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The American University in Cairo
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

Charity and Nationalism: The Case of 'Abd Allah al-Nadim's Islamic Philanthropic Society

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Middle East Studies

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts

By

Mohamed Amr Gamal-Eldin

Under the supervision of **Dr. Khaled Fahmy**

Spring 2012

The American University in Cairo

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Note on Transliteration and Translation in the Text

I have used the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* guide for transliteration as my standard throughout the thesis. Unless otherwise noted, translations from Arabic and French are my own. For the Turkish and Ottoman I am indebted to Ibrahim Kalkan and Ciğdem Kurt for their help in translation.

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Abstract

My paper argues that charity can be used as a lens to examine nationalism. Due to the transformation of the institution of charity in late nineteenth-century Egypt new charities were developed. In the nineteenth century charity was changing due to the state centralization policies of Mehmed 'Ali (r. 1805-48), who founded state-run shelters and soup kitchens and enacted prohibitions against begging. Later because of decentralization policies under Said Pasha (r.1854-1863) and Khedive Ismail (r.1863-1879), there was a move away from state control of charity, and the gradual erection of a number of private charitable associations that aimed to help the "public" poor. I look at how the evolving nineteenth-century institutions of charity, both changes under Mehmed 'Ali and later under his successors, differed from the "pre-modern" period. Is nineteenth-century charity similar to early charity, in particular the *'awqaf* (endowments) of Mamluk elites that became a symbol of the rulers' beneficence? What did donation and beneficence mean in late nineteenth-century Egypt? And did the new charitable associations of the late nineteenth century, that were not an individual endowment (*waqf*) or state-controlled charity, begin to use their power of beneficence to improve the social conditions of people with the goal to mold a particular type of Egyptian citizen? This connection between charity and the modeling of a better citizen will constitute a central theme of my argument.

My research concentrates on one Islamic charity created around the period of the 1881-2 'Urabi revolution, which are the years that are considered as the coming of age of the Egyptian nationalist movement. As such, my project's periodization falls between 1879 and 1892 in order to obtain a detailed picture of charity within the early Egyptian nationalist movement. It focuses on the Islamic Philanthropic Society (IPS), founded in 1879, by 'Abd Allah al-Nadim. The IPS

was a nationalist organization, where both Egyptian territorial nationalism and Islamic nationalism were at work, with a mission to educate young poor Egyptians against what was perceived to be a growing foreign hegemony caused by the British occupation. Specifically, I will study how the IPS evolved, how its charity was donated, how it was received and perceived by its recipients in the late nineteenth century. My work expands on the current literature by looking at the connections between charity and nationalism, rather than looking specifically at the school/education side of the IPS alone. Instead of the individual contributing for themselves, or establishing their own endowment, like the many *waqfs* created to fund a *madrassa* or a *kuttab*, the new charitable associations of the late nineteenth century could be erected as joint charitable ventures, working not only for spiritual “reward,” but for the betterment of citizens.

Introduction

Al-Watan: Where are my people, where my children, where my men? Lost and wandering am I, knowing not how he who sees me thus may treat me as he wonders unto himself, is this the Egypt beloved of all men?

Abu Da'mum: Bug off brother. What's there to love about you...

Abu L-Zalafi: Come on man, don't insult him, poor guy...

Abu Da'mum: So, if his 'people' are going around cutting each other to pieces, the big guy robbing the little guy, the rich man murdering the poor man, why should anyone love him?

Al-Watan: If you do not reform yourselves, then who shall reform you, and if you do not care for me, then who shall care for you?

Abu Da'mum: You mean we should all stand together and act like one man?

Al-Watan: Yes, for you will never succeed unless you are united!

'Abd Allah al-Nadim from his play *Al-Watan* (quoted and translated in Selim 2004:57)

Associations for joint philanthropy are few in our country, in contrast to individual charitable donations and family endowments, which are usually endowed by a single individual.

Rifa'ah Rafi al-Tahtawi (as quoted in Cole 2003: 228-229)

Born in Alexandria in 1843 to a baker, 'Abd Allah al-Nadim went on to become the "voice of the revolution," in the 1881-2 Egyptian movement for Independence.¹ Al-Nadim rose to prominence with the publication of his two newspapers, *Al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit* (Raillery and Reproof) and *Al-Ustadh* (The Professor), and with his founding of الجمعية الخيرية الاسلامية (Islamic Philanthropic Society - IPS) in 1879. Late nineteenth-century Egypt saw the start of the British occupation and the establishment of a number of nationalist movements that led to the creation of the National Party in 1907. A small but significant part of the late nineteenth century nationalist uprisings, in particular in 1881-2, was the creation of philanthropic associations that

¹ Jacques Berque, *Egypt, Imperialism & Revolution* (London: Faber & Faber, 1972).

provided social welfare in education, health, and vocational training where the state was not providing enough resources. What this thesis looks at is how these associations used their charitable activities to affect social change. As such, I will use the IPS as a case study for these philanthropic associations.

What is most interesting about the new form of charity represented by the IPS and the proto-nationalist project in Egypt is that the act of giving, because it was not centered on “reward” as it used to be in the “pre-modern” context, has a recipient that is beholden to the giver, in this case the IPS. Accordingly, as I will discuss in Chapter Four below these associational charities have a group who is linked to the nationalist idea that are inundated upon the recipients of charity. This is different from the older versions of charity where the main goal for the giver of charity was for “reward” in this life or the afterlife, not to affect “profound social change”² as the new charitable associations were.³

Objectives of the Study

My thesis argues that charity can be used as a lens to examine nationalism. Due to the transformation of the institution of charity in late nineteenth-century Egypt new charities developed that incorporated charity with a project to reform the individual into an Egyptian citizen. In the nineteenth century charity was changing due to the state centralization policies of

² Beth Baron, “Islam, Philanthropy, and Political Culture in Interwar Egypt,” in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts* edited by Michael Bonner, Mine Ener and Amy Singer, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003) pp. 239-241.

³ It must be mentioned that “reward” is not the only reason for “pre-modern” forms of charity. A lot of the large charitable endowments were erected to show a ruler’s beneficence to his people and to leave a political landmark as a reminder of the rulers giving.

Mehmed ‘Ali⁴ (r. 1805-48), who founded state-run shelters and soup kitchens and enacted prohibitions against begging. Later, because of decentralization policies under Said Pasha (r.1854-1863) and Khedive Ismail (r.1863-1879), there was a move away from state control of charity, and the gradual erection of a number of private charitable associations that aimed to help the “public” poor. To better explain my thesis I ask how the evolving nineteenth-century institutions of charity, undergoing changes under Mehmed ‘Ali and later under his successors, differed from the “pre-modern” period. Is nineteenth-century charity similar to early charity, in particular the *awqaf* (endowments) of Mamluk elites that become a symbol of the rulers’ beneficence? And if not, how does *waqf* diverge from the associational type of charity that we see in ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim’s Islamic Philanthropic Society? What did donation and beneficence mean in late nineteenth-century Egypt? And how did the new charitable associations of the late nineteenth century, those that were not an individual endowment (*waqf*) or state-controlled charity, begin to use their beneficence to improve the social conditions of people with the goal to mold a particular type of Egyptian citizen? This connection between charity and the modeling of a better citizen constitutes a central theme of my thesis. I examine below how the new charitable societies of the late nineteenth century used their beneficence to spread ideas of an Egyptian identity and nationalism.

My research concentrates on one Islamic charity created around the period of the 1881-2 ‘Urabi revolution, which are the years that are considered as the coming of age of the Egyptian nationalist movement. As such, my project’s periodization falls between 1879 and 1892 in order to obtain a detailed picture of charity within the early Egyptian nationalist movement. My periodization focuses on the IPS, founded in 1879 leading up to 1892 when al-Nadim, the

⁴ I am choosing this spelling for Mehmed Ali versus the Arabized spelling to highlight his Turkish roots.

founder of IPS, was exiled to Istanbul. The IPS was a nationalist organization, where both Egyptian territorial nationalism and Islamic nationalism were at work, with a mission to educate young poor Egyptians against what was perceived to be a growing foreign hegemony caused by the British occupation. Specifically, I study how the IPS evolved, how its charity was donated, how it was received and perceived by its recipients in the late nineteenth century. Most importantly, I ask how this philanthropic society along with the other newly-created charitable associations became pivotal in its benefactors' and recipients' imagining of the nation.

Through archival research conducted at the National Archives in London and *Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiyya* (Egyptian National Archives - DWQ) I was able to study the connection between nationalism and charity. By looking at pupil lists of the schools, imagining the building designs of IPS, among other sources detailed below, the link between the charity and the creation of "good citizens" can be further illustrated. Previous scholars have underutilized the archival sources on the IPS, and my research attempts to fill this gap. What I found was that the archival sources are thin but with the few notes found in the archives in London and Cairo and a balance sheet, recording the finances for the IPS, the archives proved that there are other sources that need to be utilized that would help us better understand how these new philanthropic associations worked. It is in Chapter Three that I examine the archival sources that I do have and have tried to use them as well as possible to reaffirm secondary sources and to shed new light on the physical layout of the school.

My research also utilizes al-Nadim's periodicals, *al-Tankit wa-l-Tabkit* (Raillery and Reproof) and *al-Ustadh* (The Professor) to understand his goals and get a better idea about the role charity played in the larger national movements historically. The IPS has largely remained an unexamined organization in the scholarship on nineteenth-century Egypt except in the area of

education⁵, although in Arabic-language historiography al-Nadim has been studied by a number of historians.⁶ Rather than looking specifically at the school/education side of the IPS alone, my work expands on this scholarship by looking at the connections between charity and nationalism. Instead of the individual contributing for him/herself, or establishing their own endowment, as was the case with the many *waqfs* created to fund a *madrassa* or a *kuttab*, the new charitable associations of the late nineteenth century could be erected as a joint charitable ventures, working not only for spiritual “reward,” but for the betterment of citizens. As illustrated by the opening quote by al-Tahtawi, a near-contemporary to al-Nadim, the associations aimed to provide a new form of charity that was not bound to perpetuity and would work for more than spiritual “reward.”

A historical study on this important philanthropic society will help expand the larger narrative of charity and early Egyptian nationalism. The workings of a charity will give us a chance to touch on the dispossessed masses who were receiving charitable donations and who on a daily or weekly basis were being affected by the charity in question.

Review of the Literature

In Chapter Two I will discuss the early theories on the development of Egyptian nationalism versus the more recent historiography that gives more credit to the early nationalist

⁵ Linda Herrera, "'The Soul of a Nation': 'Abdallah Nadim and Educational Reform in Egypt (1845-1896)," in *Altruism and Imperialism*, eds. Reeva S. Simon and Eleanor Harvey Tejirian (New York: Middle East Institute and Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 1-24. See also, Mona Russell, “Competing, Overlapping, and Contradictory Agendas: Egyptian Education Under British Occupation, 1882-1922,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 21, Nos. 1&2 (2001), pp. 50-60.

⁶ For example ‘Abd Al-Mun‘im Ibrahim al-Dusuqi Al-Jumay‘i *‘Abd Allāh al-Nadīm wa-dawruhu fī al-ḥarakah al-siyāsīyah wa-al-ijtimā‘īyah* (Cairo: Dār al-kitāb al-jāmi‘ī, 1980).

period of the late nineteenth century as opposed to the early historiography that places the beginnings of Egyptian Nationalism in the early twentieth century with the founding of the Nationalist Party in 1907 by Mustafa Kamil. As such I will compare the early historiography provided by Israel Gershoni and James Gankawoski with the more recent historiographies by Juan Cole, Ziad Fahmy, Michael Gasper and Samah Selim.

Further on, I use Beth Baron's study of Labiba Ahmad, in which she makes an interesting argument of how an association was used to implement social change and to assist in the molding a good citizen. I build on Baron's insight as it appears that the charity of Labiba Ahmad and possibly the IPS were new charities that cared less about the act of philanthropy than the subtle attempts to reshape the Egyptian character. Also, like Timothy Mitchell and in his *Colonising Egypt*, I read my sources on the IPS and how the association used its building and symbols and other effects of order to inculcate order and good citizenry. Also by using al-Nadim's writings, in particular in *al-Ustadh*, I examine his views on what he saw as the prototypical Egyptian citizen. Al-Nadim's model would be of an Egyptian subject who used a specific language—classical or Egyptian colloquial Arabic—; who did not accept the foreign ideas that were gradually intruding upon society; and who followed a manner that dictated rules for daily activities such as those that dealt with domestic life. In Chapter Two I will elaborate using al-Nadim's writings on why he deems speaking and reading Arabic as fundamental to being an Egyptian.

In his study *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East* Juan Cole examined the various social dimensions of the 'Urabi revolt. It is for this reason that I examine the social foundations of the early nationalist period through one organization, the IPS, and examine the layers that made up the charity just as Cole examined all the layers of society in his study of the

‘Urabi revolt. If in fact these charitable institutions were important to the greater social movements occurring in Egypt, I question what possible impact the IPS might have had on the people it came into contact with and how it used its role as a charitable organization to instill notions of Egyptian and Islamic identity in the poor it dealt with? In his study on the ‘Urabi Revolt, Cole shows how police registers of people arrested can throw light on the various social dimensions of a society in revolt. Similarly, I have used the registers of the Council of Ministers and the Department of Schools to better understand the organization and work of the IPS and to get an idea of the physical layout of the association to examine how the association may have effected social change in a project to create what Beth Baron calls a “profound social change.”⁷ Also, using another Cole’s study on al-Tahtawi, which examined al-Tahtawi’s opinions on poverty I discuss the writings and speeches of al-Nadim as well as the secondary literature looking for references to the building of the “good citizen” and in particular how al-Nadim addressed the poor.

In Mine Ener’s study on poverty and the poor in nineteenth-century Egypt, *Managing Egypt’s Poor*, she writes about the relation of the new charitable organizations and their relationship to the “modernizing” project of Egypt. Al-Nadim’s Islamic Philanthropic Society is one such example and the earliest we know of in Egypt of an organization dedicated to charity with an express intent of creating the model Egyptian citizen. Ener discusses the IPS briefly within the context of the new charitable associations, specifically, as an example of the modern type of charity being established in the late nineteenth century. What I am attempting to do below is add to her study by situating charity within the nationalist context. Thus, through the

⁷ Beth Baron, “Islam, Philanthropy, and Political Culture in Interwar Egypt,” p. 240.

Egyptian case, I see my research as adding to Ener's study and expanding upon the effort of studying charity as a lens for nationalism.

Chapter Breakdown

In Chapter One, I set up the historical context of the new associational charities (e.g. the IPS) with a look at charity in the early nineteenth century. I ask, "What type of former institutions of charity did the charity associations evolve from and where did these new associations differ from the older forms of charitable endowment (*waqf*)?" It is here that I begin to propose the questions on how these new associations were related to the nationalist movement.

In Chapter Two, I look closely into 'Abd Allah al-Nadim's background and his founding of the IPS. Using the publications and speeches as well as secondary sources on al-Nadim I will examine how al-Nadim perceived charity, how he viewed the poor, and how he attempted to define through his work what a "good citizen" in modern Egypt meant. This background on al-Nadim will give us a better idea of the IPS. And it is here that I examine the IPS, its structure, how it assisted in poor relief and what this association was doing differently that made it an institution working towards the creating of a "good citizen."

Chapter Three utilizes the archival sources to better comprehend the institution and how specifically it worked. By looking into the details of how the IPS functioned, its design, and the compositions of its teachers, students, I attempt to demonstrate the IPS's attempt at inculcation of a proto-nationalist program. It is here in this chapter that the financial records of the IPS shed light on what we already know about the institution and will give us a better idea of its physical

layout. Finally, this chapter shows how the IPS was viewed as more than just a charity, in particular by the British occupiers.

The fourth chapter bridges the theoretical divide between studies on proto-nationalism and studies on charity. The benefits of examining early social organizations are discussed within the context of how it can add to the recent research on the construction of national identity and citizenry in Egypt. What I ask is how the new social institutions created in the late nineteenth century assist in the bonding process on person to state? The modern nation-state as we know it today can be understood better by asking how previous generations understood their national identity. And it is through research on the IPS that we could get closer to the ground by asking how the ordinary poor understood ideas of nationalism and identity.

The concluding chapter discusses further areas of research and asks what benefit historians can gain by using sources related to specific organizations to better understand the changing social conditions of late nineteenth-century Egypt. It also indicates the contemporary applications such research has for understanding the present state of nationalism and social organizations especially local and international development programs.

Concluding Words

My research hopes not only to shed light on charity and how it was used to assist the poor, but also to offer an explanation of the effort to build the modern Egyptian state in the late nineteenth century. Its ultimate goal is to help us get a better picture of the Egyptian nationalist movement in its earliest form. More specifically, my thesis aims at revealing how charity can be used as an additional tool to examine the formation of a “modern” society. No aspect of daily life

is cut off from the other and it is up to the historian to piece together how the various cogs work together to produce the ideas we now take for granted under the banner of the nation.

On the theoretical level, the study of the transformation and use of charity in nineteenth-century Egypt might add to the literature on nationalism. Through research on the IPS and other similar associations, we find that social institutions (civil society, informal/formal groups, unions, and charities) are a major factor in the formation of nationalist thought and as such they can be included into the theories on what forms the imagining of the nation.

Chapter One

Institutions of Charity in the Early to mid-Nineteenth Century

In the Introduction above, I argued that the charitable association of ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim was a descendant of the *waqf* system of charity common throughout Islamic history. And as such, it was not that the charitable association was a breakaway from the endowment form of charity but was specifically a new way to give charity that would become common in the context of the nation-state. This is not to say that *awqaf* (endowments) were done away with, but that the new charitable associations, like al-Nadim’s, represent a transformation of charity in Egypt at the middle of the nineteenth century. This chapter elaborates further on this idea and, in the first part, it looks at the definition of *waqf* and discusses its uses throughout history. I will then examine the shift from *waqf* to the new methods of state and private charity that were practiced from the beginning of the nineteenth century as Mehmed ‘Ali takes power until 1879 when al-Nadim opened the Islamic Philanthropic Society (IPS) in Alexandria. This hopefully will shed light on the modes of charity in nineteenth century Egypt and one will be able to see how the IPS was a unique form of charity.

