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rise of the conservative current represented by the Khalidiyya-Naqshbandiyya and the more radical current identified with the Ottoman-language print media. The social changes of the era, including both the Muslim refugee influx and the growth of bourgeois strata, enlarged the social bases for these changes. Despite the Ottomans’ dependent integration into the world economy, economic development supported these changes through the relative importance of internal trade and the growth of the propertied proto-bourgeoisie. In contrast to the economic constraints, the imaginative realm opened by the new literary forms permitted Ottoman imaginations to soar, exploring new alternatives in individual subjectivity, gender relations, class formation and societal reintegration.

The New Cambridge History of Islam

The era of Muhammad 'Ali

The French occupation of Egypt (1798–1801) was the first military incursion by an industrialising and aggressively expansionist Europe in the central Middle East, and it ushered in the modern era of Western hegemony. Napoleon’s view of Egypt as a stepping-stone to India underlined its strategic position. Since then a succession of powers has sought influence if not dominance in Egypt and the greater Middle East, considering it too important to be left alone. Anglo-French competition was superseded by a British invasion and occupation in 1882. After the last of Britain’s garrison withdrew in 1956, two decades of Soviet-American rivalry ended in the present American hegemony. Foreign dominance demarcates the political history of modern Egypt from previous eras.

The ‘Mamlük’ households that had ruled for most of the previous century were too weak and divided to regain supremacy after the French withdrew, enabling Muhammad ‘Ali to manoeuvre himself into the viceroyalty. Muhammad ‘Ali (in Turkish, Mehmed Ali) came to Egypt in 1801 with an Ottoman expedition sent against the French. A native of Kavalla, in what is now Greece, he was an officer in the Albanian unit, becoming their commander when his superior was killed, and waging war against the Mamlük factions while ingratiating himself with Cairo’s notables. In an unusual move the ‘udamé’ of Cairo requested his appointment as viceroy, and thus he was appointed and awarded the title of pasha by Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) in June 1805. During his long reign Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha (r. 1805–48) established his family as hereditary rulers in Egypt. In 1905 he was retroactively declared ‘the founder of modern Egypt’ during the official centenary of his appointment as viceroy. His descendants, Kings Fu’ād (r. 1917–36) and Fāriq (r. 1936–52), staged additional commemorations and patronised a school of historians in order to place Muhammad ‘Ali and the ‘Muhammadī’ dynasty he founded at
the centre of the modern national narrative. Regardless of whether his nickname is deserved, his policies contributed in important ways to the making of the modern state and society.

**Household government**

Muhammad 'Ali’s Albanian origin was less significant than his formation in and adherence to Ottoman ruling class culture and norms. He spoke Ottoman Turkish, not Arabic. He introduced an architectural style emulating that of the imperial capital, known as 'Rūmi', and portraits show him adopting the new dress required by Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) in the 1830s, including replacement of the turban by the türbāh. Once appointed viceroy, he assembled a household commensurate with his office and rank, with numerous male and female slaves, and adopted the imperial style of reproduction through multiple concubines. Large households were integral to the reproduction of the Ottoman ruling class. Male slaves were trained to become members of the military-administrative apparatus, and their strategic placement and advancement in it enhanced the influence of their master’s network. Harem slaves were trained to become the wives of ruling-class men and mistresses of their own harems. Strategic out-marriage of harem women enhanced the loyalty of clients and cemented alliances with other households. Muhammad 'Ali’s leading officers and administrators were his kin, in-laws and mamluks, while others were linked to him through marriage to women from his harem.3

**Reforms**

Muhammad 'Ali’s reforms in the military, administration and education drew inspiration from earlier Ottoman reforms along French lines that had culminated in the Nizam-ı Cedid of Sultan Selim III, who was overthrown in 1807. While similar reforms were begun some twenty years later by Sultan Mahmud II they were revived earlier by Muhammad 'Ali in Egypt. The Pasha used old-style troops in the Arabian campaign (1811–18), freeing the Holy Cities from Wahhābī–Sa‘ūdī control, and penetrating Najd to destroy Sa‘ūdī power. This was done at the sultan’s request, to restore his sovereignty in the Hijāz and his prestige as servant of the Holy Cities, but the Pasha now controlled this province, appointing his own men as governors. Later he extended his control to Yemen. The old-style troops also conquered what is now northern Sudan (1820–2) in search of gold and slaves. The Pasha tried to form military units of African slaves, but their high mortality made this impractical. Instead, in 1822 he began to form a new army of peasant conscripts trained and organised on the French model, still the most advanced of its time. Like Sultan Selim he named his new army nīzām-i jīdī. The nīzām army and a nascent navy performed well in Greece (1824–8). Refurbished and rebuilt, they easily seized the Syrian provinces and southern Turkey in 1831–2.

Sweeping fiscal reform preceded formation of the nīzām army. A cadastral survey in 1813–14 spelled the end of the tax-farm (iltizām) system. Direct collection of the land tax increased the Pasha’s resources, strengthening his hand, and deprived the old elite of a source of income.4 Another military-related reform was the introduction of ‘modern’ (European) educational subjects and methods. Traditionally, the religious elite monopolised formal education, the purpose of which was to reproduce the religious culture and train the next generation of clerics. Muslim boys who showed an aptitude for learning in a Qur’ān school (kuttāb) would enter a mosque-college (madrasa), where the curriculum emphasised the religious sciences such as theology and jurisprudence, and related areas such as grammar and rhetoric. Other forms of education were less formal. The ruling and upper classes employed tutors, and the sons of the urban middle and artisanal classes learned from their fathers and uncles or as apprentices. No firm distinction existed between ‘training’ and ‘education’, and girls might receive either depending upon their social status. The first of the new schools was created in 1815 to train officers in military engineering. Other schools were either military-related, such as the medical school and the veterinary school, or related to what nowadays would be called economic and social development, such as a school for midwives, an agricultural school and the School of Languages. The Pasha sent a small number of officers and administrators to train in Europe before 1826, but in

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that year the first of several large student 'missions' was dispatched to Paris. Like the new schools, the student missions emphasised practical knowledge: civil, military and naval administration; diplomacy; hydraulics; mechanics; military engineering; artillery; metal founding and arms making; printing; lithography and engraving; chemistry; medicine; surgery; anatomy; physiology and hygiene; agriculture; natural history and mining; and shipbuilding. 5

The students were in their teens to thirties, already literate in Ottoman and/or Arabic, and some had religious educations. The Pasha's goal was to produce a cadre of technically competent officers and officials, rather than mass education.

