



Culture and Colonialism: The 1916 Shakespeare Tercentenary in Egypt

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THE SHAKESPEARE TRICENTENARY AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE

In 1916, the year of the three-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's death, the English playwright and theatre critic Henry Arthur Jones published a pamphlet entitled *Shakespeare and Germany*. Reflecting the ongoing hostilities of the Great War, the booklet advises German audiences to interpret the vision of Banquo's descendants in *Macbeth* as 'the long line of [England's] inheriting children, carrying the sceptres of dominion to future ages—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, [South] Africa, Egypt, India'.¹ It triumphantly declares that the consequence

The original version of this chapter was revised: Author Karma Sami's affiliation has been changed. The correction to this chapter is available at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84013-6_13

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E. G. C. King and M. Smialkowska (eds.), *Memorialising Shakespeare*,
Palgrave Shakespeare Studies,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84013-6_4

of ‘Germany’s design to destroy England [...] has been to bring all England’s children round her to defend her, and to make her vast Empire one family, secure and complete’ (Jones, p. 25). Such a use of Shakespeare to affirm the unity among Britain’s allies, particularly those belonging to the British Empire, was common in the propagandistic exhortations to the British overseas territories ‘to help the Mother Country in her peril’.² Effectively, the Tercentenary became an occasion for the imperial centre to demand expressions of loyalty and filial subordination from its colonial peripheries. However, while many British dominions enthusiastically commemorated Shakespeare, their tributes did not always produce the desired impression of imperial harmony and unity. Instead, as Coppélia Kahn argues, some of them unexpectedly foregrounded ‘the contradictions of empire’, bringing to the fore deep-seated cultural and political conflicts.³ More recent criticism has further demonstrated that the Shakespeare Tercentenary celebrations in the colonial contexts of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa registered tensions between the centralising drive to maintain imperial cohesion and local impulses to pursue emerging independent (national or ethnic) identities.⁴

Despite the growing body of research into the Tercentenary’s (post)-colonial dimensions, 1916 Shakespearean commemorations in one of the locations that Jones mentions—Egypt—have so far attracted little scholarly attention.⁵ Filling in this gap is all the more important in view of Egypt’s unique position within the British Empire, distinct from the nations whose Tercentenary celebrations have been explored in some detail. Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, unlike Egypt, enjoyed the status of self-governing Dominions and the measure of independence that came with it, while containing large numbers of ethnic British settlers. Meanwhile, Ireland, one of the earliest targets of British colonial expansion and subject to direct British rule, was engaged in an ongoing struggle for autonomy, which came to a head during the 1916 Easter Rising. Egypt’s situation differed so substantially from any of these nations that its inclusion on Jones’s list may come as a surprise. In 1916, the British occupation of the country had been relatively recent, dating back to 1882, with the protectorate status officially announced only in 1914. Nevertheless, Egypt had a long and complex history of involvement not only with the British Empire but also with other imperial powers, both ancient and modern. From the end of the era of the pharaohs until 1952, Egypt was ruled by a succession of ‘foreign potentates’, including Greeks, Romans, Arab Muslims, Mamluks, Ottoman Turks, and eventually the British.⁶ For the Shakespeare Tercentenary, the crucial

context is the nineteenth century, when the lingering Ottoman power combined with increasing European influences and growing Egyptian nationalist feelings, which resulted in a complex mixture of intellectual cosmopolitanism and anti-colonial resentment. It is against this historical background that Egypt's Shakespearean commemorations of 1916 have to be examined.

PROLOGUES TO THE 'SWELLING ACT OF THE IMPERIAL THEME'

Since 1517, Egypt had been an Ottoman province, administered by a governor appointed by the sultan and obliged to pay annual tribute to Istanbul (Tignor, pp. 176–180). However, as the nineteenth century approached, Ottoman global influence gradually declined and colonial competition between emerging European powers intensified. In 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte's troops invaded Egypt. One of their main goals was to undermine British colonial status, since Egypt was 'one of the strategic lifelines to India, the cornerstone of Britain overseas' (Tignor, p. 198). Opposed by the Ottomans, the British, and the Egyptians themselves, the French occupation lasted only until 1801, but it paved the way for a number of crucial developments. When the French army withdrew, factional fighting in Egypt propelled into power an unlikely candidate: Muhammad Ali, the commander of the Albanian contingent of the Ottoman army. In 1805, his forces seized control and the sultan reluctantly recognised him as Egypt's ruler, under the proviso that Egypt remains a tribute-paying Ottoman province (Tignor, pp. 208–209). Muhammad Ali's reign, which lasted until 1848, was a period of intensive modernisation. Drawing on European models, he enlarged and upgraded the Egyptian army, established institutions of higher education, encouraged new methods of irrigation and farming, and laid the foundations for the country's industrialisation. His modernising programmes created unprecedented opportunities for native-born Egyptians, as his expanding army and bureaucracy needed more staff than the available numbers of foreign-born elites who had traditionally filled these roles. Thus, his reign witnessed a growth of native Egyptian intelligentsia, military personnel, administrators, and wealthy landowners. As a consequence, a 'sense of modern Egyptian national identity began to take shape', a development that would continue under his successors (Tignor, p. 218).

Muhammad Ali's grandson, Khedive Ismail, who came into power in 1863, shared his grandfather's modernising ambitions. By spending lavishly to Europeanise Egypt, he became heavily indebted to western creditors, which led to European powers gradually taking control of the country's affairs. By 1878, Ismail was forced to accept not only foreign advisers to oversee the payment of debts, but also the appointment of British and French ministers to key governmental positions.⁷ Deepening financial crisis, accompanied by a dissatisfaction in the army, led to the deposition of Ismail, who was replaced by his son Tawfiq in 1879 (Tignor, pp. 225–226; Marsot, p. 83). Under Khedive Tawfiq, economic and political frictions turned to violent conflict. Ahmad Urabi, one of the only four native-born colonels in the Egyptian army, became a focal point for those who resented the dominance of the old Turco-Circassian elites and the growing European influences.⁸ Egyptians opposed to Tawfiq's policies began to gather around Urabi, and the mounting tensions came to a head in June and July 1882. On the 11th June a riot broke out in Alexandria, in which about fifty Europeans and two hundred and fifty Egyptians died.⁹ After Urabi's forces moved in to restore order, the British, who supported Tawfiq against the Urabists, commenced the bombardment of Alexandria on the 11th July. A full-scale invasion of the country swiftly followed. In September 1882, Urabi was defeated, his army disbanded, and the British occupation of Egypt began (Marsot, pp. 87–88; Reid, pp. 231–236).

