

Some Aspects of the Political, Social, Intellectual And Educational Developments which Influenced Egypt in the Nineteenth Century

By

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Abstract

There has never been a time when contact between West and East was completely interrupted, the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798 may be viewed as a mark of a new relationship and the beginning of a history, not only of confrontation but also of cultural intermarriage between the two worlds and a new Egypt. Actually, the nineteenth century witnessed the convergence of and the conflict between many traditions and cultures. The dangers as well as promises of a new age paved the way to the appearance of many scholars and leaders who contributed to the general 'Arab Awakening' Many of these reformers dealt with such varied issues as religion, education, system of government, and literary expression.

The emergence of Muhammad Ali as the supreme ruler of Egypt between, 1805-1849 and his interest in modernizing his army and building a strong and a new Egypt led to extensive contacts with Europe, the. Establishment of several important industries, the influx of foreign advisers and the sending of Egyptians to Europe for study and training. Indeed, the age was ready for a new era. The emergence of press and journalism took root, and many leading thinkers - who benefited from such new developments appeared, and consequently introduced new ideas or interpreted traditional ones accordingly.

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INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth century saw the convergence (and conflict) of many traditions and cultures. This was most evident in Arab and Islamic countries emerging from centuries of lethargy and enforced isolation. The dangers as well as promises of a new age dawned on many intellectuals and leaders of various local communities, challenging them to advance new ideas or reinterpret traditional ideas in a new light. The reform attempts, which were increasingly being regarded as a matter of necessity and urgency rather than of desire, were dealing with such varied issues as religion, education, system of government, and literary expression. Indeed, the age was ripe for these movements, which included large-scale military and social upheavals, starting, most vividly, with Wahhabism in Arabia and continuing with the Sanusiyya in North Africa and Mahdism in the Sudan, as well as with many other movements throughout the Arab and Islamic worlds.

What is more, the Arabic speaking people of Arabia founded a vast empire stretching from Central Asia across the Middle East and North Africa to the Atlantic. Almost everywhere they enjoyed the status, at least initially of being the bearers and guardians of the faith.

Obviously, that their once glorious world was gone and the consciousness of their present feebleness was revealed to the Arabs by their contact with the West. Although, there never was a time when contact between Europe and the Near East was completely interrupted, the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1793 can be taken for convenience as marking the beginning of a new relationship between the two worlds and a new age in Egypt. There is no doubt that for the first time in three centuries, the lethargy of the Arab world was decidedly shaken by this contact with the West at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Thus, the landing of Napoleon's troops at Alexandria in July 1798 marked the beginning of a history not only of confrontation but also of cultural relations between East and West.

The emergence of Muhammad ^cAli as supreme ruler of Egypt between 1805-1849 and his interest in modernizing his army and building a strong and new Egypt led to extensive contacts with Europe, the establishment of several important industries, the influx of foreign advisers and the sending of Egyptians to Europe for study and training. Among the pioneer intellectuals who benefited from and represented this new development was Rifaca Rafic Al-Tahtawi (1801-1873) who translated various European works and proposed significant reforms in the fields of education, which, he emphasized, had to include women. Shaykh Muhammad ^cAbduh (1849-1905) must be also considered as a product of and an heir to previous developments. As such he profited from what came before him, but also introduced several new concepts which he was at pains to see applied. In this atmosphere, the nascent press and journalism took root and were some-times encouraged by successive Khedives.

Political Developments

Bonaparte's adventure in Egypt heralded a new phase in the history of the Western impact on Arab consciousness. It shocked Islamic complacency and created an impulse to westernization and reform. A century and a half of direct Anglo-French involvement in the affairs of Arab lands had begun. Within Egypt, the Mamluks tried after the French withdrawal to restore their pre-Napoleonic supremacy; the Turks on the other hand wanted to suppress the Mamluks and re-imposed their own rule. The people of Cairo were sandwiched between the two groups and gave their hearts to neither. ⁽¹⁾ A

1. See Jamal Mohammad Ahmad, *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism* (London, 1960), p.6. See also R.L. Tignor, *Modernization and British Colonial Rule in Egypt, 1884-1914* (Princeton, 1966) pp.3-10. For a contemporary account of events =

fourth power emerged. This was the Albanian garrison, with Muhammad ^cAli at its head ⁽²⁾. The first time we see Muhammad ^cAli acting as a public figure is when, in May 1803, he opens the treasury by force of arms in order to pay the soldiers. His later position as Amir Al-Bahrayn (prince of the two seas) put him in direct contact with the people of Cairo. Breaking away from his former political allies, he soon inflicted a crushing defeat on the Mamluks ⁽³⁾ and the shaykhs asked him to take full control of the country.⁽⁴⁾ The Egyptian “representatives” ⁽⁵⁾ proclaimed him governor, accordingly. On 13 May 1805 he was ceremonially declared Pasha of Egypt (governor) in the Court House by the notables of Cairo, among whom was Shaykh Al-Sharqawi, rector of Al-Azhar (1793-1812).⁽⁶⁾ In September 1806 he was

= see 'Abd Al-Rahman Al-Jabarti Al-Aqli (1754-1825) ^cAja'ib Al-Athar fi Al-Tarajim Wa Al-Akhbar, 4 vols. See here vol. 3, pp 4-5, 328-330.

2. Contrary to most earlier European historians, Richard Hill, con-siders Muhammad ^cAli a Turk. He asserts: “There are no grounds, for instance for making him [Muhammad ^cAli] an Albanian. So far as is known his forbears were Turks from Arapkir in Anatolia whence they moved to Konya. From Konya Muhammad ^cAli's grandfather emigrated to Kavala in Macedonia where he settled and married”. See R. Hill, *Egypt in the Sudan, 1820-1881* (London, 1959, 3rd ed. 1966), p.4. However, there is general agreement that Muhammad ^cAli was born in 1769 at the tiny walled seaport of Kavala (Macedonia). Of the origins of his family nothing is positively known. Turkish and even Persian ancestry is claimed for him. As is well-known, he came to Egypt with the Turkish army in order to help Egyptians drive Napoleon out of their land. For a comprehensive treatment of the subject see ^cAli Mubarak, *Al-Khitat Al-Tawfiqiyya Al-Jadida* (Cairo 1887-1900, new eds. 1955-1969) iv, pp. 38-40.
3. For details of Muhammad ^cAli's act against the Mamluks (in March 1811). See J. Richmond, *Egypt, 1798-1952* (London 1958) pp. 40-41. For eye-witness accounts see Jabarti, *op. cit.*, iv, Events 4, Safar 1226/28 Feb. 1811.
4. See Shafik Ghurbal, *The Beginnings of the Egyptian Questions and the Rise of mehemet Ali* (London 1928) p. 211.
5. The Egyptian “representatives” were the spiritual leaders (religious Shaykhs) and notables. See M. Zayid, *Egypt's Struggle for Independence* (Beirut 1965) p. 4.
6. Al-Shaykh ^cAbdallah Al-Shargawi (1737-1812) author of *Tuhfat Al-Nazirin fi man Wulliyya Misr min Al-Wulat wa Al-Salatin*. For some details, see Afaf Loutfi =

officially confirmed as wali (governor) by the Sultan. Thus his rule was made both legitimate and supreme in Egypt. ⁽⁷⁾

A further turning in Muhammad ^cAli's career was his triumph over the British campaign (1807) led by General Frazer, sent out to occupy Alexandria. This victory granted Muhammad ^cAli more power and fame both in Egypt and abroad.

