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Yours sincerely,  
Dr Dennis Walker

## **\_“N.Y.” (=Antun Zakary): The Construction of Neo-Pagan Egyptian Particularist-Nationalist Ideology from the Art-Objects and Relics of Antiquity in the 1920s and 1930s\_**

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[\_Summary\_. Nationalisms crave a unity between present and past: the modern members of the particular nation fulfill today some socio-economic and cultural patterns set by their forefathers of old during the Nation’s golden age. The newly-independent Egypt polity of the 1920s and 1930s needed to minimize the sectarian divide between Muslims and Coptic Christians. The accelerating excavation and display of aesthetic and other objects from the Pharaonic era by Westerners proposed the bygone Pharaonic beauty as that golden age that defined Arabic Egyptians. The discovery and excavation of Tutankhamun’s tomb in the 1920s gave Arab Egyptians vivid images from the life and the pagan beliefs of that long-lost world. Could the 1920s’ Arabic printing presses, and all the institutions able to display those old objets d’art, and new discourses by nationalists, get Arab Egyptians inside the interior ethos of an extinct people? Pharaonic religion, paganism, was the hardest aspect for Egyptian Muslims and Christians to understand. That Pharaonic religious tenets were so alien might make them serviceable in nationalist speech to marginalize or sap in public identity the Islam and Christianity that came later, long after the Pharaonic homeland-Nation formed].

## **\_Western Archeologists, the Public Display of their Finds, and Local Minorities in “Restoration” of the Nation’s Ancient Golden Age\_**

John Hutchinson, the Scots specialist in the comparative study of nationalisms, traced (2005) how, from the late eighteenth century, European intellectuals “sought sources of inspiration outside an ossified Christianity and the mechanistic philosophies of the Enlightenment”. Their quest passed beyond Greek antiquity, to earlier “founding” civilisations of Egypt, Sanskrit India and Persia, as well as the classical Arabs. In the 1780s, British Orientalist scholars in Calcutta, led by Sir William Jones and Henry Colebrooke, discovered a Hindu Aryan Sanskrit civilisation in North India, developing from the second millennium BC, which they proclaimed as the “original” civilisation of humanity. India “spurred an internationale of thinkers and scholars to rediscover and record the most distant origins of the peoples of the world and their interrelationships, stimulating the rise of archaeology, philology, folklore and comparative religion”. “The valorisation of non-European civilisations undermined the legitimation strategies of Imperial states that portrayed their subject peoples as backward barbarians, in the perception of ‘colonised’

intellectuals who claimed rights to freedom and dignity as heirs of the founding civilisations of humanity”. Hutchinson notes that French and British archaeologists who rediscovered King Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922 thereby inspired in the upper and upper middle classes in Egypt a secular Egyptian territorial nationalism in the 1920s. He makes the important point that projection of the pagan golden age of the Nation that preceded Judaism, Christianity and Islam was, in the Middle East, disproportionately pursued from well-educated Christian minorities --- Copts in Egypt and Maronites in Lebanon --- who sought a pagan golden age in which Islam and Christianity would not figure, widening their minorities' roles in populations mainly Muslim. [Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict* pp. 47-9, 62-64].

I write this article as long-overdue recognition of the Christian-born writer “N.Y.” (=Antun Zakari?) who around 1926 published a volume *Ta'rikh Tut'ankhamun, Muharriri Misr al-'Azim* (“The History of Tutankhamun, Egypt's Great Liberator”). “N.Y.” was the acronym for the Christian Antun Zakari, then secretary of the library of the Egyptian Museum. As the possibly cynical title indicates (Tutankamun was a weak child and adolescent who died before he could become an adult to liberate anybody), on one level N.Y.'s book was a potboiler to profit from the immense interest aroused among literate Egyptians by the November 1922 rediscovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun (reigned 1361-1352 BC), one of the last kings of Egypt's ancient 18th Dynasty. The neo-pagan Pharaonist identification in modern Egyptian thought was to be finally debilitated by the remoteness of ancient Egypt's many gods and goddesses from the monotheistic frames of reference of Islam and Christianity. In contrast, the mutation in ancient Pharaonic civilization that Tutankhamun now evoked in Egyptian print-media was relatively intelligible to the Islam and Christianity of modern Arabic Egyptians. The Pharaoh Akhenaton (reigned 1379-1361 BC) had imposed a proto-monotheistic cult of the sun-disk Aton. In Tutankhamun's reign (1361-1352 BC), the priesthood restored the worship of Amun. The press and middle-brow journals of Britain and France most read by educated Egyptians throughout the 1920s carried much discussion by Westerners of the monotheist possibility in Tutankhamun's family. Consequently, the continuous publicity about Tutankhamun throughout the 1920s in Egypt's Arabic press duly carried much discussion of Akhenaton's fleeting proto-monotheism, as against mainstream Pharaonic cults more unintelligible and grating to the Arabo-Islamic Egyptians. The idea broke up some Arab Egyptians' traditional sense of the Pharaohs as tyrannical pagans who did not deserve a second glance, an attitude among Copts also. But discussion of diversity in a fragmentary ancient Pharaonic religion may still not have conveyed a world-view with enough coherence and literature to stand up before Islam and Christianity. Here archeology, the beautiful visual objects and artistic masterpieces it brought up from the ground, and the quick development of the Egyptian Museum as the institution to put all of worth found in the tomb on display to the diversity of the elite and bourgeois Egyptians throughout the late 1920s and the 1930s, were all a key factor that made a new neo-Pharaonic territorial nationalism possible for a time. The gleaming visuals that shone through the display glass obscured for the time that it would be very hard to get inside the minds of an extinct people that had bequeathed inscriptions and scrolls so outweighed by the huge literature that the classical Arabs had bequeathed in the language of the Arab Egyptians visiting the Museum.

But N.Y.'s work on Egypt's Great Liberator was less about that sickly teenage king too frail to liberate even himself than a tablet onto which “N.Y.” pasted ephemera that he and others had published in the Egyptian press into a coherent account of ancient Egyptian civilization overall. It is rough by our standards today, but a great stride forward for the 1920s by a pioneer of the construction of neo-pagan particularist ideologies in the Arabic world of the 1920s and 1930s. It would not say much to the credit of our judgment

were we to shrug off “N.Y.” and his extensive book as just a rag-bag of press cuttings banged together by a scribbler with impaired ideals out to spin a quick gunaih Misri buck.

## **The Impact of the Tutankhamun Discoveries on Educated Egyptians**

Egypt's limited independence was proclaimed on 28 February 1922. On 7 November of that year, Howard Carter discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun, one of the last kings of the 18th Dynasty. Among radically modernist-secularist young Muslims in the 1920s, al-Siyasah intellectuals excitedly impressed on their readers the dazzling craftsmanship and beauty of Tutankhamun's treasures and the wealth and power of the Pharaonic state that produced them. It must be stressed that the process of the bringing forth of the treasures was prolonged, which meant international and local press coverage of them unfolded over years. British archaeologist Howard Carter discovered the steps leading down to the entrance gallery of the tomb in November 1922. But it took the following eight seasons (October to April) for Carter to salvage the treasures within the tomb and transfer them to the National Museum in Cairo. Every piece of the set of burial objects had to be emptied from the sepulcher and restored on the spot, a process that took six years. Thus, excavations and work within the tomb were completed only in 1928. The tomb thus provided a protracted vivid visual record of a long-vanished Pharaonic era. The in background Muslim ‘Abdallah ‘Inan in 1925 published in the Tory al-Siyasah, linked to Arab-Muslim Egyptian rural landlords, a translation of an article by Carter that conveyed to Egyptians how well the art in the tomb caught, for example, minor intimate episodes in the daily life of the youthful Pharaoh and his wife, or tragic sympathy for lions killed in royal hunts: “N.Y.” could not but reprint it in his volume the following year. Coming from the outset of Egypt's life as a formally independent state, the excitement in Egypt and in the world press over the tomb and its art greatly encouraged educated Egyptians to adopt a “Pharaonic” national identity: it could command respect for their new state in the states of the West.

al-Siyasah commented as Tutankhamun's mummy was slowly unwound that the precious jewels and articles successively produced from each layer “reduce men's minds to perplexity”. They showed the “advancedness” (ruqiyy) and “wealth” (ghana') of Egypt in the age of that “Great King” [“Tutankhamun: al-Juththah wal-Nafa'is allati Ma‘aha” (Tutankhamun: the Corpse and the Treasures with it), al-Siyasah 15 November 1925; amplified by N.Y., Tarikh Tutankhamun p. 194]. In the weekly al-Siyasat al-Usbu'iyah “pictures of Pharaonic objects or scenes frequently accompanied articles dealing with Pharaonic Egypt”. The Wafdist al-Balagh al-Usbu'i and the modernist al-Majallat al-Jadidah, edited by the Fabian socialist Copt Salamah Musa, published multi-page photo-essays on Pharaonic subjects [Gershoni and Jankowski, Egypt, Islam and the Arabs p. 176]. Zakari bound into his book an opening section carrying scores of poorly reproduced photographs and sharp, interesting line drawings of the art objects of Tutankhamun's tomb and of other Pharaonic inscriptions, reliefs and statues.

From the above, we see how (a) Egyptians of Muslim background, such as Muhammad Husayn Haykal and his dear friend ‘Abdallah ‘Inan, and (b) other Egyptians of Christian origin such as Antun Zakari and Sayfayn worked together to restore Egypt's Pharaonic national Golden Age, through mutually-reinforcing Arabic writings, in the 1920s and 1930s.

The restoration of the Pharaonic defining history of the Egyptian nation in the 1920s was greatly aided by acculturation to the West and its languages among educated Egyptians. Much of the data and cultural specificities of Tutankhamun and his era was

provided by the English-language and French papers and magazines that acculturated Egyptians constantly read. As Antun Zakari put it, “the newspapers of all the nations ... published copious descriptions ...; they reproduced in their illustrated press many photographs and sketches” [“N.Y”, \_Ta'rikh Tutankhamun\_ p. 28. \_The Illustrated London News\_ provided Zakari with not just photographs of objects discovered in Tutankhamun's tomb but reproductions of earlier art of the mortuary cult of Horus that Zakari integrated into a dense discussion of Pharaonic mythology. Ibid p. 90].

Not all materials and motifs from the ancient pagan past that “N.Y.” presented worked for a self-contained Egypt in the sense of an isolationist nationalism. In regard to publicity in Arabic of movement by Semites into ancient Egypt, neo-Pharaonist Antun Zakari translated the young English journalist H.V. Morton's portrait of Tutankhamun's Thebes as a cosmopolitan trading city: Phoenicians, Syrians, Babylonians and desert Arabs (as well as some Cretans) rubbed shoulders in it with the autochthonous Hamitic Egyptians [“N.Y.”, \_Tutankhamun\_ pp. 49-51]. This imagined Pharaonic golden age set a pattern for exchanges between Egypt and the West, now to be fulfilled in modernity. Antun Zakari quoted a diffusionist British astronomer that some ancient monumental structures, probably astronomical, in Brittany and the British isles were engraved with the Pharaonic Egyptians' sacred cross with the circular head (\_'ankh\_), more evidence of inspiration from Egypt [“N.Y.”, \_Tut'ankhamun\_ pp. 137-8]. [=Now the traffic could flow the other way with Western institutions and liberalism flowing for adoption into post-1922 partly independent Egypt].