Charity occupies a central place in Islam, and it is intrinsically tied to the Muslim conception of piety within her/his life. One method of charity is that a Muslim once a year can give *zakat* or alms to the poor or less fortunate or a local institution like a *masjid*. Another way of charity is through the endowing of property as a *waqf*. For example, in the late eighteenth-century *waqfiyyah* of Fatimah Qadin, piety and doing charity were invoked and the document

reads that her endowment was created, “by her desire to do good.”⁸ And that “good” would continue in perpetuity with the benefactor receiving blessings in the afterlife. It is during the Mamluk rule in Egypt, that the establishment of pious endowments, or the *awaqf*, became an important part of establishing Mamluk legitimacy as a sunni/Muslim power and it is here where we see the *waqf* becoming an institution. As Adam Sabra has shown, the pious endowments under the Mamluks were created to do everything from teaching Qu’ran to handing out bread to the poor.⁹

Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to Truth); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of Allah; and for the wayfarer: (thus is it) ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.¹⁰

Charity in Islam is of central importance for Muslims, with numerous injunctions in the Qu’ran commanding the believers to give of their wealth to those of meager means, the poor. Yet, that charity could only be performed in the temporal world. Central, in theory, to the concept of the *waqf* is this idea of charity. The *waqf* can be said to have been present since early Islam, and it is based, among other things, in a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad commanding Umar ibn al-Khattab to use the property that he owned to earn money and then use the money acquired to fund charity for the poor.¹¹ This charity would remain in perpetuity as an act of

⁸ Butrus Abd Al-Malik and Daniel Creelius, “A Late 18th century Egyptian Waqf endowed by a Sister of the Mamluk Shaykh al-Eyay Muhammad Bey Abou-al-Dhabab,” *Arab Historical Review for Ottoman Studies*, no.1 part 2, 1990, pp. 9-14.

⁹ Adam Sabra, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam: Mamluk Egypt, 1250-1517* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹⁰ Qu’ran: Surah Tawba: verse 60. Yusef Ali translation.

¹¹ Kozlowski, G.C.; Peters, R.; Powers, D.S.; Layish, A.; Lambton, Ann K.S.; Deguilhem, Randi; McChesney, R.D.; Hooker, M.B.; Hunwick, J.O. "Wakf (a)." *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*.

endowment or *waqf* after Umar died.¹² Thus, before one died, the need to create either knowledge or charitable acts that would last after one's death was necessary. The *waqf* would prove to be a perfect way to give alms after one's death.

In early Islam, during the reign of the first four caliphs, the *waqf* was not part of any larger institutionalization; this would come later. In the ninth-century CE one sees the beginnings of the institutionalization of the *waqf* and its growth under the Abbasids. As with other Islamic institutions, such as *hisba*, we do not see a formal instituting of the practice until the Abbasids. Many argue this is the result of a Sunni revitalization, the reaction to what is seen as a corrupt Sunni Umayyad period, which witnessed the rise of Shi'i dynasties like the Fatimid's in Egypt. Thus the informal practice of endowing property in the early period becomes formalized through the creation of a centralized bureaucratic empire. Such practices became formal when the *shar'ia* courts and the state took a more active interest in the recording and registering of the *awqaf*.

It is under the Mamluks that *waqf* became an institution that would play an important part in society, especially for elites. The Mamluks used the *waqf* to declare that they were ultimate source of beneficence to the people. As Adam Sabra says, "The establishment of endowments allowed the Mamluk elite, especially the sultans and amirs, an opportunity to win public support and demonstrate their piety."¹³ The endowed properties would serve as reminders to the people of the goodness of the ruler and/or his family. Also, declaring a certain property as *waqf* was a way to circumvent the tax laws, creating property that would be un-taxable for perpetuity. Alternatively, *waqf* was a way to change who inherited property, if for example, one wanted to

¹² There is no way to ascertain whether a document was made up. But, the concept of endowing a property to pay for the foundation of another charitable property is traced back to this early *hadith*.

¹³ Sabra, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam*, p. 69.

give everything to the eldest daughter instead of the living son as stated in the Qu'ran. Thus, *waqf* became a way to circumvent *shar'ia* legal principles as related to inheritance.

It is also believed by historians that there is a direct correlation between the increase in *waqfs* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the rise in *iltizams* and taxation. Thus, *awaqf* was used by those who wished to avoid taxation on property. Because *waqf* land could not be taxed, scholars such as Sabra, have reached the conclusion that this is a reason behind the rise of the *waqf*, particularly beginning in the Mamluk period.¹⁴

Following the Mamluks, the Ottomans extended the use of the *waqf* exponentially, so much so that it is said that by the end of the Ottoman Empire that between one-half to two-thirds of landed property in the Empire had been designated as *waqf* land.¹⁵ Although the reasons for establishing a *waqf* vary, its growth is evidence of the importance that the *waqf* had, whether it was solely for charitable aims or to circumvent laws is not for us to moralize upon.

For centuries, rulers of Egypt used charity as a means to prove their beneficence, glory and power. By funding for the building of large establishments, such as hospitals, rulers could tangibly demonstrate their power and benevolence upon the populace. In the next section we will see how under rule of Mehmed 'Ali charity was used for new purposes, such as to control and police beggars. Then in the last section I go into how the charity formed under the new type of associations, *jam'iyyat*, in the mid-nineteenth century established a new method to do charity that was very different from pious endowments established under the Mamluks. The charity that these associations performed was not the same as earlier Mamluk charity that included the erection of mammoth institutions of charity.

¹⁴ Sabra, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam*, p. 72.

¹⁵ David S. Powers, "Orientalism, Colonialism and Legal History: The Attack on Muslim Family Endowments in Algeria and India," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, (Vol.31, No.3, July 1989), p. 537.

State and Charity in Nineteenth Century Egypt

While *awqaf* still existed and functioned in the nineteenth century, the various means of extending charity were transformed during the rule of Mehmed ‘Ali as the Egyptian state became highly centralized and bureaucratized. The degree to which the Egyptian state had become centralized and bureaucratized can be seen from the following story with which Mine Ener begins her chapter titled “The Charity of the Khedive.” The story takes place in 1847 and is about a Coptic woman, Maryam, who finds a child on a mosque’s doorstep and decides to take the child in from the street for several days to see if anyone would make a claim. When that does not occur, she goes to the central police department in Cairo (the *dabtiyya*) to hand over the baby to the state’s orphan care.¹⁶ Ener argues that this story illustrates how individuals viewed the state’s ability to take care of orphans like the one Maryam found. Arguably, a century earlier Maryam would have behaved differently as prior to the rule of Mehmed ‘Ali there would be no centralized police department for her to deliver the baby to. Instead, orphans would be taken care of and would have been provided for by one of the many private endowments in Cairo, such as the Maristan of Qalawun. “Eighteenth-century Maryam” would most likely have taken the child to one of these institutions. While the Maristan was still working and continued to operate as a hospital in the nineteenth century, one wonders why Maryam decided to approach the *Dabtiyya* rather than go to an orphanage in her neighborhood. The fact that Maryam had to go through the *Dabtiyya* for the child to be taken by an orphanage indicates how the centralized state of Mehmed ‘Ali had assumed a mediating role between the individual and the institution that would receive his/her charity. As Ener says, “...the *Dabtiyya*’s activities illustrate the

¹⁶ Mine Ener, “The Charity of the Khedive,” in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts*, edited by Michael Bonner, Mine Ener and Amy Singer, (Albany : State University of New York Press, 2003), p.185.

centralization of poor relief efforts and the bureaucratization of forms of relief initiated in early-nineteenth-century Egypt.”¹⁷

Central to the organization of charity to the poor and to Egyptians in general was Mehmed ‘Ali’s need and that of his successors to ensure the health of military personnel. As Khaled Fahmy¹⁸ has shown in his study of the army and as Laverne Kuhnke has elaborated¹⁹, one of Mehmed ‘Ali’s chief worry was, “... the health and hygiene of the soldiers,” because organizing a massive standing army required the need to maintain the health of soldiers, especially since epidemics like cholera could decimate an army when camped together for long periods of time for training and battle.²⁰ Thus with the establishment of state hospitals and subsequently with the founding of medical training schools in the early-nineteenth-century, “Mehmed Ali appears to have realized that to have a healthy body of troops care had to be given to the general health situation of the population at large.”²¹

With the rise of Mehmed ‘Ali’s state bureaucracy charity was now used as a new means to control the masses. Behind this interest of the state in taking care of the poor through establishing free hospitals, such as Abu Za’bal and Qasr al-Aini (after civilians had been allowed to use it), and state shelters like Takiyyat Tulun, was the need to police the individual. Begging was forbidden, and those found begging were arrested by the police and processed through the *Dabtiyya*. If found deserving, they were then either put in a shelter, or sent to work.

¹⁷ Ener, “The Charity of the Khedive,” p.186.

¹⁸ Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha’s Men* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1997).

¹⁹ Laverne Kuhnke. *Lives at Risk: Public Health in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*. (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1992).

²⁰ Fahmy, *All the Pasha’s Men*, p. 211.

²¹ Fahmy, *All the Pasha’s Men*, p. 209.

Alternatively, they would be sent back to their villages if they were emigrants. With these new means of control and order Mehmed 'Ali could find individuals for his public works projects and army, as well as lessening what European travelers found to be an annoyance: the Egyptian beggar.²² As Ener explains, "Muhammad 'Ali's government was attempting to prohibit begging (for the invalid and able-bodied alike), admitting the invalid and dependent (the elderly, single women, and women with small children) to state-run shelters."²³ Through the altruistic goal of providing health care to the people the state could, at the same time, strengthen its ability to control the movement and lives of the individual.

Therefore, while it seemed to be following earlier examples of founding charitable institutions and provided medical care gratis, the state in nineteenth-century Egypt used this charity as a means to ensure that the populace was healthier than previous generations. In other words, the nineteenth-century state was interested in charitable institutions not just for philanthropic reasons, but also in order to better preempt the outbreak of epidemics and also to minimize the impact of such epidemics on the army.

We also see the state investing in public education and opening schools in the mid-nineteenth century. These schools provided education to students without fees, and can therefore be seen as a form of state charity. But the ultimate goal was to create schools that would supply the needed manpower for the state's growing bureaucratic institutions. It is through this educational charity that provided for room, board, food and books to students that state charity was used to create the corps employees of the burgeoning Egyptian nation. A majority of the future *effendiyya* would pass through these institutions of education.

²² Mine Ener, "Prohibitions on Begging and Loitering in Nineteenth-Century Egypt," (*Die Welt des Islams*, New Ser., 39, 3, State, Law and Society in Nineteenth-Century Egypt, November 1999), pp. 330-331.

²³ Ener, "Prohibitions on Beggin and Loitering in Nineteenth-Century Egypt," p. 330.

We thus see that the individual in the nineteenth-century has come to realize the importance of the state as provider of charity when they go to the *Dabtiyya* to help them take care of orphans, beggars and even for a need like wet-nurses. Or they pass through the new government schools opened under Mehmed ‘Ali and his successors. There is a growing consciousness that the state can be and was at this point an important intermediary between institutions of charity and the individual.

In the first place, disciplinary powers were themselves to work by constructing their object as something twofold. They were to operate in terms of a distinction between the physical body that could be counted, policed, supervised and made industrious, and an inner mental space within which the corresponding habits of obedience and industry were to be instilled.²⁴

It is in state charity where the order and discipline could be ingrained in the individual, as Timothy Mitchell explains in the aforementioned citation. Through various institutions, such as police and education, made the Egyptian state in the nineteenth-century a new type of entity centered around the control and discipline of the individual. Thus, the taking of beggars off the street, as Ener discusses, and placing them into state ran shelters like Takiyyat Tulun is not to only perform a charitable function on the individual, but to police his movements. Through the registering of the poor and homeless in the central police registers and then placing them in the shelter and then deciding where to send them next, the state exerts control over the individual’s movement. The individual responds to this either by circumventing the state or by learning where her/his boundaries lie in relation to the state and from then on remembering not to cross those boundaries when necessary. The new state of Mehmed ‘Ali in nineteenth-century Egypt, thus began a process of policing the individual. And the states connection to charity in this

²⁴ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) p.127.

period, like the funding of Takiyyat Tulun, demonstrates the relationship between the state and charity and its policing of individuals.

Private Philanthropy: *Awaqf* and Associations

Despite the novel and important ways in which state charity worked in the nineteenth century, private charity continued to be an important part of the poor relief efforts in Egypt. Through such acts as the creation of new endowments, the funding of students, the feeding of families during Ramadan, or the opening of private associations and schools, philanthropy by private individuals, rather than by the state, became even more important. Some may argue that the establishment of private associations was compensating for the downturn in the Egyptian economy in the 1870's and the gradual decline in state sponsored charity. While there was a downturn, new state-ran public schools were still being opened and hospitals serving the public were still taking civilians. So if there was not a decline in these state charities or an apparent drop in state funding, what is the reason for numerous charitable associations to open during this period?²⁵

As I discuss in the final chapter, an eminent figure of the nineteenth century, Rifa`a Rafa` al-Tahtawi, may have been the first Egyptian writer to use the word *jam'iyya* with the meaning of association or a society for the pursuit of knowledge, taken from his visit to France and his interaction with the various orientalist scholars of the period. In one of his writings, which I discuss in Chapter Four, al-Tahtawi called for the organization of philanthropic societies by the elite, which would be separate from *waqf* endowments and state poor relief. The rise of philanthropic associations can also be attributed to the early missionaries because the schools

²⁵ From my research I have not been able to determine the exact number of associations established in the period.

that these missionaries founded were different from those religious schools founded in Egypt or Greater Syria, in particular from the *kuttab* system. In Damascus and Beirut associations to pursue knowledge were opened. Tools for the dissemination of knowledge from these associations to the people would be both through the establishment of new newspapers and the opening of schools. In Egypt ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim would be one of the first pioneers of this movement, who because of his dismay with other organized political activity, decided to open his own society and school in 1879. Shortly thereafter, societies in Alexandria, Damanhour, Cairo and other cities opened up, mostly following the example of ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim’s society.

While their inspiration cannot be traced back solely to al-Nadim, these associations that were organized with a charter and required the support of members transformed how charity was performed. What these associations show is that a collective movement of interested parties who were outside of the state apparatus and were not delving into individual charity, like *waqf* or regular alms, could come together in an official form through these new societies. It in these new societies that the collective organization of individuals into a concentrated effort through the association starts in the nineteenth century. In the new associations small individual contributions were collected in the hopes that the societies they were forming would help to improve their surroundings and bring a better life to the poor.

Through associations the poor could be reached at a local level. With the association situated in neighborhoods and actively led by prominent members of society, those who needed help would certainly know how to find them. And as I will show in chapter four below, these associations were using their leverage of charity to instill new forms of citizenry and ideas of nationalism and patriotism upon the poor. Unfortunately the poor seem to be the tool of the elite

and middle classes, who believe if they can mold this usually large portion of the population, then they can influence the makeup of society. The state would attempt this in the twentieth century with subsidies and land reform, but what would prove to be true was that the elite in power would always find a way to consolidate their own position before attending to the impoverished masses that they wished to assist.

Conclusion

Anybody with any wealth can give charity, whether it is a word of advice, a smile, money, or more typically food for sustenance. The connection between charity and reward in the *dunya* (earthly life) and the *akhirah* (afterlife) makes charity a central aspect in a Muslim's framework of life and death. Doing "good" can thus be seen as compulsory to being a good Muslim. What we begin to see in the nineteenth-century is that in addition to *awqaf*, the newly establishment charitable associations worked to provide education and food; in addition, central to their efforts was the idea of educating or creating an ideal citizen. The historian Mine Ener, in her study, *Managing Egypt's poor and the politics of benevolence, 1800-1952*, writes on the relation of these new charitable organizations to the "modernizing" project of Egypt.

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of charitable associations even though communally based care continued to exist. Members active in the philanthropic movement had been influenced by the success of associations in Europe... Many of these students, who went on to play influential roles in Egyptian society, concluded that associations were "among the main catalysts of the success and development" of European cultures, and they hoped to introduce similar associations in Egypt.²⁶

The Islamic Philanthropic Society of 'Abd Allah al-Nadim is one such example and in fact is the earliest society we know of in Egypt dedicated to charity with the express intent of creating a

²⁶ Mine Ener, *Managing Egypt's poor and the politics of benevolence, 1800-1952* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003) p. 101.

model Egyptian citizen.²⁷ What is most interesting about charity and the proto-nationalist project in Egypt is that the act of giving creates an audience that is beholden to the giver, and thus the charity has a segment of society who is bound to the ideals that are inculcated to the associations aims.²⁸ There appears to be a tie between Islamic charity in the late nineteenth century and the nationalist movement, related to good works that build sound moral character, but also to mold an Egyptian/Muslim/Arab citizen, who will then become a part of a society that is ready for the modern concept of the nation.

In relation to past conceptions of Islamic forms of charity, how can the Islamic Philanthropic Society be an example of a change from the earlier types of Islamic charity? These forms of charity include, almsgiving, *Zakat*, establishment of endowments and any type of good deed one can do. While these are not discontinued with the establishment of an association like al-Nadim's, the organizational performance of charity is transformed. Instead of the individual contributing for themselves, or establishing their own separate charitable association, like the many *awqaf* created to fund a *madrassa* or a *kuttab*, which for the most part were founded and sustained through the charity of an individual or family/extended family, the new charitable associations of the late nineteenth century should be seen as joint charitable ventures that are a transformation from the *awqaf* charity.²⁹

²⁷ In Chapter Three I go into more detail on how this is done.