However, Egypt did not become a 'full-fledged British colonial possession' (Tignor, p. 231).¹⁰ Ostensibly, the occupation was to be a temporary measure, aimed at restoring the country's order and financial stability. Formally, Egypt remained part of the Ottoman Empire, while retaining its own internal administration. Tawfiq's nominal authority was restored and an Egyptian government was in place. In practice, though, the khedive and the Egyptian ministers were little more than figureheads expected to follow the British advisers' lead, while the presence of the occupying army ensured compliance.¹¹ From 1883 until 1907, Egypt's *de facto* ruler was Britain's consul general, Evelyn Baring, First Earl of Cromer. Cromer's attitudes were the epitome of Eurocentric imperialism, based on the assumption that the 'subject races', among whom he counted Egyptians, were 'totally incapable of self-government' (Marsot, p. 90). To him, an Egyptian was 'a good imitator', who may acquire 'a veneer' of 'civilisation' by following 'his European teacher', but who will not understand 'the spirit of European administrative system' and will 'relapse

[...] if English supervision be withdrawn'.¹² Cromer was convinced that the British occupation was beneficial and should continue for a long time. Accordingly, he focused on restoring Egypt's solvency in order to remove other European powers from the equation, and on keeping the native population in a subordinate position, with the lower classes having enough to eat and the elites able 'to make money and so to cooperate with the occupying power' (Marsot, p. 90). At the same time, he opposed social, political, and educational reforms that might increase the country's democracy and autonomy. In particular, he objected to the development of education beyond the most basic level, believing that 'educating Egyptians was nothing more than the encouragement of troublemakers'.¹³

Although some members of the Egyptian ruling elites were willing to collaborate with the British, discontent among the population began to mount as the occupation continued (Marsot, p. 92). Young Egyptian intellectuals in particular became increasingly vocal in their opposition to the British domination. They revived the Urabists' slogan 'Egypt for the Egyptians' and began organising around leading patriotic figures, chief among them Mustafa Kamil, the founder of the nationalist newspaper *al-Liwaa*'. They argued for Egypt's independence, as well as protesting against the autocracy and injustices of the colonial rule (Tignor, pp. 235–239). In 1906 an incident in the village of Denshawai led to a sharp escalation of anti-British sentiment. An altercation between the locals and a group of British officers resulted in one officer's death. The British response was so brutal that George Bernard Shaw called it 'the Denshawai horror': after a summary trial, some villagers were hanged and some flogged in front of their families, while others were condemned to penal servitude.¹⁴

The Denshawai incident caused lasting resentment and a heightening of nationalist feelings, which were not extinguished by Cromer's resignation in the following year and the limited reforms introduced by his successors (Marsot, pp. 94–95; Daly, pp. 243–244). In 1907, three political parties were formed: Mustafa Kamil's anti-British National Party (*al-Hizb al-Watani*); Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid's Umma Party (People's Party), which 'advocated cooperation with the British until reforms necessary for social and educational development had prepared Egypt for independence'; and Sheikh 'Ali Yusuf's Constitutional Reform Party, which sided with the khedive (Daly, p. 245). All three championed Egypt's autonomy, but they proposed different routes to achieving it, ranging from Mustafa

Kamil's push for immediate, full independence, to Lutfi al-Sayyid's gradualist approach, which involved a temporary acceptance of the British involvement in running the country.

Egypt's political and national awareness continued to increase in the years leading to the First World War. With the war's outbreak, however, the British began to tighten their grip on the country. They dramatically increased the size of the occupying army, introduced censorship, prorogued the legislative assembly, replaced the reigning khedive with his uncle, and proclaimed martial law. Eventually, in December 1914, they declared Egypt a British protectorate. Although Britain promised to 'undertake the entire burden' of the war and to treat the protectorate as 'a step towards self-government', the reality proved to be very different (Daly, p. 246; Tignor, p. 239). While Egypt's autonomy was severely curtailed, the country bore the brunt of wartime hardships. Egyptians were forced to enlist in 'the labor and camel units', some of which were sent to the front and suffered considerable casualties. Land, animals, and other property were confiscated, and the prices of food soared (Tignor, pp. 240–241). Moreover, Egypt became the base for large numbers of British and colonial troops, who not only consumed the scarce resources but also behaved in a disorderly manner, harassing and mistreating the local population.¹⁵ Under these circumstances, anti-British and pro-independence feelings were steadily building up across the nation as the war progressed.¹⁶

‘MY ONLY LOVE SPRUNG FROM MY ONLY HATE’: THE SHAKESPEARE TERCENTENARY IN EGYPT

The 1916 Shakespeare Tercentenary thus came at a time marked by a growing resistance to the occupation and desire for political and social change. The widespread anti-colonial resentment, however, did not mean a wholesale rejection of all things British. Indeed, many Egyptians admired aspects of British culture and political institutions, such as parliamentary democracy and liberal education. Moreover, they were aware that a number of British politicians, intellectuals, and journalists had been vocal in condemning British conduct in Egypt.¹⁷ As a result, Egyptian attitudes towards Britain were ambivalent. Hatred towards imperialist occupation vied with a deep appreciation of finer elements of British culture. The Shakespeare Tercentenary became caught in a serious dilemma: could patriotic Egyptians celebrate a writer who belonged to the

nation of their oppressors? Could their love of English literature survive their hatred of British policies? The rest of this chapter seeks to answer these questions by examining a number of Egyptian responses to the 1916 Shakespearean anniversary.

A Book of Homage to Shakespeare

The first texts to be discussed are three commemorative poems written in response to Israel Gollancz's invitation to contribute to his *Book of Homage to Shakespeare*.¹⁸ This monumental volume includes tributes from the British Empire, its wartime allies, and neutral countries. It is a fascinating document, which places Shakespeare at the heart of Britain's negotiations concerning imperial identity and cohesion at the time of unprecedented global upheaval.¹⁹ Egyptian authors invited to participate in the project, Mohammed Hafiz Ibrahim, Waliy ad-Din Yakan, and Tadros Bey Wahby, represent three major ethno-religious constituents of the Egyptian nation: native Muslim, Turco-Egyptian, and Coptic Christian. Their poems reflect not only the plural nature of Egyptian identity, but also the diversity of political opinion in response to the British occupation around the time of the Shakespeare Tercentenary.