State, religious institutions and the intelligentsia

The present relationship between religion and the Egyptian state developed in the nineteenth century, as the Pasha and his successors asserted the prerogative of appointing (or approving) the chief religious officials, and defining (and thus limiting) their authority. By the end of the century their reforms impinged on and regulated the operation of al-Azhar and the shari'a courts. In 1812 Muhammad 'Ali seized the opportunity presented by the death, in consecutive months, of the Shaykh al-Azhar (rector of al-Azhar) and the Shaykh al-Bakri (head of the Bakriyya tariqa or mystical order), to assert his authority over these offices. He intervened to secure the nomination of Muhammad al-Shanawari (d. 1817) as Shaykh al-Azhar and, weeks later, invested Muhammad al-Bakri (d. 1855) as Shaykh al-Sajjada al-Bakriyya, making explicit al-Bakri's authority over all the Sufi orders. Four years later he added to al-Bakri's influence by naming him naqib al-ashraf (chief of the descendants of the Prophet). In 1835 the Pasha raised the standing of a third religious dignitary when appointing the Hanafi mufid, Shaykh Ahmad al-Tarriimi al-Khalili (c. 1801-52), by making him the state mufidi, whose rulings alone would have official standing. The title of al-Tarriimi's long-serving successor, Muhammad 'Abbasi al-Mahdi (1828 or 1829-96), mufid al-diyar al-miṣriyya (loosely, Grand Mufid of Egypt), indicates the supremacy this office acquired in juridical affairs. 6


Clerical activism had played a role in Muhammad 'Ali's rise, and, two years later, in Sultan Selim's fall. The pious and self-effacing al-Shanawari fitted the Pasha's desire for a shaykh al-Azhar without political ambitions. By giving Shaykh al-Bakri formal authority over the mystical orders and, later, the aṣhraf, and with the creation of the post of Grand Mufid, he divided religious authority among three chief clerics, each owing his office to the ruler and none likely to challenge him. The 'ulama' lost an independent source of income with the abolition of tax-farming and the taxation of most waqfs and riwaq endowments of agricultural land. The Pasha blocked new endowments of land, a policy reversed by 'Abbās (r. 1849-54), who however created a bureau to supervise them, which later became a ministry. Government supervision of waqfs meant control of their income. The 'ulama', paid out of these funds, became in effect civil servants. 7

Despite some grumbling about the treatment of waqfs, certain key 'ulama' supported reform and cooperated with the new regime. Shaykh Ḥasan al-ʿAttār (1766-1833), a prolific writer with wide scholarly interests, supported Muhammad 'Ali's educational reforms, especially the schools of medicine and veterinary science. The Pasha appointed him editor of the new official gazette, al-Waqaf al-Miṣriyya and, later, Shaykh al-Azhar. Al-ʿAttār's most famous pupil was Shaykh Rifat al-Tahawi (1801-73), who accompanied the first student mission to Paris as its imām, learning French and reading widely. He later served as head of the new School of Languages, edited al-Waqaf al-Miṣriyya and directed the translation bureau. Purged by 'Abbās along with other protégés of Muhammad 'Ali and Ibrāhim (r. 1848), he returned to Cairo under Sa'id (1854-63). He again directed the translation bureau under Iṣmāʿil (r. 1863-79) and was a proponent of mass education for girls as well as boys. 8

Al-ʿAttār, al-Tahawi and others shared a perception of Ottoman weakness and the necessity of reform in order to overcome it. Their views on education contained two themes characteristic of reformist 'ulama' in Egypt and elsewhere. One was that the Muslims had lost the study of philosophy and the natural sciences, in which they had once excelled, and in which Europe was now advanced. They believed that Muslims could overcome their present

state of backwardness by reintroducing these subjects in the curriculum. The other theme was that traditional educational institutions such as al-Azhar were incapable of meeting this challenge. 9

Conservative 'ulamā', faced with the challenge posed by reformers such as al-ʿAttār and al-Ṭahāwī as well as the revivalist Wahhābī and Sunnī movements, may have responded by putting greater emphasis on the immutability of the sharīʿa and the inadmissibility of independent ijtihād (original interpretation outside madhhāb boundaries) in sharīʿa studies. The doctrine of the closure of the door of ijtihād had appeared earlier, but it was not a consensual view, and limited forms of ijtihād continued to be practised and discussed by prominent 'ulamā. According to Indira Gesink the conservatives' insistence on the limits of ijtihād served 'their desire [to uphold] . . . a consistent body of law in the face of external challenges and internal divisions'. The views of the reformers were more in line with the aims of the Muḥammādī dynasty. Frustration with the conservatism of the religious establishment led them to support the new schools. 10

Economic policies

Muḥammad ʿAlī oversaw the improvement of the irrigation system and an extension and intensification of agriculture. Summer canals were cut throughout Lower Egypt, permitting perennial irrigation. The Pasha ordered the cultivation of a newly discovered, long-staple variety of cotton, which was prized in international markets. Perennial irrigation made possible an increase in production of cotton and other cash crops grown in the summer, such as indigo and rice. Much of that was destined for international markets, and in a good year agricultural exports accounted for about one-fifth of the Pasha’s revenues. The Pasha created a ‘command economy’ in pursuing these and other, less successful, policies. State control of agricultural and industrial production and distribution expanded steadily from 1809 through the 1820s. An elaborate system was created whereby decisions about what crops to plant and where to plant them were passed down through the provincial bureaucracy to village officials. The harvests were taken to government warehouses whence they were distributed internally or exported. The peasants were credited against the tax they owed and paid for the remainder of their harvest, though they often received promissory notes that were discounted. The major, traditional industries as well as new ones were controlled in a similar fashion. Foundries and arsenals were established to supply the military and navy, and an ambitious effort was made to launch a large-scale textile industry. Although textile production was traditionally widespread in the villages and towns, the Pasha was persuaded to create a factory system based on the contemporary European model. By the early 1830s there were about two dozen cotton-spinning manufactories in the Nile Valley, plus weaving and printing establishments, into which skilled workers were drafted. Egyptian artisans were able to copy human-powered mule jennies, while most weaving was still done by hand. Imported steam-driven jennies and looms could neither be copied nor adequately maintained, and this technological gap might have doomed the factories in the long run if political events had not intervened. 11

The command economy impoverished a significant portion of the peasantry. Much attention in the 1820s and 1830s was devoted to the reassessment of land that had fallen into tax arrears or was deserted. There was growing concern with illegal (that is, unauthorised) peasant migration as villagers fled tax arrears and conscription. Village shaykhs were instructed to report strangers, and dragnets were launched to return absconders. A decline in state revenues from their peak in the late 1820s reflected the deteriorating situation in the countryside. Moreover, the occupation of Syria was a net drain on the treasury. Due to the command economy’s failure, only summer crops were controlled in the later 1830s. 12

Controversy over Muhammad ʿAlī’s policies intensified in Europe during the occupation of Syria (1831–9). The rebellious Pasha’s victories caused Sultan Mahmud II to turn to Russia for support. The advance of Russian influence in Istanbul – and Russian warships into the Sea of Marmara – was a setback for British strategy, one of the pillars of which was to block Russian movement southward towards the Straits, in the Caucasus and in Central Asia. Thus Britain reaffirmed its support for Ottoman territorial integrity in Asia, and upheld the reform party in Istanbul in the hope of preserving the empire as a bulwark against Russian expansion. British intervention in

12 Cuno, Pasha’s paxatori, pp. 177–20, 133–4, 144; Fahmy, Pasha’s war, pp. 45, 103–1, 197–8.
Turco-Egyptian hostilities during 1839–40 forced the Pasha to withdraw from Syria and Arabia, ending this threat to the Ottoman Empire. British hostility towards the Pasha’s controls on production and commerce – what they called his ‘monopoly system’ – intensified after the invasion of Syria. In addition to the strategic threat posed by Egyptian expansion, British views reflected their adoption of an aggressive policy of ‘free trade imperialism’. The Anglo-Ottoman commercial convention of 1838 established a free-trade regime – low ad valorem duties and a ban on ‘monopolies’ – that would be applied in Egypt after 1841.13

The middle decades
Muhammad ‘Ali’s policies had mixed results for the lives of ordinary people. Security improved. Before 1800 villages were enclosed in walls and stout gates guarded Cairo’s residential quarters. The gates of the quarters were removed by the French and never replaced, and mid-century villages were no longer walled. Nutrition improved with the expansion and intensification of agriculture. Famine had occurred often in the eighteenth century, but was rare in the nineteenth.

