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**ALI PASHA MUBARAK'S
PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION
& ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE
EMERGENCE OF A MODERN
BUREAUCRACY IN EGYPT**

MARIAM AHMAD SHOUMAN

1999

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THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ARABIC STUDIES

'ALI PASHA MUBARAK'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND
ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE EMERGENCE OF A
MODERN BUREAUCRACY IN EGYPT

BY
MARIAM AHMAD SHOUMAN

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
MIDDLE EASTERN HISTORY

JUNE 1999

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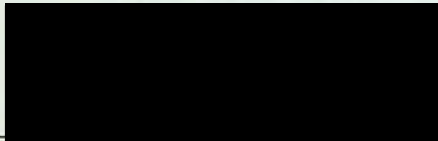
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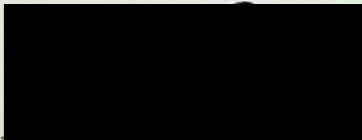
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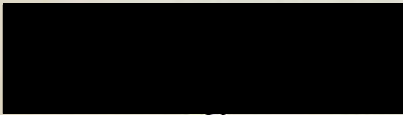
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the men in my life: my late husband, Emad, who lost his struggle with cancer before he could see me complete it; my son Ahmad who paid the price for my long hours of work and study; and my father who never gave up hope that I would eventually finish it. The family and friends who have given me encouragement are innumerable and all deserve to be thanked: those who helped me struggle through the difficult language as I grasped for shades of meaning; those who offered childcare; and especially those whom I could call in the middle of the night to say I was frustrated and wanted to give up; as well as the vast number who offered emotional support. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation for my mother for her unconditional support and confidence. I'd like to thank my employer and dear friend Rania for giving me the leeway I needed to finish this work. Dr. Elizabeth Bishop has been a constant source of support. I sincerely appreciate the effort made by my committee to read and return my thesis promptly with insightful comments. I owe a huge debt to Dr. Michael Reimer for his guidance, patience and understanding of the difficult circumstances I happened to encounter during the course of my work on the thesis. Without his help and direction, I certainly would never have finished.

ABSTRACT

Of

‘ALI PASHA MUBARAK’S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO
AN EMERGENT MODERN BUREAUCRACY

This thesis, entitled “‘Ali Pasha Mubarak’s Philosophy of Education and Its Relationship to an Emergent Modern Bureaucracy,” was completed at the American University of Cairo by Mariam Shouman under supervision by Dr. Michael Reimer. The main focus of the work is an attempt to pinpoint ‘Ali Mubarak’s philosophy of education as presented in his own works, *al-Khitat* and *‘Alam al-Din*. These works have been examined and translated in some detail to reveal indications of this important figure’s perception of the role education should play in individual lives as well as its importance to the bureaucracy at large. While these writings demand a critical eye to determine what is accurate and what is self-laudatory, the passages are interesting in and of themselves because they indicate the rhetoric of the moment. The historical moment which they describe is important because it represents an instance of transition, a pivotal point of change in which a new pedagogical system was formulated and introduced as the primary means of attaining a position in a new expanded bureaucracy.

While the 19th-century, under the sway of Muhammad ‘Ali was in fact a time of transition, the continuities with the past should not be overlooked. While the new educational system differed from the traditional *kuttab* and *madrassa* in terms of curriculum, nature of discipline, pedagogical methods, as well as the professions for which students were prepared for upon completion of study, it is important to remember that the new schools drew upon the old for students and consequently imbibed some of their methods. Memorization, which is often indicated as a feature of traditional education, remained a feature in the modern schools. The goal of moral socialization remained constant even though the pedagogical methods for achieving it changed.

An associated theme examined within the thesis is that of the formation of the modern bureaucracy in which students graduated from the modern schools were to serve. The thesis touches upon Muhammad ‘Ali’s military and associated support structure and focuses upon the role education played within a newly centralized bureaucracy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	
EDUCATIONAL CHANGES IN 19 th -CENTURY EGYPT	7
<i>Kuttab</i> s	
Tutors	
<i>Madrasas</i>	
An alternative system	
Student missions abroad	
Attempts to build an indigenous system of education	
CHAPTER TWO	
'ALI MUBARAK'S ROLE AS A NATIVE BUREAUCRAT	32
Arabicization of the elite	
Biographical detail	
' <i>Alam al-Din</i> : Reflection of biographical details within the novel	
Qualifications for prominence	
The duty to instruct	
CHAPTER THREE	
'ALI MUBARAK AND HIS THEORY OF EDUCATION	48
A modern education	
<i>Al-madrasa al-amiriyya</i>	
<i>Mubarak as a teacher</i>	
Dar al-'Ulum	
CHAPTER FOUR	
THE GROWTH OF MERITOCRACY	65
Emerging bureaucracy	
Conditions and consequences of achieving a government post	
Criteria for success	
New opportunities for native Egyptians	
Other avenues to promotion and wealth	
Native bureaucrats building a self-sufficient nation	
Loss of Support for the Khedive	
Concept of <i>al-watan</i>	
CONCLUSION	83
BIBLIOGRAPHY	86

Introduction

In Egypt, the 19th-century was a period of transition during which most elements of public life were undergoing dramatic changes. A new system of education provided the base for and the manpower to enact the reforms. The driving force behind the creation of this new system of education was Muhammad 'Ali's aspirations regarding the military which he was building and the need for an associated support structure to serve the army.¹ While initially his impulse may have been to rely upon foreign experts and his localized Ottoman elite, eventually it became clear that in order to meet the manpower demands of the structure erected to serve the military he would have to turn to native Egyptians.² The infrastructure which he intended to impose on Egyptian society was built essentially to serve the military and as an afterthought provided services for the rest of the society. Muhammad 'Ali's military played a pivotal role in his plans to carve for himself a position of power within the Ottoman Empire. His military was to provide him with a strong negotiating position from which he aimed to guarantee for himself and his descendents a position in Egypt which exceeded that of a *wali* who could be dismissed or transferred at the whim of the sultan.

The modern military which he intended to form, required extensive support structures which were not available in Egyptian society. Building the structures which would enable him to maintain the

¹Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, his army and the making of modern Egypt*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 12.

²James Heyworth-Dunne, *Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London: Luzac & Co., 1938), 105.

military involved areas as diverse as: medical care for his soldiers; agricultural monopolies to supply the required revenue to support military expenses; an irrigation system to ensure the productivity of agriculture; and a school system which would produce individuals technically qualified to implement and supervise all of these programs.

One of the problems that Muhammad 'Ali encountered in his ambitious plan was the lack of a modern school system. While education in some sense is important to every society, what might be termed a "useful education" is determined by what best fits the needs of current societal demands. The educational system which had served native Egyptians revolved around the *kuttab* which basically offered Qur'anic memorization as its primary program of study. Those who advanced beyond the *kuttab* obtained a technical education through apprenticeship to learn skills or went to a *madrasa* which aimed at producing religiously learned men, men ready to take their places in the old professions of power that had traditionally been open to Egyptian natives, but not prepared for the new opportunities that would emerge in the new bureaucracy.

Muhammad 'Ali began to pursue his interest in building an alternate system in 1809 by sending a handful of students to Europe.³ In 1826, the educational mission program was accelerated and developed to send groups of students, primarily to France, to learn the basic skills required for military purposes.⁴ Upon return to Egypt they were to contribute their efforts to the building of a military machine and the creation of a new indigenous system of education. Not only did these missions aim to help the government gain independence from European experts, they raised within the Egyptian members a hope that they might introduce the benefits of modern education into Egypt. Their influence was destined to affect Egypt profoundly. The 1844 mission was crucial in this respect because it included a long list of native Egyptians, many of whom went on to hold influential positions in the Egyptian government.

'Ali Mubarak (1823/4-1893) was one of the native Egyptians on the 1844 mission and is the focus of this thesis. Mubarak is unique in that he was the first native Egyptian Muslim to hold a ministry level post.⁵ His participation in the mission to France played an important role in his success

³Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 105.

⁴Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 157.

⁵ Robert Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives 1805-1879* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984), 124.

in the Egyptian bureaucracy not only because of the technical education he received, but also because of the personal connections he formed to the future rulers of Egypt and the system of patronage or *intisab*⁶ which was so important in the state hierarchy. Both the clear relationship between Mubarak's education and his future success in the Egyptian bureaucracy as well as theoretical statements reflecting the educational policy which he formulated are demonstrated in his written works.

This thesis will examine two of Mubarak's works in search of biographical detail which reflects upon Mubarak's career as well as evaluative statements which indicate Mubarak's view on a variety of specific topics relating to education. The two large works in question are *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyya al-Jadida li-Misr al-Qahira wa Muduniha wa Biladiha al-Qadima wa al-Shahira* and *'Alam al-Din*. I have chosen these works in particular for several reasons: they are among his most important works; both are rich in observations upon education in a practical and theoretical sense; they represent two very different genres and hence offer a variety of style and approach. Widely recognized as his most important work, *al-Khitat* was published in 1304-5 AH/1888-9 AD. This work in 20 volumes has been described as a topographical encyclopedia⁷ designed to give an account of ancient, medieval, and modern history and topography. In addition to serving as a history of Egypt and, chiefly, Cairo, Mubarak sets out "...to give an account of contemporary Egypt as a record for later generations."⁸ It is in this function, rather than as strict history, that the work is most interesting. *Al-Khitat* is not what we think of as modern critical history, rather it is a vast "compendium of factual data..."⁹ about 19th-century Egyptian society and culture.

Because of Mubarak's unique position in government, he came into contact with a wide cross-section of Egyptian public and administrative life and carefully noted down his observations. The work relies upon official documents, personal observation, oral evidence, and written Arabic and

⁶ Ehud Toledano, *State and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 102. Toledano uses the Turkish transliteration *intisap*.

⁷ Michael J Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness in 'Ali Mubarak's Description of al-Azhar," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 29 (1997), 53.

⁸ Gabriel Baer, "'Ali Mubarak's *Khitat* as a Source for the History of Modern Egypt," in *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, ed. P.M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 13.

⁹ Jack Crabbs, *The Writing of History in Nineteenth-Century Egypt: A Study in National Transformation* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1984), 118.

European sources. *Al-Khitat* has been criticized for its lack of systematic use of evidence, a tendency to be less than painstakingly accurate in reporting details, and omission of important works both in Arabic and languages other than French.¹⁰ The significant contribution made by *al-Khitat* lies in the use of urban title-deeds and *waqf* documents as well as the presentation of oral and observational evidence, not in its reporting of pre-modern Egyptian history.¹¹ The work is organized along the same lines as traditional medieval Arabic topographical encyclopedias in the tradition of al-Maqrizi¹² and consists of sections dealing with various locations, organized alphabetically according to the names of the towns or villages. One important aspect of the work is the inclusion of the biographies of important men associated with various places. In the section on Birinbal al-Jadida, Mubarak's birthplace, his autobiography relates his educational experiences as well as the history of his bureaucratic career. This autobiography is one of the most interesting aspects of the work in terms of the scope of this thesis. While his autobiography often takes on an overtly self-laudatory tone, it not only offers a native critique of the system of education, it also sheds light on the development of a new type of government emerging in Egypt: a modern bureaucracy in which promotion was based at least in part on merit as determined by successful completion of an educational program in the new state schools.

The work *'Alam al-Din*, on the other hand, is a novel published in four volumes in 1882. While it is designated as a novel, the intent of the writer is clearly to offer entertainment with an educational bent. The form that he chooses for his novel is indicative of his purpose. The entirety of the work is organized as *musamaras*—discussions with a pleasant connotation or entertainments. These discussions center around any topic which 'Ali Mubarak felt it would be useful for his readers to know more about. In terms of the author's purpose, the narrative, which describes the travels of the principal characters who are an Englishman, a shaykh, and his son, is really secondary to the discussion of the novelties the main characters encounter. However, from the standpoint of education, the narrative is infinitely interesting. Events revolve around an unnamed Englishman who has set out to research an edition of a work on the Arabic language, the famous *Lisan al-'Arab*. To assist him in his task, he enlists the aid of an Azhari shaykh, 'Alam al-Din, for whom the novel is named. Over the course of the novel, the Englishman, 'Alam al-Din, and his son travel to Alexandria by rail and then by boat to

¹⁰ Baer, *Political and Social Change*, 14.

¹¹ Baer, *Political and Social Change*, 21.

¹² Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness," 53.

Marseilles. The long voyage provides a perfect opportunity for many an entertaining discussion. In addition to these discussions, which are interesting from a pedagogical standpoint because Mubarak utilizes them to inform his readers, the novel addresses directly the issue of education for the young. The shaykh is faced with the critical decision of how his son, Burhan al-Din, will be educated and the Englishman seizes the opportunity to express his views on the proper education to prepare him for a profitable career. In addition to Burhan al-Din who accompanies him on his voyage, 'Alam al-Din must also consider the education of his younger children and his sisters whom he has left at home with his wife. His advice to his wife on how their instruction should be carried out entails a critique of the existing system of education. By covering a wide array of topics and including a range of information, the novel intends to be both entertaining and instructive. Timothy Mitchell characterizes the novel as: "...intended for people's instruction and improvement in unfilled moments of their day (such moments were now visible, and in need of being filled)..."¹³

'Ali Mubarak's written works represent an ideal avenue for exploring the attitudes of a native Egyptian towards the changes occurring within his own society. Mubarak's experience within Muhammad 'Ali's new schools and in Paris shaped his perceptions of his own society and this internalization of what was perceived as a new alternate system is clear in his writings. Mubarak's views are noteworthy because of his long association with the Department of Education, which he directed at various times, and due to his long-term commitment to the younger generation through education on a personal level involving writing textbooks and teaching. These personal experiences helped to develop what can be termed his educational philosophy.

In this thesis, I will look at Mubarak's views on corporal punishment, language learning, education in the *kuttab*, teacher training, and the importance of observation and inspection as well as the appropriate physical environment for an effective education. In addition to looking at the aspects of the system which represented a departure from the existing system of education such as new curriculum and concern for personal habits, my examination of 'Ali Mubarak's works helps to reveal

¹³Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 63.

the extent to which the new system was in fact shaped by the previous educational system and represents a hybrid which drew from the old system to meet new societal demands.¹⁴

Mubarak was not the only native Egyptian to play a definitive role in the development of a new system of education. His career parallels that of Rifa'a al-Tahtawi who played a significant role in the development of education and the propagation of western ideas through his work with the Bureau of Translation. While al-Tahtawi's influence was unquestionably important, in this thesis I will only touch upon his work in relation to that of 'Ali Mubarak.

The role of 'Ali Mubarak as one of the first native bureaucrats to hold high office in 19th-century Egypt will be examined along with the growth of the modern bureaucracy which began to include some elements of a meritocracy. Throughout the work, I will use Arabic transliterations because I have relied upon Arabic sources;¹⁵ this choice may not accurately reflect the Ottoman identity of Muhammad 'Ali and his elite, but is consistent with the process of Arabicization occurring during Mubarak's lifetime. The translations of excerpts from 'Ali Mubarak's two major works included in the thesis are original. While excerpts from *al-Khitat* have been translated in other works, *'Alam al-Din* has not received as much attention and consequently, many of the translations most likely appear here for the first time.

By examining the two works for philosophical statements of the purpose of education and the practicalities of how Mubarak intended to accomplish his goals, this thesis adds to our knowledge of the long-term development of education in Egypt and the consequent formation of modern Egyptian values.

¹⁴Kenneth Cuno, *The Pasha's Peasants: Land, Society, and Economy in Lower Egypt, 1740-1858* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Cuno addresses the issue of drawing too fine a line between Muhammad 'Ali's policies and those existing prior to his reign in terms of land tenure.

¹⁵ Transliterations are according to the *IJMES* system.

Chapter One

Educational Changes in 19th-Century Egypt

Muhammad 'Ali seized control of Egypt in the period after the French occupation (1798-1801). This period following the French evacuation (1801) has been characterized as a time of "complete breakdown of law and order."¹⁶ With the Mamluk leaders suffering from the defeats they had experienced at the hands of the French combined with the divisive rivalries that had characterized the Mamluk government before the French invasion, the power structure of the country was vulnerable to interference from abroad. The Ottoman sultan perceived this vulnerability as an opportunity to re-establish Ottoman control; however, according to Fahmy, three factors hindered Ottoman success: 1) British assistance to Mamluk leaders; 2) the lack of discipline that characterized the Janissary troops; 3) the unruly Albanian contingent that accompanied the troops of Husayn Pasha, grand admiral of the Ottoman navy.¹⁷ This Albanian contingent provided Muhammad 'Ali with the opportunity he required to gain power in Egypt. 'By a shrewd manipulation of the Albanian force and an opportunistic alliance with the Mamluks, he was able to defeat the appointed Ottoman *wali* and, the *wali*'s successor. Once he no longer needed the Mamluks, Muhammad 'Ali capitalized upon their old divisiveness and enlisted 'ulama' support against the Mamluks. The support of the 'ulama' was vital in legitimizing his power.¹⁸

¹⁶Khaled Fahmy, "The era of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, 1805-1848," *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, ed. M.W. Daly (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 140.

¹⁷Fahmy, *Cambridge History*, 142.

¹⁸Ehud Toledano, "Muhammad 'Ali Pasha" *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2nd ed. (London, Brill Leiden: 1960-1995), 423.

With Muhammad 'Ali's position of power unassailable, the sultan recognized him as *wali* of Egypt.¹⁹ Using the same techniques of forging alliances and then undermining his allies, Muhammad 'Ali was able to contain the power of the 'ulama' as well. 'Umar Makram was one of the members of the 'ulama' who was dispatched once he appeared to pose a threat, on account of his protest against Muhammad 'Ali's taxation of *waqf* land. One writer describes the technique used to eliminate the threat posed by Makram and undermine the 'ulama' at the same time: "Splitting 'ulama' ranks by threat and temptation, he managed to isolate 'Umar Makram and, finally exiled him."²⁰

This historical detail illuminates Muhammad 'Ali's primary goals: the centralization of power in an autonomous state and, beginning in 1820, the building of an unchallengeable military force to insure his position of authority.²¹ The Mamluk rulers, from whom he had assumed control, had been too internally divided²² to make fundamental changes in the state apparatus. Muhammad 'Ali, on the other hand, aimed at an increasingly bureaucratic and "interventionist" state. In other words, while there are important continuities between Muhammad 'Ali's policies and those of earlier regimes, his most important break with the past constituted an increased level of state interference in the structure and workings of society. The primary goal of this interventionism was to establish his military and provide all the necessary services and provisions for it, an aim to which all else was secondary. Muhammad 'Ali's policies had an effect on most aspects of public life. Land ownership, marketing of goods, bureaucratic structure, higher education, medical care, and, most importantly, the military and the accompanying issues of conscription and officer training all fell squarely within the auspices of the new interventionist state.²³

¹⁹ Fahmy, *Cambridge History*, 143-144.

²⁰ Toledano, *ET*, 424.

²¹ Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 9.

²² Fahmy, *Cambridge History*, 143.