MOHAMMED HAFIZ IBRAHIM, 'TO THE MEMORY OF SHAKESPEARE'

Mohammed Hafiz Ibrahim (1871–1932) was an influential Egyptian poet, often described as *Sha 'ir al-Nil* (Poet of the Nile). He is famous for his patriotic writing, including verses which condemn the British for the Denshawai incident.²⁰ He was an ardent chronicler, whose poetry recorded crucial developments of the time and commented on a wide variety of social and political issues. His occasional poems, written to mark important historical events, addressed both the conqueror and the conquered, representatives of the British Empire, such as Queen Victoria, and their Egyptian opponents, among them Mustafa Kamil.²¹ His writing, while highly accomplished in form and means of expression, was 'no intellectual luxury' (Kani, p. 13). Ibrahim eschewed elitism, instead 'express[ing] popular feelings and humor in terms that ordinary people could understand' (Goldschmidt Jr., p. 86).

Ibrahim's contribution to Gollancz's volume is a poem in Arabic, entitled 'To the Memory of Shakespeare'. The entire text was never translated

into English, but *A Book of Homage* includes the Arabic original and short English summary.²² This prose synopsis conveys the poem's main ideas, but inevitably fails to do justice to its formal complexity and sophistication. The text is a dramatic monologue, expressed in the traditional Arabic poetic form of the *meemiyya*.²³ It opens and closes with couplets addressing Shakespeare directly, which serve as the piece's prologue and epilogue. The initial couplet is a ceremonial salutation to the playwright from the 'quiver land', a poetic allusion to Egypt. The subsequent, eleven-line section can be read as a dramatic exposition, naming Shakespeare 'the father of poetry' (l. 8) and introducing the modern world that has not progressed beyond the flawed state of human affairs depicted in his plays. This is followed by a four-line intermission, which presents Shakespeare as a peace-maker, whose anniversary should signal a truce among the warring nations.

The next, longest section of twenty lines, forms the heart of the argument: the outpouring of admiration for Shakespeare as a timeless genius. However, despite lavishing praise on the playwright, Ibrahim does not place him above Egypt's own national literature and culture. Instead, he puts Shakespeare on a par with ancient Egyptian artists, proclaiming that the 'freshness' of such characters as Macbeth, Shylock, Hamlet, and Romeo and Juliet 'remains through the ages, like the colourful inscriptions on a Pharaoh's temple that are immune to time' (l. 28). Similarly, he pays tribute to Arab writers, whose talents he considers to be no lesser than Shakespeare's: 'Had they received the appreciation they deserve, celebrations in their honour would be held throughout the East and the West' (l. 35). Ibrahim sees these authors as the source of enduring light, even though 'their own successors are blind to it' (l. 36). Effectively, he equates underappreciated Arab writers with Shakespeare, since he notes that Shakespeare had also had been ignored 'for scores of years', until eventually people were 'guided to his path' (l. 33).

By placing Egyptian writing on the same level as the epitome of the English literary canon, Ibrahim's poem proves to be anything but a humble acknowledgement of the alleged superiority of the coloniser's culture by a representative of a colonised nation. Instead, it provides a platform from which the colonised can address the coloniser as an equal. The only speaker in the poem is the Egyptian subaltern, while Shakespeare remains a silent listener. However, the concluding couplet asks Shakespeare to pass on a radical message from the poet of the Nile to 'the people of the Thames': 'However great is your pride in your mighty

fleet, your pride in your unique poet should be greater' (ll. 37–38). These lines set out to teach the British a moral and political lesson, reversing the usual power dynamic between the colonised and the coloniser. The lesson is that culture is more important than military might, which the British occupiers have been wielding in Egypt, and that cultural achievement is not the exclusive domain of the colonial ruler. The fact that Ibrahim chose to relay this message through Shakespeare assigns to the playwright the role of a potential spokesman for the oppressed and a negotiator between them and the oppressor.²⁴

WALIY AD-DIN YAKAN, 'SHAKESPEARE'²⁵

Waliy ad-Din Yakan (1873–1921) is a much less renowned poet than Ibrahim. He came from a prominent Turco-Circassian family and was related to Muhammad Ali, the ruler of Egypt in the first half of the nineteenth century. Yakan was born in Istanbul but, after losing his father at the age of six, he was brought up by his uncle Ali Haydar, the minister of finance in Egypt. Around the turn of the century, he went back to Istanbul, where he worked in governmental positions. He became critical of Sultan Abdul Hamid's regime, and was interned between 1902 and 1908. He was released after the Young Turk Revolution and, after a short stay in Istanbul, returned to Egypt. In 1909, he published *Al-Ma'um wa al-majhul* [*The Known and the Unknown*].²⁶ The book attacked the Ottoman Sultan, while extolling Lord Cromer's rule in Egypt, to the extent that the first edition was published with the picture of Cromer on the inside cover, captioned 'The Reformer of Egypt'.²⁷ Yakan also produced other pro-British writings, including his 1910 'Rithā', an elegy for King Edward VII, in which he declared that the Nile and the pyramids wept over the monarch's death.²⁸

Yakan's pro-British stance can be explained by his experiences in Turkey. The Young Turks party, with which he was associated, looked up to Britain in its fight to overthrow Sultan Abdul Hamid and institute a constitutional government. In its turn, Britain was happy to support them against the pro-German Hamidian regime. However, the British backing stemmed entirely from their own interests in the region, and most certainly did not extend to granting the same constitutional reforms and self-government to Egypt, India, or other countries under their colonial rule. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, expressed this position in starkly cynical terms in 1908: 'If, when there is a Turkish Constitution in

good working order and things are going well in Turkey, we are engaged in shooting a rising in Egypt of people who demand a Constitution too, the position will be very awkward'.²⁹ Liberal-minded Turco-Egyptian intellectuals like Yakan may not have been aware of these double standards, mistakenly seeing British control as the progressive alternative to Ottoman tyranny.