On the other hand, Muhammad ‘Ali’s policies accentuated inequalities. Land in arrears or abandoned by impoverished peasants was transferred to wealthier villagers, including the rural notables, and to members of the Pasha’s family, his officers and officials. Most land was state revenue (miri or kharif) land and would not be recognised as privately owned until the 1890s. The Pasha granted additional cultivated and reclaimable land to himself and his family, officers and officials after 1840 to ensure their loyalty. Later called ‘izba land, it was privately owned and untaxed until 1854, when Sa‘id imposed a low rate on it. Thus in the countryside the smallhold and landless strata grew while some villagers – especially the notables – accumulated more land. A privileged class of large landowners, mostly the families of Ottoman officers and officials in the Pasha’s service – Ottoman Egyptians – and headed by the viceregal family, was created. Two terms, ‘izba and murāba’ā, were emblematic of the new situation. Large landholdings were often farmed by sharecroppers for a one-fourth share of the crop, a system known as murāba’ā. On the large estates agricultural workers began to be housed by mid-century in small settlements called ‘izbas. Named after their owners, ‘izbas are easy to spot on early twentieth-century survey maps, and the names reflect the origins of the large landowning class: Ottoman Egyptians, rural notables, provincial merchants and the occasional foreigner.15

Muhammad ‘Ali’s policies appear not to have weakened Egypt’s large-scale merchant class as much as shifts in international trade. Muhammad Bey Shinnawi, a descendant of prominent merchant notables in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century al-Mansūra, was a mill owner and cotton merchant on the eve of the First World War.16 Yet continual operation of a merchant family firm such as his was more the exception than the norm. With the liberalisation of trade in the 1840s, European firms based in Alexandria and employing Greek agents came to dominate large-scale commerce in the countryside. Facing stiff competition from firms backed by European capital, many merchants invested in land. Despite a lack of de jure ownership, land tenure was stabilised by new laws, and rising agricultural prices made it an attractive investment.17

The traditional craft, service and merchant guilds remained intact, becoming obsolete towards the end of the century once they ceased either to serve the needs of the state or to protect the interests of the workers. Urban manufacturing and service workers increased in number. Some older industries restructured in the face of European competition and adjusted to new tastes, so that in the second half of the century construction workers, furniture makers, tailors and shoemakers learned to produce in European styles. Some entirely new services arose, such as cab driving, made possible by the construction of straight, paved streets.18

The political regime
In accordance with the London Convention and the ferman of 1840–1 the Muhammad ‘Ali family were granted the hereditary paslik of Egypt and Sudan. The Pasha was required to reduce his army to 18,000. All Ottoman

16 Cuno, Pasha’s peasants, pp. 251 n. 33.
17 Cuno, Pasha’s peasants, pp. 186–97.
laws and treaties were to be applied in Egypt, including the commercial convention of 1838. The last seven years of the Pasha’s rule were devoted to political and economic retenchment. He had once said that he ensured the loyalty of his men by paying them well and giving them gifts, but not land, which might enable them to develop an independent influence. Now he distributed land grants to solidify the position of his family and retain the loyalty of the elite. The marriage of harem women to officers and officials further assured their loyalty to the viceregal household. Though Muhammad ‘Ali, his sons and his leading officials had retinues of mamluks who were placed in the military and administration, by mid-century the men entering the officer corps and civil service were trained in government schools rather than elite households, and mamluk retinues had become obsolete. Large harems were still maintained, as the practice of marrying harem women to officials and officers continued through the reign of Ismā‘īl. Ismā‘īl, and other princes and princesses, gave harem women in marriage along with houses and grants of land of anywhere from 50 to 1,000 faddāns (1 faddān = approximately 1 acre). Although, in keeping with Ottoman reform, the Egyptian government formed executive ministries in the 1830s and a consultative assembly in the 1860s, the political regime remained autocratic. To rise ‘up’ in state service meant moving closer to the viceroy, who controlled finances and was the sole dispenser of patronage.

The Ottoman system of succession of the oldest male fostered rivalry between Muhammad ‘Ali’s descendants. The Pasha was succeeded by his son ʿIbrāhīm as regent, followed by his grandson ‘Abbās ʿIlī I, his younger son ʿSa‘d, and then another grandson, Ismā‘īl. There was bad blood between ʿIbrāhīm and ‘Abbās. Once in power ‘Abbās purged many officials favoured by Muhammad ‘Ali and ʿIbrāhīm, earning an undeserved reputation as a ‘reactionary’. ‘Abbās’ loyalists attempted to install his son ʿIlīm as viceroy in place of ʿSa‘d, the legitimate successor. Ismā‘īl put an end to these rivalries by securing a ferman changing the system of succession to primogeniture. His oldest son Tawfīq now became crown prince. Ismā‘īl conciliated other, collateral lines of the viceregal family by marrying his sons and daughters into them, thereby inaugurating a pattern of royal endogamy and monogamy in place of concubinage and polygyny. Tawfīq (r. 1879–92) was married to Aminah ʿIlīm (1858–1931), granddaughter of ‘Abbās, and would become Egypt’s first monogamous ruler. In spite of their rivalries Muhammad ‘Ali’s successors consistently asserted Egypt’s autonomy and the position of their dynasty. Ottoman laws were applied, but often in a localised version. ‘Abbās insisted on issuing his own penal code, rather than the one drawn up in the imperial capital. The Egyptian land code of 1858 was distinct in many respects from its Ottoman counterpart. In addition to changing the rule of succession, Ismā‘īl persuaded the sultan to grant him and his successors the official title khedive, and to allow him to contract foreign loans without imperial approval.

A changing elite

The elite that emerged in the middle decades had a larger proportion of Egyptians, men such as the engineer ʿAli Ḥunrāk (1823–93). Mubārāk was appointed director of government schools by ‘Abbās, and would have a long career directing public works and education under Ismā‘īl and Tawfīq. His earliest education was in a kuttab, then in government schools and in France. Ottoman state servants of this generation were equally likely to be the product of government schools and foreign training. Muhammad Sharīf (1826–87), an Ottoman educated in Muhammad ‘Ali’s schools and in France, served in the army under ‘Abbās, later heading several ministries and serving as prime minister more than once. Mubārāk and Sharīf were vastly different in background and outlook. Mubārāk came from a family of provincial ‘ālamā’ in Lower Egypt and was proud of his Egyptian heritage. The son of an Ottoman chief judge, Sharīf harboured a belief in the Ottomans’ inherent right to rule and a contempt for native Egyptians. Mubārāk was dedicated to reform, especially in education, following a European model. Sharīf was profoundly conservative and mistrustful of introducing elements of European culture. Both men represent the first generation of officials trained in Muhammad ‘Ali’s schools and abroad, who started their careers in government service soon after the Pasha’s death. The men in this generation differed from their predecessors in having a European-style education, advanced training and knowledge of a European language.