²⁸ I hope to expand on this idea in Chapter Four.

²⁹ Juan Cole, "Al-Tahtawi on Poverty and Welfare" in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts* edited by Michael Bonner, Mine Ener and Amy Singer (Albany : State University of New York Press, 2003) p. 229.

Chapter 2

Nationalist Historiography and ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim

Ye sons of Egypt! Now is the time for you to display your courage, and to make war on the enemy of the Arabs, the enemy of Islam—The Government of England. May God confound her and push her malice down her own throat!³⁰
‘Abd Allah al-Nadim

The historiography of Egyptian nationalism is typically written with a focus on organized political entities and usually traces the beginning of Egyptian nationalism to the founding of the National Party of Mustafa Kamil in 1907.³¹ What this historiography ignores is the late nineteenth century, specifically the period from 1870 to 1895 which witnessed nationalist writers and shapers of what would eventually become Egyptian nationalism. In particular, ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim stands out as an early reformer/nationalist whose work in the Islamic Philanthropic Society (IPS), his numerous newspapers publications and his notorious participation in the 1881-2 ‘Urabi Revolt as a chief orator all added to the burgeoning nationalist imagining of what made up an Egyptian nation.

In this chapter, I look at how Egyptian nationalist historiography portrays the period from the late 1870’s to the early 1880’s, specifically in relation to the nationalist movement of the early twentieth century. I first detail the historical context surrounding ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim’s life in Egypt and parallel to that a biographical account of his days. I then state where I find gaps within the nationalist historiography of the early nationalist movement by detailing the various accounts of the period by historians. The historical contextualization of al-Nadim will

³⁰ *The Times*, Tuesday, Sep 05, 1882; p. 3; col G

³¹ Jacques Berque, *Egypt, Imperialism & Revolution*, (London: Faber & Faber, 1972) and Arthur Goldschmidt Jr., “The Egyptian Nationalist Party: 1892-1919,” in *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*. ed. P.M. Holt, (London: Oxford University Press, 1968).

provide us with a better picture of him, while also helping to add a new point for historians to go forward from when contesting established historiography of the burgeoning nationalist movement in late nineteenth century Egypt. Movements and local institutions, like the IPS, organized in the late nineteenth century provide a way to fill the gap that is left empty in the historiography of the Egyptian nationalist movement.

‘Abd Allah al-Nadim: A Background and Historical Contextualization

To understand why ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim decided to establish the Islamic Philanthropic Society in 1879 we first need to briefly look at the early part of his life. His first thirty-plus years of life give us an idea of the trajectory that took al-Nadim from Alexandria to all around Egypt and back to Alexandria again, on the path to becoming a nationalist figure and a powerful orator. It is during this formative period that he developed his ideas and found his passions of language and education. His experience working in the telegraph office, as I will discuss, would give him a leg up to others in seeing how fast information could travel across vast distances. And his ending up in Cairo at a time of growing nationalist zeal in the 1870’s would give him new ideas and a renewed confidence to return to Alexandria in the hopes of spreading the nationalist message there. As we shall see, his life is an interesting and unique one and shows the intellectual and political development of one of the earliest Egyptian nationalist.

Al-Nadim was born in Alexandria in 1843,³² the son of a baker, Misbah ibn Ibrahim. Not born to wealth or raised within the elites of Egyptian society, al-Nadim would eventually be known as the “voice of the ‘Urabi Revolution,” and would rise to national prominence with the publishing of his two newspapers, *Al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit* and *Al-Usatdh*, and with the creation

³² There is dispute about his year of birth. It is believed that he was either born in 1843 or 1845. I have chosen to go with 1843.

of the Islamic Philanthropic Society. In his 1980 biography of ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, ‘Abd al-Mun‘im al-Disuqi, writes that al-Nadim lived in a “modest” and “simple” home with his family near the main port of Alexandria.³³ His father had moved to Alexandria from his family’s village, al-Tibah,³⁴ to work at the port’s dockyards that Mehmed ‘Ali had finished construction in 1831.³⁵ After his stint at the dockyards, he stayed in Alexandria and worked as a baker most probably in the al-Manshiyah neighborhood where he would raise al-Nadim and the rest of the family. As a young man, ‘Abd Allah attended a local *kuttab* in al-Manshiyah. It is said that he memorized the entire Qu’ran at age nine. At the age of twelve he would go on to attend a higher school, *al-Jami‘ al-Anwar*, where he would study the basic subjects required of those attempting to join *al-Azhar* in Cairo, such as jurisprudence and linguistic sciences. It is these early formative years in the *kuttab* system that gave al-Nadim an idea of what he wanted to do differently when he opened his school at the Islamic Philanthropic Society. As we shall see in the coming chapter his school was very different from the traditional *kuttab*.

After leaving the school system and not wishing to continue on to *al-Azhar*, al-Nadim was forced to fend for his own as his father was upset with his choice to leave his studies. Thus, he traveled around Upper Egypt for a while and then found his place working for the telegraph agency in Banha, around 30 km north of Cairo, where he gained a reputation for efficiency on the telegraph. This reputation allowed him to be transferred to Cairo where he worked in Qasr al-Nil, the palace of Princess Khoshyar Hanem, the mother of Khedive Ismail. This appointment

³³ ‘Abd Al-Mun‘im Ibrahim al-Dusuqi al-Jumay‘i, *‘Abd Allāh al-Nadīm wa-dawruhu fī al-ḥarakah al-siyāsīyah wa-al-ijtimā‘īyah*, (Cairo: Dār al-kitāb al-jāmi‘ī, 1980), p. 33.

³⁴ It is supposedly a village in the Delta where exactly I am not sure of.

³⁵ Ali al-Hadidi, *‘Abd Allah Nadim: Journalist, Man of Letters, Orator, And his Contribution to the First Egyptian National Movement*, (PhD diss., University of London, 1959), p. 13.

at the palace most likely took place after Ismail Pasha had ascended to the governorship of Egypt in 1863 because sources say that his mother did not reside there until after Ismail succeeded his uncle Said Pasha.

Khedive Ismail (r. 1863-1879) was the grandson of Mehmed 'Ali. His development projects, which included the reorganization of Cairo streets and the building of the Suez Canal, are seen as major achievements; however, they are also seen as detrimental to the Egyptian economy as the high cost of these projects led the state to default on its loans to Europe. The early part of Khedive Ismail's rule is connected to the boom in cotton trade that was caused by the American Civil War and the decline of US cotton exports. With Egyptian cotton now in high demand it resulted in an increase in the state's revenue as well private landowner's pockets.³⁶ But the boom did not last with the price of cotton on the international market going back down after the end of the US Civil War and the increased spending could not be balanced with enough revenues.

As already mentioned, although the Suez Canal can be considered the most significant public works project completed under Khedive Ismail, it was also one of the reasons why Egypt would become indebted to the Europeans in the 1870s. Egypt in 1856 began work on building a canal that would connect the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. The French first contemplated this project when they first came to Egypt earlier in the century, and by the 1850s Ferdinand de Lesseps had finally convinced Said Pasha to undertake the project. The Canal was eventually completed in 1869 with great pomp and circumstance as Khedive Ismail invited European royalty to join in the grand opening festivities. But it would be the financing of the canal and the

³⁶ Robert F. Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives*, (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1999) pp. 105-110. Hunter shows how the records portray the increase of land given to state officials particularly the Ottoman officials in Egypt were given preferential allotment of land. This is intricately tied to the cotton boom of the mid-1860's because of the North's blockade of cotton exports during the United States Civil War.

beautification of Egypt—as Ismail wanted to remodel Cairo as a world class city—that would be the ultimate downfall to Egypt’s independence. His indebtedness and the inability of Egypt to pay back even the interest on the loans eventually forced Khedive Ismail to sell his shares in the Suez Canal Company in 1875.

It is during this period of the debt crisis, that al-Nadim, who had been living in Cairo, met thinkers and came into contact for the first time with the new ideas of Egyptian nationalism and Islamic identity that were rising up against the perceived foreign infiltration of Egypt. He was introduced to the circles of the famous poets of the period, including Mahmoud Sami al-Barudi, and became a regular attendee of these circles. He was recognized for his rhetorical ability and was drawn into the small group of intellectual poets and reformers in Cairo. What appears to have been a popular social setting was the freemasonry movement in Cairo, where al-Nadim met Jamal ad-din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abdu. Mine Ener in her study on benevolence in Egypt cites the Freemasons as integral to the development of associations in Egypt because of the networks the freemasonry movement created through its society.³⁷ Whether or not the freemasonry movement was active and how central they were to the political intrigues of the late nineteenth century are questions that still need further research. However, what is important is that we see here the beginning of a relationship between Abdu, Afghani and al-Nadim. And in the case of Afghani and al-Nadim that relationship would last into their respective exiles in Istanbul.

Around 1875-6, ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim was relieved of his job at the palace and forced to search for work again. He decided to travel around going from towns and villages connecting with local literary saloons and persons. Eventually he made his way once again to Alexandria

³⁷ Mine Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor and the Politics of Benevolence, 1800-1952* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 101.

where he joined the political group *Misr al-Fatah* (Young Egypt), but he would shortly become disillusioned with their goals. This would lead him in 1879 to establish the charitable association, the Islamic Philanthropic Society in Alexandria (IPS). The goal was philanthropy and the creation of an organization that would lead to the betterment of the Egyptian poor. To this effect he founded the school at the IPS in April of 1879. His work though extended beyond the IPS and included the production of a number of plays at the Zizinia Theater in Alexandria. In the spring of 1881 al-Nadim would stage his last production of *al-Watan* (The Nation) that was performed by students from the IPS. This would also mark the end of his collaboration with the IPS. He infers that he was forced out from his position as head of the IPS by others in the organization due to his fiery tongue. This would not stop him from speaking his mind, and in June 1881 he begins publishing *al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit* (Reproof and Raillery).

Events between Egypt and the Great Powers were becoming stressed from 1875 onwards as the debt commission was established and more foreign influence was extended into Egypt's budget. One might argue that since the early nineteenth century Britain had had an interest in Egypt. These interests had to do not with any specific natural resources, but were related to Egypt's strategic geographic position as related to the Ottoman Empire, Russia and the need to ensure a buffer between Russia and Britain's colonial jewel, India. The British attempted to enter Egypt in 1807, but were pushed out by a contingent of forces from Mehmed 'Ali and the coordinated resistance by the people in Rosetta. As Mehmed 'Ali's power in Egypt and overseas³⁸ grew so did his ambitions to challenge the Ottoman sultan, and in 1831 he invaded Syria thus forcing the Great Powers to align together in an attempt to preserve the integrity of the

³⁸ In 1811 the Ottoman sultan ordered Mehmed 'Ali to dispatch troops to fight the Wahhabi movement in the Hijaz and Central Arabia.

Ottoman Empire. In 1840 the British helped broker a peace treaty that established the dynasty of Mehmed ‘Ali in Egypt and entrenched its power in Egypt for the next century.³⁹

In 1876 Egypt declared bankruptcy and its finances ended up being controlled by the *Caisse de la Dette* and thus effectively turning over the control of the Egyptian economy to a debt control board with a British official appointed as the minister of finance. This tenuous situation was followed with suspicion by the general population, especially the intelligentsia and reformers who could not take Khedive Ismail’s malfeasance any more. It has to be remembered that it is during this period in the mid 1870s that al-Nadim develops a lifelong relationship with al-Afghani and becomes more radicalized to the fears of a European occupation of Egypt. With growing political instability in 1879 Khedive Ismail was forced to abdicate in favor of his son Tawfiq. In 1880, European commission took over control of the Egyptian economy and directed the majority of revenue towards the repayment of the loans. It is here where the burgeoning nationalist fervor reached its peak and ultimately led to the ‘Urabi inspired revolt of 1881-2.

Al-Nadim’s actions and whereabouts at all times during the ‘Urabi revolt of 1881-2 cannot be fully accounted for, but what we know is that he became the orator of the revolution. Due to his knowledge of the villages and towns outside of Alexandria and Cairo he was able to travel around easily drumming up anti-European and pro-‘Urabi sentiment. According to rumors al-Nadim, during the riots of June 1882 in Alexandria, rode around the city in a carriage attempting to agitate the crowd further against foreigners. The verity of this seems questionable, but it shows the type of aura that al-Nadim possessed as the “voice of the revolution.” In a

³⁹ The treaty of 1840 would also ensure that the Ottoman Empire would not break up leaving an opening to the Russians to extend their sphere of influence south towards India. Thus, British ability to step in and finance the Suez Canal in 1876 and the subsequent occupation in 1882 was not part of a century long attempt to colonize Egypt, but a necessity to provide quick and safe access to the Indian colony through the Suez. For more on British imperialism see, John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson. *Africa and the Victorians: the official mind* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1961).

telegraph to Wilfred Blunt, a British supporter of the Egyptian revolt, al-Nadim states that all Egyptians supported ‘Urabi and his government and that it was only those opposed to Egyptian self-determination who were against it.

Toute la nation d’accord avec Arabi et confiante en ministere Sami. Fellahs, Bedouins, Ulemas sont unis. iln’ya a que co[a]lni d’entre vous qui est contre liberte Egyptienne qui cherche a fausser l’opinion nationale.⁴⁰

In 1882, ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim began publishing the *Taif* newspaper that would become an organ of the ‘Urabi movement. As explained below, the ‘Urabi revolution is typically understood as having its roots in the animosity that Egyptian officers felt towards the Turco-Circassian near monopoly over senior positions within the army. But, as Juan Cole has deftly explained in his work *Colonialism and Nationalism in the Middle East*, the revolt can be better explained as an urban protest movement in which all types of people were involved. For sure, al-Nadim’s writings and oratory would have helped the broader appeal of the movement. In September 1882, the British cornered ‘Urabi after they had bombarded Alexandria. Following the defeat of al-Tall al-Kabir, ‘Urabi and his colleagues were exiled to Ceylon, but al-Nadim was never apprehended, and was therefore tried in absentia. In a correspondence to Earl Granville, the Earl of Dufferin stated that al-Nadim had fled the country and that his sentence for actions during the ‘Urabi movement would be an “indefinite exile.”⁴¹ However, al-Nadim himself wrote that from 1882 onwards he had been hiding in the Delta and Upper Egypt using various disguises and holding up with his supporters. He was then caught in 1891 and exiled to Jaffa, where according to the Ottoman authorities he was reported to have been “spreading his dangerous ideas.”⁴² He

⁴⁰ Gladstone Papers Vol XXV Correspondence with W.S. Blunt and F.R. Bonham 1835-1885 Brit Library MS 44110 D.1 Telegraph to Blunt: Cairo 17th of May 1882 1:15am

⁴¹ British National Archives, FO 633/49 pp. 46-48. December 31, 1882.

⁴² Başbakanlık Y.A. HUS 277/54. 1310 AH

was finally allowed back in to Egypt in 1892 where he continued his anti-British speeches and writings. Almost immediately, he began publishing *al-Ustadh* (The Professor), a journal through which he attempted to reform the Egyptian into a prototypical citizen. He also used this publication to spread his anti-British rhetoric. This landed him in more trouble, and he was eventually exiled once more, this time to Istanbul. Upon arrival in Istanbul, he was reunited with al-Afghani and was given a job on the Committee for the Inspection of Education.⁴³ In this way, al-Nadim's old involvement with education was once again nurtured. This, however, would turn out to be his last position in Istanbul. In October 1896, right before he was pardoned by Lord Cromer and allowed to return to Egypt he died in Istanbul and was buried there.

Al-Nadim and the his Proto-typical Egyptian Citizen

In the Following chapter we will see how the IPS's school language curriculum focused heavily on Arabic language education that was related to new Egyptian state policies that stressed the importance of Arabic language instruction, but also to al-Nadim's own belief that education and specifically Arabic language was central to what he imagined as the proto-typical Egyptian citizen of the late-nineteenth century. During the 'Urabi revolt of 1881-2 al-Nadim wrote about the revolution, promoting the Egyptian nationalist cause through his newspaper *Al-Tankit* and later in the paper *Al-Taif*. His writings portray a man who did not imagine the Egyptian nation through the lens of religion, but through language; specifically, Arabic. "He also drew the nation's attention to the importance of holding fast to their own language in face of the irksome tendency to use Turkish, in preference to Arabic, to please the rulers, and French and English under the influence of the controllers," explains Ali al-Hadidi summarizing al-Nadim's

⁴³ Başbakanlık Y.PRK.MK 6/16. 1311 AH

writings on Arabic versus foreign language use in Egypt by Egyptians.⁴⁴ For al-Nadim, Arabic was central to the makeup of the Egyptian. He saw that with Arabic there was a uniting bond that could link those in the cities with those in the villages.

The aim of the revolution is to gain equal rights for the whole country to enjoy, without a discrimination against any citizens, be he Turk or Circassian. We are all Egyptians, Egypt is our mother, Islam our religion, Arabic our language, love our relationship and unity our link; our aims are constructive: we want to make our country fertile, defend it from aggression, and suppress tyranny.⁴⁵

Al-Nadim in defending the ‘Urabi revolt highlights what he proposed the Egyptian nation to be organized upon. Specifically, the language was to be Arabic and it would be a uniting force against those from abroad, be they Turks, French or English. Language is one of the simplest common connectors for a people attempting to unite. And as I discuss in the next chapter, al-Nadim repeatedly told his readers in *al-Ustadh* that Arabic, as the spoken language of Egyptians, should be one of main factors to unite them together. This is also why Arabic language instruction occupied such a prominent place in the curriculum of al-Nadim’s school, and it is also why he paid particular attention to the student’s extra-curricular activities that included performing Arabic plays and preparing speeches.⁴⁶ Arabic then was integral to being a “good” Egyptian citizen for al-Nadim and was the keystone that would unite Egyptians.