To realize his dream of an independent Egypt, Muhammad ^cAli was shrewd enough to tread the road of reform carefully but boldly, while declaring undivided loyalty to the Sultan. By the 1830s he had conquered an empire composed of Egypt, the Sudan, and a large part of Arabia. He created in Egypt a power far more progressive and powerful than the Ottoman Empire itself. The French saw in him “an oriental manifestation of Napoleonic virtues” and a potential ally, consequently they were willing to give him their support, which he utilized brilliantly. ⁽⁸⁾

The British, however, adopted a largely obstructive policy. Even though he granted them important trade concessions and sought to make them his friends, he was consistently frustrated. It is reported that he once told the British Consul in 1830: 'with the English for my friends I can do anything: without their friendship can do nothing.... I foresaw long ago that I could undertake nothing grand without her [Britain's] permission. Wherever I turn, she is there to baffle me'. ⁽⁹⁾

= Ali-Sayed, “The Role of the ^cUlama’ in Egypt during the Early Nineteenth Century”, in Political and Social Change in Egypt

7. See Ahmad, op.cit., p.7.

8. See Zayid, op.cit., pp.4-5. On French and British relations with Egypt, see Charles Hallberg, The Suez Canal (New York 1931) pp. 34-47.

9. See Zayid, op.cit., p. 6

British concern is not difficult to explain. British interests in the area were increasing quickly, and the Foreign Office resisted Muhammad ^cAli's expansion in Syria fearing that the route to India, across Syria and Iraq, might be jeopardized. They were also wary of French designs on Egypt. The British general policy, as it developed in the 1830s, aimed at “bolstering Turkey and maintaining the status quo by keeping Egypt attached to the Porte”.

In the ensuing conflict between Muhammad ^cAli and the Sultan, Britain, Russia and Austria forced the Pasha to content himself with Egypt. The three powers, joined later by France, imposed on him and the Sultan the settlement embodied in the Treaty of London 1841, as well as in subsequent firmans, confirming among other things the hereditary rule of Muhammad ^cAli in Egypt and granting him “without hereditary tenure, the government of the provinces of Nubia, Darfur, Kordafan and Sennar, with all their dependencies... that is to say with all their adjoining regions outside the limits of Egypt”.⁽¹⁰⁾

This settlement deprived Muhammad ^cAli of his dependencies, with the exception of the Sudan. His factories and military establishments were rendered fruitless by the restrictions imposed on the size and power of his army for which he had spent large sums of money. It also internationalized the question of Egypt. The Ottoman Sultan could not change the status of Egypt or the privileges of its governors without approval from the signatory powers of the treaty.

10. See H. Dodwell, *The Founder of Modern Egypt: A Study of Muhammad ^cAli*, (Cambridge, Eng., 1931, 2nd ed., New York 1977) p. 105. See also Zayid, *op.cit.*, pp. 6-7, and M. Rifaat bay, 'The Awakening of Modern Egypt' (London 1947) pp. 41-43. On the political (and military) conflict between Muhammad ^cAli and the Sultan, see Dodwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-124. For texts of the con-temporary (and later) firmans, see Thomas Erskine Holland, *The European Concert in the Eastern Question* (Oxford, 1885) pp. 1-60, 89-103 and 110-125.

For this reason, and after Muhammad ^cAli died in 1849, the political life in the second half of the century witnessed significant changing. We have already seen that he (Muhammad ^cAli) had loosened the tie between Egypt and Turkey, an act which stretched the resources of the Egyptians but had given them self-confidence which they had lost for centuries. He had given them the great cotton industry, European methods, and they had beginnings of a national idea.⁽¹¹⁾

In the generation which followed the death of Muhammad ^cAli, the situation of Egypt underwent profound changes. Muhammad ^cAli by hereditary right bequeathed to his successors an autonomous and strong government, an effective army, and a country potentially the richest in the Near East.⁽¹²⁾ His successors, however, were largely selfish and incompetent; ^cAbbas 1(1848-1853) a reactionary who undid most of what his great father had achieved.⁽¹³⁾ Muhammad Sa^cid (1853-1863) who succeeded the latter, was extravagant, unbalanced and weak-willed. He opened Egypt even further to foreigners, incurred on Egypt the first foreign debt and hastily granted the

11. See The Times Book of Egypt (London 1937), p. 33.

12. See P.M. Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516-1922: A Study of Political History, ed. (London 1975) p. 193.

13. Suffice it to say that in 1850 Tahtawi was exiled (by order of ^cAbbas) to the Sudan, on the pretext of opening a school in Khartoum, and the next year his school of languages was closed. But when Sa^cid succeeded ^cAbbas in 1853 Tahtawi was allowed to return to Cairo. He became director of the Military School and was restored to his position at the Translation Office. When Isma^cil succeeded Sa^cid in 1863 Tahtawi became the editor of an educational review, Rawdat Al-Madaris, and he was indeed one of the group which drew up the new educational system. See A. Hourani, Arabic Thought n the Liberal Age, 1798-1939 (London, 1962) p. 72, also Gamal El-Din El-Shayyal, A History of Egyptian Historiography in the Nineteenth Century, p. 39.

canal concession to his friend Ferdinand de Lesseps.⁽¹⁴⁾ His wasteful tendencies culminated in the reign of Isma^cil, whose financial irresponsibilities invited the subordination of the country to great power interests and the purchase by England under Disraeli of Egypt's shares in the Suez Canal.⁽¹⁵⁾ With the imposition of a French-British Debt Commission a little later, Isma^cil's fate was sealed. It was not long before he was forced to abdicate in 1879 in favour of his son Tawfiq.⁽¹⁶⁾

On the other hand, Isma^cil, when he had obtained the title of Khedive and virtual independence, had remodeled nearly every department of administration and spent money lavishly on public works.⁽¹⁷⁾ In his desire to rally popular support against the Sultan in Turkey and the European powers, he encouraged journalism and gave attention to the intelligentsia, who hated his rule but also disliked interference by the Sultan and the powers. A new sense of national responsibility was coming to the fore.⁽¹⁸⁾ In 1869 Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani⁽¹⁹⁾ arrived in Egypt on his way to Istanbul, where during a brief

14. See Zayid, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

15. See Rifaat, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94; *The Times Book of Egypt*, p. 65; and for an extensive account of the financial crisis under Isma^cil, see Sayyid Rajab Haraz, 'Al-Azmah Al-Maliya fi ^cAhd Al-Khudaiwi Isma^cil: Asbabuha, Tatawwuruha, Nata'juha', in *University of Cairo Magazine*, xxvii, pts. 1 and 2 (Cairo 1969), pp. 1-50 here 46-49.

16. See ^cAbd Al-Rahman Al-Rafi^ci, ^cAsr Isma^cil (Cairo 1948), i, pp.10-16; and Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt* (London, 1908), i, pp. 51-52, 56-59, 135-139. For further information, see Abdel Maksud Hamza, *The Public Dept of Egypt, 1854-1867* (Cairo 1944).

17. See *The Times Book of Egypt*, p. 33. and cf. the report by Mr. Cave on the Financial Conditions of Egypt, "Progress and Indebtedness Under Isma^cil, 1863-1875" in *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914*, Issawi ed., pp. 430-438.