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usually French. This was also true of the rulers, beginning with Sa‘id, who had European tutors. The growth of education and the expansion of the bureaucracy and officer corps under Ismā‘īl offered new opportunities to Egyptians, who by the 1870s predominated in the civil service just below the highest offices, and in the lower ranks of the officer corps. However, the contraction of the state after the bankruptcy of 1876 blocked social mobility. ‘Alī Mubārak was the sole Egyptian cabinet minister before 1882, and no Egyptian officer was promoted beyond the rank of colonel. The frustration of Egyptians in the officer corps contributed to the ‘Urābi Revolution.

Egypt’s rural notables also emerged as a force in politics. Typically large landholders, their wealth and influence increased during the mid-century agricultural boom. Some emulated the ruling elite, building houses in the Rūmī style with whitewashed walls and glazed windows, and sending their sons to government schools. Railway and telegraph lines built in the 1860s facilitated communication and travel between their villages and the urban centres. In 1866 Ismā‘īl created a Consultative Assembly of Delegates (maflis shūrā al-nawwāb). The assembly was predominantly provincial, its members coming from the most prominent families. It reflected the khedive’s recognition of the importance of the notables and the need to consult them, especially in matters of taxation, but it lacked real power. Assemblies were convened at the pleasure of the khedive, who neglected to do so in some years. Nevertheless, deputies took their work seriously, delving into issues such as tax reform, public works, irrigation and the corvée. They asserted a voice in state finances, debating the government’s reliance on foreign credit to finance the deficit and demanding the right to examine annual accounts of receipts and expenditures. Unlike the officer corps and civil service, the notables were not a dependent elite. They might receive honours, titles and gifts from the khedive, but they had independent local bases of wealth and influence.

Informal imperialism

From an estimated 14 per cent before 1800, Europe’s share of Egypt’s growing foreign trade rose to about half by mid-century. This was encouraged by the khedives’ promotion of export-oriented agriculture, their infrastructural projects, the commercial convention of 1838 and the development of steam navigation. The port of Alexandria boomed, its population rising from around 15,000 in the 1820s to over 200,000 in the 1870s. In addition to European diplomats, bankers and businessmen, Egypt’s growing economy offered opportunity to skilled craftsmen and tradesmen from Greece and Italy, who settled in Alexandria, Cairo and other towns. Their foods and languages have left an imprint on Egyptian culture. Migrants from other Ottoman provinces – Muslims, Christians and Jews – also found opportunities in the trades or professions. Whether tourists or residents, foreign nationals enjoyed extraterritorial legal privileges due to their nations’ aggressive interpretation of ancient agreements known as the capitulations. They could neither be sued nor tried in a local court, but only under their own law as administered by their consular representatives. Nor were they subject to taxation. The Mixed Law Code of 1876 provided a venue for adjudication of property and commercial cases involving Egyptians and foreigners, with an international judiciary and French-based law. This reflected the balance of power with Europe.

Though rivals, Britain and France shared an interest in preserving Egypt’s autonomy – that is, in limiting imperial authority so as to enhance their own influence – and in its stability. The two powers contested influence in part by supporting their subjects’ pursuit of concessions for major projects. Britain backed construction of Africa’s first railway by Robert Stevenson, connecting Alexandria with Cairo and Suez and facilitating the passage to India. Sa‘id gave an incredibly generous concession to the Frenchman Ferdinand de Lesseps for the construction and operation of the Suez Canal. The canal was begun despite British and Ottoman opposition, and opened in 1869 amid extravagant festivities attended by foreign dignitaries, including Empress Eugénie of France. The Gezira palace (now a Marriott hotel in the Zamalek district of Cairo) was built to accommodate her, and a carriage road (now Pyramid Road) was constructed through the fields of Giza for her visit to the pyramids. These projects fitted with the planning and construction of a new, European-style quarter in the floodplain between Ottoman Cairo and the Nile. One can easily distinguish the Paris-like visage of the nineteenth-century city, with its straight streets and roundabouts, from the old city with its narrower, winding lanes. Haussmann’s remaking of Paris inspired the plan.

of the new city. Isma'îl, who wished to be accepted on equal standing with the princes of Europe, understood such a planned capital to be an accoutrement of a modern state - along with the library, museum and learned societies he patronised. 29

Emergence of a public sphere

The reign of Isma'îl saw advances in intellectual life and the emergence of a 'public' that took an interest in and discussed issues affecting the political community. A sense of political community was nurtured by the spread of literacy, the state school curriculum, railways and telegraphs, the khedive's encouragement of intellectual life and his use of public rituals and symbols to foster loyalty to the khedival and imperial dynasties. A crucial role was played by publishing and the press. Muhammad 'Ali established a press in the 1820s to print books in Arabic, Ottoman Turkish and Persian for administrators and the schools. By the end of the decade it also printed al-Waq'a'il-Misriyya ('Egyptian events') in Arabic and Ottoman, which was distributed to officers, officials, prominent ulama and notables and teachers and students in the government schools. The production of Arabic books grew slowly but steadily from over a hundred in the r82os to more than four hundred in the r85os, when privately owned Arabic presses began to be established. More than three times as many Arabic books were printed in the r86os to r880 some 23 non-government periodicals appeared in Cairo and Alexandria, though many did not last very long. 30

Although some newspapers such as al-Ahram were circumspect in local politics they were free to cover events outside Egypt, and the presence of a Reuters bureau in Alexandria from 1866 made that task easier. This was an era of momentous events that directly affected the extended political community

of Ottoman subjects and fellow Muslims. In 1876, al-Ahrâm's first year, Egypt and the Ottoman Empire declared bankruptcy, an Ottoman constitution was issued - the first in the Middle East - and Bulgaria rose in bloody rebellion, leading to war with Russia and the intervention of the other powers. While the Congress of Berlin (1878) was deciding the empire's fate, the debt settlement in Egypt subjected it to Anglo-French control (as described below). Albert Hourani observed that while al-Tahâwî's generation of reformers saw Europe as a model to emulate, in the course of the century Europe revealed a predatory side. 31

Egypt and India were centres of the movement in Islam called 'modernism' by Western scholars. Towards the end of the century modernists advocated a cluster of reforms aiming to reconcile the way in which the faith was understood with 'modern values such as constitutionalism, cultural revival, nationalism, freedom of religious interpretation, scientific investigation, modern-style education, [and] women's rights'. Conservatives and some Western observers were sceptical about the compatibility of these values with Islam, but the modernists 'saw the tension between Islamic faith and modern values as a historical accident, not an inherent feature of Islam'. 32 Reformist 'ulama' preferred the label Salafi, the term referring to the earliest generations of Muslims, al-salaf al-salihân or 'the pious forebears', whose understanding and practice of the faith were idealised as closer to the Prophet's Islam than that of succeeding generations. In the Salafi (re)construction of history, the present state of backwardness was the result of inner decay. Centuries of accretion of un-Islamic custom and layers of archaic scholarship had to be scraped away to permit a return to the true or original Islam. Thus they pitted themselves against the mystical orders, which they saw as obscurantist, and against the conservative curricula and methods of the madrasas, which they saw as ossified. Additionally and increasingly toward the end of the century, colonialist discourse forced the reformers into defending Islam itself: Islam, they insisted, was not a cause of backwardness and oppression. 33