These issues come to the fore in 'Shakespeare', the Arabic poem which Yakan contributed to Gollanz's *Book of Homage*.³⁰ When compared to Ibrahim's tribute, Yakan's text is less formally complex and less closely focused on Shakespeare, whose commemoration it addresses directly in only four out of its eleven tercets. After addressing Shakespeare as 'the king of poetry' in the first stanza (l. 1), the poem zooms out to paint a broader cultural panorama. Rather than dwelling in depth on Shakespeare and his work, it goes on to juxtapose the playwright against other national poets who sang the glories of their own lands and people: Homer, Imru'ul-Qais, Dante, Victor Hugo, and Goethe. The poem proclaims Shakespeare's superiority over these writers, stating that he 'surpasses them all like lightning' (ll. 5–6). It does not stop at the implicit ranking of national literatures, but it adds an explicit comment on the current political situation, with an aside that Goethe has been 'disgraced' by the evil deeds of his compatriots (l. 19). Thus, unlike Ibrahim, who treats Shakespeare as a potential avenue for criticising colonial Britain, Yakan uses the occasion of the Tercentenary to support the British cause against Germany in the First World War.

Yakan develops this theme in stanzas eight to ten, where he praises Shakespeare's ability to elucidate bygone generations' deeds and motivations, so that 'their past [becomes] present, as if we witness[ed] their intents', and 'history [does] justice to all' (ll. 22–24). Poetic and divine justice triumph, as 'God, the creator of humankind, sees all, and every aggression must come to an end' (l. 28). To Yakan, a poet is entrusted with mirroring God's actions in denouncing evil and showing its eventual defeat: 'Every conqueror shall be conquered; such is the role of poetry, o poet' (l. 29). He seems to see himself as such a poetic voice of conscience, which lays bare his contemporaries' flaws, pointing out that people embroiled in the ongoing war 'carry their vices around their necks' (l. 25). However, he mentions only one culprit by name: Krupp, the German steel baron and arms manufacturer (l. 26). Alluding to the mighty artillery Krupp's factories produced for the German army, Yakan states that 'eyes that overflow with tears in the dark can do what cannons

cannot' (l. 27). By singling out Krupp, Yakan effectively takes the British side, blaming Germany for the misery that the war causes.

TADROS BEY WAHBY, 'THE MEMORY OF SHAKESPEARE'

The third Egyptian text commissioned for *A Book of Homage* never made it into the volume, but it survives as a typescript in the archive of Gollancz's correspondence at the Folger Shakespeare Library.³¹ It is a poem penned by Tadros Bey Wahby, ex-Principal and Inspector General of the Coptic Orthodox College and Schools in Cairo. Though Wahby (1856–1934) is now relatively unknown, in his day he was an important representative of the Egyptian Coptic intelligentsia. He worked as a translator and educator, and was appointed by the Patriarchy to teach composition, French and Arabic languages at the Coptic school. Though a Christian, he commanded sufficient knowledge of the holy Quran, *fiqh* (jurisprudence), and *sharia* (Islamic law) to be admitted to study at the al-Azhar Mosque, and he became one of the few Egyptian Azhari Copts. He published numerous articles on teaching history to schoolchildren in *Rawdat al-Madares*, Egypt's first educational-pedagogic journal. He composed hymns for Coptic schools, which promoted the values of peace, brotherhood, and tolerance. He also translated Fénelon's *Les Aventures de Télémaque*, and authored books on history, French, Arabic, and Coptic grammar, as well as theatre plays. His works reflect a deep interest in Egyptian history, politics, and Arabic language, intertwining elements of Christian and Islamic cultures which coexisted within the nation.³²

In a letter dated April 1916, Wahby Bey thanked Gollancz for the invitation to contribute to the volume, and explained that illness had prevented him from sending a tribute in time to be included in the publication. Nevertheless, he attached fifteen presentation copies of a poem in Arabic which he 'composed for the purpose'. He expressed the hope that the text would be read out at the ceremony on the 23rd of April, and he asked for it to 'be presented to His Britannic Majesty The King, should it please His Majesty to allow same'.³³ Gollancz's correspondence contains neither an English translation of the poem nor an indication whether Wahby's requests were fulfilled, but the requests themselves and their respectful tone signal that the author's stance might have been pro-British. Indeed, the poem praises not only Shakespeare, whom it presents as a messenger of enlightenment, but also 'the English, who have reached the peak of human achievement [...] in the land which has become

the home of excellence' (l. 25). By contrast, the rest of the world has suffered numerous calamities because its people 'succumbed to vice' (l. 38). The poem expresses the hope that, with time, humanity will match Britain's achievements. The speaker goes as far as to entertain the idea that God, who has made Shakespeare the monarch of wisdom, may have also inspired King George, hailed as pious and 'abiding by the constitution', to 'reform the happy valley of the Nile' (l. 74).

These outpourings of admiration for Britain may sound like a credulous echo of colonial propaganda, accepting Egypt's alleged inferiority and approving of its foreign occupation. However, considering that the Copts generally 'identified themselves with the Egyptian nation that sought liberation from colonial rule', it seems doubtful that this is what Wahby proposes.³⁴ More plausibly, like the Umma Party, he is advocating a gradualist approach to achieving independence. The corollary of this approach is to tolerate the British presence until accomplishing the desired political and social reforms, and then to progress towards full autonomy. In this context, Shakespeare becomes a signifier of what the Egyptian intellectuals valued about Britain: its scientific, economic, and socio-political advances. At the same time, the poem subtly points out that these benefits are still unavailable to Egyptians. After all, to describe King George as 'abiding by the constitution' is to draw attention to the growing demands for a constitutional government in Egypt, which the British were stubbornly ignoring. Thus, under the veneer of praise for the coloniser, Wahby conveys some of Egypt's own political aspirations. Simultaneously, he foregrounds the nation's cultural achievement, as his poem follows Islamic and Arabic traditions, rather than imitating western literary standards. The text is saturated with references to the Quran, Prophetic Hadiths, and similar cultural allusions, and it follows established conventions of classic Arabic poetry, such as opening with a courtly lover's complaint and bringing together seemingly disparate ideas in a display of masterful control of the material. In effect, Wahby seems to be trying to make the best of a fraught political situation, hoping that the British involvement may, with time, contribute to Egypt's social progress without compromising its national and cultural identity.

