CHAPTER 16

The Making of Postcolonial Citizens

"For the first time in a generation, life has come near normal," wrote Albert Hourani, a British-Lebanese scholar, from Damascus in the summer of 1944. "[But] the growth of strong opposition has already begun."[1] The transition period between the transfer of civilian powers in 1944 and the final withdrawal of French and British troops in 1946 was a time of both optimism and anxiety. As fear of famine receded, states and citizens alike cast auspicious eyes upon the postwar future. Expectations ran high that independence would purge social and political ills associated with French rule. But even as the Syrian and Lebanese governments hurried to staff and run ministries vacated by the French, many citizens suspected their leaders' calls for patience masked contempt for true reform.[2]

Syria and Lebanon's unusually prolonged transition to independence would profoundly affect the nature of their postcolonial civic orders. Nationalist elites profited politically from the continued occupation of French troops, for fear that France might reassert their rule helped to divert calls for internal reform. The friendlier British presence also bolstered their power indirectly, by posing as a force of repression while nascent governments remained without armies of their own until late 1945. Because Britain's primary concern was to maintain peace on the Middle Eastern front, the transition to independence could not, and would not, flare into a revolution against the status quo.

Subaltern movements pursued their agendas for reform of the civic order through political means. Success would be hampered, however, by their inability to coalesce around a unified program. While women, Islamic populists, Communists, and labor unions all sought greater equality among citizens, they remained divided by their class alliances and ideological differences. Their separate efforts to win piecemeal reforms were often undermined by battles with each other, battles that ruling elites exploited. Discord among subaltern

movements and the advantages that elite nationalists enjoyed at the helm of state thus blocked substantial change. Neither country discarded its colonial-era constitution; the only substantial revisions were those that purged mention of France. Ruling nationalists not only fortified the inequities of the colonial civic order but also rolled back state commitments to social welfare with self-interested policies of liberalism in Lebanon and statism in Syria. As a result, the terms of citizenship would remain problematic—unstably poised between paternal privilege and republican rights—well after independence in 1946. This assured the perpetuation of the gendered national pacts that subordinated women in the civic order.

The Women's Movement and the 1944 Cairo Women's Conference

With full independence on the horizon, women in both countries reorganized, revitalized, and renamed their unions in early 1944, becoming the Syrian-Arab Women's Union and the Lebanese-Arab Women's Union. The name change betokened their new emphasis on solidarity among all Arab women, which paralleled male nationalists' efforts at the time to found the Arab League.[3] Arab women had begun organizing across national lines with their 1938 conference on Palestine. Abandoning the old Eastern women's conferences, which had included Iranian, Turkish, and Indian women, they planned, under the leadership of Huda Sha'rawi, the first Arab Women's Conference to be held in Cairo in December 1944. It was their first international gathering since the war's start. As never before, women's leaders took their conference resolutions to their constituents and their governments, seeking their own fruits of independence.

Women's aspirations for political and civil rights had sunk low by the time they met with Sha'rawi in September 1944 to plan the Cairo meeting. Women's leaders in both countries were discouraged by the defeat of the Lebanese suffrage proposal the previous month.[4] The Syrian women's union had accepted Sha'rawi's invitation before the May 1944 crisis gave Islamic populists a new lease on life.[5] In December, just before the conference opened, the city of Damascus ordered the segregation of women tram riders during the religious holidays, fulfilling a demand long made by the Islamic populists. The influential Damascus newspaper, *Alif Ba*', commented that "it was odd that men still sought to shut women in harems and special tramcars when these same women meeting at the conference are demanding to be equal to men and to share government jobs with them."[6]

This climate no doubt accounts for 'Adila Bayhum al-Jaza'iri's defensive tone at a Cairo press conference on December 11:

> The first goal of our conference is to reaffirm the cultural, social and economic ties of Arab countries. . . . Our feminist cause comes next; it aims mainly to improve the family and to grant women their full rights . . . . the Syrian woman has general goals and particular goals. For now, she is more concerned with general goals, national goals, than with women's goals.[7]

Rose Shahfa, leader of the Lebanese delegation, expressed higher hopes for the conference: "We plan to study women's postwar situation. The war has, in effect, provoked a social evolution, and the social rights of women will be of the highest importance after the war." Shahfa also invoked women's participation in November 1943 to justify their acquisition of political rights: "The Lebanese Women's Union has taken an active part in the Lebanese political movement, with excellent results. This proves that if women take an interest in political life, they can perform usefully." Both women, however, dared only to demand partial suffrage. "The Syrian woman demands, with reserve, for the educated woman, the right to enter political life," Jaza'iri told the press. Shahfa averred, "We believe that the educated woman has more right to political privileges than the ignorant man who enjoys these rights." Embattled, the women's unions hunkered down behind familiar barricades of class-based and nationalist alliances.