²³ Cuno, *The Pasha's Peasants*, 48-54. While Muhammad 'Ali has often been presented as a reformer who made a sharp break from the past, in recent years, historians like Kenneth Cuno have taken issue with this representation and tried to indicate the continuities present between the 18th and 19th century. Cuno has challenged the common assumption that the Egyptian agricultural community went from a subsistence economy where there was little contact between villages or between village and town

Muhammad 'Ali's primary goal to which everything in his administration was secondary was the formation of a modern army. In the early 1820s, in the second decade of his reign, Muhammad 'Ali had managed to "organize the economy of the province of Egypt and to reap its considerable potential wealth" unlike any of the Ottoman governors who had preceded him.²⁴ With the economy in hand, he was set to start the process of conscription. This conscripted army has often been idealized as part of the first stirrings of nationalism because it allowed native Egyptians to bear arms for Egypt for the first time in centuries.²⁵ Khaled Fahmy, in his recent study of the Egyptian army from the point of view of the conscript, takes issue with this characterization of Muhammad 'Ali's reign and the associated assumptions that 1) the conscripts felt that they were waging patriotic war for the sake of their homeland; 2) Muhammad 'Ali's military was sabotaged by British intervention; 3) the Ottomans were perceived as the enemy.²⁶ In fact, Fahmy points out, the *fellahin* who were presumably in the throes of nationalistic passion were actually conscripted through force, completely against their will. Fahmy argues that the discourse of nationalism did in fact enter the Egyptian scene in tandem with the erection of the modern military, but this discourse arose through a process of education that imparted a particular message "...that fighting for Mehmed Ali and his family was tantamount to giving one's life for the sake of the "nation," a nation that was now thought to have always already existed and which, moreover, demanded the sacrifices of its own citizens."²⁷ This discourse of nationalism was to be brought into being through the processes of coercion and discipline. On the point of British intervention, Fahmy takes issue with those who blame the British for the eventual failure of the military and the rest of Muhammad 'Ali's institutions. While Fahmy does not deny that British intervention played a role in curbing Muhammad 'Ali's policies when those policies directly threatened British possessions or communication lines, the internal flaws of his institutions cannot be overlooked.²⁸ Consideration of the Ottoman Empire as the enemy is a direct contradiction of the essentially Ottoman

because each village produced what they needed and no more, to a market economy producing cash crops and relying upon urban credit and investment.

²⁴ Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 10-11.

²⁵ Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 12.

²⁶ Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 17.

²⁷ Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 19.

²⁸ Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 22.

character of Muhammad 'Ali and his elite. In fact, according to Fahmy, initially Muhammad 'Ali wanted to establish his own power base by conquering surrounding lands, while remaining in the good graces of the Ottoman sultan.²⁹

The idea of forming an army based upon conscription was not the initial manifestation of Muhammad 'Ali's plans for military greatness. He began to build his army using slaves captured in the Sudan but when casualties rose high both in his slave-gathering forces and in the slaves as they made their way to Cairo, it became clear that this policy would not succeed. Instead, Muhammad 'Ali turned his attention to the native Egyptian *fellah* in 1822. At first conscription was to be limited in terms of time spent within the military and the number of Egyptians who were to be inducted into the army. These Egyptians were to enjoy the accompanying benefit of exemption from the head tax once they returned to their villages. The process of conscription soon degenerated into a forcible seizure of men who were inducted for an unlimited period of time. To exempt themselves from conscription, many of the *fellah* resorted to desertion of villages, open rebellion and then self mutilation in the hopes that they would be declared medically unfit.³⁰

The principal source of Egypt's wealth was its land. Muhammad 'Ali's reforms in the area of land ownership and rural economy were directed at seizure of control of this economy. Consequently his policies aimed at joining the local economy to the world market through his monopoly system on major crops which helped him control and maximize the revenue arising from the land.³¹ The result of Muhammad 'Ali's land policy was the introduction of a new discipline in the countryside, new measures of control which would put revenues squarely into his hands. In an effort to more effectively control revenues, after a cadastral survey to gather precise information, he abolished the *iltizam* or tax farming system in 1813-14 and brought much of the *waqf* land under government taxation. By ensuring security and investing in the irrigation system, combined with government assignment of *ib'adiyya* land (land that was not currently under cultivation) to rural notables and others with the revenue to spend upon bringing it under cultivation, Muhammad 'Ali took steps to increase his control over the countryside and promote export-oriented agriculture to meet his need for revenues.³²

²⁹Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 25

³⁰Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 100-102.

³¹Cuno, *The Pasha's Peasants*, 2.

³²Cuno, *The Pasha's Peasants*, 112.

The new army called for industrial products, as well, which Muhammad 'Ali set out to produce locally. The first of these products was munitions, beginning in 1815. Textile factories to produce uniforms for his army were next on the agenda. In 1816, the first textile factory was established using machines and skilled workers imported from abroad while he put pressure on workshops to close so that craftsmen would go to work in his new factory. Subsequently, village production came under scrutiny and officials purchased all cloth and thread manufactured in the village. The cloth was sold at a profit to merchants and the thread was used in the new factories. The policy of stamping government-produced cloth facilitated punishment of those who had cloth from other sources.³³ In tandem, sugar refineries, indigo factories, rice mills and tanneries were established and encouraged through government activity. This, which has been called Muhammad 'Ali's industrial experiment, was unprecedented for Egypt.³⁴

The bureaucratic structure which Muhammad 'Ali erected was perhaps the single most important tool for establishing control over society so that he could utilize every resource of the society to forge a strong military. His elaboration of bureaucratic forms resulted in the division of Egypt into subdistricts, districts, departments and provinces, each with associated appointed officials to oversee them. These institutions linked every geographical part of Egypt to Cairo in a centralized administrative structure.³⁵ The officials responsible for administering the structure represented centralized power and took direct roles in punishing offenses and inspecting land and factories. On a central level, the government was divided into executive departments in order to better distribute responsibility and avoid an overload on Muhammad 'Ali's central *diwans*. In 1837, he instituted six new departments: Finance, War, Marine, Industry, Foreign Affairs, and Education.³⁶ After his death, his successors created a series of other departments: al-Awqaf in 1851 (underwent significant changes in 1863); Interior (1857); Public Works (1864); Justice (1872); and Agriculture (1875).³⁷ While it was Muhammad 'Ali that began creating these executive departments, their full assumption of

³³ Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914*, (London: Methuen & Co., 1981), 69.

³⁴ Toledano, *ET*², 425.

³⁵ Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives*, 18.

³⁶ Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives*, 21.

³⁷ Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives*, 46.

responsibility and power occurred under his successors; the departments underwent a period of growth in the 1860s which was accompanied by an increased demand for new officials to staff them. In large part, these new officials were to come directly from another one of Muhammad 'Ali's programs: education.

Education was of importance to Muhammad 'Ali because on a large scale, it allowed him to supply both his military and his bureaucracy with the technically trained officials needed to support and guide both institutions, and on a personal level, education brought discipline and control to the individual student's life. Muhammad 'Ali's system of schooling began from the top down. Initially he established secondary and military schools. One of the earliest military schools, *Madrasat al-Jihadiyya* was established in Bulaq in 1825 which was eventually transferred to Abu Zabal in 1836. In 1842, a "staff college" was established to train officers. A school of veterinary medicine was founded in 1827 in response to an epidemic that wiped out a large percentage of livestock. In 1831, an artillery school was opened in Tura and students were drawn from Qasr al-'Aini School. A school for training naval officers was founded in 1825. The School of Engineering, called the Polytechnique, had its roots in one of the earliest schools, *Dar al-Handasa*, which was located in the Citadel beginning in approximately 1820, and was then transferred to Bulaq. A school of translation was founded in 1836 which was later renamed the School of Languages.³⁸ This School of Languages with its bureau of translation was to play an integral part in the Arabicization of education in that it was responsible for translating European works into Arabic and preparing them for publication on the new printing presses.³⁹ Graduates of the military schools were to serve as officers in the new military and graduates of the other schools were to contribute to the support structure associated with the military.

One of the most important services needed to maintain a well-run military was efficient and well-trained medical care. The establishment of the medical school in 1827 was a direct response to the alarming death toll among troops and a result of Dr. Antoine Clot's observation that 50 European physicians and pharmacists had no chance of maintaining the health of an army numbering 150,000.⁴⁰ As a solution, the medical school was founded and drew its students from native Egyptians from al-Azhar. Medical students were conscripted into a service organization tied to the military. These

³⁸ For dating of the foundation of the various schools, see Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 107-152.

³⁹ Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, 72.

⁴⁰ Kuhnke, *Lives at Risk*, 32.

students of the Egyptian medical school were never to assume the title of doctor, however, and were to be considered instead as senior health officers as well as receiving a fraction of the salary awarded to European medical officers. The medical school and subsequent medical services were closely tied to the military as demonstrated by the locations of major hospitals near the training camps. The close link between army camps and hospitals is demonstrated by the transfer of the military hospital at Abu Zabal to Qasr al-Aini which was concurrent with the evacuation of the army training camp at Abu Zabal in connection with the Syrian campaign.⁴¹ Two medically-related programs that sought to protect the military by virtue of protecting the whole of the population were the smallpox vaccination program (starting in 1819) and the policy of quarantines against contagious diseases such as cholera and the plague.⁴²

Although Muhammad 'Ali had a penchant for rhetoric that he was aiding the general public and promoting the cause of civilization, most of his reforms benefited the average Egyptian incidentally if at all. One example of his eloquent claim to be pursuing lofty goals can be found in his order to carry out the census where he states: "It is self-evident that among the causes of the progress and civilization of other nations is the precise enumeration of their people..."⁴³ Justifying government intervention in previously untouched areas of people's lives with a call to emulate more "civilized" nations would play a part in what was perhaps the easiest reform of Muhammad 'Ali to idealize: education. Prior to Muhammad 'Ali's reforms, the only available education in Egypt was based on the traditional *kuttab* and *madrassa* system. Building the modern nation-state required persons who were educated in a certain fashion and ready to accept new ideas and new information. These new pedagogical methods were to be adopted from those more "civilized" nations. The *kuttab* alone had little hope of turning out individuals prepared to play a role in the bureaucracy Muhammad 'Ali envisioned. However, it is significant to note that while the *kuttab* and *madrassa* alone did not meet Muhammad 'Ali's need for educated men, he was forced, especially in the beginning, to draw upon boys and young men from the very educational system he found so outmoded to feed his new schools. In fact this dependence upon the existing educational system extended to the new medical school which

⁴¹ Kuhnke, *Lives at Risk*, 34-41.

⁴² Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men*, 209.

⁴³ Kenneth M. Cuno and Michael J. Reimer, "The Census Registers of Nineteenth-century Egypt: a New Source for Social Historians," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (1997), 24(2), 213.

initially drew its candidates not from Muhammad 'Ali's model schools, but from al-Azhar, the highest level in the existing educational system.⁴⁴ 'Ali Mubarak, one of the first native Egyptians to reach a high administrative position in the modern period and an instrumental figure in educational reform, began his education in a *kuttab* and gained admittance to Qasr al 'Aini school only as a result of his success at a *kuttab*.⁴⁵

The 19th-century represented a period of transition in the educational system of Egypt. New demands for individuals trained to assume positions within a variety of fields ranging from bureaucratic office to military posts to the medical profession stimulated the creation of the new system of higher schools. To feed these higher schools, Muhammad 'Ali created model schools to provide elementary education. While the traditional system of education did not disappear, the new system grew in importance. Until the appearance of this new system, traditional education represented by the *kuttab* and *madrasa*, private tutoring, and apprenticeships, served as the training ground for Egypt's youth and prepared them for the careers that were open to native Egyptians. Even once the new system appeared the old system was instrumental in feeding the new schools with the brightest students that they had to offer.

A look at the old system is instrumental in understanding what is meant when one characterizes the new system as "modern." Understanding what the old system consisted of and how it formed the character of youth enrolled in it is also vital to grasping 'Ali Mubarak's education philosophy. His early days, as related in his biography in *al-Khitat*, were spent in the traditional system and when he found himself dissatisfied with it and began to look for other avenues leading to material success, he found Muhammad 'Ali's new system to hold the most promise. The new system served him well in that it contributed significantly to his career. His experience with the traditional system led him to emphasize what was negative in the old system, as revealed in his critique of traditional schooling in *'Alam al-Din*.

⁴⁴ LaVerne Kuhnke, *Lives at Risk: Public Health in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*, (Berkeley, University of California Press: 1990), 34.

⁴⁵ 'Ali Mubarak, *al-Khitat al-Tavfiqiyya al-Jadida li-Misr al-Qahirah wa Muduniha wa Biladiha al-Qadima wa al-Shahira*, (1304-5 AH; reprint, Bulaq, 1993) 111-113. All page numbers refer to the second edition.

*Kuttab*s

The institution of the *kuttab* has a long history and is inherently linked to the importance of a religious education among members of the Muslim intellectual elite. The Islamic respect for the revealed word represented by the Qur'an meant that one of the fundamentals of conscientious religious practice was accurate recitation of Qur'anic passages. As the revelation of the Qur'an is considered the primary focus of Islam, each word of it is treasured. Hence, the earliest curriculum at the *kuttab*s aimed at accurate recitation and memorization of the Qur'an.

A quote from the shaykh in '*Alam al-Din* indicates the importance laid upon the careful attention to the instruction of one's children and reflects what is essentially a religious rationale for the importance of education:

One of the most important things to mankind is what he spends to educate his children... and you know that our children are the products of our hearts and the support of our backs. We are to them like an umbrella protecting them from the sun.... If they get angry, pacify them. If they ask for anything, give them what they ask for. If they don't ask, you should offer. Don't look at them angrily because they will get hurt and wish for your death. Good rearing will make their conditions improve and make their position among people rise. No doubt you love to show them God's blessings so you get for them what they desire as far as clothing and food.... treat them kindly and ask their partnership in word and action and follow a gradual path, they will learn what you teach them of religion and as they grow older they grow stronger and their minds become more active. As they grow to adulthood, bad influences won't have any effect on their minds; and their beliefs will become permanent and their convictions correct. If they learn in youth good character and behavior, people will love them.... Because of their good reputation and good intentions, God will flood them with blessings and send them with those whom He has blessed to Paradise.⁴⁶

From a religious standpoint, moral education was imperative in the socialization process and one of the fundamental duties of parenthood. Good character and behavior were the primary goals and the means for achieving them lay in religious instruction for which Qur'anic memorization was the base. In addition to Qur'anic instruction, pupils in the *kuttab* may have had some instruction in other disciplines including arithmetic, the Arabic language, and sometimes poetry. The course of study is often said to have lasted two to three years. Writing was not generally part of the curriculum. Edward

⁴⁶ Ali Mubarak, '*Alam al Din*, (1882; reprint, *al-Hayah al-Misriyah al-Ammah lil-Kitab*, Cairo, 1993) pg. 223-224.

Lane observed that *kuttab*s were to be found in most sizeable villages. Those who aspired to an academic career were destined for al-Azhar or one of the other *madrasas*.⁴⁷

The lack of literacy training within the *kuttab* was a weakness in meeting the demands of the new bureaucracy, however it had not prevented the *kuttab* of accomplishing its goals of teaching the basic religious tenets and promoting a common value system. The *kuttab* played an important role in socializing Egyptian youth. While they may not have provided the most useful education in terms of preparing young men for careers in the growing bureaucracy, *kuttab*s had long met the basic demands of an elementary education for the society within which they prospered and played an important role in the experience of most Egyptian youth. These traditional institutions also initially provided the young men needed for Muhammad 'Ali's model schools.

Heyworth-Dunne mentions the frequent absence of any sort of book within the *kuttab* setting – even the Qur'an: "The boys used a kind of tablet for writing out the alphabet; the master may have had a copy of the Kor'an, but as copies of the holy text were in manuscript form and consequently expensive, and the method was one of memorising, most *kuttab*s in all probability did not possess a copy."⁴⁸ The fact that the expense of a copy of the Qur'an may have prohibited each *kuttab* teacher from having one indicates the lack of organized public financial support for education. Muhammad 'Ali not only brought new ideas to the education system – he also had a willingness to spend generous amounts of money upon the system because he considered it an investment in his military. This had not been the case with the *kuttab* since each was locally based and locally funded. This dependence upon local communities for facilities goes a long way toward explaining the want of amenities and the often-deficient physical surroundings provided for use as a *kuttab*. *Kuttab*s, as fundamentally local endeavors, lacked any system of supervision or inspection, which would have encouraged them to maintain uniform standards.

For a first hand account of the traditional system of education in Egypt during the 19th-century, 'Ali Mubarak's writings are invaluable. While his descriptions inevitably reflect his personal agenda of promoting modern education, they represent a native critique of traditional institutions. He personally spent his early years in traditional education and only through persistence combined with

⁴⁷Lane, 66-67. Lane notes that sometimes a *faqih* might be illiterate, utilizing a monitor for any tasks involving reading, on the pretext of being poor sighted.

⁴⁸Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 4.

accidents of fate and new opportunities, was able to enroll in Muhammad 'Ali's new schools. One writer notes, "The early period of Mubarak's life portrays the state of education in Egypt prior to the establishment of a system of modern schools."⁴⁹ Mubarak's personal investment in the new system of education and harsh criticism of the old system is apparent throughout his works and is a factor to consider when one is determining the accuracy of his observations. In fact, it is interesting to note that Mubarak's own accounts bear much resemblance to Edward Lane who documented his observations of life in Egypt in 1833-35.

Mubarak began his education in the village of Birinbal al-Jadida, where he was born. When he describes his early experiences with education, he always mentions physical punishment.⁵⁰ Mubarak's personal experience probably contributed to the following passage from his novel *'Alam al Din*. The passage is taken from a letter which the shaykh wrote to his wife while travelling and details what he hopes his wife will do to educate his children and his sisters:

It is better not to send them to the *kuttab*. It is better to raise them under your supervision so you can observe their movements, silences and behavior. I am worried about their contact with other children, because it may make them engage in undesirable behavior. It will harm them when they grow up. Because they are now in their years of growth, we should protect them from what we don't want them to do. If you choose a place at home for them which is clean from dirt, dust and garbage, and furnish it with mats or some furniture, it is better than to send them to the *kuttab* where their clothes will get dirty, they will sit on the floor and become infested with lice. At the *kuttab*, they may become ill and get scabies.⁵¹

Clearly, the physical circumstances under which the pupils studied their lessons were less than ideal from Mubarak's point of view which, in consideration of his personal investment in the modern system, is not surprising. Taking into account the fact that *faqih*s were in general poorly paid and of low social status, it is not surprising that a private home would be better maintained than a *kuttab*.⁵² In fact many well-to-do Egyptian parents did just what the shaykh was suggesting and obtained private

⁴⁹Suzanne Sidhom, *'Ali Mubarak: The Man and His Achievements*, thesis, AUC, 1974, 3.

⁵⁰*'Alam al-Din*, 108.

⁵¹*'Alam al Din*, 222.