AHMAD LUTFI AL-SAYYID, 'TO SHAKESPEARE'

While the poems discussed above were composed in response to a British initiative, there have also been independent Tercentenary commemorations in Egypt. The most prominent of the celebrants was Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid (1872–1963). Born to a wealthy landowning family, Lutfi worked as a lawyer, politician, newspaper editor, and educational leader, rising to the post of Rector of Cairo University. Throughout his life, he championed the cause of Egypt's independence. In 1896, he joined a secret society dedicated to the nation's liberation, and in 1906 he was part of the Denshawai peasants' defence team. He became the leading member of the Umma Party, which advocated moderate means in pursuit of Egypt's autonomy, and he edited *al-Jarida*, the newspaper supportive of the party's policies. He campaigned for independence when Britain declared war on Germany in 1914, and he quit active politics when the hopes of sovereignty were dashed. Despite his opposition to the British occupation, Lutfi cherished many elements of Western thought, particularly Aristotle's philosophy and John Stuart Mill's liberal ideals. He was also a lifelong admirer of two European literary icons: Tolstoy and Shakespeare.³⁵

To commemorate Shakespeare's tercentenary, Lutfi wrote a front-page editorial for *Al-Abram*, the leading newspaper of the Arab world.³⁶ The article, entitled 'Ila Shakespeare' ['To Shakespeare'], stresses the playwright's universality, world-wide reach and importance. Lutfi foregrounds Shakespeare's lasting literary, philosophical, and cultural influence by discussing him in the context of later writers: Max Nordau, Anatole France, Victor Hugo, and Jean Jacques Rousseau. He points out that 'Shakespeare did not restrict his stories to people from a particular nation or social group. He dealt with Man per se regardless of his home. He tackled him in England, Denmark, just as he tackled him in Italy, Egypt, and Greece' ('Ila Shakespeare', p. 1). Neither was Shakespeare 'confined to the analysis of the psyches of crowned heads or religious figures, for they, though graced by higher social status, are no different from others in their lusts, virtues, moral standards, and failings' ('Ila Shakespeare', p. 1). In effect, Lutfi implies that Shakespeare belongs to all humanity regardless of race, religion, class, or nationality.

Moreover, Lutfi believes that Shakespeare is not bound to one historical period: 'Shakespeare does not belong exclusively to one nation or one age. He is read across time and performed on stages every day without

losing his novelty' ('Ila Shakespeare', p. 1). This view of Shakespeare's transhistorical significance is reflected in the article's title, 'To Shakespeare', which signals a desire to address the playwright directly and bring him into dialogue with the present moment. Indeed, over forty years before Jan Kott, Lutfi stresses Shakespeare's contemporaneity, calling him 'our mutual friend' ('Ila Shakespeare', p. 1).³⁷ He invites his readers to recognise Shakespeare's ongoing relevance, to identify with his characters, and to study his work as a means of reflecting on their own, current, real-life dilemmas. For Lutfi, Shakespeare's texts are universal because they present human traits and behaviours which can be recognised as easily in modern Egypt as in Renaissance England—anywhere and in any period. While the particulars of characters' situations may be alien, the underlying insights on the human condition can be applied across time and space. Shakespeare, then, calls for a critical reading which recognises the interplay of the universal and the particular. And a key element of such a reading is an ability to perceive parallels between the plays and the individual audiences' local circumstances, both personal and political.

In this light, the particular admiration for *Hamlet* that Lutfi displays in the editorial is revealing. A play depicting a murderous usurper on the throne must have resonated with a writer whose country was suffering under violently enforced foreign rule. Its protagonist, the archetypal scholar-philosopher facing the anti-culture represented by Claudius and his court, is not unlike an Egyptian intellectual struggling with the reality of the British occupation. Lutfi thus views Hamlet's hesitation to take revenge not as a manifestation of the character's weakness, but as Shakespeare's method of highlighting the key issue at the heart of the play: the difficulty facing a moral thinker confronted with evil at the highest level of political power. To him, Hamlet is 'a mystic philosopher whose heart simmers with anger, and a titanic avenger in the guise of a sweet young man. He knows everything about his family, but is uncertain what to do and what to refrain from doing'. As a result, he is torn by contradictions, becoming 'a brave coward, a serious scoffer, and a sane madman' ('Ila Shakespeare', p. 1). Lutfi explicitly draws the readers' attention to the parallels between the play and the contemporaneous political situation, stating that Shakespeare, 'the storyteller of discontent', should be 'present among us today to see that he was absolutely right about humanity' ('Ila Shakespeare', p. 1) Hamlet's discontent with Denmark's situation parallels the discontent which Egyptian intellectuals like Lutfi felt about their own country's plight. And the juxtaposition between Hamlet's 'pure soul'

(‘Ila Shakespeare’, p. 1) and corrupt court politics surrounding him can be seen as mirroring a juxtaposition of two cultures: that of the colonised and the coloniser.

Ultimately, Lutfi does not treat Shakespeare as an exclusively British poet, but as a universal genius, whose ‘greatness and humanity’ are recognised by ‘every lover of literature’, regardless of time and place (‘Ila Shakespeare’, p. 1). Shakespeare’s admirers include the wide Egyptian public, as Lutfi proudly emphasises: ‘There is none among the residents of [Egypt’s] cities or small towns who is not familiar with *Romeo and Juliet* or is ignorant of *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, or *The Merchant of Venice*’ (‘Ila Shakespeare’, p. 1).³⁸ This universal recognition of Shakespeare contrasts sharply to the way in which Lutfi elsewhere assessed the consul general Cromer: ‘from the perspective of the English, he is nothing but admired. Yet, in the Egyptians’ eyes, he deserves no praise’ (*Qissat hayati*, p. 45). While the appreciation for Egypt’s recent colonial ruler is limited to the occupiers, everybody recognises Shakespeare’s value, since it is founded on shared human interests rather than on military violence and political domination. In bringing these facts to light, Lutfi demonstrates that it was possible for Egyptians in 1916 to value the best elements of British culture, epitomised by Shakespeare, while rejecting the injustices perpetuated by Britain as a colonial power.

CELEBRATIONS AT THE EGYPTIAN UNIVERSITY, CAIRO

The inauguration of the Egyptian University in Cairo in December 1908 was a victory for the nation’s intellectuals, who had long campaigned for it against Cromer’s opposition.³⁹ In 1916, the University organised a commemoration of the Shakespeare Tercentenary, which received a detailed coverage in the *Al-Mabrousa* newspaper. It was held at the Faculty of Arts, ‘whose duty is to celebrate Shakespeare and his fellow artists, who are the reason for its existence’.⁴⁰ The undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, Esmael Pasha Hasanein, opened the event with a speech emphasising the necessity to ‘sustain a continuous connection with the poets of humanity both in the east and the west’ (‘Dhzekra Shakespeare wal Ihtefal’, p. 1). Then followed addresses by Percy White, lecturer in English Literature, and Louis Clement, professor of French Literature, who also delivered an excerpt from Shakespeare in French.⁴¹ Tawfiq Diab, an Egyptian journalist and anti-occupation activist, recited some of Shakespeare’s poetry and performed Mark Antony’s monologue

in both Arabic and English.⁴² The event thus had an international flavour, transposing Shakespeare into different linguistic and cultural contexts, rather than focusing on his Englishness.

