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YOUTH AS PERIL AND PROMISE: THE EMERGENCE OF ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY IN POSTWAR EGYPT

Abstract

A public discourse of “youth crisis” emerged in 1930s Egypt, partly as a response to the widespread student demonstrations of 1935 and 1936 that ushered in the figure of youth as an insurgent subject of politics. The fear of youth as unbridled political and sexual subjects foreshadowed the emergence of a discourse of adolescent psychology. By the mid-1940s, “adolescence” had been transformed into a discrete category of analysis within the newly consolidated disciplinary space of psychology and was reconfigured as a psychological stage of social adjustment, sexual repression, and existential anomie. Adolescence—perceived as both a collective temporality and a depoliticized individual interiority—became a volatile stage linked to a psychoanalytic notion of sexuality as libidinal raw energy, displacing other collective temporalities and geographies. New discursive formations, for example, of a psychology centered on unconscious sexual impulses and a cavernous interiority, and new social types, such as the “juvenile delinquent,” coalesced around the figure of adolescence in postwar Egypt.

Prior to the events of 25 January 2011, the question of Arab youth had captured the imagination of an increasingly vocal international and regional audience focused on the dangers of a demographic youth explosion.¹ Scholars had presciently argued that Middle Eastern youth were burdened by “the expectations and imprecations generated by the ‘youth’ of elite imagination.”² Youth in Egypt were emblematic of this process—maligned by their elders and increasingly confronted with a repressive political landscape in which even blogging was tainted with the hint of political or sexual sedition and in which social anxieties, for example, regarding common-law or *ʿurfī* marriage, surfaced in a spate of didactic, journalistic, and psychological texts.³ This was visible in rhetorical tensions between a moralizing public discourse that censured contemporary youth for political apathy and for “illicit” sexual activities and a failure to acknowledge the social and economic realities of everyday life. Yet, in the dramatic unfolding of the so-called youth revolution, Egyptian youth exceeded the conceptual categories of their compatriots, social scientists, and Western observers, definitively demonstrating that

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youth as subjects and agents of history were constituted by, yet irreducible to, the disciplinary projects and categories of public discourse and social science.

The discourse of youth as threatening sexual and political subjects illustrates the resilience of social scientific categories of analysis and political projects that have sought to domesticate youth as proper national subjects. In seeking to understand this genealogy, this article returns to an earlier moment of public discourse on youth crisis, analyzing a series of social scientific writings in Egypt from the mid-1930s to the early 1950s. The research emerged out of a collaborative project, the Arab Families Working Group (AFWG), which has sought to understand the significance of youth to public discourse in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab world.⁴

My argument is that a discourse of “youth crisis” emerged in 1930s Egypt, partly as a response to the widespread student demonstrations of 1935 and 1936 that ushered in the figure of youth as an insurgent subject of politics. Youth were recast as a problem in need of regulation and control and as a necessary object of study. The fear of youth as unbridled political and sexual subjects foreshadowed the emergence of a discourse of adolescent psychology. By the mid-1940s, “adolescence” had been transformed into a discrete category of analysis within the newly consolidated disciplinary space of psychology and was reconfigured as a psychological stage of social adjustment, sexual repression, and existential anomie. Indeed, sexuality, in keeping with contemporary social scientific theories, was taken to be a cornerstone of adolescent psychology. Adolescence—perceived as both a collective temporality and a depoliticized individual interiority—became a volatile stage linked to a psychoanalytic notion of sexuality as libidinal raw energy, displacing other collective temporalities and geographies while allowing for the intrusion of disciplinary social scientific projects.

The “adolescent” (*al-murāhiq*) thus emerged as a social scientific category of analysis, demarcating the psychological literature from the more popular writings of the mainstream press that addressed “youth” (*shabāb*).⁵ The construction of the adolescent as a psychological subject was geared toward a particular mode of subjectification, which involved the elaboration of an apolitical psychological interiority and an attempt to domesticate the “boundless energy of youth” through the production of normative gendered, heterosexual, and ethical subjects engaged in the cultivation of self-health. Adolescent subjectification was thus a highly gendered process and the category of the adolescent was configured predominantly as a problem of masculinity, particularly when socially delinquent.⁶ Nevertheless, adolescent sexual deviance was viewed as a problem of both sexes and femininity thus garnered attention as well, especially when norms of compulsory heterosexuality were violated.

Widely divergent postwar perspectives on adolescent psychology were, in fact, remarkably alike in their emphasis on overwhelming unconscious sexual impulses that threatened to disturb the balance of adolescent self and psyche and in seeking to resolve the youth crisis as a crisis of psychosexual adjustment. Adolescence had become the subject of “an alignment between the aspirations of the professionals, the political concerns of the authorities, and the social anxieties of the powerful.”⁷ New discursive formations of a psychology centered on unconscious sexual impulses and a cavernous interiority, and new social types, such as the “juvenile delinquent,” coalesced around the figure of adolescence. Rather than reconstruct the historical *experience* of adolescence or youth, I explore the discursive frameworks within which the question of youth was

articulated in social scientific discourses in Egypt. This is not, of course, to suggest that such discourses exhaust our range of understandings but merely to attend to the shifting meanings of the category of youth in the public sphere.⁸

YOUTH AS A CATEGORY IN CRISIS

Like the emergence of childhood in the long 19th century, youth's emergence in the 20th century was both a local and an international phenomenon. Historians have noted the development and the reinvention of the category of youth in a variety of historical contexts, linking the idea of youth to the Bolshevik revolutionary transformation in the wake of World War I, to Italian and German fascism in the interwar period, to revitalization projects in postwar France, and to national sovereignty and geopolitical fantasies in the Cold War era United States.⁹ In the Egyptian context, as Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski note, "a myth of youth developed in interwar Egypt, a rhetoric stressing the national role as well as redeeming power of the 'new generation.'"¹⁰ As representatives of the emerging national polity and economy, youth were thought to best embody the political subjectivity of nationalism.¹¹ Such a discourse of youth was not entirely new, of course, and antecedent links between youth and nationalism were to be found in the heady days of the 1919 revolution. Indeed, throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, youth were viewed as the repository of national identity and entrusted with the task of creating a modern nation able to attain independence from the British.¹²

Public discourse on youth in the 1930s and 1940s was, however, distinct from earlier periods in a number of ways. The vast increase in the number of secondary school and university students between 1925 and 1945 led to a close identification between the category of "youth" and "students," as well as the prolongation of the period of pre-adulthood.¹³ As education came under national control after Egypt was granted nominal independence in 1922, primary and secondary education expanded, state education budgets increased, literacy rates rose, and universities witnessed a rapid increase in the number of students.¹⁴ Between 1925 and 1950, for example, the number of university students (excluding al-Azhar) rose from 2,000 to 30,000.¹⁵ The flooding of schools and universities in this interrevolutionary period was coupled with increased political activism and ideological factionalism. As Lucie Ryzova has argued, youth of the 1930s and 1940s often saw themselves as addressing the political passivity of the 1919 generation, while that generation saw youth as troublemakers and revolutionaries and sought to co-opt them as part of a unified nationalist imperative in the face of British colonialism and European cultural hegemony.¹⁶

Although youth were often touted as bearing the promise of the future and as purveyors of national culture in Egypt, the discourse on youth was thus inherently doubled as both peril and promise. On the one hand, adolescence conceived of as a liminal category that marked the threshold between childhood and adulthood was a perfect metaphor for the political and social transformation from colony to independent nation. On the other hand, youth was viewed as precarious and it indexed social and political anxieties. Thus, the very characteristics of youthful energy and optimism thought to be suited to nationalist politics were tempered by discussions of the labile nature of youth, which

was seen to be indicated by the events of 1935 and 1936 and the fear of youth bolshevist or fascist extremism.¹⁷

The emergence of “youth” as a category in crisis can be traced to the wide-scale student demonstrations and strikes of 1935 and 1936. In fact, it was the period following these protests that were christened “the years of youth.”¹⁸ A complex mix of political factors spurred students to actively protest British hegemony. These included the Italian invasion of Ethiopia; the replacement of the 1923 constitution with the less democratic 1930 constitution; the Wafd’s increasingly conciliatory relationship to the British and the palace; and, finally, Sir Samuel Hoare’s November 1935 announcement that the 1930 constitution was “unpopular” and the 1923 constitution “unworkable.”¹⁹ November 1935 was a month of collective student action and violent response on the part of the police, with several students killed and hundreds wounded. Further demonstrations erupted in January 1936 and led to the dismissal of Prime Minister Tawfiq Nasim Pasha’s government.²⁰ As Ahmed Abdalla notes, “the student uprising of 1935–36 marked the emergence of the student movement as a distinctive force in Egyptian politics.”²¹ In December 1935, the 1923 constitution was restored, and shortly thereafter the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty of 1936 was signed.²² From that point forward student militant organization, activism, protest, and mass mobilization would be instrumental in influencing the political negotiations of the palace, the Wafd, and the opposition movement, illustrating the “already growing wedge between the youth and the parliamentary values and system.”²³