The archeological recovery of Tutankhamun's tomb and its superb artifacts made vivid Egypt's 18th Pharaonic dynasty (1550-1292 BC), fertile in its ferment of religious thought, and in which Tutankhamun was but a fleeting monarch. In reality, the 18th dynasty had long been the best-attested of all Egypt's dynasties in regard to temple sites, inscriptions and tombs. Thus, many of the embodiments of divinity and other stage-properties of the ancestral Pharaonic civilization and golden age as “N.Y.” reconstructed it are of the 18th dynasty: for example, Hator, the cow-goddess of love, motherhood, joy, music --- and fertility, as we shall see.

## Problematic Communication from the Visual and from Ancient Art

The type of reproductions with which the daily Arabic newspapers and more particularly the magazines of Egypt could visually illustrate the art and objects of Tutankhamun's tomb, and of Pharaonic Egypt in general in the 1920s, may be gained from the 66 illustrations that N. Y. prefixed to his early book.

Although the line illustrations are the most effective in conveying Pharaonic Egyptian life, there also are a few relatively effective photographs of treasures from Tutankhamun's tomb such as the third plate subtitled “the Statue of King Tutankhamun, being one of the two statues standing on the two sides of the locked room in which the King's body is believed to lie.” The photograph that N. Y. reproduced in c. 1925 gives, albeit only in black and white and despite the imperfect reproduction by his Egyptian printing-press of that era, an adequate representation to the life-size statue of the King that guarded the walled-up entrance to the funerary chamber. The contrast with (a) the black resin coating over the wooden statue of (b) his gold or gold-gilded eyebrows, georgette sandals, loin-wrapper and the mace and long cane that he holds in his hands makes the visual impression from N.Y's plate much the same as that conveyed by the color plates of the statue that C. Desroches-Noblecourt [facing p. 256] and I. E. S. Edwards (1974: plate facing p. 48) printed in the 1960s and 1970s --- decades later. However, N.Y.'s plate has the fault that

some wooden attachments block any view of the waist or legs of the statue which are clear for observation in the later plates of the Western authors. Artistically less satisfactory an idea of an original is N.Y.'s ninth prefixed plate, a black-and-white photograph of the famous gold-plated throne found in the antechamber of the tomb. Readers, though might have felt tantalized at best because of the limited size of the plate, because the camera was positioned to take in all the throne as a whole, and because of the incapacity of a black-and-white plate to adequately represent in particular the contrasts of gold and silver sheets, colored glass, glazed ceramic and inlaid calcite which form the scene of Queen Ankesenamun anointing her seated husband's collarete, on the throne's back. Because subtler bright tints were much more important here than in the primary contrasts of the previous stature of Tutankhamun, the illustration of the throne comes out blurred and lacking in detail in N.Y. However, the scene on the throne's back, although visually not clear, is discussed a number of times in the text. The reproduction and N.Y.'s caption, and his discussions, taken together, do convey a general idea of the throne. It is "plated with gold, inlaid with precious stones. The legs of the throne represent lions, the two sides represent the holy serpents. On the back of the throne is a symbolic decoration representing the King and Queen sitting in the royal palace as the holy Sun shines its life-giving rays upon them. The picture is placed within a wonderfully-executed frame." Antun Zakari had given the Egyptian bourgeoisie the print-focus to deeply appreciate the splendid art-works from Tutankhamun's tomb when they entered the Egyptian Museum in crowds.

Antun Zakari's above two plates, and his print-discussion of them, show commemorative art and the visual from ancient Egypt getting across, in a bumpy and imperfect way, via publishing and the media, to literate bourgeois Egyptians both Muslim and Christian, in the 1920s. As much ancient Egyptian art and architecture would, they could concretize print-discussion of ancient Egyptian religion, so alien and hard to comprehend for speakers of Arabic. Most surviving art of ancient Egypt, though, was highly official and formalistic: it was close to political power. The art-objects that "N.Y." delivered after a fashion, though, showed a king and his queen together off-stage in their intimate home.

But ancient Egypt had some militarism that was decidedly not in a minor key. Another reproduction of a work of art from Tutankhamun's tomb catches this very vividly in N.Y.'s book: illustration twenty, being one of the two small sides of the famous painted chest of stuccoed wood where the king appeared four times in guise of a sphinx treading his enemies underfoot. N.Y.'s caption is "an official photograph of a decorated chest of marvelous beauty, splendor and precise craftsmanship [depicting] King Tutankhamun, which was found in his sepulcher. The King was symbolized by a lion with his head. His enemies have fallen between his hands and in the middle of the picture is the King's seal in hieroglyphics. This chest surpassed in beauty and accomplishment all else found in the tomb." The reproduction suggests something of the teeming, myriad vitality of the war scenes, and of the one hunting scene, on the other panels of the chest. The miniature, because of the contrast of its dark, predominantly brown subject with a light background, makes the transition quite successfully to black and white in N.Y.'s book, although the brown, blue, black and green of the original miniature work are reduced to patchy black and gray only. It is to be noted that N.Y. describes his illustration of the chest miniature as "an official photograph": it probably, then, was one of those taken by the photographer Harry Burton whom Carter engaged upon discovery of the tomb [Edwards p. 44], to the extent that Zakari's publisher could reproduce it.

In another illustration, N.Y. presents a reproduction of a photograph of "a headrest of ebony wood upon which the king used to support his head or neck when sleeping." The photo gives a good idea of the geometry and shape of the headrest but some important details are blurred: the hieroglyphs on the vertical band up the middle of the

headrest are indistinct. Illustration 13 reproduces “an official photograph of some vases and earthen jars made of translucent marble as they found them in the antechamber to Tutankhamun’s tomb. They are ornamented and made in beautiful shapes that bear witness to the fine taste of the ancient Egyptians.” As was inevitable in a picture taking in a substantial number of items, the significant details of “ornamentation” of individual vases are blurred and indistinct. Ornamental incisions forming designs central to the meaning of these vases may be lost with this sometimes too-rudimentary a technology of reproduction by the Egyptian printing presses of the 1920s and 1930s. N. Y. also reproduces a photograph of a part of a ceremonial cane of Tutankhamun [ill. 50]. He captions it “the handle of the staff of the king Tutankhamun made from ivory and ebony. It is decorated with a picture of enemies of the Egyptian land from the Southern and Northern borders. The carved handle shows the features of the sculpted faces with great preciseness.” It is a preciseness that however fails to come through in this illustration: the photo is too small [a half–page] and does not give a close enough view of the detail of the ceremonial cane “handle” to give any idea of how beautifully and with what verisimilitude the prostrate African and Asian enemies were depicted. This though the use of ebony and ivory made the carving peculiarly suitable for black and white photographic illustration, unlike the “necklace of coloured stones and beads” [ill. 49] which inevitably fails to come over even in a relatively clear black-and-white illustration.

These plates are N.Y.’s only photographic reproduction of outstanding works of art from the tomb of Tutankhamun itself. Apart from the photographs of art objects in Tutankhamun’s tomb, line-sketches made on the basis of drawings presented by Lord Carnarvon are produced, plate no. 11 an example. In N.Y.’s book the plate is captioned “Scene of the interior of the antechamber of Tutankhamun’s tomb sketched on the basis of drawings presented by Lord Carnarvon, Discoverer of the Tomb” and gives an impression of the tomb as a place: chests and jars of unguents strewn in disarrangement around the antechamber floor, and two towering lifesize statues of Tutankhamun standing guard, mace in hand from each side of the entrance to the Burial Chamber, are caught. One effect of the sketch is to convey a spaciousness about the tomb. The reproduction of the sketch in N.Y.’s book is a little blurred on the left side. There is a seeming official photograph of the two statues “guarding” the sealed room, a clothes chest, the stuccoed chest, the King’s bed etc. It all gives an impression of the arrangement of one corner of the room, that where it was first entered. There are photographs of lesser objects found in the tomb in N.Y.’s book: his eighth illustration is of Tutankhamun’s sandal of straw decorated with colored beads, for example, and the twelfth illustration is the “glove of strong fabric for a small child’s hand which is thought to be that of the king when he was a child. It is the oldest glove known in history.” There is, too, a photograph (ill. 21) of a bouquet of flowers found in the tomb and “coated with transparent gelatine to prevent disintegration.” There is a photograph, too, of a small child’s shirt “found in one of the precious chests. They believe it to have been the shirt of the king when he was a child” [ill. 25]. These photographs seem shapeless and meaningless and probably suggested nothing to N.Y.’s Egyptian readers despite the pathos of childhood clothing being buried in a tomb for someone who was cut down in callow youth. There are photographs of other objects of personal but little artistic significance: a fly-whisk [ill. 31] and a basket [ill. 33].

There are other photographs of the objects of the non-official home life of the young king: e.g. “an official photograph of the interior of the sepulcher in which are the King’s bed, his sofa and food chests and diverse pieces” [ill. 24]. There are a number of photographs of Lord Carnarvon and Howard Carter and the actual excavating of the tomb that give an idea of the archeological operation. There are some very unsatisfactory and meaningless reproductions of crude sketches of the gilded ebony statue, a long chair with an animal head and legs, and of a marble vase that totally fail to focus or suggest the beauty of

the objects found in the tomb [ill. 18]. Similarly ill-focussed are photos of a marble cup, a candle-stick, a brazier, a chest and a two-wheeled chariot “found in the first room of the sepulcher” [i.e. in the antechamber] [ill. 36] and of a necklace [ill. 37]. These deformed images would have aesthetically repelled the book’s Egyptian readers from the tomb’s treasures rather than attract them to them.

Although, technically, the reproduction of the photographs and sketches relating to Tutankhamun’s tomb in N. Y.’s book ranges by present-day standards from second-rate to bad, they did create a sense of the archeological excavation involved and of the West and the Westerners directing that process, they did evoke the tomb as a place and in conjunction with the text in the body of the book and the incessant press publicity contributed to awareness, unsatisfactory though it was in many aspects, of the individual relics in the mind of readers. Most of the illustrations should have been sharper, and yet they did suggest a teeming multiplicity of the objects of the day-to-day life of the ancient Egyptians, especially of the governing and royal classes (the Pharaonic political elite). Some of the photographs were technically good, but the pooriness of their reproduction in N.Y.’s book illustrates the difficulty that newspapers, magazines and books faced in the 1920s in reproducing photographs within a distortingly small compass using primitive printing presses. Some of the sketches of individual objects that presumably had artistic value [pp. 18, 36, 37] were cruelly distorted rather than conveying any Pharaonic Egyptian sensibility.