Tawfiq al-Hakeem (1898–1987), a young man who was to become Egypt's leading dramatist, described the Egyptian University's commemoration as both a 'token of gratitude' to Shakespeare and 'an encouragement' to other writers.⁴³ For al-Hakeem, the event was a call to give voice to those artists whose talents were unrecognised and untapped. It should move Egyptians to follow Shakespeare's example in serving their nation the way he served England. Simultaneously, it should inspire the university to celebrate native-born writers as well, 'so it could not be said that the Egyptian nation has no single man to celebrate in the same vein the English celebrate their great poet'. Commemorating Shakespeare for his 'service to humanity' thus becomes a catalyst for appreciating Egypt's artists and an injunction not to forget 'the memory of *our* heroes' (al-Hakeem, p. 3, emphasis added). Effectively, al-Hakeem praises not so much Shakespeare as what he sees as the British attitude towards their national poet, an attitude that he wishes the young Egyptian University would promote in relation to Egypt's own literary creators.

CONCLUSION: TO CELEBRATE OR NOT TO CELEBRATE?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the strength of anti-British sentiment in the occupied country, some Egyptians took exception to their compatriots celebrating the invaders' national poet instead of promoting their own, native literary tradition. Thus, an anonymous article published in the Alexandrian newspaper *Wadinnil* [*Nile Valley*] sets out to correct what it perceives as Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid's Anglophile bias. It argues that Shakespeare is *one* of the poets of Humanity, not 'the Poet of Humanity', as Lutfi calls him in his editorial.⁴⁴ According to the author, Arab writers possess the same merits which Lutfi attributes to Shakespeare, and they should be receiving the media attention lavished on the English playwright:

We, children of the Arabic language are equal to other nations. Our great poets are also poets of Humanity, and they deserve equal admiration. Our poets must be given their due in the same way that [the Western nations] have acknowledged their cultural icons. ('Dhzeakra Shakespeare wa Qasidat Hafiz', p. 1)

In effect, the critic suggests that Lutfi should curb his enthusiasm for Shakespeare and instead venerate an Arab poet:

If we require a role model, we have plenty. It is enough, however, to mention one man, whose great importance Mr Lutfi himself acknowledges. Abu al-'Ala' al-Ma'arri, who excelled in his depiction, portrayal, and delineation of human nature, is no less significant than Shakespeare. ('Dhzekra Shakespeare wa Qasidat Hafiz', p. 1)

By emphasising the merits of al-Ma'arri (973–1054), the renowned Arab poet who predated Shakespeare by more than half a millennium, the author rejects Lutfi's apparent privileging of the colonisers' literary canon, and validates his or her own cultural heritage.⁴⁵

The poem which Hafiz Ibrahim wrote for Gollancz's *Book of Homage* also attracted criticism in Egypt. An anonymous critic in *Al-Watan* derided it as 'a hollow composition with neither meaning nor content, depending mainly on flowery verbiage'.⁴⁶ Overtly, the author attacks the poem's artistic merit, but one can detect political undertones in the article and the newspaper polemic that followed.⁴⁷ It seems that Ibrahim's detractors blamed what they saw as his stylistic flaws at least partly on his excessive indebtedness to Shakespeare, the epitome of the non-native (Anglophone) tradition, while his defenders countered that such indebtedness was appropriate for the poem's occasion.⁴⁸

At first glance, the criticism which greeted Lutfi's and Ibrahim's tributes to Shakespeare may imply that there were two diametrically opposed groups of Egyptian intellectuals at the time of the 1916 Tercentenary: those who, in Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin's terms, 'mimicked their colonial masters and echoed their praise of Shakespeare', and those who 'challenged the cultural authority of both Shakespeare and colonial regimes by turning to their own bards as sources of alternative wisdom and beauty'.⁴⁹ Our chapter reveals that the situation was much more complex than this. Firstly, as Loomba and Orkin point out, there is a third way in which the representatives of colonised nations can and do engage with Shakespeare: they '[appropriate him] as their comrade in anti-colonial arms by offering new interpretations and adaptations of his work' (p. 2). Mahmoud al-Shetawi amply demonstrates that more recent Egyptian and other Arab artists have engaged in such anti-colonial appropriation, but he does not think the practice occurred as early as 1916.⁵⁰

Our analysis of the Tercentenary tributes by Ibrahim and Lutfi in particular shows that even at that early stage some Egyptian writers were able to use Shakespeare to present a subtle criticism of the colonial situation, even if they did not produce wholesale anti-colonial reworkings of his plays.

Secondly, the Egyptian Shakespeare Tercentenary commemorations reveal a more diverse range of opinions within the nation than a simple binary of colonial versus anti-colonial attitudes can account for. As we have demonstrated, Egyptians at the time varied not only in their ethno-religious backgrounds, but first and foremost in their interpretations of what a modern Egyptian national identity should be and what were the best ways of achieving independent nationhood. To some, like Yakan, the key immediate goal was to end the Ottoman oppression, even if this meant accepting some British interference. To others, like Lutfi and Wahby, an indispensable condition to establishing modern Egypt was social, political, and educational reform, which, while not abandoning native cultural traditions, adopted certain Western ideas, such as a constitutional government and secular academic institutions. Yet others, like Lutfi's and Ibrahim's anonymous critics, rejected anything to do with the British occupier in their quest for immediate political and cultural independence. In the Tercentenary year, Shakespeare became a space in which these multiple voices and opinions clashed and debated. Through engaging with Shakespeare, Egyptian intellectuals negotiated a way beyond either a submissive imitation of the coloniser's culture or its outright, patriotic rejection. In the midst of the trauma of occupation, that way was far from clear and straightforward. The shaping of both Egyptian national identity and a distinctly Egyptian Shakespeare would continue well beyond 1916, even to the present day.⁵¹

NOTES

1. Henry Arthur Jones, *Shakespeare and Germany (Written during the Battle of Verdun)* (London: Whittingham and Co., Chiswick Press, 1916), p. 24. Like many of his contemporaries, Jones uses the word 'England' to denote both England and Britain (the words 'Britain' or 'British' do not occur in the pamphlet). In our analysis, we employ the term 'Britain' in the way that reflects the current understanding of the concept, while retaining Jones's 'England' in quotations. For the account of the usage of 'England and