18. See Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

19. Much confusion still surrounds Afghani's nationality, whether he was Afghan or Persian. However, according to "reliable" sources Al-Sayyid Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani (1839-1897) was born in As^cad-Abad near Kabul in Afghanistan. Somewhat against this is the explanation of some Persian sources that Al-Afghani was born in a village of Asad-Abad near Hamadan in Persia, which =

stopover he met some figures of Egyptian (Azharite) intellectuals, (some sources state that Muhammad cAbduh was one of them). May be it was the first revolutionary and intellectual base established by Al-Afghani in Egypt. In 1871 he was embarking once again from Istanbul to Egypt, where he was to remain until his expulsion (to India) in August, 1879 by order of Khedive Tawfiq for subversive activities. Hourani describes those eight years in the life of Al-Afghani as the best and “most fruitful” period of mainly from Al-Azhar, who were to play an important part in the life of their country, even when the influence of their original mentor had waned with time.⁽²⁰⁾

In reality, Al-Afghani came to Egypt at a time when the educated classes required a leader. He had by then a clear idea of his life's purpose: 'to arouse any one Muslim country to strength and leadership, so that the Islamic community might catch up with the civilized nations of the world, unite the East and liberate its mind from the shackles of superstition.'⁽²¹⁾

= Seems to be in the letters of English alphabet the same name. But it is completely different in Arabic and Persian alphabet. In any case, for a life of Al-Afghani in the light of these viewpoints, see Muhammad cAmarah, Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani: Al-Acmal Al-Kamila, 2 vols. (Beirut 1979-1981, in progress) here see i, pp. 19-28; Muhammad Pasha Al-Makhazumi, Khatirat Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani (Beirut 1931, ne ed. 1980) pp. 19-22; for further documentation of Al-Afghani's tendencies and thought, see Hourani, op. cit., pp. 101-129; C. Adams, Islam and Modernism in Egypt (London 1933) pp. 4-17, here see p. 4; N.R. Keddie, an Islamic Response to Imperialism: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani (California 1968) here pp. 4-7; also for con-cise biography and background, see Albert Kudsi-Zadeh, “Sayyid Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani: A Summplementary Bibliography”, The Muslim World, Hartford, Connecticut, U.S.A., ixv (1965) pp. 279-291; for further references see A. Dagher, Masadir Al-Dirasa Al-Adabiyya, 4 vols. (Beirut 1956-1972) here ii, pp. 126-131.

20. See Hourani, op. cit., pp. 108, 109, 131-132; and cf. Muhammad cAmarah, Al-Acmal Al-Kamila lil-Imam Muhamamd cAbduh, 6 vols. (Beirut 1972-1974) here i, p. 21, n.1.

21. Quoted in Ahmad, op. cit., p.16

Convinced that the Muslim community possessed all the elements that combined to make a nation - religion, language, character, and customs - he sought to instil in the hearts of the Muslim peoples what he thought they lacked most, a sense of pride and adventure: “from fear of death they have lately succumbed to death. Years of submission, on the other hand, have rendered their natural intelligence unprofitable. They have become purposeless, apathetic, timid, lacking in perseverance and excessively humble”.⁽²²⁾ Soon after Al-Afghani's arrival in Egypt, the young patriots launched a “campaign of nocturnal circulars against Riyad Pasha's government”.⁽²³⁾ On one occasion, we are told, the streets of Cairo were 'littered with thousands of anonymous sheets attacking the Khedive and his foreign supporters'.⁽²⁴⁾ Besides his clandestine activities, Al-Afghani helped in establishing the first organized nationalist group of the period, Al-Hizb Al-Watani. The party, primarily political. included members of all faiths, Muslims, Christians and Jews, who had equal political rights in the party.⁽²⁵⁾

22. See *ibid*; also see Hourani, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-114.

23. See Fahmi, T. Mukbil, *The Development of Reform Concepts in Nineteenth-Century Egypt with Special Emphasis on Shaykh Muhammad cAbduh and His Group*, Ph.D. Thesis, Manchester University, Manchester, England, 1983, pp. 282 ff. and 289 ff.

24. See Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

25. This was one of the early political organizations to develop in modern Egypt, and appeared as a part of the nationalist ferment stimulated in the 1870s by Al-Afghani. According to D.N. Wilber in *United Arab Republic, Egypt, its people its society its culture* (Connecticut, 1969) it was more in the nature of a movement held loosely together by nationalist sentiments and personal ties than a highly structured party. One of its principal objectives was to oppose foreign domination of Egypt. The leadership consisted to politicians and religious leaders, in addition to some army officers, mostly from middle-class and peasant backgrounds. The role of the “native” officer corps, Wilber observes, “foreshadowed the later developments of 1952”. See *ibid*, p.161; as it is wellknown, the second Nationalist Party =

To Muhammad ^cAbduh, Al-Afghani was a torrent of inspiration. He upheld and later developed many of his ideas of political action as well as literary and other interests. For Al-Afghani's knowledge, as W.S. Blunt testified, had been "almost universal".⁽²⁶⁾

But to what extent was the intellectual atmosphere in Egypt at that time ready for Al-Afghani's teachings? More specifically, what foundations had the early phase of the new educational system laid to prepare its beneficiaries for the advent of new ideas and, perhaps, violent change?

Intellectual and Educational Developments

The need for a strong army that could stand in the face of Ottoman threats called for the exploitation of larger and special sectors of the population. Missions were thus sent by Muhammad Ali to Europe to help, provide teachers and experts for such growing "national" needs as the building of factories, shipyards, and technical schools.⁽²⁷⁾ In the conflict that ensued between the Ottomans and the Egyptian ruler, the important London Treaty of 15 July 1841 (signed jointly by Britain, Austria, Russia, Prussia and Turkey).⁽²⁸⁾

= was born later, aiming to struggle for Egyptian independence. The second part which adopted the same name of Al- Hizb al –Watani (Nationalist Party) was founded in 1907 by Mustafa Kamil (1874-1908) See *ibid.*, p. 163; ^cAmarah, Afghani, pp. 33-34; and Bassam Tibi, *Arab Nationalism: A Critical Enquiry*, ed., and translation from German by M.F. Sluglett and P. Sluglett (London, 1981) *passim*, here see p. 153 .

26. See Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, *Secret History of English Occupation of Egypt* 2nd ed. (London 1969) p. 101.

27. For an excellent account of schools and colleges established by Muhammad ^cAli, see ^cAbd Al-Rah.man Al-Rafici, ^cAsr Muhammad ^cAli (Cairo 1962), pp. 386-463. Also cf. A.L. Tibawi, "Islamic Education: Its Traditions and Modernization into the Arab National Systems" (London 2nd ed. 1979) p. 48; P.J. Vatikiotis, "The History of Egypt: from Muhammad ^cAli to Sadat", 2nd ed (London 1980) pp. 433 ff; and D.N. Crecelius, *The Ulama and the State in Modern Egypt* (Michigan, 1967) pp. xiii-xiviii.

28. See Zaid, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

The treaty, moreover, is notable for its later formative impact on educational planning in Egypt, in addition to its legitimization of the hereditary nature of the rule of Muhammad ^cAli's family. This last aspect resulted in the extraordinary measures taken by Muhammad ^cAli to ensure that the country's educational system would inevitably serve his own objectives as well as those of his family and “dynasty”. Hence military and technical schools were established and encouraged at the expense of more popular ones.⁽²⁹⁾

Muhammad ^cAli's policy may have started as part of his attempt to create a modern army and navy. Yet he always believed in the power of knowledge and patronized the members of the educational missions, which he sent abroad, insisting, on their return, that they should share their knowledge by translating books from European languages. It is narrated that he once “cut a geography book into three portions with his sword and put three men to work on translating it, because he had been told it would take three months to translate”. Until 1837 education was administrated by the War Department, but in that year a Department of Education was created, with a president, three permanent and six consultant members, and a secretary. By 1840 two large preparatory schools, one in Cairo and the other in Alexandria, and about fifty primary schools had been established throughout the country. In co-operation with other government departments, the council maintained also a number of specialist military and medical schools. Meanwhile, several students holding government scholarships were studying in Europe. The first of these missions had been sent in 1813 with fifteen students, following mainly military studies. By the end of Muhammad ^cAli's reign (1849) eleven missions had been sent to England, Italy, France,

29. Cf. Al-Rafici, *op.cit.*, pp. 227-233, 252 ff.; also J. Heyworth -Dunne, *An Introduction to History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London,1938) pp. 340 ff.