The conference opened with great pomp in ceremonies hosted by the Egyptian king and other luminaries, and in succeeding days it produced a list of resolutions directed at all Arab governments. At the top of the list was the demand for women's political equality, especially the rights to vote and to hold political office. Next came resolutions to reform personal status law so that women might perform more fully as citizens, including restrictions on men's abuse of divorce rights, limits on polygamy, and a minimum marriage age of 16 for girls. To cap their quest for equality, the delegates voted to suppress feminine suffixes to words in the Arabic language. And as patriotic mothers they also called for governments' commitment to universal, compulsory education and medical care for the poor. The women also acted as diplomatic representatives of their countries, with resolutions in support of Arab unity and of Palestine.[8]

Meanwhile back in Syria, Islamic populists vigorously protested the threat to masculine prerogative. In Aleppo, a group petitioned President Quwwatli to fight loose morals and ban Muslim women from cinemas, while a December 20 Friday sermon by Shaykh Muhammad Abu Salih attacked women's

rights as forbidden by the Qur'an: "The goal of this feminist agitation is to encourage modernism; that is, impiety, bad morals and the insubordination of woman towards man."[9] Shaykh Muhammad Ashmar, veteran of the May 1944 revolt, joined the crusade by adding his name to a joint manifesto of Damascene Islamic populists sent to parliament and addressed to the entire nation:

> Your attention is drawn to the grave decisions taken by the women's conference in Cairo, which concern the supposed rights demanded by women: divorce, suffrage, admission to state offices, abolition of polygamy, etc. . . . The realization of these women's aspirations would lead to disastrous consequences for the Arab Muslim nation—corruption, loss of energy and of patriotic spirit—and will provoke a dire reaction in Syrian circles.

In effect, they declared adoption of the Cairo resolutions a violation of the tacit gender pact cemented the previous May. Establishment ulama evidently concurred. On January 5, 1945 the Friday sermon at the country's preeminent Umayyad mosque condemned the government for even authorizing Syrian women's attendance in Cairo.[10]

The women's union and government were thrown on the defensive. The Syrian delegates assured the press that they had voted against suppression of feminine suffixes in Arabic because they had an "honored place in the Qur'an."[11] The prime minister's daughter-in-law, Suhail al-Khuri, denounced the entire conference to the press: "The role of woman is not to demand the political rights of man, but to influence public life even as she confines herself to a more intimate and reserved context."[12] The prime minister himself, Faris al-Khuri (who had succeeded Jabiri in October), reiterated those views at a Cairo banquet hosted in March 1945 by Huda Sha'rawi to celebrate the signing of the Arab League pact. When Sha'rawi protested that no women delegates had been chosen for the new league, Khuri drew ridicule from fellow guests by responding that woman was merely the "ornament of man" and the "rear guard" to men's "vanguard" in the army of politics.[13]

Lebanese women, whose movement was still buoyed by the November 1943 crisis, took a more aggressive approach. Laure al-Khuri, wife of the president, openly supported the Cairo resolutions and called for their immediate adoption. "Why not?" she asked a reporter. "There are already numerous female lawyers and doctors. Why not female politicians?. . . . I can assure you that you will notice our achievements in five years."[14] In April, Rose Shahfa formally

presented the resolutions to the new prime minister, ʿAbd al-Hamid Karami, who promised to set up a committee to study them.

To prove their worthiness as citizens in the meantime, as Nazik ʿAbid had done a quarter-century before, women joined the latest battle against the French. In January 1945, Syrian women turned out in unprecedented numbers in a surge of nationalist demonstrations demanding control of the army and full evacuation of French troops. Jaza'iri's students at her Dawhat al-adab school joined nearly 300 other female high school students in a march to parliament and the Serail, demanding specifically to see their archrival, Faris al-Khuri. And as anti-French protests crested with the end of the European war in May, 200 women representing women's organizations marched again, proclaiming "the intent of Syrian women to consecrate all their efforts to achieve national independence."[15] Lebanese women joined the May protests too, when veterans of November 1943 reunited in their effort to oust the French. Ibtihaj Qaddura gave a speech at the reunion, proclaiming: "Here is the woman who walks in front of the man, devoting all her energy to service of the nation. Here she is, this revolutionary, who combats oppression and injustice," she proclaimed. "Woman is no longer made for the home, because the whole world can no longer do without her services."[16]

When the May demonstrations turned into gun battles between Syrians and the French, women hurried to join the fight in Hama, Damascus, and elsewhere. As in 1925 they risked death under flying bombs and shells to gather the wounded in the streets and deliver daily meals to hundreds of refugees and rebels. ʿAdila Bayhum al-Jaza'iri herself was forced to spend a night hiding in Damascene orchards when French bombs blocked her way home. This proved to be the last violent confrontation with the French: Allied pressure forced the French to transfer control of the Special Troops to the states by August. Syrian women felt, as Lebanese women had in November 1943, that they had shown ultimate proof of their patriotism.[17]

However, by 1946 it became apparent that national liberation would not bring women's liberation. The Khuri and Quwwatli regimes would never enact either women's suffrage or reforms of personal status law. Despite women's display of valor, opponents still argued that citizens should enjoy rights only if they perform military service. This was so laughable an idea for women, in their opinion, that it settled the issue. Others continued to define women's "natural" role, embodied in religious law, as different from men's, in arguments that women's political participation would deform their femininity, destroy the home, and violate the divine order. Some resurrected Islamic scripture (hadith) about the Prophet's wife ʿAisha to argue that women's intervention in politics

incurs national chaos and disaster.[18] Nationalist rulers played to these prejudices. In 1947, when President Quwwatli endorsed the inaugural issue of a new women's magazine, *Woman* (*al-Mar'a*), his advice to women echoed Shaykh Ashmar and others who had condemned the 1944 Cairo conference. While he praised women as mothers and as patriots who fought for independence, he warned them against ambition. Women's pursuit of education and culture was dangerous, he wrote, "if it is not strengthened by sound morals—morals without culture is better than culture without morals."[19] Although women in both countries intensified their suffrage struggle after 1946, the National Pact in Lebanon and the tacit gender pact in Syria would discourage any change in parliamentary opinion for the duration of the immediate postwar regimes.