Growing student disaffection with the Wafd in particular and with party politics in general was preceded by the formation of numerous groups that stood outside the traditional domain of parliamentary politics. Social and political organizations such as Young Egypt and the Young Men’s Muslim Association (YMMA) were founded during the interwar era.²⁴ As several scholars have noted, student organizational efforts after the events of 1935 and 1936 increasingly took on a factional and ideologically polarized dimension.²⁵ At various points in the aftermath of 1935 and 1936, one could find avid Wafdists, as well as Muslim Brothers, Communists, and Young Egypt’s anti-Wafdist paramilitary Green Shirts, active in the student and youth movement.²⁶

Youth activism and organization was thus a political reality in the 1930s and 1940s, and many social reformers sought to harness youth energy to nationalist projects. The onslaught of articles in 1936 alone indicates the immediacy of the youth question and its perceived relevance to national independence. The widely read literary and cultural journal *al-Hilal* devoted a whole special issue to youth that year.²⁷ Similarly, the journal *al-Risala* was littered with articles expounding the benefits of a youth revival and featured a column devoted exclusively to youth.²⁸ In response to fears that youth were potentially insurgent subjects who stood outside the domain of party politics, writers in these journals recast the question of youth politics as central to national unity, highlighting the role of youth in moderate internal political reform and social welfare projects.²⁹

The concern over youth dovetailed with the larger concerns of the 1930s: minimizing class conflict by establishing cross-class alliances, promoting social welfare and reform, and creating a political subject freed from the constraints of European hegemony.³⁰ It was a discourse that placed youth at the vanguard of societal change and cast them as embodying the political subjectivity of nationalism but only insofar as they could enact a non-antagonistic conception of politics grounded in national unity. In an important

sense, we can see the intensification of youth activity—and its attendant redistribution of bodies in public space in the form of demonstrations—as a mode of politics antagonistic to the police order of the 1930s.³¹ In sum, by the 1930s youth had been recast as a problem in need of regulation and control, and hence as a necessary object of study.

In a 1936 article, prominent Arabic scholar Ahmad Amin remarked on the perceived dire state of youth affairs. Bemoaning the fact that the “youth problem” was Egypt’s most pressing concern, he noted that no single in-depth scientific study of youth yet existed.³² Amin identified the anger and discontent of youth as a principal cause for concern, implicitly referencing the tumultuous years of 1935–36, and critiqued colleagues who had politicized the university.³³ Directly connecting the discipline of psychology to the youth crisis, he argued that specialists in psychology and sociology would need to conduct psychological studies of youth based on scientific principles and theories, identify illnesses, and posit cures.³⁴ Individualized psychology was to replace collective politicization. This would require, he noted, the establishment of psychological clinics similar to clinics for ailments of the body. But before such clinics could materialize, the adolescent himself—and he was most often male—had to emerge as a distinct category of psychological experience.

THE EMERGENCE OF ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY

Historians have noted that in the post-World War II era psychologists played an increasingly central role in processes of adolescent normalization, supplanting earlier 19th-century discourses of moralization. Thus, for instance, juvenile delinquency became a sign of social maladjustment rather than a symptom of moral degeneracy. What Jacques Donzelot refers to as a “tutelary complex” enabled the family unit to remain central to the normalization processes of health and hygiene, mediated by technologies of governance.³⁵ With the consolidation of a disciplinary space of psychology in Egypt, the literature of the 1940s conceptualized the “youth question” largely in terms of the role of psychology in the cultivation of adolescent health.

Nikolas Rose has argued that the management of the “young citizen” fell within the purview of the discipline of psychology, whose object was the regulation of normality through technologies of subjectification such as intelligence testing and studies of social adjustment.³⁶ “With the rise of a normative expertise of childhood,” he states, “family life and subjectivity could be governed in a new way.”³⁷ The emphasis on adolescent psychology within the nascent field of Egyptian psychology was similarly concerned with the management of the subjective experience of youth. Quantitative surveys of adolescents, the collection of memoirs and personal diaries, and the focus on adolescent self-discovery and self-analysis—as mediated by the gaze of the psychologist—were all means by which individual youth subjectivities and dispositions were to be constituted by techniques of self-management and external observation.³⁸ Adolescence emerged as a distinctive stage of life, with its own unique psychological contours of subjective experience, in need of self-monitoring and management by experts. The adolescent (*al-murāhiq*) was, in other words, a product of the process Ian Hacking refers to as “making up people.”³⁹ Psychologists fashioned a pragmatic role for themselves in postwar Egypt by taking adolescence as an object of urgent study and reform.

The emphasis on adolescence in social scientific conceptions of youth was thus very much a part of the nascent field of psychology in Egypt, whose institutionalization and dissemination was a broad and multifaceted process.⁴⁰ Notions of the unconscious had seeped into Arabic writings in Egypt since at least as far back as the 1920s and through a myriad of sources, including Pierre Janet, Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Alfred Adler.⁴¹ The imprint of Freudian psychology, in particular, was becoming increasingly visible in the 1930s and 1940s in the focus on unconscious sexual impulses as translations of Freud began to appear.⁴² For example, a 1938 article in *al-Hilal* noted that a generational shift had taken place and that Egyptian youth were avidly reading Freud and were familiar with his ideas on the unconscious, the interpretation of dreams, psychoanalysis, and the sexual instincts.⁴³ As the exemplar of modern science, Freud, it was argued, could help the East move forward.⁴⁴ By the mid-1940s a burgeoning popular literature on psychology was so well developed that scholarly journals felt compelled to critique the unscientific literature “drowning the marketplace”—a testament to the increased salience of psychology to popular public discourse.⁴⁵

Psychology itself had been taught at the Egyptian University in the philosophy department as early as the university’s founding in 1908, and by mid-century there were academic psychologists in all the other major universities and institutes in Cairo and Alexandria, such as the Higher Institutes of Education and Ibrahim University.⁴⁶ The field received a strong impetus with the return of Yusuf Murad and Mustafa Ziywar to Cairo in the early 1940s. Both had been trained in philosophy and psychology at the Sorbonne in the 1930s and were extremely active in the translation and dissemination of psychological theories in Egypt after World War II, founding the Jama‘at ‘Ilm al-Nafs al-Takamuli (Society for Integrative Psychology) and the Egyptian *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* (Journal of Psychology) in 1945. Murad was well versed in the traditions of French scientific psychology as well as in psychoanalytic and neo-psychoanalytic approaches and had pioneered what he termed an integrative approach to psychology, publishing a popular handbook of psychology in 1948 that went through at least seven editions.⁴⁷ The journal conceptualized psychology broadly, publishing Freudians and anti-Freudians alike, and was illustrative of the openness of the emerging disciplinary space of psychology in Egypt in the 1940s; it was understood as a science of selfhood and the soul (*‘ilm al-nafs*) rather than delimited as the empirical study of mental processes. The expansive nature of their intellectual agenda was reflected in the journal’s opening statement, which emphasized the importance of psychology (both theoretical and applied) to an educated audience, and in particular the need to present and define psychology and its applicability to Egyptian and Eastern contexts.⁴⁸

The postwar years of the journal’s publication coincided with the return of student demonstrations, most notably in November 1945, February 1946 (including the dramatic student March across ‘Abbas bridge and ensuing clash with police forces), and November 1946; intensified political activity calling for British evacuation without negotiations; the waning of popular (and especially student) support for an increasingly discredited political establishment; an increase in student and youth activism; and the increased radicalization of student ideology, particularly of a leftist inclination.⁴⁹ In this atmosphere of social unrest and political uncertainty, the burgeoning social sciences were increasingly relied upon in the postwar management of populations.