And the States.⁽³⁰⁾

As a result of these missions, a “School of Languages” (among other schools) was opened by Muhammad ^cAli in 1835 with Rifa^ca Al-Tahtawi as its head.⁽³¹⁾ The school played an important leading part in establishing guidelines for the intellectual and political renaissance in Egypt, as well as in some other Arab countries. The school produced such writers as Muhammad Abu Al-Sa^cud (1841-1903)⁽³²⁾ and Muhammad ^cUthman Jalal⁽³³⁾ and, what possibly was more important, it turned out people who translated various European

30. See Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 10. For a detailed account of Muhammad ^cAli's mission to Europe, see ^cUmar Tusun, *Al-Bacathat Al-clmiyya fi cAhd Muhammad ^cAli* (Alexandria, 1934); Ahmad ^cIzzat ^cAbd Al-Karim, *Tarikh Al-Taclim fi ^cAsr Muhammad ^cAli* (Cairo 1938); and Alian Silvera, 'The First Egyptian Student Mission to France under Muhammad ^cAli', *Middle Eastern Studies*, London, vol. 16, No.2, May, 1980, pp. 1-22. The American Knickerbocker published during 1846-1847 a series of thirty-one 'Egyptian Letters'. These letters, which were edited by Mathew Markwell, are said to be written by an Egyptian by the name of “Abd Allah Omar”, who identifies himself in the first letter as being first Egyptian student to pursue education in America. In these letters, addressed to “Syed Ahmed El-Baji”, Chief Secretary of the Ckadee [i.e. Qadi, or Chief Judge] at Cairo, the writer gives his impression of the country, its institutions and its people, as well as their religion, habits and customs. In the first letter he writes: 'When according to the recently established rule of our Pacha Mohammed Ali (whose name be praised!) a number of us were selected to be sent to Europe, there to acquire a more profound knowledge of the arts and sciences than is taught at home I felt my desire revive, with a willingness to forego the pleasures the society of the old world could bestow, for the novelty of being the first Egyptian who wandered to a region so much talked of and known to him only in story. I besought our ruler to change my destination, and I cannot describe to you how great was my joy when yielding to my earnest entreaties, supported by your active friendship, he gave me permission to visit the distant land of America. You know that I lost no time in preparation, but commenced the voyage without delay; and, praise be to Allah! I am here in safety, though in the midst of the profane'. See xxviii, Nov. 1846, p. 289. Also see Letters 2-4, *ibid*, pp. 319-400; Letters 5-8, Dec. 487-498; Letters 9-11, xxix, Jan. 1847, pp. 27-28; Letters 12-14, Feb. 135-147; Letters 15-17, Mar., 236-248; Letters 18-19, May, 414-424; Letters 20-21, June, 483-492; Letters 22-23, xxx, July 1847, pp. 50-61; Letters 24-25, Oct., 316-323; Letters 26-27, Dec., 500-508; Letter 28, xxxi, Feb. 1848, pp. 132-137; Letter 29, Mar., 236-241; and Letters 30-31, May, pp. 422-430.

31. On Al-Tahtawi, see pp. ff. below.

32. See below p. 19, n. 72.

33. See below p. 19, n. 74.

works, many of which were published by the official printing press established by Muhammad^c Ali .⁽³⁴⁾

Fifty elementary schools were established in the country. Azhar Shaykhs acted as headmasters. The curriculum consisted of the Qur'an, reading, writing and arithmetic. The course was established for three or four years, starting from the age of seven, with all pupils receiving free clothing, food and being lodged in the school under semi-military discipline⁽³⁵⁾. From these fifty schools 2,000 pupils were selected for admission to the two preparatory schools in the country. Here the curriculum, extended to four years, included the three languages (Arabic, Turkish and Persian) algebra, geometry, history, geography, calligraphy and drawing. It prepared the pupils for further training in the specialized schools, which at this time included a polytechnic, a school for infantry, another for cavalry, a third for artillery, in addition to the schools of medicine, veterinary science and languages and one or two others. The teaching of French (or any other European language) was absent from the curriculum. Translations of textbooks into Arabic or Turkish of the assigned books had become available.

The system obviously carried little intellectual weight. It was more of an instrument of the government than a public utility. It neglected female education, while failing to co-ordinate with the traditional system, which felt threatened by this modern “substitute”. It did not provide for the training of teachers, and it recruited its administrative staff from a mainly

Turkish and Armenian elite⁽³⁶⁾.

34. The number of books and pamphlets which were translated, in particular, by Al-Tahtawi and his pupils, has been put at two thousand. See Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 10; also Al-Husry, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

35. According to Tibawi in *Islamic Education*, the total number of pupils in these schools was 5,500. See *ibid.*, p. 54.

Muhammad ^cAli's rule was so long, however, that it is easy to find material for both praise and blame. Nevertheless, one cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that by sending Egyptians abroad for education and adopting such European inventions as the printing press he initiated an intellectual movement the significance of which became evident with time.⁽³⁷⁾

The man typical of the new educated class was Rifa^c a Rafi^c Al-Tahtawi (1801-1873)⁽³⁸⁾. Initially a product of traditional education (the village Kuttab then Al-Azhar), he was appointed (in 1825) an imam to the first educational mission which Muhammad ^cAli sent to Europe. With no knowledge of foreign languages, nor indeed of the world outside Egypt, his duties involved mainly the leadership of the forty members of the mission in prayer and the administration of their religious needs and duties. Muhammad ^cAli “did not want his students to lose their religion in Europe”.⁽³⁹⁾

Like Sheikh Hasan Al-^cAttar ⁽⁴⁰⁾ in the previous generation, Tahtawi began with a strong belief in the power of language and a critical trust in

36. See Tibawi, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

37. See Ahmad, op. cit., pp. 10-11. And for an extensive study of the mission and their influence, see ^cUmar Tusun, Al-Bacathat Al-cllmiyya fi ^cAhd Muhammad ^cAli thumma fi ^cAhd ^cAbbas Al-Awwal wa Sacid (Alexandria 1325/1907).

38. On Al-Tahtawi, see Muhammad cAmarah, Rifaca Rafic Al-Tahtawi, Al-Acmal Al-Kamila, 3 vols.(Beirut, 1973); Mahmud Hijazi, Usul Al-Filer Al^cArabi Al-Hadith ^cInda Al-Tahtawi; Maca Al-Nas Al-Kamil li Kitabih Takhlis Al-Ibriz (Cairo, 1974).

39. See S.K. Al-Husry, Three Reformers; A Study in Modern Arab Political Thought (Beirut, 1966); p. 11; and Hourani, op. cit. p. 70.

40. Al-^cAttar (1766-1835) was a celebrated grammarian and one of the great scholars of the age. For a full biographical and critical study see Hasan Muhammad ^cAbd =

European arts and sciences, but he was always ready to modify his ideas. He made a conscious effort to adapt the Arabic language to modern needs, and he preceded Qasim Amin⁽⁴¹⁾ in the call for the “liberation” and proper education of Arab women; he pioneered the translation movement and revived old classics, and made attempts at popularizing European sciences in Arabic. He was ever at pains to create “disciples”, who could carry the movement of reform to new areas. Muhammad ^cAbduh was to provide such a continuity.⁽⁴²⁾

Above all, before Tahtawi, European learning was almost unknown to Egyptians and it may therefore be said with enough justification that the “intellectual movement in Egypt began with his studentship in Paris and the book he wrote then”.⁽⁴³⁾ Tahtawi was well acquainted with the writings which preceded and inspired the French Revolution. He read besides current French

= Al-Ghani, Hasan Al-^cAttar (Cairo, 1968); and for concise biography and references, see Dagher, *Masadir Al-Dirasa Al-Adabiyya*, iii, pp. 314-315.

