on increasing contraceptive prevalence through media efforts and social marketing.

To be sure, within these two biopolitical regimes, the intrusion of the modernizing nation-state into the everyday lives of its citizens has continually expanded throughout the twentieth century. Both state and nonstate actors have been complicit in this process, including nongovernmental organizations and religious institutions and figures. Indeed, religious discourses have often been complementary, rather than antithetical, to biopolitical regimes and their attendant population programs and policies, oftentimes facilitating the instrumentalization of the family by the state.

In thinking about the relationship between gender, reproduction, and demographic mandates in modern Egypt, it is clear that women have functioned as the fulcrum of population policies. While women's voices were marginalized in the 1930s and 1940s, and their efforts to engage population debates took place "quietly on the side," they became more prominently involved in family-planning efforts in postrevolutionary Egypt. Historian Laura Bier and political scientist Mervat Hatem have characterized post-1952 Egypt by state feminism, a process that sought to incorporate women into

the public sphere as political subjects, even as it created new classed and gendered hierarchies.[131] As Bier notes, while prerevolutionary discourses viewed women as objects of population policy, in the post-1952 period "Policy planners, public figures, and the press began to talk of gendered national subjects for whom the use of birth control constituted the performance of the duties of citizenship."[132] Indeed, feminists in the 1950s and 1960s often tied family planning to wider emancipatory visions that often focused on the vulnerabilities of rural and urban poor women.[133] And yet women who were engaged in family-planning work should not be viewed as having simply reproduced statist discourses; rather they often simultaneously reaffirmed and subverted population mandates and gendered imperatives.[134] As Beth Baron has outlined, the social and community based approaches of women involved in family planning in the Nasser era often conflicted with the technocratic and biomedical visions of state agents and international donors.[135] Beyond that, traditional forms of knowledge regarding childbearing and birth control by *dayas* or midwives were often delegitimized throughout this process of encroaching state control over reproduction.[136]

In the neoliberal period, as collective welfare projects were displaced by socioeconomic development and liberal notions of individual choice, family-planning projects were often received in complex and contradictory ways, and the social implementation of the pedagogical project of family planning often confronted its own limitations.[137]As Kamran Ali notes, the social significance of fertility and being fertile in the Egyptian setting meant that decisions regarding fertility control were related to a complex of relations within the household and beyond.[138] In this environment, biomedical conceptions of fertility coexisted with women's own cultural constructions of their bodies, which were not neatly aligned with liberal notions of an autonomous individual and unitary self, but rather linked to a larger social and cosmological world.[139] Women's choices, too, thus did not always align with the goals of family-planning programs. Women not only resisted contraception at times, but also considered autonomous choice as contradictory to their sense of agency and subservience to God.[140]

As Kamran Asdar Ali presciently stated in 2002, "I submit that demographic transition may eventually happen in Egypt. If it does, it will more likely happen as a result of diminishing opportunities for a majority of Egyptians to make a living than as a natural response to better standards of living."[141] Those diminishing opportunities, in addition to the changed nature of relations between rulers and ruled, were the impetus behind Egypt's 2011

revolutionary uprising and its rallying cry of "bread, freedom, and social justice." These are demands that have not been met, it is worth recalling, by the postcolonial state's singular focus on population reduction as the principal vehicle of modernity.

Notes

1. Wendell Cleland, "The Necessity of Restricting Population Growth in Egypt," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 278–87, quotation, 279.
2. Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 22.
3. See *al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937); Hanna Rizk, "Population Policies in Egypt," in *The Fifth International Conference on Planned Parenthood, Report of the Proceedings 24–29 October 1955, Tokyo, Japan* (London: International Planned Parenthood, 1955), 38; Haifa Shanawany, "Stages in the Development of a Population Control Program," in *Egypt: Population Problems and Prospects*, ed. A. R. Omran (Chapel Hill: Carolina Population Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1973), 193.
4. The quotation is from Mustafa Fahmi, "Hal min al-khiyr li misr fi zurufiha al-haliyya wa fi nitaq hajatuha al-harbiyya in tu'amim fiqrat tahdid al-nasl?!" *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 96–117, quotation, 113.
5. See David Horn, *Social Bodies: Science, Reproduction and Italian Modernity* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994) and Ann Anagnost, *Narrative, Representation and Power in Modern China* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997), 117–37. Works in Middle East studies that have addressed the construction of population include Kamran Asdar Ali, *Planning the Family in Egypt: New Bodies, New Selves* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002); Rhoda Ann Kanaaneh, *Birthing the Nation: Strategies of Palestinian Women in Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); and Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Conceiving Citizens: Women and the Politics of Motherhood in Iran* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Timothy Mitchell's "The Object of Development," in *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), provides a cogent critique of contemporary development discourse and the construction of a population problem in Egypt.
6. See, for example, Dr. Ali Bey Fu'ad, "Tahdid al-nasl," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 48–56; Dr. Abdel Hakim al-Rifa'i, "Mushkilat al-sukkan fi misr," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 135–49; and Fahmi, "Hal min al-khiyr li misr?"
7. I borrow the term "total social fact" from Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (1925; New York: W. W. Norton, 1990).