Islamic Populists and the Rise of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood

In the short term, the Syrian gender pact apparently took the heat off of Quwwatli's regime. In the months after the May 1944 crisis, Islamic populists turned their attention away from the state to battle the staunchest promoters of secular, democratic government, the Communists. In August 1944, a group of Damascene ulama and shaykhs including Shaykh Ashmar, backed by industrialists and merchants, announced their opposition to the alliance with the Soviet Union, declaring "Communism is dangerous to Islam." The group attempted to organize workers from all over Syria into non-Communist unions, staging protests particularly against British military employers. In the autumn of 1944, anti-Communist rallies sparked violent clashes between the two groups in Damascus, Homs and Hama.[20] The leader of the Youth of Muhammad in Homs, Mustafa al-Siba'i, reportedly authorized the killing of Communists because they "reveal their women" and "trample on the Qur'an," and especially because they had convinced some members of his group to defect to their camp. In the violence that ensued, however, it was a Communist who killed one of Siba'i's followers.[21] In effect, the Islamic populists were fighting battles for the bourgeois nationalist elite, for whom the Communists were not merely a moral danger but an increasingly powerful threat to their class interests.

But while the nationalists appeared to have won their battle against Islamic populist rebels, they were in fact fighting an old war. At issue was no longer merely the boundaries of state power but control of the state. By affirming state control over public morality in May 1944, Quwwatli and Jabiri played

into the hands of the Islamic populists, for the next logical step would be to place in political power those who were experts in Islamic morality, the shaykhs and ulama themselves. The tacit gender pact actually encouraged populists to form a united front of opposition. It immediately cemented the alliance of groups that had supported the revolt: al-Gharra, al-Tamaddun, and the Youth of Muhammad. By the autumn of 1944, police reported that other Islamic populist groups in Damascus were negotiating a formal merger. It was this united front that had issued the manifesto against the 1944 Cairo women's conference.

Meanwhile, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood was being founded in Aleppo. By the end of 1945, Mustafa Siba'i would establish the Brotherhood's headquarters in Damascus, uniting groups in all major cities. The Brotherhood would compete as a political party for the first time in the 1947 elections, with an agenda to unseat nationalist elites, recruit lower classes, and revolutionize the civic order on Islamic principles of justice. Siba'i in this period incorporated elements of socialist ideology in his effort to attract the same constituency that the Communists recruited. (Siba'i's own family was split between Islamist and Communist sympathizers, suggestive of the two groups' common grievances as subalterns.)[22] Nationalist elites' appeasement of Islamic populists had apparently backfired.

Communists and the Labor Movement: The Fight for Labor Codes

After the crises of November 1943 and May 1944, labor unions and Communists in both countries renewed their quest to transform the colonial welfare state into democratic welfare states. Even though bread was now plentiful, urban workers still labored long hours for deflated wages, with little security. Indeed, the imminent withdrawal of British troops and reopening of world markets threatened a new wave of unemployment.

In the winter of 1943–44, Lebanese unions unleashed a wave of major strikes. In an unprecedented unity of purpose, railroad, tramway, electrical, and tobacco workers joined truck and taxi drivers, shoemakers, carpenters, and typographers in demands for government intervention on their behalf. They sought a shorter work day, paid sick leave, higher wages and family allowances, legalization of more unions, and protection from foreign competition. In January, labor federation leader Mustafa al-'Aris, who had cooperated with the rump government during the November crisis, met with

President Khuri, Prime Minister Sulh, and the minister of commerce and industry to demand enforcement of existing labor laws and adoption of a full labor code. Workers, too, wanted to enjoy the fruits of independence.[23]

Meanwhile, the Communist Party held its annual conference in Beirut. The Syrian and Lebanese branches formally separated in light of the impending political independence of the two countries, with Khalid Bakdash head of the Syrian party and Farajallah al-Hilu head of the Lebanese. Both stressed that they sought a democratic, national revolution—not socialist revolution, for which they deemed Syria and Lebanon not yet ready. They jointly demanded full independence, liberal republican regimes, and social and economic reforms.[24] In their 1944 May Day speeches, Bakdash and 'Aris reiterated their call for a welfare state that would offer comprehensive protections for all workers.[25]

At the end of 1944, Syrian labor unions also began to federate, as Lebanese unions had done. Thousands of textile workers struck around Syria against continuing MESC restrictions on supplies, ending in a bloody confrontation with police in Aleppo. In January 1945, Syrian unions held a national meeting at Syrian University, attended by 150 delegates and the prime minister, Faris al-Khuri. The nascent labor federation adopted an agenda calling for the right to work, full employment for skilled workers, full legalization of unions, a workers' savings bank, state technical schools, and comprehensive social security, including free medical care and unemployment, old age, and disability insurance. It also demanded fuller political rights, with seats reserved for workers in parliament and in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. At the same time, Syrian Communists distributed copies of their new charter, which demanded not only a labor code, but also equality among all citizens; rights to free speech and association; universal education in city and village; free medical care for the poor, especially women and children; liberation of peasants from poverty, and pay raises for civil servants.[26]