41. On Qasim Amin (1863-1908) his career and Ideas see Muhammad Amarah, *Qasim Amin, Al-Actual Al-Kamil*, 2 vols. (Beirut, 1978). For further references and concise biography, see Dagher, *op. cit.*, ii, pp.138-140; also see F. Mukbil, *op. cit.*, pp. 210 ff.
42. Muhammad ^cAbduh (1849-1906) has left an unmistakable imprint on modern Arab history. His role in the reform movement of the nineteenth century, as well as his many-sided personality, has inspired successive generations of reformers and historians in the Arab world. ^cAbduh had appeared on the scene at a time when the cultural identity of the Arab-Islamic world and Egypt in particular was threatened. He stood, by word and deed, against the collapse of that identity, while working to transform it into something modern and viable. Clearly, ^cAbduh was a shrewd and sensitive reader of history, one who nevertheless did not lose sight of the demands of a new age. For further information about ^cAbduh's life and role, see Muhammad ^cAmarah, *Al-Actual Al-Kamil Al-Imam Muhammad ^cAbduh*, 6 vols (Beirut, 1972-1974); also Muhammad Rashid Rida, *Tarikh Al-Ustadh al-Imam Al-Shaykh Muhammad ^cAbduh*, 3 vols. (Cairo, 1931). Here see Hourani, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-71, Al-Husry, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.
43. Tahtawi wrote and translated more than twenty-five works in a variety of areas ranging from history to mathematics and poetry. Three of his own writings are relevant to this narrative, namely, *Takhlis Al-Ibriz fi Talkhis Pariz* (1st ed., Bulaq, 1834, Turkish translation 1840, 2nd ed., 1849 3rd ed., 1903-1905, new ed. Cairo, 1958); *Manhij Al-Albab Al-Misriyya fi Mabahij Al-Adab Al-^cAsriyya* (1st ed. Bulaq, 1869, 2nd ed. Cairo, 1912) (worth thousand. See Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 10; also Al-Husry, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

newspapers, Racine, Rousseau, Voltaire, Lord Chesterfield's letters, and Montesquieu. He even translated some of Montesquieu's writings and chose two books written by Voltaire on the History of Peter the Great and the History of the Romans to be translated by two of his pupils. Finally, Rifaca, who himself witnessed the 1830 revolution while he was in France, translated the "Charte" or constitution which was granted by King Louis Philippe (1830-1848).⁽⁴⁴⁾ Tahtawi's *Al-Manahij*, written late in its author's life, gives an account of the growth of civilization in Egypt from the earliest time up to the governments of Muhammad ^cAli and his successors. But Rifaca in "furtherance of his country's interests" as he proclaims in the introduction to the book, is more concerned with the future. Ahmad summarized most adequately the book's salient features:

There is hardly an aspect of social reform on which he does not comment, thus setting a pattern for subsequent thinkers and reformers. The book covered a wide range of what he called the needs of Egypt and their fulfilment, for instance, the need for his countrymen to distinguish "brother-hood of country" from "brotherhood of religion", the need for cultivating public spirit by teaching elements of good citizenship to school boys and girls, the rights and duties of rulers and the need to help foster a public opinion for use as an instrument of pressure against the excesses of rulers.⁽⁴⁵⁾

"Egyptians", Tahtawi wrote, "must cease to believe that politics are the special field of the ruler". Times have changed and modern society stands badly in need of both "forces of government" and "forces of the governed". To explain this "novel idea", Rifaca devoted four chapters to the theme of "The duties of the Citizens of Egypt". He set out rules for the four classes of the population – "rulers; ^cUlma, and judiciary; the

44. See Al-Shayyal, Rifa^ca, pp. 90-92; Hourani, op. cit., p. 71.

45. See Ahmad, op. cit., pp. 13-14; also see and cf. Hourani, op. cit., pp.77-83, here 79.

46. See *ibid.*, also cf., Hourani, op.cit., pp. 74-76; and Al-Husry,op.cit., pp. 21-23.

soldiers; and peasants and craftsmen” - and starting with their “rights and duties”, went on to the “code of behavior” they should follow.⁽⁴⁶⁾

Tahtawi argued that there was a need to depart from the teachings of the Hanafi School of jurisprudence if modern practices required it.⁽⁴⁷⁾ This was a bold view as was his view on the traditional problem of Ijtihad: the innovations of the modern age should not be shunned or rejected. They are the honourable fruits of the best minds... conducive to the advancement of the political community. In *Al-Jamciyya Al-Siyasiyya*, he reminded his people that Islamic jurisprudence taught them the principles of social utility, but the economic needs of the times made it necessary to adopt some aspects of western civilization - inside a framework of Islam - such as the laws of trade, commerce, and credit.

Himself a graduate of Al-Azhar, he criticized its rejection of secular subjects, which had once flourished there. He emphasized however, that the restoration of Al-Azhar could not be in itself a substitute for learning the new arts of government and science from Europe. In ancient times, he argued, Greece and Egypt had exchanged ideas, with benefit for both, and it was time that Egypt in its new era began to do so again.⁽⁴⁸⁾ At any rate, Tahtawi, as Al-Husry asserts; tried to stay “within the inherited traditional bounds”, and attempted to “reconcile western institutions and modes of life and thought with teachings of Islam.”⁽⁴⁹⁾

47. As it is well-known, there are four Madhahib (doctrines or schools) belonging to the Sunnites (Orthodox Muslims) one of which is Al-Madhhab Al-Hanafi. Hanafiyya is the earliest of the four schools of law. It was founded by Al-Imam Abu Hanifa (699-767). Throughout the period of Ottoman domination, the Shaykh or Mufti in Egypt was Hanafi. See Hourani, op. cit., pp. 75-76; and Al-Husry, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

48. See Ahmad, op.cit., p.14, also see Hourani, op.cit., pp. 80-81.

49. See Al-Husry, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

AlManahij was indeed the “greatest single influence on the thought of Egypt in the nineteenth century.” Its author's concern for the revitalization of Egyptian society and institutions as well as of the Arabic language itself was never lost on the second generation. He was the first Egyptian who saw Egypt as a “nation”, distinct from the general body of the Islamic community. “Every land in the world has a planet which rises from its horizon”, he declared, “our Egypt is the planet of Africa, its highest minaret and the shining sun of its horizon”.⁽⁵⁰⁾

Whatever case may be, the fact is, the French influence on an increasingly secular education had continued from the time of Napoleon's invasion. Students who were sent to Europe exerted, upon their return to Egypt, a considerable westernizing influence by translating into Arabic European works on history, medicine, law, science, literature and economics.⁽⁵¹⁾ Foreign missionary schools were becoming more widespread. Although American missionary activity in the Near East initially centered in Lebanon,⁽⁵²⁾ its influence was beginning to be felt elsewhere in the Arab world by the late 1800s. By 1878, 52 per cent of Egyptian boys in school were in European-administered institutions.⁽⁵³⁾

Despite the fact that the system suffered a setback after the death of Muhammad ^cAli, the sending of students for training in Europe was continued. This time they went not only to France but also to England, Italy, Austria and Bavaria. Students returning from Europe served in the surviving schools and government departments. In Tibawi's words, they and their

50. See Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 14; and Al-Husry, *op. cit.*, p.30. For an account of Rifa^c'a's pupils, see Al-Shayyal, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

51. See Wilber, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

52. See A.L. Tibawi, *American Interests in Syria, 1800-1901: A Study of Educational, Literary and Religious Work* (London, 1966) pp. 1-30.

53. See Wilber, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

predecessors represented the 'real net gain' of the movement first initiated by Muhammad ^cAli.⁽⁵⁴⁾

While the traditional system of education was slowly making a recovery after Muhammad ^cAli, the missionary schools were left unscathed. European interests had led to increased pressure on local governments in the Ottoman Empire and in Egypt, and Christian communities in these areas had been patronized by various European nations. This phase was also witnessing a steady increase in the size of French, Italian, and Greek colonies in Alexandria, Cairo and elsewhere.⁽⁵⁵⁾ The members of these colonies were enjoying (and exploiting to the full) extra-territorial privileges in commerce, industry and education conceded by a steadily beleaguered Ottoman authority.