8. The most important actors in these debates throughout the nationalist period were Egyptians who wrote in Arabic, with the sole and noteworthy exception of Wendell Cleland, an American.
9. Roger Owen, "The Population Census of 1917 and its Relationship to Egypt's Three 19th Century Statistical Regimes," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 9, no. 4 (December 1996): 457–72, quotation 469. At various points in his career Craig served as director of the Computation Office of the Egyptian Survey Department, controller of the Statistical Office and Census Office, controller General of the Census, controller of the Supplies Control Board, and financial secretary of the Ministry of Finance. See J. I. Craig, "The Census of Egypt," *L'Égypte Contemporaine* 8, no. 32 (1917): 209–34; Craig, "The Census of Egypt," *L'Égypte Contemporaine* 17, no. 96 (1926): 434–55; and Craig, "Statistics," *L'Égypte Contemporaine* 26, no. 153–54 (1935): 115–45.
10. My use of the term "homogeneous mass" refers to the process by which population comes to be viewed as a uniform, and national, entity, and resonates with Benedict Anderson's use of Walter Benjamin's concept of "homogeneous, empty time" to refer to the conception of temporality within the modern nation-state. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 24.
11. See Mark Adams, ed., *The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil, and Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); and Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).
12. Dr. R Goldscheid, "Discussion," in *Proceedings of the World Population Conference, 29 August—3 September, Geneva*, ed. Margaret Sanger (London: Edward Arnold, 1927), 104–5.
13. Wendell Cleland, *The Population Problem in Egypt* (Lancaster: Science Press, 1936). See also "Egypt's Population Problem," *L'Égypte Contemporaine* 28, no. 167 (1937): 67–87; Cleland, "A Population Plan for Egypt," *L'Égypte Contemporaine* 30, no. 185 (1939): 461–84. Cleland, an American who had lived in Cairo since 1917, was a member of the faculty of the American University in Cairo where he taught psychology. His involvement with prominent ministry officials working on issues such as irrigation, public health, sanitation, and hygiene, impressed upon him Egypt's most serious social issues. Cleland (b. 1888) had served in various posts related to the Middle East before his arrival in Cairo, such as the Syria and Palestine Relief Fund. His book, originally his Ph.D. thesis, was submitted to Columbia University's Department of Sociology, where he earned his doctorate.
14. Cleland's book was favorably reviewed by *Al-Muqtataf* and situated as part of a broader set of discussions on population and birth control that had flourished in 1936 and 1937. See "Mushkilat al-sukkan fi misr," *Al-Muqtataf*, May 1937, 646–47.
15. It would be grossly erroneous to think of Malthusianism as the product (or "master paradigm") of a bygone era—transformed from theodicy into a secular

platitude. Indeed, one can argue that Malthusianism became ever more linked to the idea of the national economy as a self-contained structure. On the modern transformation of the idea of the economy, see Mitchell, "The Character of Calculability," in *Rule of Experts*.

16. Hasan al-Sa'ati, "Tatawur al-madrasa al-fikriyya li 'ilm al-ijtima' fi misr," *Al-Majalla al-Ijtima'iyya al-Qawmiyya / The National Review of Social Sciences*, National Centre for Sociological and Criminological Research (1964): 21–34.
17. Cleland, *Population Problem in Egypt*, 36.
18. Wendell Cleland, "Discussion of Prof. Bentley's Paper: Fertility and Overpopulation in Egypt," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 296–303.
19. Cleland, "Egypt's Population Problem," 67–68. For a critique of Malthusian thought from a Marxist and neo-Marxist perspective, see Ronald Meek, ed., *Marx and Engels on the Population Bomb: Selections from the Writings of Marx and Engels Dealing with the Theories of Thomas Robert Malthus* (Berkeley: Ramparts Press, 1971). On the postwar use of Malthusian arguments linking poverty to overpopulation, and in turn rationalizing development policies, such as the replacement of peasant agriculture with commercial agriculture, and the wide-scale support of population programs in the Third World and its relation to the Cold War, see Eric Ross, *The Malthus Factor: Population, Poverty and Politics in Capitalist Development* (New York: Zed Books, 1998). There is an extensive literature historicizing and critiquing Thomas Robert Malthus's theory of population, both empirically and theoretically. The literature on Malthus is enormous; two excellent collections, one historical and one contemporary, are *Malthus: Critical Responses*, ed. Geoffrey Gilbert, 4 vols. (New York: Routledge, 1998); and *Thomas Robert Malthus: Critical Assessments*, ed. John Wood Cunningham, 4 vols. (Surry Hills: Croom Helm, 1986).
20. Cleland, *Population Problem in Egypt*, 90.
21. Cleland, "Egypt's Population Problem," 82.
22. The conference proceedings were published in *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937).
23. Fahmi, "Hal min al-khiyr li misr?" and Dr. Muhammad ʿAwad Muhammad, "Al-Nawahi al-ijtima'iyya al-khasa bi tanzim al-nasl," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 57–75. Infant and child mortality, which in 1937 was estimated to account for 65 percent of deaths in Egypt, was also considered a serious loss in productivity. Fahmi, "Hal min al-khiyr li misr?" 110.
24. Hamed El-Sayed Azmi, "The Growth of Population as Related to Some Aspects of Egypt's National Development," *L'Égypte Contemporaine* 28, no. 168 (1937): 267–303.
25. See Mirrit Boutros Ghali, *The Policy of Tomorrow* (1938; Washington D.C.: American Council of Learned Societies, 1953); 'Aisha 'Abd al-Rahman (Bint al-Shati'), *Al-Rif al-Misri* (Cairo: Al-Matba'a al-rahmaniyya, 1936), a collection of articles printed in *al-Ahram* in 1935.