The labor/Communist movement was thus motivated not merely by immediate economic complaints, but by the intent to reshape the civic order into a more level playing field. It was the most powerful democratic force in politics. Communists' expanding influence among the urban masses sparked street battles not only against Syrian Islamic populists, but also against the Syrian National Party in Lebanon, which they attacked as fascist. In November 1945, an SNP member stabbed to death Edward Shartuni, director of the Communist magazine *al-Tariq*. Communists suspected the government of supporting the right-wing SNP to counterbalance the influence of the political left.[27]

Indeed, the turf battles in the streets were mere episodes in the larger war

against the two governments. Both parliaments stalled on labor code proposals, while state bureaucracies neglected enforcement of existing protective laws. Parliaments had even less incentive to pass labor laws than they did in the 1930s. First, their majorities of rural deputies were not predisposed to sympathize with the urban industrial workforce. Second, unionized workers were concentrated heavily in formerly French concessionary companies. While enhancing workers' rights against imperialists might have been tolerated as a patriotic act when the French ruled, now that those companies were controlled by the nationalist governments, workers' rights would only diminish the power of the ruling elite. Third and most important, nationalist leaders felt less pressure to engage in social bargaining now that they did not face electoral rivalry from the Free French and their collaborators.

In Syria, Faris al-Khuri announced the National Bloc's first political agenda in October 1944, a full year after Sulh's inaugural policy statement in Lebanon. Khuri clearly heard the voice of the Communist/labor movement, for four of his eight points of policy promised to promote national economy and industry while protecting workers and peasants, raising civil servants' pay, expanding public education, and limiting press censorship. But while he attended the national labor conference in January 1945 and even drew up a draft labor code, Khuri shelved the measure indefinitely, presumably due to opposition from his bourgeois party fellows. The National Bloc promoted state support for industrialization as the vehicle of national progress, but not necessarily as a means to uplift of workers' condition.[28]

In Lebanon, the National Pact had fostered an alliance of Christian and Muslim bourgeois interests that were fundamentally unfriendly to the Communist/labor movement. President Khuri's Constitutional Bloc represented (mainly Christian) financial and international mercantile interests, and dominated the parliament through networks of landowners and local merchants commanded by the two Sunni prime ministers, Riyad al-Sulh and 'Abd al-Hamid al-Karami. In January 1945, the government banned an Egyptian film called "The Worker," which portrayed a tyrannical silk mill owner who fired employees for unionizing and demanding their rights.[29] Many employers claimed that labor laws adopted under the French no longer applied. While the Lebanese bourgeoisie as a whole was hostile to enhancing workers' rights, the dominant commercial-financial wing also worked to undermine the very manufacturing firms that employed unionized workers by promoting liberal economic policies favoring international trade over protection of local industry.[30]

The labor movement countered the stalling tactics of bourgeois politi-

cians with numerous strikes, demonstrations, meetings, and petitions in 1945 and 1946. The show of strength was at times impressive: During their January 1945 national meeting, 50,000 workers marched through Damascus, the largest demonstration in the city's living memory. In May 1946, the Lebanese labor federation staged a general work stoppage that shut down Beirut and its northern hinterland as well as Zahla and other towns.[31] The confrontation turned violent when employers called in police to force strikers they had fired to vacate factories. The state sent in police even though the workers claimed benefits supposedly guaranteed them by law. The right to strike was still not formally recognized.

Prominent in the fight were women factory workers in Lebanon. In February and June 1945, police assaulted female strikers at the tobacco monopoly's headquarters in Furn al-Shubbak, just south of Beirut, and at a Beirut stocking factory, drawing indignant notice in the press. In July and August, police injuries hospitalized two women who were picketing textile factories. And in June 1946, police actually killed a female tobacco worker, Warda Butrus Ibrahim, when she and a group of other female strikers lay down in the road to prevent company trucks from crossing their picket line. The scandal raised protests from unions throughout Lebanon and Syria, as well as from newspapers and several parliamentary deputies. Some labor leaders even proposed making June 27, the day Ibrahim was killed, a national holiday for workers.[32] Indeed, the labor/Communist movement came to represent women's interests more than ever before. While women were still a minority of factory workers, they were becoming the backbone of textile manufacturing and tobacco and food processing. President Quwwatli's conserves factory, for example, employed many women.[33] And while factory women joined unions, the Communist Party continued to draw higher-class women away from the bourgeois women's unions. Male and female party members routinely mixed at party headquarters and marched together in parades and demonstrations.[34] At the party's 1943–44 conference, Rugina Khayyatah, delegate of the women's section, declared: "The Communist Party is the first party where the Arab woman has found a space to fight for her nation."[35]

The killing of Warda Ibrahim in Lebanon and the continued pressure of labor actions in Syria pushed the parliaments to adopt comprehensive labor codes in mid-1946.[36] The codes were a long-deferred victory. They finally legalized employee-only unions and strikes (except against the public sector) and formally codified previous laws on minimum wages, work hours, holidays, sick pay, severance pay, and protections for women and child workers. In addition, Syrians gained the work accident insurance that Lebanese had won from the

French in 1943. And while women were still classified as an exceptional category of worker, subject to protective laws along with children, they won rights to paid maternity leave and severance pay if they left their jobs to marry.