⁴⁴ Al-Hadidi, “‘Abd Allah Nadim: Journalist, Man of Letters, Orator, And his Contribution to the First Egyptian National Movement,” p. 172.

⁴⁵ ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, *Al-Tankūt wa-al-tabkūt : min turāth ‘Abd Allah al-Nadīm*. Edited by ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Ibrāhīm al-Jumay‘ī. (Cairo: al-Hay’ah al-Miṣrīyah al-‘Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1994), p.312.

⁴⁶ A petition to the Ministry of Public Works in 1882 written by al-Nadim and Yusef al-Khayyat and found by the historian Adam Mestyan recently demonstrates al-Nadim’s wish to see a theater troupe that performed entirely in Egyptian Arabic. Cited in Adam Mestyan. “*A Garden with Mellow Fruits of Refinement*” *Music Theatres and Cultural Politics in Cairo and Istanbul, 1867-1892*, (Phd Diss. Budapest: Central European University, 2011), p.488-9

Thus, al-Nadim who as we have seen was born as the son of a baker in Alexandria and who had an early experience as a telegraph official eventually evolved to become a pivotal figure in Egyptian nationalist historiography. Although he attempted to assist in the forestalling of the British occupation – an attempt that obviously failed, he would continue to assert a sense of Egyptian national identity through his writings both in Egypt and while in exile. From his humble origins, al-Nadim rose to be the writer, orator and organizer of early nationalist organizations before the formal nationalist movement begins in the late 1890's. In the next section I explore the gaps of Egyptian nationalist historiography that I see with the sidelining of the early nationalist movements and organizations, such as al-Nadim and his IPS.

Historiography on Nineteenth Century Egyptian Nationalism

Our only aim is to deliver the country from slavery, injustice and ignorance, and to raise our people to such a position as shall enable them to prevent any return to the despotism which in time past desolated Egypt.⁴⁷
Ahmad 'Urabi

The historiography of Egyptian nationalism is large and varying. When the readings are analyzed two distinct divisions emerge in the historiography. The two divisions rise from a difference in the importance laid upon the early proto-nationalists of the nineteenth century, such as 'Abd Allah al-Nadim, in contrast to the later nationalist movement highlighted by figures like Mustafa Kamil and Saad Zaghouel. Lately, there has been a movement to reexamine this early formative period of Egyptian nationalism that starts in the 1870s led by historians such as Juan Cole, Michael Gasper and Ziad Fahmy.

⁴⁷ Ahmad 'Urabi quoted in Wilfred Blunt, *Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt*, (New York: Howard Fertig Inc., 1967), p. 246.

This later historiography stands in contrast to an earlier one which had historians studying the period from 1870 to 1895 within one general narrative: from the Khedival loan default, to the ‘Urabi revolt, leading to the British occupation and finally to the efflorescence of nationalist sentiments with Mustafa Kamil’s activism in the late 1890’s and the formation of the National Party in 1907. The narrative is essentially a teleological, linear one. For example, both Jacques Berque and Arthur Goldschmidt Jr. move from the ‘Urabi revolt in 1882 to a decade later, thus effectively assigning the true beginnings of the Egyptian nationalist movement to the 1890s.⁴⁸ This framing puts nationalism as developing directly at the start of Abbas Helmi II’s rule (r.1892-1914). Accordingly, Abbas II is typically presented as a supporter of Egyptian nationalism in reaction to the growing British occupation. But what this historiography does is ignore the early period of the 1870s and early 1880s, thereby leaving out a whole decade or more of resistance and growth of nationalist ideas. This is where the significance of Cole and Fahmy’s more recent work lies, and more specifically with their attempts to reassert agency to this proto-nationalist period. For Cole his interest lies in a social history of the ‘Urabi revolt of 1881-2.⁴⁹ Fahmy, on the other hand, focuses on the growing colloquial media of the late nineteenth century.⁵⁰

In this section, I will first examine the early narratives of the development of Egyptian nationalism that ignored the earlier formative period of the 1870s and 1880s. I will then contrast this narrative with scholarship that has, of late, started to excavate the early period. It is here in this newer scholarship on Egyptian nationalism that my research finds company, and in the next

⁴⁸ Berque, *Egypt, Imperialism & Revolution*, and Goldschmidt, “The Egyptian Nationalist Party: 1892-1919.”

⁴⁹ Juan Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East: Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt’s ‘Urabi Movement* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1999).

⁵⁰ Ziad Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

chapter devoted to the Islamic Philanthropic Society and school of ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, I will show how examining closely specific institutions and movements of the period can shed light on this formative era in Egyptian history. And I will finish by situating where I stand within the various frameworks of Egyptian nationalist historiography as well as the broader theories of nationalism in general.

Early Narratives on Egyptian Nationalist Historiography

In his account of the period from the 1870s into the 1890s, Arthur Goldschmidt focuses first on the story of the growing loans and the free-spending culture of Khedive Ismail and somehow moves to analyzing the popular anger against the Khedive and the Great Powers following the establishment of the Debt commission. He then concludes with the “failed” ‘Urabi movement.⁵¹

After the final defeat of the first Egyptian nationalist revolution at Tel-el-Kebir...the nationalist movement entered a quiescent phase. Indeed it is commonly thought that the ensuing decade passed without any Egyptian resistance to foreign control...⁵²

The quote from Goldschmidt is indicative of what early scholars on Egyptian nationalism see as a moment of failure and then a period of sleep before reassigning the true beginnings of the Egyptian nationalist movements to the late 1890s and then to the founding of the National Party in 1907.⁵³ This framing puts nationalism as developing directly after the death of Khedive

⁵¹ Goldschmidt Jr., “The Egyptian Nationalist Party:1892-1919,” pp. 308-333.

⁵² Goldschmidt Jr., “The Egyptian Nationalist Party,” p. 308.

⁵³ Berque, *Egypt, Imperialism & Revolution*, pp. 105-26. And Arthur Goldschmidt Jr., *A Concise History of the Middle East*, (Cairo: American University Press, 2004), pp. 177-184. And Goldschmidt Jr., “The Egyptian Nationalist Party:1892-1919,” pp. 309-333.

Tawfiq and the start of Abbas Helmi II's rule. Abbas II is typically presented as being strongly against the British rule and a supporter of Egyptian nationalism.

This gap in history is stunning, for it leaves out a whole decade of resistance to British colonial rule and gestation of the nationalist movement. As such, this narrative underestimates the movements of the 1870s and early 1880s. Those events are relegated to the backburner of history as can be seen within Egyptian nationalist imagining of their history, where the 'Urabi movement is seen as a significant marker, but just as the Dinshaway incident, it is treated as a historical marker and nothing more. Thus, the 'Urabi period in the standard literature on the Egyptian nationalist movement, is not more than a marker in time when discussing the late nineteenth century nationalist movements. This leaves a gap of nationalist organizing that needs to be filled with a renewed focus on the early proto-nationalist movements. As we will see in the next section there have been new studies on the 'Urabi revolt that examine the social makeup of what was an important period in Egyptian history.

What stands out in the writings of the early scholarship is the stress on a "paradigm of failure" when dealing with the 'Urabi movement or any nationalist movement pre-1890s or early twentieth century. Berque's chapter on the 'Urabi revolution, for example, is entitled "The Revolution that Failed."⁵⁴ For Berque and others it is the "why" of failure that is highlighted, and not the impact that the revolution would eventually have on future nationalist movements. For it has to be stressed that the revolution must have instilled a sense of power and nationalist agitation against the British. Like Berque, Goldschmidt also follows a similar vein and in his narrative of the events he argues that the "early nationalists had proved a weak force."⁵⁵ The

⁵⁴ Berque, *Egypt, Imperialism & Revolution*, pp. 112-26.

⁵⁵ Goldschmidt, *A Concise History of the Middle East*, p. 182.

constant looking for successes or failures allows for continual moralizing on history, its events, persons and their actions. Furthermore, although the ‘Urabi movement was harshly defeated by the British invasion, it is arguable that it would have been very difficult for ‘Urabi or anyone to survive an onslaught of the Great Powers. It is important to stress that ‘Urabi movement’s defeat in 1882 was due to the power of the British military engine that showed its strength in the bombardment of Alexandria in July 1882.

In their study on Egyptian nationalism from 1900 to 1930, Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski discuss the three stages of early Egyptian nationalism in late nineteenth century. First, there is the uniting around religion; next the shared imagination of being connected to a particular territory; and then finally the ethno-linguistic connection. These three stages contribute to creating the earliest forms of nationalist identifiers.⁵⁶ Egypt during the second half century of the nineteenth century exhibited all three aspects, and exhibited them strongly. Satirical newspapers increased in demand during this period where the language of rebellion and satire was the Cairo Arabic dialect helping to create a national language of identity.⁵⁷ Religion was used as a language by nationalist figures like ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim to reform the Egyptian people and in the end to demand freedom from their occupiers. And in 1882 ‘Urabi sought to use the growing nationalist sentiment to push for the erection of an independent nation, even if he preferred to see Egypt as belonging to the Ottoman domains.⁵⁸ But, Gershoni and Jankowski do not see this period as important enough to discuss in a full chapter. Rather, the period from the

⁵⁶ Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 3.

⁵⁷ Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians*, Chapter 3.

⁵⁸ *The Times* Saturday, Oct 1, 1881; pg. 5; col C

1870s to the 1890s is relegated to brief discussion in their introduction to *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs*.

Recent Historiography on Early Egyptian Nationalism

In *Colonialism and Revolution* Juan Cole is determined to understand and depict the crowd, from the foreigner to the local native, of the 1881-2 ‘Urabi revolt in Egypt. His study is a social history of the revolt that concentrates on the urban crowd in the 1880’s. It is through arrest records and court documents that Cole shows the various parts of the crowd that typically get sidelined by the earlier historiography on 1882 as we discussed in the previous section. He writes that “The Egyptian Revolution in 1882 entailed both a conflict between social strata and a protonationalist struggle.”⁵⁹ A table of occupations of prisoners arrested in late September and early October 1882, demonstrates the importance that the colonial occupiers felt that the intelligentsia played in the events post-1879. With almost 80 percent of those arrested of the intelligentsia—journalist, ulama, officials, professionals, and high ranking Egyptian officers (38 percent)—we see a varied group of resisters, begging us to look at the movement as a larger nationalist action and not a peasant revolt or an army officers movement.

In Chapter Five of *Colonialism and Revolution*, Cole goes through most of the various organizations, whether clubs or saloons, and finds links and shared resources that show how the individual movements cooperated with one another.⁶⁰ This finding is significant because it adds a new layer to our understanding of the revolution, an event that is continually seen as militarily inspired and led. It is therefore significant to note that all kinds of societies were being formed

⁵⁹ The “conflict between social strata,” being the Egyptian officer’s unhappiness with treatment as related to the Turco-Circassian officers. Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution*, p. 268.

⁶⁰ See chapter five in Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution*, pp. 133-63.

and becoming active at the time. Societies as various as the Helwan Society, or the Islamic Philanthropic Society or the Masonry clubs, each with varied class and organizational memberships, must have rejected the notion that the ‘Urabi movement was solely of the military. And even though the movements were eventually harshly suppressed, Cole concludes that “movement participants had learned much about how to create a coalition of clubs and societies for the achievement of political goals upsetting the regime.”⁶¹ This awareness would better prepare them when in the latter end of the nineteenth century the nationalist movement was reignited with a new vigor and force, and when it was led by those who had grown up during the earlier nationalist revolt between the 1870s and early 1880s.

Adding to this is Ziad Fahmy’s recent study, *Ordinary Egyptians* which sheds even more light on the proto-nationalist movement.⁶² By concentrating on media capitalism, which he defines as anything from theatre to gramophone records and newspapers, he challenges Benedict Anderson’s theory on print capitalism and its importance to the imaging of the nation.⁶³ Fahmy’s main focus is the colloquial media of the early period from the 1870s onwards and its growing influence in the Egyptian public sphere. “The theater and a profit-motivated industry (Gramophone industry),” he argues, “contributed more to the molding of national tastes and the creation of a national culture than just print media alone.”⁶⁴ By studying the colloquial media of the 1870s and 1880s that used primarily the Cairo dialect of Arabic, Fahmy makes the argument

⁶¹ Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution*. p. 163.

⁶² Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians*.

⁶³ Fahmy’s work is attempting to challenge the hegemony of print capitalism in the theorization of nationalism. So rather than just focusing on newspapers and books only Fahmy is arguing for the inclusion of other forms of mass consumed media. See Benedict Anderson *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso Press, 1991).

⁶⁴ Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians*, 16.

that this early formative period would help to establish the types of stories, language and themes that would be replicated in the early twentieth century, in particular by the music industry in Egypt, but also by nationalists. Images of the *fellah* (peasant) and the *kawwaga* (foreigner) would be replicated by singers and writers in the twentieth century's Egyptian nationalist movement and in general by the colloquial media. Fahmy's work challenges nationalist historiography that relegates the early proto-nationalist movement to the backwaters of Egyptian nationalism. Yet, one shortcoming of Fahmy's study is his over reliance on press material and we do not get into the music of the artist or their lyrics until late in the study. While this may be due to little availability of the music from the early period, the argument that Fahmy makes loses some of its power when he relies so much on printed material rather than the oral.

In separate studies, both Samah Selim and Michael Gasper examine the imaginings of the peasant in late nineteenth century Egypt that would later in the twentieth century be used by the nationalist to proclaim the peasant the truest of all nationalists.⁶⁵ But, the peasants were also derided at the same time as backward and ignorant with the need to reform them. In both these studies, the authors use 'Abd Allah al-Nadim's writings as well as those of other late nineteenth century nationalists like Yaqub Sanuu to illustrate how their depictions of the peasant would be replicated in later twentieth century novels and press. Thus showing the process by which the imaging of the nation through the peasant evolved from the early period and later on deep into the twentieth century. Both studies refuse to relegate the period of al-Nadim to the sideline or just introductory chapters because these early nationalist figures are valuable in understanding where Egyptian nationalism and national imagining came from.

⁶⁵ Samah Selim. *The Novel and the Rural Imaginary in Egypt, 1880-1985* (London: Routledge, 2004), and Michael Gasper, "'Abdallah al-Nadim, Islamic Reform, and 'Ignorant' Peasants: State-Building in Egypt?'" in *Muslim Traditions and Modern Techniques of Power* edited by Armando Salvatore, (Berlin: LIT, 2001).

Egyptian Nationalist Historiography and Theories of Nationalism

In *Imagined Communities* Benedict Anderson elaborates a theory of nationalism that was asserted on citizens from the top-down and was influenced by a growing print culture. This theory is primarily centered on a Eurocentric view of the growth of the nation state in Europe, and is connected to the establishment of vernacular language and the invention of the printing press. As I have discussed above, Ziad Fahmy argues against this hegemony of sight and print and calls for more attention to be paid to other means that were used to disseminate nationalist sentiment in Egypt. As Fahmy and Juan Cole have shown, the establishment of the nation and nationalist ideology is part of larger societal movements that involves more than the availability of printed material. How the individual imagines themselves within the nation is still not fully understood and remains a subject necessary of further study. What we know, however, is that political organizations (i.e. political parties), local institutions (schools and charities), and various forms of media both print and oral were integral in the imagining of the nation. We must be wary of the dangers inherent in relying solely the press when discussing the rise of a national imagining of an Egyptian citizen.

Conclusion

Should ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim and other “proto-nationalist” actors be relegated to mere introductions and entry paragraphs of scholarly work? Except for recent work on nineteenth century Egypt rarely in Western scholarship does one find serious studies handling these proto-movements that were organically appearing from the mid to late nineteenth century.⁶⁶ These proto-nationalist of the 1870’s and 1880’s are just as important, as is the establishment of a

⁶⁶ Juan Cole’s study is an example of the rarely, *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East: Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt’s ‘Urabi Movement*. As well as Ziad Fahmy’s recent work *Ordinary Egyptians*.

National Party in 1907, to study of the Egyptian nationalist movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The early nationalists began the process of imaging the Egyptian nation through their writing and organizations. And as we will see in the coming chapter the study of a specific institution, such as the Islamic Philanthropic Society, assists historians in the continuing excavation of this period in Egyptian history.

Chapter 3

Charity, Education and early Egyptian Nationalism

He (‘Abd Allah al-Nadim) was one of the earliest apostles of freedom on the Nile. In Ismail’s time he founded a school of political and religious liberty under the cloak of teaching his pupils elocution: and he counts his disciples now by thousands in every city and town of the Delta. He is a man of organizing genius, an establisher of associations, educational societies, anti-slavery leagues, committees of direction, wherever he passes...But, above all, he is an orator.⁶⁷

Wilfred Blunt

Al-Jam’iyya al-Khayr’iya al-Islāmiya, or the Islamic Philanthropic Society (IPS), was a benevolent organization founded in Alexandria in 1879 by ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim and other benefactors.⁶⁸ The IPS formally established a school in June 1879 with its objective being “the promulgation of national education among deprived boys and girls.”⁶⁹ In this chapter I discuss the establishment of the IPS and the school in 1879. For much of the literature on ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim and the IPS scholars have tended to rely on al-Nadim’s own writings and other secondary sources, but archival research on the IPS specifically has not been done. I use a budget sheet for the IPS that is housed in the Egyptian National Archives (DWQ) that corroborates what al-Nadim and the other sources tell us about the organization which gives us a better picture of how it looked and was ran. We are unable to locate where the school once stood and so this sheet helps us infer about its physical space. The budget sheet and the secondary sources, primarily

⁶⁷ *The Times*, Wednesday, Aug 30, 1882; pg. 6; col. E.