26. Salama Musa, "Dabt al-tanasul wa man' al-haml," in *Salama Musa: al-Mu'alafat al-Kamila*, vol. 2, *ʿUlum al-ijtimaʿ* (Cairo: Salama Musa lil nashr wa al-tawziʿa, 2002), 217–36.
27. Abbas Ammar, "Al-Nahya al-insaniyya fi mawdu' tanzim al-nasl," *al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 187–211.
28. 'Ammar, "Al-Nahya al-insaniyya."
29. 'Ammar, "Al-Nahya al-insaniyya," 195. At the core of debates on Malthus's theory of population is the question of the origin of poverty, its relationship to progress, and the perfectibility of man and society. See Robert Harry Inglis Palgrave, ed., "Population," in *Palgrave's Dictionary of Political Economy*, 3rd ed., vol. 3 (London: Macmillan, 1927). See also T. Sowell, "Malthus and the Utilitarians," 210–16; D. Harvey, "Population, Resources and the Ideology of Science," 308–35; E. N. Santurri, "Theodicy and Social Policy in Malthus' Thought," 402–18; all in *Thomas Robert Malthus: Critical Assessments*, vol. 1, *The Life of Thomas Robert Malthus and Perspectives on his Thought*.
30. Cleland, *Population Problem in Egypt*, 110.
31. The assumption that standards of living and population growth were inversely related may be traced back to Malthus. For a critique see Sowell, "Malthus and the Utilitarians."
32. It was in the development of "a psychological attitude, the 'desires,' for fewer and more cultured children, that the peasantry can be made to curb their own growth .... In more primitive circumstances, such as surround the fellaheen ... the chief source of recreation is sex, and that raises the birth rate. ... Our aim then would be to do everything possible to sublimate the emotions and attention of the fellaheen while trying to raise their standards." Cleland, "Population Plan for Egypt," 477–78. Such assertions were loosely derived from older nineteenth-century views, such as those of Herbert Spencer, that the fecundity of the civilized races and classes, due to their level of moral and material progress and their preoccupation with matters of the intellect or spirit, was lower than that of the uncivilized.
33. Cleland, "Population Plan for Egypt," 479.
34. Muhammad, "Al-Nawahi al-ijtima'iyya," 61.
35. Kamal al-Din Effendi Fahmi, "Tanzim al-nasl fi ba'd al-aqtar—khatina fi misr," *al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 118–29.
36. Public governmental organizations (such as the Child Welfare section of the Department of Public Health), as well as private philanthropic initiatives, such as the Lady Cromer Memorial dispensaries, the Society for the Protection of Children, Mabarrat Muhammad Aly (Ouevre Muhammad Aly, Dispensaire pour les femmes et les enfants- Centre de Puericulture et de Pediatrique Preventive), Mme. Huda Sha'arawi dispensaries, the Egyptian Feminist Union, the Egyptian Child Welfare Association, and the Jama'iyyat ummuhat al-mustaqbal (Société des meres futures), were responsible for the diffusion of health propaganda to mothers and children all over Egypt. See DWQ, *Abdin,*

al-Jama'iyyat, al-Jama'iyyat al-Ijtima'iyya, 1899–1952, Archive Box No. 203; and *Abdin, al-Jama'iyyat, al-Jama'iyyat al-Ijtima'iyya, 1902–1949,* Archive Box No. 204.