In fact, in 1945, the inaugural year of *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs* and less than a decade after Ahmad Amin's call for a study of Egyptian youth, Yusuf Murad laid out a research agenda for the study of adolescent psychology in Egypt and the wider Arab world.⁵⁰ Murad had insisted on the creation of an Arabic-language science of psychology that was based on the specificity of cultural factors, and he regularly published a dictionary of psychological terms in *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs*. He was also a member of the Academy of Language for the committee on psychological terms and thus played a crucial role in the creation and standardization of an Arabic lexicon of psychology. Psychology, he argued, was unlike the natural sciences where universal laws could be discovered; each culture, and therefore psychology, had its own specificity. The particularity of culture, he argued, was nowhere more true than in the study of adolescence. European youth, he noted, would differ from Egyptian youth due to geographical, religious, and cultural differences. The implications for psychological study were numerous. For example, Freud's stages of sexuality were culturally specific to the European formation of the family, as, he pointed out, Margaret Mead's discussion in *Coming of Age in Samoa* had clearly demonstrated. Similarly, he argued that research had shown that adolescence need not necessarily be a combative period. A regional study of youth would certainly contribute to the larger study of the youth issue and broaden its horizon beyond its current European provincialism.⁵¹

Although they recognized that the contours of psychology depended on culturally specific factors, Murad and others writing in *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs* shared a set of assumptions about adolescent psychology as characterized by introspection and acute self-perception, the manifestation of unconscious sexual impulses, and philosophical turmoil. Adolescence, in other words, marked the developmental beginnings of a cavernous interiority and represented a new category of analysis that hailed new modes of being.⁵² This process was, of course, not unique to Egypt; it was contemporaneous with the demarcation and research of adolescence as a distinct developmental stage in European adolescent psychology, such as the writings of Maurice Debesse, a student of Henri Wallon.⁵³ Wallon, from whom Lacan derived his idea of the mirror stage, was surprisingly popular in postwar Egypt, part of a broader set of interconnections between French and Egyptian psychology. The imprint of Debesse's pioneering 1937 work *Comment Etudier les Adolescents* was clear in Murad's emphasis on diaries as a means of accessing interiority, as well as on the unique significance of affect in adolescence.

Accessing interiority through diaries, correspondence, questionnaires, psychiatric tests, and observation became a principal goal of adolescent psychology.⁵⁴ Murad thus proposed a questionnaire composed of forty-four questions, divided into seven sections: childhood memories, desire for originality, intimate diaries, friendship, philosophical preoccupations, and diverse conflicts and aspirations.⁵⁵ Students were asked questions about their childhood years, whether they had any positive or negative memories, their concern with philosophical or religious issues, and whether or not they kept a diary: questions, in short, that required the articulation and elaboration of interior states.

'Abd al-Min'am al-Miliji, who had taught philosophy in Helwan and psychology in Cairo, took up Murad's research agenda and advocated the use of diaries and memoirs as a research method specific to understanding adolescent psychology. He argued that adolescence could be clearly demarcated as a psychologically distinctive stage of life,

marked by a romantic phase.⁵⁶ The key attribute of adolescence was the way in which the individual, previously embedded and connected to the outside world, become increasingly disconnected and focused on the self while distancing himself from society and social mores. Based on a careful reading of numerous student diaries and memoirs, al-Miliji depicted adolescence as a period of intense turmoil, focusing on the conflicts youth experienced between self and society; these conflicts, he noted, could be resolved in any number of ways, ranging from personal diaries to suicide.⁵⁷ Al-Miliji also noted the key attributes of these diaries: namely, secrecy, a focus on self-analysis, and the representation of society as cruel and merciless.⁵⁸

A tumultuous interiority, characterized by intensive introspection, thus emerged as the developmental coordinates and cornerstones of adolescent psychology. Significantly, the predominance of psychology as a modality for constructing and understanding adolescence moved in tandem with the emergence of a depoliticized adolescent psychic interiority. Psychological discourses emphasized adolescent psychic conflicts as individualized conflicts between “self” and “society” rather than viewing adolescence as deeply embedded within, and reflective of, larger social and political struggles or conflicts.

THE ABERRANT ADOLESCENT

In keeping with the emphasis on Freudian psychology, al-Miliji viewed negative adolescent attitudes toward society as the unconscious projection of inner turmoil. Thus, having collected information using Murad’s questionnaire method and his own personal observations, al-Miliji analyzed what he viewed as an extreme case of adolescent maladjustment, or juvenile delinquency, in a nineteen-year-old Egyptian secondary school student that he referred to as “A.”⁵⁹ A’s behavior was characterized by aggression toward his peers, hostility to authority, excess sexual activity, and “mental vagabondage,” such as a morbid obsession with death. A had been abandoned by his father at the age of one and was raised in the desert by his Bedouin mother. He was forcefully taken away from her at the age of ten by his father and sent to primary school, only to receive a note two years later, at the age of twelve, informing him of her death. Al-Miliji recognized, in passing, that A’s situation was related to the social vulnerability of Bedouin women who married urban men without a marriage contract, but he bypassed a sociological analysis. Instead, his analysis of A was straightforwardly psychoanalytic, seeing psychic trauma as blocking normal adolescent development while searching for causes of maladjustment in an excess of either maternal affection or paternal severity. Aberrant behaviors, he argued, functioned as pseudo solutions to unconscious conflicts that manifested themselves in ontological and existential anxieties.

Al-Miliji’s analysis was explicitly meant to counter popular and dominant conceptions of the juvenile delinquent as in need of punitive treatment or legal redress. The history of the emergence of the juvenile delinquent as a social and legal category in Egypt would take us well beyond the scope of the present essay. Suffice it to say that by the late 1930s juvenile delinquency had become a major topic of study and received “concentrated attention” in lectures at the Cairo School of Social Work (CSSW) during the 1937–38 academic year; the school’s parent organization, the Egyptian Association of Social

Studies, undertook a comprehensive project for the psychological, medical, and social study of juvenile delinquents beginning in 1940.⁶⁰

Al-Miliji's case study of A stands amidst the figure of the delinquent, who lurked at the margins of nationalist discourse on youth and who did not conform to the proper middle-class subject of masculine nationalism; delinquents were the "stray dogs," as one commentator put it, who roamed the streets of Cairo at night.⁶¹ In a 1948 article in *al-Risala*, Abbas Khudr critiqued the abundance of free time among middle- and lower-class youth, which they filled by frequenting cinemas and cafes; concern was particularly strong for boys with a chaotic home life who had not received a proper upbringing (*tarbiya*). This figure of the unruly and unproductive subject was the non-nationalist subject par excellence, who was to be disciplined through youth organizations such as the YMMA that sought to assist young men in the cultivation of appropriate middle-class bodily comportment, aesthetic sensibilities, and nationalist ethics.⁶²

While al-Miliji, and numerous others writing in *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs*, recognized the social contours of delinquency, they placed the juvenile delinquent directly at the center of individualized discourses of adolescent psychology, oftentimes as a highly aberrant psychosexual subject.⁶³ In this view the delinquent emerges as the symptom of the larger unconscious tendencies of the individual in his relationship to the social environment. Although poverty, ignorance, and social marginalization were critical factors, dealing with adolescents such as A in the manner that Khudr suggests (through the disciplinary projects of organizations like the YMMA) would hardly be a sufficient precondition for mental health from this perspective.

More significantly, al-Miliji's discussion provided a long-durée psychological analysis as an alternative framework for understanding juvenile delinquency as a symptom of maladjustment rather than as an emblem of moral degeneracy or an infraction of the sociolegal order. In an important sense, then, the delinquent emerged as one end of a continuum of psychological health rather than a distinct social character. This was clear in al-Miliji's analyses of adolescent diaries among representative secondary school students. Al-Miliji defined adolescence itself in terms of the emergence of unconscious sexual instincts and the conflict between these instincts and societal or religious mores (much as he had viewed the case of A). For example, in discussing the case of a young man who had begun praying, fasting, and worshipping "to the point of Sufism," he analyzed his extreme religiosity as a form of moral guilt for sexual impulses that had been sublimated into religious impulses.⁶⁴ I will return later to this figure of the young Sufi, suppressed at the margins of psychological discourse.

Al-Miliji's analysis was noteworthy in at least two respects. First, al-Miliji, like many psychologists at mid-century, characterized the adolescent as first and foremost a psychosexual subject, that is to say, as a subject forged at the vortex of unconscious sexual impulses. Such unconscious sexual impulses were powerful yet precarious and therefore subject to distortions that could lead to an aberrant sexuality. Second, for al-Miliji religion itself was viewed as a psychological state rather than as a set of embodied practices or ethical traditions. This was precisely the argument of an earlier article, in which al-Miliji had focused on religious feeling as a significant adolescent experience that was the complex product of individual and social factors, discussing religious awakenings during adolescence, religious enthusiasm, doubt and atheism, and religion and love.⁶⁵ I address each of these points in turn: the adolescent as a psychosexual subject and as an

ethical subject. These were prominent themes in the wider literature on adolescence in Egypt and constituted different, yet interconnected, modes of subjectification.