⁶⁸ Al-Nadim’s philanthropic society was not the only charitable association formed in late nineteenth-century Egypt as we will see in chapter four. For example inspired by al-Nadim’s society a group of Coptic Alexandrians formed a Coptic Benevolent Society shortly after the IPS’s founding.

⁶⁹ Etidal Osman, “Thematic Concerns in the Speeches and Dialogues of ‘AbdAllah Al-Nadīm,” (Master’s Thesis Center for Arabic Studies. Cairo: American University in Cairo, 1979).

newspapers, will allow us to understand the physical layout of the school by examining the various people hired to help with its upkeep. But, more importantly it shows the central importance that the Arabic language instruction held for al-Nadim's school. To setup the political economy situation of why charities were being formed in the 1870's and 1880's let me first discuss briefly the changing economic conditions in Egypt.

The reason why so many charitable associations were founded in the 1870s and 1880s is connected to the economic conditions of the period. Decades prior to the 1870s, state expenditures exceeded revenues, and from as early as the latter decades of Mehmed 'Ali reign and throughout that of his successor Abbas (r. 1849-54) the state had to reduce the number of jobs and close some of its schools.⁷⁰ As discussed earlier in Chapter Two above, public spending increased under Said Pasha and Khedive Ismail, due to investment in large national projects, such as the Suez Canal. This coupled with growing foreign loans landed Egypt in bankruptcy in 1875. Most of the money borrowed from Europe went towards agriculture, specifically to the cultivation of cotton, which was directed entirely towards export. However, with the growing loans as well as a low Nile, (in 1877 the Nile floods reached a record low -- the worst in the nineteenth century), the Egyptian economy was in dire straits.⁷¹ Most probably, the price of basic food stuffs increased, and with state expenditure being slashed due to increased foreign intervention in the Egyptian economy through the Caisse de la Dette, Egyptians needed new sources to turn to for help. "Thus, by 1878, interest payments on the debt could only be made with the greatest difficulty, many government officials were left without salaries and the

⁷⁰ Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy 1800-1914*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), p. 123

⁷¹ Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy 1800-1914*, p. 132

deficit on the ordinary budget had reached £3,440,00.”⁷² The heavy debt owed to foreign creditors, a low Nile and an agricultural economy geared towards export are most likely the reasons why the new charitable associations stepped in to help replace the state charity.

الجمعية الخيرية الاسلامية (Islamic Philanthropic Society)

The Islamic Philanthropic Society was founded in 1879 in Alexandria. While the society could be seen as the brainchild of ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, it was also a reflection of the dire straits that the Egyptian economy was passing through for, as has been shown earlier, the political economy of the period led to the need for more local charities that were founded by private philanthropists. As we shall see, prominent members of the Alexandrian community were founding members, for example, Muhammad Shukri a high ranking Alexandrian police official. And because it was a new type of charity where donors were integral to the survival of the charity it meant that one did not have to have a large endowment of funds or land to establish a charitable society. The charity had a school, provided stipends for widows, operated a hospital and hostel as well as a library. But the main goal of the Islamic Philanthropic Society was the founding of the school. For al-Nadim education in general, but in particular a stress on Arabic language instruction, would be the backbone of the society’s work. By the end of the first summer, i.e. by August/September 1879, newspaper accounts say that the school was a popular neighborhood attraction with upwards of 250-300 people attending the Friday speaker sessions and an estimated 350-400 students being taught there. As Linda Herrera says, “the Alexandria

⁷² Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy 1800-1914*, p. 132

school emerged as an engaged arena in the public domain.”⁷³ As we will shortly discuss, the school’s students performed plays that al-Nadim wrote for the Zizinia Theater. In the next sections, I go into the school’s pedagogical concerns as understood from the salary sheet found in the Egyptian National Archives.

Alexandria in the late 1870s and early 1880s was a hotbed for insurrectionist press against Khedive Ismail. Influenced by such personalities like Jamal Din al-Afghani, the press was becoming heavily politicized in the larger issue of colonization and its threat to Egypt caused by the debt owed to the Europeans by the Khedive.⁷⁴ The Islamic Philanthropic Society was a part of this wave of politicization with its grounds being used for political oratory once a week on Fridays and students putting on nationalists plays to be performed at both the famous Zizinia theater, in the Raml section of Alexandria, and at the IPS. As such, the IPS should not be seen as simply a charity. The general public did indeed make monetary donations for the maintenance of the IPS school specifically and for other charitable activities. In this manner, the IPS could be seen as a charity organization functioning along the idea of charity in an Islamic context which was related to the concept of “reward” either in this life or the hereafter. However, as indicated above and with its politicized activities, the IPS was practicing a new type of charity whereby people could pool their money together with “reward” towards the afterlife not being their only goal.⁷⁵ As Rifa`a Rafa` al-Tahtawi, a near-contemporary to al-Nadim, explained when

⁷³ Linda Herrera, 'The Soul of a Nation': 'Abdallah Nadim and Educational Reform in Egypt (1845-1896),' In *Altruism and Imperialism*, ed. Reeva S. Simon and Eleanor Harvey Tejirian. (New York: Middle East Institute and Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 5.

⁷⁴ *Al-Tijarah* and *Abu- Naddarah Zaqra* are only two examples of the critical newspapers of the period..

⁷⁵ In Chapter Four I delve into “reward” and charity.

referring to this new type of charitable associations, “The associations aimed to provide a new form of charity that was not bound to perpetuity and would work for more than spiritual reward.” According to al-Tahtawi, “Associations for joint philanthropy are few in our country, in contrast to individual charitable donations and family endowments, which are usually endowed by a single individual.”⁷⁶

The local newspaper *Al-Tijarah* reported on these acts of individual beneficence to the IPS as a means to garner support of others who would want to join in donating. *Al-Tijarah* was edited by one of al-Nadim’s close friends whom he met in Cairo, Adib Ishaq. Ishaq was a Syrian who moved to Egypt and became an important voice of Egyptian and Arab nationalism. One example is the well-to-do Mustafa Effendi Manzalawi, who is mentioned for donating one-hundred piastres a month that would go towards the opening of the *madarassa*, on top of his annual membership fee for the society.⁷⁷ Further on in the same article, the reporter discusses how the head clerk of the Port Said Customs (*gumruk*), Mustafa Effendi Badran, had agreed to become an agent of the Islamic Philanthropic Society to help find donors and to highlight the good work of the association to potential donors.⁷⁸ Similar to what David Cioeta has discussed in relation to the founding of benevolent societies in Ottoman Syria, from 1875-1882, local newspapers were used to highlight the work of the benevolent societies.⁷⁹ Growing readership

⁷⁶ As quoted in Juan Cole, “Al-Tahtawi on Poverty and Welfare,” in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts* edited by Michael Bonner, Mine Ener and Amy Singer (Albany : State University of New York Press, 2003), pp. 228-229.

⁷⁷ *Al-Tijarah* June 19,1879, p. 1.

⁷⁸ *Al-Tijarah* June 19,1879, p. 1.

⁷⁹ Donald Cioeta, “Islamic benevolent societies and public education in Ottoman Syria, 1875-1882,” *The Islamic Quarterly*, 26 (1),pp. 40-55.

of newspapers and the oral transmission of the news ensured that newspapers highlights of events and ideas were transmitted to larger portions of society.⁸⁰

As the sentiment that connected donations/charity to nationalist aspirations became more widely shared, wealthy individuals began giving more to the cause. One writer in *Al-Tijarah*, most probably ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim himself or another IPS supporter, made the case that giving charity to the school was linked to the improvement of the Egyptian nation, or “human service and national betterment (*al-maslaha al-wataniya*).”⁸¹ In Chapter One I discussed the various uses of *awqaf* in Islamic history. We have seen *awqaf* used as a means to show the beneficent power of the sultan, or established by a single benefactor, to fund the opening of a hospital for the poor or a richly decorated mosque. But in the IPS we see the pooling of charitable contributions towards the opening of a local institution that was aimed at encouraging the reform of Egyptian society through education. Benevolent associations should not be assumed to be separate from the rising proto-nationalist movements that were growing in Egypt. Benevolence, as the sultans had used it previously, was a means to make a statement, whether it was that the sultan was a glorious and prosperous man, or to show the amount of power wielded by the benefactor of a charity.

As Etidal Osman says in her analysis of ‘Abd Allah Al-Nadim’s statements in his periodicals on the concept of nationalism, the famous orator’s language “embraces social, cultural, economic and political considerations.”⁸² It is through his writings that we gain a

⁸⁰ For a perceptive analysis of the impact of newspaper on the growth of nationalism, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso Press, 1991).

⁸¹ *Al-Tijarah* June 19, 1879

⁸² Osman, “Thematic Concerns in the Speeches and Dialogues of ‘AbdAllah Al-Nadīm,” p. 96.

picture of al-Nadim's vision for reforming Egyptian society. His method was a pedantic one, with him taking on the role of "teacher or reformer either directly or under disguise of one of the participants."⁸³ Not surprisingly, he was the head of the Islamic Philanthropic Society's school from 1879-1881. Within the Syrian context, Cioeta discussed how the *vali* of Sham Midhat Pasha approved the creation of Islamic benevolent societies in Beirut, Damascus and Jerusalem during the period of 1875-1882, because he saw in them a solution to the problem of lack of funds available to open government schools. It is probable that al-Nadim by meeting with Afghani during his time in Cairo and working with other intellectuals in the eighteen-seventies he might have known of the advent of benevolent societies in Greater Syria, especially since the newspaper *Thamarat al-Funun*, which had started its publication in 1875 in Beirut under the leadership of the Islamic reformer 'Abd al-Qadir al-Qabbani, wrote about the opening of such societies.

Given that state funds in Egypt were tied to paying off the debt owed to the Europeans, it made sense that a similar situation to that in Syria would occur in Egypt, with elites taking up the effort of education through benevolence. In contradiction to the British opinion of the Egyptian elite as being as Mine Ener says, "unresponsive to the needs of poor Egyptians," the opening of the IPS and other philanthropic institutions shows there was an elite willing and capable of working to pick up the slack of the government.⁸⁴ As Ener argues, the reasons for this can be traced back to the inability of the state to take care of the poor, described as "a religious, ethnic,

⁸³ Osman, "Thematic Concerns in the Speeches and Dialogues of 'AbdAllah Al-Nadim," p. 97.

⁸⁴ Mine Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor and the Politics of Benevolence, 1800-1952* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 97.

or national community's collectively felt threat."⁸⁵ Most of these philanthropic associations were formed in the late nineteenth century and modeled after Europeans missionary societies and the freemasons. While they were founded around coreligionists, these associations did not restrict their services to members of their own community, but served other communal groups as well.. "Nationalist and charitable devotion" rather than an inward- looking sectarian educational focus is what informed the Islamic Philanthropic Society's activities.⁸⁶

By analyzing al-Nadim's rhetoric in his newspapers, writings and speeches one can see that he saw a connection between nationalism and charity. The fact that the IPS and specifically its school were teaching classes that were modern and nationally-inspired is corroborated by a closer study of the association and its activities. Through charity al-Nadim and others like him wished to transform Egypt into a hue more of their own liking. As the famous line goes, it was about making "Egypt for Egyptians."⁸⁷ During the period of al-Nadim and the 'Urabi revolt the idea of what made one imagine themselves as Egyptian was a new idea. As other's have argued it may be seen in relation to the anti-imperialist movement of the time. But, certainly the idea that one was Egyptian with a tie to the territorial state of Egypt is new. But, what type of Egyptian does al-Nadim imagine? That we will discuss further in the upcoming sections on the educational mission of the Islamic Philanthropic Society's school.

⁸⁵ Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor*, p.101.

⁸⁶ Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor*, p. 102.

⁸⁷ Alexander Schölch, *Egypt for the Egyptians: The Socio-political Crisis in Egypt, 1878–1882* (London: Ithaca Press, 1981).

Islamic Philanthropic Society: between modern education and national duty

As they brought their activities to the attention of the Egyptian public, they posited their actions within a framework of national duty and in this manner laid claim to the elites' role as the vanguard in fulfilling a national obligation.⁸⁸

For al-Nadim the education of the Egyptian was important. In his publication *al-Ustadh* he writes on how one would become a good housewife -- how to prepare meals, which ingredients to use and which utensils were essential to a proper meal. For al-Nadim "order" was important, especially the particular type of order that was related to training young students to become good citizens.⁸⁹ As a newly minted member of the elites that Ener argues found their activities to be a part of a "national obligation," al-Nadim was attempting to create a new type of educational training for his students.⁹⁰ As explained below, the type of teachers in the Islamic Philanthropic Society's school as well as the classes taught and the extra-curricular activities performed therein, all indicate that al-Nadim was attempting to put in place an education that was centered on what we today would call the liberal arts. In an article from the newspaper *Al-Tijara*, the writer, who is most probably al-Nadim himself or a close associate, states, "we are in a new era the circumstances have changed and God has fulfilled that hope by showing us this Society," referring to the IPS.⁹¹ He goes on to write of the failure of the education system as it stood at that time and stated his desire to add new disciplines so one could see the world in a

⁸⁸ Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor and the Politics of Benevolence, 1800-1952*, p. 101.

⁸⁹ Lisa Pollard, *Nurturing the Nation: The Family Politics of Modernizing, Colonizing and Liberating Egypt 1805-1923* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) is a good study on the use of education to create an Egyptian citizen.

⁹⁰ Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor*, p. 101.

⁹¹ *Al-Tijara*, August 23, 1879

different manner. This to al-Nadim would create a more complete individual, or what we today would call a well-rounded student.

Al-Nadim saw a link between education and its ability to train students with ideas and methods to become a different type of Egyptian than in previous generations. That he did this through a charitable society's school is also interesting because of what it says about the use of charitable donations. Academics and researchers tend to point to his writings and dialogues as evidence of his ambitions in social reform, but if you couple that with a study of the IPS and how it was formed, what its goals were and in particular the school and its curriculum you can gain a broader understanding of al-Nadim and the nationalist movement at the time. Looking closely at the IPS school and its activities one can see al-Nadim experimenting with many of the ideas that he would later elaborate on in his two major publications *Al-Tankit wa Al-Tabkit* and *al-Ustadh*, periodicals that were published in 1881 and 1892 respectively, i.e. some years after he had launched the IPS.

In previous decades, schooling for the majority of sons and daughters was done through the *kuttab*, where students would learn Arabic grammar and Qu'ran typically at a local mosque.⁹² But beginning in the nineteenth century new opportunities for education would appear, such as the military schools and the teaching hospital at Qasr al-'aini. The estimates vary for the number of students being taught in *kuttabs*, but they show a gradual increase throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and that, coupled with the increase in private missionary schools and the state schools, amount to a gradual increase in the number of students educated. 'Abd Allah al-Nadim himself was among those students who passed through the *kuttub* system, wherein he saw

⁹² James Heyworth-Dunne in his study of Egyptian Education, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London: Luzac & Co., 1939) discusses the *kuttab* system that preceded state public schools and private schools.

the limits to its education. At age five al-Nadim was sent to his local Qu'ran school where he stayed until the age of nine, by which time he had memorized the Qu'ran. His father, wanting him to continue his Islamic studies, then sent him to the Ibrahim Pasha Mosque in Alexandria. Here he would study for several years. Scholars tend to believe that it was this *traditional* education that helped influence al-Nadim's later works, and I agree that it is this early education that molded al-Nadim by allowing him to see that things were changing, including education, and that he had a chance to help other children of poverty (into which he himself was born) to have an improved station in life. As Ziad Fahmy says, after a brief stint at the Ibrahim Pasha Mosque, al-Nadim, "did not like the antiquated and dry learning style" and "quit his studies to pursue his real love—literature."⁹³ When his father found out that he had begun frequenting literary salons and coffeehouses he cut him off, and al-Nadim was forced to go out on his own and search for work. This eventually brought him in contact with Jamal al-din al-Afghani and other reformers. While exploring various nationalist groups such as the Masonic Lodge and *Misr al-Fatah* (Young Egypt), a nationalist party formed in Alexandria in 1878, al-Nadim worked his way toward the creation of the Islamic Philanthropic Society in Alexandria, for his drive remained education and the molding of youth.

Al-Nadim would work with other Alexandrian elite to establish the IPS in 1879. The eleven founding members are as follows: Muhammad Amin, Mahmud Wasif, Hassan Mansur, Dr. Hassan Sirri, Muhammad Shukri (a high ranking police official in Alexandria), Ali Daif, Hassan al-Misri, 'Abd al-Majid 'Umar Shuwaytir, Amin al-Kayyal, and Muhammad Muhyi al-Din-al-Nabhani.⁹⁴ The first two Muhammad Amin and Mahmud Wasif were high ranking

⁹³ Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians*, p. 49.

⁹⁴ Ali al-Hadidi, "'Abd Allah Nadim: Journalist, Man of Letters, Orator, And his Contribution to the First Egyptian National Movement," (PhD diss., University of London, 1959), p. 97.

members of the political society *Misr al-Fatah* that al-Nadim first joined when he returned to Alexandria. He was able to persuade the two to join him in his new endeavor. They were all respected members of the Alexandrian community and their joining in with al-Nadim gave the IPS legitimacy. Membership fees were set and prices were set for different levels of membership so ordinary people could also join in.⁹⁵ Shortly after the opening of the society the IPS school was opened in June of 1879. It is to the school where we turn our attention to next.

A program for national education began in the 1860s with the creation of the *Diwan al-Madaris* of which its most important head was Ali Pasha Mubarak. Educated first in government schools and later sent to Paris on an educational mission, Mubarak was charged with reforming and expanding the educational system nationally. The schools he would create aimed at training young civil servants who would manage and maintain the new institutions of *modern* Egypt. The opening of new schools in the 1860s and 1870s would lead to the education of a larger portion of Egyptian society. It was this system that was leading to the education of the “individual citizen,” for Ali Mubarak could not reform the nation without the focus on the individual, as Timothy Mitchell illustrates.⁹⁶ As explained below, what al-Nadim and other of his contemporaries were doing was attempting to help the impoverished by offering them education on a higher level. It is in June 1879 that al-Nadim formally established the school part of the Islamic Philanthropic Society, which had been formed in the wake of his leaving the nationalist movement *Misr al-Fatah* because of differences in opinion. The IPS and the school will play an important part in helping us understanding al-Nadim and the proto-nationalist movement in the late 1870s and

⁹⁵ Al-Hadidi, “‘Abd Allah Nadim: Journalist, Man of Letters, Orator, And his Contribution to the First Egyptian National Movement,” p. 99.