Apart from illustrations dealing directly with Tutankhamun’s tomb and its contents, there are other illustrations that give a visual impression of him or his period but which come from other sites. There is a pleasing relief of Tutankhamun from the wall of a temple in Luxor that was done in a more conservative, conventional style than much art inside his tomb [ill. 6]. In plate 7, N.Y. reproduced a painting in the tomb of Huy, Tutankhamun’s viceroy over Nubia, showing Tutankhamun accepting tributes and vanquished prisoners from Nubia. This tomb-painting is visually precise and sharp for N.Y.’s book and, as Christiana Desroches–Noblecourt noted after World War II, with the others in the tomb “give us a comprehensive account of provincial administration in [Pharaonic] Egypt’s southern possessions” [CD–N p. 192]. But the seventh plate in N.Y.’s book compresses almost the whole painting into a compass smaller than that of the individual sections from the tributary procession into which Desroches Noblecourt divides it [NY plate 112; CD–N p. 196. “Procession of the young Nubian princess in the tomb of Huy, viceroy of Nubia” from the top of N.Y.’s plate 118; CD–N p. 198. “Nubian tributes being presented to the viceroy” from the left hand middle of N.Y.’s reproduction]. The sharp detail that N.Y. might have conveyed of both Tutankhamun’s and the general ancient Egyptian life at points can get vitiated not because of any technical limitation in the resources of visual illustration available to Arabic periodicals or printing presses in the 1920s but because N.Y. fails to use what resources of photographic plates that were available to him sensitively or effectively. N.Y.’s 17th plate seems to be identical with Desroches–Noblecourt’s plate 115: “Huy paying homage to his sovereign, Tutankhamun” [CD–N p. 198] and although the small photographic plate in N.Y. is a bit dark, a clear idea is given of the subject and of the approach of ancient Egyptian art to it [cf. N.Y.’s plate 32].

There remains another, third, group into which most of the other illustrations must fall: illustrations relevant to the general Pharaonic period rather than to Tutankhamun’s tomb in particular. Whether photographs or line-drawing sketches, all these strongly appear to be stock illustrative material for newspapers and magazines, and one suspects that N.Y. borrowed use of these illustrations from local Arabic editorial offices. Among the sketches or drawings, illustration 5 “The workers who used to labor in the building of the Great Pyramid” looks like a [British?] magazine illustration. The picture has a romantic sense of pageantry: Pharaoh, or some high official, is being borne aloft upon a

palanquin or bier looking over the site: the bare-chested workers are not shown as being physically ill-treated. (The picture may originally have come from some Western illustrated magazine?) A similar romanticized pseudo-historical picture is “Cleopatra Visits Herod” [of Judea, whose land she wanted] which again looks like a stock modern illustration for magazines or popular books, conveying the same sense of pageantry. Somewhat different is the plate “An ancient Egyptian scribe” which comes into an intermediary position: it is a modern drawing of an ancient Egyptian statue of a cross-legged seated scribe that changes the spirit of the work into something modern. Representations of the seated scribes were to figure in governmental magazines and books published by the messianic pan-Arab regime of Gamal ‘Abdul-Nasir (1952-1970). One picture is more effective than most in the book: lithographed and dividing the page into two units that I have counted as two separate illustrations, it gives white outlines of the Egyptian “gods” Horus, Isis-Hator, Hator, Tut, Hut, Talut, Oziris, Set, another form of Hator, Sobek, Amon, Amon-Re, and the Worshipped One (the Pharaoh-god?) against black ink backgrounds [illustrations 26, 27]. The result is a visually clear impression of members of the Pharaonic pantheon of gods.

There is another similarly white-outlined image against black background of “the execution of those who rebelled against the Worshipped Pharaoh” [illustration 29] that may not have been made from the original of a Pharaonic art-piece, but which is clearer than most photographs of Pharaonic works in this book. A drawing of Pharaonic statues of Osiris and Isis is similarly superior to the direct reproductions of photos in giving an idea of the original [illustration p. 38]. Another line-drawing against a black background is that of “the court of judgment in the underworld of the Worshipped One Osiris” (“al-Mahkamat al-Jahannamiyyah lil-ma‘bud Uziris”). A line-drawing against white of a relief of Asian immigrants [illustration 47] gives a sharp idea of the costume and appearance of those foreigners. Another line-impression of an ancient work “Sargon the king of Assyrian with scepter in hand” [ill. 51] gives a good impression of the costumes of the Assyrians who figure in N.Y.’s book as enemies of the Pharaonic Egyptians. Other line-impressions from items from actual Pharaonic Egyptian works of art are Amen Re [illustration 53], “an Egyptian artist coloring a stone statue” [illustration 54], an ancient Egyptian funeral [illust 57], “wine presses among the ancient Egyptians” [ill. 62] “an Egyptian sculptor making a statue” [ill 65]. “An Egyptian sculptor shaping an arm” [ill. 66] did give a visual idea of the artistic merits of the ancient Pharaonic works which they at least outlined. Such line-drawings from ancient Pharaonic works were widely used for illustrating in the more serious kind of particularist journalism: Hasan Kamal used it for his articles in *\_al-Muqtataf\_* in the 1930s, although his reproductions were of line-drawings he took from John Gardner Wilkinson’s multi-volumed *\_Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians\_* (1837-1847) --- the pioneering but outdated work whose pre-photography line-plates were exactly what Zakari’s crude press could utilize, and vividly so.

Some miscellaneous items that N.Y. prints are his facsimile of the Rosetta stone, [ill. 61], a sketch of a papyrus bush [ill. 64], his romantic illustration of Cleopatra visiting her rival King Herod of Judea, and the sketch of a profile bust of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, king of Ptolemaic Egypt from 283 BC to 246 BC [ill. 59]. The last two, Cleopatra and Herod, do not strictly fall within the Pharaonic period.

My impression from this close examination of the 43 pages of illustrations, line and photographic (totaling 66 illustrations in all), that N.Y. prefixed to his book is that the long-standing method of illustrating through lithographed reproduction of line-drawings from Pharaonic works of art was still rendering a clearer visual impression of Pharaonic life than the reproduction of photographs. None of the photographs was printed as a plate in the true sense of the word since all the illustrations were run off upon the same ordinary paper as the rest of the book. They were prefixed to the book in a clump of 43 pages rather than



interspersed in the body of the text where their illustrative function might have been more intelligible. But the author may have not had them ready until a short while before the printing of the book was nearly completed. Nonetheless, both drawings and photographs would have been helpful to educated Egyptian readers to make what was in practical terms an alien culture at least visually more immediate a reality to them.

## Materials for Chauvinist Militarism Checked by Downcast Mood of Europeans After the Mayhem of World War I

Aspects of the interest in Tutakhanom's treasures by the Westerners who were bringing them to light again, or projecting those discoveries in print and then via display of the glorious originals in the Egyptian Museum, and the debilitation of the West following the slaughter of millions in World War I, worked to give the response of Egyptians to them a special twist that did not favor any militant nationalism looking for a fight.

The increased mixing of Hamitic Egyptians and Semitic West Asians within as well as outside the Egyptian homeland and the limited importance some Pharaohs gave to that area worked against the development of a Pharaonist neo-militarism in Egypt in the 1920s. N. Y. commented like the pan-Syrian particularist Antun Sa'adah next decade upon the mercenary, racially motley character of Pharaonic armies (in contrast to Hammurapi's more national hosts of troops). The Pharaonic Egyptian army, writes "N.Y." drawing upon the English journalist Morton, was relatively small, an expeditionary force to Syria that a Pharaoh would head numbering from 20,000 to 25,000 men "in which number there would be such a variety of races as to resemble [Britain's present] Indian armies now". [DW: = This was no national struggle]. There were Egyptians among the archers, and the charioteers were the Egyptians who ranked the highest, but the guard that surrounded Pharaoh would consist of "Sardinians" "who came from across the seas" and were "employed" in the army and Pharaoh's service. Behind the Egyptian and Sardinian troops would come fasa'il (squadrons) of Sudanese wearing wild animal skins, and brown-colored Libyans. Thus, N.Y. makes the same point before 1927 that Sa'adah made later, that is to say that the Pharaonic armed forces were a multinational rather than a national force, and that the Egyptian governing classes were unprepared to direct an energy or effort of organization sufficient to develop a large national army of indigenous Egyptians.

There was little sense in Antun Sa'adah's thought in the 1930s of the sufferings that war occasions, although he had pitied the mayhem of World War I as an adolescent. In N.Y.'s writing there is, however, and in his anti-romantic comments on the military life we can perceive something of the skeptical, urbane intelligence that informed the liberal particularist thought of the 1920s in Egypt. Despite its fustian, there are one or two places where N.Y.'s book delivers across a gulf of the millennia and that between two separate language families, a real human voice from that golden age that may not accord with nationalist grandiosity. N.Y. summarises an (unattributed) letter from a senior official to a young friend warning him that although the new recruit exults in his plumage and uniform, he will be subject to harsh discipline if, when he sees real military service, he performs his duties unsatisfactorily; that those who ride chariots into battle find it less to their taste than they had beforehand hoped it would prove; that "if the work of the cavalry is strenuous, that of the infantryman is harder and more onerous, for he is beaten with the whip should he slip or do wrong --- must, even, march to Syria in the heat of the sun with the army: day after day must pass as he tramps on through hills and mafaawiz deserts that sharply differ from the paved level ground of his own county. He must carry his heavy equipment and weapons like some ass of burden; oft needs he drink filthy water that makes him sick. In the war he is prey to danger and wounds while

officers and superiors get the fruit of his suffering; when the fighting ends he returns to his homeland riding an ass with his bones smashed and his clothes robbed” --- an object lesson to young men to enter the civil service in which the writer of the letter had shone [NY pp. 162–163]. N.Y.’s skepticism towards the vocation of arms in part reflects the isolationism of the Egyptian particularism of the 1920s, so anxious for external adventure to be shunned and all national efforts to be directed to internal socio-economic modernization. His images of the horror and futility of war fed nationalism’s definition of the group and its tasks from its first formation in pagan antiquity.

At the same time, N.A.’s recurring unenthusiasm for militarism and national conquests was also patterned from recent devastation in Europe that at the time had marked the kinds of Westerners likely to contribute to the crystallization of a neo-pagan national consciousness in Egypt. An instance was a lecture that the most influential of the experts on the Pharaonic era, the U.S. archeologist and historian J.H. Breasted, gave on “Egypt’s Position in History” to the Egyptian Historical Society. In it he interpreted Egypt’s contribution to the common civilization of the world in terms of (1) the invention of sedentary agriculture, (2) of irrigation and (3) thus necessarily of central government. In a significant parenthesis, this American observed that “I will not attempt here to define the meaning of civilization; we were told that we fought for it in the Great War but I do not know what is the thing we saved through this war” [NY p. 291]. The type of western attitude the particularist Egyptians were likely to pick up in the early 1920s thus was one of war-weary liberalism, an attitude that considered civilization to be the shared possession to which all the literate peoples of the old and new worlds contributed cumulatively. The U.S. specialist Breasted explicitly tried to impress upon his Egyptian audience that “civilization passed from Egypt to Southeast Europe and then to America”: that assured Arab Egyptians borrowing modern industrial civilization from the West that it was just a reentering by Egypt into its own inheritance. In the context of this attitude, military conquest or prowess did not rank very high [NY p. 294]. Howard Carter, the discoverer of Tutankhamun’s tomb, a Britisher and hence likely more wounded by World War I than the American Breasted, himself could evince the same somewhat disillusioned, pessimistic, war-weary liberalism. Postulating that Tutankhamun and his wife were “two children and two instruments in the hand of the powers working behind the throne” Carter reflected, in an article by him that Muhammad ‘Abdallah ‘Inan translated and published in *\_al-Siyasah\_*, that “the political intrigues that successively occur in history are the same in all ages” [NY p. 202]. [=Pharaonic society was not a golden age better than Egypt in the 1920s]. Elsewhere Carter wrote that although archeology was rapidly rediscovering the past, “the more our information increases, the more surprised --- and perhaps sad --- we become that human nature has changed only this slightly over the several thousand years whose history we to some extent know” [210]. Carter believed that the modern world and the tastes and arts of Tutankhamun’s world coincided at many points [NY 210]. He obviously empathized with Tutankhamun the “sportsman, the lover of dogs, the young husband” [NY 210] --- in short with the capacity for intimate love and family affection that the art in the tomb revealed [203], and the robustness of “the open air life” [204]. In contrast to his excitement at the glimpses of private persons afforded by the tomb’s art, the depiction of Tutankhamun as the absolute ruler, the public man, the military conqueror, bored Carter and provoked his skepticism. In contrast to the simple, small “emblems of sensitive feeling”, or one “simple manifestation of domestic life which restores to us the past in its human aspect” [NY 200 ] or like the art scenes from Tutankhamun’s tomb that “carry us over the gulf of the ages and obliterate the sense of the passage of time” [NY 203 ] he did not think much was to be learnt about the past from “the scrolls of piety or the pompous official inscriptions that boast that some obscure ‘King of Kings’ crushed and humbled his enemies” [NY 200]. Although scenes depicting Tutankhamun crushing his