THE PSYCHOSEXUAL SUBJECT

Adolescent psychology in the interwar and postwar period in Egypt was predominantly concerned with academic study, but the knowledge generated by it was to play a pragmatic role in the management of Egypt's youth crisis and in particular to assist in the creation of normalized adolescents, free of psychosexual ailments. Thus, Dr. Muhammad Zaki al-Shafa'i argued that countering the youth crisis in Egypt would not be possible without a psychological understanding of the various unconscious tendencies of youth, which would facilitate the prevention and treatment of common adolescent ailments, such as inferiority complexes.⁶⁶ Dr. Ibrahim Naji argued for Freud's relevance to the Egyptian context, noting that Freudian theory could be employed as a potential corrective to the problems of youth, and to the question of sexual repression in particular. Freud's work, he clarified, was not only about sexuality but also about the relationship between males and females and therefore of relevance to university instructors who witnessed their co-ed students, now seated side by side in the university, unable to interact.⁶⁷ Cairo University had admitted its first female student in 1928, and the process of coeducation in the university was completed in 1953, when Dar al-'Ulum admitted women.⁶⁸ Abdu Mikha'il Rizk emphasized the difficulties caused by gender segregation and lectured at the Popular Culture Association in Damanhur on the significance of sex education for youth in order to prevent sexual deviance.⁶⁹

There are several larger political and social contexts for the increased emphasis on adolescent psychosexual development. First, as we have seen, the focus in the 1940s on adolescent psychology as an index of social adjustment led to the proliferation of a variety of technologies of subjectification, centered on the inner turmoil of youth. Fears that the "boundless energy" of youth would be misdirected toward sexual deviance, or projected onto the field of political activity, fueled a concern for moral turpitude that focused on the importance of the emotions and of heteronormative sexuality to proper adolescent development. Indeed, socioanthropologist Raoul Makarius attributed the political excitement and turmoil of 1945 and 1946, in part, to the sexual anxieties and repressions of youth.⁷⁰

Second, as Hanan Kholoussy has shown, 20th-century discussions of sexual practices in Egypt need to be situated within larger discourses of the monitoring and medicalization of sexuality that produced the normative heterosexual healthy male subject as the foundation for a postcolonial nation free of sociomedical ills.⁷¹ Prolonged bachelorhood, female prostitution, and precocious sexuality were targeted as social ills.⁷² A final context was the larger literature on sexuality and sexual deviance, which by the late 1920s and 1930s, as Wilson Jacob notes, "had become a regular topic of cultural criticism, marshalling the opinions of doctors, journalists, fiction writers, and significantly, enthusiasts of the physical culture movement. This is demonstrated in a wide array of sources—from newspapers, magazines, and pulp novels to police and court records."⁷³

The literature on adolescent psychology was focused to a large extent on the elaboration of the role of unconscious sexual impulses and their normal or pathological resolution in adolescent life. In a book entitled *Sikulujiyyat al-Jins* (The Psychology

of Sex), published as part of the popular *Iqra'* series, Yusuf Murad outlined for a lay audience the figure of the adolescent as a psychosexual subject whose complex psyche was formed at the intersection of unconscious sexual impulses rooted in childhood and societal norms of Egyptian gender relations.⁷⁴ This was a follow-up text to Murad's popular 1943 book *Shifa' al-Nafs* (Healing the Self), which had introduced its audience to the basic theories and concepts of psychology and its schools of thought.⁷⁵ His text was peppered with case studies and dialogues drawn from students and patients, thereby providing an enlivened psychology for his readers.

Compared to earlier Arabic writings on sexuality, *Sikulujiyyat al-Jins* was less of a medicalized discourse than one focused on the proper *psychological* resolution of relations between the sexes.⁷⁶ Throughout his text Murad illustrated numerous incomplete resolutions of psychosexual complexes, drawing on examples from his clinical practice and interviews with adolescents or young adults. In keeping with his theoretical emphasis on integrative psychology, he focused on conflicts that emerged between different parts of the self, or between conscious and unconscious impulses. As noted previously, although adolescence was viewed in large part as a problem of masculinity, femininity garnered attention particularly in discussions of sexual deviance. Many of Murad's examples illuminated failed heterosexual attachment, for example, in his focus on situations in which females became attracted to and developed romantic attachments to classmates of the same sex. His analysis of homosocial and homosexual female attachment was predicated upon a conflict between societal norms and psychological imperatives.⁷⁷

Murad presented femininity as an excessively fragile, almost unattainable ideal, noting that females traversed adolescence only with extreme difficulty. He argued that even when married, females often lacked awareness of the unconscious perverse sexual impulses of their own adolescent years and their negative attitudes toward the opposite sex: attitudes that could lead to frigidity or hysteria during marriage. He ended with a plea for psychological education for youth to help them combat deviant sexual tendencies and attain a harmonious married life. Heterosexuality, in other words, needed to be inculcated through psychological education and analysis. Murad's analysis of femininity was, broadly speaking, neo-psychoanalytic, placing greater emphasis on sociological factors.⁷⁸ He was far from a thoroughgoing Freudian and had often critiqued Freudian models as mechanistic and reductive.⁷⁹ In fact, his approach to feminine psychology as the product of social and cultural factors equally seemed more akin to that of Karen Horney, whom he cited favorably in other contexts.⁸⁰ In his view, the Egyptian milieu intensified feminine tendencies, such as the perception of lack in comparison to males, which was only reinforced through differential treatment by parents. Similarly, he argued, as females began to experience heterosexual feelings in adolescence, the societal interdictions against male–female interactions led to a conflict between sexual feelings and societal norms. Rather than direct and discipline the female child's feelings (a process he referenced as *tahdhīb*), Egyptian parents reinforced the interdiction.⁸¹

The counterpart to failed femininity was the improperly actualized masculine subject, a topic Murad and his co-editor Ziywar had addressed several years earlier. In a 1948 issue of *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs*, two readers wrote in asking the editors to elaborate on same-sex love. One, who signed with the initials "Sin 'Ayn," began by recounting his early childhood years in which his sister dressed him in female clothing and had him play female roles. The structure of his letter was clearly indicative of the extent to which the

confessional self-narration of childhood had taken hold among readers of the journal. Sin ‘Ayn was perturbed by the fact that as a twenty-one-year-old male he had experienced no feelings of sexual desire toward women. At school he had befriended a good-looking boy and was experiencing sexual urges despite acknowledging that homosexuality was against both custom and law. What should he do, he asked, and how could he combat his urges?⁸² The journal’s response was extensive and measured. In no less than an eight-page response, they noted the increase of homosexuality (*al-jinsiyya al-mithliyya*) and lamented the absence of any sustained scientific discussion in the Arabic scientific and scholarly press.

After outlining the various types of homosexuality (ranging from actual sexual contact, to sexual relationships without full sexual contact, to sexual desire), and the various psycho-social studies that had estimated the incidence of homosexuality (such as those by Havelock Ellis and Alfred Kinsey), the editors proceeded to discuss in depth numerous psychological theories of homosexuality, ranging from Freud to Adler. Crucial to their argument was the need to move away from entrenched popular perceptions of homosexuality as innate toward the idea of homosexuality as a psychological phenomenon. If homosexuality could be shown to be due to an abnormal childhood, an inferiority complex, or the separation of the sexes, then it could be resolved through psychological analysis and behavioral or environmental changes. In point of fact, the editors’ principal explanatory emphasis was neo-psychoanalytic.⁸³ Presenting a simplified account of the Oedipal complex, they noted that the lack of proper resolution of the complex was responsible for many instances of homosexuality. In sum, the young reader troubled by his lack of heterosexual urges, they suggested, should seek psychoanalysis.

The production of normalized psychosexual subjects was thus part and parcel of the development of an adolescent psychology that sought the “normal” resolution of psychological complexes through the inculcation of heterosexual desire and companionate marriage.⁸⁴ Yet every step toward normalcy was beset with potentially “pathological” resolutions: from early childhood to marriage, and most acutely in adolescence, homosexual desire threatened to destabilize youth psychology. Although marriage emerged in Murad’s account as the telos of proper adolescent psychosexual health, the process of adolescent sexual maturation was plagued by hesitations and halting failures. Heterosexual masculinity and femininity emerged in this literature as nearly impossible norms of psychosexual development. Concerns for a normalized heterosexual sexuality dovetailed with the increased prevalence and dissemination of psychoanalytic theories of self and psyche, as sexual concerns were recast as problems that could be addressed through psychological analysis. But there was another body of literature equally concerned with normalized adolescent psychosexual development. This was the literature that sought to place the adolescent within the longer-standing Islamic tradition of *tahdhīb al-nafs*.