54. See Tibawi, *Islamic Education*, pp. 55-56, here see p. 56.

55. For similar developments in Syria, see Tibawi, *American Interests in Syria, 1800-1901*; also *idem*, *British Interest in Palestine, 1800-1901* (Oxford, 1961). H.A.R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and The West* (London, 1951), vol. i, part 2, chap. xi, on Education. Arabic translation *al-Mujtamac Al-Islami wa Al-Gharb*, by A.A.R. Mustafa and A. Izzat (Cairo, 1970); and for general background and excellent information on American Missionaries History, see J. Tracy, *History of American Missions to the Heathen, from their Commencement to the Present Time* (Worcester, 1840).

56. ^cAli Mubarak Pasha was a scholar whose monumental work *Al-Khitat Al-Tawfiqiyya Al-Jadida*, 20 vols. (Bulaq, 1886-1889) new ed., 1955, 1968) was a principal source of information on nineteenth century Egypt. *Al-Khitat*, contains marvellous factual material on Egyptian villages, towns, and Cairo's and streets, buildings, schools, mosques. The population and even dervish convents are described and discussed. While Mubarak, a French-trained engineer, was minister, the important law of 1868 was approved. It established the state system of education. See Tibawi, *Islamic Education*, pp. 57ff.; also for a concise biography and general information on ^cAli Mubarak, see Muhammad Ahmad Khalafallah, *^cAli Mubarak wa Atharuh* (Cairo, 1957); for a more recent article see L.M. Kenny, "^cAli Mubarak, 19th century Egyptian educator and administrator" in *Middle East Journal*, 21 (1967), pp. 35-51.

In the period after Muhammad ^cAli, the figure of ^cAli Mubarak Pasha (1824-1893) is important.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Mubarak was a product of both the old and the new system. After the usual Kuttab education he enrolled in one of Muhammad ^cAli's new schools, and in 1844 he was selected for training as an artillery officer in France. Like, Tahtawi, who in the words of Tibawi seemed “less prepared for the experience than Mubarak was”, he had the vision and the influence to leave his mark on modern Egyptian thought and educational practice. Mubarak additionally was well placed and skilful enough to use the agency of government better than other reformers. He was in-charge of “education, religious foundations and public works” when he took the opportunity to apply the first education decree issued late in 1867.⁽⁵⁷⁾

Earlier, in reform movement at Al-Azhar ⁽⁵⁸⁾ had been in progress. pioneer attempt was launched in 1865 when Shaykh Muhammad Al-^cAbbasi Al-Mahdi - who became Rector of Al-Azhar from 1870 until 1882 - submitted detailed proposals for reform deploring both the narrowness and low standards of the curriculum. Few graduates, he said, were proficient in grammar and composition. Fewer still were those who had adequate knowledge of linguistic, literary historical, physical and astronomical studies. It was indispensable, he stressed, to “renew the pursuit of these esteemed studies”.

While the attempt was a failure, resulting in the Rector's dismissal, Mubarak's plan proved more effective. Its application resulted in the

57. See Tibawi, op.cit., p.57. For an illuminating study of the development of Egyptian education, its successes and failures, see Abu Al-Futuh Ahmad Radwan, *Old and New Forces in Egyptian Education*, Columbia University, Series on Education (New York, 1951).

58. For further information on the role Al-Azhar in the intellectual, political, and social life of the Arab and Islamic world see Muhammad ^cAbdallah ^cAnan, *Tarikh Al-Jamie^c Al-Azhar: Min Al-^cAhd Al-Fatimi Hatta Al-^cAsr Al-Hadith* (Cairo, 1942); and Janet L. Abu Lughod, *Cairo, 1001 Years of the City Victorious* (Princeton, 1971).

constitution in a few centers of two grades of “civil” schools - elementary and central. Government control was increased, and a first (though incomplete) integration between the traditional and the innovative systems was made. Central schools in some cities went beyond traditional curricula, incorporating, in addition to religious instruction and Arabic, arithmetic, the elements of history, geography, and science, penmanship and Turkish ⁽⁵⁹⁾ (or another foreign language). The teaching of Christian religious instruction was introduced into the central schools for the benefit of Coptic pupils, thus working towards a “national” system of education. European teachers were employed in these schools, as well as in the specialized schools, remnants of Muhammad ^cAli's system, which, dwindling in number, included the military school, the naval school, the school of medicine and other schools for administration, accountancy and surveying. In 1872, Dar Al-^cUlum was opened. Recruits to this college received instruction from staff members who were partly Azhar shaykhs and partly “modern” teachers educated in the new schools or in Europe.

The process of opening up to Europe which was initiated by Muhammad ^cAli gave Egypt not only a crop of useful translations and educational and technical institutions, but also a batch of intellectuals who rose to prominence or at least to public attention in the second half of the nineteenth century beginning with the reign of the Khedive Isma^cil, i.e., the period roughly between 1860 and 1880. These first intellectuals arose

59. See Tibawi, op. cit., p. 58, According to Richmond in Egypt, 1798-1952, the Turkish language gave way to Arabic, which was used in official correspondence increasingly from the 1840s. Turkish survived in the army, until the army itself was abolished after Tell El-Kabir, [i.e. after ^cUrabi Revolution, 1881-1882]; it even survived into the British officered Egyptian army, in the names of the ranks and words of the drill book. It survived for a long time in the Khedival and Royal Egyptian Court, where its use was discontinued only after the death of King Fu'ad in 1936. But these were survivals; before the end of the nineteenth century, Arabic, which had survived as a literary language during its course, became the national language of Egypt. See *ibid*, pp. 113-114.

from the ranks of officials and were expected to fulfil “specific tasks and duties” essentially in the fields of teaching, translation and technical services.⁽⁶⁰⁾

Both of Muhammad ^cAli's immediate successors, ^cAbbas 1 and Sa^cid, had no coherent educational policy. Though medical students continued to go to France, no attempt was made to pursue earlier educational reforms. Government control slackened and modernization ground to a halt. Benefiting from this, the European schools gathered added strength and expanded in various directions consolidating all the non-Muslim communities. After Isma^cil's succession, however, education became once again a local interest.

Isma^cil's first educational act was to revive the Supreme Educational Council and separate schools from the War department. The Khedive then allotted special state funds for building schools in the provinces.⁽⁶¹⁾ Educational missions to Europe were resumed. Numerous advanced schools were founded in addition to a national library⁽⁶²⁾ and a museum. The Khedive was a patron of the theatre, and he fostered a sense of “national pride” by prescribing Mariette's History of Egypt from Earliest Times to the Muslim Conquest for the Egyptian high schools.

In 1868 the organic law of public instruction was introduced. There also appeared special schools for music, languages, survey and agriculture, law and administration, veterinary medicine and technical subjects. In 1873, the Khedive's wife opened a school for girls which admitted in the following year four hundred pupils. Its curriculum combined fundamental subjects such as arithmetic, geography, history and religious knowledge with training in

60. See Crecelius, op.cit., pp. 22 ff.; see also Tibawi,op.cit., pp. 57-58; and cf. Tignor, op. cit., pp.346-357.

61. See Riff^cat, op.cit., p.122. For records and numbers of pupils attending schools throughout Egypt, as well as for details of numbers of schools and the population etc., see ibid., p.124.