The labor codes appeared to promise a fundamental transformation of the civic order. The state was now officially the watchdog over employer-employee relations. Workers would be able to organize and strike without fear of losing their jobs or police bullets. Optimism was reflected in the rising number of labor unions, which jumped in Syria alone from 91 to 143 between 1946 and 1948.[37] However, the codes fell short of the democratic welfare state that unions and Communists envisioned. The Syrian law omitted nearly all of the social security measures and the political representation that workers had demanded at their January 1945 national meeting. The codes in both countries excluded peasants and the majority of working women employed in domestic service and small family businesses. Moreover, the government agencies set up to enforce workers' rights rarely did so. And while disability insurance and pensions were established in principle, no financial mechanism to fund them was created.[38]

In fact, the governments had written the codes without the consultation of labor leaders, and now used them as a means to control workers. The states had effectively granted themselves the power to intervene directly in union affairs. Workers could no longer choose their unions, because the state now assigned them membership. Nor could they strike at will, for they now had to apply first to state-appointed arbitration committees. Syrian bourgeois nationalists used the law as a means of disciplining workers and modernizing industry.[39] The labor code "recognizes only the individual's right to join a union, but ignores other rights, like their independence from the state," complained a Syrian scholar in 1949.[40] Similarly, a Lebanese scholar observed "the police spirit that governs this law."[41] According to historian Jacques Couland, bourgeois rulers used the Lebanese code "to retain a monopoly and prohibit employees from introducing social issues into politics; that is, prohibit any union intervention that would maintain and improve the democratic regime upon which application of the law depended."[42] In short, the codes were used to block, not to foster, democratic transformation of the civic order.

The Fate of the Colonial Welfare State

Just as nationalist rulers had encouraged women's philanthropy while blocking change in their legal status, so they ostensibly granted workers rights while

actually securing control over the labor movements. Both states played the paternalistic role they had inherited from the French, but with a difference. While the Syrians adopted France's statist tendencies, the Lebanese amplified the liberal aspects of mandatory rule. The former suited the Quwwatli regime's drive to industrialize, while the latter catered to the needs of Beirut's financial-commercial bourgeoisie. Both approaches were used to slow and even halt expansion of the colonial welfare state.

Education was the states' major focus of social policy in these years. Between 1944 and 1946, the Lebanese state opened nearly 150 new schools, raising enrollment from 30,000 to 41,000. In 1943–45, Syria opened 30 new state schools and also added about 10,000 students to state rolls.[43] The number of students in Lebanese state schools would triple by 1950, while the number in Syrian state schools would quadruple by 1960, twice the rate of expansion under the French. But while both Syrian and Lebanese rulers proclaimed citizens' right to education, they hitched that right to their programs of statist and liberal paternalism.

Syrian education adviser Sati' al-Husri, veteran of Faysal's governments in Syria and Iraq,[44] revamped the national school curriculum to standardize and arabize it. The purpose of state schools, according to the 1944 reform law, was to ensure that:

> every individual will develop to be strong in body, good in character, sound in thought, loving to his fatherland, proud of his nationality, mindful of his duties, provided with the information he needs in life, capable of serving his country with his physical and intellectual powers and with his productive efforts.[45]

While the reform law uprooted the French curriculum, it imitated France's centralized school system built to foster dutiful citizens loyal to the state.[46] The state was to become the paternal teacher to its children and the forger of national unity as envisioned by the National Bloc.

In contrast to Syria's state paternalism, Lebanon retained the mandate era's mediated paternalism, leaving education largely in the hands of Christian religious patriarchs. The National Pact government, with its entrenched sectarianism, was especially vulnerable to Catholics' stiff resistance to state control of education. "To make education an instrument of national politics seems to us an insult to human nature," said one advocate.[47] By the 1940s, French missionaries and the Maronite Church had a far greater stake in Lebanese schooling than when they persuaded Gouraud to reopen their schools after World

War I. The Lebanese thus did little to alter the mandate era's French-style curriculum or its reliance on private schools. In 1945–46, only 26 percent of Lebanese students attended state schools, compared to 67 percent of Syrian students. The proportion would rise to only to 31 percent by 1959. In general, state schools remained a ghetto for poor Muslims and poor villagers of various sects.[48] Muslims who had attacked France's support for the mediated educational system in the 1930s, like Prime Minister Karami himself, found little satisfaction under the independent state.