37. Ministry of Finance, *Almanac for the Year 1935* (Cairo: Government Press, 1935), 286.
38. On the history of maternalist processes in Europe and its relation to imperialism, nationalism, and the welfare state see, Gisela Bock and Pat Thane, *Maternity and Gender Policies: Women and the Rise of the European Welfare States, 1880s–1950s* (London: Routledge, 1991); Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood," *History Workshop* 5 (1978): 9–65; Victoria de Grazia, *How Fascism Ruled Women: Italy, 1922–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), chap. 3; Ute Frevert, "The Civilizing Tendency of Hygiene," in *German Women in the Nineteenth Century: A Social History*, ed. John Fout (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1984), 320–44; Horn, *Social Bodies*; Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, eds. *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (London: Routledge, 1993). Outside of Europe, see the fascinating study by Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999); and Asunción Lavrin, *Women, Feminism, and Social Change in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, 1890–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).
39. An official Egyptian delegation was sent to Geneva for the 1925 First General Congress on Child Welfare. At the Congrès Quinzaine Sociale Internationale, held in Paris in 1928, Doctor Sayyid Effendi 'Arif, an administrative inspector, was sent to the Congrès International de la Protection de l'Enfance. See DWQ, *Abdin, mu'tamarat, 1925–29*, Archive Box No. 59. See also Paul-Valentin, "La Protection de l'enfance: comment elle devrait être organisée en Egypte," 20eme Congrès International de Bruxelles, *L'Egypte Contemporaine* 14 (April 1923): 371–97; Paul-Valentin, "Une étape nouvelle dans l'organisation scientifique de la protection de l'enfance," *L'Egypte Contemporaine* 14 (January 1923): 10–41.
40. Cleland, "Population Plan for Egypt," 470–71.
41. Mohamed Shalaby, *An Experiment in Rural Reconstruction in Egypt* (Cairo: Egyptian Association for Social Studies, 1950); Ahmed Husayn, "Tajarib islah al-qarya fi misr," *Shu'un Ijtima'iyya* 2, no. 7 (1941): 61–67.
42. Faye Ginsburg and Rayna Rapp, introduction to *Conceiving the New World Order: The Global Politics of Reproduction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
43. Zahya Marzuq, "Kilma lil-mara' fi tanzim al-nasl," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20 (July 1937): 150–54.
44. 'Ammar, "Al-Nahya al-insaniyya."
45. 'Ammar, "Al-Nahya al-insaniyya," 203–4, quotation, 204.
46. Ann Anagnost has discussed the shift from quantity to quality in Chinese population discourse following the 1978 one-child policy. According to her, the Chinese notion of population quality is multivocal and covers a broad

range: birth control, childrearing, sanitation, education, technology, law, and eugenics. Although resonating with earlier 1920s eugenics discourse, population discourse in the post-Mao period moved far beyond the concerns of a small elite, to include themes such as blaming national backwardness on poor population quality, the categorization of the rural masses as backward and peripheral by the urban and intellectual elites, and the coupling of "raising the quality of the people" with the building of socialist civilization. Anagnost, *Narrative, Representation and Power*, 118–28. David Horn has discussed the goals of fascist demographic politics: "Rather than purification, the goals . . . were social defense and multiplication, rather than selective breeding and sterilization, its means were improved hygiene, diet and education." Thus, although the emphasis was on quantity in the Italian case, quality mattered at least in preventive terms, a process Horn refers to as "euthenics," by which he means positive eugenics (pronatalist social hygiene). Horn, *Social Bodies*, 60.

47. "Tahsin al-nasl: itijah ijtima'i jadid," *Shu'un Ijtima'iyya* 2 (June 1941): 101–103.
48. Broadly, Egyptian ideas on eugenics were only vaguely biological in orientation, and were more concerned with social reform, public health, and sanitation. Most of the authors writing on the subject were either members of the medical profession or social reformers. If any particular scientific traditions are to be singled out as exerting the most influence on population writings, it would be neo-Lamarckian and social Darwinian, whereas Mendelian genetics had not yet made serious inroads into discussions of population. The neo-Lamarckian strains are noticeable in discussions surrounding the importance of improving the physical and social environment of the working poor—as well as the general concern for puericulture, hygiene, and sanitation. And although there were those who insisted on sterilization, at least in cases where the genetic basis of disease transmission had been proven beyond a doubt, few argued on Mendelian grounds. Social Darwinism was broached in the few instances where natural selection and elimination were discussed, but its usage was often imprecise. A key figure in debates on biology was Shibli Shumayyil, whose social Darwinism drew from Huxley, Spencer, Haeckel, and Büchner. In fact, Shumayyil had translated Büchner's commentary on Darwin into Arabic. Salama Musa, too, was influential in the transmission of Lamarckian ideas into Arabic. On these figures and on Darwinism in Egypt and Greater Syria in general, see Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860–1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
49. There is a vast and rich literature on the development of the eugenics movement, which has gone far in debunking various myths portraying eugenics as solely an Anglo-American phenomenon, as a pseudoscience, as predominantly Mendelian, and as right wing. See Mark Adams, "Toward a Comparative History of Eugenics," in Adams, *The Wellborn Science*.
50. Dr. Abd al-Hakim al-Rifa'i, "Mushkilat al-sukkan fi misr"; Fu'ad, "Tahdid al-nasl"; Mustafa Fahmi, "Hal min al-khiyr li misr?"; Kamal al-Din Fahmi, "Tanzim al-nasl fi ba'd al-aqtar."