⁵² Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 3. Heyworth-Dunne notes that a *faqih* was rewarded for his pupil's successful memorization of the Qur'an with items of clothing including a turban and a pair of shoes.

tutors for their children⁵³ and it would not be surprising if one of the reasons was that they were able to preserve a better standard of hygiene. Mubarak's mention of disease, scabies in particular, rings a biographical note because during his time at Qasr al-'Aini School (one of Muhammad 'Ali's model schools) he was hospitalized with a case of scabies that caused him to fear for his life.⁵⁴

The miasmatic theory of disease prevalent in Europe,⁵⁵ had had its effect on Mubarak who consequently found the settings of the *kuttab* distasteful. For Mubarak, the *kuttab* was an ill-kempt, cramped, poorly furnished, disease-ridden place where students were likely to suffer more harm than good. According to Kuhnke, this theory, which attributed disease to exposure to noxious fumes, led the way toward a new emphasis in the western world upon sanitation and the importance of air and light in one's personal environment. In the new schools, a premium would be placed upon personal hygiene as well as the cleanliness of the school environs. Mubarak's experiences in Europe obviously influenced the priority he gave to public hygiene: "Streets and schools were built as the expression and achievement of an intellectual orderliness, a social tidiness, a physical cleanliness, that was coming to be considered the country's fundamental political requirement."⁵⁶

In addition to a concern for cleanliness, the shaykh in *'Alam al-Din* expresses concern for the social environment in which his children would be placed, fearing for their manners:

Some of the instructors [*mu'addibin*] have bad habits which we don't want our children to learn; the least of which is to insult their parents and tell lies and use bad words, repeating them all day. Since the child is with them, he will learn [the instructor's behavior] and it will harm his perceptions and his mind. To this day, I remember how my instructor [*mu'addib*] forced me to bring things from home and obtain them in a dishonest way. If I didn't bring what he wanted or brought less than he asked for, he would beat me.⁵⁷

The use of the term *mu'addib* is interesting here because the term strictly means disciplinarian, coming from the root word *adab* or manners. In this case, the parent fears the very figure who is supposed to discipline his children. This expression of concern for what the children

⁵³Lane, *Manners*, 68.

⁵⁴*al-Khitat*, 113.

⁵⁵Kuhnke, *Lives*, 3.

⁵⁶Mitchell, *Colonising*, 63.

⁵⁷*'Alam al-Din*, 222.

might learn from their instructor indirectly paints a picture of the behavior of the instructor himself. In addition to using physical penalties to punish wrongs, which seems to have been an expected part of his role as disciplinarian, he is said to use corporal punishment to coerce his pupils into dishonest behavior. Mubarak's account of his own experience with *faqihs* with whom he studied is replete with accounts of corporal punishment.⁵⁸ The picture Mubarak paints of the *mu'addib* is one of personal power. In the relationship between student and *mu'addib*, no intermediary existed other than the parent, no overarching structure interfered as was to be the case once the state became involved in establishing and supervising educational institutions.

Another common complaint raised against *faqihs* was that they used their pupils for menial labor. Perhaps this was their way of compensating themselves for their low salaries:

Sometimes he would treat us like servants. Some of us went to work for his wife and filled her water jar [*zir*], swept her house and shook out her mats. Others worked as servants for him and prepared his food, filled the fountain [*sabil*] and poured the water for his ablutions, pounded his snuff and collected date pits from the market and others brought corn cobs for making coffee... You know, the child because of his lack of mature intellect doesn't know what is beneficial for him - he wants to play so he prefers serving to learning. Many children can be enrolled for many years without gain. If a child learns anything it may harm him more than benefit him. During his education he may gain bad habits and they may become ingrained in his manner. It would be difficult for his family to change him and these habits will remain with him for the rest of his life. So, I beg you, don't send the children to the *kuttab*.⁵⁹

It is interesting that Mubarak uses the voice of the shaykh in '*Alam al-Din*, the representative of traditional education, to speak so strongly against the *kuttab*; and that he speaks against the institution not from the point of view of one who has been convinced by his friend the Englishman, rather he speaks from his own negative experiences within the *kuttab*. Perhaps this reflects the difference between the *kuttab*, which was the elementary level of education offered to most Egyptians, and al-Azhar, an elite institution for those dedicated to making learning and teaching their lives' work.

⁵⁸ *al-Khitat*, 107.

⁵⁹ '*Alam al-Din*, 222-223.

Tutors

While *kuttab* teachers educated their pupils in public establishments, private tutors such as the shaykh had suggested for his children in the previous passage instructed students in their own homes and played an important role in education.

However, Mubarak criticizes this practice of tutoring one's own son, a practice in conflict with the modern education which he was promoting, using the voice of the Englishman in '*Alam al-Din*:

If you keep him by your side, you are not sure you will live to finish his instruction. If you die before [completing your task], what will he do? What will his situation be? Who will take care of him when he is bereft of knowledge and richness of understanding? And you will be responsible for that negligence. Is your love for him a reason to condemn him to the worst of states and the harshest work?⁶⁰

By relying on one's own resources to educate his son, a father limits his offspring in many ways. Not only is the son completely dependent upon the father for instruction, he is limited to learning what his father knows. The argument as to what would happen to the son if the father died before his instruction was complete is interesting because it amounts to an endorsement of the idea of depending upon an institution rather than an individual for education. An institution does not depend upon any single individual and will presumably continue to function even if it loses one or many of its supporting staff. A personal relationship, on the other hand, has the potential to disintegrate for a variety of reasons, among them death and disputes.

If depending upon a parent for one's education was problematic, Mubarak presented the idea of having a tutor, who was outside the control of an over-arching system, as even worse:

If you get a *mu'addib* you will not know if he is fit to rear him or not. The external is not always indicative of the internal. He may be a good teacher or *'ilm* [learned man] but not upright in character. If this is the case, it will be transferred to your son. The *mu'addib* will be more harm than good for your son. In addition, the *mu'addibs* do not pursue a particular teaching method that is widely agreed upon to achieve results. They use different methods for undeterminable reasons: whether it is for the benefit of the students or for their own benefit or to show off or to appear cleverer in hopes of an increase in salary is unclear.⁶¹

⁶⁰ '*Alam al-Din*, 238.

⁶¹ '*Alam al-Din*, 238.

In addition to the chance that the *mu'addib* will possess a flawed character, his lack of effective pedagogical methods prevents one from having confidence in him. In the succeeding passage, the Englishman goes on to contrast the education gained from a *mu'addib* with that earned in one of the model schools, which will be discussed later.

In addition to his time in a *kuttab*, 'Ali Mubarak had personal experience being tutored. His father had chosen for him the traditional family career of being the *imam* at the mosque and had arranged accordingly for the appropriate education. While Mubarak's father had initially taken a role in his son's education, when he found himself busy with his own profession, he sent his son to a tutor named Abu 'Asr and then later to Shaykh Ahmad Abu Khadr in the village of al-Kurdi. These two men were to teach him reading, writing, prayer and Qur'anic recitation.⁶² Mubarak's experience with his tutor, which will be discussed in further detail in a later chapter, was far from pleasant and was one of the factors which set him on his way to looking for a different type of education. He describes his experience with one of his tutors in the following passage:

Because he hit me so much, I left him and refused to go back to him. I started to read with my father but he was busy with his own pursuits and was preoccupied so I used to play, and in my carelessness forgot what I had learned. My father worried about my education and started to force me to go to the teacher. I was not content and intended to escape if he didn't leave me alone.⁶³

Mubarak's father was trapped in the dilemma of turning his son over to an abusive tutor or accepting responsibility for his education himself. Because his own employment prevented him from being able to assume the role of educator, he had to send Mubarak back to his tutor. 'Ali Mubarak's relationship with his tutors was stormy at best. Later in *al-Khitat* he describes how he fled from his tutor and consequently from his family after a particularly abusive incident that occurred when he and his tutor traveled to another village:

....once he asked me in front of the headmaster and an attending group what one multiplied by one was and I answered, "Two." He struck me with a coffee roasting pan and injured my head. The group castigated him. I went to my father and complained to him. I received no sympathy from him [his father], only injury. It was during the celebration of Sayyid Ahmad al-Badawi. In the middle of the crowd, I escaped and fled in the direction of al-Matariyya.⁶⁴

⁶²Sidhom, *'Ali Mubarak*, 5.

⁶³*al-Khitat*, 107.

⁶⁴*al-Khitat*, 107.

After this incident, Mubarak intended to go stay with his mother's sister in another village, however, along the way, he became ill and a stranger took him in and nursed him for 40 days until he returned to health. Mubarak reports that when his benefactor asked him about his family, he replied that he was an orphan without any family. If this account is accurate, it indicates the degree to which he dreaded returning to his tutor.

In *'Alam al-Din*, the shaykh is still influenced by traditional knowledge, and consequently emphasizes religious knowledge of the kind Mubarak's father was trying to provide for him. In the following passage, he gives his wife advice on what sort of tutor to choose for his children and sisters:

If you choose a disciplinarian for the children, look for someone of perfect character: knowledge of *fiqh*, reserved, calm, and quite knowledgeable in arithmetic and in the language and literature of the Arabs and strong in his beliefs. ... He should have knowledge of the history of the Prophet and his *hadiths*.⁶⁵

Along with the more common topics of study including the Qur'an, *hadith*, Arabic language and literature, *'Alam al-Din* desires a tutor versed in arithmetic. The basics of arithmetic were sometimes included in the curriculum of the *kuttab* and consequently it would not be remarkable for a private tutor to instruct his charges in them. This description of the desired characteristics of a tutor reflects a recognition that whatever impact a tutor would have on a child's identity would be long-lasting. The more intimate relationship between a tutor and his pupil as compared with a teacher and a pupil in his class, made the choice of a tutor even more important.

Madrasas

The *madrasa* was the next step after the *kuttab* for serious students who wanted to pursue a career in law or teaching. Even the earliest *madrasas* were found in mosques, which demonstrates the union between education and worship as illustrated by the lack of division of space between the two pursuits.

The most well-respected and well-known of the *madrasas* in Egypt was al-Azhar. Prior to the 19th-century, the highest learning was available at the mosque-college and the institution was responsible for turning out the leaders of the community. In truth, for centuries the shaykhs of al-Azhar were a force to be reckoned with for any power in Egypt, a body that could and did wield considerable power. Often leaders found themselves in a position which required them to petition the

⁶⁵ *'Alam al-Din*, 224.

'ulama' to placate the populace. In the period just prior to Muhammad 'Ali's assumption of power, for example, the 'ulama' had held a unique position as mediators between the Turkish-speaking Mamluks and the Arabic-speaking populace. The Mamluk leaders' respect for religious authority and their need for the influence the 'ulama' exercised with the public combined to forge a mutually beneficial relationship between the two groups.⁶⁶

Subjects taught at al-Azhar included: grammatical inflexion, syntax, rhetoric, versification, logic, theology, the exposition of the Qur'an, *sunna*, jurisprudence, arithmetic, algebra as well as calculations relating to the Islamic calendar and prayer times.⁶⁷ Instruction was free and students from the country received an allowance of food from *awqaf* funds. Al-Azhar, like so many other institutions, was subject to the whims of the current leaders. The 19th-century was not a period of florescence for the mosque-college. Michael Reimer writes, "... the available evidence indicates that al-Azhar declined in wealth and influence while the rest of the country was being coercively reawakened by Muhammad 'Ali."⁶⁸ According to Lane, it suffered financial losses:

Those of Cairo and its neighbourhood used to receive a similar allowance (of food); but this they no longer enjoy, excepting during the month of Ramadan, for the present Basha of Egypt has taken possession of all the cultivable land which belonged to the mosques, and thus the Azhar has lost the greater portion of the property which it possessed: nothing but the expenses of necessary repairs and the salaries of its principal officers are provided for by the government. The professors also receive no salaries.⁶⁹

Similarly, Lane argues that the very reforms which were strengthening a "modern" education were undermining the traditional higher education offered by al-Azhar. As Lane noted, one blow Muhammad 'Ali struck at al-Azhar was his seizure of *waqf* properties which had provided the revenues vital to maintaining the mosque-college.⁷⁰

⁶⁶Afaf Loutfi El Sayed, "The Role of the 'ulam ' in Egypt during the Early Nineteenth Century," *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, P.M. Holt (London, Oxford University Press: 1968), 265.

⁶⁷Lane, *Manners*, 211-213.

⁶⁸Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness," 56.

⁶⁹Lane, *Manners*, 213

⁷⁰Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness," 56.

Fitting the history of al-Azhar and its glorious past alongside criticisms of its pedagogical method posed a dilemma for 'Ali Mubarak in *al-Khitat*, according to Reimer. Mubarak's deep ambivalence toward the institution springs from his incorporation of al-Azhar and its role in Egyptian history into his positivistic nationalistic historical outlook combined with his distaste for al-Azhar's pedagogical methods which he regarded as outmoded. His approach to his description of al-Azhar in *al-Khitat* reflects this dilemma of how to praise the history of the mosque-college and the religious authority which it represented as a "...vital element in the formation of Egypt's national identity"⁷¹ while making it clear that the institution in his estimation had, due to its pedagogical approach and a variety of other failings, become "...irrelevant to the future of culture in Egypt..."⁷²

'Ali Mubarak thus endorsed the modernizing project of Muhammad 'Ali, particularly in the changes it brought to education and education related careers. Muhammad 'Ali altered the routes to prosperity within Egyptian society when he placed a high premium on a new kind of education – a technical one which prepared graduates for careers in the new military and bureaucratic structures. He was looking for a way to educate men in just such a "useful form" of knowledge, knowledge which would prepare them to render the services which the new state structure demanded – a form of knowledge that then became the means to material prosperity. He created avenues for success far removed from the traditional religiously-based professions which had been honored for so long.

New institutions were required because the wheels of reform turned slowly in the millenium-old institution of Al-Azhar. Not only did the institution teach a curriculum that did not meet the needs of the bureaucracy, the very system through which students were determined to be qualified was perceived as lacking. It was not until 1872 that the beginnings of a more "modern" system began to evidence itself in the bastion of traditional learning. Until 1870, "There were still no formal diplomas, only the personal certificates written by individual teachers. There was, moreover, no system for the appointment of professors, so that classes were often conducted by ambitious shaykhs, who were incapable and lacking in true scholarship."⁷³ This lack of a regulated system created a situation of uncertainty from the standpoint of modern bureaucracy as to the capabilities of the students of al-Azhar

⁷¹Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness," 54.

⁷²Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness," 54.

⁷³ Bayard Dodge, *Al-Azhar: A Millennium of Muslim Learning* (Baltimore: The Middle East Institute, 1974) 116.

as well as the teachers because they were unmeasured. The new bureaucracy increasingly demanded firm credentials that would state the contents of a given program of study. A rigorous system to ensure equality in the standard of graduates and teachers administered by a power outside the hands of the individual teacher was the area of strength of the new schools and colleges. This system was foreign to the time-hallowed arena of al-Azhar because the old system had depended upon the discretion of each individual shaykh to grant *ijazas* when they determined that a student had fulfilled the requirements of study for a given work. In fact, the Azhari system empowered the individual teacher, while the new system demanded systemic and impersonal supervision and structure. Muhammad 'Ali's system removed much of the personal power that had been in the hands of the shaykh and replaced it with systemic power under the auspices of an intrusive hierarchy. These new institutions had a reliance upon systemic power designed to create a rigid hierarchy theoretically based on merit, which originally set them apart from all of the traditional educational structures in Egypt.

Eventually, however, even al-Azhar had to follow in the footsteps of these new institutions and create a more stringent system of examinations, curriculum and certification. The Law of February 3, 1872 aimed at altering academic administration along these lines by instituting a system in which six scholars conducted the examinations of not more than six candidates a year. Students were examined in *fiqh*, theology, *hadith*, *tafsir*, grammar, rhetoric and logic. Those who passed received diplomas and were awarded degrees of honor: The first of which was marked by distinct dress and the privilege of free travel throughout Egypt as well as a post at al-Azhar. Less qualified students were given a lesser rank but could repeat examinations after additional study. "This law was important because it was the first of a series of reforms, which turned al-Azhar from a mediaeval mosque-college into a modern university."⁷⁴ Even once the new system had been enacted, though, 'Ali Mubarak, with his tendency to disapprove of the pedagogical methods of al-Azhar, noted that the goal of promoting only those who deserved promotion had not yet been met and criticized students for their lack of a love of learning, and for seeking status and praise instead.⁷⁵

⁷⁴Dodge, *Al-Azhar*, 116-117

⁷⁵Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness," 58.

An alternative system

Muhammad 'Ali was driven by his desire to create a strong military to establish more effective control over his state. In order to achieve this goal, he required a certain social and economic infrastructure as a support system for his military. To create the required structure with the prerequisite services, he needed to create a system of education which would produce men to staff the infrastructure. He turned to the west for a model on which to base his system of education. In the beginning, he had to depend to some degree upon foreign experts but eventually in the interest of longevity and practicality, he began to take steps to make the system more indigenous.

Muhammad 'Ali depended upon his foreign experts to aid him in creating a new indigenous system which would eventually turn out native manpower to staff his military machinery and the related support system which he was actively creating. Many foreign experts were employed by Muhammad 'Ali to lend their abilities to the creation of the new order. Robert Hunter notes that the trend begun by Muhammad 'Ali continued and "...by mid-century, the European technical presence had become firmly rooted."⁷⁶ According to Hunter, initially, members of the localized Ottoman elite always supervised these European experts but at mid-century, Europeans began to be appointed to posts as directors of major departments, beginning with Lee Green who was appointed as director of Railway and Communications in 1855. The initial reluctance to assign Europeans to positions of power was caused by sensitivity to the issue of religion and the possibility that Ottoman Muslims would object to having European Christians in superior posts.

Through his new system of education, Muhammad 'Ali hoped to revolutionize Egyptian society by cementing his power base in a way that the divisive Mamluk rulers had not. He hoped to accomplish this goal through a strong state structure, and in order to do this, he needed a radical new approach which he found only in foreign expertise. "Whereas formerly education had been conceived as a means for perpetuating the *status quo*, it was now considered a principal tool for revolutionizing society and bringing substantial changes in its structure. It was only in the light of this basic philosophical reorientation that the more material changes in form and curriculum were later accomplished."⁷⁷ Whether or not Muhammad 'Ali had a philosophical orientation towards pedagogical

⁷⁶Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives, 1805-1879: From Household Government to Modern Bureaucracy* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984) 93.

⁷⁷Radwan, *Old and New Forces*, 84

method, his major goal was the consolidation of state power through a strong bureaucracy and the "material changes in form and curriculum" which were implemented were key elements in his plans.

Muhammad 'Ali started with what was most important to him, military knowledge, and later moved on to encompass other areas of modern education to create a system of primary, secondary, technical and higher schools which one writer notes was patterned on the French system.⁷⁸ Yacoub Artin details the reforms Muhammad 'Ali enacted, beginning with the establishment of Qasr al-'Aini school in 1825. He comments on the enrollment of the school, noting that there were 500 children of various extraction, including Circassians, Georgians, Kurds, Armenians and Greeks: "...all strangers to the country but their parents were in the service of the Khedive."⁷⁹ While Artin, writing in 1890 may have perceived this ethnic mix as foreigners in the service of the Khedive, they were not in fact foreigners because they were all Ottomans, serving the Sultan's appointed *wali*. Artin describes the school's curriculum: "As far as the lessons go, they were according to the ancient method: the Qur'an, writing, grammar, Turkish literature, Persian and Arabic. But with a mind to prepare the students for entry into the military school, there were also other fundamental studies: the basics of arithmetic, of geometry, algebra, design and the study of the Italian language, which is the European language spoken by the majority of the instructors in the military school."⁸⁰ Here it is evident that suitable preparation for the new military schools was initially regarded as consisting of a traditional education with the necessary additions of modern curriculum.

In general, the European power which Muhammad 'Ali admired most was France so he sought aid and guidance primarily from the French. It is important to note that the French system itself was in a state of transition in the late 18th-early 19th-century due to increasing demand for democratization of education to provide the lower and middle classes with a more vocationally-oriented education. Increasing criticism of the classical humanistic French education which concentrated on producing French gentlemen, led Victor Duruy (French minister of public instruction, 1863-1869) to rethink the system of education. While he did not turn away from classical education,

⁷⁸Russell Galt, *The Effects of Centralization on Education in Modern Egypt*, (Cairo: American University in Cairo, 1936), 18.