The Iranian scholar and activist al-Sayyid Jamâl al-Dîn (1818/9-97), who called himself 'al-Afghânî', spent the years 1871-9 in Cairo. Though often credited with beginning the Salafi movement in Egypt, his perception of the need for and means to reform paralleled the concerns of al-'Aṣâr and
al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, especially with regard to education. Al-Afghānī was invited to Egypt and granted a stipend by Ismā'īl’s prime minister, ʿAbd al-Rahmān Pasha (1834–1911), a sign of the compatibility of Salafi reformism and the Muḥammadī dynasty’s progressive vision. Al-Afghānī’s charisma and learning attracted a following including Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qawi (1849–1905) and Saʿd Ṣaḥib (1857–1927). He taught mainly Islamic philosophy, which was studied for centuries. Nikki Keddie observed that al-Afghānī’s teaching offered ‘a path to rationalism, şerif and a foreigner’.34 Despite his association with Islamic reform and, later, pan-Islam, al-Afghānī’s ‘I’llāysh (r802–82), the dynasty’s progressive vision. He encouraged all to promote the cause of reform and resist—ever to European domination through journalism.35 al-Afghānī’s Egyptian circle included several Syrian Christian writers and the Jewish Shanī.36 He encouraged all to promote the cause of reform and resistance to European domination through journalism.35 Shaykh Muḥammad ʿIllaysh (1802–82), the Mālikī muftī and a teacher at al-Azhar, championed the use of taqīd in sharīʿa studies, with its reliance on the scholarship of previous generations, and opposed independent ijtihād. Al-Afghānī and later reformers redefined taqīd and ijtihād in epistemological terms, claiming that ‘the closure of the door of ijtihād’ and the practice of taqīd were causes of stagnation and backwardness.36

Bankruptcy, revolution and invasion
Foreign loans were Ismā'īl’s undoing. He inherited a foreign debt from Saʿīd, and had to borrow to pay an indemnity to de Lesseps to revise the terms of the Suez Canal concession more in Egypt’s favour. Additional loans financed infrastructural projects. The khedive may have counted on export earnings from cotton to pay off the loans. The American civil war created a cotton shortage in world markets and a ‘cotton boom’ in Egypt that was in full swing when Ismā'īl’s rule began. Cotton, grown mainly in the eastern Delta since the 1820s, was now planted wherever land could be irrigated. Prices remained high until 1864, and then plunged. The khedive’s ability to raise revenues in other areas was limited. On the eve of bankruptcy, debt service consumed the majority of revenues. The Ottoman and Egyptian bankruptcies occurred nearly simultaneously, and European creditor nations intervened to protect the bondholders’ interests. The debts were consolidated and rescheduled, and special funds controlled by the creditors were created to pay off the debts, and revenues were assigned to the funds. In Egypt about half of all state revenues were assigned to the Caisse de la dette publique. In 1878 a French minister of public works and a British minister of finance were placed in the khedival cabinet, taking control of revenues and expenditures. Ismā'īl had personally secured some loans, and as a consequence his estates were turned over to a commission to be sold off. The British government purchased his shares in the Suez Canal Company, inherited from Saʿīd. From then until its nationalisation in 1956, the Suez Canal Company and its revenues were in Anglo-French hands.37

The financial settlement transformed Egyptian politics. Ismā'īl took draconian measures to raise taxes, causing widespread distress and anger. In Upper Egypt in 1879 the unremitting demands and a poor Nile resulted in famine. Second, the khedive’s authority was undercut. Deprived of control of the budget, he no longer had the means to induce and enforce the loyalty of the governing elite. Moreover, the European takeover displaced the Ottoman Egyptian and native elite. Last, the European Ministry’s budget cutting caused the dismissal of thousands of civil servants and officers and reduced salaries for others. Ismā'īl tried to mobilise opposition in April 1879, dismissing the European Ministry and appointing a new ministry ostensibly to carry out a National Manifesto issued earlier that month and signed by more than three hundred officials, military officers, members of the Assembly, religious leaders, merchants and notables. The manifesto offered a revised financial plan to pay off the debt, and called for giving the Assembly more power. Two months later Ismā'īl was deposed by the sultan, acting under Anglo-French pressure.38

His son and successor, Khedive Tawfiq, restored the European Ministry and its financial programme. The announcement of further cuts in the military coincided with a policy of restricting the higher ranks to Ottomans. In January 1881, when three Egyptian colonels including Ahmad Urabi (1841–1911) were court-martialled for petitioning for the dismissal of the war minister, they were rescued by their regiments. The war minister was replaced by Mahmūd Şānī al-Bārūfī (1839–1904), a Circassian Egyptian sympathetic to the Egyptian officers. The khedive’s dismissal of al-Bārūfī led to another showdown in September when Urabi, backed by the army, presented a set of demands to Tawfiq. In the intervening months what had begun as a mutiny became a

37 Owen, World economy, pp. 122–35.
broadly based revolutionary movement. Now the officers were backed by the same elements that had supported the 1879 manifesto, Ottoman Egyptian and Egyptian officials, rural notables, prominent ‘ulamā’ and intellectuals, including a number of writers from al-Afghānī’s circle. ‘Urābī’s demands reflected the interests of this coalition: dismissal of the European Ministry; election of a new Assembly; and raising the army’s strength to 18,000 (less than a third its size in 1878). Again Tawfiq capitulated. In January 1882 a joint Anglo-French note declaring support for the khedive backfired, undermining the officers’ interests of this coalition: dismissal of the European officials, rural notables, prominent Egyptians for the first time, including ‘Urābī as war minister. The Assembly now gave itself the authority to vote on bills and to discuss the portion of the budget not encumbered by the debt or the imperial tribute. Spurred by alarmist reports from their men on the spot, Britain and France dispatched warships to Alexandria in May, demanding the resignation of the nationalist cabinet. A month later the tense city exploded in rioting, and the khedive fled to the protection of the British fleet. In July the British bombarded the city on a false pretext. In September they invaded, defeated ‘Urābī, and restored Tawfiq. ‘Urābī and numerous supporters were placed on trial. His sentence of death was commuted to exile in the Seychelles.39

Anglo-American historians have begun to accept the ‘Urabi movement as revolutionary due to its ‘extensive civilian involvement and social depth’, but there is disagreement over the extent of its popular support and radicalism. In Egypt the Free Officers rehabilitated it as a national revolution and a precursor to their own, and recent studies have focused on its popular bases. In comparative perspective it was one of several movements in Asia and Africa that were driven by opposition to autocratic rulers allied with foreign domination and inspired by constitutionalist ideas during the pre-First World War era.40

The veiled protectorate

The British restored Tawfiq but not khedival autocracy. Egypt became a ‘veiled protectorate’, in the apt words of its main architect, the British consul

general, Lord Cromer (1883–1907). Legally Egypt remained an Ottoman province ruled by the khedive, but the British ruled in all but name. British officers trained and led a new army and police force. Cromer, with advisers appointed to each ministry, made important decisions. The Army of Occupation was conspicuously present in the Qāṣr al-Nil barracks in Cairo (the site of today’s Nile Hilton). At first the British insisted that they would depart as soon as political and financial order were restored, though a British garrison remained for seventy-five years. The occupation gained a certain legal standing in Anglo-Ottoman negotiations, though London and Istanbul failed to agree on the terms of an evacuation. The various international agreements to which Egypt was subject – especially in finances – hindered the British until they were able to reschedule the debt and make timely payments on it, winning ‘the race against insolvency’. French opposition to British control disappeared with the entente of 1904.