foreign enemies underfoot “with great glee” shared the technical “masterly imaginativeness and extraordinary execution” of the hunting scenes, such war scenes with their “corpses piled at his feet” revealed some “sameness” and were a merely conventional way of portraying monarchs --- Tutankhamun at his age had probably not fought in any real battle [NY 208]. Carter near the end of his article concluded that “Egypt’s arts are most likely to lead us to envisage [the ancient Egyptians] as beings that are almost identical to us in human tastes, in [their] sensibility and feeling” [NY 210], although “we should not overvalue the present: our modern world is becoming less lighthearted, and darker” [NY 210].

The rather gloomy, war-weary, decline-of-the-West atmosphere, and skepticism about institutions that infected archeologists as other educated Westerners in the post-World War 1 period, and which coincided with the birth of particularist Egypt and the neo-Pharaonic craze that the discovering of Tutankhamun’s tomb so largely spurred, was itself, then, unfavorable to the depiction of the ancient Pharaonic Egyptians as a conquering race, and to focus data that highlighted military prowess or empire. Tutankhamun’s tomb was the main impetus for the interest of educated Egyptians in the Pharaonic period itself in the 1920s. Tutankhamun, he himself an ineffectual child and then sick adolescent, came at the tail-end of Akhenaten’s inward-looking, externally unassertive, religiously-preoccupied reign. Thus the materials about ancient Egyptian life and culture that Carter uncovered would not center so much around conquest, military might or an Egyptian imperial sway over adjacent regions of the Middle East. In contrast, a similar discovery from the military and externally assertive Ramsid dynasty that almost immediately succeeded Tutankhamun’s might have presented the Arabic Egyptian public with a very different image of their Pharaonic forefathers. In any case, Egyptian particularists like Muhammad ‘Abdallah ‘Inan who translated Carter’s article and published it in *\_al-Siyasah\_* (October 11, 1925), were doubtless pleased that the art and remains of the tomb presented this type of material. They were, in their aspect of particularist nationalism at least, anxious to isolate Egypt from the rest of the Arab world or adventures in it as ‘Inan’s later worried writing in 1929 on the implications of the Palestine dispute showed. The image of the ancient monarchy as politically or militarily feeble that Carter’s characterizations suggested thus suited *\_al-Siyasah\_*. As the mouthpiece of the Liberal Constitutionalist’s Party, *\_al-Siyasah\_* was unlikely to project any material, even historical given particularism’s concept of the unity of present and the remotest past, that would nourish the legitimacy of a strong or absolute monarchy. A sick teenage Pharaoh surrounded by beautiful objets d’art was the right leader-figure for Egyptian particularist nationalists in the 1920s.

Generally, the historical data which the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb projected to the Egyptian public was unlikely to promote a cult of Egyptian military strength or a taste for foreign adventures. Dr. Hasan [Kamal] in his article on “Tutankhamun: A Medical Historical Study” in *\_al-Muqattam\_* 8 December 1925 painted from the Pharaonic inscriptions of the latter part of the 18th dynasty a vivid picture of a period in Egypt’s history when “the gods abandoned Egypt and when any expeditionary force (tajridah) dispatched to Syria to raid or conquer it returned in failure and defeat”. Indeed Dr. Hasan even suspected that Tutankhamun may have died at his early age of eighteen because he was poisoned: “a revolt broke out in the land shortly after his death: the Pharaohs of Egypt in that age were able to reign over the Kingdom only for short periods due to Egypt’s internal disturbances”. The Egypt that the contents of Tutankhamun’s rediscovered tomb revealed to the Arabic-speaking Egyptians of the 1920s, then, was a country whose increasing military and political weakness contrasted with a great artistic and religious originality and ferment.

While the territory of Tutankhamun’s Kingdom was extensive, it in fact closely corresponded to that of the nation-state of particularist Egypt born after World War 1, “extending” (in Dr. Hasan Kamal’s words) “from the farthest-removed reaches of the Delta

in the north to the fourth cataract in the South”. But the then-governor of the Sudan, Huy, related that his Highness Tutankhamun received tribute from the lands of Asia, “from which it has been concluded that Palestine was subject to Egyptian influence at that time and probably some districts of Syria”. Thus, the Egypt revealed by Tutankhamun’s tomb was one that had a minimal (and only lightly-controlled) empire in Asia in comparison to other Pharaonic periods, although it controlled certain territories of the Sudan that Egypt’s particularist nationalists in the 1920s claimed but which Britain administered.

If the discovered tomb did not stimulate expansionist nationalism or a military spirit, discussion of the circumstances in which Tutankhamun’s (18th) dynasty had been founded did promote concepts of the right of colonized nations to revolt to free the watan (homeland). Thus Dr. Hasan’s *\_al-Muqattam\_* article referred to what he termed “the mummy of “King Sankara III of the 17th dynasty”, concluding of its smashed skull that “he met this deadly injury fighting the Hyksos in defense of the honor of his homeland... the personified example of the patriotism of these most ancient Kings... in defense of the honor of their Nation and their people”. This personality who hit the Semitic Hyksos is identified by Egyptologists in the 21st century as Seqenenre Tao/Seqenenara Djehuty-aa or Sekenenra Taa: some Egyptologists in the earlier twentieth century may have confused the name with that of his possible father, the preceding Pharaoh currently identified as Senakhtenre Ahmose.

Even in N.Y.’s early book, published close to the beginning of Egypt’s particularist nation-state life, there were some passages likely to feed a pride in ancient Egyptian military prowess. It translated passages from H.V. Morton’s *\_Golden Age of Tutankhamun\_* who for instance recorded that “not a year would pass in that age without one seeing Egyptian armies marching to the capital of the country with rows of enslaved prisoners and women, and a great number of horses and chariots and arms from Asia” [NY 49]. Morton gave a detailed if also imaginative description of a victory procession of a returning Egyptian army through excited crowds to the King’s palace in Thebes: “war trumpets... glittering armor, a row of carts loaded down with spoils, then hundreds of foreigners in chains and shackles (asfad), hundreds of naked women and horses and bulls and sheep... There is a huge African elephant, and a number of giraffes followed by some of the apes of Africa” [NY 51]. It is true that he depicts fewer of the general population sharing the war-spoils [NY 44–50]. But Morton’s account, here mediated in Arabic to an Egyptian audience, stressed that military conquest led to trade and thus to the more peaceful economic interaction of Egypt and her neighbors. Thus, Morton fails to bring home in this passage that the latter period of the 18th dynasty in fact represented a period of military weakness rather than strength for Egypt.

But although the main interest of N.Y.’s book undoubtedly is concentrated upon the culture, religion and social customs of ancient Egypt, and although he is quite aware that Egypt often was not externally or militarily strong, he was attracted at one or two points to the concept of the ancient Egyptians as a conquering imperial race. N.Y. notes without comment the military assertiveness of the 12th dynasty in Libya, Nubia, and perhaps Sinai [NY pp. 103–104]. Certainly, N.Y. heartily approves the breaking of the “feudal” power of the nobles [p. 103] and the replacement of their independent armies with one strong standing army maintained by the monarchy. There is an element of relish and celebration in N.Y.’s account of Egypt’s wave of post-Hyksos conquests in Asia, specifically Phoenicia and Syria “to the Euphrates river” [NY 110]. Thutmose III was “one of the greatest conquerors in the ancient world” [NY p. 110]: he “led a huge army to pacify the states of Syria that repudiated obedience to the Egyptians, in this being headed by the King of Qadesh based at Megiddo”. Thutmose III “plundered from inside and outside” Megiddo after it surrendered “many precious things and the pavilion of the King of Qadesh also and 924 chariots including the two chariots of the kings of Qadesh and Megiddo and thousands of horses and suits of armor” [NY p. 111]. In a second raid on Syria, Thutmose’s “reputation spread to all the horizons and

the King of Babylon feared his might, currying favor with him by offering presents of precious stones and Babylonian horses. Three years after that raid he invaded Syria a third time, then a fourth, marching on to conquer Erwad and other Phoenician towns and returning with much loot. And he raided a sixth time in which he conquered impregnable (mani'ah) Qadesh after a long siege. In the third year, Thutmose exacted tribute from all the lands of Syria" [NY 111]. In the 33rd year of his reign, Thutmose III crossed the Euphrates in Mesopotamia, conquering Nineveh. "In those days the Egyptian fleet controlled the Eastern Mediterranean. All those wars and campaigns abroad made Egypt the mistress of the ancient world. Its Kings become as governors living in fear of Pharaoh's armies and fleets so that they tendered obedience, gifts and tribute to him" [NY 111]. Thutmose III's son Amenhotep II "raided Syria reaching the Euphrates, returning to Thebes with spoils beyond computation and seven captive Kings" [NY 111]. In short, after the expulsion of the Hyksos "the Egyptians... expanded through conquest until their flags (a'lam) flapped over the land of Syria and Lebanon and they penetrated as far as the Euphrates to the East and Palestine to the North and Nubia to the South, which were the most famous lands of the world at that time". "Because of this, Egypt's standing rose so high that it rivaled the stars in glory" [NY 112].

The use of such frankly celebratory language to describe ancient Egyptian conquests in Syria and Lebanon must have aroused a touch of anti-Egyptian feeling among particularist-minded Lebanese who chanced to read such Egyptian writings of the 1920s. But this researcher found no instances within the time-frame of this research project. Perhaps because post-1922 Egypt was slow to register a claim to pan-Arab leadership, Lebanese writers quite the contrary celebrated the close links between ancient Phoenicia and Pharaonic Egypt, ignored any element of military coercion in the relationship, and visualized ancient links as a foundation for present-day friendship.

Ancient Egypt's military prowess was not much stressed by Egyptian particularists in the 1920s at least, because of the liberal and isolationist temper predominating in intellectual life in the first decade of Egypt's birth as a particularist nation-state. But this variant of data was to come into its own in the 1930s and 1940s with such new militaristic, anti-Western movements as Ahmad Husayn's Young Egypt (Misr al-Fatat).