⁷⁹Yacoub Artin, *L'Instruction Publique en Égypte*, (Paris: 1890) 70.

⁸⁰Artin, *L'Instruction*, 71.

he sought to revitalize and democratize it.⁸¹ One of the chief criticisms of French education voiced at the time Duruy took office was the emphasis upon preparation for examinations which is described as "...sterile and mechanical – largely a matter of memorization and cramming...."⁸² While Duruy addressed this defect in French education, it seems this characteristic had already been passed onto the Egyptian mission members and through them to the Egyptian system of education. Russell Galt argues that the dependence upon the French for inspiration and expertise caused the modern Egyptian educational system to develop centralization and an emphasis upon memorization as its primary characteristics. He credits the French influence with the dependence upon rigid examinations that has remained consistent as a feature of Egyptian education. "The fundamental fact which emerges in any study of the Egyptian system is the fact that Egypt has copied the French system of administrative centralization and has carried it to excess."⁸³ It is perhaps not surprising that this drive for development, which in essence and fact originated in the mind of the leader for a specifically centralized purpose – that of forging a strong military – would take on a strongly centralized character.

In addition to seeking guidelines and structures from abroad, Muhammad 'Ali recruited manpower from western countries as well to staff and guide his efforts. "In 1836 the first Ministry or Council of Education was created, composed of seven Egyptians and five Frenchmen."⁸⁴ Most of the Egyptian members of the ministry had recently returned from studies in France.

Student missions abroad

Building an educational system from the ground up was destined to take far more time than Muhammad 'Ali had expected. The solution he found to "jump start" both his military and educational plans was to send promising young men abroad to glean what they could from western education and then return to Egypt to lead the way in modernizing and educating. Beginning in 1809, Muhammad 'Ali pursued this interest by sending student missions to Europe. These student missions were designed originally to meet a primarily military purpose, however within them the beginnings of a new

⁸¹Sandra Horvath-Peterson, *Victor Duruy & French Education*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 118-120.

⁸²Horvath-Peterson, *Victor Duruy*, 125.

⁸³Galt, *Centralization*, 3-4.

⁸⁴Galt, *Centralization*, 37.

system of education for Egypt can be found. "The culture after which he attempted to model Egypt was that of France; so the French educational system was the model for his schools. Impatient at the slow progress of his own system, he sent students to France to study in her technical schools."⁸⁵ In an effort to create the proper environment for these students that he sent abroad, an Egyptian School was founded in Paris in 1826 and 44 students were sent to study in it. Accompanying these students was Rifa'a al-Tahtawi who, upon his return, was to take a pivotal role in the course of Egypt's educational policy. While al-Tahtawi was sent on the mission as *imam*, not as a student, he used his time in Paris to acquire an extensive knowledge of French which would later serve him well as a translator of French works into Arabic. In addition to language learning, al-Tahtawi read extensively in a variety of different disciplines including ancient history, Greek philosophy and mythology, geography, arithmetic and logic as well as the great works of the French Enlightenment. The works of Rousseau, Voltaire and Montesquieu left a lasting impression upon him and it was through him that these works were introduced into Egyptian intellectual discourse.⁸⁶

While the ideas of the French Enlightenment may have made an accidental impression upon members of the missions, that was certainly not Muhammad 'Ali's intended aim for sending them to Paris. These students went to study subjects essential to building and maintaining a strong military: "... [they] studied the military arts, medicine, and just administration, civil and military engineering, and in general, all the fields of knowledge for which the Pasha had been obliged to employ Europeans so that Egyptians would possess the necessary instruction in the diverse branches of science."⁸⁷ Clearly the student missions were an expression of Muhammad 'Ali's realization that one had to forge an indigenous system of education if one hoped to build a lasting new order. While foreign experts could initiate the new system, eventually his men would have to bear responsibility for perpetuating it. While at first he was willing to rely upon the traditional elite, it eventually became clear that he would have to enlist native Egyptians into the system to provide needed manpower.

Once the missions began to include native Egyptians, they raised within the Egyptian members a hope that the benefits of western education might be introduced into Egypt. The influence

⁸⁵Radwan, *Old and New Forces*, 87.

⁸⁶Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939*, (London, Oxford University Press: 1962), 69.

⁸⁷Artin, *L'Instruction*, 72.

of these mission members was destined to affect Egypt profoundly. It is interesting to note that it was 'Ali Mubarak's inclusion in the 1844 mission to France with two of Muhammad 'Ali's sons and two of his grandsons which paved the way for his important role in the Egyptian bureaucracy. The rare opportunity for this native Egyptian to travel abroad with the sons of the Khedives to receive a French education was enough to insure that 'Ali Mubarak would have an opportunity to achieve posts through which he would become a valuable asset to the new order. In a later chapter, I will discuss how the ties that were forged between Mubarak and the princes placed him firmly within the system of *intisab* or patronage that played a significant role in determining promotions and positions in mid-19th-century Egypt.⁸⁸

Attempts to build an indigenous system of education

Eventually the new system was destined to take on increasing importance. One writer notes, "... while elementary education was comparatively neglected, the Europeanized system became the royal road to the limited field of the higher professions and the more numerous and well-paid government posts."⁸⁹ In this passage, Galt is addressing a later period, however, the trend which he identifies has its beginnings in the reforms of Muhammad 'Ali in the 19th-century.

In the beginning, Muhammad 'Ali relied upon his student missions and foreign experts to build his new system, however, this was inherently limited. To "domesticate" the whole process, he called the members of the student missions into service as teachers. Translation of textbooks was another important step taken to separate the need for knowledge from the need for foreigners. The guiding figure in efforts at translation was Rifa' al-Tahtawi who became director of the School of Languages in 1836. In 1841 the School opened a bureau of translation dedicated to translation of western works into Arabic. Al-Tahtawi took an active role not only in supervising but in translating and choosing works to be translated. In this capacity he selected and translated Montesquieu, a figure whose philosophy he incorporated into his own works in terms of the ideal of the nation, or *watan*.⁹⁰ This concept of *watan* will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

⁸⁸Toledano, *State and Society*, 102-104.

⁸⁹Galt, *Centralization*, 19-20.

⁹⁰Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, 70-71.

One of the clearest examples of how Muhammad 'Ali was trying to "localize" certain vital areas of knowledge is his unique recruitment policy for the medical school. In contrast to his recruitment policy for the preparatory and military schools, in which Egyptian natives were not favored, pupils for the School of Medicine, which was founded in 1825, were in large part of Egyptian origin.⁹¹ One writer finds the explanation of the choice of al-Azhar students in their skill in the Arabic language. Because instructors spoke French and Italian, interpreters translated lectures into Arabic and then pupils transcribed the information into literary Arabic with the aim of developing textbooks in the Arabic language.⁹²

The new system of higher education was in essence based on imparting a technical education with the lower levels of education designed to prepare students for the higher technical institutions specifically created to serve Muhammad 'Ali's military. This technical education then paved the way for entry into the institutions created by Muhammad 'Ali to lead the way toward modernizing Egypt. This represented a change in the type of qualifications required to serve in the government, a change which opened up the possibility of native Egyptians gaining more access to higher level posts, posts that had once been reserved for those who enjoyed social status by virtue of belonging to the localized Ottoman elite. The broadening of the entire system of government from a household government to a modern bureaucracy led to a new emphasis upon merit and qualifications gained through new forms of education. While this new emphasis on education did not mean that status ceased to have its privileges, the new system demanded that even those who had inherited rights would have to expend some effort to claim them and extended hope of attaining high level positions to those who had been previously ineligible for government employment.

⁹¹Artin, *L'Instruction*, 71.

⁹²Kuhnke, *Lives*, 34-35.

Chapter 2

'Ali Mubarak's Role as a Native Egyptian Bureaucrat

The question of why 'Ali Mubarak (1823/24-1893) should be considered an important figure in 19th-century Egyptian history must be answered in two parts: he is important for what he did in terms of program reform but also in terms of what his career represents historically. The reforms that he instigated will be examined in greater detail in a later chapter. This chapter will deal with the role he played in the history of Egyptian bureaucracy and how he represents a new breed of administrator and is a sign of a changing social structure. In early 19th-century Egypt, native Egyptians were not high-level government administrators. It had been many generations since native Egyptian Muslims were allowed to assume a direct role in governing themselves at what Hunter has termed the ministerial level. The first native Egyptian Muslim to breach this barrier and assume what can be termed a ministerial-level position was 'Ali Pasha Mubarak.⁹³

Mubarak rose to administrative heights under the Khedives and represented the first of a new generation of bureaucrats making their appearance in Egypt – a new generation formed and identified by certain characteristics. This generation of native Egyptian stood apart from the old foreign elite which had held possession of important posts prior to Muhammad 'Ali's reforms. Described by one writer as "representative of a new type of official: the Egyptian-born technician with a scientific education,"⁹⁴ Mubarak was one of the new bureaucrats who won their posts not through status and

⁹³ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 124.

⁹⁴ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 123.

high birth, but primarily through education. While these new bureaucrats were still subject to the caprice of the ruler and dependent to some degree upon the system of *intisab* to gain posts, the basic qualification of their service was their education.

Arabicization of the elite

According to Ehud Toledano, mid-19th-century Egypt was governed by what he terms an "Ottoman-Egyptian elite."⁹⁵ His analysis of what made up the elite group is important because the 19th-century is a time of transformation of the elite and in order to perceive this transformation an understanding of what the group began as is vital to understanding what it became. Toledano takes issue with scholars for focusing upon Arab sources or Arabic translations of Ottoman Turkish sources because he perceives this as giving the period too much of an Arab character when in fact, the age was dominated by a Turkish-speaking localized Ottoman elite: "If we 'Arabicize' the government and elite of Mehmet Ali Pasa, we are bound to misapprehend the gradual process of Egyptianization, which made the Ottoman elite in Egypt at the beginning of the nineteenth century into the Ottoman-Egyptian elite of the middle years, and finally, at the turn of the century and beyond, into an Egyptian elite."⁹⁶ For Toledano, the elite are a "power-elite" in which power is married to culture and the culture of power in the early and mid-19th-century is essentially Ottoman.⁹⁷

During the middle decades, this localized Ottoman elite governed. While others could possess wealth and social standing, they were excluded from the realm of governmental power. This exclusion was destined to change and the roots of the change are to be found in the policies of the early decades of the 19th-century. Perhaps it was Muhammad 'Ali's drive to transform Egypt from a subject nation which was his to govern and control into an instrument which he hoped to use to conquer other lands that spurred this change. Toledano describes a "dynamic re-formation" in the elite during these middle decades. He notes that a "...movement began to appear across the boundary, as members of non-elite groups were acquiring technical skills and higher government appointments in the provinces as well as in Cairo."⁹⁸ This concept of skills being the basis for a newfound ability to access posts in the

⁹⁵Toledano, *State and Society*, 16.

⁹⁶Toledano, *State and Society*, 22.

⁹⁷Toledano, *State and Society*, 16.

⁹⁸Toledano, *State and Society*, 17.

government is important to an understanding of how native Egyptians began to infiltrate their own government.

'Ali Mubarak is an ideal figure for illustrating the general transformation occurring in the bureaucracy because his professional career was formed and driven by riding the wave of change. While the 1844 student mission included many native Egyptians who went on to positions of power and prominence, Mubarak presents himself as the most interesting figure from several standpoints: 1) he was the first to reach a ministerial level post; 2) he took a directing role in the development of the very system that had become responsible for his own success – the educational program; 3) his voluminous works present ample evidence of his own perceptions of the factors leading to his success. Mubarak recognized the emergent vitality of the educational system and the role it should play in determining who would achieve rank in government. This is evident from his autobiography.

Biographical detail

As we have seen, 'Ali Mubarak was born in the small village of Birinbal al-Jadida in Daqahliyya province in 1823 to a family of shaykhs who had traditionally served as *imams*, *khatibs* and *qadis* in the village⁹⁹ – a family whose status was essentially tied to the religious role they played in the village. In accordance with their positions and the religious duties that they were responsible for executing, the family was in a well-respected position. 'Ali Mubarak's father had fully intended his son to follow precisely in his footsteps and fought against his son's deviation from an education which would have led him to assume one of the inherited family occupations. It is interesting to note that 'Ali Mubarak, who is so representative of the new order, had his origins in the old system of education.

The Mubarak family was forced to leave Birinbal when they felt their customary status was under attack. When the government began to pressure the family to pay taxes under threat of corporal punishment and imprisonment, measures usually reserved for *fellahin*, they fled their homes to a village in Sharqiyya rather than suffer the indignity of being treated like common *fellahin*. This incident demonstrates the vulnerability of even well-placed members of what had always been considered to be honorable professions. Before Mubarak left the village of Birinbal he reports that he had already begun to learn to read and write under a tutor.¹⁰⁰ In their adopted home in Sharqiyya,

⁹⁹ *al-Khitat*, 106.

¹⁰⁰ *al-Khitat*, 106.

Mubarak's father, Mubarak ibn Mubarak ibn Sulayman ibn Ibrahim al-Ruji, earned the respect of the local Arab population by virtue of his *'ilm* and they built a mosque and designated him as the *imam*.¹⁰¹

'Ali Mubarak had always had great plans for himself; never being content to accept the path laid out for him. His first aspirations when he was young were of being a *katib* because he perceived the *katib* as holding a respectable post and enjoying material wealth. In pursuit of the goal of achieving material wealth and success, he apprenticed himself to a *katib* in order to learn the trade, however, according to his own account, he was cheated out of three months' pay. When he tried to deduct the money owed to him from revenues he collected, the *katib* took revenge by having him chosen for the draft.¹⁰²

As is clear from his autobiography in *al-Khitat*, Mubarak always had a healthy ambition. His quest to find the routes to success are clear from an incident following Mubarak's imprisonment related to his being drafted in the military, in which he meets a *ma'mur* who happens to be a black man. After his first encounter with the *ma'mur*, he is overcome with curiosity as to how he could have reached such a position of importance:

I stayed up late at night with my father. I talked to him about this *ma'mur*. I said that this *ma'mur* could not be a Turk because he was black. Then he answered that he might be a liberated slave. Then I asked if it were possible for a slave to govern when even the highest caliber of natives were not governors. He gave me unconvincing answers. He said perhaps he had reached his position due to his high morality and knowledge. I asked: "What is his knowledge?" He said that perhaps he had lived near al-Azhar and learned there. Then I said: "And does learning at al-Azhar lead to being a governor?" Then he said: "My son, we are all slaves of Allah and Allah the most elevated raises whom he wishes. I answered: "I agree but reasons must exist." Then he advised me and told me stories and poetry which didn't convince me either. Then he advised that I join him [the *ma'mur*] and obey his orders.¹⁰³

The young boy's shock that a black African could reach this sort of well-respected position of authority when white Egyptians of good families could not do so, kept him on his quest to know how the *ma'mur* had attained his rank. After he had apprenticed himself to the *ma'mur*, Mubarak inquired of those who worked with him as to how this man had reached this level of power. He learned that the woman who had owned him had had him educated in Qasr al-'Aini School, one of Muhammad 'Ali's

¹⁰¹*al-Khitat*, 106.

¹⁰²*al-Khitat*, 108.

¹⁰³*al-Khitat*, 110.

Toledano, Ehud. *State and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century Egypt*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Tritton, A.S. *Materials on Muslim Education in the Middle Ages*. London: Luzac & Co., 1957.

Welch, William. *No Country for a Gentleman*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1988.

Williams, James. *Education in Egypt Before British Control*. Birmingham, 1939.

Young, George. *Egypt*. London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1927.

model schools.¹⁰⁴ This was his first encounter with information on one of the new schools in Cairo. When he inquired as to how one could enter the school, he found that admittance was strictly limited, however, some who excelled in the *maktabs* could enroll.¹⁰⁵ Against his father's wishes, Mubarak enrolled in a *maktab*, excelled in his program of study, and was chosen to attend Qasr al-'Aini. Within the autobiography, both the terms *maktab* and *kuttab* are used to refer to the school Mubarak attended, however, Darrell Dykstra notes that the *maktab* which Mubarak attended was one of Muhammad 'Ali's carefully supervised primary schools.¹⁰⁶ After achieving academic success at the school, he went to the Polytechnique (or School of Engineering) and also excelled. As we have seen, in 1844, he was chosen to go on one of the largest student missions sent to Paris. After encountering initial difficulties with the French language, in which he lacked training, he was able to master the language and excel in his educational program. The role of education in his personal success is evident. Each step that he took towards gaining an education brought him closer to his goal of personal and material success. While he began by pursuing the traditional basic education available at the time, his achievements and dedication led him through the traditional education system into the new system of westernized education that was only beginning to become available to native Egyptians. Without his education, he would never have traveled abroad and achieved his engineering education in the company of the sons and grandsons of Muhammad 'Ali.

'*Alam al-Din*: Reflection of biographical details within the novel

A brief glance at the table of contents and the 125 chapter titles gives the impression that '*Alam al-Din* is essentially a pedagogical work. Chapter topics on a purely informative level include: The Sea and its Wonders; Volcanoes; Shellfish; Pearls; The Silkworm; Bees; Ants; Elephants; Lions; Tigers; Monkeys; Eels; Harmful Pests; Grasshoppers; Tobacco; Coffee; Precious Stones; Air and Water; Cotton; Fruits; Grapes; Alcohol; Beer; and Trees and Flowers. Within these chapters he goes to great lengths to describe things that his readers have perhaps never seen. For example, in a chapter on dolphins, he describes the appearance of the dolphin as well as a fish that attaches itself to the dolphin

¹⁰⁴ *al-Khitat*, 110.

¹⁰⁵ *al-Khitat*, 111.

¹⁰⁶ Darrell J. Dykstra, "A Biographical Study in Egyptian Modernization: 'Ali Mubarak (1823/4-1893)," (University of Michigan, 1977), 60.

to help it navigate through the water. This fish he takes as an example of God's wisdom in that it depends upon the dolphin and the dolphin depends on it.¹⁰⁷ For descriptions of establishments within society, one can find chapters addressing a large range of topics including: Theatres; Coffeeshouses; al-Hashish; Gambling; Inns and Hotels; Sights of Paris; A Parisian Market; and Hospitals. Religious topics also are the subject of quite a few of the *musamaras*, including chapters entitled: *al-Mawlid*s, *'ids* and *Mawsims* (the *mawlid*s being the commemorations held in honor of saints, *'ids* the two official holidays in Islam and *mawsims* the celebrations of other religious events); Ablutions; Polygamy; Predecessors and Successors in Islam; and Religiosity. Social structures are also discussed at length, among them: Learning and Teaching; Railways; The Post; Slaves; The Census; Gold and Mining; and The Stock Market. General topics of study are also included such as: Geography; Geology; Agriculture; Navigation; and History. Interspersed between all these topics is the narrative of the novel.

As noted earlier, the narrative centers around an Englishman, whom some writers have suggested bears resemblance to Edward Lane,¹⁰⁸ who is editing and publishing a work on the Arabic language and consequently seeks the company and assistance of an Azhari shaykh. After many attempts, he finally finds 'Alam al-Din, a shaykh who is willing to accompany him on his travels to Europe. The whole of the book consists of discussions on a variety of topics, as noted above. Ghislaine Alleaume portrays the shaykh as representing Egypt and traditional knowledge, while the Englishman represents Europe and its modern technology as well as its vision of dominating the world.¹⁰⁹ The Englishman cannot resist the opportunity to pass on to the shaykh all the information he has on any particular subject, particularly matters involving technology and western attitudes. The shaykh contributes information on topics on which he possesses knowledge such as the customs and traditions unique to Egypt.