51. "It is to the nation's benefit to have children of healthy build and sound mind rather than a plentiful but disabled and weak minded progeny. . . . Better to live as a progressive nation of small numbers than a populated backward nation." Fu'ad, "Tahdid al-nasl," 49, 51.
52. "Dabt al-tanasul: haraka ijtima'iyya khatira tuʿam al-alam al-mutamadin al-yawm," *Al-Hilal* 33 (June 1925): 938–40; Amir Buqtur, "Ifa al-tanasul wal ighraq fihi: bahth ijtima'i wa iqtisadi wa sihi," *Al-Hilal* 38 (August 1930): 1201–6; "Al-shakawi min izdiyad sukkan al-alam," *Al-Hilal* 39 (April 1931): 868–72; "Taqyid al-nasl wal tahakum bi adad al-mawalid," *Al-Hilal* 39 (July 1931): 1393–96; "Hal nu'amid ila tahdid al-nasl?" *Al-Hilal* 40 (December 1931): 234–38; "Taqyid al-nasl am intikhabu," 41 (November 1932): 84–90; "Tahdid al-nasl: wa atharu al sihiyya wal ijtima'iyya wal dawliyya," *Al-Muqtataf* 90 (March 1937): 261–67; Tahdid al-nasl wa mushkilat al-sukkan," *Al-Muqtataf* 94 (January 1939): 283–89; "Tahdid al-nasl fil mizan," *Al-Muqtataf* 95 (June 1939): 41–45.
53. "Hal nuʿamid ila tahdid al-nasl?" 236–37.
54. S.Q., "Sihhat al-nasl: aham manab'a al-tharwa al-qawmiyya," *Shu'un Ijtima'iyya* 2 (April 1941): 88–93. All indications point to the authorship of Sayyid Qutb, who was a regularly contributing member to the journal. On Sayyid Qutb's writings on social reform, see Alain Roussillon "Trajectoires Reformistes Sayyid Qutb et Sayyid ʿUways: figures modernes de l'intellectuel en Egypte," *Egypte/Monde Arabe* 6 (1991): 91–139.
55. S.Q., "Sihhat al-nasl," 90. The anonymous article "Tahsin al-nasl," *Shu'un Ijtima'iyya*, also called for the medicalization of marriage licenses. For a rich discussion, see Hanan Kholoussy, "Monitoring and Medicalising Male Sexuality in Semi-colonial Egypt," *Gender and History* 22, no. 3 (2010): 677–91.
56. Ann Anagnost, "A Surfeit of Bodies: Population and the Rationality of the State in Post-Mao China," in Rapp and Ginsburg, *New World Order*, 22–41, quotation, 31.
57. Elie Nassif, "L'Égypte est-elle surpeuplée?" *L'Égypte Contemporaine* 33, no. 208 (1942): 613–773, quotation in the subhead, 641. An Arabic synopsis of Nassif's article appeared in the same issue, "Hal tashku misr min al-izdiham bi-l sukkan?" 775–91.
58. Nassif, "L' Égypte est-elle surpeuplée?"
59. For Italian statistician Corrado Gini, Malthusian theories of the geometric increase of population were premised on one fundamentally flawed assumption—namely, that "the reproductive powers of populations remain constant throughout their generations." Gini had formulated a theory known as the theory of the cyclical rise and fall of population, whose underlying postulate was the differential rates of increase of different populations, according to race and class, on the basis of evolutionary biological difference. According to Gini, populations, like societies, individuals, and other organisms, had biological life cycles of birth, evolution, and death. The implications were decidedly

anti-neo-Malthusian, since intervals at diverse points in history could represent transitory phases of over- or underpopulation. Corrado Gini, "The Cyclical Rise and Fall of Population," in *Population: Lectures on the Harris Foundation 1929* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930), 1–140, quotation 4.