## The Engagement with Ancient Egyptian Religion

The images of ancient Egyptian religion conveyed in N.Y.'s disordered book are not all harmony and continuity. The Nation's golden age has turmoil and faults and divisions and can malfunction. The mood of modern-educated Copts and Muslims alike was often anti-clerical in the 1920s and early 1930s. The reign of Akhenaton had seen stumbling movement away from idols and from plurality in the Divine towards one God (the Aton sun-disk). It was this variation that made Pharaonic religion more tolerable to Zakari. It occurred in a protracted struggle between Palace and the priesthood, between the two successive capitals of Amarna, and of the Thebes where the priests were strong. Those who evoked the Nation's Pharaonic golden age in Arabic to minimize Christianity and Islam nourished a secular atmosphere in Egypt in the 1920s: Pharaonism could slash down the standing and roles of Islamic and Coptic clerics in national public life, although most of the writers had not crafted neo-Pharaonism as a reductionist instrument solely for that. Marginalization of the revealed religions from statal and public life would be more a spinoff and a side-benefit.

The conflict between a proto-monotheist monarchy and the established priesthood in Pharaonic antiquity may have been felt by some neo-Pharaonists of the 1920s and 1930s as an archetype of the struggles between secularism-tinged laities against the power of the Coptic Christian and Islamic clergies prominent in most areas of life in newly-independent Egypt.

Zakari mentioned that one of Akhenaton's daughters married Tutankhamun, and that he "moved the capital of the Kingdom back [from Amarna] to Thebes and restored the worship of the god Amon so that the power of the priests of the city of Thebes was restored" [NY p. 119]. This comes in what NY clearly regards as a significant section in the general history of the various Pharaonic dynasties. Antun Zakari was responding after the rediscovery of the tomb to meet the interest it created not only in Tutankhamun but in broader ideology in his transitional age, so bitterly divided precisely over the issue of Akhenaton's heresy. N.Y. could also have been impelled by earlier vernacular press interest aroused by the "pre-war" excavations of Akhenaton by the German, English and American archeologists to whom Dr. Hasan Kamal referred in the second paragraph of his 1925 article "Tutankhamun: A Medical-Historical Study". The medical examination of Tutankhamun's mummy only underscored that Tut assumed the throne at 12 at the most and died aged around 18. Thus, he was never a ruler but a powerless minor who ratified the will of his military commander Horemheb, and of the Theban priesthood who pressured him to restore Amun [Dr Hasan [Kamal] "Tutankhamun: Bahthun Ta'rikhiyyun Tibbi". For Dr Kamal, then, Tutankhamun's tomb highlighted not Tut but the ideological tensions between Akhnaton's monotheism and resurgent traditionalist Pharaonic polytheism. Antun Zakari published in the well-circulated daily \_al-Ahram\_ careful Arabic translations of Akhenaton's hymns to his nationalities-spanning unitary God: reprinted \_Ta'rikh Tutankhamun\_ pp. 115-8.

Zakari's \_al-Ahram\_ views on Akhenaton's heresy, which "N.Y." understandably reproduced, have two areas of relevance for our study of the development of neo-pagan thought among the intelligentsia in the 1920s and 1930s. The first area is the anti-clericalism of the socio-historical context that Zakari interpretively proposes for the heresy. Zakari argues that abundant spoils flowed into Egypt when the kings of the 18th dynasty carved out wide conquests in Asia as a protective barrier in the wake of their expulsion of the Semitic Hyksos. As a consequence of this and of the priesthood's right to impose sweeping tributes and taxes on the alluvial soils of Upper and Lower Egypt, "the High Priest [of Amon], (he being the first minister of the King) monopolized wealth and influence in Egypt and became richer than the royal family itself". Under his authority there was a huge army of priests and scribes and administrators and troops and peasants and slaves: "hence he enjoyed absolute authority in all religious and civil affairs". Zakari cites such titles that the High Priest of Amon acquired as "God's beloved" or "Bearer of the seals of the Kingdom" or "Governor of the city of Thebes" or "Head of the Royal Court" or "Chief of the secretaries to the King". It all was proof that the monarchy was in danger to being reduced to a figurehead for the Amon priesthood [NY 113]. To break the theocratic power of the priesthood of Amon, centered at Thebes, 18th dynasty monarchs even before Akhenaton, such as Hatshepsut and Thutmose IV, had already encouraged the worship of alternative gods as a means to reduce the scope of the cult of Amon and thus the legitimacy of its priesthood [NY 113]. For Akhenaton's own father, Amenhotep III, Zakari cites archeological evidence of promotion of the Aton, the solar disc: "in his eleventh regnal year [Amenhotep IV] ordered the digging of a [vast] pleasure-lake for his wife the queen Tiy [of Thebes] and the Queen would pass over this lake on a ship called Aton" (i.e. the solar disc). Zakari/"N.Y." cites other promotion of the Solar Disk by Amenhotep III. "N.Y." clearly depicted such royal promotion of alternative cults as a conflictual counter to the Theban priesthood's self-legitimizing cult of Amon: political power was the central stake, but tenets in themselves became a self-sustaining "cause of the antagonism between the two parties" [NY 114].

This perception of a theocratic threat from priesthods here steers particularist perception of the ancient history of the territorial Nation overall. N.Y. observes that the priests of On and also those of Ra at Heliopolis used "to hold the administration of the

country in an arbitrary grip” [yastabidduna bi-amri idaat il-bilad]. in the early part of the fourth dynasty; they continued to do so for about 120 years until they were able to bring down the fourth dynasty. Since the credit in founding the new dynasty went to the priesthood, “its Kings were weaker than those before them, which enabled the governors of the provinces to make their posts hereditary although they remained loyal to their King” [NY 99]. Zakari in an *\_al-Ahram\_* article saw religious divisions and the ambitions of the priesthood as having been largely responsible for Egypt’s loss of her national independence: when Tukankhamon agreed under the pressure of the priesthood to move the capital back to Thebes he restored their power and “their authority which Akhenaton had weakened became [so] strong... that they gradually overpowered the Pharaohs themselves a mere three centuries after the death of Tutankhamun, forcing the Kings of the 21st dynasty to allow them to share in the government. They monopolized Upper Egypt while the Kings of the twenty first dynasty had the Lower Egypt with its Nile Delta (*al-wajh al-bahri*) for themselves. This continued into the 23rd dynasty. This division was one reason why foreigners gained control of Egypt, so that Ethiopians, Assyrians, Romans and Arabs and others came to rule over it [NY 119]. The threat that a theoretic class could pose to a viable national government of a particularist nation in ancient history was also examined by the secularist pan-Syrian thinker Antun Sa’adah a decade later in his comments on ancient Egyptian history specifically. Documentation, though, would be needed to determine if Zakari had some ideology of historical recurrence in which the drive of ancient pagan priesthoods to build political power could have recur in a similar thrust by Sunni Muslim clerical classes to pervade or take over the relatively secular nation state Arab Egyptians were evolving after 1922.

Thus, Zakari does perceive, and traces, a persistent relation of conflict between (a) the 18th dynasty’s Pharaohs beginning from Thutmose III [NY 114] and (b) the Thebes priesthood of Amon which culminated in (c) “the great religious revolution that broke out in the Egyptian lands in the age of Akhenaton” [NY 115]. Still, Zakari clearly regards the thoroughgoing religious revolution that Akhenaton tried to effect in Egyptian belief as qualitatively different from the religious policy of Amenhotep III who, in promoting diversity in religious worship, was merely limiting the claim to theoretic power of the Theban priesthood, not denying their gods: “Amenhotep III used to submit to the god Amon but refused to submit to the power of Amon’s priests and their despotism” [NY 115].

The second, but chief, relevance of Zakari’s *\_al-Ahram\_* article and of N.Y.’s miscellany that reprinted it, to media stimulation of the development of neo-pagan thought among the intelligentsia in the 1920s and 1930s, is his account of Akhenaton’s new religion as such. Although Zakari was well aware that references to the sun-disc Aton had become more frequent under Amenhotep III, he does not analyse Akhenaton’s new creed as simply an expression of the contest for power of the Thebes priesthood and the monarchy but as a highly original religious “revolution”, a true religious phenomenon fundamentally different from anything that preceded or followed in Pharaonic history. Akhenaton’s faith was a true monotheism, “N.Y.” argued. “They did not consider that [the Aton disk] had any partner in godhead, in contrast to the cult of the god Ra and others for [that latter god’s] followers used to worship many gods alongside him and call him the chief of the gods, since every province had a particular god which it worshipped in distinction from others” [NY 118]. In contrast to all his predecessors, Akhenaton did not simply work against the Theban priesthood, he denied its gods: “he did not erect any statues to the god Amon as was the practice of his predecessors, but instead erected them to his new god Aton. This great religious revolution originated in the city of Thebes, capital of the Kingdom... He cancelled the worship of Amon, confiscated the pious properties of its cult, dismissed its priests, banned mention of Amon in all parts of the Kingdom, obliterated all the gods and deleted the plural form of the word

‘gods’ where it had been inscribed on obelisks, temples and houses of worship... out of hatred for this god [Amun] and to cut away mention of him” [NY 115].

Zakari traced the religio-political significance of Akhenaton’s move from Thebes to the new capital he constructed, Akhetaton/Amarna as an attempt to launch a new departure in Egyptian life from there far from the resistant priests of Amon. But, getting the ethos itself across from a remnant of its long-lost discourse, Zakari printed his Arabic translation (done from Adolph Erman’s German and Maspero’s French translations of the original Egyptian inscriptions at al-‘Amarnah/Akhetaton --- p. 116) of six hymns to the sun-disk which may have seemed beautiful to many of \_al-Ahram\_’s (and N.Y.’s) readers. Hymns 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are mainly visual descriptions of the glory of the sun disc and the subjection of living things to it, and reveal the ancient Egyptian writers’ sensitivity to nature and natural atmosphere --- a territorial homeland for those readers who might have wanted to give it such a twist. But the sixth Arabicized hymn, the longest of the lot and in fact more than twice the length of the next longest, hymn 2, at the same time thrusts to the Universal. It has an interesting broad supra-homeland canvas of a range of races and nations: “you [Aton] are the one who gave life to all creatures, setting their tongues free to converse despite the difference of languages. You grant them what they need of food and means of subsistence (\_ma’ash\_) and covering and bedding... You created the foreign lands and Syria and Ethiopia and the Valley of the Nile and created each of them in its place and directed to them their needs. You awarded to each man his distinct qualities and set the limit to the days of his life. You it is who created the peoples different in races and languages and colors and qualities” [NY 117]. This would look to fit in at points with the ideology of Egypt’s 20th century particularist nationalism, yet Zakari, and no doubt correctly, interprets Akhenaton’s teaching in a sense that could be read as dysfunctional for particularism: “there is no doubt that these principles brought peoples closer to each other despite the differences of their races and their languages because they united them religiously, making them all brothers worshipping one god in one faith” [NY 118]. Akhenaton’s new creed came 200 years after the foundation of the eighteenth dynasty ended Hyksos rule and after a century of extensive imperial conquests in (and more peaceful economic and cultural interaction with) Palestine, Phoenicia and Nubia. The thrust in Akhenaton’s hymns to Aton towards some universalizing rather than narrowly Egyptian vision undoubtedly spoke to the increased contact that the Egyptians had had with foreign races, religions, cultures and art, apart from the territories that had been incorporated under Egypt’s suzerainty by the dynasty’s victorious arms. The god of Akhenaton clearly is the universal god of all nations and geographical regions: “you are he who created the Nile for the life of its sons and revived them with the freshness of its water. You are the one who brings sustenance to far-off lands and brings the rains down upon the red-hot mountains so that the waters run down to the fields and the lands for their fertilization and their irrigation” [NY 118].