- English [...] as metonymies for Britain and British’, reflecting the Anglocentric concept of British culture inherited from the imperial period, see Willy Maley, ‘“This Sceptred Isle”: Shakespeare and the British Problem’, in *Shakespeare and National Culture*, ed. by John Joughin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), pp. 83–108 (p. 85).
2. ‘Sir G. O. Trevelyan and the War. Interesting Address at Stratford-on-Avon’, *The Newcastle Daily Journal*, 2 May 1916, p. 5. For other examples, see Clara Calvo, ‘Fighting over Shakespeare: Commemorating the 1916 Tercentenary in Wartime’, *Critical Survey* 24.3 (2012), 48–72; Matthew C. Hendley, ‘Cultural Mobilization and British Responses to Cultural Transfer in Total War: The Shakespeare Tercentenary of 1916’, *First World War Studies* 3.1 (2012), 25–49; Lynne Walhout Hinojosa, *The Renaissance, English Cultural Nationalism, and Modernism, 1860–1920* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 143–176; Richard Foulkes, *Performing Shakespeare in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), pp. 180–206; and Balz Engler, ‘Shakespeare in the Trenches’, *Shakespeare Survey, Volume 44: Shakespeare and Politics*, ed. by Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 105–11.
 3. Coppélia Kahn, ‘Remembering Shakespeare Imperially: The 1916 Tercentenary’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 52.4 (2001), 456–478 (p. 457).
 4. See Andrew Murphy, ‘Bhíos ag Stratford ar ab abhainn. Shakespeare, Douglas Hyde, 1916’, in *Shakespeare and the Irish Writer*, ed. by Janet Clare and Stephen O’Neill (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2010), pp. 51–63; Andrew Murphy, ‘Shakespeare’s Rising’, in *Celebrating Shakespeare: Commemoration and Cultural Memory*, ed. by Clara Calvo and Coppélia Kahn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 161–181; Philip Mead, ‘Lest We Forget: Shakespeare Tercentenary Commemoration in Sydney and London, 1916’, in Calvo and Kahn, eds, pp. 225–244; Mark Houlihan, ‘Shakespeare and the Kiwi, 1916’, in *Shakespeare Jubilees: 1769–2014*, *Studien zur englischen Literatur* 27, ed. by Christa Jansohn and Dieter Mehl (Zürich: LIT Verlag, 2015), pp. 333–348; Victor Houliston, ‘*The Merchant of Venice* in the City of Gold: The Tercentenary in Johannesburg’, in *The Shakespearean International Yearbook 9: Special*

- Section, South African Shakespeare in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Laurence Wright (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 46–65; and Peter Merrington, ‘Loyal Memory: The Tercentenary in Colonial Cape Town’, in Wright, ed., pp. 29–45.
5. Ramsis Awad briefly discusses some aspects of the Egyptian celebrations of the 1916 Tercentenary in his *Shakespeare fi Misr [Shakespeare in Egypt]* (Cairo: GEBO, 1986), pp. 7–9.
 6. Robert L. Tignor, *Egypt: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 81.
 7. Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid Marsot, *A History of Egypt from the Arab Conquest to the Present*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 83; Tignor, p. 241.
 8. Urabi’s name is sometimes spelled as Arabi, ‘Urabi, or Ourabi.
 9. See Donald Malcolm Reid, ‘The ‘Urabi Revolution and the British Conquest, 1879–1882’, in *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Volume Two: Modern Egypt, from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, ed. by M. W. Daly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 217–238; Marsot, pp. 86–88.
 10. See also John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 64–111.
 11. See Reid, p. 217; Marsot, pp. 88–89; Tignor, p. 231.
 12. Earl of Cromer [Evelyn Baring], *Modern Egypt*, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1908), II, 154–155.
 13. Sania Sharawi Lanfranchi, *Casting off the Veil: The Life of Huda Shaarawi, Egypt’s First Feminist* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), p. 36; M. W. Daly, ‘The British Occupation, 1882–1922’, in Daly, ed., pp. 239–251 (p. 243); Tignor, pp. 231–235.
 14. George Bernard Shaw, ‘Preface for Politicians’, in *John Bull’s Other Island and Major Barbara* (New York: Brentano’s, 1908), pp. v–lxii (pp. xlvi–lxii).
 15. See Lanver Mak, *The British in Egypt: Community, Crime and Crises, 1882–1922* (London: Tauris, 2011), pp. 194–196.
 16. Soon after the Armistice, the British continuing refusal to address Egyptians’ legitimate grievances led to the next stage in the country’s struggle for independence, the 1919 revolution. See Tignor, pp. 239–250; Marsot, pp. 96–97.

17. Chief among them was Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, who organised Urabi's defence at his trial in 1882 and criticised Britain's occupation of Egypt. See Louisa Villa, 'A "Political Education": Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, the Arabs and the Egyptian Revolution (1881–82)', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 17.1 (2012), 46–63.
18. For reasons explained below, only two of them actually appeared in the volume.
19. See Kahn, *passim*, and Gordon McMullan, 'Goblin's Market: Commemoration, Anti-Semitism and the Invention of "Global Shakespeare" in 1916', in Calvo and Kahn, eds, pp. 182–201.
20. Arthur Goldschmidt Jr., *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Egypt* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), p. 86.
21. Mohamed Esmael Kani, Introduction to 2nd edition of *Diwan Hafiz Ibrahim* [*Collected Poems of Hafiz Ibrahim*], ed. by Ahmad Amin and others (Cairo: GEBO, 1987 [1937]), pp. 9–51. 'To the Memory of Shakespeare' is reprinted in this anthology on pp. 72–75.
22. See *A Book of Homage to Shakespeare*, ed. by Israel Gollancz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1916), pp. 331–332 for the Arabic text; p. 335 for the English summary.
23. Meemiyya (or mimiyyah) is a poem which employs a monorhyme scheme, with all lines ending with the nasal sound 'm', represented in the Arabic alphabet by the letter 'meem'.
24. Mahmoud Al-Shetawi offers a contrasting interpretation, seeing the poem as a proof that 'early Arab writers and artists mimicked their [colonial] masters and happily accepted life under their literary shadow'. However, his brief discussion does not analyse the poem in much detail, quoting only the final couplet, which he reads as 'probably echoing Carlyle, who was quoted as saying that were England to choose between Shakespeare and the Empire, it would opt for Shakespeare'. Mahmoud F. Al-Shetawi, 'Arabic Adaptations of Shakespeare and Postcolonial Theory', *Critical Survey*, 25.3 (2013), 4–28 (pp. 9–10).
25. In Gollancz's volume, Yakan's family name is consistently misspelled as 'Yeyen' (pp. xx, 333, 335, 557).
26. For Yakan's concise biography, see Goldschmidt Jr., pp. 229–230.
27. Waliy ad-Din Yakan, *Al-Ma'lum wa al-majhul* [*The Known and the Unknown*], 2 vols (Cairo: Al Ma'aref, 1909), I, n. pag.