60. He referred to proponents of the demographic optimum as "Anglo-Saxon doctrinaires," noting that they excluded the possibility of diverse demographic optima corresponding to the progressive evolution of the social and economic structure of a society and its complexity. These included William Beveridge, Allyn Young, A. M. Carr-Saunders, Edwin Cannan, Hugh Dalton, and Lionel Robbins. For an overview see E. F. Penrose, *Population Theories with Special Reference to Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1934), 49–55; Elie Nassif, "L'Égypte est-elle surpeuplée?" 621–38.
61. Corrado Gini, "Some Considerations of the Optimum Density of a Population," in *Proceedings of the World Population Conference, 29 August—3 September, Geneva*, 118–22; Nassif, "L'Égypte est-elle surpeuplée?" 629.
62. Muhammad Hasan, "Mushkilat al-nasl fi misr," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 183–86; Hasan al-Banna, "Ra'y fi tahdid al-nasl min al-wajha al-islamiyya," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20, no. 7 (1937): 217–22.
63. Abd al-Majid Nafi'a, "Al-Dawa' ila tahdid al-nasl: jarima qawmiyya la darura ijtima'iyya," *Shu'un Ijtima'iyya* 2, no .5 (1941): 34–39.
64. Roger Owen, "The Ideology of Economic Nationalism in its Egyptian Context: 1919–1939," in *Intellectual Life in the Arab East, 1890–1939*, ed. Marwan Buheiry (Beirut: American University in Beirut Press, 1981); Mourad Magdi Wahba, *The Role of the State in the Egyptian Economy: 1945–1981* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1994); Robert Tignor, *State, Private Enterprise and Economic Change in Egypt: 1918–1952* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984).
65. Nassif, "L' Égypte est-elle surpeuplée?" 720.
66. Nassif, "L' Égypte est-elle surpeuplée?" 767. Nassif was indeed prescient. A policy of population redistribution through land reclamation and resettlement would later become the cornerstone of the Nasserist population program.
67. Fatwas are issued in response to queries from lay believers. See Hussein Ali Agrama, *Questioning Secularism: Islam, Sovereignty, and the Rule of Law in Modern Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), chap. 5.
68. Shaykh Abd al-Majid Salim, *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20 (July 1937): 55; translated in Abdel Rahim Omran, *Family Planning in the Legacy of Islam* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 250. I have amended the translation from the original text, in Wizarat al-awqaf wa wizarat al-aʿlam, *Mawqif al-islam min tanzim al-usra* (Cairo: State Information Service/Information, Education and Communication Center, 1991), 81–82. Note that this is representative of the *Hanafite* school of jurisprudence. In the Muslim tradition children are reputed to be "gifted with souls" after the first 120 days of gestation.
69. Historically speaking, birth spacing or planning has a long history of debate in the Islamic tradition. The earliest and most comprehensive statement of

permissibility on coitus interruptus (*al-'azl*) in Islamic jurisprudence is the medieval text of the *Shafa'i* scholar Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (d. 1111). Al-Ghazali deemed coitus interruptus permissible with the following justifications: to avoid fathering children who would become slaves, to preserve the wife's beauty in order to ensure marital bliss, and to avoid economic hardships and "embarrassment" (*haraj*). Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Ihya' ʿulum al-din* (Cairo: Matbaʿat al-istiqama, 1965). On the history of birth control in Islamic jurisprudence see Omran, *Family Planning*, chap. 8; and Basim Musallam, Basim, *Sex and Society in Islam: Birth Control before the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

70. The Muslim Brotherhood was originally founded in Isma'iliyya in 1928 by al-Banna as an alternative associational grouping aimed at encouraging an Islamic revival and introducing Islam into all aspects of everyday life and society. The Society, committed to the ideals of social justice, anti-imperialism, pan-Islamism, and a free Palestine, relocated to Cairo in 1932, where it gained a following that included lower- and middle-class Egyptians (civil servants, urban workers, students, and lawyers), estimated at hundreds of thousands by World War II. Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
71. Al-Banna, "Ra'y fi tahdid al-nasl," 217.
72. Al-Banna, "Ra'y fi tahdid al-nasl," 217, and Issa 'Abduh, "Ra'y fi tahdid al-nasl wa tanzimuhu: bahth min al-nahyatin al-islamiyya wal iqtisadiyya," *Al-Majalla al-Tibiyya al-Misriyya* 20 (July 1937): 155–65.
73. Al-Banna, "Ra'y fi tahdid al-nasl," 218. Al-Banna quotes *ahadith* (sayings of the Prophet) in support of his argument in favor of procreation as the goal of marriage. One recounts a man who approached the Prophet stating that he loved a woman who was of noble birth and rank and wealth but who could not conceive. He then asked the Prophet, "Should I marry her?" The Prophet said no. The man returned two more times. On the third occasion, the Prophet stated: "Marry those that are dear and fertile (*al-wudud al-wulud*) for I shall make a display of you before other nations."
74. Abduh, "Ra'y fi tahdid al-nasl wa tanzimuhu," 157–59.
75. Abduh, "Ra'y fi tahdid al-nasl wa tanzimuhu," 160.
76. Mitchell, *Society of Muslim Brothers*.
77. For a social history of a similar process in Turkey, see Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family and Fertility, 1880–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
78. As Foucault has taught us so well, power over life is the fundamental site for the deployment of modern power. What is at stake in biopolitics is the optimization of the strength of the population and its constituent subjects, while simultaneously rendering them more governable. My analysis of population politics is informed largely by the Foucauldian elaboration of governmentality, biopower, and the political investment of the individual body and the body politic. See

Michel Foucault's analysis of biopower as found in the *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990); and "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87–104.