The narrative of the novel is interesting because so many of the biographical details of Mubarak's life have echoes within *'Alam al Din*. One such issue is the expectations of a father regarding the choice of his son's profession. 'Alam al Din began with plans for his son that were very

¹⁰⁷ *'Alam al-Din*, 658-663.

¹⁰⁸ Dykstra, "A Biographical Study," 410.

¹⁰⁹ Ghislaine Alleaume, "L'Orientaliste dans le Miroir de la Littérature Arabe," *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Bulletin*, 9, (1982), 6.

similar to those of Mubarak's father – that of entering a religiously based profession after completing his education. Even though the shaykh is undertaking to have his son Burhan al Din learn English from the Englishman, his expectations are still firmly planted in traditional aspirations. After both the father and the son have embarked upon their course of English language study, the Englishman broaches the subject of the son's future profession in the chapter entitled "Learning and Teaching." The Englishman asks the shaykh what sort of profession 'Alam al Din would like to have his son enter:

One of those fine days when they were having one of their pleasant conversations, the Englishman told the shaykh: "Your son is old enough now and has learned enough Arabic that he needs to learn a profession or trade to help him to earn a living in the future. What sort of trade do you plan to teach him? The shaykh said: "I would like him to learn Arabic well and finish reading the literary classics. When that is finished, I will begin to think about how he can improve his condition and of what will help him reach his goals, on the condition that he does not leave the learned professions and the religious word."¹¹⁰

Clearly the most important factor in the shaykh's mind is Burhan al Din's completion of his traditional study which would prepare him to take his place in the time-honored professions of his father and grandfathers, just as 'Ali Mubarak's father had hoped he would follow in his family's tradition. Monetary aspirations are inherently secondary to the obligation of pursuing the career his father has chosen for him. The Arabic word the Englishman uses for trade is *sina'a*, a word which the shaykh meets with obvious distaste. His expectations do not include his son entering *sina'a*, he anticipates that his son will enter *al-waza'if al-'ilmiyya*, or the learned professions, just as his father and grandfathers had.

However, he does recognize the value of the new qualifications that his son is gaining during his stint with the Englishman and has hopes that the language skill his son is learning will prepare him for earning a living:

With your help he is learning your language. If he learns both languages, he will have the best of qualifications. With either of them, he will be able to earn a good living so that he won't need to follow any other trade outside the realm of his father and grandfather's professions. The Englishman said: "You are saying that your son will become an *imam* or *khatib* in a mosque, or a translator or an assistant to a judge some place."¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ 'Alam al Din, 243-244.

¹¹¹ 'Alam al Din, 244.

The Englishman, ever the voice for western education and upward mobility, expresses his doubts over the suitability of these aspirations:

All these occupations are not enough to satisfy him. In addition, he will always be in the employ of others who will have power over him to accuse him of negligence in his job, or ignorance of what is needed or lack of knowledge to enable him to do what is necessary. I want to bring to your attention that occupations are of different levels. Some are honorable, some are not; some are high and some low. Now you have the chance to help your son to be a leader or a prince or make him a follower of others. You must think hard and look carefully until you find the trade that will increase his honor.¹¹²

This discussion highlights the change in career expectations between the older generation and the younger generation that occurred in 'Ali Mubarak's youth. Mubarak was constantly searching for ways to improve his material lot while his father placed priority upon the old ways of learning and what he regarded as the well-respected professions.

Mubarak's qualifications for prominence

'Ali Mubarak's technical, engineering education not aristocratic origins qualified him for his governmental posts. While he relied upon his connections and influence to advance his government career, without his education, he would never have gained admission to government service. In fact, many of his connections had their foundation in his mission experience. Native Egyptians in the new bureaucracy were generally either western educated or rural notables, and although he was from a family of shaykhs, he lacked the significant rural power base that could have made him valuable to the ruler as a rural notable. Instead, he gained admission to the bureaucracy because he met the new set of qualifications for secular government service in mid 19th-century Egypt.¹¹³ These new criteria are indications of the changing nature of the demands of the bureaucracy.

Robert Hunter's work *Egypt Under the Khedives, 1805- 1879* has many comments on the change in qualifications demanded of bureaucrats under the new order. The work, subtitled significantly *From Household Government to Modern Bureaucracy*, makes a strong case for the argument that one of the predominant changes occurring in the period was an alteration in qualifications required for those who would participate in what was rapidly becoming a modern bureaucracy. Under what Hunter terms a household government, service in the government hinged on

¹¹² 'Alam al Din, 243-245.

¹¹³ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 123.

personal loyalty to Muhammad 'Ali and men were chosen according to desired personal qualities. "As time passed, two new criteria were added. First, an intimate connection between scientific knowledge and administrative service was established, and men were recruited because they knew a European language or possessed other technical skills acquired in Europe or in Egypt's new European-style schools. Second, the khedive's increasing need for the support of Europeans and of Egypt's rural notables led to the introduction into the administration of men from these two privileged groups."¹¹⁴ Personal qualities that had been so important in a household government were to take a role of lesser importance in a modern bureaucracy. A new emphasis was placed on competence and the ability to serve particular purposes and accomplish determined tasks using a technical approach.

Hunter identifies four types of officials in addition to the localized Ottoman element, "...Egyptian technicians, employed in the central administration, many of whom had received a scientific education in Europe; Egyptian provincial officials drawn from the ranks of village headmen (*shaykhs al-balad*); a number of Europeanized and well-educated Armenians; and Europeans who fulfilled both administrative and technical functions."¹¹⁵ The category of rural notable will be discussed briefly in a later chapter. 'Ali Mubarak, of course, falls securely into the category of Egyptian technician. Hunter singles out the 1850s as a critical point when Egyptian technicians made the leap in replacing localized Ottoman officials at high levels. It was in 1850 that 'Ali Mubarak, Hammad 'Abd al-'Ati, and 'Ali Ibrahim, two other engineers educated in Paris, were assigned by 'Abbas to inspect provincial engineers as well as teachers in the School of Engineering.¹¹⁶ The three had been the most outstanding students in the mission and had been the only three appointed to the rank of *yuzbashi awwal*, a rank roughly equivalent to captain, upon return from Paris.¹¹⁷ Mubarak was made director of government schools in 1850 and served in the post for four years.¹¹⁸ Egyptian rural notables, on the other hand, were given the provincial posts of district and subdistrict chief in 1856 and later they were given provincial governorships. Hunter marks the 1870s as the point when native

¹¹⁴ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 83.

¹¹⁵ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 83-84.

¹¹⁶ Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 298.

¹¹⁷ Dykstra, "Biographical Sketch," 106.

¹¹⁸ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 129.

Egyptian provincial governors became common.¹¹⁹ This critical shift marks the culmination of the change occurring in the 19th-century, a shift from emphasis upon drawing officials from the localized Ottoman elite to a growing acceptance of native Egyptians in high governmental posts.

While the new emphasis on education did not mean that ethnicity and inherited status ceased to have an impact, the new system demanded that even those who had inherited rights would have to expend some effort to claim them and extended to those who did not inherit positions the hope of attaining one. Originally from a reputable but modest provincial family, Mubarak was able to exceed the expectations of a career as an *imam* or *qadi* which had previously been the height of success in the Mubarak family and enter an entirely different domain – the realm of secular government service. His success had its base in his education beginning in the traditional *kuttab* and extending to his journey to Paris. Upon his return from France, 'Ali Mubarak occupied a variety of posts, according to the state of his relationship with the various Khedives as will be discussed below.

While his status as the first native to head a department makes him an ideal candidate for our study, it was also probably the single most important factor leading to the instability of his career and the wild fluctuations which it underwent.¹²⁰ At times Mubarak rose to heights of success unknown to native Egyptians in the government hierarchy and, during other periods, fell drastically out of favor. While he enjoyed unprecedented success for a native Egyptian, he also endured much in the way of professional uncertainty. Under Khedive 'Abbas (1848-54), Mubarak enjoyed a large measure of success after Prince Ahmad, who had participated in the student mission of 1844, intervened upon his behalf to help Mubarak gain position. On his recommendation, Mubarak was interviewed and consequently promoted to fifth rank and joined the viceroy's entourage. His first assignment was that of inspecting engineers in the provinces for signs of incompetence. When he successfully discharged his inspection duty, he proved his usefulness in what was to become a trademark for Mubarak: suggesting a strategy to cut expenses. A proposal by Mougel Bey, the viceroy's chief engineer, to enable safe passage of boats through the Nile Barrages was found to be too expensive. Mubarak along with al-'Ati and Ibrahim worked together to chart a plan for cutting expenses on boat passage through the Nile barrages which met with 'Abbas' approval due to its practicality.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 88.

¹²⁰ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 124.

¹²¹ Sidhom, "'Ali Mubarak,'" 28.

After this success, 'Abbas began to consult Mubarak on many matters. An important turning point was when Mubarak and two of his Egyptian colleagues were asked to make a proposal for schools as an inexpensive alternative to the plan of Lambert Bey. According to *al-Khitat*, after much discussion and debate, the three failed to agree on any one plan. Rather than admit to failure, Mubarak determined to formulate his own proposal independent of the other two. When his plan was submitted to 'Abbas, it met with enthusiastic approval because it represented a drastic savings over Lambert's plan – a difference between LE5,000 and LE100,000! Mubarak describes how he perceived the reception of his plan: "...they asked us to submit our plan, and we had done nothing except for this (the plan Mubarak had drawn up by himself) so we submitted it to the late 'Abbas Pasha. He liked the creative originality and the lower cost. And he said: "Who did this?" I said: "I did."¹²² Once 'Abbas had accepted his program, he consulted Mubarak for suggestions on who might be able to execute the plan. After Mubarak obliquely indicated that he might be the best candidate for the job, he was awarded the directorship of the government's primary schools, the Cairo Polytechnique and the preparatory school in 1850.¹²³

Unfortunately for Mubarak, like many things in Khedival government, his position was subject to political tides. Each Khedive upon succession to the throne was liable to replace the favorites of his predecessor. Upon 'Abbas' succession by Sa'id, Mubarak was removed from government service. Sa'id's rule represents an all-time low in Mubarak's career. After leaving his government post, he was inducted into the army and sent to the Crimea. Throughout Sa'id's reign, Mubarak suffered through several low-paying posts, constantly trying to repay his debts. While in high office, Mubarak had been very conscious of maintaining appropriate appearances and had spent heavily on housing and other material goods. Once he lost his post, he had to face the difficult situation of trying to repay the debts he had incurred in order to maintain the image of a high government official, without the government salary to which he had become accustomed.¹²⁴ In fact, throughout his professional life, Mubarak did not enjoy the extent of material wealth that most in his position attained.

¹²² *al-Khitat*, 122.

¹²³ *al-Khitat*, 122-123.

¹²⁴ *al-Khitat*, 131.

While he was awarded various gifts of land and money at different times, they were not comparable to those extended to others in similar positions.¹²⁵

Mubarak's professional luck was due to change for the better, however, with Isma'il's accession in January 1863. Slowly, he began to work himself up through a variety of posts. In the winter of 1867-68, he was sent to Paris to study both the French educational system as well as the sewer system in preparation for being made director of Education and Public Works in April 1868.¹²⁶ In this post, he was to supervise the civic transformation, which Cairo was undergoing as well as assuming responsibility for the slated educational reform. In October 1869, he was granted the post of director of railways and communications in addition to public works and education. This concentration of power in his hands represented a level of bureaucratic power which no Egyptian had attained to this point in modern times. However, it was destined to come to an end in 1872 when Prince Husayn Kamil replaced Mubarak as director of Public Works and Education.

According to Hunter, there is some discrepancy between Mubarak's account of his professional status and evidence from the archives. Mubarak claims that he held his posts until 1872, while the archives state that he was temporarily removed from both offices (Public Works and Education in January 1869 and the Railway Department in July 1870). Public Works and the Railways were returned in 1869 and Education in January 1870. Archival material also shows that he was removed from all three offices in September 1870 and returned to Education in May 1871 and Public Works in June 1871. Mubarak notes that he was removed from office in November or December 1871 in connection with a dispute with Isma'il Siddiq and regained his posts in May 1872, only to lose them again in August 1872.¹²⁷ This discrepancy indicates that one must read Mubarak's account critically.

During the following period, his status continued to fluctuate—sometimes suffering upsets, sometimes enjoying successes—until he was pensioned in 1891. He was reinstated to Public Works in 1873 as deputy director. In 1875, he was made an advisor in the same department. He regained the position of director of Education in 1878. Under Tawfiq, he was made director of Public Works in 1879 and again in 1882 and director of Education in 1888.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 134-135.

¹²⁶ *al-Khitat*, 134.

¹²⁷ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 131-132.

¹²⁸ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 129.

While he served as the director of the departments of Railway, Public Works, and Charitable Endowments, the government office which he left most impact upon was the Department of Education. Historians as disparate as Robert Hunter and Hussein al Najjar have called Mubarak the "Father of Education" in Egypt because of the important role he played in establishing a new school system as well as his instrumental role in the foundation of *Dar al-'Ulum*, a teachers' training college, both of which will be discussed at a later point.

In addition to Mubarak's impact upon the specifics of education, the novelty of his attitude is worth addressing. His attitude towards western civilization and the desirability of technology was not unique among those who had shared experiences similar to his. A favorable outlook on western civilization was tied integrally to the introduction of western technology and the new system of education. "Between 1809 and 1849, 349 young men were sent to Europe, most to France and Britain, and almost 11,000 youths passed through the new schools in Egypt. Scientific study was of course accompanied by learning European languages, and this ineluctably led to a familiarity with European culture and ideas. Students formed friendships with their foreign instructors, who lost little time acquainting them with the writings of Locke, Montesquieu, and Rousseau."¹²⁹ These students with a penchant for French Enlightenment ideas of nationalism and positivism combined with an essentially local Egyptian identity were destined to become the new bureaucrats.

The duty to instruct

With the new breed of bureaucrats came a new attitude, which Hunter describes as "a technocratic mentality." This approach involved regarding the solution of problems as lying in finding the proper technique – if one found the proper tool, one could solve any difficulty. Locating the proper tool or the appropriate approach involved using organization and broaching any problem in a methodical manner. "Egypt's hydraulic economy would be mastered by the proper irrigation techniques, just as the Egyptian people could be "improved" by the right kind of education. There was a certain conceit about these men, whose esprit de corps derived from a feeling of indispensability and a conviction of their own superiority."¹³⁰ It is not surprising that these men had a feeling of superiority. Many of them had been abroad for the express purpose of serving as the receptacles to carry the fruit of

¹²⁹ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 113.

¹³⁰ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 92.

western learning home to Egypt. While this may seem a condescending attitude, to men like 'Ali Mubarak, the privilege of having gained a better education was intimately tied to responsibility. These men assumed a duty to instigate reform and guide the formation of the minds and behavior of their fellow countrymen just as their intellectual progress had been steered and molded by their foreign teachers during their schooling abroad.

Mubarak's conviction of his responsibility to instruct and inform his countrymen is evident in all of his writings, including *'Alam al-Din*. A prime example of how explanation of an academic principle sometimes overtakes any pretense of storytelling is the chapter on steam engines. Simply because the main characters are traveling from Cairo to Alexandria by train, Mubarak chooses to insert an entire section explaining the principle on which steam engines operate as well as a related discussion on the structure of the railroad system and management of it in Egypt as compared with abroad. Of course it is the Englishman who explains, however, one can not help but feel it is 'Ali Mubarak the engineer speaking. In the chapter describing their trip aboard a steam-powered train, the shaykh is understandably timid about the whole experience, but the Englishman enthuses at great length over all aspects of the steam engine: engineering, financial, and even including the safety of this particular mode of transportation. His manner of convincing the shaykh of the safety of the railroads is interesting in that it is statistically based and empirical. The following paragraph suggests the technocratic attitude which Hunter notes – the problem of lack of trust in a new invention can be addressed in a methodical manner. If all the numerical details are presented to people, they will come to appreciate the value of new technical advances:

The Englishman said, from the files in the period of the last ten years from 1273 (AH) in America 1,070,224,378 passengers have traveled on the railroads, 187 passengers of them died in accidents and 3,155 were hurt. From 1251 to 1273 (AH) 224,345,769 passengers traveled by railroad in France of whom 111 died and 402 were hurt. From 1268 to 1273 (AH) 55,552,813 people traveled on the railroads in Russia. Two of them died and four were injured. So all together from all the different countries there were 1,350,122,970 travelers and 300 died and 3,531 were injured so from every 4,500,000 passengers, one died and from every 381,000 one was injured. This is very slight in comparison with what happens in other means of transportation.¹³¹

'Alam al-Din is not limited to discussions of technical advances. Economic and philosophical ideas were also propagated. Mubarak is not only trying to persuade his readers of the safety and

¹³¹ *'Alam al-Din*, 122-123.

technical beauty of the invention of the steam engine. He also wishes to educate them on the economic principles governing the administration of the whole railroad system abroad and to set these in comparison to the system in place in Egypt. Again, he accomplishes his goal through the form of discussion between the Englishman and the shaykh:

The shaykh said that the railway in Egypt was built at the expense of the government, and the government takes responsibility for doing all that is necessary to run the railroads and takes all of its revenues. The shaykh asked, "Is the railroad run according to this system in other countries?"

The Englishman said that in European countries the system is run in a contrary manner, "The building of railways is at the expense of companies formed from few or many partners -depending on the situation of the railway that will be built and the amount of money that is needed. The investors pay to build the railroad and take the revenues that arise from the passengers and merchandise that is transported by the railroad. In order to protect the interest of passengers, profits are limited by law and cannot be exceeded. In this way, the owners of these companies are prevented from behaving in a way contradictory to the main reason for these railways, which is facilitating transportation and enabling people to travel comfortably and safely while paying lower fees than they used to pay for other means of transportation.

The number of people who are hired by the railways for every 10 kilometers of track are assumed to be 75 in England, 72 in Germany and 71 in France. Each company uses at least 27,000 employees. This army of individuals is used to widen the circle of human fortune. In addition to those directly employed by the railway, these individuals are living in areas established by these companies and served by a large number of people, so if we calculated the number of the people who are working in serving the railways we would find it around one million people.¹³²

All of these facts and figures are noteworthy because this is 'Ali Mubarak's way of carrying out what he perceived as his sacred duty to inform and educate his fellow countrymen. The information reflects the insights Mubarak had on the private enterprise system and in contrasting this system with the government-run system in Egypt, he is attempting to educate his readers on the differences between the two systems. Mubarak's sense of wishing to pass on his observations and knowledge is not unique to him. He shared this attitude with many who had accompanied him upon the student missions abroad. Mubarak is an ideal example of this sense of responsibility if only because of his voluminous works. In addition to his stated purpose of his books, there is always the feeling that he seizes any opportunity he can find to impart information upon any subject that he finds interesting or enlightening. As Hunter notes, "Ali Mubarak was wholly committed to the elixir of a scientific education, not only to produce 'forward-looking leaders,' but also to change the values of his

¹³² *'Alam al Din*, 112.

society."¹³³ This commitment to scientific education is evident both in his works and in the reforms he promoted.