62. For details on libraries at that time, see Filib Tarrazi, Khaza'inAl-Kutub Al-^cArabiyya fi Al-Khafiqaayn, 3 vols. Published by Ministry of Education, Lebanon (Beirut, n.d.).

practical household crafts such as sewing and weaving.⁽⁶³⁾ ^cAli Mubarak played an important part in building up the collection of the new Khedival Library from the libraries of mosques and other sources. The founding of the Egyptian Museum in 1863 indicated the strides which Egyptology had taken and the growing awareness among westernized Egyptians of their country's pre-Islamic past. The Institute Egyptian, founded in 1859, evoked the memory of the Institute d'Egypte, which had flourished brilliantly and briefly during the French occupation. The revived institute had both European and Egyptian members. A purely Egyptian society was Jam^cdiyyat Al-Ma^cArif, founded in 1868, which had as its principal function the publication of Arabic manuscripts. The Khedival Geographical Society was established in 1875 and reflected Egyptian interest in Africa, as well as in such fields as irrigation and water problems of the Nile, desert studies and cotton cultivation.⁽⁶⁴⁾

Above all, the important thing developed in the reign of Isma^cil was the press. Of course, the first Arabic newspaper was the official Egyptian gazette, Al-Waqa'i^c Al-Misriyya, which was established, by Muhammad^c Ali's order in 1828.⁽⁶⁵⁾ The gazette became daily in the reign of Isma^cil, when a number of other periodicals were started by private persons.⁽⁶⁶⁾ This new development was helped by the entry into Egypt of a number of Syrian writers with new ideas on literary and political subjects which they were

63. See Rifaat, op. cit., pp. 122 and 123

64. See Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, p. 205.

65. See F. Mukbil, op.cit., p. 82 ff.

66. According to Holt in Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, the most important Arabic newspaper of this period was Al-Jawa'ib, which was edited by the Lebanese Ahmad Faris Al-Shidyaq (1804-1890) and published in Istanbul. It circulated in Egypt as elsewhere in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. See *ibid.*, p.206, n.1. For information on Al-Shidyaq's career see *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed. (Leiden, 1960 in progress) art., Djarida, ii, pp. 464-477, here see p. 466, by B. Lewis and Ch. Pellat; also Zaydan, *Mashahir*, ii, pp.74-83.

unable to express in their own country beneath the heavy censorship of Turkish rules.⁽⁶⁷⁾ By the end of Isma^cil's reign there were sixteen well-established papers, ten of them in Arabic.⁽⁶⁸⁾ A number of gifted writers came to the political scene. Among them was Adib Ishaq, who was representative of the revolutionary writers and one of the most talented of Al-Afghani's disciples.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Another important figure was Abdullah Al-Nadim⁽⁷⁰⁾ a journalist and orator of great talent, which he employed later in support of ^cUrabi and his colleagues to check the power of the Khedive and the growing influence of Europe.⁽⁷¹⁾

This general renaissance had the direct consequence of strengthening the Arabic language and its literature in Egypt. The 1870s witnessed an eruption of literary activity beginning with the emergence of the press and journalists. ^cAbdallah Abu Al-Sa^cud⁽⁷²⁾ a product of the new synthesis in

67. See Ahmed, op. cit., p. 17.

68. One of which Al-Ahram, still exists. On the history of Al-Ahram, see Ibrahim ^cAbduh, Ta'rikh Al-Ahram (Cairo, 1951).

69. Adib Ishaq (1856-1885) was born in Damascus into a Christian family. Ishaq had received his elementary education in Beirut, and by the time he was fifteen had gained fame as a poet, writer, translator and orator. At seventeen he was contributing articles to several Lebanese journals, soon becoming joint editor of Thamarat Al-Funun wa Al -Tagaddum, of Beirut, as well as translating Racine's Andromaque with Salim Al-Naqqash. In 1876, he arrived in Alexandria, and associated himself with Al-Afghani. Thus, the famous Jaridat Misr was born in 1877. See Ahmad, op.cit., p. 18; and for further details on Ishaq's career, see Hamza, Adab Al-Magala Al-Suhufiyya, ii, pp. 9-56.

70. ^cAbdallah Al-Nadim (1845-1896) born in Alexandria, and coming from a "fellah" family and background, understood his country and its mind much more than many who were writing at the time. He wrote against the Europeans who lived off the fellah in the countryside and closely associated himself with the ^cUrabists. He was penalised for his attacks on the Khedive whom he blamed for the miseries inflicted upon the Egyptian people. After the collapse of the ^cUrabi rising he spent several years in hiding, but then emerged to edit Al-Ustadh, which caused so much public stir that the authorities banished him to Constantinople, where he died. See Ahmad, op. cit., p.19; also for further information, see ^cAli Al-Hadidi, ^cAbdallah Al-Nadim, Khatib Al-Wataniyya (Cairo,n.d.); C.Wendell, The Evolution of the Egyptian National Image: From Its origins to Ahmad Lutfi Al-Sayyid (University of California, California 1972) pp. 140 ff. and passim.

71. See Ahmed, op. cit., p. 19.

education, became a famous history master at Dar Al-^cUlum, authorizing school textbooks in history, translating Mariette's History of Ancient Egypt from the French, and participating in the translation of the Napoleonic code. He became the first editor of the newspaper Wadi Al-Nil in 1868.⁽⁷³⁾ Besides Abu Al-Sa^cud, as we have already mentioned, there was Mohammad ^cUthman Jalal (1828-1898) most famous student of Tahtawi and graduate of School of Languages as well as translator of European - mainly French - fiction, short stories, romances, plays, essays and novels. Jalal started, in collaboration with Ibrahim Al-Muwaylihi, (1846-1906) the short-lived but significant weekly paper Nuzhat Al-Afkar in 1869.⁽⁷⁴⁾

Under Khedive Isma^cil, Egyptians were exposed as never before to the artistic aspects of European culture. Drama,⁽⁷⁵⁾ painting and sculpture were introduced and patronised by the Court. Egypt became linked with the history of the opera through Verdi's Aida, commemorating the opening of the Canal.⁽⁷⁶⁾

72. ^cAbdallah Abu Al-Sa^cud Effendi (1820-1878) was born in Dashhur, near Giza. A prominent graduate of the School of Languages which was directed by Tahtawi, apart from his proficiency in foreign languages his writings in Arabic literature and poetry, of which he wrote a number of volumes, he was professor of history in Dar Al-^cUlum, and subsequently a well-known editor-in-chief of the newspaper Wadi Al-Nil. See I. ^cAbduh, Tatawwur Al-Sihafa, p.56; Wendell, op.cit., p. 145

73. See I. ^cAbduh, op. cit., pp. 63-65.

74. For further details on Jalal's career, see Zaydan, Adab, iv, p.245. Wendell, op.cit., pp. 145-285; also for details on Muwaylihi's career, see Rida, op.cit., p.668; Adams, op. cit., p.211; and for a history and survey of newspapers published in Egypt during the French occupation, as well as under the Khedives, see I. ^cAbduh, op. cit., pp. 14-25, 42-54, 62-68; idem, Tarikh al-Tibaca wa Al-Sihafa Khilal Al-Hamla Al-Faransiyya.

75. For a somewhat detailed history of the modern theatre in Egypt and the role of Syrian troupes, see Zaydan, Adab, pp.135-143; Rifaat, op.cit., pp.105-109,122; and for a general survey see Dagher, Masadir Al-Dirasa Al-Adabiyya, pp.1561-1567. On Ya^cqub Sannuc, who played an important part in this movement see F. Mukbil, op. cit., p. 103.

76. The Canal was finally opened by Egenie Marie Ignace Augustine de Montijo (1826-1920), Empress of France, on 17 November 1869. It may be interesting to note that the official title of the Company of Suez Canal was "Compagnie Univrselle

and the founding of an operahouse in Cairo. The Egyptian army sported its bands and seemed to march to the tunes of European music. Although such manifestations were as a rule more imitative than original, there was no immediate danger of the country being swamped by western influence. The army, despite its musical importations, was still robust, and the country yet enjoyed a viable autonomy. But the drift from cultural influence to economic and political pressure, and eventually military intervention, certainly dealt a fatal blow to Egypt's independence. This drift was almost an inevitable by-product of imperial interests and rivalries in the latter half of the nineteenth century, though the blame has also to be shared by the inadequate, indeed disastrous, policies of Isma^cil and Twafiq. Paradoxically, however, the slide into economic chaos and foreign occupation also witnessed the rise to eminence of a vocal and many-sided reformer, Shaykh Muhammad^c Abduh, who saw it as his special destiny to try to arrest that decline or at least harness its lessons to a programme of national rebirth.