79. See Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003), chap. 7.
80. "Al-Safir al-Yugoslavi ya qul: Mudiriyat al-Tahrir min 'azam al-tajarib al-ijtima'iyya fil alam," *al-Sahara'* 1, no. 12 (1957): 17; "Ma' al-Nuwwab fi Mudiriyat al-Tahrir," *al-Sahara'* 2, no. 20 (1957). On land reclamation and resettlement, see Wizarat al-istislah al-aradi, al-mu'assassa al-'amma lil istighlal wa al-tanmiya lil aradi al-mustasliha, *Takwin wa tanmiyat al-mujtama'at al-jadida fil aradi al-mustasliha* (Cairo: Ministry of Land Reclamation, 1969); Magdi Hasanayn, *Al-Sahara'*: *Al-thawra wa al-tharwa—Qissat mudiriyat al-Tahrir* (Cairo: Al-Hay'a al-misriyya al-'amma lil-kitab, 1975).
81. Doreen Warriner, *Agrarian Reform and Community Development in the U.A.R.* (Cairo: Dar al-Ta'wun, 1961), 54.
82. Institute of National Planning (United Arab Republic), *Research Report on Employment Problems in Rural Areas of the United Arab Republic: Report B: Migration in the U.A.R.* (Cairo: Institute of National Planning, 1965), 34.
83. Institute of National Planning, *Research Report*, 34.
84. Abbas Mustafa Ammar, "The Population Situation in Egypt and the Necessity of Planning Population Policy for the Country," in The Egyptian Association for Population Studies, *The Egyptian Association for Population Studies* (Cairo: Imprimerie Misr S.A.E., 1960), 5–17.
85. Ammar, "Population Situation," 13, 15.
86. Ammar, "Population Situation," 15–16.
87. Rizk, "Population Policies in Egypt," 40.
88. Al-Shafa'i, Press Conference (September 14, 1954) as quoted in Rizk, "Population Policies in Egypt," 39–40.
89. Gamal Abdel-Nasser, as quoted in Shanawany, "Stages in the Development," 197.
90. Beth Baron, "The Origins of Family Planning: Aziza Hussein, American Experts, and the Egyptian State," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 4, no. 3 (2008): 31–57, quotation, 36.
91. Baron, "Origins of Family Planning," and Laura Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood: Feminisms, Modernity, and the State in Nasser's Egypt* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2011), chap. 4.
92. *Wizarat al-shu'un al-ijtima'iyya, Wizarat al-shu'un al-ijtima'iyya fi khamsa wa 'ishrin 'amm* (Cairo: Information Department, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1964), 49.
93. Quoted in Rizk, "Population Policies in Egypt," 105; Shanawany, "Stages in the Development," 202.
94. Abdel Rahim Omran and Malek el-Nomrossey, "The Family Planning Effort in Egypt: A Descriptive Sketch," in Omran, *Egypt*, 219–53.
95. Shanawany, "Stages in the Development," 205.

96. Shanawany, "Stages in the Development," 204–5. Some of the groundwork for training in statistics had been laid previously. In 1951 a Training Center on Vital Statistics and Health Statistics, sponsored by the United Nations and World Health Organization, was held in Cairo; see "Training Centre on Vital Statistics and Health Statistics for the Eastern Mediterranean," *L'Egypte Contemporaine* 42 (1951): 95–99.
97. Gamal Abdel-Nasser, as quoted in Shanawany, "Stages in the Development," 207.
98. Gamal Abdel-Nasser, as quoted in Shanawany, "Stages in the Development," 207.
99. Omran and el-Nomrossey, "Family Planning Effort," 225–26. The SCFP was a coordinated effort that included ministers of health, education, cultural and national guidance, local government, social affairs, and religious affairs.
100. Warren Robinson and Fatma H. El-Zanaty, *The Demographic Revolution in Modern Egypt* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2007), 44.
101. Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood*, 129.
102. Robinson and El-Zanaty, *Demographic Revolution*, 45.
103. Baron, "Origins of Family Planning," 48.
104. Baron, "Origins of Family Planning," 41.
105. Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood*, 123.
106. Khalid Muhammad Khalid, as quoted in Rizk, "Population Policies in Egypt," 39.
107. Wizarat al-awqaf wa wizarat al-aʿlam, "Mawqif al-islam min tanzim al-usra," 143.
108. As quoted in Omran, *Family Planning*, 253–54.
109. Allen C. Kelley, Atef M. Khalifa, and M. Nabil El-Khorazaty, *Population and Development in Rural Egypt* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1982); H. Abdel-Aziz Sayed, "Population Policy in Egypt," Cairo Demographic Center Annual Seminar, 1989); Omran, *Egypt*.
110. Sayed, "Population Policy in Egypt"; Supreme Council for Population and Family Planning, "Itar al-istratijiyya al-qawmiyya lil-sukkan wal-mawad al-bashariyya," Cairo, 1980.
111. H. A. Sayed, "The Demographic Impacts of the Population and Development Program: Some Theoretical and Methodological Considerations," *Dirasat Sukkaniyya: Population Studies* 12, no. 74 (1985): 3–26. The PDP had been initiated on an experimental basis in 1977; by 1978 it was operative in eight hundred villages, by 1979 in fifteen hundred villages, and by 1980 in three thousand villages; see H. Abdel-Aziz, Sayed, J. Mayone Stycos, and Roger Avery, "The Population and Development Program in Egypt: A Problem in Program Impact Measurement," Cairo Demographic Center Working Paper No. 8, 1984, 1.
112. Kelley, Khalifa, and El-Khorazaty, *Population and Development*, 34–44.
113. Sayed, Stycos, and Avery, "Population and Development Program," 5–6.
114. Anwar al-Sadat, as cited by United Nations Fund for Population Activities, "Arab Republic of Egypt: Background Paper for Population Assistance Needs Assessment Mission," Cairo, 1980, 57.