Imperial strategy was the decisive factor in the longevity of the occupation. Control of Egypt and the Suez Canal was deemed vital to guarantee communications with India, especially now that the Ottomans were turning to Germany for financial and technical assistance. Zealous officials such as Cromer, convinced of their civilising mission, drove Britain’s deepening involvement in the Egyptian administration. The Sudan crisis afforded Cromer an opportunity to clarify the relationship between the British and Egyptian governments. After the fall of Khartoum to the Mahdist rebellion in 1884, Cromer opposed another military expedition, his priority being to meet the scheduled debt payments. At Cromer’s suggestion the foreign secretary, Lord Granville, sent him a message stating ‘that the responsibility which for the time rests on England obliges Her Majesty’s Government to insist on the adoption of the policy which they recommend, and that it will be necessary that those [Egyptian] Ministers and Governors who do not follow this course should cease to hold their offices’.41

Although British interests in Egypt were primarily strategic, Cromer’s policies had certain economic, social and political aims informed by the ‘lessons’ learned in India. In order to raise agricultural output and increase exports, special attention was devoted to the improvement of irrigation and drainage, one of the few areas of significant public expenditure. The Aswan Dam, built in 1902 and heightened in 1907 and 1912, brought perennial

40 Cole, Colonialism, pp. 3–22; Reid, ‘The ‘Urabi revolution’ (p. 317).
irrigation to Middle Egypt. The emphasis on agriculture was also calculated to win the support of the propertied classes, whom British administrators viewed as natural allies. Agricultural prosperity, it was believed, would keep continued colonial rule. In the 1890s a new cadastral survey was begun, full private ownership rights were recognized in agricultural land and tax rates were lowered. This period saw economic growth though the distribution of income was highly skewed. In a mainly agrarian economy land-owners data is a good indicator of inequality. In 1913 less than 1 per cent of all income was owned by less than 5 per cent of rural families, while about 70 per cent of rural families owned less than the 5 faddâns deemed necessary for their subsistence, and another 21 per cent owned no land at all. Most 'peasant' households survived by renting or sharecropping the land of others and wage labour. Women contributed income by tending livestock and poultry and taking on manufacturing work.

Urbanisation, industrialisation and education were discouraged. When local entrepreneurs established spinning and weaving factories, Cromer imposed an excise tax sufficient to make them unprofitable. Funding for education was reduced. The number of government schools was cut and students were required to pay for tuition.

Modernism

Muhammad 'Abduh joined al-Afghâni in Paris, where for eight months in 1884 they published al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa ('The indissoluble bond'), which was smuggled into Egypt and throughout the Middle East. In its pages al-Afghâni's rationalist approach to Islam was joined with a stronger emphasis on the need for pan-Islamic unity in the face of European domination. If Muslims understood their faith correctly, strength and unity would result.

Al-Afghâni sketched a modernist agenda in broad strokes, but it was 'Abduh who tried to achieve it in concrete form. Permitted to return to Egypt in 1888, he served as a judge in the civil courts and later as Grand Mufî (1899–1905). Like al-Afghâni, 'Abduh believed that the principles of original Islam offered the soundest basis for modern life, and their recovery would serve to close the gap between secular Westernisation and the ossified Islam of the conservative clerics. Original Islam, in his Salafi method, was to be found in the sources of the faith—Qur'an and Sunna—as well as in the religious scholarship of the first few Islamic centuries. That period was characterised by ijtihâd, informed original interpretation. Stagnation set in about the fourth century, and was reproduced through taqlid, which he saw as blind imitation.

'Abduh confined his activism to the spheres of education and law. In that respect, at least, he was a traditional cleric, acting as a teacher and guide, and pursuing reform through scholarship. The very different career of his disciple Shaykh Muhammad Rashid Râd (1865–1935) mirrored changes occurring in the discursive field of Islam. Though trained like 'Abduh as a religious scholar, for most of his life Râd edited the influential modernist journal al-Manâr ('The Beacon', 1898–1935). Turn-of-the-twentieth-century discussions and debates over Islam were no longer confined within the madrasas but had spilled out into the public sphere. Modernists contributed to this development by asserting that ijtihâd was something that could be practised even by lay persons, so long as they were educated in Arabic. Yet it was also a consequence of the development of print culture. The difference can be put this way: intellectuals of al-Afghâni and 'Abduh's generations sought influence for their ideas by gathering circles of students around themselves and getting the ear of the ruler, a prince or a minister. Râd's generation competed for a share of public opinion.

The continued growth of the periodical press suggests the expansion of the public sphere and the growing importance of public opinion. In Cairo and Alexandria alone, between 1880 and 1908 over 500 newspapers and more than a hundred journals were published, though many were short-lived. Book publishing developed exponentially. Three-fifths of all Arabic books published in the nineteenth century were printed in the 1880s and 1890s, and the number published in the first quarter of the new century surpassed what had been published up to 1900. Islamic books were the most numerous, being well over a fourth of what was published between 1832 and 1935. Works of jurisprudence (fiqh) were published far more often than anything else in this category, followed by the bases of religion (al-din); hadith and hadith studies; the Qur'an, Qur'anic studies and exegesis (tafîr); and the biography of the Prophet.47 The thriving market for religious books seems to

42 Owen, World economy, p. 218.
43 Ibid., p. 235; Donald M. Reid, Cairo University and the making of modern Egypt (Cambridge, 1990), p. 18.
44 Hourani, Arabic thought, p. 113; Keddie, Sayyid Jamal ad-Din, p. 224.
45 Hourani, Arabic thought, pp. 149–57.
reflect an interest generated by the controversies between modernists and conservatives. It also illustrates how print technology would in the long run undermine clerical authority in interpreting the shari'a. Religious questions could no longer be monopolised by the shaykhs or confined within the academies. Books, including religious books, could be bought, read and discussed by anyone.