⁹⁶ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

early 1880s. What follows is an accounting of salaries for teachers and staffs at the school that were submitted to the *Majlis al-Nuzzar wa al-Wuzarā'* (Council of Ministers) and are currently located in the Egyptian National Archives. The sheet shows who the IPS hired allowing us to understand what was being taught at the school and gives us an idea of what the physical space may have looked like.

Exploration of the Accounts of the Instructors (Khoja) from the school of the Islamic Philanthropic Society in Alexandria.

Total (All) 6000.00 Signed by the head of the Islamic Philanthropic Society⁹⁷

Instructors of the School

Language Instructors:

First Instructor: 700.00
 Second Instructor: 450.00
 French assistant: 300.00
 English assistant: 300.00
 Total: 1750.00

Arabic Language Instructors:

Instructor: 230.00
 Instructor: 230.00
 Instructor: 200.00
 Instructor: 130.00
 Instructor: 130.00
 Instructor: 120.00
 Instructor: 100.00
 Instructor: 100.00
 Total: 1240.00

Math Instructors:

Instructor one: 600.00
 Instructor two: 350.00

Calligraphyetc

Instructor for the Arabic script of *riq'a* (رَقْعَة) 400.00
 Instructor (?): 270.00
 (Illegible) 200.00
 Total: 870.00
 Instructor (?): 300.00
 (Illegible) of the Society: 100.00
 Scribe of the Society 300.00
 (Illegible)
 Cleaner one: 136.00
 Cleaner two: 100.00
 Doorman: 77.00
 (Illegible) : 77.00
 Gardener: 100.00
 Total: 490.00

⁹⁷ DWQ 0075-008697 IPS Teacher Salaries for 1880 Oct. 16 (Shawwal 1, 1297)

This salary sheet used here was found as a separate sheet submitted to the *Majlis al-Nuzzar wa al-Wuzarā'* (Council of Ministers) in relation to a petition for a donation from the *Majlis* to help with funding the school. In the petition, the IPS asks for money to help with the procuring of furniture and resources for the school. What is interesting here is that we have a private charitable society, the IPS, returning to the state asking for funding to help with the school.⁹⁸ As such, the reason why the document was preserved in the National Archives is because of the need that the association had from the state. This is interesting because in the *Diwan al-Madaris* one can find similar salary documents, salary sheets, submitted to the state from public and private schools. What this shows is whether or not the school was petitioning for money from the state, the state was intrusive within the school's organization. Education took on an important part of the development of the state, molding the new bureaucrats and *effendiya* throughout the nineteenth century, so it is not surprising that the state would demand such details from schools. As of right now, there is no known IPS archive with sources on the day to day running of the school, detailed syllabus, names of students, a detailed list of funders or information on the exact location of the school.

Furthermore, the salary sheet presents another problem, namely, that it shows that the salaries paid to some Arabic language teachers were similar to that received by the gardener of the society, this despite Arabic language instruction being ostensibly central to the school's mission. One possible explanation is that those were teacher assistants. Most likely the salary sheet shows that the school was tight for money and couldn't afford to pay the Arabic teachers a high enough salary. And there appears to be a continuation of salary discrimination where foreign language teachers were paid with a salary almost double the highest paid Arabic instructor. Even with all these limitations, the salary sheet is important to analyze because it proves that Arabic language instructors were the majority of the teachers at

⁹⁸ DWQ 0075-008800, *Majlis al-Nuzzar wa al-Wuzarā'*: Oct 12, 1880.

the school showing a concern towards Arabic language education. We also see the growing influence of the state upon education with the state requiring salary sheets from private and public schools.

Writing in 1881 in *Tankit*, al-Nadim tells of how the number of students grew from 150 on the first day to 480 over the next several months.⁹⁹ By comparison, in 1878 al-Nadim's old school at the Ibrahim Pasha Mosque in Alexandria had 312 students. Included in the 480 that the IPS had were 203 orphaned or poor children. And from the list that al-Nadim provides we can safely assume that the school had roughly eighteen teachers. While scholars had previously argued that besides oratory, literature, composition and the typical government mandated syllabus, the IPS school curriculum stressed Arabic language pedagogy, this official document shows a total of eight Arabic instructors. By contrast, there was only one instructor for English and one for French, in addition to one assistant each for both languages. This information revealed in this document corroborates al-Nadim's polemic writings in *al-Ustadh* where stresses the importance of Arabic language. For example, in one article he "reports" on a conversation between two young girls about language training in school, and specifically about the reasons why Arabic should be the focus of such training. The two girls are named Nafisa and Zakia, and al-Nadim obviously takes the side of the good citizen, Zakia, who warns Nafisa of the threat of foreign language education, and specifically how such foreign language education was of no use to the young Egyptian woman. The dialogue begins with Nafisa telling Zakia that she studies Arabic alongside French, sewing, piano and foreign dancing.¹⁰⁰ This is where Zakia begins to question the usefulness of

⁹⁹ Al-Hadidi, "Abd Allah Nadim: Journalist, Man of Letters, Orator, And his Contribution to the First Egyptian National Movement," p. 107.

¹⁰⁰ Omnia Shakry writes how early girls education was geared towards the teaching of young women how to be mothers. With women seen as mothers of the nation emphasis was placed on the proper ways for women to raise and rear children. For more on this please refer to Shakry's chapter "Schooled Mothers and Structured

learning foreign languages. The only language that is important to learn, she says, is the Qu'ran because it allows you to "learn your religion". Zakia adds sarcastically, "what what are you going to do with foreign languages? Marry a French or Englishman?"¹⁰¹ For Zakia, or more likely al-Nadim, the woman's place was at home; only women of the royal court need know foreign languages.¹⁰² Zakia eventually manages to win over her friend who decides to tell her father that she only needs to study Arabic, reading, writing and sewing at school.

Instead of teaching girls foreign languages, your school should be teaching you your own language, the ways of your religion, and how to bring up children and take care of the house, not about things that aren't useful.¹⁰³

This gives us an idea of how al-Nadim saw the female's place within the nation. She was to be in the domestic sphere. Al-Nadim was not unique in taking this restrictive attitude towards women's education. Across various nationalist movements, we have continually seen the marginalization of women to the domestic sphere, where their first responsibility is seen to be to the family and their family's growth and well-being. As Linda Herrera discusses in her critique of al-Nadim, "Foreign languages (for al-Nadim) might not only distract women from their primary domestic responsibilities, but acclimatize them to the habits and tastes of Europeans and potentially lead them to paths of immorality."¹⁰⁴ But, what is interesting here is the focus on Arabic being important to developing the Egyptian citizen male or female.

Play: Child Rearing in Turn-of-the-Century Egypt," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp126-170.

¹⁰¹ Al-Nadim, *Majallat Al-Ustadh*, ed. 'Abd al-Mun'im Ibrahim al-Jumay'i, (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyah al-'Ammah lil-Kitab, 1994), p. 246.

¹⁰² Lisa Pollard, *Nurturing the Nation: The Family Politics of Modernizing, Colonizing and Liberating Egypt 1805-1923*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) and Beth Baron's *Egypt as Woman: Nationalism Gender, and Politics*, (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2005) are good examples of creation of the female in the nationalist project of Egypt.

¹⁰³ Herrera, "The Soul of a Nation": 'Abdallah Nadim and Educational Reform in Egypt (1845-1896)," p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ Herrera, "The Soul of a Nation," p.13.

Al-Nadim saw that he could strengthen the bonds of the masses brought about by having a common tongue. This is also what partially explains his use of the vernacular in his writings. One can imagine his newspaper being read in the street with men, women and children passing by, or at cafes and salons and then transferred to women and children by fathers who heard or read the news. And since his writings were in the vernacular, the masses would not have as tough a time understanding his message. That is why Arabic and oratory were so important to the IPS school. Students were taught public speaking and some were even given the chance to speak at the IPS Friday events which began in the summer of 1879 and which drew crowds between two hundred and fifty and three hundred people each week. Students also performed two plays that al-Nadim had written, one that has since been lost, and the other, *al-Watan*, was performed at the Zizinia Theater in the Raml section of Alexandria twice in 1880 and a third time in July in front of the Khedive.¹⁰⁵ The showing was sold out once tickets were announced and the school was able to raise £E350.¹⁰⁶ Drama and theater coupled with what was also being taught at the IPS school, calligraphy and penmanship, and the various arts would create an ideal Egyptian citizen ready to work for the nation. Al-Nadim the teacher was attempting to create a school whose focus would invigorate Arabic in the youth and helping to further his attempts at building an Egyptian nationalist citizen.

Besides and in addition to the usual rudiments of knowledge, he desired to teach the children the literature of their language and the history of their country so that they should grow up, not dishonoured and debased by subservience to oppression, but well coached in the principles of nationalism, proud of their origin, filled with patriotic zeal to serve Egypt and conscious of their duty towards her.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Sadgrove, *The Egyptian Theatre in the Nineteenth Century, 1799-1882*, (Bershire: Ithaca Press, 1996), p. 146.

¹⁰⁶ Sadgrove, *The Egyptian Theatre*.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Hadidi, "'Abd Allah Nadim: Journalist, Man of Letters, Orator, And his Contribution to the First Egyptian National Movement," p. 101.

As can be seen from this quote, Arabic was seen as the key to touching the masses, not just the elite. Because al-Nadim himself came from poverty, the focus on Arabic in al-Nadim's school is proof of his wish to instill Arabic pride and possibly make Arabic at the center of national identity.

Related to al-Nadim's own concern with Arabic language instruction is a document on the organizing of the teachers college, *Dar al-mu'limin*. Written in 1874, five years before the opening of the IPS's school, this document specifies that Arabic language training should be the top priority for the new teachers. Arabic language was the priority ahead of Religious Sciences, the Art of Teaching and the training in foreign languages.¹⁰⁸ With Turkish being the language of the court, and French the language of the growing *effendiya*, 'Abd Allah al-Nadim believed that a refocus on Arabic language training in schools would unite the entire population, both urban and rural, around Arabic. In another report on Arabic language training in Egyptian schools, the authors bemoan the lack of employees in the government bureaucracy who are qualified enough to write a letter or make administrative reports in Arabic are minimal. This sad state of affairs the document attributes to the inadequate teaching of Arabic in Egyptian schools. In order for the new Egyptian nation's bureaucracy to expand, the ability to read and write Arabic for government employees would become paramount. One of the reasons given for the trouble in teaching Arabic is that there are two types of Arabic: one being taught in schools, "اللغة العلمية للعصور الماضية" (a classical Arabic) and "لغة عصرنا" (the present-day Arabic) which the writer exclaims is more useful because it is what people use in everyday life.¹⁰⁹ This is a contrast 'Abd Allah al-Nadim also highlights with his purposeful use of colloquial Arabic in his writings and plays. In order to do mass

¹⁰⁸ Ahmad 'Izzat 'Abd Al-Karim, *Tārīkh al-ta'lim fī Miṣr min nihāyat ḥukm Muḥammad 'Alī ilā awā'il ḥukm Tawfīq, 1848-1882*, (Cairo: Matba'at al-Nasr, 1945), pp.96-7.

¹⁰⁹ 'Abd Al-Karim, *Tārīkh al-ta'lim fī Miṣr min nihāyat ḥukm Muḥammad 'Alī ilā awā'il ḥukm Tawfīq, 1848-1882*, p.259.

education one would have to teach the Arabic that the masses understood and used daily. This modern Arabic would become one of the unifying forces of the burgeoning nation that would be disseminated through speech, newspapers and later on music, radio and television.

Returning to al-Nadim, sadly in 1881 after a final performance of *al-Watan* at Zizinia, al-Nadim and several founding members of the IPS had a falling out, and he left the organization shortly thereafter.¹¹⁰ This falling out seems to be directly connected to his growing influence among Ahmad ‘Urabi and the nationalist movement against the European control of Egypt’s finances. As we know, al-Nadim’s loyalties lay in his nationalist ambitions to strengthen Egypt.

The nationalist ambitions of al-Nadim can be seen in particular when one takes a look at other salary ledgers in the Egyptian National Archives and you find the difference in salaries for similar instructor positions. We see, first, al-Nadim’s value of educators and his use of the funds available to him, which appear to support secondary sources that say the IPS was able to raise significant funds from donors and had the means to pay the high salaries of the teachers. Secondly, the IPS payroll compared to other sheets found at the Egyptian National Archives shows that the IPS paid their Arabic language teachers double what other schools paid.¹¹¹ Also, where other salary sheets mention the positions *nazir al-madrasa* (headmaster) and *dhabit* (guard) the IPS sheet mentions neither. Possibly al-Nadim or another took the role of the minder and headmaster of the school. Or it could signal the difference in teaching methods that the school promoted versus other schools. However, these salary sheets do provide a clear understanding of how teachers were paid as compared to other schools in the 1870’s and 1880’s.

¹¹⁰ Sadgrove, *The Egyptian Theatre in the Nineteenth Century, 1799-1882*, p. 153.

¹¹¹ I was able to compare salary sheets of other schools with the salary sheets of the IPS. With more research comparing the various schools we can begin use the salary ledgers to examine how schools valued teachers and which teachers were in more demand.

The fruit of the school will be tangible and watered with the waters of freedom that will fruit science and literature and competition and dignity and they have seen their contribution (the donors) should not be limited to the young students.¹¹²

Imagining the IPS School, Building and Grounds

In contrast to much of the other scholarship that focuses primarily on ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, I have attempted to think of how the IPS and the school in particular were organized as an institution of education and charity. We have already seen that al-Nadim enjoyed the company of some of Alexandria’s elite and when founding the IPS he turned to them to join him in creating the association. What I attempt below is to imagine the physical space of the IPS from what we know in our primary and secondary sources. Spatial organization and spaces in particular play a huge role in how one conceptualizes ideas and how we create memories. Several French philosophers have discussed space and organization: Michel Foucault and Gaston Bachelard. In *The Poetics of Space* Bachelard focuses on the home as a space that holds our oldest memories and creates stability in our present imagining of the home.¹¹³ Foucault in *Discipline and Punishment* examines the way space is used, for example in the panoptic prison, to control and discipline the prison, through the creation of a platform that would allow a single viewer to watch over all.¹¹⁴ Timothy Mitchell followed up on this and examined the introduction of discipline in Egyptian education of the mid-to-late-nineteenth-century. The model English Lancaster School was recreated in the new schools that Ali Pasha Mubarak and the state were organizing. And with discipline like the military schools begun under Mehmed ‘Ali, these new schools would help organize the new Egyptian

¹¹² *Al-Tijara*, June 19, 1879

¹¹³ Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* tr. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press Books, 1994).

¹¹⁴ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* tr. Alan Sheridan. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

individual, “These schools were not for creating soldiers, but for creating disciplined members of the community.”¹¹⁵

From what we know of the school and IPS it was an organization with generous donors and well connected contributors. The IPS even received £E350 from the Khedive Tawfiq after he saw the students’ performance of *al-Watan*. Newspaper articles and al-Nadim’s own writing also tell us that the IPS was comprised of a hospital, hostel, library, soup kitchen and most importantly the school. With so many parts to this charity it is obvious that it was not in some small building. The school is opened within the first year of the founding of the IPS in 1879 and is ready to receive students, as it is reported that one-hundred and fifty students showed up on the first day. And we know from al-Nadim’s own account in *al-Tankit* that several months after that they were able to care for two-hundred and three orphans. This was not a *kuttab* run on top of a *sabil* or in one of the Mosques in Alexandria. We also know that starting in 1879 the school played host on Fridays to oratory and public speeches on the growing troubles of Egypt in the 1870’s. Newspaper accounts that may have been exaggerated say that some two-hundred and fifty people attended these meetings that took place in the courtyard of the school. With the amount of the children attending the school being some four-hundred in total according to al-Nadim, and being orphans that had to be taken care of, and knowing that the space of the courtyard had to be big enough to hold large gatherings, it seems that the IPS school was no small institution and was an important place to come hear about the political ideas being disseminated around Alexandria in this period. It is also mentioned in the salaries for the IPS in 1880 that there was a gardener hired to take care of what we may suppose to be the garden/courtyard area. This was in addition to the *bawwab* (doorman) of the school.

¹¹⁵ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p. 71.

What I hypothesize, because historians have yet been unable to find the location and my own research in the archives has yet to produce plans or anything that would hint at the exact location, we can only surmise about the school and its layout as compared to other institutions. With the size of the school and large courtyard and the wealthy endowers of the organization it seems reasonable that the school, like a lot of other schools in the nineteenth century, was a villa converted to an educational institute. It would explain the space needed to take care of all the orphans and students and the area where the Friday meetings were held. Being that ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim was raised and spent a lot of his time in al-Manshiyah, particularly considering his education as a youth and, upon his return to Alexandria, his activity among the Alexandrian intellectual community that seems to have radiated out from the Zizinia Theater¹¹⁶, I am hypothesizing that the school must have been in the surrounding area.

We can imagine a whitewashed villa with French and/or Italian motifs surrounded by a courtyard garden. On Fridays it must have been bustling with people coming in after the Friday prayers to hear al-Nadim and other nationalists speak. As we head into the growing ‘Urabi movement and the beginning of the British occupation, we can imagine a space filled with nationalist meetings and symbols.