115. Ali, *Planning the Family*.
116. National Population Council, "National Population Policy," Cairo, 1986; Fatma El-Zanaty, Hussein A. A. Sayed, Hassan H. M. Zaky, and Ann A. Way, *Egypt Demographic and Health Survey, 1992* (Cairo: Egypt National Population Council, 1993); Sayed, "Population Policy in Egypt."
117. Ali, *Planning the Family*, 36.
118. J. D. Sherris et al. as cited by Social Planning, Analysis, and Administration Consultants, "Evaluation of Appropriate Mix of Services Offered by Family Planning Outreach Workers," Report Submitted to National Population Council, Cairo, 1991.
119. US Agency for International Development, "State Information Service/ Information, Education, Communication Center Family Planning Project Process Evaluation and Recommendations," Cairo, December 1987.
120. Social Planning, Analysis, and Administration Consultants, "State Information Service/Information Education Communication Center Impact Evaluation Study: Final Report," Cairo, 1988.
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123. US Agency for International Development, "Final Evaluation of the Information, Education and Communication Subproject of the Egypt Population/Family Planning II Project," Cairo: September 1993.
124. Shaykh al-Tantawi as cited by Ali, *Planning the Family*, 157.
125. Gaafar Abdel-Salam, "Legal Aspects of Family Planning," in *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Bioethics in Human Reproduction Research in the Muslim World, December 1991* (Cairo: International Islamic Center for Population Studies and Research, al-Azhar University, 1992), 118–36, quotation, 119.
126. Gamal Serour, "Ethical Concerns in the Muslim World and the International Center for Population Studies and Research," in *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Bioethics in Human Reproduction Research in the Muslim World*, 13–16, quotation, 14.
127. Al-Haq, as cited by Omran, *Family Planning*, 10.
128. This is condensing a complex history that I cannot do justice to here. For more on the relationship between al-Azhar and the Egyptian state, as well as on the increased emergence of competing religious visions and authorities, see Malika Zeghal, "Religion and Politics in Egypt: The Ulema of al-Azhar, Radical Islam,

and the State (1952–94)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31, no. 3 (1999): 371–99, quotation 373.

129. Ali, *Planning the Family*, 154–60.
130. TFR references the average number of children that would be born to a female if she were to live to the end of her childbearing years and bear children in accordance with current age-specific fertility rates. Total fertility rates for Egypt are taken from El-Zanaty et al., *Egypt Demographic and Health Survey 1992* and UNICEF, as cited by Baron, "Origins of Family Planning," 32. Contraceptive prevalence rates have likewise increased from 24 percent among currently married women in 1980 to 47.1 percent in 1992 to 60.3 percent in 2008. See Robinson and El-Zanaty, *Demographic Revolution*.
131. Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood*, 2; Mervat Hatem, "The Paradoxes of State Feminism in Egypt," in *Women and Politics Worldwide*, ed. Barbara Nelson and Najwa Chadhury (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 226–42.
132. Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood*, 135.
133. Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood*, 136–39.
134. Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood*, 123.
135. Baron, "The Origins of Family Planning," 41.
136. Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood*, 142–45; Ali, *Planning the Family*, 85–88.
137. For a discussion of women's experiences with family planning in the Nasser era, see Bier, *Revolutionary Womanhood*, 145–52.
138. Ali, *Planning the Family*, 119.
139. Ali, *Planning the Family*, 99–101. See also Marcia Inhorn, *The Quest for Conception: Gender, Infertility, and Egyptian Medical Traditions* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994).
140. Ali, *Planning the Family*, 118.
141. Ali, *Planning the Family*, 163–64.