The states' tepid response to demands for welfare expansion was reflected in their budgets.[49] State spending boomed after the war, when inflation leveled off and the resumption of trade boosted tax revenues. Spending on health and education soon surpassed their peak prewar levels and by 1951 Syria was spending eight times what it did in 1943. In fact, however, spending on health and education remained level as a proportion of total state budgets, comparable to their share in the French budgets of the 1930s. The lion's share of the new, postwar state revenues went instead toward building national militaries and to public works projects that primarily benefitted elites who owned construction firms and whose businesses needed more roads, electricity, irrigation, and so on.[50]

Indeed, aside from Syria's massive investment in education, there was no permanent reapportionment of state funding toward welfare, nor was there a significant redistribution of state benefits from rich to poor citizens. The states not only failed to introduce new welfare programs, but actually cut food subsidies, family allowances, and other wartime supplements. In 1961 a Lebanese finance ministry official lamented, "Not only is the relative expenditure on social services low in Lebanon but also the standard of service is very poor." He praised Sweden, where spending on social services represented 41 percent of state expenditures, in contrast to Lebanon's 17 percent and Syria's 21 percent. The official blamed the income tax system, which taxed the wealthy lightly and provided only 11 percent of state revenues by 1957.[51] That same income tax had provoked vigorous protest in 1945 from women's groups, labor unions and Communists because it unfairly burdened the poor.[52]

Social policy also did little to alleviate gender inequality, and in some respects even aggravated it. In the early 1950s, the Lebanese state still hired women almost exclusively as secretaries. Women factory workers were still paid less than men and less than the legal minimum wage, and women in most jobs were forced to quit when they married so that employers could avoid paying for maternity leaves. Girls' enrollment in state primary schools tripled but still represented only one-third of all students, compared to 29

percent in 1930, due largely to the state's refusal to expand women's teacher-training and to build as many schools for girls as for boys. In effect, the Lebanese state was practically absent from most women's lives. The Syrian state performed a bit better by 1955, with state-run mother-child health programs in several cities, girls' enrollments in state primary schools quadrupling (but also remaining only one-third that of boys'), and minimal court enforcement of equal-pay laws.[53]

In sum, the drive toward a democratic welfare state effectively halted after 1943. Syria's state paternalism was not state welfarism; Lebanon's liberal paternalism did not even pretend to be. There were of course practical obstacles to European-style welfarism: low taxation, low industrialization, and administrative inexperience aggravated by the mass hiring of political clients. But these obstacles did not inform policy. To the contrary, as we have seen, bourgeois nationalists had opposed social reform long before they captured the state. Instead, Syria's statism and Lebanon's liberalism represented alternative paths toward decolonization of the welfare state. Both paths preserved and even extended, in variant ways, a spirit of paternalism alongside the rhetoric of rights. Both paths also skirted a third alternative favored by workers, women and some Islamic populists, that of a democratic welfare state that would provide services directly and universally, as a right of all citizens and as a means of levelling disparities of class, gender, and religious affiliation.

Conclusion: The Making of Postcolonial Citizens

The transition from colonial rule to independence in Syria and Lebanon prefigured patterns of decolonization followed by many other countries in the 1950s and 1960s. Elite nationalists, or middle-class soldier-nationalists, seized their states claiming to represent the general will of the people, while in fact desperately cutting compromises with, or violently excluding, an array of mass movements that had also emerged in the colonial period. While they promised a new era of national progress and democracy, all too often they instead pursued the self-interest of their own ruling class, or became mired in internal rivalries that perpetuated the paternalism and authoritarianism that were the legacies of the colonial civic order.[54]

Syria and Lebanon were also unlike many decolonizing countries, in the profound structural contradiction between paternalism and republicanism built into their colonial civic orders. Debate on the political, civil, and social rights of colonial subjects surfaced elsewhere, particularly when resistance

movements emerged after World War I to demand a share of the new rights being granted to citizens in the democratizing metropoles of the British and French empires.[55] But the mandate system had established a distinctive dynamic. Mandates were not simply a form of indirect colonial rule, and residents of mandated territories were not supposed to be colonial subjects at all. Rather, the League of Nations had ordered that they be granted constitutions and court systems to protect the rights of the people.

The liberal goals of the mandate charter, however, ignored the exigencies of establishing foreign rule over a population. As we have seen, the French built a parallel regime of power, similar in its basic attributes to their other colonial regimes of indirect rule, based on alliances with paternalistic elites, the promotion of divisive sectarian identities, and the continued threat of brute force. The resulting tension between paternalistic hierarchy and republican principles of equality and rights was perhaps greater in Syria and Lebanon than in their neighboring Middle Eastern mandates: The British established much more overtly paternalistic monarchies in Iraq and Transjordan; in Palestine, their failure to create any sort of unitary government virtually negated the construction of citizenship altogether. The heightened paternalist-republican contradictions of French rule in Syria and Lebanon thus exploded regularly in the streets and climaxed in the armed conflict of May 1945, when the French bombed the Syrian parliament building that they had themselves built.

This tension between two types of authority was further aggravated, as we have seen, by the broad social and economic changes unleashed by war and the spread of global markets. The French, and local elites, engaged in an uphill struggle to preserve and strengthen paternalistic structures of authority and community that were crumbling under the weight of sheer economic necessity, the new social configurations of the urban public, and the appeal of new ideologies to an increasingly educated population. Meanwhile, the world wars enriched an urban bourgeoisie that had emerged in the Ottoman era, producing a self-conscious social class that shunned the communal ties that had once bound rich and poor in the cities. City communities were further disrupted with the arrival of peasants fleeing the effects of dislocated, neglected, and feudalized agriculture. As the disruption of households during after World War I spread the demand for girls' education beyond the elite classes, and as more women took jobs as factory workers, household maids, and schoolteachers to supplement family income, male authority in the family and male control of the urban public were challenged. The vertical ties of paternal authority were strained and broken, in a general crisis of paternity.