THE ETHICS OF THE SELF

In exploring how notions of the adolescent were transformed through the increased dissemination of psychological notions of self and psyche, we would be remiss to neglect the significance of religious discourse. Analyzing religious discourses enables us to ask more pointedly if the emphasis on adolescent psychosexual normalization displaced, or rather converged with, earlier discourses of morality and ethical subject

formation. In fact, most authors writing on youth psychology put forth a tripartite view of the care of the self as entailing a concern for the body, mind, and soul.⁸⁵ Ethics constituted one significant pole of adolescent development, and many authors stressed the importance of longstanding concerns for the spiritual well-being of youth rooted in the Islamic tradition and emphasized existential and sexual anomie as posing the greatest threat to Muslim youth.⁸⁶

In an extensive five-part article published in *al-Risala*, Ibrahim al-Batrawi faulted social reformers for tackling the problems of youth in purely physiological and psychological terms.⁸⁷ Al-Batrawi critiqued psychologists and psychoanalysts whose analytical focus on the individual and on sexual instincts had the potential for unleashing and encouraging debauchery.⁸⁸ The deeper issue, he argued, was a more fundamental problem of youth, namely, their skepticism of religious, ethical, and political ideals. Evoking the image of youth who spent their free time in cafes and salons talking about metaphysics and the truth of existence in the terms of modern philosophy, Batrawi expressed concern with the existential conditions of doubt and nihilism.⁸⁹ Extreme existential states of doubt, he noted, left youth open to ideological exploitation by a variety of political factions. He pointed to two predominant modern philosophical tendencies: the French tradition of philosophical skepticism, culminating in the French Revolution and eventually leading to existentialism, and the Marxist tradition that culminated in communism. These observations would surely have been read in the context of the events of 1945 and 1946: militant student activism, the violent clashes between police and students, and the concomitant crackdown against leftist agitation inaugurated by Sidqi's repressive campaign, all of which had intensified fears of youth political activism.

Al-Batrawi's work clearly stood apart from the wider literature on adolescent psychology in its virulent critique of psychological understandings of youth while simultaneously illustrating how dominant such understandings had become. Fear of the unbridled political and sexual subject (communists and debauchees) loomed large in al-Batrawi's writings, as it did in those of many of his fellow social scientists. Unlike them, however, he did not propose psychological analysis or sexual education for youth but rather argued for the reintegration of Islamic ideals into the collective life of youth. In particular, he proposed a return to the Islamic model of combining religion and science (*'ilm*), citing the late 19th-century writings of al-Afghani as an exemplar and the medieval al-Ghazali as a personal role model.⁹⁰

Al-Batrawi's discussion of philosophical nihilism was echoed in a number of writings in *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs*. Al-Miliji similarly focused on religious doubt in adolescence as a significant psychological sentiment, based on his case studies of students.⁹¹ His analysis concentrated on the individualized circumstances that led adolescents to experience religious doubt or atheism. It was premised on his view of religion as merely the sum content of human emotions (such as love or fear) attached to things the individual considered sacred.⁹² Religiosity was always constituted by an individual's general psychological make-up. Thus he explored extreme religiosity as a way for adolescents to deal with inner turmoil and unconscious impulses (sexual ones in particular) in a socially sanctioned manner while noting that it could take forms such as melancholia manifested in constant prayer.⁹³ In his discussion of the aberrant adolescent (*al-murāhiq al-shādhah*) al-Miliji depicted the individual in a battle with his negative human self,

trying to overcome his sexual impulses through asceticism. Evoking the figure of the Sufi who reached a state of ecstasy and self-annihilation, al-Miliji likened such adolescent responses to an extreme form of religious sickness.⁹⁴ Citing examples such as Augustine and al-Ghazali, he argued that such processes of religious conversion (from debauchery to piety, or from doubt to belief) could be understood as the product of unconscious emotional complexes and struggles that came to be resolved through religious experience.⁹⁵

The tormented process that al-Miliji described as akin to psychological illness is referred to in the Sufi tradition as *jihād al-nafs*, in which certain qualities of the *nafs* or self are viewed as an enemy that must be combated.⁹⁶ In a series of articles by al-Sayyid Abu al-Wafa al-Ghunaymi al-Taftazani, the young shaykh of the al-Ghunaymiyya Khalwatiyya Order, the entire discussion of *jihād al-nafs* is couched in psychological terminology.⁹⁷ He discussed the origin of self-struggle in the repression and sublimation of instincts.⁹⁸ Significantly, he elaborated upon what he referred to as a psychological tendency toward Sufism among Sufis. Using the same examples of al-Ghazali and St. Augustine as al-Miliji and al-Batrawi, he defined tendencies toward Sufism largely in terms of existential crises and affective states such as doubt, anxiety, depression, and a desire to know the truth of existence.⁹⁹ This analysis was rendered in modern psychological theory to such an extent that al-Taftazani noted that psychological traumas may often be the reason behind propensities toward Sufism.¹⁰⁰ Analogizing the shaykh–disciple relationship to that of psychologist and patient, he noted that desires and unconscious thoughts were meant to be analyzed with the shaykh and that their relationship was therefore one of healing the soul. According to al-Taftazani, the process of self-disciplining or *tahdhīb al-nafs* that the young initiate worked through with his shaykh entailed the repression of sexual instincts uncovered in introspection. The Sufi, he argued, aimed to repress tendencies in conflict with the noble moral and spiritual principles of ethical being. Repression, in this rendering, was seen as a positive psychological facet of adolescent life.

We thus have three different understandings of adolescent existential turmoil, each with a distinct view of religion. Al-Batrawi proposed a turn to religion and science, in opposition to psychology, as a solution to adolescent turmoil. Al-Miliji viewed religion, and therefore religious doubt, as epiphenomenal, that is, as reducible to a psychological state, and thus proposed psychology as the principle vehicle for understanding adolescent turmoil. For al-Taftazani, in contrast to the others, there was no incompatibility between viewing adolescent religiosity as both a psychological state and a path toward ethical being and union with the divine.

But the differences in these writings betray an underlying similarity. Islamic writings on adolescent and youth psychology were in fact remarkably similar to their social scientific counterparts in their emphasis on overpowering unconscious sexual impulses that threatened to disturb the balance of adolescent self and psyche. In many instances the disciplining of the self (*tahdhīb al-nafs*) as an Islamic modality for the regulation of sexuality was in fact complementary to psychology (*ilm al-nafs*). For example, the Sufi notion of *tahdhīb al-nafs* or *al-mujāhada al-nafsiyya* could be combined with or, more precisely, translated into Freud's idea of sublimation—to arrive at the positive consequences of certain forms of repression. Thus, the modernist Freudian ethic was not antithetical to Islamic discourse but in fact complementary to it.

CONCLUSION

Discussions of youth in 20th-century Egypt have tended to focus on the relationship of youth, or of discourses of youth, to nationalism and national identity and have emphasized, for example, the significance of the social history of the student movement to nationalist politics or political struggles. Here, in contrast, I have attempted to illuminate new modes of knowledge production and the formation of new types of subjects, such as the “adolescent” forged at the intersection of unconscious sexual impulses and existential turmoil. The panoply of individualized characters who emerged from disciplinary formations such as psychology are in many ways familiar—the “heterosexual,” “the juvenile delinquent,” and the angst-ridden “adolescent.” The development of adolescent psychology in postwar Egypt thus moved in tandem with the production of normative gendered, heterosexual, and ethical subjects. Yet, these categories required, as the very condition of their possibility, the construction and suppression of the alterity of other marginalized figures, such as the sexually “deviant” adolescent, the “stray dogs” of Cairo’s popular neighborhoods, and the “excessively” devout Sufi. Such figures of alterity, repressed at the margins of public discourse, also offered up the possibility of categories of identification that subverted the terms of public discourse and demonstrated its inability to fully incarcerate the subject as the homogeneous product of its disciplinary practices and epistemic categories.

NOTES

Author’s note: I am grateful to Beth Baron, Sara Pursley, and the anonymous reviewers of *IJMES* for their helpful and critical comments. I am especially indebted to Paul Amar, Abigail Boggs, Marwa ElShakry, Samira Haj, Suad Joseph, and Hanan Kholoussy for their insightful suggestions and constructive criticisms. I thank the members of the Arab Families Working Group for their intellectual engagement, encouragement, and support. Research was made possible by grants from the Ford Foundation and the International Development Research Centre.