Social Development

Undoubtedly, the effects of the initial successes of the Napoleonic campaign on Egyptian society were considerable. The sudden awakening of Egypt to Western realities revealed to her (on a very wide scale) the technological and administrative superiority of the West's military and civil institutions. This realization prompted later rulers, in the period following the campaign, to adopt a "policy of imitation and adaptation of Western systems". Muhammad^c Ali's use of French advisers is a case in point. Moreover, the Egyptians woke up to the weakness of their Mamluk rulers and to the possibility of improving their lot in life. The Egyptians felt the extent of their power through their participation in various committees and

due Canal Maritime de Suze." See Holt, op.cit., p.200; The Times Book of Egypt, p.65. For a detailed study of the Canal and its important place in the world, see D.A. Farnie, East and West of Suez; The Suez Canal in History, 1854-1956 (Oxford, 1969).

organizations. Their struggle against the French occupation gave rise to a widespread feeling of national identity and unity. Furthermore, the French campaign inadvertently drew attention to the important strategic position of Egypt, which increasingly began to enter the sphere of imperial interests.⁽⁷⁷⁾

The age of Muhammad ^cAli did, not mark only the beginning of a modernisation movement in Egypt but also that of a general “revival” which assumed political, administrative, economic and cultural proper-ties. In practice, Egyptian society under Muhammad ^cAli included three classes: one was made up of Muhammad ^cAli himself, together with his relatives and followers. A second class was composed of civilian and military officials who, as a rule, enjoyed exceptional privileges and among whose members individuals were chosen to receive higher or more specialized education in Egypt, France, and other European countries. Scholarships and grants were being instituted, while towns and cities witnessed a steady outpour of members of that class from their seats of power in the countryside. A third class included the religious ^cUlama, who evidently enjoyed several privileges and wielded some influence during Muhammad ^cAli's reign. This class, however, later suffered from a gradual loss of power and became more closely identified with the wider class of farmers, labourers, artisans and small traders.⁽⁷⁸⁾

77. See Ahmad, op. cit., pp.3-4; Rifaat, op. cit., pp. 6-13.

78. See Rifaat, op. cit., 16 ff. also see Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (London,1977) p.11.For the significance of ^cUlama in Egyptian society and their qualities, in particular, their rule during the Napoleonic campaign and Muhammad ^cAli's reign, see Crecelius, *The ^cUlama and the State in Modern Egypt*, pp.1-47,85-137; and Afaf Loutfi El-Sayed, “The Role of the ^cUlama' in Egypt during the Early Nineteenth Century”, in *Political and = = Social Change in Modern Egypt*, Holt ed., pp. 260-280. Also for details of Muhammad ^cAli's agricultural policies, see Helen Anne Rivlin, *The Agricultural Policy of Muhammad ^cAli in Egypt* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961).

To achieve efficient exploitation of resources, the scope of the state under Muhammad ^cAli was enlarged “beyond that traditionally accepted by the Ottomans”. Foreign experts helped improve methods of cultivation and irrigation. New crops, such as cotton, sugar, rice, and indigo, were introduced to sell abroad and provide foreign exchange. The state helped the peasants produce the new crops by pro-viding the land and seed, though transforming the peasants in the pro-cess into “little more than hired labourers”. On the other hand, living conditions for many peasants improved somewhat because Muhammad ^cAli built hospitals and clinics, introduced a quarantine system, and provided medical schools and training. To facilitate tax-collection he built roads and carried out a new cadastral survey.

However, the economic success was achieved at a price. The Western orientation of Egypt's economy (and its new merchant navy) greatly increased the country's dependence on world markets and made it vulnerable to European economic fluctuations. Foreigners, who were encouraged to settle in Egypt, controlled and manipulated the 'national economy. The independence and initiative of large segments of the subject class were destroyed in both town and country, with native participation excluded except “at the most menial levels”.⁽⁷⁹⁾

Muhammad ^cAli followed his policies with a single-mindedness and a severity far in excess of other Ottoman reformers. Those who dared to resist his reforms were repressed without pity. When the people resisted taxes or conscription, and other government controls, they were quickly dealt with by the new army.⁽⁸⁰⁾ The ^cUlama and guild leaders were also put in their places, from which they had emerged only briefly during and after the French campaign.

79. See Shaw and Shaw, *op. cit.*, p.11. On Muhammad ^cAli's economic policies, see Charles Issawi, 'The Economic Development of Egypt, 1800-1960', in *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914*, Issawi ed., pp.359-374.

Direct governmental control over Islamic institutions was imposed in the guise of reforms introduced into the Azhar Mosque (and University) between the year 1820-1830.⁽⁸¹⁾ The result was a relatively efficient state and army but at a “terrible” cost, which “weighed heavily on the land during the last half of the nineteenth century.”⁽⁸²⁾

In conclusion, in the nineteenth century, under the impact of various factors, the Arab world produced a generation of intellectuals who contributed to the general “Arab Awakening”. Many of these people were pioneers of reform in the fields of religion, education, writing, poetry, and journalism, as well as in the revival and development of the Arabic language itself. Above all, most of them were builders of the modern age of Arab political thought, which was increasingly coming under Western influence. In any case, it is a matter of fact that many of these reformers were conscious of what was happening in the world at large and were committed to the ideals of social reform and regeneration.

It was not long before the rise of nationalism in Europe proved to be an attraction to the oppressed peoples in the East. Of course, this movement in Europe was itself a product of a long evolution, which had roots in the Renaissance and had taken shape through such stages as the Reformation, the expansion of trade and the French and Industrial Revolutions. Thus the three pillars on which modern Western civilization was founded (the reality of the physical world, the humanistic emphasis, and the supremacy of the mind) came to be formed. The secular emphasis was crucial. It led ultimately to an association being formed between the 'pursuit of happiness' and man himself,

80. Cf. “cAbd Al-rahman Al-Jabarti” ‘The Revolution in Land Tenure, 1801-1815’, in the Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914, Issawi ed., pp.380-383 .

81. See Crecilius, op. cit., pp. 127-128; and Afaf Al-Sayid, op. cit., pp. 268-270, 275-280. On the progress of these reforms see Mukbil op. cit., pp. 63 ff., 66 ff., 121-124.

82. See Shaw and Shaw, op. cit., p. 12.

now considered the sole object of that pursuit. This movement which witnessed (almost necessitated) a decline in the power of the church, led, needless to say, to an increase in 'temporal' and purely 'social' powers, as well as to unprecedented leaps in science and significant geographical and commercial expansions. The process saw the rise of a class of capitalists and industrialists, who turned their attention to countries outside Europe in the search for resources and markets. Eventually, the movement which started as one of liberalism within the one country developed into international imperialism.

Moreover, economic and political rivalries between Britain and France in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century led by one way or another to napoleon's campaign in Egypt which tried to gain control of trade routes in the East, as well as to weaken the British navy in the Mediterranean and its relative hold on Egypt itself. In reality, when this event took place Egypt was prepared for it in the sense that "in the last decade before the French occupation, the authority of the Ottoman Empire was a purely nominal authority. On the other hand, the Mamluks did indeed rule Egypt as its masters and kept its revenues for themselves, with the weakening Ottoman state no longer able to take the direct military action needed to restore the situation".

Thus, in more than one way, Egypt at the turn of the nineteenth century, was being pushed into the modern era and the modern conflicts. After the Napoleonic invasion the Near East was never the same again. Reaction in Egypt itself led to the overthrow of the Mamluk ruling class and the rise of a new star, an officer in the Turkish forces, from Macedonia, Muhammad ^cAli, who had helped in the driving out the French forces. In 1805, he was designated Pasha (or governor) of Egypt by the Sublime Porte, and he became in effect the founder of modern Egypt as well as of the Turkish dynasty which

was to rule there till 1952. Truly, he was the most powerful (and important) Muslim ruler and reformer of the nineteenth century. Since 1805 until his death in 1849, his story is indeed that of Egypt, an Egypt trying to forge a way for itself in a rapidly changing world.