As a result, the mandatory civic order defined citizenship in highly hetero-

geneous and unstable terms. First, because of its paternalistic biases, the distribution of rights was far from universal. Only adult males enjoyed the political rights to vote and to hold office; civil rights varied across the population according to religious sect and gender; and social rights were enjoyed only by those with power enough to claim them. Second, Syrians and Lebanese came to define their relationship with the state simultaneously as individual citizens and as members of a group—as male breadwinners, as patriotic mothers of families, as members of a sect guaranteed a certain number of seats in parliament, as clients of political patrons. Those who continued to rely primarily on family or sectarian support systems also came to demand rights from the state, for schooling, for health care, for better wages, for bread.

This heterogeneous citizenship was condemned by some, particularly Communists on the left and the SNP on the right, who promoted universal standards of citizenship. It was defended by others who vaunted the value of community identity and preached the need for tolerance and unity at the meta-level of the nation. It would be misleading, however, to assume that most Syrians and Lebanese preferred heterogeneous citizenship. While most did, and still do, take great pride and pleasure in family and community ties, the reincarnation of paternalism in new state institutions was not solely a product of their choice. Paternalism was also a product of the instability and weakness of other alternatives, caused by a colonial state that tightened its budget by relying on religious and elitist intermediaries to offer social services to profoundly unsettled urban populations; that routinely undermined its guarantees to rights by rigging elections and shutting down parliaments; and that repressed political groups that advocated an absolute shift away from privilege, paternalism and sectarianism.[56]

There was, however, a political convergence before the 1943 elections around support for social rights that might have offset fundamental inequalities among citizens. Even nationalist elites pledged to support equality and social benefits in their campaigns. When they reneged on those pledges after their victory, they unleashed new currents of opposition that once again polarized dissent. Politics again took to the streets, as nationalist elites' pretense to represent the general will of the people—or in terms used in this book, their pretense to be true fathers of the people—was stripped away. The crisis of paternity remained unresolved, and their sons—and daughters—battled for succession. Paternal republicanism—the refusal to democratize and expand the colonial welfare state, and the persistence of heterogeneous citizenship rights—would contribute to the causes of Syria's successive coups beginning in 1949 and to the outbreak of civil war in Lebanon in 1958.

While factors contributing to instability are readily apparent, and are the focus of most studies of postcolonial Syria and Lebanon, countervailing forces of stability and continuity are less noticed. This study has suggested that gender was a crucial site of solidarity and compromise that muted class and religious tensions; gender bargains stabilized the civic order both under the French and in the early years of independence. One reason for gender's salience was that it directly tied the anxieties faced personally at home with those confronting the society as a whole. Gender issues could thus easily mobilize mass sentiment. Secondly, because gender difference was already built into colonial paternalism, its reinforcement offered a means of stabilizing the independent civic order's highly contested and unstable boundaries.

For example, the crisis of paternity was foremost a crisis of masculinity. While elite nationalists posed as true fathers, subaltern movements sought an alternative to paternalistic hierarchy by posing various models of fraternity. Paramilitary, or proto-fascist, groups organized young men with totems of masculinity like military uniforms, guns, and sports events. Islamic populists vaunted the brotherhood of Muslim men as the proper locus of authority, in contrast to the paternalism of secularist nationalist elites. Communists offered a brotherhood of another kind, among worker-comrades. All three of these movements grew strong because they embraced the ideal of the male breadwinner and defender of the family, and so seemed to link household politics to national politics directly through gender discourse. In short, these subaltern movements organized men into new communities that resuscitated their gender identity.

In this perspective, the gender pacts struck by the French and then reaffirmed by the independent nationalist governments may be understood as an attempt to mitigate the rivalry among males and assure loyalty to the state. Resembling bargains so often struck by emergent states, they appeased citizens from whom the state extracted resources by awarding them privileged control over a subaltern group of citizens.[57] Just as the French had granted landowners a monopoly over peasants' status and had awarded Druze and other tribal shaykhs similar unilateral control over their tribal followers, they granted urban men complete dominance over women. In exchange, the French mandatory state extracted from men control over the use of violence, and a modicum of cooperation. This tacit agreement, nowhere recorded as such in documents, was made manifest in times of unrest, when men routinely expressed their dissent by raising the alarm that the French sought to capture or violate their women, as in the 1925 revolt, the Nazira Zayn al-Din affair in 1928, the street battles of the 1930s, the 1939 protests against personal status

law reform, and the November 1943 coup. The colonial gender pact was renewed by nationalists after the crises of 1943 and 1944. In both cases, the fraternity of male citizens in the republican order was reconciled with paternalism by the virtual exclusion of women.