¹Ragui Assad and Ghada Barsoum, “Youth Inclusion in Egypt: In Search of ‘Second Chances,’” *Middle East Youth Initiative*, Working Paper No. 2 (Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government, November 2007). For excellent overviews on contemporary issues facing Middle Eastern and Muslim youth, see Ted Swedenburg, “Imagined Youths,” *Middle East Report* 37 (2007): 4–11; *Being Young and Muslim: New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North*, ed. Linda Herrera and Asef Bayat (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); and Marilyn Booth, “Arab Adolescents Facing the Future: Enduring Ideals and Pressures to Change,” in *The World’s Youth: Adolescence in Eight Regions of the Globe*, ed. B. Bradford Brown, Reed W. Larson, and T. S. Saraswathi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

²Swedenburg, “Imagined Youths,” 11.

³Mona Abaza, “Perceptions of ‘Urfi Marriage in the Egyptian Press,” *ISIM Newsletter* 7 (2001): 20–21; Diane Singerman, “The Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices and Identities among Youth in the Middle East,” *The Middle East Youth Initiative*, Working Paper No. 6 (Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government, September 2007); Assad and Barsoum, “Youth Inclusion in Egypt.” In fact, Egypt’s Supreme Constitutional Court organized an international symposium on ‘urfi marriage in 2009. See “Married or Maybe Not,” *Al-Ahram Weekly Online* (December 2009), <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2009/976/feature.htm> (accessed 25 June 2011).

⁴On AFWG, see <http://www.afwg.info/> and the special issue on War and Transnational Arab Families, *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 5 (2009).

⁵My shifting usage of “youth” (*shabāb*) and “adolescent” (*al-murāhiq*) reflects this dual usage in the mainstream press and in the psychological literature, respectively.

⁶For a much needed critical overview of Middle East masculinity studies that points to new avenues of inquiry and research, see Paul Amar, “Middle East Masculinity Studies: Discourses of ‘Men

in Crisis,' Industries of Gender in Revolution," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 7 (2011): 36–70.

⁷Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (London and New York: Free Association Books, 1999), 125. Rose is referring to the rise of the welfare surveillance of working-class families.

⁸As Wilson Jacob has noted, the "formation of youth as a subject constantly challenged the capacity of narrative to represent them." Wilson Chacko Jacob, *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870–1940* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2011), 115. For ethnographic accounts of Middle Eastern youth see Roxanne Varzi, *Warring Souls: Youth, Media, and Martyrdom in Post-Revolutionary Iran* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006); and Stefania Pandolfo, "'The Burning': Finitude and the Politico-theological Imagination of Illegal Migration," *Anthropological Theory* 7 (2007): 329–63.

⁹Anne Gorsuch, *Youth in Revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington & Indianapolis, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2000); Tracy Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight: Political Socialization of Youth in Fascist Italy 1922–1943* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); Walter Lacquer, *Young Germany: A History of the German Youth Movement* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1984); Richard I. Jobs, *Riding the New Wave: Youth and the Rejuvenation of France after the Second World War* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007); Leerom Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* (Durham, N.C. and London: Duke University Press, 2005); and Leyla Neyzi, "Object or Subject? The Paradox of Youth in Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33 (2001): 411–32.

¹⁰Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation, 1930–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 20. Such rhetoric "denounced the shortcomings" of the old generation while lauding its "own greater competence."

¹¹See the entire special issue on youth of *al-Hilal* 44 (1 April 1936), including Tal'at Harb, "Mas'uliyat al-Shabab," *al-Hilal* 44 (1936): 609. See also Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyat, "Naḥdat al-Shabab," *al-Risala* 1 (15 November 1933): 3–4; Salama Musa, "Harakat al-Shabab," *al-Risala* 1 (15 November 1933): 15; A. al-Jabiri, "al-Haraka al-Fikriyya li-Shabab al-'Arab," *al-Risala* 2 (20 August 1934): 1377–379; Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafi'i, "Ya Shabab al-'Arabi," *al-Risala* 4 (22 June 1936): 1001–1002; Khalil al-Hindawi, "Risalat al-Shabab fi al-Ḥadir," *al-Risala* 5 (31 May 1937): 907–908; Dr. Zaki Mubarak, "Shuban al-Yawm al-Jadid fi Misr al-Mahrusa," *al-Risala* 10 (10 August 1942): 776–79.

¹²Further historical inquiry will need to analyze the emergence of a youth discourse in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a task I leave to future scholarship.

¹³So much so that 'Ali Isma'il contested the implicit equation of *shabāb* with students, asking that the former category be expanded to include employees, doctors, and other working young people. 'Ali Isma'il, "Ḥalamu ya Shabab," *al-Risala* 5 (14 June 1937): 994.

¹⁴Ahmed Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt, 1923–1973* (Cairo and New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2008), 24–34; Ron Shaham, *Family and the Courts in Modern Egypt* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), 3.

¹⁵Donald Reid, *Cairo University and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 127.

¹⁶Lucie Ryzova, "Egyptianizing Modernity through the 'New Effendiya,'" in *Re-Envisioning Egypt, 1919–1952*, ed. A. Goldschmidt, A. Johnson, and B. Salmoni (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2005), 147–49.

¹⁷Amir Buqţur, "Zawaba' al-Shabab al-Misri," *al-Hilal* 44 (1 April 1936): 628–34. Ahmad al-Zayyat, the owner and editor of *al-Risala*, had made a similar argument cautioning youth against fascism and Marxism, two inappropriate ideologies for nascent nations. "Ila Ayna Tajih al-Shabab," *al-Risala* 5 (3 May 1937): 746–48.

¹⁸Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid Marsot, *A Short History of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 95.

¹⁹Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt*, 39–43; Haggai Erlich, *Students and University in Twentieth Century Egyptian Politics* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1989), Ch. 3; and idem, "Youth and Arab Politics: The Political Generation of 1935–1936," in *Alienation or Integration of Arab Youth*, ed. Roel Meijer (Richmond, U.K.: Curzon Press, 2000), 47–69. Erlich has interpreted the student demonstrations as indicative of the problem of graduate unemployment, while Abdalla argues that the student movement might be most productively related to the problems of national independence and social and political

development. Wilson Jacob has critiqued these types of accounts for reducing youth to a story of national becoming. Even when “treated as a political force in their own right, the story is always told in terms of the nationalist struggle, or of the class struggle, and so on. . . . [T]he narrative and practical constructions of youth as a category were fundamentally political and from their inception imbricated in other stories” (*Working Out Egypt*, 115). Jacob’s own nuanced account emphasizes ethics and aesthetics, as well as politics, in the performative production of modern masculine Egyptian subjects. What he refers to as “effendi masculinity” (a form of bourgeois masculinity) was constituted in part through physical culture, which played a significant role in national life. Here, I concern myself with tracing how social scientific discourses posited youth as a psychological category even as commentators deemed the crisis of 1935 and 1936 primarily political. The political was thus never a pure category but always cross-hatched with other modes of becoming.

²⁰Erlich, *Students and University in Twentieth Century Egyptian Politics*, 127.

²¹Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt*, 42.

²²Ryzova notes that the 1936 treaty was viewed as a victory by seniors and as treason by the younger generation. “Egyptianizing Modernity,” 163n99.

²³Erlich, *Students and University in Twentieth Century Egyptian Politics*, 133.

²⁴See Salama Musa, “Harakat al-Shabab,” 15, and “Diyaghat al-Shabab fi Misr,” *al-Risala* 16 (6 December 1948): 1384–385; James Jankowski, *Egypt’s Young Rebels: “Young Egypt,” 1932–1952* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1975); Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 20–22; and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, “The Discovery of Adolescence in the Middle East,” in *Youth and Youth Culture in the Contemporary Middle East*, ed. Jorgen Baek Simonsen (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2005), 21–34.

²⁵Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt*, 43.

²⁶Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt*, Ch. 3; Erlich, *Students and University in Twentieth Century Egyptian Politics*, Ch. 3.

²⁷*Al-Hilal* (1892), founded by Jurji Zaydan, was one of the most widely circulated periodicals in the Middle East at the time. For the youth issue see *al-Hilal* 44 (1 April 1936).

²⁸*Al-Risala* (1933–52) was a literary journal edited by Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyat (1885–1968). Both journals were part of the vibrant print culture of the interwar period. Like *al-Hilal*, *al-Risala* was an astonishingly popular weekly journal with a wide distribution and circulation in several Arab cities and was geared toward the new middle-class reading public, or the *effendiyya*, the younger generation in particular. While some have contrasted *al-Hilal* as decidedly secular in tone with *al-Risala* as part of a broader *Islamiyyat* literature, they were markedly similar in their examination of the youth question. Both journals stressed the role of youth in the creation of a unified national culture and in furthering the goals of political and economic nationalism. On *al-Risala*, see Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 63–65, 69; for a very different view of print culture and Egyptian modernity, see Jacob, *Working Out Egypt*, 67–71.