An examination of Mubarak's life and writings serves as an illustration for two major trends occurring in 19th-century Egypt. These trends played a large role in forming Mubarak's career and at the same time, Mubarak's career had a very definite role in shaping how the trends would run their course. Mubarak was one of the first of a new generation of native Egyptian bureaucrats who gained their positions and importance from their educational status. The post that he left the most impact upon himself was that of director of the Department of Education, the very department responsible for turning out more native Egyptians trained to take their places within the bureaucracy. While he gained his government posts through his technical engineering background and his connections, he also helped to make just such an education the new criteria for success in government service. His educational experience was rooted in the traditional forms of education which had been responsible for teaching Egyptians for decades, but went far beyond these common roots. With his participation in the new system of schooling in Egypt and the mission abroad to France, Mubarak was a product of the reforms of Muhammad 'Ali, who would go on to impact the very system that had been responsible for his success.

'Ali Mubarak did much to define education in the second half of the 19th-century. His experience of his own education, combined with practical experience teaching and writing textbooks contribute to the theory of education which guided his policies as the head of the educational administration.

¹³³ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 114.

Chapter 3

'Ali Mubarak and His Theory of Education

Because 'Ali Mubarak was affected so profoundly by the changing form of education, by his own attestation, he was qualified to formulate a definition of what was meant by a "modern" education as well as ascertaining how it could best be attained. In fact, it was an inherent aspect of the mission abroad in which he participated that he procure a modern education and return to Egypt to impart as much as he could of what he had learned. This duty to convey what he had learned was sacred to Mubarak¹³⁴ and he seized every opportunity that he could to relay specific information upon any subject as well as trying to promote what he perceived as a more modern method of attaining knowledge. To Mubarak the difference between modern and traditional methods was especially distinct because his formative years were affected by both. His critique of traditional education is evident within his written works. Several excerpts from his works can be combined to give an indication of his prescription of the best way to gain knowledge following the modern method.

One of the important differences between the two forms of education available in 19th-century Egypt was the professional goal at which they aimed: a traditional education prepared one for one set

¹³⁴Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 113.

of occupations and a modern education led to entirely different career possibilities. If one was dedicated to pursuing a traditional education beyond the *kuttab* at a *madrassa*, one might join the ranks of the religious professions. For centuries those who pursued *al-'ilm al-sharif* or honorable learning, had been ensured a livelihood, a measure of respect within the community, and the potential for obtaining wealth, all of which was tied to the essentially religious nature of their posts which often were in the legal arena. A modern education, on the other hand, was a requirement for entrance to the technically-oriented posts in the growing bureaucracy which were becoming accessible in the 19th-century and could lead to material success and a potential for upward mobility within the government structure. Of course as head of the Department of Education, Mubarak had plans and theories on how to implement a program to convey this modern education, which he expressed in deeds as well as words.

One of his most memorable achievements was the establishment of Dar al-'Ulum, the first modern teaching college in Egypt which in itself is an expression of Mubarak's approach: teaching is a skill that must be learned. Dar al-'Ulum combined both traditional and modern education in one institution which made it a unique development in Egypt. By drawing upon al-Azhar students, the teaching college was fundamentally tied to the old system. One reason the college sought al-Azhar students was that they were already well-versed in the curriculum of the *kuttab*. With their enrollment in Dar al-'Ulum, however, they began to receive instruction in subjects not available at al-Azhar. In this manner, the old and new were combined with the aim of producing well-qualified Arabic teachers for the new government schools.¹³⁵

A modern education

The differences between a modern and a traditional education were evident in many aspects including: teaching style, physical environment, and curriculum. A traditional education aimed at the acquisition of a body of knowledge which was essentially religious and based on analysis of and commentary on an existent and finite body of knowledge. This knowledge was useful because it led to further understanding of religious matters and their worldly applications. A modern education was a process of procuring and sorting through limitless information from the physical world for what was

¹³⁵Lois A. Aroian, *The Nationalization of Arabic and Islamic Education in Egypt: Dar al-'Ulum and al-Azhar*, (Cairo: AUC, 1983), 3.

useful for a particular purpose. Traditional teachers ranging from those found in the *kuttab* to those at al-Azhar shared a manner of imparting knowledge that stressed memorization and discouraged discussion of the information being imparted. In fact, this emphasis upon memorization was not unique to Egypt or to traditional methods. The French system under which the student missions studied has been criticized for the same technique,¹³⁶ and this French influence left its impact on Egyptian education leading to conflict with modern methods. Theoretically, a modern education was to stress physical cleanliness, order, discipline, understanding and observation.

According to 'Ali Mubarak, in a physical sense, traditional education took place in a noisy, disorganized environment, an environment that, to those educated in the modern methods, seemed unhealthy and unproductive. The dirt and lack of respectable places to sit made the *kuttab* undesirable.¹³⁷ Modern education required a more organized physical arrangement and stricter control over the behavior of students, including what they ate, how they dressed, where they sat and the maintenance of their health. In Mitchell's work, he concentrates on the importance of outward form in education. One of the chief priorities Mitchell sees in Egyptian education policy was attaining an external structure of discipline. He entitles his chapter on education "An Appearance of Order."¹³⁸ In *Colonising Egypt*, the order and discipline in education was a requirement of another system that was making its appearance: private land ownership and production for the European market. Discipline in education encouraged productivity.¹³⁹ He contrasts the order of the new system with the disorder found in al-Azhar where shaykhs simply give lectures without paying sufficient heed to whether or not their pupils attended or ascertaining their understanding and mastery of the various lessons.¹⁴⁰

Memorization was an integral pedagogical method in the traditional schools for the simple reason that the body of information that was being studied was held as sacred. Mitchell notes, "The process of learning always began with the study of the Quran, the original text of the law (indeed the only original text, the only text which could not be read in some sense as the interpretation or

¹³⁶ Horvath-Peterson, *Victor Duruy*, 125.

¹³⁷ 'Alam al-Din, 222

¹³⁸ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 64.

¹³⁹ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 75.

¹⁴⁰ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 80.

modification of an earlier writing)."¹⁴¹ Religious knowledge was "applied" in such fields as law which were textually linked. 'Ali Mubarak prescribed how someone interested in gaining the best education should utilize every opportunity to observe the world around him. A serious student should carry with him a notebook and write down everything that occurs to him as well as whatever he might learn from the world. It was not necessary to commit these notes to memory; they would be carefully organized and filed to be referred to at need. This passage places the emphasis clearly upon empirical observation of the world and the gathering and organization of information in order to gain a clearer picture of the natural and social universe; a clear contrast to the text-based nature of traditional education which aimed at an understanding of an ideal. It is also worth noting in that it is clearly the approach 'Ali Mubarak himself took in his personal life. As mentioned earlier, one of the most valuable aspects of *al-Khitat* is the personal observations that Mubarak painstakingly details.¹⁴²

A comparison between the physical environment of a traditional education and a modern education represented by the Lancasterian school is studied by Mitchell. Mitchell perceives the difference in physical environment to be essential in contributing to making the new system foreign to Egyptians. He sees the new schools as "capturing their bodies" by forcing Egyptians into physical and habitual postures that Mitchell hypothesizes were fundamentally foreign to their characters. The new system was ordered to the minutest degree – every moment was filled, every motion dictated.¹⁴³ Mitchell notes how the regimentation and scheduled structure of the new system contrasted sharply with what he perceives as the more organic nature of the traditional system. Whereas in the old system pupils had sat on the floor and had their lecture schedule dictated by the times of prayer, a system of time integrally tied to nature and constantly changing in that the sun determines the prayer times;¹⁴⁴ in the new system, they sat in chairs and consequently in defined rows and places and moved from lesson to lesson governed by the supreme authority of minutes and hours, a method which was presumed to result in more effective learning.

It is not clear how successful in fact the implementation of the Lancasterian system was. Mitchell simply notes that the order was given to establish Lancaster schools in the eight sections of

¹⁴¹Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 83.

¹⁴²Baer, *Political and Social Change*, 15-16.

¹⁴³Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 71.

¹⁴⁴Michell, *Colonising Egypt*, 83.

Cairo, without commenting upon whether or not these schools were actually built and how faithful they were to the Lancasterian model.¹⁴⁵ Heyworth-Dunne notes that around 1834 "...the regulations of a European Lancasterian school were sent to Egypt to serve as a model for Muhammad 'Ali's schools but apart from the reference in St. John there is no evidence that the system was ever adopted."¹⁴⁶ The idea however, of disciplined education, with the day divided into carefully planned segments that involved students' bodies as well as their minds, was certainly not foreign to 'Ali Mubarak. In *'Alam al-Din* the following advice is given: "...divide the day into two parts, half of it for mental activity and study and the other half for play. There should be a playing session in the middle of the learning and studying period because if they [the children] sit for too long, it suppresses their mental ability and weakens their bodies..."¹⁴⁷

Al-madrasa al-amiriyya

The new government primary schools, *al-madaris al-amiriyya* were funded through the government budget¹⁴⁸ and aimed at implementing certain modern reforms. In 'Ali Mubarak's estimation, these schools were far superior to the traditional schools. In a passage from *'Alam al-Din*, the Englishman explains the reasons for their superiority over *kuttab*s and private tutors. The passage is worth quoting at length because it represents clearly Mubarak's perceptions of the advantages the new systematic method of education had over the personal power held in the old system:

These schools [*al-madaris al-amiriyya*] do not depend upon personal whims. We can have confidence in the method which is used and [due to our confidence] we are obliged to follow it. The way these schools are run is the same in all civilized nations... In these schools one finds accuracy and discipline [*al-dabt wa al-rabt*]. Every wise man must observe and embrace [this discipline] from his youth and continue to pursue it in his family life and once he starts to work. He will not find these habits in his family because their kindness will lead to negligence and condoning his play. This mercy will be the cause of his poor habits even though his family is supposed to prevent him from engaging in bad habits through his education. If you hire a private tutor [*mu'addib*]... you will pay his salary thinking that he does what you wish. Any excuse the child gives, his family will accept whether it is valid or not which will prevent the *mu'addib* from teaching the child. This

¹⁴⁵ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 71.

¹⁴⁶ Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 281-282.

¹⁴⁷ *'Alam al-Din*, 224.

¹⁴⁸ Aroian, *Nationalization*, 20.

will prevent the child from being busy with what is useful to him. Naturally it is known that parents do not see the faults of their children. Also mothers, because of their tender feelings towards their children, may feel they are doing more than they should.... If the child stays at home all day with his father and mother and the *mu'addib*, he will get bored and will not learn. Because they are together for a very long time, they may hate each other. On the other hand, in the public schools there is nothing of this. The children will be kept from all of this. They will compete with each other in studying what the teachers say because they worry that they will be prevented from the rewards of excellence or punished or kept from their families or relatives if they do not... The child's fear of these penalties and his love for what is beneficial to him will increase. There will be discussions between [the pupils] about what is said. Some will be right sometimes and others will be right other times. The reason for their activity and effort is their competition with each other for improvement. Because of the variety of arts, they will not be bored and will not be lazy as a result of too much work, instead they will be kept happy by changing often from mental to physical work. This will make the pupil stronger physically and spiritually. The manners of his teachers will be etched in his mind and he will grow accustomed to it [their manners]. The teachers are chosen from the best mannered so you will not find them engaging in behavior detrimental to education, and if it happens, it will be rare. The child will gain in a very short time the good manners of men and because all of the children are the same in their external appearance and manner and methods in which they have been taught, they will be like brothers and help each other. In the course of their education, they will forget the mercy of their mothers and fathers and gradually the child of great men will descend from his greatness and the greatness of his family and the poor child will rise through his good manners.¹⁴⁹

Whether or not the Lancasterian model was ever adopted, there were aspects of the system that were evidently incorporated. Mubarak's praise of *al-dabt wa al-rabt*, expressions usually used for military discipline, indicate that this sort of discipline was intended by the new system. The new pedagogical methods were intended to form a new type of personality – one who pursued a disciplined course not only in his academic career, but also in his family and professional life.

The duty of inspection of pupils and involvement in their everyday life mentioned in Mitchell is clear from the following passage from *al-Khitat* where Mubarak describes the personal role he assumed in supervision:

All of [my duties] didn't detract my attention from giving my time and attention to the pupils and their food, drink, clothes, instruction and other matters. I, myself, supervised the instruction of students on how to dress and how to read and write as well as observing the way the teacher instructs and how he disciplines the pupils. No day passed without my going to each grade level to check their condition. I was strict with the officers and even with the menial workers to make sure they did what they were supposed to do. This

¹⁴⁹ *Alam al-Din*, 248-250.

prevents a great deal of general harm as well as spoiling of the pupils. In addition, I arranged lessons and gave students instruction in subjects such as physics and architecture.¹⁵⁰

Mubarak's personal interest in the slightest detail of his students' lives reflects a policy similar in spirit to what was described in Mitchell although certainly far less comprehensive. As far as Mubarak was concerned, education was responsible for creating and shaping the human beings who entered the modern pedagogical system. In order for the effort and expense of education to pay off, each component of the system had to function in the way it was intended. The details of food, clothing, and cleanliness were all elements of education and as such fitting subjects for inspection.

One other area requiring careful attention was that of corporal punishment. In the traditional system the responsibility for carrying out punishment and limiting what punishment might consist of rested fully on the shoulders of the teacher. In several places in his autobiography Mubarak notes that his teachers hit him.¹⁵¹ Mubarak comments on the danger of such a burden being placed on an individual:

The act of hitting affects the one who hits so that he becomes unable to stop at a reasonable punishment, instead exceeding the reasonable because he remembers the past sins of all of those he knew in the past. He might hurt their limbs or because of their fear of him, students might relate stories about him without knowing what is true and what is not. This behavior might lead them into bad habits which will last them all their lives. Since the intention of parents in rearing their children is to instill in them proper values, they should not expose their children in their youth to what leads to the opposite of the manners they wish to encourage. Instead they should choose a disciplinarian for their children that is polite, kind, and well behaved, so that the children will see nothing of him but what is good.¹⁵²

Avoiding harsh corporal punishment not only was desirable in that it instilled the proper values, it also was a more productive approach on an academic level. While Mubarak expressed his distaste for this method of discipline, corporal punishment remained a factor in military schools according to Mitchell; however it had become standardized and regulated. Each offense carried a particular penalty.¹⁵³ Mitchell notes that, in contrast to the military schools, in the Egyptian School in Paris which was responsible for educating mission members, corporal punishment was no longer used:

¹⁵⁰ *al-Khitat*, 123.

¹⁵¹ *al-Khitat*, 107.

¹⁵² *Allam al-Din*, 224.

¹⁵³ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 39.

"Students are now deprived of leave or confined to their rooms rather than beaten with the leather whip. In this way punishment is made an aspect of discipline, of that continuous technique of control whose method is to position, to divide, and to set limits."¹⁵⁴ Maintaining order through discipline rather than corporal punishment theoretically allowed for a more productive and understanding relationship between teacher and student. A teacher that has sympathy for his students is more likely to discern their level of understanding and consequently tailor their lessons to take their students gradually and painlessly from one level to another. Mubarak comments:

Also because of their kindness, they would act towards the children in a way that was appropriate to their age. Starting with simple words [*al-kalimat al-saghira*] and short parables [*hikams*] and then building upon them will lead children by themselves to want to learn and love learning. This will be the case especially if he points out to them the advantage of every word and parable he has taught them by indicating the use of each one and uses kind words while talking to them.¹⁵⁵

Here it is clear that Mubarak is stressing teaching method, an emphasis that will become important in his founding of Dar al-'Ulum. His prescribed method of education embraced discussion. While the emphasis upon love of learning and illustration of the utilitarian nature of learning is distinctly different from traditional education, one theme within this short passage ties this essentially modern approach to traditional schooling: the essentially moral character of the early knowledge taught in the form of parables (*hikams*).

Mubarak as a teacher

Mubarak became head of the Department of Education in 1868. To Mubarak, the post was not merely a position assigned him for the prestige and power associated with it. Since his return from Paris, Mubarak had had a passion for teaching and imparting knowledge. As we have seen, under 'Abbas, Mubarak had occupied a variety of posts, however, upon the assumption of power of Sa'id, he was removed from his post in the Department of Education and sent to the Crimea, which amounted to an honorable form of exile. Shortly after he returned from the Crimea, Mubarak found himself without meaningful occupation. He accepted a post as a clerk in the Department of War and then proceeded to hold a variety of other low-level posts until Sa'id assigned him to map the 'Abu Hammad fortifications.

¹⁵⁴ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 74.

¹⁵⁵ *Alam al-Din*, 225.

Once he and one of his colleagues had been asked to draw up the plans, they couldn't find an opportunity to show them to Sa'id.¹⁵⁶ "I traveled with 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim (one of his classmates from Paris) for three months without any work, moving from one town to another, from one place to another. One day he (Sa'id Pasha) was in the area and saw me. He called to me and asked me what I'd accomplished in my drawing. I brought it to him and he said to keep it until he had enough time to look at in detail. He never looked at it, but I was awarded a fixed salary."¹⁵⁷

While in the company of 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim, he encountered an opportunity to busy himself in a pursuit that appealed both to his desire to promote education as well as his aspirations to help *abna' al watan*, Egypt's native sons. Much to everyone's surprise, he accepted the duty of teaching illiterate officers how to read along with the basics of arithmetic. His description in *al-Khitat* reveals just how seriously he took the assignment even though those around him regarded it as a demeaning task ill-suited to one of his experience and status:

I stayed in his ['Ali Pasha Ibrahim's] company for a long time without work until we were in Maryut. Adham Pasha [a Turkish officer who was director of Education at various points] was there. He told me that he had orders to teach officers and non-commissioned officers reading, writing and mathematics. He asked me to suggest the best person for this job and I offered myself. He thought I was joking because he thought that I wouldn't do such a trifling job. He asked, "Would you be willing to be a teacher for these people?" And I said, "How could I refuse the opportunity to teach native sons and give them the benefits of knowledge? We, too, began with the alphabet and progressed until we reached the stage that we are in." When I made my offer, he asked me to proceed in teaching them.¹⁵⁸

This passage is indicative of how Mubarak perceived himself and his motivations of personal dedication to education and conviction of the useful role it could play in improving the conditions of his fellow countrymen. Mubarak, by his account, set about his teaching with serious intent, bent upon executing his task in the proper fashion and making a personal commitment to the endeavor: "I had two *effendis* to help. I arranged the subjects that I was going to teach and determined the methods that we should use. We started teaching them. I wrote the alphabet for them in my own hand."¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶Lorne M. Kenny, "'Ali Mubarak: Nineteenth Century Egyptian Educator and Administrator," Middle East Journal, 21, (1967): 43.

¹⁵⁷*al-Khitat*, 130.

¹⁵⁸*al-Khitat*, 130.

¹⁵⁹*al-Khitat*, 130.

'Ali Mubarak's view of how the process of education should be carried out is interesting. In describing his experience teaching illiterate officers, he goes into details of how he created the proper atmosphere for learning and executed the method which he found most valuable, all with very little in the way of facilities:

In order to provide stability, I went to their tent. I taught by writing letters on the ground or on the shop tile with a piece of coal until some of them knew how to write and learned the basics of mathematics. Then I made the outstanding students my assistants. I needed them to help me in teaching the others.¹⁶⁰

The idea of using advanced students as monitors or assistants to help other students was not new to either the traditional methods of education or the Lancasterian method. In traditional schools, those who had memorized the lesson might be called upon to aid those who needed help.¹⁶¹ In the Lancasterian schools, student monitors were responsible for guiding their groups of pupils through their daily routines.¹⁶²

Mubarak seemed to revel in being placed in challenging situations and in trying to overcome them. Lacking a well-furnished classroom and educational aids, he had to make do with what he found around him. He placed his emphasis firmly on demonstrating the implications of theory visually:

In order to teach the rules of geometry that they needed to understand, I used only a rope and sticks. When I wanted to teach them the process of evaluating distances and defining points and a straight line, I demonstrated it practically. I showed them the benefits of theory [how it could be applied]. This practical demonstration made the points I was conveying stay with them. Some of them understood at once and demonstrated the principle immediately with no difficulties because of the practical demonstration.¹⁶³

Mubarak's pleasure in his success at conveying his lessons is evident. His teaching experience was a training ground for his methods of education, to see them succeed inevitably was rewarding and reconfirming to him.