Male gender anxiety fed into women's own crisis of femininity. Elite women had emerged from World War I with aspirations of rights to fit their changing lifestyles. The core of the colonial gender pact was, however, women's deprivation of civil and political rights. The ban on women's suffrage effectively removed them as a viable force at elections. Retention of the dual legal system granted religious leaders control over personal status law, which in turn granted men control over women in their families and in public space, effectively circumscribing recruitment to the women's movement. This pressure split the movement and so weakened it. The Lebanese women's union and Communist women in both countries continued to pursue equal rights, but they lost the support of many women who responded to male gender anxiety by adopting an ideology of patriotic motherhood that glorified a tradition of women's place in the home and a mediated relationship to the public and political arenas. The Women's Social Democratic League in Lebanon, with its anti-work, pro-male breadwinner ideology, possibly represented a silent majority of women who desperately wished the return of paternalistic protections eroded in the social dislocations since World War I.[58] It is not clear, however, whether these silent women simply never heard the women's unions' call for rights, whether they shunned the call for fear of men's reprisals, or whether they actively rejected it; this study has been limited by the paucity of direct documentation on common women's views.

Despite its divisions and handicaps, the women's movement succeeded remarkably in inserting women's voices into the debates on citizenship. But because gender was also constructed as a site of conflict and compromise among male actors in the civic order, the women's movement was structurally incapable of asserting itself against competing movements that might use gender as a bargaining chip. As in so many other countries, the strength of the women's movement was determined as much or more by its relations with other movements as its inner resources.[59] The Syrian and Lebanese women's unions were weak because they were unable to forge necessary alliances to advance their cause. While Communists supported the rights of women workers, they dropped earlier calls for reforms of women's legal status from their platforms of the 1930s and 1940s. This was likely due to their fear of sectarian division among workers and their rivalry with Islamic populists for the same lower-class constituency. Likewise, while some elite nationalists clearly did

support women's rights, they were dissuaded from enacting them by the need to appease much stronger religious interests. Without alliances, the women's unions could not hope for parliamentary majorities to reform their legal status. They met greater success in transforming spatial boundaries of the civic order—by the 1950s most Lebanese and most elite Syrian women had unveiled—precisely because such reform did not require approval of formal political institutions.

That gender pacts were a defining trait of the colonial and postcolonial civic orders is attested by their durability. The dual legal system survived the Ba'thist revolution in 1963 and Lebanon's civil war, with little reform of personal status law. And while Syrian and Lebanese women did finally win the right to vote, the way they achieved it underlines how fundamental gender bargains have been to defining regimes. The governments of both Shukri al-Quwwatli and Bishara al-Khuri crumbled before their legal terms expired, under various political pressures, violence, and charges of corruption. Both of their successors desperately needed to signal a fundamental reform of government. In Syria, Colonel Husni al-Za'im, whose coup overthrew Quwwatli in 1949, simply decreed limited suffrage for educated women amidst a host of political, military, and social reforms. In Lebanon, Camille Chamoun granted women full suffrage and the right to hold office in a 1953 electoral law designed to curb sectarianism, thereby setting his regime apart from that of Khuri, who in his last desperate days had sought to expand the power of religious courts.[60] In each case, gender acted as a primary marker of a change in political direction.

Colonial rule mattered a great deal in the gendering of citizenship in modern Syria and Lebanon. A stark contrast is neighboring Turkey, which curbed the power of religious patriarchs, abolished Islamic law, and granted women political and civil rights in the 1920s and 1930s. Turkey was free to do so because it was not colonized and because the fall of empire did not produce the same crisis of paternity in the civic order: The new republic was ruled by a war hero, Mustafa Kemal, who took the surname Ataturk, meaning father of the Turks. "The new woman of the Kemalist era became an explicit symbol of the break with the past," notes Deniz Kandiyoti.[61] Colonialism permitted no such clean break. Indeed, the French worked hard to preserve the bases of paternalistic authority of the past. They augmented the power of the urban landowning bourgeoisie that would seek to defend its privilege at independence through gender pacts, because gender and mediated hierarchy were so closely bound together. Foreign rule also strengthened the hand of conservative Muslims, ancestors of contemporary Islamist movements that continue to pursue a reified Islamic tradition through religious law. Women's appeals to universalist

principles of equality and rights were undercut by the early 1930s, with the rise of religion-based discourses of cultural particularity. According to the longtime supporter of the women's movement, Muhammad Jamil Bayhum, "The women's revival in Syria saw its pillars knocked out from beneath it by the French occupation, which promoted suspicion of foreigners and a complete diversion to the struggle for independence. Likewise, the women's revival came to a standstill among Lebanese Muslims."[62] Other former Ottoman provinces in Arab lands, like Egypt and Iraq, shared Syria and Lebanon's colonial experience and so its legacy of dual legal systems and Islamism that continue to gender citizenship.[63]

But colonial rule is by no means the sole factor; other political and social conditions also contribute to the construction of citizenship. Just as the terms of citizenship and gender differ between Syria and Lebanon, so are there differences among other Arab countries. Some Arab countries, like those of the Arabian peninsula, did not experience republicanism in either its late Ottoman or colonial guises, producing far more paternalistic civic orders. Others, like Tunisia, broke free of colonial dilemmas to enact substantial personal status reform. There is no space here to carry out such comparisons, although they are dearly needed. It is hoped, however, that this study has helped to challenge the too common assumption that Arabic culture—and Islam—are essentially and ahistorically predisposed toward the inequality of gendered citizenship that prevails today in the Middle East.