²⁹Al-Zayyat, “Ila Ayna Tajih al-Shabab”; “al-Zahf al-Ijtima’i,” *al-Risala* 5 (10 May 1937): 788; Letter to the Editor, *al-Risala* 5 (31 May 1937): 908; “al-Siyasa Fatwat hadha al-‘Asr” *al-Risala* 5 (10 May 1937): 789; “al-Siyasa wa-l-Ruh al-‘Amm,” *al-Risala* 5 (17 May 1937): 826; Mustafa Kamil, “Wajib al-Kuttab wa-l-Mufakkirin,” *al-Risala* 5 (24 May 1937): 870; Mukhtar Yunis, “Ihtimam al-Shabab bi-l-Shu’un al-‘Amm,” *al-Risala* 5 (24 May 1937): 870.

³⁰In this vein, Jean and John Comaroff have suggested that anxieties about class may be displaced onto generation, with general concerns about social reproduction projected onto youth as the embodiment of futurity. Jean and John Comaroff, “Millennial Capitalism: First Thoughts on a Second Coming,” *Public Culture* 12 (2000): 291–343.

³¹Here I invoke Jacques Rancière’s useful distinction between “politics” and “policing.” Policing does not reference the state apparatus but rather “the set of procedures whereby the aggregation and consent of collectivities is achieved, the organization of powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimizing this distribution” (28). Politics is antagonistic to policing. “Political activity is whatever shifts a body from a place assigned to it or changes a place’s destination. It makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise. . . .” (30). Jacques Rancière, *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. Julie Rose (Minneapolis, Minn., and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

³²Ahmad Amin, “Mashakil al-Shabab wa-Kayfa Tu‘alij,” *al-Hilal* 44 (1 April 1936): 621–25.

³³Amin, “Mashakil al-Shabab.” See also idem, “Miqyas al-Shabab,” *al-Risala* 4 (May 1936): 723–24. In keeping with the emphasis on the university’s role in fostering national unity, Amin critiqued partisan politics,

noting that “it is utterly wrong that a rector, or dean, or a teacher should plunge into political partisanship so that it affects his behaviour—he would favor students from his party and maltreat those from others. . . . This would destroy the independence of the university and would spoil the manners of students and teachers alike.” Ahmad Amin, “University and Politics,” cited in Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt*, 249–50n27.

³⁴Crucially, Amin noted that such studies must be inflected by the specificity of locale and “address our children and youth” and not those of Europe. Amin, “Mashakil al-Shabab,” 624.

³⁵Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, trans. R. Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1979).

³⁶Rose, *Governing the Soul*, 130–33.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 154.

³⁸For Michel Foucault’s theorization of technologies of subjectification or “the way a human being turns himself into a subject,” see Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” *Critical Inquiry* 8 (1982): 777–95; *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1980); *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth. Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: New Press 1997). See also Patrick Hutton, “Foucault, Freud, and the Technologies of the Self,” in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, ed. L. Martin, H. Gutman, and P. Hutton (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press), 121–44.

³⁹Ian Hacking, *Historical Ontology* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), esp. Ch. 6.

⁴⁰I am currently writing a history of discourses of selfhood (psychological, religious, and criminological) in 20th-century Egypt, as part of a book-length project titled *Theorizing the Soul*.

⁴¹See Salama Musa, *al-‘Aql al-Batin, aw Maknunat al-Nafs* (Cairo: al-Hilal, 1928).

⁴²Mustafa Safwan translated Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams* into Arabic in 1958. See *Tafsir al-Ahlam*, trans. Mustafa Safwan and reviewed by Mustafa Ziywar (Cairo: Dar al-Ma‘arif, 2004). For contemporary debates on psychoanalysis and Islam, see Joseph Massad, “Psychoanalysis, Islam, and the Other of Liberalism,” *Umr(a)* (2009): 43–68.

⁴³Dr. Ibrahim Naji, “al-Shabab al-Misri wa-l-Mushkila al-Jinsiyya,” *al-Hilal* 47 (1 November 1938): 57–60.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵See, for example, Mustafa Ziywar’s book review of *‘Ilm al-Nafs al-‘Amali*, in *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 1 (1945): 75–78.

⁴⁶E. Terry Prothro and Levon H. Melikian, “Psychology in the Arab Near East,” *Psychological Bulletin* 52 (1955): 303–10; S. E. Farag, “Egypt,” in *International Handbook of Psychology*, ed. A. R. Gilgen and C. K. Gilgen (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 174–83; Fouad Abou-Hatab, “Egypt,” in *International Psychology: Views from around the World*, ed. Virginia Sexton and John Hogan (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska, 1992), Ch. 12.

⁴⁷Yusuf Murad, *Mabadi’ ‘Ilm al-Nafs al-‘Amm*, 7th ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Ma‘arif, 1978).

⁴⁸See Yusuf Murad and Mustafa Ziywar, *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 1 (1945): 10–12. I discuss both editors and the journal at length in “The Arabic Freud” (unpublished manuscript).

⁴⁹For an overview of the condition of youth in the postwar era, see Raoul Makarius, *La Jeunesse Intellectuelle d’Egypte au Lendemain de la Deuxieme Guerre Mondiale* (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1960); Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt*, Ch. 4–5; and Erlich, *Students and University in Twentieth Century Egyptian Politics*, Ch. 4.

⁵⁰Yusuf Murad, “Tamhid li-Dirasat Nafsiyyat al-Murahiqli fi Misr wa-l-Aqtar al-‘Arabiyya,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 1 (1945): 172–82.

⁵¹Murad, “Tamhid li-Dirasat Nafsiyyat al-Murahiqli,” 172–74.

⁵²Hacking, *Historical Ontology*, 99–114. On the connection between childhood and interiority see Carolyn Steedman, *Strange Dislocations: Childhood and the Idea of Human Interiority* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

⁵³Maurice Debesse, *Comment Étudier les Adolescents; Examen Critique des Confidences Juvéniles* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1937); Irena Wojnar “Maurice Debesse (1903–1998),” *Prospects: The Quarterly Review of Comparative Education* XXXIII (2003): 1–19.

⁵⁴Other types of studies focused on more objective evaluations of adolescents. See, for example, Mahir Kamal, “Evaluations of Adolescent Personality by Adolescents and Adults,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 3 (1947): 152–47; Abdu Mikhail Rizk, “Smoking among Adolescents: An Objective Study,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 3

(1947): 144–46; Zaki Saleh, “A Questionnaire Study of the Problem Adolescent Girl in Secondary Schools,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 7 (1952): 410–16.

⁵⁵A test of the questionnaire on a small group of secondary school students was administered by M.A. students in philosophy from Fu’ad I University, with the idea of distribution to all secondary schools and scholarly institutes in Egypt and the Arab world. Murad, “Tamhid li-Dirasat Nafsiyyat al-Murahiḡ,” 179–82.

⁵⁶Abd-al-Min’am al-Miliji, “Nafsiyyat al-Murahiḡ min Mudhakkiratu,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 5 (1950): 351–60.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 351–52.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 352–53, 357.

⁵⁹Abd-al-Min’am ‘Abd al-Aziz al-Miliji, “Kayfa Yan’adam al-Tawafuḡ al-Ijtima’i,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 2 (1946): 131–45.

⁶⁰Saied Ewies, “Egypt,” in *International Handbook of Contemporary Developments in Criminology*, ed. Elmer Johnson (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983), vol. II, 187–88. In fact, Sayyid ‘Uways, who would go on to become Egypt’s premier sociologist, worked on his first in-depth case study of a juvenile delinquent as part of his training at the CSSW. See Sayyid ‘Uways, *al-Ta’rikh alladhi Ahmiluhu ‘ala Zahri* (Cairo: Dar al-Hilal, 1985). For an early statement of his interest in youth, see idem, “Jama’iyyat al-Inbi’ath al-Qawmi,” *al-Risala* 5 (17 May 1937): 827–28.

⁶¹Abbas Khudr, “Diyaghat al-Shabab fi Misr,” *al-Risala* 16 (6 December 1948): 1384–385. In the context of contemporary Egypt, Paul Amar has outlined the significance of what he terms “time-bomb masculinity,” a gendered and classed discourse that problematizes and targets the sexuality of working-class male youth, as a mechanism of control used by the security state. “Turning the Gendered Politics of the Security State Inside Out?” *International Journal of Feminist Politics* 13 (2011): 299–329.