One area of concern for him was the learning of languages and for him it carried personal connotations. As a young man in the Paris school, he had faced the severe difficulty of being thrown into a classroom in which all of the lessons were taught in French. While at first he floundered in the

¹⁶⁰*al-Khitat*, 130.

¹⁶¹Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 3.

¹⁶²Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 69.

¹⁶³*al-Khitat*, 130.

strange learning environment and experienced great difficulty in trying to keep up with the lessons. he was determined to learn the language so that he would be able to excel. In *'Alam al-Din* the Englishman gives advice to the shaykh which surely arose from his own personal experience:

In order to gain advancement in languages, apply certain methods of learning. Through practice and using these methods every day, all that you learn will stick in your mind. In a short time you will learn a great deal. Part of the method involves reading in books, starting with those at a low level because of the easiness of the words and phrases and then going on to the next level, and so on. The method of learning, as is obvious to you, is to start by reading the lesson and learning to pronounce the words and repeating them until they stick in your mind. Continue with this process until you have a collection of words and then begin to learn the conjugation of words and look at examples of conjugation. Then look at examples by yourself and apply the rule to each example. It is not enough to learn by recitation. You should have a small book that is easy to carry with you and you can look at it anytime you want.¹⁶⁴

One can only imagine Mubarak himself busily writing in a tiny notebook all that he learned of French and peering at it as he struggled to attain the language which would open the doors of education to him. Mubarak's understanding of language learning is that of one who has actually learned a language well enough to use it in his life. The process of learning a rule, looking at examples of it and then applying it independently is a characteristic of the modern education that Mubarak helped introduce into Egypt.

Traditional education concentrated upon the classics from the very beginning in the *kuttab* with memorization of the Qur'an¹⁶⁵ through to the level of al-Azhar where the curriculum was determined entirely by a series of classic works of religious commentary.¹⁶⁶ This concentration upon books is evident in modern education as well, according to the Englishman. He stresses the value of literature in one's education and prescribes reading poetry and great works to the shaykh and his son:

"As you advance in the language, you need to learn more poetry and the great works of literature." The Englishman praised education and classic literature because it is more rigid than common speech. "It is better that you choose poetry which brings enjoyment and avoid what is hard or complicated until you learn proper pronunciation and gain proficiency in the language."¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ *'Alam al-Din*, 242.

¹⁶⁵ Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 2.

¹⁶⁶ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 83.

¹⁶⁷ *'Alam al-Din*, 242.

One interesting aspect to note is that a student is to choose what he finds pleasurable in the great works and poetry. In traditional education, the choice of works is more rigidly predetermined. Poetry, while sometimes taught, was often regarded with suspicion and a common caution was associated with the study of poetry – that one must be careful to avoid that which was erotic. Another insight gained from the above passage is how works of literature could form the basis of language learning. In fact, the students on mission to France encountered many great works of literature, in particular al-Tahtawi because he was completely free to choose his own reading materials, since he didn't have class work to attend to.¹⁶⁸

This confidence in one's ability to learn from books is also evident in *'Alam al-Din*. The Englishman, who has assumed responsibility for teaching English to the shaykh and his son, prescribes a book for them to use to teach them the language:

I will bring you a book that has everything that you need in it. If you follow it and follow what I planned for you, it will be no time at all before you learn to speak the English language. With God's will, when we return, you will find no difference between you and me in speaking the English language. So the shaykh thanked him for his advice and followed his recommendation and took the book and followed it to the word. The son followed the example of the father so they were the best of help to each other.¹⁶⁹

A sense of order and schedule was also essential in modern education. The life of the shaykh and the Englishman followed the concept of scheduling time for the different pursuits: "They divided the day. Some of it for recreation on the ship deck, some of it for eating, and some of it for memorization, the rest was for discussion and study."¹⁷⁰ This sense of order was seen as benefiting the process of learning and was a feature of the new schools. Timothy Mitchell describes this sense of order as being essentially foreign to Egyptian society. In putting stress on examining the Lancasterian, he takes an extreme example. A characteristic of the Lancasterian system was that at any given moment the position and activity of the students would be assured. A strict system based on precise timing and instinctively followed telegraphic signals was to result in a factory atmosphere which transmitted knowledge without the disorder which led to a lack of control and lost time. This sort of overwhelming order surely was foreign to most cultures, not just Egyptian society, an artificial

¹⁶⁸ Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, 69.

¹⁶⁹ *'Alam al-Din*, 243.

¹⁷⁰ *'Alam al-Din*,

structure created with a goal of complete discipline leading to an efficient system to educate the largest number of pupils.

Dar al-'Ulum

As we have said, in recognition of the fact that teaching like any other skill must be acquired, that teachers need to *learn* how to teach, Mubarak established Dar al-'Ulum, the first modern teaching college in Egypt. This important reform represented a change from the traditional attitude that possession of knowledge was the only qualification required for teaching. Teacher training was a new idea. Previously, the only qualification required to teach was having attained knowledge of the work to be taught. The *faqih* in the *kuttab* was qualified to teach by virtue of the fact that he had memorized the Qur'an.¹⁷¹ The student at al-Azhar once he had studied a work with a teacher, was awarded an *ijaza* or license from his teacher to instruct others in the same work.¹⁷² Setting any sort of standards regarding the educational background and the body of knowledge a teacher should possess was made impossible by this lack of formal training of teachers. Once formal training became a requirement, greater respect for the profession of teaching in primary education was an expected corollary.

'Ali Mubarak had long been fascinated with teaching methods and often theorized on how education could most effectively be conveyed so it is no surprise that he would play an integral role in founding the institution which would standardize the education required of teachers. In *al-Khitat*, Mubarak explains the rationale for founding Dar al-'Ulum: "Since one of the most important requirements for schools is having teachers ready to assume all of the duties of teaching, I concentrated my thoughts on this important matter. After a decree was issued, I founded Dar al-'Ulum."¹⁷³ This concept of "all the duties of teaching," meant that teachers were not merely required to master one literary work or have formal education in one field. Teachers from this point onward would be required to have a much broader education than had previously been required including mathematics, geography, physics, history, geometry and calligraphy.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 2.

¹⁷² Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 67.

¹⁷³ *al-Khitat*, 137.

¹⁷⁴ Aroian, *Nationalization*, 16.

Dar al-'Ulum finds its beginnings in a lecture series organized by 'Ali Mubarak in May 1871. The lectures were held in the Dar al-'Ulum amphitheater in the palace at Darb al-Jamamiz which housed the Diwan al-Madaris and Dar al-Kuttub among other educationally-related institutions. These lectures covered a wide variety of topics including: scientific topics such as astronomy, natural sciences including experiments, mechanics, physics and botany; literary sciences; and religious matters including *fiqh*, *tafsir* and *hadith*.¹⁷⁵ The composition of the lecture series reflected the elements which Mubarak felt were missing from an al-Azhar education alongside the essential components of a religious education. Mubarak describes the curriculum which Dar al-'Ulum was to follow:

These students would be taken from al-Azhar, students who had studied some of the great Arabic works, *fiqh* [jurisprudence], as well as having memorized the Holy Qur'an. In this school they were to be taught in fields of knowledge missing from al-Azhar's curriculum such as math, geometry, physics, geography, history and calligraphy in addition to al-Azhar's curriculum of Arabic, *tafsir*, *hadith*, *fiqh*, and the *madhhab* of Abi Hanifa al-Numan.¹⁷⁶

In addition to specifying that students come from al-Azhar, the age of applicants was also specified. Initially, students were between 30 and 40 years old but later the age of admission dropped significantly.¹⁷⁷ By choosing students from al-Azhar, the quality of Arabic education was already presumed to be very good and these students were well versed in the traditional curriculum of the *kuttub*. The aim of Dar al-'Ulum, then, would be to fill in the gaps present in an al-Azhar education in terms of non-religious studies. By offering al-Azhar students the opportunity to gain access to a government education, they were consequently given access to government employment.

Students' material needs were to be well taken care of. Funding through *al-awqaf* funds provided their needs in terms of clothing and food: "They were given a monthly salary to spend on clothing and other costs of living. The afternoon meal was provided for them and was paid for from *al-awqaf* funds."¹⁷⁸ Dar al-'Ulum was classified as a *madrassa ahliyya* as opposed to an *amiriyya* or royal school. *Amiriyya* schools were part of the government budgets, but *ahliyya* schools were under

¹⁷⁵ Aroian, *Nationalization*, 13.

¹⁷⁶ *al-Khitat*, 137.

¹⁷⁷ Aroian, *Nationalization*, 29.

¹⁷⁸ *al-Khitat*, 137.

government supervision but not budgeted, instead they were funded through *al-awqaf*¹⁷⁹ in the same manner that the *madrasa* system was funded.

To begin with, Mubarak had to locate teachers to lecture in Dar al-'Ulum: "The required teachers were obtained from both the 'ulama and others. These teachers were to teach the students and train them to master the desired fields of study so that students might benefit personally as well as passing on the benefits [of their education] to others. These students would go on to be teachers of Arabic, calligraphy and grammar in *al-makatib al-ahliyya* in Cairo and other places."¹⁸⁰ During the period from 1868-1879, 31 new primary schools opened in Cairo, Alexandria and some of the provinces.¹⁸¹

The idea of participating in the new teacher training colleges appealed to many of al-Azhar's students according to Mubarak. While other aspects of the modern education system were too foreign to them, Dar al-'Ulum bridged the gap between traditional education and modern education. The subjects that they were teaching would be the same, it was merely a matter of getting the proper training on how to go about teaching them. In fact, according to Mubarak, so many wanted to enroll that a screening process had to be instituted:

When the word spread [of the founding of the school], many of the outstanding students at al-Azhar came asking to enroll in the school. We tested them and selected the desired number of students. They began studying and achieved what was desired. The trial succeeded and those who graduated became teachers in Cairo and other areas to their own benefit as well as the benefit of others.¹⁸²

While Mubarak sees his experiment as an unqualified success, it has been criticized by outside observers and historians for a variety of reasons. Heyworth-Dunne notes that only 27 students graduated between 1872 and 1879 and that these men did not represent a body of educators.¹⁸³ He criticizes the initial recruitment of older students, perceiving them as "... already having imbibed too much of the Azhari method of teaching and learning which depended mainly on the memory."¹⁸⁴ The

¹⁷⁹Aroian, *Nationalization*, 20.

¹⁸⁰*al-Khitat*, 137.

¹⁸¹Aroin, *Nationalization*, 10.

¹⁸²*al-Khitat*, 137.

¹⁸³Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 379.

¹⁸⁴Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 379.

decision to use older students was in keeping with the level of education that they were supposed to have achieved at al-Azhar.

In addition to Arabic teachers, those who taught other subjects also required training:

The teachers of subjects other than Arabic, like those who taught geometry, math and languages, were to come from outstanding students who had finished study at institutions of higher learning like the *Muhandiskhana*, the school of accounting, or business administration. At first they would be employed as demonstrators for the teacher's lessons and then would be employed as teachers independently in *madrasas* and *maktabs*, each according to his ability with the exception of those who are employed in institutions other than the schools within the government departments. This was decided and announced and the students were informed of it. The students wished to learn and strove to advance and insisted upon succeeding. They entered professions in the technical arts and [through Dar al-'Ulum] the government was able to enlarge the circle of education without great expense.¹⁸⁵

Mubarak's emphasis upon the cost-efficiency of the new school is characteristic of a man who made his career by proposing plans to achieve desired goals at far less than projected costs. Dar al-'Ulum was part of the government's effort at organization and central control of the educational system. This standardization was essential to building a modern system because in order for an education to hold meaning as a qualification required to enter a profession, one must be able to determine exactly what that education consisted of. Once it became clear that all who graduated from a given institution possessed a given set of qualifications and had studied a particular body of knowledge, education could become a pre-requisite for professional promotion. This establishment of education as a criterion for promotion is essential to the idea of a modern bureaucracy in which, presumably, rank and status is based at least in part on qualifications.

The implementation of the modern system of education in Egypt was begun by Muhammad 'Ali, but it was bureaucrats like 'Ali Mubarak who fueled the continuation of the modernization of the system and helped make education a requirement for material success in both practical and theoretical terms. By establishing Dar al-'Ulum, the propagators of the system, the individual teachers, underwent a process of standardization – because they all shared the same training, they could be assumed to be teaching at the same level. Once teaching was standardized, education took one more step towards being a pre-requisite for any sort of professional success. Mubarak's stress upon the need for teacher training arose from his conviction that teaching required preparation, not only in the sense that one

¹⁸⁵ *al-Khitat*, 137.

would know the curriculum required, but also possess the method by which it should be imparted. Mubarak's ideas on teaching appropriate methods revolving around the importance of observation and practical demonstration were formed both by his own educational experience and his own teaching experience. These methods, combined with the difference in curriculum, were to create the contrast between a modern education which was becoming the criterion for professional success in a changing world and a traditional education which, while it had once been a source of status and wealth, was rapidly losing ground as native Egyptians began to qualify for government posts through their education in the new pedagogical system.

Chapter I

The Context of the Reform

Chapter 4

The Growth of Meritocracy

The link between education and material success in the developing bureaucracy became a characteristic of Egyptian society during the 19th-century. This link is significant in the process of Egyptianization of government that was occurring in that it opened doors to native Egyptians to serve in the governmental hierarchy and enjoy the attached status and material benefits, an avenue that had been temporarily closed during the Ottoman administration. This trend toward Egyptianization was followed by an Arabicization of the bureaucracy under Isma'il in which Arabic replaced Ottoman Turkish as the language of record-keeping¹⁸⁶. Along with the increasingly Egyptian and Arabic character of the administration, the government was undergoing an expansion and developing into a modern bureaucracy, a process that provided career opportunities offering wealth and status. In order to take advantage of these opportunities, one increasingly required a modern education which was inherently secular and fundamentally technical. The connection between modern education and the ability to attain a respected, financially rewarding post in government is important in understanding Egyptian social history in the mid to late 19th-century, continuing through to the 20th-century. Even after the British

¹⁸⁶Toledano, *State and Society*, 158.

Occupation, a materially useful education was one that would guarantee government employment because it extended opportunities for wealth, status, and Europeanized lifestyle, combined with a certain degree of stability.

Those who entered the Egyptian bureaucracy and managed to reach high levels shared several characteristics in common. Once they gained admittance to the bureaucracy, they strove to attain an ostentatious style of living suitable to their rank even if it meant, for some like 'Ali Mubarak, living beyond their means. Their tastes and purchases reflected European influences. To varying degrees they owned land as a result of khedival land grants which was both an asset in the sense that it contributed to prestige as well as being a major financial responsibility if the land could not support itself.¹⁸⁷

It is interesting to note that the native Egyptian bureaucrats that achieved their positions as a direct result of the education that they received through the patronage of the Khedival state were later to play an instrumental role in the breakdown of the absolutist rule of Khedive Isma'il. Hunter attributes their western education and the related values and political priorities as being a key factor in their withdrawal of support for Isma'il.¹⁸⁸

Emerging bureaucracy

The 19th-century is characterized by the development and expansion of the state, which led to the emergence of a modern bureaucracy. Hunter describes the state machinery of the 19th-century as "the embryos of the bureaucracies of the twentieth century."¹⁸⁹ This is true in many senses; at least one of them is recruitment for government posts. The new recruiting patterns and training instituted to meet the demands of the military machine Muhammad 'Ali created, continued to feed the emerging bureaucracy. As the state machinery expanded, more and more qualified men were required to keep the administration running smoothly. As more and more men entered government service, the need for a certain level of rationalization became more evident. With this rationalization came measures leading toward modern bureaucracy. Once the need for these men was created and the educational system had been instituted as a means of supplying them, the government became dependent upon these lines of

¹⁸⁷Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 100-103.

¹⁸⁸Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 190.

¹⁸⁹Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 3.

recruitment, which would continue to be important even after the British occupation. If Muhammad 'Ali had been preoccupied with creating a group of men capable of initiating his reforms, the British occupiers would be no less preoccupied with insuring their supply of government employees.

Ironically, the centralized structure which was created to support his reforms lasted longer than most of his more substantive reform programs. In many ways, the enduring legacy which Muhammad 'Ali left to his adopted country was its bureaucracy. Due to foreign intervention, his monopolies were abolished and many of his reform plans went with them due to related current events and excessive demands upon his subjects in the period; however, interventionist government continued.¹⁹⁰ Hunter chooses the year 1837 as a turning point because by this time it had become clear that the financial demands which he had placed upon the *fellahin* were excessive as demonstrated by their large scale flights to larger towns or the desert. In the same year, an international monetary crisis was reflected locally in bankruptcies of merchant houses that the Egyptian government had turned to for credit. Coincidentally, another war with the Ottomans was in the planning stage – a war that would be engaged in 1839 and lead to European military intervention and the London treaty of 1840 which reduced Muhammad 'Ali's army, forced him to accept a ban on monopolies within the Ottoman empire as well as requiring him to give up the Ottoman territories he had taken by force of arms. The *Siyasatname* issued in 1837 was to form the basis of Egyptian administration for the rest of the century. It aimed at a major reorganization of governmental departments in an effort to institutionalize central administration.¹⁹¹ While the *Siyasatname* did not accomplish all it set out to do, the centralized nature of Muhammad 'Ali's government remained and "...grew so rapidly in subsequent years that 'bureaucracy' became almost synonymous with the modern state in Egypt."¹⁹² All of these factors constituted a threat to the fiscal income of the state which had supported reform. A decrease in income was necessarily accompanied by a cut in funding for various programs. Also, with the limitations on military forces, the prime impetus for the reform programs as far as Muhammad 'Ali was concerned was gone.

¹⁹⁰Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 32.

¹⁹¹ Raouf Abbas Hamed, "The *Siyasatname* and the Institutionalization of Central Administration under Muhammad 'Ali," in *The State and Its Servants: Egypt from Ottoman Times to the Present*, ed. Nelly Hanna, (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1995), 84.

¹⁹²Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 17

While Muhammad 'Ali was responsible for bringing Egyptians in contact with western education, he was interested only in what he found "useful" to him and his growing state. The technical education, which he so valued, might have originated in the west, but he was only interested in its utilitarian value, not in its cultural and philosophical implications. Indeed, Muhammad 'Ali and his successors achieved a level of despotism which was unprecedented. His approach to western knowledge was that of one who sees a tool to use to his own ends. In this case, his ends involved "...the reconstitution of power in his own hands and its imposition upon the rest of society."¹⁹³ By incorporating native Egyptians into the bureaucracy, he took a step towards making his power structure depend more and more upon Egyptians not only in terms of the men he educated but also through his policies in relationship to the rural notables who assumed a greater role and more power under Muhammad 'Ali.¹⁹⁴

Conditions and consequences of achieving a government post

With the development of the new bureaucracy, new criteria became the basis of success within the bureaucracy. Hunter notes changing criteria for recruitment into the government bureaucracy, criteria which represented a clear change from the early years of Muhammad 'Ali's reign during which officials gained positions in government as a result of "...their presumed loyalty to the ruler or because their personal qualities were needed at the moment."¹⁹⁵ Three groups were becoming incorporated into the bureaucracy. The first reflected "...an intimate connection between scientific knowledge and administrative service..."¹⁹⁶ including education abroad or in one of the new Egyptian schools combined with foreign language skills. The second group was European in origin and gained administrative and technical positions. The third consisted of Egypt's rural notables; a result of the government's need for support from this group whose influence penetrated to the lower levels of Egyptian society through their rural power base.