It seems not fanciful to visualize Akhenaton’s cult of the sun-disc as having provided for westernized post-traditional Egyptians in the 1920s and 1930s a sort of surrogate Christianity or Islam that made no demands of rituals or from a transcendent moral code on them and suggested no terrors, which both Christianity and Islam did with the hell-fire (\_al-nar\_). Akhenaton and his ghost-writers had simply hymned the total life-giving beneficence of the sun-god and merely asked humans to be grateful for the life and warmth “He” supposedly provided. However, residual impulses or splintered motifs from Abrahamic religions as an Arabic-speaker moves into secular neo-pagan nationalism can maintain a guy-wire back, as happened when Muslim publicists who were neo-Pharaonist-particularist nationalists in the 1920s became modernist pan-Arabs and pan-Islamists in the 1930s and 1940s (Muhammad Husayn Haykal).



As a surrogate last phantom of Christianity or Islam, the religion of the sun-disk as particularist nationalist writers in Arabic restored it was dysfunctional for their ideology on the level of the national question by its projection of an ancient Egypt that had gone far towards cultural fusion with other Mediterranean peoples and particularly with the Asiatics of Palestine and Syria. Indeed we have seen that Morton (and N.Y. as he tapped him) were aware of the intermingling of Asiatic and Egyptian populations under the 18th dynasty and that N.Y. hinted at an Asian/Syria origin (Ba'labakk --- in post-1920 Lebanon) for Akhenaton's sun-cult. (Ba'labakk: not so far from where Jesus walked and taught and Muhammad in youth plied his trade with Christian Syriac-speakers) One \_al-Muqattam\_ correspondent as he mused on Tutankhamun's tomb was perceptibly swinging between an Egyptian and a wider "Eastern" identification, reflecting that the wastes on both sides of the Nile Valley had "failed to confine Egyptian civilization and its sensibility from expanding out of the Valley eastwards and southwards to the neighboring areas": it had left cognate monuments "in the rocks of Abu Simbal, and the temples of Mirawwi and the rocks of the Dog River (=Nahr al-Kalb: in post-1920 Lebanon) and the burial grounds of Jubayl and so on to the Euphrates river" [\_al-Muqattam\_ 7 March 1926]. Although a homeland-nationalist, Zakari to some extent took this universalism of the Aton cult on board: he did briefly visualize it integrating different races and peoples into one community. The insistence of particularist writers that Akhenaton's creed had been a true monotheism exaggerated the similarity with Islam and Christianity, whose claim to constitute universal community particularists in Egypt had to sideline if not refute to even launch the venture of the modern geographical non-sectarian nationhood. Intellectually it was dysfunctional to the development of a secularized world-view and political community (although it may be argued that it was a functional bridge from the traditional religious consciousness of Muslim and Christian Egyptians to a Pharaonist world view in the 1920s).

N.Y. made an embarrassing attempt to make Atonism fit the thought-frames of modern Western sciencism when he wrote that the belief that "the radiating power of the sun is the source of all life is perhaps the only materialist doctrine which was accepted as a religious belief in any age of history or any of the world's lands" [NY 30]. Here, NY sought for the cult of the Aton only a human source and authority: it was a product of the human mind. "Akhenaton spared no effort in seeking religious truth... His constant motto was 'Journey for truth'. The extraordinary transformation he effected though the diffusion of his ideas... confers upon him a stature worthy of the greatest thinker born in Egypt. Had he lived on a lower level of civilization than the Egyptian, he would have been praised as a prophet whom people would honor over the centuries (generations: \_ajyal\_)" [NY 30]. It was an audacious relativization of the Hebrew prophets and Muhammad.

By publishing in \_al-Ahram\_ a translation of the six hymns to the sun, Zakari had given Egyptian readers an adequate idea of the religion from primary sources (its "scriptures" --- in reality for the most part just fragmentary inscriptions): he evaluated the hymns as "remarkable"/"wondrous" ('\_ajibah\_) [p. 115] and laments that because Akhenaton lacked a son his "exalted new teachings" died with him [NY 119]. Zakari also put his finger on an important aspect of the happy nature-worship of the Aton cult: there was no element of fear in it. Their belief was not that Aton is the sun itself but that he is the Essence which has no form and is the origin of everything, the one who brought love down upon the earth so that they called him love itself [NY 118]. His life-giving beneficence encompassed all lands and all people ("humans who worship" --- '\_ibad\_) in contrast to Amon, for instance, who was characterized by "force" (\_qahr\_) and power/might ("\_jabarut\_") and the taking of vengeance [NY 119]. It is to be noted that "Qahhar" ("the Being who overpowers") and "Jabbar" ("Almighty/Omnipotent"), names of God in Islam, are of the same two trilateral Arabic stems as \_qahr\_ and \_jabarut\_.

Some might ironize that for this variant of neo-Pharaonic particularists such neo-paganism was an Egyptian Islam or Christianity minus sin and hell, and that it expressed their continued reflex or nostalgia for religious values. Nonetheless, Zakari's perspective wsd ill-dosposed to religion in politics is unfavorable: because of conflict between the throne and the priesthood, and internal religious division, "the unity of the Egyptian people was dissipated... so that their colonies shrank and their independence was lost --- and no wonder, for a house divided against itself must become ruined" [NY 112 ].

### To Religious Relativism or Skepticism

The probably Christian "N.Y." provides further evidence of the religious skepticism that neo-Paganism engendered (or ratified) in the intelligentsia that embraced it in the 1920s. His Christian origin valuably controls our tracing of the phenomena in the in origin Muslim Muhammad Husayn Haykal, the editor of *\_al-Siyasah\_* in the 1920s. Like Haykal, N.Y. sees Hebrew beliefs as derivative from ancient Pharaonic religion. The two broad causes for this new skepticism were (a) the apparent nature of some materials that the West's archaeology, in which neo-pagan particularists naturally took a close interest, presented and (b) the innate temptation of any partly West-patterned nationalism anywhere to claim the self-sufficiency of the national civilization it asserted. The continuity of the Nation down history is asserted by claiming that religions which the particularist nation later adopted had been originated in --- and by --- the Homeland. As with Muhammad Husayn Haykal, N.Y. is most ready to suggest the derivative nature of Hebrew beliefs. He notes George Smith's expedition to Mesopotamia, financed by *\_The Daily Telegraph\_*, to the ruins of Ninevah to uncover in 1872 an [Assyrian? Chaldean?] version of the Flood story: "Mr George Smith predicted that the future will uncover a more ancient translation than that, which would prove a source for the inspiration preserved in the book of Genesis in the Old Testament (*\_al-Tawrat\_*)". The discovery of a Sumerian version written twenty ceanturies before that in Ashurpanibal's library had proven the truth of this prediction [NY p. 81]. But N.Y., ever the neo-Pharaonist nationalist, then moves to argue that the Nile Valley was the original source of the story. N.Y.'s readers in 1926 may have thought that his argumentation of this thesis sounds somewhat strained. "Even though the story given in the tomb of Seti I does not in narrating the story of the destruction [of mankind] mention the flood, it is clear that the Egyptian and Assyrian narratives have one origin" [p. 81]. On p. 83 N.Y. continues his argument that is growing more tortuous: an Egyptian myth of an ageing king who slew his subjects when they conspired to kill him "got mixed up... with the story of the Nile flood and the reddening of the flood of the Nile Waters with the blood of the dead: when that spread to foreign lands, it all got confused and mixed up with [other] tales until it was said that the flood caused people's death" [NY p. 83].

The point is that N.Y. implicitly regards the Hebrew religion as having transmitted at third hand a garbled, degenerate version of what had originally been a Pharaonic myth. Being of Christian origin, however, N.Y. does not simply (as Haykal did) question the truth of Judaism by ascribing what it claimed were God-inspired narratives of historical realities to the ancient Pharaonic religion, and thereby through Judaism also casting a shadow of doubt upon Christianity and Islam where they both endorsed the factuality of those events whether more or less. N.Y. also questions Christianity at its heart and core. He ironically hints, as we have seen, that the "story" of Osiris rising from the dead to judge human beings after death is the origin and inspiration for the "life" (sic!) of the Messiah [NY p. 184]. N.Y. also prints material about a set of four scenes in the temple of Luxor in which the Queen Mutemwia, mother of Amenhotep III (18th dynasty: born c. 1388 BC) is represented as "the Virgin Mother who has become pregnant without any man, and

she the mother of the Eternal One”. Without directly claiming anything, N.Y. interprets these four scenes of the Luxor temple in such a way as to suggest that Pharaonic beliefs inspired Christian concepts of the nature and birth of the Christ: “the first scene... shows the god Thot, that is Mars or the Divine Word, as he gives the Virgin Queen the glad tidings that she shall beget a son. In the second scene the god Kenef is shown with Hator breathing life into her: this is the Holy Ghost... The fourth scene shows the scene of the Adoration. Here the child sits on the throne and receives honor from the gods and gifts from people. Behind the god Kenef to the right are seen three men offering gifts with their right hands and life with their left” [NY p. 141]. Although the consequence down the line might be the designation of Islam as derivative from Pharaonic tradition in some narratives where it parallels Hebrew and Christian narratives to some extent, what N.Y. is more directly and consciously claiming here is the derivative nature of Christianity. The implied parallel with the three Magi is in the line of a Christian tradition since no notice of them is to be found in the Qur’an; N.Y.’s account of the first scene where Thot the Divine Word gives the glad tidings to the Virgin Queen obviously is phrased to echo Arabic Luke 1:26-34.

Despite his obvious belief that Judaism is a garbled version of neighboring Middle Eastern pagan (notably Egyptian) mythologies, which would seem to be a standard feature of much neo-pagan particularist thought in both Egypt and Lebanon, “N.Y.” does not --- any more than Haykal when he claimed that other-worldly mysticism and consecration to the Hereafter were of the very essence of Egyptians national character --- regard the religious outlook as harmful or anti-rational. But the 1920s, with its atmosphere of a new start in Egypt, at times could open up into a quest for religious truth located in Pharaonic Egypt that would be independent. Whatever doubts he harbored about both the OT and NT, N.Y. claims that he is a man of religious faith, and believes that ancient Egypt has a religious revelation to offer for all mankind. Endorsing the efforts of modern Western spiritualists to make contact with the unseen, N.Y. mused that “it would be no exaggeration if we stated that the ancient Egyptians who were outstanding in Philosophy, the spiritual sciences, magic and chemistry and things Divine knew about the spirits that which we do not know now, and that the spiritual scholars of today are nothing but children [compared with] the remarkable spiritual school [patterned by Pharaonic Egypt] that will rock the world one day”.