Second-wave nationalism

Unlike Tawfiq, who owed his position to the British, his son ‘Abbās Hilmī II (r. 1892–1914) chafed under the veiled protectorate, and his relations with Cromer were strained. In his first year as khedive Cromer confronted him over the appointment of a prime minister, extracting a promise to follow British advice in important matters. The following year he was forced to back down from disparaging remarks he made about the British officers in his employ. More quietly, the palace under Tawfiq and ‘Abbās cultivated the charisma of the Muhammadī dynasty. The khedives toured the provinces and staged public celebrations of their birthdays and the anniversaries of their ascensions, replete with processions, cannon fire and illuminations, while Ottoman imperial celebrations were correctly observed as well. The press reported on the activities and movements of members of the khedival family in a manner similar to the coverage of European royal families. Towards the turn of the century a number of books and articles appeared extolling the life of Muhammad ‘Ali. These efforts to identify the reigning dynasty with the modern nation, including the centennial of the Pasha’s accession in 1905, were in response to the emergence of a sense of national community, and the contested nature of that identity.46

Thus second-wave nationalism included a pro-palace orientation, the leader of which was Shaykh ‘Ali Yusuf (1863–1913), founder and editor of the newspaper al-Mu‘ayyad (‘The Confirmed [as truth]’; 1889–1915). ‘Ali Yusuf came from a humble family in Upper Egypt and had an Azhar education. Al-Mu‘ayyad had early support from Tawfiq’s prime minister, Riyād Pasha, and became a palace mouthpiece under ‘Abbās. It supported the khedive and struck an anti-British and pan-Islamic stance. Its pages carried articles by nationalists who later espouse competing views, such as Muṣṭafā Kāmil, Muḥammad Farid, Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid and Sa‘d Zaghlūl. By the turn of the century it had the largest circulation of any Egyptian newspaper, having overtaken the popular pro-French al-Ahrām and pro-British al-Muqāṭam.49 In 1907 ‘Ali Yusuf formed the pro-khedival Constitutional Reform Party.

Two other trends were represented by their very different leaders. Muṣṭafā Kāmil and Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid. Muṣṭafā Kāmil (1874–1908), the son of an army officer, was born in Cairo. Unlike many intellectuals of the time he was educated entirely in the new schools and had no exposure to religious education. He attended the Khedivial Law School, and earned a law degree from the University of Toulouse. He belonged to the professional class that in the next century would be called the effendiyya, and who, along with students in the government schools, formed his popular following. The effendiyya were disadvantaged by the favouritism shown British and other foreigners in civil service appointments. As literate urbanites they were sensitive to an accelerating pace of social and cultural change that seemed to threaten to run out of control. The problem was especially acute under colonial rule, for one was not master of one’s own house. Muṣṭafā Kāmil’s anti-imperialism and cultural conservatism appealed to this constituency, and it was also compatible with the agenda of the khedive, who patronised him throughout the 1890s. He was an Egyptian nationalist but also an exponent of Ottoman and pan-Islamic solidarity, calling in The Eastern Question (1898)50 for support of the ‘sacred [Ottoman] Islamic Caliphate’ against European aggression, and supporting Ottoman claims to the eastern Sinai in the Taba dispute of 1906. The extended political community in which many Egyptians saw themselves was reflected in his appeal to multiple loyalties – Egyptian, Ottoman and pan-Islamic. Anti-imperialism was a consistent element in his thought. His book The Rising Sun (1904), published nearly a year before Japan’s decisive naval victory over Russia in the Tsushima Strait, upheld Japan as a model of successful modernisation while resisting Western control.51 After breaking with ‘Abbās, Kāmil founded the daily al-Liwā’ (‘The Banner’ and successors of various names, 1900–14), which became the mouthpiece of the Nationalist (Waṭanī) Party, which he formed in 1907. Under Kāmil and his successor Muḥammad Farid (1868–1919) the Nationalist Party called for an immediate and unconditional end to the British occupation, and for constitutional government.52

48 Cuno, ‘Muhammad Ali and the decline and revival thesis’.

50 Muṣṭafā Kāmil, al-Mu‘ayyad al-sādiriyā (Cairo, 1898).
51 Muṣṭafā Kāmil, al-Shams al-nasā’īyyā (Cairo, 1904). I am grateful to Arthur Goldshmidt for information on this book.
Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid (1872–1963) was the scion of a wealthy rural notable family. He began his education in a kuttāb before attending government schools, including the Khedival Law School. Along with Mustafa Kamil he joined the secret Society for the Revival of the Nation, which was patronised by the khedive and would evolve into the Nationalist Party. Later he distanced himself from Kamil and the khedive. In 1907 he became editor of al-Jarida ("The Newspaper", 1907–14), the mouthpiece of the Umma ("Nation") Party established in the same year. The Umma Party identified the interests of the nation with the notables, those who have a real interest in the country, who considered themselves qualified and entitled to lead it. Its supporters were mainly from the large landholding families. As men of property they were mistrustful of radical change. Though desiring an end to the occupation they were gradualists, believing that Egypt needed a period of preparation for self-rule. Influenced by European liberalism, the Umma Party distanced the khedive's autocratic leanings and championed a constitutional order in which his power would be constrained by a parliament. It articulated a specifically Egyptian identity devoid of Ottomanism or pan-Islamism.53

These three nationalist orientations emerged before 1907, when events dictated the establishment of formal parties. Coming on the heels of the Taba dispute in 1906, the execution of four peasants and the flogging of several others in the village of Dinshaway aroused nationalist passions as never before. This exercise in exemplary colonial violence, decreed by an extraordinary tribunal, resulted from an incident provoked by British officers hunting pigeons, who accidentally set fire to the village and then shot at the villagers in panic, wounding a woman. A fleeing officer died of heat stroke, but it was assumed that the peasants killed him. The angry public response to these events led Lutfi al-Sayyid's group to found al-Jarida and the Umma Party to act as a moderating voice. Their move led to the formation of the other two parties.54

The national leadership that emerged after the First World War was formed in the pre-war Nationalist and Umma parties. Despite differences they shared a concept of 'Egyptianness' that was not strictly ethnic. Egyptians were those whose families had lived in the Nile Valley for some time, and who 'felt' Egyptian. No distinction was made between Ottoman Egyptians and native Egyptians, who in any event had begun to intermarry by then. The Nationalist Party’s pan-Islamism intensified after Kamil’s death, alienating many Copts, but neither party defined the Copts nor Egypt’s Jews as outsiders.55 Another concern shared by all nationalists was the state of education and Egypt's linguistic identity. The British reduced spending on education to less than 1 per cent of the budget in 1902, and it never exceeded 4 per cent. By 1900 English was the principal language of instruction in the primary and secondary schools, something opposed by even the Umma Party. Cromer opposed the establishment of a modern university. The privately funded Egyptian University (now Cairo University) opened after his departure in 1908, with support from the khedival family and across the political spectrum.56

Cromer cultivated the notables, seeing them and the Umma Party as a counter to the khedive and anti-British nationalists. His successor, Sir John Eldon Gorst (1907–11), drew close to the khedive in order to isolate the nationalists. He revived the Press Law of 1881 to suppress Nationalist Party publications and jailed or drove into exile the party’s leaders, including Muhammad Farid. However, in 1910 the notable-dominated Legislative Assembly rejected a proposed extension of the Suez Canal concession beyond its terminus date of 1968. Boutros Ghālī (1849 or 1849–1905), the prime minister and a prominent Coptic leader, was associated with this proposal, the press law and other unpopular policies. His assassination by a nationalist in February 1910, amidst vitriolic exchanges between al-Liwâ and the Coptic press, brought Muslim–Coptic relations to a nadir. A Coptic Congress vented grievances in March 1911 in Asyūt. Muslims responded by convening an Egyptian Congress in Heliopolis in April, which condemned separatism and asserted national unity. Tensions abated under Gorst’s successor, Viscount Kitchener (1911–14), who revived Cromer’s policy of cultivating the Umma Party.57

Martial law was imposed during the First World War, political activities were suppressed, and the nationalist newspapers ceased publication. Britain declared Egypt a protectorate, severing it from the Ottoman Empire, and deposed 'Abbās II in favour of his uncle, Husayn Kamīl (r. 1914–17), who was

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54 Lutfi al-Sayyid Marzou, Egypt and Cromer, pp. 166–73; Kazzziba, 'Jaridah-Ummah group', 179; Tignor, Modernization, pp. 278–86.
given the title sultan to emphasise Egypt’s separation from the Ottoman Empire. His successor, Ahmad Fu‘ād, would take the title king in 1922.