28. Waliy ad-Din Yakan, *Diwan Yakan [Poetry Anthology]* (Cairo: al Moqtataf and al Moqattam, 1924), p. 63.
29. Quoted in Feroz Ahmad, 'Great Britain's Relations with the Young Turks 1908–1914', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 2.4 (1966), 302–329 (p. 303).
30. As far as we can determine, the complete text of this poem appears in print only in Gollancz's volume. The posthumously published anthology of Yakan's poetry, *Diwan Yakan*, reprints the first four stanzas, under the title 'To Shakespeare' (pp. 117–118).
31. Tadros Bey Wahby, 'The Memory of Shakespeare', in *Tributes for Book of Homage to Shakespeare*, ed. by Israel Gollancz (manuscript collection), Folger Shakespeare Library, Y.d.85 (7).
32. Khairudeen al-Zarkaly, 'Wahby Bey', *Al 'Alam [Who Is Who]*, 8 vols (Beirut: Darul 'Elm, 1927, repr. 2002), II, 82; Mohamed Sayed Kilany, *Al Adab al Qibty Qadeeman wa Hadeethan [Classical and Contemporary Coptic Literature]* ([1963], repr. Cairo: Al Ferjani, 2010), p. 205; Aida Naseef, 'Tadros Wahby men Sho'araa' al Aqbat' ['Tadros Wahby. A Coptic Poet'], *Al Bawaba*, 8 April 2016 <https://www.albawabhnews.com> [accessed 20 October 2018].
33. *Letters chiefly to Sir Israel Gollancz from Various Writers* (manuscript collection), Folger Shakespeare Library W.a.79 (19).
34. Vivian Ibrahim, 'Beyond the Cross and the Crescent: Plural Identities and the Copts in Contemporary Egypt', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38.14 (2015), 2584–2597 (p. 2585).
35. For Lutfi's short biography, see Goldschmidt Jr., pp. 183–184. His memoirs, *Qissat hayati [My Life]* (Cairo: Al Hilal, 1963) have not so far been translated into English.
36. *Al-Abram [The Pyramids]*, founded in 1875, is the second oldest Egyptian newspaper. It remains among the most popular and credible newspapers in the Middle East.
37. See Jan Kott's influential study, *Shakespeare Our Contemporary* (London: Methuen, 1964).
38. While Lutfi's claim may be somewhat hyperbolic, from the second half of the nineteenth century Arabic adaptations of Shakespeare had been popularised on the emerging Egyptian commercial stages. See Al-Shetawi, 9.
39. See Lanfranchi, pp. 36–41.

40. 'Dhzeakra Shakespeare wal Ihtefal beha fil Jame 'a al Mesryya' ['Commemorating Shakespeare and Its Celebration at the Egyptian University'], *Al-Mahrousa*, Cairo, 3 May 1916, p. 1.
41. White and Clement were among a number of foreign staff teaching at the Egyptian University at the time. See Donald Malcolm Reid, *Cairo University and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
42. The source does not specify the speech, but most likely it is referring to Mark Antony's 'funeral oration' for Caesar (III.2.70–104).
43. Ibn [Tawfiq] al-Hakeem, 'Laytany Kontu Shakespeare' ['I wish I were Shakespeare'], *Jareedatul Afkar*, 4 May 1916, p. 3. For al-Hakeem's short biography, see Goldschmidt Jr., pp. 67–69 (in this source, his name is spelled as al-Hakim).
44. 'The Memory of Shakespeare', *Wadinnil*, 27 April 1916, p. 1.
45. 'Al-Ma'arri, Arab Poet', *Encyclopaedia Britannica* online <https://www.britannica.com> [accessed 23 November 2018].
46. 'Shakespeare', *Al-Watan* 6 March 1916, p. 1 (quoted in Awad, p. 8). Since Gollanz's volume was not published until late April 1916, Ibrahim's poem must have been circulated in Egypt in another format before then. Ibrahim's later anthology mentions a publication on 1st March 1916, but does not specify where that publication occurred (*Diwan Hafiz Ibrahim*, p. 72).
47. See 'Dhzeakra Shakespeare wa Qasidat Hafiz' ['The Memory of Shakespeare and Hafiz's Poem'], *Wadinnil*, 8 March 1916, p. 1, and the exchange of letters to the editor in *Wadinnil* between 8 and 16 March 1916.
48. Awad argues that the underlying reason for the polemic was the ongoing artistic feud between Ibrahim's supporters and the followers of his great poetic rival, Ahmed Shawqi (1868–1932) (Awad, p. 8). Shawqi was in exile between 1914 and 1919, which is probably why his own Tercentenary poem, 'Shakespeare', did not attract any attention in Egypt at the time. It was subsequently published in Shawqi's anthology ('Shakespeare', *Diwan Shawqi* [*Shawqi's Poetry Anthology*], ed. Ahmad al Hofy, 2 vols (Cairo: Nahdet Misr, 1980), II, 350–353. Ironically, the poem was later criticised for praising not only Shakespeare, but also the British Empire. See Abbas Mahmoud al-Aqqad and Ebrahim al-Mazny, *Al-diwān fil Adab wal Naqd* [*Al-Diwan in Literature and Criticism*] (Cairo: Hindawi, 1921, repr. 2018), pp. 150–151.

49. Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin, 'Introduction: Shakespeare and the Post-Colonial Question', in Loomba and Orkin, eds, *Post-Colonial Shakespeares* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 1–19 (p. 2).
50. See al-Shetawi, pp. 9–11 and 15–21.
51. For more recent developments, see May Sélim, 'Tracing Shakespeare: A Brief Look at a Century of Bard's Presence in Egypt's Theatres', *Abram Online*, 30 April 2016, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/205745.aspx> [accessed 23 November 2018].

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