The neo-Pharaonist writings of Egyptians, both Muslim and Christian, in the 1920s came at the culmination of the thinning of data about literate Islam and literate Christianity among a generation that had been educated in French and (more and more) English under a British colonial rule that harbored no love for classical Arabic. Many of them had lacked much full-time formal Christian or Islamic education. Islamic-educated writers like the ex-Azharite Taha Husayn were not too eager to attack the classical Arabs in the name of an immemorial and continuous Egyptian nationhood in the 1920s. Such radical neo-Pharaonists as Muhammad Husayn Haykal and “N.Y.” knew little about the literate forms of Islam and Christianity so that their critiques often veered widely off the mark.

“N.Y.” used razor-sharp innuendo towards the Christianity of his parents. He played ironically with the word “inspiration” to imply that the inspiration for the central events and beliefs asserted by the writers of Christianity came not from God but from constantly mutating stories that had done the rounds of the Middle East, and which had been originally set off by the narratives of the Pharaonic Egypt much further back in antiquity. The question then arises if the assertions and figures of Pharaonic religion are to be regarded as myths as (in the particularist imagination) were the lines of stories they set off in the Middle East, or if they might be truth that mutated

and died in being transferred to other figures. Many Egyptian intellectuals, both Christian and Muslim, considered spiritualism in the 1920s and 1930s, and that seems to run against the rationalism of the modernist West --- at the end of its tether after World War I. "N.Y." implied that, although they were still at a childish stage in the quest, modern Westerners were groping to contact spirits that actually existed. He equated the magic and spiritual sciences of the ancient Egyptians with their chemistry and philosophy as all valid. Pharaonic Egyptian concepts would enable Westerners to make their breakthroughs to the spirits and their realm. It then becomes a matter if N.Y. could then convert to a higher stage in which he would come to see the ancient Egyptian gods as not emanations of the classical Nation's genius, but real beings to be worshipped, to be sure in the context of a proud nationalist polity, as giants towering over the assemblage of the spirits.

The slaughter of World War I, with the break-up of both Christianity and Voltairian rationalism, brought trauma and thought-chaos amid which Westerners now turned much more to "spirits" (\_arwah\_), and towards toying with ancient paganisms. Those who lived on wanted to contact the beloved ones whom the trenches and artillery had taken. The Irish-Scottish creator of the rationalist detective Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, physicist Sir Oliver Lodge, and Alfred Russel Wallace the co-founder of the theory of Natural Selection --- all tried to converse through mediums with the spirits of departed ones not truly "dead". (You couldn't get more scientific or rational than that with giants of that stature involved). During his 1920 speaking-tour of Australia, Doyle convinced \_The Age\_ newspaper of Melbourne: "Unquestionably the so-called 'dead' live", that quality journal could not but endorse. So I'll have no man go around saying that "N.Y." was one of the unhinged eccentrics because he dabbled in seances (let alone Muhammad Husayn Haykal who also came to seek the immortal Spirits in company with \_al-Hilal\_ editor Emile Zaydan, by birth a Christian Syro-Egyptian although his father Jurji was a freemason). The world of the spirits a delusion in that lambent concourse of the best minds of Europe and the West?! Why, the very National Poet of Ireland, W.B. Yeats, strove time and time again to tune in to those on the Other Side in the 1920s and 1930s [See Chris Wormersley, "Negotiating with the dead", \_The Age: Features\_ (Melbourne) October 30, 2010 pp. A2-A3]. As the havoc of the Great War raged on the Continent, two girls in Cottingley, West Yorkshire, produced photographs of themselves with cut-out fairies suspended before them. Edward Gardner, a prominent figure in the Theosophical Society, publicized this proof of the spirit world, and in 1922 eminent Irish-Scottish author Arthur Conan Doyle published his full-dress book \_The Coming of the Fairies\_ to push those plates. Spirits and fairies were solace for Conan Doyle, whose son had been killed in the Great War, although his hard-nosed detective Sherlock Holmes surely would have queried. [In 1982 the scientific photographer Geoffrey Crawley proved the

trickery, and the two elderly women confessed their deception. Obituary to Crawley in The Age 15 November 2010 p. 19].

In the 1920s, then, rationalist, scientific Europe itself glimpsed wider possibilities of life beyond this material world and the paranormal life to which Christianity and Islam bore witness. When they attended the séances did Christian-born and Muslim-born Egyptians in the 1920s and 1930s cast longer ropes far out and try to summons up, say, the Sun-God, the divine cow Hator, Osiris and Isis? N.Y. had said that that a massive infusion of ancient Pharaonic religion had to enter and transform spiritual investigations in the world generally to produce a new spiritual school for all humanity. Could that second, more real, Sun blaze out from Egypt to submerge the whole world in the effulgence of a new holiness?

### The Ancient Egyptian Language: The Nuts and Bolts of Actualization

Various Westerners, scholarly and political, stride though Zakari's account of Pharaonic language and antiquity: as the recoverers and decipherers they are a party in their own right acting throughout this grammar, although with more detail in his chaotic book around Tutankhamun. It was not just a matter of scholars. Pharaonic antiquity and its recovery got woven into the international present, relations and macro-conflict between the two mighty European powers Britain and France. Pharaonic art objects and texts became among the stakes in global conflict and warfare, in military victories and defeats, in treaties between armies. From France's invasion of Egypt in 1798, the pillaging of her antiquity by Europeans became purposeful enough to place those objects and texts as a stake in military attacks and documents and in treaties of surrender, albeit well down in the lists.

Did neo-Pharaonism in the 1920s have the caliber to make ancient Egypt's culture live again among educated Egyptians? In that decade of radical change, Antwan Zakari published a flat, bald, practical, stripped-down primer of ancient hieroglyphic Egyptian, the Miftah al-lughah al-Misriyah al-qadimah. He liked that knowledge for its own sake, but stated that he had penned the book "out of my duty as a patriot to benefit my nation" (ummati) --- that he was trying to actualize in serious culture, in a literate nationalism, that interest in Pharaonic Egypt aroused in the 1920s. "The number of those seeking to learn this language has become many in these days", but there were no books available to teach it except in foreign languages --- "prohibitively expensive" [=for the straitened petty-bourgeoisie that Zakari sensed would be his main market] [Zakari, Miftah 5]. It is significant, though, that Zakari believed that many in that constituency could have followed the languages of those Western books that taught ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs: [haply his best, most passionate students would go on to study those foreign works later?]. He hoped that his fifty page list of the most important ancient Egyptian ideographs when memorized would enable Arabic Egyptians to understand some of the ancient inscriptions that they were encountering. Zakari was setting his pedagogical sights high, but Pharaonic monuments had always stood out, and now internal tourists to them were multiplying in the new era of the particularist nationalism that the newly-independent state promoted to legitimize itself, above all in Europe.

In languages and conceptually, neo-Pharaonist nationalism widely acculturated Egyptians to the West in the 1920s and 1930s. Modern Egyptians still had no path to get to

the minds of the ancient Egyptians in depth save via Western languages and their scholarship. Was the neo-Pharaonic national identification now grounding them in ancient hieroglyphic Egyptian or much more in French, English and even German? Even Antwan Zakari's own list of hieroglyphic words translated them into French as well as into Arabic [\_Miftah\_ 66-108], and his primer was clearly a rework of some French text or texts. Zakari made no bones that it was the scholars of the West who made it possible for modern Egyptians to understand at last what their great forefathers wrote. He accordingly urged on a project to install in the Egyptian Museum, where he worked, a statue of Champillon, the Frenchman who deciphered ancient Egyptian, under the patronage of King Fu'ad I. The statue had at first been intended to be set up in the open air near the French consulate in Alexandria, in line with celebrations in France of the 100th anniversary of Champillon's presenting of his report deciphering hieroglyphic Egyptian to the Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1822. The statue of Champillon originally planned for Alexandria was to have two side-statues of the Pharaonic gods for knowledge and that of writing. These endeavors brought together European scholars resident in Egypt with Muslims, including from the traditional Turco-Circassians royal aristocracy (eg. the scholar 'Umar Tusun who raised some money), with Copts like Zakari. But Turco-Circassian King Fu'ad then ordered an allocation to the Ministry of Public Works to make the statue and then install it in Cairo's Egyptian Museum. Zakari's book tried to hold "our reviver of the sciences and lover of archeology" to his royal promise in the face of postponements [10-11].

However bound to Europe by its languages and concepts, Zakari was alienated from it as well by his nationalism [and perhaps, deeper down, by the sense of many Coptic as well as Muslim Egyptians that Westerners are not coreligionists]. The texts of the ancient Pharaonic Egyptians that the West's scholars unlocked had shown the modern Egyptians that their forefathers had been "men when the Greeks were just children" [\_Miftah\_ 10]. The impulse to define one's group against Europe and to disengage culturally from it to an extent flickers out again.

## A Coptic Identity?

Zakari sounded positive and cheerful enough about the birth and evolution of the Coptic language. Both in the period of rule by the classical Arabs, and with modern-minded Copts ancient Coptic literature did not always seem to offer enough works beyond a very narrow circuit of religious subjects. Zakari claimed that Coptic literature passed beyond religious matters, to encompass literary and scientific works, but the range of subjects that he cites are heavily religious: ""translations of scriptures, sermons, lives of saints, acts of the martyrs and synods, the history of the Church and books related to the orders of monks, and monasteries" [122]. ##### Moreover, Zakari at this point of this work at least, underrated the gap between Pharaonic Egyptian language and the Coptic of the Egyptian Christians that took written form in the third century CE. He saw what had happened as a change of scripts: "the Coptic language is the same language as the hieroglyphic Egyptian": "the pronunciation of words is the same in both, but the written form differs".

A late section of the book shows some roots for Zakari's interest in hieroglyphic Egyptian in the liturgical Coptic language he heard as a child in churches on Sundays. Again, though, there may have been a skeptical edge to his phrasing: "the traditions informed us that it was Saint Mark who introduced Christianity into Egypt and founded the Church of Alexandria and made Athanasios its Patriarch" [\_Miftah\_ 121]. It is to be noted, though, that Zakari pointed to Genesis in the OT apparently as an accurate source when he listed Aramaic among a complete table of the Semitic languages [137]. But Coptic could also be a setting that acculturated Zakari to Westerners just like his engagement with ancient Egyptian. He had learned Coptic with Fr Jean-Paul Gerard [\_Miftah\_ 6], and through the French \_Grammaire

copte\_ by Alexis Mallon. Zakari's book carried quite a few pages setting out the Greek-derived script of Coptic, descendent of the ancient tongue, glossing the meanings of some words in Arabic [125-139]. Some clerics in the 1920s tried to start a movement for the Copts to introduce Coptic into their daily conversations as a restored living national language: the movement, though, failed. A question then is if Zakari regarded Coptic as the nationalist successor to its hieroglyphic parent: would he have liked it if learning hieroglyphics also encouraged Copts among his bourgeoisie to deepen their Coptic? It is more likely that he hoped the movement would go backwards, from Coptic to the ancient Egyptian helping the secularization of the Arabic Egyptians of the 1920s.

In *Miftah* Zakari sounded positive about the birth and evolution of the Coptic language, offspring of that ancient Egyptian written in hieroglyphics. Would interest in Coptic pick up among Coptic intellectuals amid the territorial-Pharaonist secular nationalism of the 1920s?