Egypt in the early twentieth century

During the ‘long’ nineteenth century Egypt’s population grew from perhaps 4.5 million to over twelve million by 1917. Four-fifths of Egyptians still lived in villages and most earned a living from agriculture, but only a wealthy minority possessed enough land to live from it alone. Most of the benefits of a century of improved irrigation and transport went to them. In spite of reduced mortality, perhaps one in three persons lived to the age of twenty. Most women married in their late teens or early twenties, while men delayed marriage longer. Divorce, and remarriage due to divorce or death, was frequent. Counting slave concubines, polygyny probably was most widespread in the 1860s and 1870s, due to increased slave ownership made possible by the cotton boom and aggressive slave raiding in Sudan. The slave trade ended in 1877. In the early twentieth century possibly 6 per cent of married Muslim men had multiple wives. Wealthy rural notables practised polygyny and maintained large multiple family households even while modernist reformers endorsed monogamy and the khedival family appeared to uphold it. Family life was in flux, and with it the position of women, with multiple and sometimes contradictory trends in different strata. 58

Since both the traditional and new schools were devoted nearly exclusively to educating men, gains in literacy produced a chasm between the sexes (15 per cent male and 2 per cent female literacy in 1917) 59 that alarmed reformers and conservatives alike, for by then the idea of the conjugal family was the sole path of social mobility available to men of humble origin. Now the surest path of advancement was open to tābih-wearing government-school graduates in the civil service and professions. At mid-century there were some twenty madrasas in Cairo and thirty-two in the provinces, but by the beginning of the twentieth century there were only six. 60 On the other hand khedival decrees in 1908 and 1911 centralised the madrasa system under the direction of the Shaykh al-Azhar. His authority was further enhanced with the chairmanship of administrative councils, including the Council of Great Scholars (Hāy‘at Kibār al-‘Ulāmā‘), which was authorised to discipline students and defrock ‘ulamā‘ for unseemly acts or unorthodox views. 61 Thus institutionally strengthened, al-Azhar

(1899) 62 by Qāsim Amin (1863–1908) aroused a storm of controversy with its call for the reform of the family through the education of women and an improvement in their legal status, and for its assertion that Islam did not require women to cover their faces or hands in public. The book signalled the spread in educated circles of a European bourgeois family ideal, in which ‘the family’ consists of a monogamous couple and their children in an independent household, and the home is a site for the raising and disciplining of children, the nation’s future. 63 Several years of women’s writing and advocacy in the press preceded Amin’s book, though no female author produced the reaction that he did, perhaps because he took on several issues at once and went further than female writers in criticising the face-veil. The pioneer feminist Malik Hīfīn Nāsīf (1886–1918, who published under the pen name ‘Bāhithat al-Bādiya’) was more concerned with the evils of polygyny, marriage at an early age and the ease with which men divorced their wives. Though convention prevented her from attending in the person, she submitted a list of demands to the Egyptian Congress in 1911 that included women’s access to all types and levels of education, the opening of the professions to them and their admission to mosques for congregational prayers. 64

The development of education produced another division in society, namely between ‘turban and tābih’, Generations earlier the madrasa system and a career as a turbaned ‘ālim was the sole path of social mobility available to men of humble origin. Now the surest path of advancement was open to tābih-wearing government-school graduates in the civil service and professions. At mid-century there were some twenty madrasas in Cairo and thirty-two in the provinces, but by the beginning of the twentieth century there were only six. 60 On the other hand khedival decrees in 1908 and 1911 centralised the madrasa system under the direction of the Shaykh al-Azhar. His authority was further enhanced with the chairmanship of administrative councils, including the Council of Great Scholars (Hāy‘at Kibār al-‘Ulāmā‘), which was authorised to discipline students and defrock ‘ulamā‘ for unseemly acts or unorthodox views. 61 Thus institutionally strengthened, al-Azhar

61 Qāsim Amin, Yabī‘ al-Mar‘ūn (Cairo, 1900).
64 Eccel, Egypt, Islam and social change, p. 140.

would act in the future as a guardian of conservative orthodoxy. A corresponding decline in the prestige of the heads of the Sufi orders, Shaykh al-Bakr and Shaykh al-Sādāt, was due to the disapproval of mysticism by both the conservative ‘ulamā‘ and the reformers. Yet the numerous Sufi orders remained popular. In Cairo alone in 1900, one source listed more than eighty mawlids or saints’ days.66

The autobiography of Taha Husayn (1889–1973) offers a perspective on the contrasts that Egyptians experienced in this era. He presents his life as a series of transitions: village to city, Islamic Cairo to modern Cairo, the culture of al-Azhar to that of Lutfi al-Sayyid’s al-Jamā‘a and the Egyptian University, and finally Egypt to Europe. His is not an objective account but an affirmation of modernism. He recalls his village kutub teacher as corrupt and rural religious mendicants as spongers. A lack of modern medical knowledge caused the death of two siblings. By his third year at al-Azhar he had given up on learning. In the Egyptian University, however, he found the European style lectures ‘strange and new ... exciting my mind and revolutionising my whole way of thinking’.67 Perhaps he saw in his life a metaphor for Egypt, or a prescription to be followed.

67 Taha Hussein, The days. His autobiography in three parts (Cairo, 1997), p. 248.

Sudan, Somalia and the Maghreb to the end of the First World War

Knut S. Vikør

Two trends dominate the history of North and north-eastern Africa in the nineteenth century. One is the growing interference of European powers in the internal workings of the Muslim states. The other is the development of Islamic reform, in part as a reaction to the challenges of the European presence, in part indigenous and often pre-dating any European influence. Some of these reformist trends paved the way for the integration of Muslim societies into the colonial ‘modernity’, while others, intentionally or not, became vehicles for intellectual or political resistance to pressures from outside.

Some historians have seen these indigenous reform movements as local emanations of the Wahhābī movement of Arabia. However, most of them had little or no connection to the Wahhābīyya. It would rather seem that a less radical but profound milieu for intellectual reform in Morocco in the later eighteenth century played an important role, as many of these movements, as far away as in Somalia, had their intellectual roots in this milieu. Less inclined than the Wahhābīs to call other Muslims infidels and often linked to Sufi movements, these reformists called for a renewal in legal development (ijtihād) and rejected the absolute authority of the established opinions in the schools of law (madhhabs). Although not initially concerned with politics, many of them became focuses for militant mobilisation when the historical moment called for it.

The nineteenth century also changed the nature of those established state authorities that did survive by adapting to the changed relations of power. North Africa was in 1800 no stranger to European interventions. Christian powers – in particular Spain – had invaded and occupied port cities and coastal regions for longer or shorter periods many times before. What changed in the course of the century was that the Europeans started to intervene in the internal workings of Muslim states. The rulers, for their part, saw the European powers initially as a resource they could