⁶²*Ibid.*; Jacob, *Working Out Egypt*, Ch. 4.

⁶³Several articles in the journal emphasized the psychosexual formation of juvenile delinquents, focusing on sexual impulses, improper resolutions of the Oedipal complex, and incest. See, for example, Mahir Kamal, “Dirasa Namudhajiyya li-Jinah al-Ahdath 1,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 4 (1948): 185–200; and “Dirasa Namudhajiyya li-Jinah al-Ahdath 2,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 4 (1949): 407–22.

⁶⁴Al-Miliji, “Nafsiyyat al-Murahiḡ min Mudhakkiratu,” 357–58.

⁶⁵Abd-al-Min’am ‘Abd al-‘Aziz al-Miliji, “al-Shu’ur al-Dini ‘ind al-Murahiḡ,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 3 (1947): 193–206.

⁶⁶Dr. Muhammad Zaki al-Shafa’i, “Murakab al-Naḡs wa-Atharu fi Hayat al-Shabab,” *al-Hilal* 44 (1 April 1936): 678–82; al-Miliji, “Nafsiyyat al-Murahiḡ min Mudhakkiratu.”

⁶⁷Naji, “al-Shabab al-Misri wa-l-Mushkila al-Jinsiyya.”

⁶⁸Reid, *Cairo University*, 105–107.

⁶⁹Abdu Mikha’il Rizk, “Fi al-Tarbiya al-Jinsiyya,” *Majallat ‘Ilm al-Nafs* 6 (1950): 91–98.

⁷⁰Makarius, *La Jeunesse Intellectuelle d’Egypte*, 49–53.

⁷¹Hanan Kholoussy, “Monitoring and Medicalising Male Sexuality in Semi-Colonial Egypt,” *Gender and History* 22 (2010): 677–91. For debates on bachelorhood see idem, *For Better, For Worse: The Marriage Crisis that Made Modern Egypt* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2010).

⁷²For a discussion of how actual social practices diverged from medicalizing and moralizing discourses on prostitution, see Hanan Hammad, “Between Egyptian ‘National Purity’ and ‘Local Flexibility’: Prostitution in al-Mahalla al-Kubra in the First Half of the 20th Century,” *Journal of Social History* 44 (2011): 751–83. On the importance of marriage in the regulation of sexuality and the dangers of prolonged bachelorhood, see the extensive three-part article in *al-Risala* by ‘Ali al-Tantawi, “al-Mathal al-‘Ala li-l-Shabab al-Muslim,” *al-Risala* 6 (7 February 1938): 218–21; “al-Mathal al-‘Ala li-l-Shabab al-Muslim,” *al-Risala* 6 (14 February 1938): 252–54; “al-Mathal al-‘Ala li-l-Shabab al-Muslim,” *al-Risala* 6 (21 February 1938): 296–98.

⁷³Wilson C. Jacob, Review of Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, H-Levant, H-Net Reviews (September 2009), <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=25004> (accessed 25 June 2011). Complex historical genealogies of gender and sexuality in the Middle Eastern context are much needed, as in Afsaneh Najmabadi’s forthcoming *Sex in Change: Configurations of Sexuality and Gender in Contemporary Iran*. See also idem, “Transing and Transpassing across Sex-Gender Walls in Iran,” *WSQ: Women’s Studies Quarterly* 36 (2008): 23–42. For a fascinating discussion of how the Western category of “homosexuality” was introduced to Chinese culture, and the concomitant “epistemological rearrangement in the social significance of same-sex desire in modern China,” see Howard Chiang, “Epistemic Modernity and the Emergence of Homosexuality in China,” *Gender & History* 22 (November 2010): 629–57.

⁷⁴Yusuf Murad, *Sikulujiyyat al-Jins* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1954).

⁷⁵Idem, *Shifa' al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1943).

⁷⁶Jacob discusses interwar writings on sexuality briefly in the context of the journal *Physical Culture* and in particular the medical writings of Dr. Sabri Jirjis; Jacob, *Working Out Egypt*, 172–79. But by the mid-1940s Jirjis's writing was predominantly on psychopathy in *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs*. Salama Musa discussed youth sexuality extensively, often in stereotypical terms of repression, segregation, and masturbation. See, for example, Salama Musa, *Ahadith ila al-Shabab* (Cairo: Salama Musa li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi'a, 1957), as well as Joseph Massad's discussion of him in *Desiring Arabs* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 128–41.

⁷⁷Murad, *Sikulujiyyat al-Jins*, 89–94.

⁷⁸Neo-psychoanalytic approaches drew key elements from Freudian psychoanalysis but diverged from orthodox positions in a variety of ways. They include such schools as object relations theory, ego psychology, and Neo-Freudianism.

⁷⁹For his critiques of Freud see Murad, *Shifa' al-Nafs*, 90–101; idem, "al-Usus al-Nafsiyya li-l-Takamul al-Ijtima'i," *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs* 2 (February 1947): 425–41.

⁸⁰Murad, "al-Usus al-Nafsiyya li-l-Takamul al-Ijtima'i."

⁸¹Murad, *Sikulujiyyat al-Jins*, 93.

⁸²"Sin 'Ayn," *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs* 4 (1948): 131.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 131–38. Henry Abelove discusses the complexity of Freud's thinking on homosexuality, his lack of moralism, and his refusal to treat it as a disease, as well as the diametrically opposed position taken up by American psychoanalysis. Abelove, "Freud, Male Homosexuality, and the Americans," in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, ed. H. Abelove, A.B. Barale, D. Halperin (London: Routledge, 1993), 381–93.

⁸⁴As Afsaneh Najmabadi has noted in the Iranian context, the "so-called youth crisis" often condensed questions surrounding the proper role of sexuality, marriage, romance, and youth in society. Najmabadi, "The Morning After: Travail of Sexuality and Love in Modern Iran," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36 (2004): 367–85.

⁸⁵Muhammad 'Awad Muhammad, "Nafsiyyat al-Shabab al-Misri," *al-Hilal* 44 (1 April 1936): 643–49.

⁸⁶Shaykh Mustafa 'Abd al-Raziq, "Khatirat al-Shak fi Sudur al-Shabab," *al-Risala* 6 (21 March 1937): 447; Mansur Fahmi, "Tumuh al-Shabab," *al-Risala* 9 (1 December 1941): 1448–450.

⁸⁷Ibrahim al-Batrawi, "Qadiyyat al-Shabab bayn al-'Ilm wa-l-Falsafa," Part I, *al-Risala* 17 (23 May 1949): 891–93; Part II, *al-Risala* 17 (30 May 1949): 919–20; Part III, *al-Risala* 17 (6 June 1949): 948–49; Part IV, *al-Risala* 17 (13 June 1949): 979–80; and Part V, *al-Risala* 17 (20 June 1949): 1004–1005.

⁸⁸Al-Batrawi, "Qadiyyat al-Shabab bayn al-'Ilm wa-l-Falsafa," Part I, 892.

⁸⁹Al-Batrawi, "Qadiyyat al-Shabab bayn al-'Ilm wa-l-Falsafa," Part II, 949.

⁹⁰Al-Batrawi, "Qadiyyat al-Shabab bayn al-'Ilm wa-l-Falsafa," Part V, 1005.

⁹¹Al-Miliji, "al-Shu'ur al-Dini 'ind al-Murahiqa," 199–202.

⁹²*Ibid.*, 193–94.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 197–98.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 198.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 201–202.

⁹⁶For a brilliant theorization of *jihad al-nafs* see Stefania Pandolfo, "'Soul choking': Maladies of the Soul, Islam, and the Ethics of Psychoanalysis," *Umbr(a)* (2009): 80–90.

⁹⁷Abu al-Wafa al-Ghunaymi al-Taftazani, "Sikulujiyyat al-Tasawwuf," Part I, *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs* 5 (1949): 291–96; "Sikulujiyyat al-Tasawwuf," Part II, *Majallat 'Ilm al-Nafs* 5 (1950): 377–84. Al-Taftazani (1930–95) was a scholar and professor of Islamic philosophy who held the post of dean and professor of philosophy at Cairo University. "Dr. Abu al-Wafa al-Taftazani," Mustafa Najib, *A'lam Misr fi al-Qarn al-'Ishrin* (Qalyub, Egypt: al-Ahram, 1996), 83.

⁹⁸Al-Taftazani, "Sikulujiyyat al-Tasawwuf," Part II, 384. Here he quotes from Yusuf Murad's *Mabada' 'Ilm al-Nafs al-'Amm*.

⁹⁹Al-Taftazani, "Sikulujiyyat al-Tasawwuf," Part I.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 293.