Both in the period of rule by the classical Arabs, and with modern-minded Copts, ancient Coptic literature did not always seem to offer enough works beyond the narrow circuit of religious subjects. Zakari claimed that Coptic literature had passed beyond religious matters, to encompass literary and scientific works in its evolution. But the range of scholars he cites are heavily religious: "translations of scriptures, sermons, lives of saints, acts of the martyrs and synods, the history of the Church and books related to the orders of monks and the monasteries" [122].

Moreover, Zakari at this point of this work at least, underrated the gap between (a) the Pharaonic Egyptian language and (b) the Coptic language of the Egyptian Christians that took written form in the third century CE. He saw only a change of scripts: "the Coptic language is the same language as the hieroglyphic Egyptian": "the pronunciation of words is the same in both, but the written form differs" [122]. In reality there had been very great changes indeed with the passage of the centuries and the millennia.

Zakari did not voice hostility to Arabs or Semites that could feed a new Coptic micronationalism among the bourgeoisie. His hieroglyphics primer again illustrated that it was hard for him as a native speaker of Arabic to distinguish the Pharaonic Egyptian people from Semites and West Asia. It was so hard for him to turn that final corner out of his Arabness. He mentioned a theory of German scholars like Johann Adolf Erman (1854–1937) that the ancient Egyptians' language had come originally from the Arabian peninsula, or from Mesopotamia as the Semites spread out into it, with influences from the Berbers resident in North Africa and from East Africa (eg. the Somalis). Zakari noted that that line for provenance had been followed by Ahmad Kamal Pasha, a Muslim who had been a pioneer author about ancient Egypt and its language in Arabic: Kamal had highlighted any ancient Pharaonic words that may or may not have come from Arabic ones he gave. However, Zakari set out counter-arguments from French archeologists that African invaders had come to rule Egypt in prehistory, mixing with its inhabitants to form the people that invented the written form of Egyptian under the dynasties [13-14]. The Francophone Zakari inclined to the French scholars here, but Erman had spent thirty years recovering the grammar of ancient Egyptian language, and put his finger on Semitic-like triliterality and perfect verb forms in it that scholars have since upheld.

Whether Semites had much entered the bloodstock of the ancient Egyptians or not, Zakari --- albeit he thought it only deserved a (bloated) "footnote" --- did portray the 640 CE Arab invasion led by 'Amr Ibn al-'Ass as a process of quasi-liberation of Copts from Byzantine rule in which the Coptic Church took part. After the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451, the emperors of Byzantium unremittingly persecuted the Copts as "heretics", making them detest the Byzantine state. The Copts were watching for setbacks to the Byzantines that they could seize to get rid of them. Hence they helped 'Amr Ibn al-'Ass to

get into Egypt. "Thus Egypt entered into the rule of the Arabs, who restored Patriarch Benjamin to his Alexandria seat from which the [Byzantine] Emperor had ordered him exiled to Thebes in Luxor" [\_Miftah\_ 120].

In regard to the decline and final death of Coptic in Egypt, Zakari did mention that the Umayyad Caliph al-Walid Ibn 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan had ordered that it be replaced with Arabic in government administration in 967 (which Zakari 's readers would have noticed came after an easy-going period of extended transition since the initial conquest of 640 --- more than a century). Zakari also wrote that the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim bi-Amrillah then moved to "abolish Coptic completely by punishments for any who spoke it" [\_Miftah\_ 121]. Here the Coptic language could come out as an important distinction or stake between two groups, although of all the Shi'ite Fatimid Caliphs al-Hakim bi-Amrillah was the one that Sunni Muslim Egyptians would most deny title to be termed a Muslim.

It is very hard for quite a few Copts to disengage their minds from Semites and Semitic languages and literary standard Arabic given that they have themselves spoken only Arabic for many centuries. Zakari in the \_Miftah al-Lughah al-Misriyah\_ also carried a section on the Semitic Hebrew language, with vocabulary in Hebrew characters, that looks to have been unnecessary for the book's ostensible discourse.

Zakari gave a sympathetic account of the evolution over centuries of literary Hebrew, which lacked the short vowel-signs that would fix the exact pronunciation of words until the Hebrews' Babylonian exile. Zakari wrote that Hebrew was connected into the ancient Egyptian language in its earliest phase when the Hebrews lived in Egypt for a long time: the two language groups exchanged "many" loanwords. This mutual influence in antiquity of Hebrew and the classical tongue of his own Egyptian nationality likely made Zakari approve the study of Hebrew in Western and Egyptian universities as a prerequisite to, for instance, becoming an archaeologist [\_Miftah\_ 142: his general observations on Hebrew pp. 137-142, 144-147: he even offered a few sentences of Hebrew with parallel Arabic translation: 147].

## Overview

Art objects from antiquity excavated by Western archeologists, and the ensuing publicization and display of the discovered masterpieces, fed new nationalisms in Southern Europe, South Asia, the Middle East and Indonesia. Antiquity's visible artifacts and public architecture (a) deepened the new bourgeoisies' sense of pagan initial golden ages of their Nations, but (b) since Westerners were the ones who excavated those pasts and deciphered inscriptions and other surviving discourse at the sites deepened acculturation to themselves and their languages. The ancient precursors and their ideologies were refracted and colored by the lens and shifting ideologies of Westerners delivering the data about antiquity. Disillusionment in a devastated Europe after the World War favored a pacivist viewing of history rather than utilizing it for militarist grandiosity in the 1920s. The elites building new neo-pagan territorial nationalisms gradually provided some affiliates or members to the Western learned institutions conducting the bulk of the rediscovery. Neo-Pharaonism and parallel ideologies in Asia had among its aims to build equal community with Westerners, intellectual and scientific but also in political independence within the comity of nations --- the United Nations that was to come.

The drawn-out flow of beautiful objects from Tutankhamun's tomb over a full decade was conveyed by press- and Museum-display to hundreds of thousands in the literate classes in Egypt. The succession of vivid objects conveyed many details of the material lives and livelihoods of the diverse classes in ancient Egypt to Arab Egyptians, but



with huge gaps. Many of the objects touched on ancient Pharaonic religion. Surviving written discourse from that religion, though, could be thin. The new and the familiar ancient objects were enough to unsettle and tantalize minds and arouse some openness and curiosity, but was there enough discourse grist from the centuries of Pharaonic greatness to make the ancient religious ethos at all guide a modern people within a new nationalism? Antun Zakari may have toyed with looking around in ancient Pharaonic religion for beings of provenance from beyond Egypt, but only time will tell if Arab Egyptians can make this core of the lost Pharaonic ethos live again with enough vigor. N.Y.'s book still gives them some guidance: a new edition of *Ta'rikh Tutankhamun* came off the printing press of Cairo publisher Maktabat Madbuli in 1999. Some Egyptians in our new 21st century still feel that his data and orientation still offer something that nourishes their psyches.

The results of neo-Pharaonism in Egyptian intellectual life were mixed and up in the air, as they are still in our own day. Recovered Pharaonic objects could differentiate Arabic Egypt more from other Arabic groups. Yet even the Pharaonic conquests in West Asia, the Sudan and Libya were depicted by N.Y./Antun Zakari to have produced cultural exchanges between (a) ancient Egyptians and (b) the Semites. Glorious conquests could promote either Egyptian particularist pride and militarism or prefigure a future fusion of Egyptians with Arabs (>pan-Arabism).

"N.Y." could veer off into some excesses. But, overall, he presented much sober data from the Pharaonic golden age, even if as ill-classified splinters at a few points. Although his book at points could degenerate down into a rag-bag, he often points us today to the New Age and the new religious movements and neo-paganisms to which many Americans and Australians have fled from the West's secularist ameliorism and the "bigoted" old religions that they fear, in tandem, threaten the survival of humanity today even more gravely than in the 20th century.

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## Endnotes

A propos of NY's awareness that ancient Egypt fanned out into Asia, and that Asiatics were heavily present in Egyptian cities in the era of Akhenaton and Tutankhamun, the Encyclopedia Britannica (Macropedia 15 th ed. 1973 v. 6 p. 473) noted "close commercial interconnections among Mediterranean lands... Not only were foreign *objets d'art* imported into Egypt, but Egyptian artisans copied Aegean wares as well. Under Amenhotep II, a deeper recognition of the value of things foreign is manifest in the acceptance of Asiatic gods in Egypt, where Astarte and Resheph became revered for their reputed potency in warfare; and later Astarte was honored in connection with medicine, love and fertility. Some Asiatic gods were eventually amalgamated with similar Egyptian deities... Asiatics themselves tended to be accepted as members of Egyptian society and could on occasion rise to important positions... The breakdown of Egyptian isolationism and the increased cosmopolitanism in religion were also reflected in Amon Re's concern for the welfare of Asiatics".

The health of Tutankhamun was clarified in the early 21st century by research published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* in 2009. Catskans and DNA tests on Tutankhamun's 3300-year old mummy and 15 others found him to have been a frail boy who suffered a cleft palate, curved spine, club foot and fragile bones as a result of high inbreeding in the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty. Tutankhamun was debilitated by brain-malaria, which afflicted most of these Pharaohs, and died of complications to a broken leg

and an attack of his malaria. The medical findings are in stark contrast to the popular image of a graceful boy-king as portrayed by the dazzling funerary artefacts in his tomb that later introduced much of the world to the glory of ancient Egypt. The religion-reformer Akhenaton and his sister were indeed Tutankhamun's parents. A hole in his skull had long fuelled murder theories from the discovery of his tomb, but the 2005 CT scan found that the hole was likely from the mummification process. The research was directed by Zahi Hawass, Egypt's top archaeologist who leads the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Cairo, and involved medical scientists and anthropologists from Egypt, Germany and Italy [Paul Schemm, "The short and sickly life of King Tut finally revealed: The mysteries of Egypt's boy pharaoh are being uncovered through DNA", *The Age* (Melbourne) 18 February 2010; *The Journal of the American Medical Association* February 2010].

"N.Y." (=Antun Zakari?), *Ta'rikh Tutankhamun, Muharriru Misr al-'Azim* ("The History of Tutankhamun, Egypt's Great Liberator") (Cairo: Maktabat Zaydan c. 1926).

Antun Zakari. *Miftah al-lughah al-Misriyah al-qadimah wa-anwa' khututiha wa-ahamm isharatiha wa-mabadi al-lughatayn al-Qibtiyah wal-'Ibriyah* (Madinat Nasr: Dar al-Afaq al-Arabiyah 2004)

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The surviving remains of ancient Egyptian material culture are dominated by the stones used for building, ornamental, gem, and utilitarian applications. These came mainly from the Nile Valley and Eastern Desert (with some also from the Western Desert), where over 200 quarries have been discovered spanning about 3500 years from the Late Predynastic Period to the Late Roman Period. The term "quarry" is used here for all extraction sites, although those for gemstones (and precious metals) are more commonly referred to as "mines". In the sections that follow, the geology of Egypt is first summarized in order to provide a general idea of the stones available to the ancient Egyptians. Each jar required widening below the shoulder using boring processes that were separate from the drilling of the interior with tubes. All of the jars represent stone vessel manufacturing at its best, and are likely to have been created in the nearby workers' town of Kahun. What were the key factors enabling such ancient work to be accomplished? In order to explore these similarities, the use of a reconstructed ancient Egyptian tool in making a limestone vase was investigated. It is generally thought that the cold beating, or forging, of truly smelted and cast copper into tools and other artifacts first occurred in Egypt ca.