The Islamic Philanthropic Society, Al-Nadim and Revolution in 1881-2

In 1881 the ‘Urabi revolt was in full swing as ‘Urabi, in spite of the British annoyance with him, was appointed a Minister of War by Khedive Tawfiq. ‘Urabi had been demanding equal treatment for Egyptian members of the army, especially the officers, on the same level as the foreign troops and officers. Alexandria was central to the 1881-2 revolution, and ‘Abd

¹¹⁶ Currently the theater is named Muhammad Ali theater and located off Nabi Daniel St in the Ramleh section of Alexandria.

Allah al-Nadim, as we discussed earlier, was labeled the “oratory of the revolution.” What I have been attempting to argue is that through the erection of the IPS and other similar associations by Egyptians in the late-nineteenth century, al-Nadim and others were right in the middle of the nationalist fervor of the period.

In a letter written in November 1882 to Lord Dufferin, E.T. Rogers, then the Consular-General of the British Consul in Cairo, wrote explaining the events of the revolution and assigning blame for how events transpired. He explains that the Khedive was central in stirring up the nationalist movement through his appointment of ‘Urabi as Minister. He also writes, and here is the most pertinent part, that:

Several so-called benevolent societies were established in Egypt, as a cloak for the spread of sedition and of hatred towards the Europeans. Their meetings which were largely attended by both civil and military officials were under the presidency of members of the ex-Ministry, and the principal orator was generally the notorious Abdallah Effendi Nedim.¹¹⁷

The IPS had been founded by ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim and other cast-offs from the nationalist party *Misr al-fatah*, and in his writing and speeches you saw no “cloak” of nationalism. The fact that one of the highest ranking men in the British occupying force saw these “benevolent societies” as agitators and organizers of nationalist “sedition and hatred” highlights the importance of such organizations in the shaping of the Egyptian nationalist movement. These societies were helping to mold an individual who saw themselves as Egyptian citizens. With a focus on Arabic writing and reading, oratory and Egyptian history, these schools/societies were instilling future nationalist with the tools to further evolve the Egyptian nationalist movement into what will become evident later. That this was done through benevolent societies was new and illustrates new ways that charity could be used. That they were seen as important enough to write about and that ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim receives mention shows, one, that the British were well informed and, two, that the IPS was known as a place for

¹¹⁷ FO 141/170 Memo from E.T. Rogers to Lord Dufferin on the situation in Egypt. November 16, 1882.

nationalist meetings. A charitable organization that from all reports was benefitting a population with the basic needs medically and educationally and was involved centrally in the nationalist movement shows the range and flexibility that charity possesses.

Chapter Four

Charity as a Lens to Examine Socio-Political Organizations

In Chapter Two above, I discussed how the theories of nationalism have concentrated on official political movements (e.g. established parties) and paid less attention to organizations that appear outside the strata of “political” actors. Accordingly, these theories would study a statesman or an officially recognized political party as a legitimate actor. By contrast, associations like the Islamic Philanthropic Society (IPS) or the Young Men’s Muslim Association are treated as organizations of social movement, which, because they were not regarded as expressly political, tend not to be treated as part of the official political establishment.¹¹⁸ In order to highlight how these social movements can be seen also as important political actors, I focused on the IPS, and in particular its school, as an example of the burgeoning charitable associations.

I argued in Chapter Three that because of its position close to the poorest and most marginalized in society, the IPS and other associations like it had a huge impact on reaching the masses to spread the burgeoning ideas of Egyptian nationalism alongside more conventional forms of nationalist tools that include print and other forms of media. Ziad Fahmy has attempted to challenge the current notions of cultural nationalism as argued by Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson. He argues that media capitalism is a better way to understand the imagining of the nation. As opposed to “print-capitalism” that has been extensively studied by Anderson, Fahmy argues that “media capitalism” brings together both the audio and the visual, making up for the preferential treatment that the written word receives in Anderson’s work. Included within media capitalism is performance media.

Like print capitalism, media capitalism describes the commodification of mass media, including print, and their function as a part of a media market. Indeed, as examined in a later chapter, the theater and a profit-motivated music

¹¹⁸ Founded by Abdul Hamid Said in 1927 with the Young Men’s Christian Association as the model.

industry contributed more to the molding of national tastes and the creation of a national culture than just print media alone.¹¹⁹

Fahmy includes ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim within his media-capitalism model, particularly because of the Oratory Club formed by his students and the Friday speakers sessions and the performance of nationalist plays at the Zizinia theater by al-Nadim and the students from the IPS. As such, al-Nadim’s IPS would appear to be at the forefront of building nationalist sentiment during the period prior to the ‘Urabi revolt and the wider revolution with the schools theater work and oratory sessions a part of the performance media that Fahmy describes. The idea of a charitable association used as a nationalist tool is also unique because the IPS is an example of charity being used to fund the molding of students in a very particular nineteenth century Egyptian image of themselves. Building upon Mine Ener’s work and her research on benevolence in nineteenth-century Egypt, I examine in this chapter how charity and early Egyptian nationalism were combined in this IPS.¹²⁰ Specifically, I examine the advent of charitable associations for the rest of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries. I also detail the way charity theoretically becomes conceived within these associations. As we will see charity and nationalism become merged together in these modern private associations.

As discussed in Chapter One charity in the early nineteenth century was centered on private endowments and state sponsored charities. Merchants in the Middle East had for centuries created what amounted to corporations, where agents in cities and towns around their trade routes would handle local business for the main owner. But the idea of member-supported associations of private individuals that were founded to deliver benevolence or to educate students did not exist.

¹¹⁹ Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians*, p. 16.

¹²⁰ Mine Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor and the Politics of Benevolence, 1800-1952* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

It has been argued that the inspiration for such societies as the Islamic Philanthropic Society or the Coptic Benevolence Association came from the missionaries that were present in Egypt and the Middle East from the mid-nineteenth-century onwards. For example, the opening of Christian private schools in Greater Syria gave impetus for early Muslim reformers to open their own educational institutions.¹²¹ One of the early missionary societies for education was *al-Jam'iyya al-Suriyya* (The Syrian Society) primarily focused on the education of Christians by American Protestants; among its notable members was Butrus al-Bustani. In 1875 Sa'd Hamadah, president of the commercial court in Beirut, founded one of the early Muslim societies called *Jam'iyat al-Funun*, which focused on the arts. The purpose of these societies was not to create a communal system of education, but to provide a similar type of education as that provided by the missionary schools, but specifically for the Muslim communities. As these were private institutions they could be molded and organized as the founders wished. It has been argued that the *Maqasid* charitable society and school that was founded in 1878 might have been a possible inspiration for al-Nadim's Islamic Philanthropic Society, founded the next year in Alexandria.¹²² We know that al-Nadim associated with intellectuals of the period who came from Syria, such as Adib Ishaq. In addition, he benefited from the trade networks and from reading newspapers that transferred ideas throughout the Mediterranean zone. From a note in the Ottoman archives we find the Sultan allowing the publication of al-Nadim's *al-Ustadh* in Damascus.¹²³ An interesting study would be an examination of the circulation of periodicals within the Ottoman domain.

¹²¹ Donald Cioeta, "Islamic benevolent societies and public education in Ottoman Syria, 1875-1882." (*The Islamic Quarterly*, 26(1)), pp. 40-55.

¹²² Linda Herrera, "'The Soul of a Nation': 'Abdallah Nadim and Educational Reform in Egypt (1845-1896)," in *Altruism and Imperialism*, ed. Reeve S. Simon and Eleanor Harvey Tejirian, (New York: Middle East Institute and Columbia University Press, 2002).

¹²³ *Başbakanlık Y.A. HUS 277/54. 1311 AH*

Such a study would help us understand the spread of ideas and the influence of intellectuals in the late nineteenth-century.

The influence of private schools based on sectarian training in Egypt began under the rule of Mehmed ‘Ali and became a small but important part of the early educational system in Egypt. Missionary schools as Heyworth-Dunne has argued did not begin opening up until in the 1840’s.¹²⁴ Alexandria in particular hosted a large number of these private schools due to the diversity of the burgeoning city’s population. With foreign communities from France, Italy, England, and Greece, Alexandria had no monolithic religion and hosted communities from all over.¹²⁵

However, it is important to note that missionary schools that opened mid-nineteenth century did not suddenly appear in Egypt. As Heyworth-Dunne explains, schools for non-Egyptians had existed since the eighteenth-century. Egyptian society was not homogeneous and with travelers, merchants and ascetics passing through Egypt, various types of schools had to be founded to accommodate them. According to Heyworth-Dunne, the first private school, that opened in Egypt under Mehmed ‘Ali was the Armenian school that was attached to the Armenian church in the Bulaq quarter of Cairo.¹²⁶ Opened in 1828, it was most probably an elementary school for children of officials of the Palace court.

In 1829 a private school run and instructed by one man, Uwais as-Sam’ani ar-Rumani, opened to teach Arabic, French and Italian. Primarily focused on language, it met the increased demand among at least the burgeoning elite under Mehmed ‘Ali to acquire additional languages in addition to Arabic or Ottoman. In 1840 Jewish schools for girls and

¹²⁴ James Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*, (London: Luzac & Co., 1939), p.275.

¹²⁵ Will Hanley. “Foreignness and Localness in Alexandria, 1880-1914.” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2007)

¹²⁶ Heyworth-Dunne, p. 271.

boys were founded in Cairo; and the Greeks, with a large indigenous population, founded schools in the 1840s in Alexandria and Cairo, although it seems certain that prior to this time there were other schools which were affiliated with the church and which had been founded to accommodate the Greek community.¹²⁷ Also, in the 1840s Catholics from the Lazarist and *Freres* founded a school in Alexandria, but the Lazarist eventually split to create their own charity called the *Filles de la Charite*. Ali al-Haddidi in his works on al-Nadim says that al-Nadim may have had interest in these particular Catholic associations, modeling the IPS after them. But, we are unable to prove without doubt that the school or charity was modeled directly after them. What can be said with certainty is that from the mid-1860's to the founding of the IPS in 1879 and with numerous schools and missionary societies opening in Cairo and Alexandria, al-Nadim and his cadre must have been aware of these different societies and their particular approach to education. As such, it is probable that these missionary schools might have influenced al-Nadim in his efforts. According to Heyworth-Dunne, 129 non-Egyptian private schools were opened during the period from 1863 to 1879. And given that a large number of these were in Alexandria, it is very likely that al-Nadim would have come in contact with them.

Walking around present-day Raml and al-Manshiyah sections of Alexandria, one finds schools founded by Franciscans and Angelicans dating before the founding of al-Nadim's IPS and situated near major thoroughfares such as Mehmed 'Ali Place and Nabi-Daniel Street. This is not to claim that al-Nadim was supremely influenced by the very "foreign" founded missionaries that he would rail against in his later writings, but to show the continuity that evolves in the creation of new forms of education and in particular associations. Like the Lazarist *Charite*, al-Nadim set up an orphanage, school, hospital, and

¹²⁷ Heyworth-Dunne, pp. 272-5.

library as part of his *Jam'iyya*, attempting to create an association that was more than just charity for the sake of charity.

What I discuss below in this chapter is how these new associations transformed the idea of benevolence into the establishment of modern ideas of public welfare as conceived by the nation. But first I would like to discuss the evolution of the idea of the *Jam'iyya*, or association in the Arabic lexicon, and the various purposes for which associations were founded in the nineteenth-century.

The new use of *jam'iyya* in Arabic during the 19th century

Prior to the nineteenth century, corporations in business and incorporations of different *waqf* properties into shared entities occurred with regularity. We see many cases of foreign merchants creating large scale corporations that handled business dealings for a share of the profit. One member would be based in Yemen while the other would be in Tunis, with the head being located in Cairo. Each agent, in Yemen and Cairo, would handle the business interests of the merchant in that location on behalf of the main merchant. In a recently released edited volume on *awqaf* in the Islamic World, Husam 'Abd al-Mu'ti describes how various *waqf* holdings in Egypt were incorporated together to form a larger endowment for the upkeep of Mecca and Medina and the feeding of poor in the cities.¹²⁸

Jam'iyya comes from the root ج - م - ع meaning to collect, combine or place together. Looking at the orientalist Edward W. Lane's Arabic Lexicon Dictionary written in the nineteenth-century, we see no mention of the idea of associations as al-Nadim and others

¹²⁸ 'Abd al-Mu'ti, "Piety and Profit: The Haramayn Endowments in Egypt (1517-1814)," in *Held in Trust: Waqf in the Islamic World* edited by Pascale Ghazaleh. (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2011), pp. 41-72.

would later come to understand it. In Rifa`a Rafi` al-Tahtawi's travelogue on his time in France he discusses the "societies" that the French orientalist Silvestre de Sacy belonged to, referring to the scholarly societies of the time. Al-Tahtawi chooses to use the word *jam'iyya* to refer to these societies in Arabic. Some say this may be the first use of the word *jam'iyya* in Arabic as "association".¹²⁹ This is poignant because al-Tahtawi was one of the early Islamic reformers of the nineteenth century to call for the creation of such societies, in particular the establishment of associations endowed by the wealthy who help to sustain them.

The hand of God is with the group, and the establishment of these philanthropies for the public good requires that an association of the wealthy endow them, and make charitable donations which are inalienable and subject to exploitation in perpetuity...In respect to cooperative companies their profits will be shared, as will the thanks accruing from them. Associations for joint philanthropy are few in our country, in contrast to individual charitable donations and family endowments, which are usually endowed by a single individual.¹³⁰

The establishment of such societies would provide charity and education outside of the state-centered projects. What is interesting about the creation of these associations as opposed to founding larger endowments -- for example those founded by the elite, in particular emirs and beys -- was how the concept of association allowed for the pooling of individual assets through endowment or just basic benevolence through charitable solicitations. The idea of combining agents and/or *awqaf* monies thus was not new to Egypt. But what was unique was the idea of associations of *jam'iyya* in the nineteenth century. It allowed well as men and women from various classes to establish societies in the late-nineteenth century.

¹²⁹ Rifa`a Rafi` Al-Tahtawi, *An Imam in Paris* (London: Saqi Press, 2004) 186.

¹³⁰ Juan Cole, "Al-Tahtawi on Poverty and Welfare," in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts* edited by Michael Bonner, Mine Ener and Amy Singer (Albany : State University of New York Press, 2003), pp. 228-9.

Albert Hourani writing on *jam 'iyya* for the Encyclopedia of Islam (*EII*) discusses how these ballooning societies, of which he cites al-Nadim's Islamic Philanthropic Society as one of the first associations established in Egypt or the Middle East, could be seen as predecessors to the creation of nationalist parties or *ahzab*.¹³¹ These societies since they were promoting a particular world view, whether it was Islamic, anti-imperial, Coptic, or Maronite, were essentially promoting a particular political ideology. Following the foundation of the Alexandrian society of al-Nadim, the Coptic community established a Coptic Benevolent Society, and in 1884 the Maronite community in Cairo established a similar society called the Maronite Benevolent Society.¹³² Of importance is the founding in 1892 of the Islamic Philanthropic Society in Alexandria that has lasted until the present. The society had on its founding board such nationalist figures of importance such as Mustafa Kamel, Mohamed `Abdu and Saad Zaghoul. In 1896 they would found a school in the Moharram Bey district that has lasted until today in its current place.¹³³

The transformation of charity into associations that would benefit the public did not require the establishment necessarily of land or businesses to produce the monies needed to run the society as *awqaf* do. As we saw in the funding of the IPS of al-Nadim in Alexandria, annual dues, individual benevolence, as well as state benevolence would form the foundation of the new societies' funding and organization. "In perpetuity" would be exchanged for the necessity of constant fundraising.

¹³¹ Andri Demeerseman writes that in 1867 Khayr Din al-Tunusi used it to refer to, " academy, scientific association; charitable society; municipal or cantonal organization (*djam 'iyyat al-kāntūn*), agricultural or industrial association; parish, parish council; various groups of teachers, notables, officials, local magistrates, municipal councilors." EI2 entry under Djamiyya, It is possible that he may have read al-Tahtawi.

¹³² DWQ, 0075-008186 . October 27, 1885

¹³³ I would like to thank the staff of the school for being very helpful and patient with me and my questions about the school.

It would also mean that those who funded the association as it evolved over time would play an important part in establishing the trajectory of the society. This appears to be what happened with al-Nadim. As he was not a man of much means, he needed the funding of the Egyptian elite, which would require him most likely to adjust to their whims. Due to an ongoing dispute al-Nadim after a final showing of *al-Watan* in July 1881 at the Zizinia Theater in Raml, had a final falling out with other members of the society and was forced out. Shortly after we stop hearing about the IPS in the newspapers, but we do continue to hear about al-Nadim's speeches and ideas during the 'Urabi revolt with the establishment of *al-Taif* and *al-Tankit wa al-Tabkit*. He may have been forced out of the association, but he was still able to find supporters who would help publish his writings up until his running away in 1882 to evade British capture. Al-Nadim's work at the school ended in 1881 and it appears because there is little mention of the IPS afterwards, which probably means it became defunct during the early period of British rule in Egypt. And what I would like to believe is that the new IPS founded in 1892 was founded with the memory of what al-Nadim began in 1879: the combining of charity to reach the masses attached to a program of popular education that would train students in Arabic, Egyptian history and geography, as well as science and math with a particular Egyptian nationalist tint. With the creation of the *al-Hizb al-watani* (Nationalist Party) the early nationalists would need members who thought of themselves as Egyptian and who understood the past that was being created by the nationalist writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Mass education and the rise of the nation and nationalism have been written about in other places. But what I wanted to concern myself with was how societies, like the IPS and the Coptic Benevolence Association, used charity to provide education in order to promote a particular ideology. Charity has always been used as propaganda. Rulers attempt to assert their closeness to God and their immense wealth through benevolence to the people, but the

use of a philanthropic association in a nationalist cause as with the IPS, was something new. With the focus on Arabic and Egyptian history as well as other courses, like rhetoric, ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, the teacher, used the society’s charity to reach the poor, who are always the majority (population-wise), to mold a specific type of Egyptian citizen. How charitable associations’ beneficence was different than earlier forms of charity is what we will examine next.

How “Giving” is transformed in the 19th Century: The IPS as a Case Study

Societies were a way to disseminate founders’ ideologies and win adherents to their political positions while reinforcing their social positions and the social hierarchy.¹³⁴

Like development organizations today, these charitable associations use their position as charity giver to help with poor relief, coupled with their own program for social change. ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim was able to use his newly acquired class position, as an anti-imperialist and orator, to educate the poor and orphaned. Maybe he identified with these children, but certainly he saw that through education he could mold them in the image he thought appropriate. And by offering the education gratis, he gained an attentive audience who saw him as a figure to look up to and emulate. He hailed from their city, and now he was back, giving them something new, something that had not been an option to him as a youth. It would be through the IPS, a charity in all respects, that al-Nadim would strive to educate these children with a nationalist self image. We have seen in chapter three how al-Nadim employed his newspaper articles in *al-Tijara* to call for funds and to highlight the role played by his generous donors. The act of constant fundraising meant that the monies for the IPS

¹³⁴ Beth Baron, “Islam, Philanthropy, and Political Culture in Interwar Egypt: The Activism of Labiba Ahmad,” in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts* edited by Michael Bonner, Mine Ener and Amy Singer, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), p. 241.

were not guaranteed like in an endowment. As such, the act of giving charity while alive, with direct control, in non-perpetuity, and in hopes of affecting some type of societal change was different and unique for nineteenth century Egypt.

Writing on the benevolence of Labiba Ahmad and her *Jam'iyyat Nadhat al-Sayyidat al-Misriyyat* (Society of Egyptian Ladies' Awakening), Beth Baron examines the role of an elite woman, the development of benevolence and the nature of Egyptian nationalism after the 1919 revolution. Like the revolution of 1881-2, the 1919 Revolution would become a pivotal marker in the history of the nationalist movement in Egypt. Baron brings up how Labiba Ahmad's association for women and others like hers were "precursors to later development agencies," as well as a means for elite Egyptian women to provide social services for those who were in need, while strengthening the nationalist cause. "The emergence of benevolent associations, in Egypt as elsewhere, was intimately connected to the rise of nationalism and the spread of capitalism," writes Baron, thus, begging us as historians to continue to look at these organizations, small and large, for more details of how the nation was formed. Egyptian nationalism was not simply a top-down movement that with one click changed how people conceived themselves within Egypt; rather, it was a gradual process from the bottom-up. And close to the bottom were charities that had been established, usually by elites, or in the case of the Islamic Philanthropic Society, by a man who moved his way up the class capital ladder with his fiery speech and beautiful verse, as well as his anti-imperialist and specifically Islamic nationalist ideology. Al-Nadim is proof of the work that non-elites could do in society.

By working at the bottom of society with charity, al-Nadim and others like the Coptic Benevolence Society and Labiba Ahmad's Society of Egyptian Ladies' Awakening were presenting charity in a theoretical structure that Beth Baron calls the "asymmetry of power

between giver and recipient.”¹³⁵ I will further elaborate on the construct of power that is developed in associations. We understand power to be the use of force either subtly or with physically implementation. In a post-modernist sense of the nation and state, power is the ability to apply discipline through a variety of methods. Looking at charitable endowments (*awqaf*) and their interaction with the recipient versus the interaction of recipient and giver in these modern associations forces us to ask several questions. What is expected from the “giver” to a *waqf* and how does that charity differ from the “giver” to a charitable association? What is the interaction between giver and recipient in a *waqf*? And similarly why is the recipient of the association’s beneficence so much more important than the donor of the charitable funds (the giver)? These power interactions are important to the understanding of these new charities and how associational charity was significant in the non-state movement to shape the youth and, in turn, to shape society. In particular it is connected to how, in the case of the IPS, ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim viewed the poor.

In a *waqf* the giver of funds to sustain the charity has usually bequeathed land or a business towards upkeep of the charity and besides the *waqfiyyah* document, detailing how the endowment is to be ran, there is not a constant day to day interaction with the recipients of the charity. While there are numerous examples of the endowments being used by endowers to circumvent Islamic law on inheritance, the endowment of a *sabil* or hospital was seen as a way to pave a path to heaven in the afterlife and as well to leave a permanent structure showing the owners beneficence. As we discussed earlier in chapter one, the endower was partly thinking of the afterlife when donating. The focus on the afterlife comes from the belief in Islam that if an act of charity is performed, and the benefits of this act can last for a long time and affect many people, than the endower will receive reward from God

¹³⁵ Baron, “Islam, Philanthropy, and Political Culture in Interwar Egypt,” p. 239.

for the charity for as long as it continues to exist on earth. We see little concern here with having influence on the recipient; it is more of a concern for dividing the money as one wanted among family and household and to provide charity for those less fortunate. It was not about changing the recipient into a different person, or even to mold an Egyptian citizen, but rather charity was for the sake of charitable reward in the hereafter. The recipient is left out here, because within the power structure, the poor were a marginalized segment of society on which donors could practice their beneficence in order to procure reward.

In the associational setting of charity there is no single endower and the charity given is usually in the form of singular monetary contributions. We know the IPS collected yearly dues from its members. They also used the newspapers and elites for fundraising. There was no land in the Delta or Upper Egypt that was yielding revenue to be used in the organization; rather, the association was entirely supported by donation. The giver of charitable contributions was giving to a cause or movement, much like today's political contributions to a party one supports. In that sense associational charity was connected to a particular ideological movement or local cause, which is distinctive from how the *waqf* functioned. The giver in this case is not thinking solely about gaining spiritual reward in the hereafter in perpetuity, but wants to affect societal change in the present. Thus, to the recipient the associational charity is much more based on a power dynamic that assumes the one receiving the charity will change for the betterment of himself as well as the nation. The recipient is much more dependent on the charitable association than on the *waqf*, because the association is attempting to affect tangible change and provide an education and benefits that a bread *waqf* or a Qu'ranic school did not attempt. Yes, opening a Qu'ranic school for the poor to attend for free would allow those students who were keen on memorization to finish the Qu'ran and move on to higher studies, leading to a life of religious study and a stable and

respected career as an *'alim* (scholar) or reciter of Qu'ran. But, while it may raise one out of his current station in life it, the *waqf* charity was not attempting to restructure society.

For al-Nadim the poor needed to be taught and reformed whether it was through his charity or through his writings. We get a good idea from his writings about what type of reform al-Nadim wanted. In his newspaper *Al-Ustadh*, he states that his purpose through his work was, "Inviting the various forms of patriotism for country to unite and move forward in the treatment of anything that might save the nation."¹³⁶ Quite literally, the intended goal of the newspaper begun in 1892 was to teach the people of Egypt the correct "ethics and customs" that would lead to a modern Egyptian citizen, whether Muslim or not, but it was particularly with an Islamic tint that the lessons were handed down. How these lessons were to be brought to all the people is not entirely known, seeing that it was disseminated through the print format, but other research suggests that people would have read newspapers aloud to family and those sitting around them, most probably as a form of entertainment or a way of learning.

The goal was to "expand the scope and dissemination of knowledge in cities and villages, to open many schools in the provinces,"¹³⁷ and central to that reform effort was the discussion on the use of colloquial Arabic versus the classic form and the creation of a new Arabic between colloquial and classical. Through the opening of new schools that were outside of the *kuttabs* or Qu'ranic schools systems, the nationalist hoped to reshape how the Egyptians would see themselves. How al-Nadim defines the Egyptian is still uncertain, but one trait that would connect Egyptians to each other was the local colloquial. As in England

¹³⁶ Abd Allah Al-Nadim, *Majallat Al-Ustadh*, ed. Abd al-Mun'im Ibrahim al-Jumay'i (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyah al-‘Ammah lil-Kitab, 1994), p. 13. August 24th 1892.

¹³⁷ "فوسع نطاق المعارف ونشرها في المدن و القرى بفتح كثير من المدارس في المديریات"

‘Abd Allah Al-Nadim, *Majallat Al-Ustadh*, ed. Abd al-Mun'im Ibrahim al-Jumay'i (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyyah al-‘Ammah lil-Kitab, 1994), p. 13; *Al-Ustadh* No. 2, 30th of august 1892, p. 35.

and elsewhere in the West, the school provided the easiest place where one could disseminate nationalist thought.

In his discussion of Rifa‘a al-Tahtawi, Timothy Mitchell, analyzed the definition of education (*tarbiya*) and showed how al-Tahtawi believed that, “There is no way to educate and strengthen something, except by training and drilling it in the performance of its functions, until it can accomplish it with smoothness, speed, and precision.”¹³⁸ This is applicable to al-Nadim and his movement because it was primarily through education that the new Egyptian would be formed.

In one section of *Al-Ustadh*, al-Nadim discusses the various food that the poor and the rich each eat, arguing that “the poor have little variety” of food.¹³⁹ In the same section he enumerates the different foods that those who are poor eat as opposed to the rich. Diet, wealth and consumption of foreign foods are intrinsically tied here, and one wonders if this is part of the reason why the poor are not in the same position as the rich in society. There is also, within the discussion on food, a sense of trying to create an order to food between what is good and Egyptian and what is foreign. Written in al-Nadim’s description of “customs and ethics” is an entire exposition on food that appears to be part of a process of completely ordering life from mores to diet. To delineate the various foods and discuss each one in detail hints at the idea of ordering in the Foucauldian sense, and it also highlights what Iman Farag describes as al-Nadim “denouncing...the adoption of Western standards, and what he sees here in terms of the internalization of inferiority.”¹⁴⁰

From the enumeration of the various types of meat, to the types of vegetables, to the numerous desserts, this is more than an attempt at ethnography by al-Nadim; it is using the

¹³⁸ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) p. 89.

¹³⁹ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p. 51.

¹⁴⁰ Farag, “Private Lives, Public Affairs: The Use of *adab*,” in *Muslim Traditions and Modern Techniques of Power* edited by Armando Salvatore, (Berlin: LIT, 2001), p.104

analysis of the various foods consumed by the rich and poor as a means to create the dichotomization of foreign versus Egyptian cuisine. What al-Nadim is doing in his section of food is categorize what he believes makes up an Egyptian diet as opposed to a foreign diet. Part of the nation building project is the creative imagining of the intricacies that make up the nation, namely dress, music, language, food and finally flag. Does the ordering of food create an order to the new nation? Al-Nadim's goals for the section on the ordering of food could have been numerous, but the careful enumeration begs one to look deeper into what al-Nadim wanted to say by ordering food. It is by the imagining of the nation through education, media, transportation that the nation comes into existence; before that it has no parameters and is a ghost of sorts, waiting to be created by the human imagination. And what should be remembered is that it is an imagining pushing up against influences being brought from outside the indigenous society: the 1882 occupation of Egypt by the British brought with it cultural and societal changes that were seeping into society.

Returning to Timothy Mitchell, he sees that there can be a direct link between the ordering of society as a whole through education. And as many of these associations were active in educating children they were directly related to the new "national" order. Quoting al-Tahtawi, Mitchell says, "The formation of individuals was to be the means to the formation of a 'collective form'."¹⁴¹ In his research on educational theories, it was the "collective form" that Mitchell saw as the linking factor to the creation of the modern nation. And the charitable associations established in the late nineteenth century were linked to a re-ordering into a nation. As we have seen in the discussion of al-Nadim's writings, educating the people on the ordering of something as mundane as food would reorient how individuals saw themselves within society.

¹⁴¹ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, p. 119.

For these associations, the poor were seen as part of this new “collective form” that would shape society, and the beneficence doled out to them by the charities was connected to the transformation of the person into a citizen. This was done primarily through education, and as such, the school of the IPS is an example of a philanthropic society using its power to try and transform students into Egyptian citizens. Through a focus on Arabic language rather than English or French, as well as teaching drama, oratory, Egyptian history and geography, the IPS school geared its syllabus towards the burgeoning nationalist movement.

The beneficence of these associations is coupled with social improvement of society or what Beth Baron calls, “profound social change.”¹⁴² It was an activist form of charity. More than just doing “good” for the reward in the hereafter, one uses one’s place in society as a charitable organization or “giver” to affect change upon their recipients with whom they are able to interact and be in contact with, rather than as in a *waqf*, where the giver gives and the recipient accepts and both go back to their lives.

The Future of Associations and Benevolence in Egypt

Two developments in charity occurred in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. First, these types of associations connected to charity that run orphanages, schools, hospitals, or soup kitchens continued to expand and to increase in number. With that increase in number, a greater political power becomes attached to these organizations ability to provide charity. Secondly, we see the development of the state in the twentieth century taking over charitable duties that most of these associations were already handling. These changes highlight the work that the early charity of ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim inspired. The idea of centralizing public welfare within the state is another topic completely, but what I would like to touch on here is the numerous modern charitable societies of

¹⁴² Baron, “Islam, Philanthropy, and Political Culture in Interwar Egypt,” pp. 239-241.

importance that seem similar in retrospect to the movement of al-Nadim, which may help us to better understand how these more modern associations work.

I find the connection that becomes tangled in charity between doing “good” for good’s sake and political-religious ideology extremely interesting, because ideally they would appear to be separated. It is a common belief in Islam that according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, that the charitable act the left hand should not know what the right hand is giving. The idea is that you yourself should not think on how much to be charitable with but to just give. Yet, you know how much your right hand has given and you know to whom and where the charity is going in these new associations. In these associations there is a keen interest to give for a particular political cause. We see it in the establishment of a charity with the same name as ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim’s Islamic Philanthropic Society in Alexandria in 1892 and the opening of a school with the same name in 1896. The board of this association was filled with nationalists like Mustafa Kamil and Saad Zaghoul. Thus, giving a donation or becoming a member of this association meant that you supported the main ideals for which the society stood and thus were willing to provide your charity to this particular cause. In doing this, one was making a particular political move to support a charity that one believed would support the nationalist cause in Egypt. Rather than hiding your charity from your other hand you were making specific choices in how the charity was made. Thus, associational charity transformed the idea of giving for reward in the afterlife alone by coupling it with reward for helping to improve your temporal society as well.

Later on we see, for example, the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1920s which is connected to this growing Islamic nationalism that elites like Labiba Ahmad probably would have supported. These associations all rely mainly on membership dues of individuals providing charity to the society. Their goals are outwardly to reform society with an Islamic nationalist program. The sociology of charity among organization like the Brotherhood is a

subject for another study, but the connection between charity and its use to attempt to reform society to a particular ideology shows us how one can use charity as a lens not just for early Egyptian nationalism, but for broader political movements. That charity is essential to these groups' survival and that charity allows them access to those who are usually the majority, but who are at the lowest end of the societal hierarchy, makes the act of charity and the associations that use it integral parts of society.

Conclusion

Because of the good (food, money, or education) that charity imparts on the recipient, the poor or the lesser fortunate, charity can be deceptive. On the local level, the charity of giving a penny or a pound to someone on the street carries little significance besides between giver and receiver. It is anonymous and the recipient is not beholden to the giver. But done on a larger scale as I discussed in Chapter Four, charities can be a way to instill values upon the receiver of the charity. This is why I find the opening of charitable associations in late nineteenth-century Egypt so compelling. These charities were in effect using their benevolence to promote a certain type of ideology. As we see from the archival and secondary source evidence on the Islamic Philanthropic Society's (IPS) school, the charity used its funding to educate students in subjects such as Arabic and rhetoric and Egyptian history and to do so in such a way as to inundate students with an Egyptian nationalist ideology.

The importance of the school is highlighted by the fact that many other charitable societies opened similar schools inspired by 'Abd Allah al-Nadim. And a decade after the IPS school closed its doors a new organization with the same name opened up in Alexandria to provide Islamic charity to the people as well as to open schools. Today, that school still stands and the organization, The Islamic Charitable Association, is still active with schools all over the Egyptian nation. The founding members of this society's board were prominent members of the Egyptian nationalist movement. They included such figures as Saad Zaghouel and Mustafa Kamil. It is not that I am saying that al-Nadim's society began a trend or created a new form of institution, but rather that it stands as an example of how charity was changing in the nineteenth century. Al-Nadim's society also suggests how charity and the early Egyptian nationalist cause were connected to one another.

In Chapter One I examined the changing forms of charity in the nineteenth century connecting that to the eventual establishment of charitable associations in the late nineteenth century. And then through the examination of archival and secondary sources in chapter three we were able to see how the charity was used in the school and how the school was ran and what its priorities were in terms of education. Coupled with the British consular document that portrays the importance of the new associations to the nationalist movement in the 1880s we have come to a better understanding of how influential these societies were. With the imperial force of Great Britain aware and talking about the threat these associations produce to foment nationalist uproar we need to take heed and examine the influence these associations had on the early Egyptian nationalist movement of the 1870s and 80s.

We cannot ignore charity or the influence it can have in society on a larger level. What I have attempted to do is to provide a better understanding of how new charitable associations, such as the IPS, in the late nineteenth century operated. I believe that these early examples of charitable associations that were closely connected to the nationalist cause help us better understand how charity was used in various means to help the poor but also to teach them a specific nationalist ideology. In the case of the IPS that ideology was one centered on Arabic language training being an important part what would produce a new citizen of the Egyptian nation in the late nineteenth century. Charity can be passive but it can also be a force that creates and sustains new causes and ideologies. We would be naïve to believe that charity for charity's sake is what is occurring. What we have seen is an organized effort by charitable societies in the nineteenth century to help people while at the same time strengthening their support. While there is definitely an argument that those receiving charity can accept the charity and not feel beholden to the giver, the rise of a number of socio-political organizations through local charity reminds us of how important charity is to the individual and society at large.

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