Toledano confirms the proposition that while it may have been common at one point for appointments to government positions to depend entirely upon the whims of the viceroy, soon it would

¹⁹³Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 22.

¹⁹⁴Cuno, *The Pasha's Peasants*, 86.

¹⁹⁵Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 83.

¹⁹⁶Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives*, 83.

be clear that: "Training, education, and patronage through long-term association with an elite household [*intisap*] were far more important [than khedival whim] in shaping the careers of officers and bureaucrats."¹⁹⁷ Toledano perceives this as being the case beginning from mid century. If we look at the example of 'Ali Mubarak, all three elements are essential to his rise through the bureaucracy. His education and training abroad qualified him for the posts that he held, and, according to his own account, *intisab* played an important role in gaining him admission to government service. Mubarak relates his experience of his first meeting with 'Abbas Pasha: 'Abbas asked him if he was 'Ali Mubarak and when he confirmed his identity, 'Abbas said, "Ahmad Pasha, the brother of the ex-Khedive, recommended you to me. So I will keep you with me in my service."¹⁹⁸ While he received Khedival attention due to his connections with Ibrahim Pasha's son, his further promotion depended upon his own skills at making himself necessary to the ruler.

While promotion was not based entirely upon the caprice of the ruler, officeholders were far from secure either in their positions or in their belongings. Toledano notes that this sense that property and wealth might be arbitrarily confiscated at any time led Egyptian officers to hide their wealth and diversify their investments in ways that would protect their livelihoods, even if they fell from favor.¹⁹⁹ According to his later testimony, 'Ali Mubarak was in no way above this insecurity of position. At times he contemplated returning to the country and leaving government service entirely.²⁰⁰

Perhaps the single most important factor contributing to this sense of insecurity was the mobile and erratic nature of most bureaucratic careers in the Khedival government. Almost no official remained in a single sector of government for his entire career. Promotions and demotions might mean leaving one branch of government for another one entirely.²⁰¹ The strong personal power of the Khedive was reinforced by the general policy of replacing the appointments of one's successor as well as shifting and transferring officials from post to post even within one administration. "Within days of his [Isma'il's] accession, he had begun replacing Sa'id's men with his own, and by March 1863, most of his predecessor's appointments had been revoked. Officials were continuously transferred from one

¹⁹⁷Toledano, *State and Society*, 97.

¹⁹⁸*al-Khitat*, 120.

¹⁹⁹Toledano, *State and Society*, 98.

²⁰⁰*al-Khitat*, 128.

²⁰¹Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 83.

position or assignment to another, or dismissed outright; few remained in one place very long."²⁰² As noted earlier, 'Ali Mubarak's career was a good example of this mobility. He was appointed to 15 major posts in 10 years. Mubarak moved between the Education, Public Works and *Awqaf* Departments, sometimes holding more than one post simultaneously, sometimes being entirely stripped of meaningful office.

As a way of combating the insecurity of the system, one had to possess skills. Toledano notes that literacy, for instance, began to be a qualification for even low-level technical jobs. The key to gaining and then retaining one's post was to exhibit the appropriate skills:

Still, though increasing professionalization of the service in effect mitigated office insecurity, the feeling among elite members persisted nonetheless.... In any event, social status and economic opportunity were so inextricably bound to office, that officeholders were prepared to endure a great deal in order to remain in the viceroy's service. In that sense, they certainly had an accurate perception of reality. In the middle of the century, many advantages accrued with office, which greatly offset the hardships attached to it.²⁰³

No matter how difficult and uncertain a government post might be, the unique advantages available through a government career made the bureaucratic hierarchy a well-respected avenue to success.

Criteria for success

The bureaucratic elite, *al-dhawāt*, enjoyed special privileges and shared many characteristics. It was a class that was undergoing many changes during the 19th-century. "The high officials of mid-century were a new and distinct body of men, patricians of rank bridging the gap between Muhammad Ali's imported Ottoman-Mamluk ruling class and the Europeanized, highly technocratic service aristocracy that began to surface during the second decade of the British occupation (the 1890s)."²⁰⁴ Hunter identifies three different time periods characterized by three generations of high level bureaucrats. The first group, with the exception of a few men like Adham Pasha, lost power with the accession of 'Abbas either sent to exile, retired or dead. The next group which included 'Ali Mubarak was noted for the western education they received under Muhammad 'Ali. These men rose through the

²⁰² Hunter, *Under the Khedives* 76.

²⁰³ Toledano, *State and Society*, 104.

²⁰⁴ Hunter, *Under the Khedives* 82.

bureaucracy to reach the highest levels under Isma'il. Under the British occupation, the sons of these men were to assume power.²⁰⁵ In addition to these three main periods characterized by changes in government officials, there was also some reshuffling and demotion of former officials when Sa'id came to power, due to his rivalry with 'Abbas. One often cited example is the relationship between al-Tahtawi and Mubarak. Under 'Abbas, Mubarak enjoyed many high level posts while al-Tahtawi was sent to near exile in the Sudan. With Sa'id's assumption of power, al-Tahtawi was reinstated and Mubarak's career went through a low period.²⁰⁶

As was true throughout the Ottoman Empire, bureaucratic rank was a source of social standing as well as material wealth. This rank could either be achieved in the civil or in military service and movement between the two branches was not uncommon. Rank was awarded as a result of office holding but as Toledano points out, once rank was attained, even after an official was removed from his office, he did not lose his rank or his status as a member of the elite.²⁰⁷

Salaries are another interesting point reflecting the establishment of a civil service. "Despite disagreement over the criterion for awarding salaries, the principle of salary by rank rather than by position or quality of work became firmly established during Muhammad Ali's reign."²⁰⁸ Rank was independent of position within one of the various branches of the government. All those who held the same rank would receive the same salaries regardless of what post they held. Systems in payment reflected the difference between those who were in the government hierarchy and those who were not: while government employees were assigned regular salaries that were paid every four months, anyone else hired was paid on a daily basis, a system generally used for payment of menial workers.²⁰⁹ This system of assigning salaries according to rank represented the rationalization that the government was undergoing and seems a reflection of the military basis of the bureaucracy. Later in 1871, however, salaries were awarded according to position rather than rank, seemingly as a measure to cut expenses. Toledano notes that salaries reflected severe inequality between the ranks with the top salary being

²⁰⁵ Hunter, *Under the Khedives* 82-83.

²⁰⁶ Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 296.

²⁰⁷ Toledano, *State and Society*, 70.

²⁰⁸ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 55.

²⁰⁹ Toledano, *State and Society*, 105.

approximately 300 times the lowest.²¹⁰ The question of salaries indicates the way rationalization processes had been set into motion but shows how inconsistencies remained. As long as the ruler enjoyed strong personal power, a strict meritocracy could not come into being.

Another characteristic common to high office holders was an expectation that they would maintain a high standard of living accompanied by high expenditures. The elevated standard of living that they sought to achieve was modeled along the lines of European consumption. Hunter notes that by the late 1860s, slave purchases were less common while investments in steam engines increased. Carriages replaced horses as the favorite mode of transportation. European knickknacks decorated the expensive homes reflecting new Europeanized taste that bureaucrats took great pains to erect. This new Europeanization was evident even in the dress of Egyptian officials and their families. Frock coats, fezes and French dresses all marked this desire to attain what was deemed the appropriate standard and style of living.²¹¹ For officers from moderate means, the ability to maintain this sort of lifestyle depended upon one's position in the government. 'Ali Mubarak, for instance, built a large house suitable to his standing under 'Abbas, incurring a large debt in the building. When Sa'id came to power he was sent to the Crimea and upon return lived in a small rented house with a brother and a nephew.²¹²

Status as a landowner became increasingly associated with high office – something that had not been the case under Muhammad 'Ali in the first three decades of his rule. Once Muhammad 'Ali decided to grant land estates to his bureaucrats, he created a new way to assign responsibility to his officials for contribution to the economic well-being of the country as well as starting the trend of tying landholding to status.²¹³ These landed estates were not without complications. Some officials were granted *uhdas*, a term meaning literally care or responsibility or in a legal context, contractual obligation,²¹⁴ and amounting to a return to tax farms in that the officials were responsible for collecting the taxes assessed upon them.²¹⁵ Others were given *ib'adiyya* estates. These estates were made up of

²¹⁰Toledano, *State and Society*, 105.

²¹¹Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 101-102.

²¹²*al-Khitat*, 128.

²¹³Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 103.

²¹⁴Cuno, *The Pasha's Peasants*, 157.

²¹⁵Cuno, *The Pasha's Peasants*, 148.

land which was not currently cultivated and carried the expensive responsibility of bringing the land under cultivation – an operation that might or might not be profitable. Hunter notes, “Excluding the viceroy’s family, who got the best estates, officials considered land to be an obligation rather than a privilege, and accepted estates under compulsion; no one could refuse the gift of an *uhda* or *ih’adiyya*.”²¹⁶ Later once Muhammad ‘Ali’s monopolies came to an end, the estates began to yield a profit for their owners and began to be viewed as a source of profit. Toledano credits the rise in cotton and cereal prices in the middle decades with transforming land from a source of status into a major material asset.²¹⁷

It is interesting to compare this pursuit of a high salary and position with what ‘Ali Mubarak perceived as the goals of the ‘ulama.’ In this excerpt from *‘Alam al-Din*, the shaykh’s wife is pleading with him to consider the worldly needs of his family:

And from this point of view was your criticism of wealth... you didn’t consider any aspect of it except for imagining the hardships. Your view is either due to the fact that you haven’t attained wealth or you felt you were excluded from it so you hated it and criticized it. If you acted in a way consistent with the depth of your understanding, you would have looked at its great benefits and important features such as giving us the ability to expand and provide spaciousness for the children and the relatives, helping us to console our neighbors, friends, and partners, rescuing the sorrowed and helping the needy and ending the suffering of the impoverished and lodging strangers and giving food and helping in the problems of daily life.²¹⁸

Mubarak’s portrayal of the shaykh’s attitude towards wealth reflects what he perceived as the natural result of an emphasis upon religious knowledge and pursuit of a career which did not extend the promise of wealth to those who entered it. While religious careers might lead to wealth and status, Mubarak characterizes the shaykh as without material ambition. This is indicative of what he perceived as a contrast in expectations between the goals of a traditional education and the aims of a modern education in terms of the aspirations of those who pursued the two paths. Mubarak probably overdrew this contrast when he penned these words of the shaykh: “Those who have wisdom are denied wealth. The proof of the existence of God’s fate [*qada’ wa qadar*] is the misery of the

²¹⁶Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 103.

²¹⁷Toledano, *State and Society*, 106.

²¹⁸*‘Alam al-Din*, 64.

intelligent and the pleasant existence of the fool."²¹⁹ This observation, while it may have been increasingly true in Mubarak's time, had not always been the case. Certainly under the Mamluks when the 'ulama' were a group to be placated and persuaded, they were not denied position and 'pleasant existences.' Baer describes their wealth at the turn of the 19th-century: "Like the Mamluk *amirs* they built luxurious palaces, surrounded themselves with servants and hangers-on, employed officials, and took enormous interest in their property and wealth."²²⁰

New opportunities for native Egyptians

One of the most vital changes that occurred was one in the attitude towards making education available through a state system. Under Muhammad 'Ali, most of the concentration was upon producing a few native Egyptians with a high level of education from abroad or from advanced, selective schools within Egypt. Later under 'Abbas, the policy was destined to undergo a change because he felt that what Egypt truly needed was a strong elementary program.²²¹ 'Abbas cut back on expenditures on most of the western educational programs that had been advanced by Muhammad 'Ali.

Khedive Isma'il, on the other hand, well known for his extravagance in spending, made large investments in education in comparison with his predecessors 'Abbas and Sa'id. Hunter sees these expenditures as a new commitment to continue with Egypt's development in general, expressed particularly through administration. The programs in which Isma'il invested included new schools in Cairo for civilians, provincial primary schools and Dar al-'Ulum, as well as stepping up the frequency of the practice of sending students abroad.²²² This growing commitment to building a national system may have been a reflection of Isma'il's difficulties with the Ottoman Empire and represents a graphic example of how an independent infrastructure was being built to support Egypt's need for local administrators. Toledano credits the new-found mobility for natives in Egyptian society as beginning with the reformed educational system, the student missions and training which helped them attain skills and consequently gained them admission into the lower ranks of the elite. Gradually, over the course

²¹⁹ *Alam al-Din*, 44.

²²⁰ Gabriel Baer, "Social Change in Egypt: 1800-1914," in *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, ed. P. M. Holt, (London, Oxford University Press: 1968), 147.

²²¹ Toledano, *State and Society*, 122.

²²² Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 40.

of decades, the native segment of the elite grew in numbers and advanced upwards through the ranks. This process was vital in reshaping the class structure.²²³

Official measures to promote education of native Egyptians broached the problem of illiteracy in 1868 when a resolution of the House of Deputies called for all of its members to be literate within 18 years. Within 30 years, all of the electorate was to be literate as well. The decree stated: "...whereas this affair is essential for the welfare of the country and one of the greatest advantages to civilization, and whereas this advantage cannot be realized except by establishing schools in every corner in the provinces... it is advisable to take the resolution of opening schools in every province to teach reading, writing, and other sciences."²²⁴ The provision, described as the clearest expression of Mubarak's "...vision for renewal and extension of public education,"²²⁵ was adopted on January 3, 1867. The law called for a school in every province and in larger cities, free tuition and meals for those who needed them, and declared that admission would be regardless of class or religion. The program was to be financed as the traditional system had been, by the provinces and cities who might utilize *awqaf* funds for the purpose. The khedive dedicated the revenues of certain estates to the program.²²⁶ Radwan comments that this democratization of education ran contrary to the original aims of Muhammad 'Ali who had not conceived of a broad system of public education.

'Ali Mubarak was designated to administer the program and was appointed secretary or *wakil*. He and a committee dedicated to studying the proposal developed the plan further. They called for reforms in three different levels of schools. The most primitive *kuttab* was to be reformed by the following: introducing arithmetic along with reading and writing into the curriculum of the *kuttab*, requiring the instructor to attain a diploma, and specifying that if the teacher was blind, he had to have a literate assistant. A second level was the *kuttab* with more than 70 students, which was to teach a more extended curriculum including economics, history, geography, and a foreign language. The third type was called *al-madrassa al-markaziyya* and would include zoology, botany and agriculture in their

²²³Toledano, *State and Society*, 250-251.

²²⁴Radwan, *Old and New Forces*, 91.

²²⁵Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness," 63.

²²⁶Fritz Steppat, "National Education Projects in Egypt before the British Occupation," *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: Nineteenth Century*, ed. Polk, William R. and Richard L. Chambers, (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press: 1968), 288.

programs of study and would aim to attract the best students. Under the plan, parents were to pay tuition if they had the means.²²⁷ Delanoue notes that the plan was modest in aspirations for two reasons: the government wanted to leave the responsibility for educating children in the hands of their parents and the goal was not to replace *kuttab*s, but rather to leave them in place with some modifications.²²⁸ The resolution calling for universal literacy was abandoned in 1888.²²⁹ Lack of funds and qualified staff led to the failure of the law to meet its goals.²³⁰ The program had called for all of the *kuttab*s to be incorporated into the modern system, however, even with extensive inspection and attempts at repairs of the physical buildings, the difference between a modern school and a *kuttab* remained.²³¹

Other avenues to promotion and wealth

While this thesis focuses on 'Ali Mubarak, and consequently the western-educated technically trained bureaucrats who were becoming a facet of Egyptian government, Egyptian participation in the viceregal administration was not limited to these men, although they were the first to reach ranks of importance within the government. Another element of Egyptian society, what Hunter calls "the provincial notability," consisted of those men who held local power within their villages. Men from this group began to attain new positions of importance in the official government of Egypt. These men were not western-educated, nor did they possess foreign language skills. Instead, their value to the viceroy lay in their ability to influence and command respect from the *fellahin* as well as being instrumental in the collection of taxes.²³²

This group of notables infiltrated the administrative system as demonstrated by the Consultative Chamber of Delegates which was an advisory body that had some law-making power and consisted of 75 members drawn from the provincial notability. Hunter notes: "The establishment of a

²²⁷ Steppat, "National Education," 289-291.

²²⁸ Gilbert Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans dans l'Égypte au XIX^e siècle*, 2 vols., (Cairo: IFAO, 1982), 2: 508.

²²⁹ Judith Cochran, *Education in Egypt*, (New Hampshire: Croom Helm, 1986), 10.

²³⁰ Heyworth-Dunne, *Education*, 370.

²³¹ Steppat, "National Education," 295.

²³² Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 41.

legislative body consisting entirely of Egyptians gave its members an opportunity to acquire experience and knowledge of a kind unavailable to them anywhere else."²³³ Drafting plans, arguing their merits, and trying to reach compromises gave these men legislative experience that had previously been denied them. Their designated purpose brought them into contact with records and details that had previously been inaccessible to them. This process of learning the intricacies of the bureaucracy was something that had been out of reach of native Egyptians for a long time.

Other avenues to power and status existed. One rather unique example of an official who held very important positions and high ranks within the government, without the benefit of a western education was Isma'il Siddiq. He was neither a member of the rural nobility nor western educated. Hunter calls him "the son of a humble *fallah*."²³⁴ But through virtue of his ties to his foster brother Khedive Isma'il, he gained position and prestige and was reported to be one of the wealthiest of officials.

Native bureaucrats building a self-sufficient nation

As the bureaucracy expanded, more places became available for employees. As more native employees entered the lowest rank, they gained access to the ladder of bureaucracy which eventually led upwards. Hunter notes that during the 1840s Turks regained governmental positions from native Egyptians but in the 1850s Egyptians began to replace Turks once again and began to reach the highest levels of bureaucracy, beginning with 'Ali Mubarak's appointment as the director of government schools. Rivalries and prejudices between ethnic groups were common. The relationship between the Egyptian members of the bureaucracy and Turkish officials was uneasy. "The latter resented the intrusion of 'peasants' into 'their' administration, while Egyptians thought Turks dull-witted and spoke of them disparagingly as latecomers to Islam."²³⁵

Problems between ethnic groups were not confined to Egyptians and Ottoman Turks. When one discusses government bureaucracy in 19th-century Egypt and the changes it was undergoing, one cannot neglect the Europeans. Under Muhammad 'Ali, Europeans had not held the highest of positions because of the sensitive matter of religion. Muhammad 'Ali ensured that Ottoman Turkish officers

²³³Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 52.

²³⁴Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 145.

²³⁵Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 88.

were always placed in positions of authority relative to European experts. As we have seen, starting in the middle decades, Europeans began to attain appointments as directors and deputy.²³⁶

While there were tensions between the various groups, these tensions did not threaten governmental stability because "...Egypt's political/administrative order was not a purely competitive system in which everyone was scrambling against everyone else for a finite set of rewards. It was possible for all groups and individuals to gain in wealth, and there was room at the top for everyone.... Important common material interests were being forged among elite subgroups, who shared much more than high rank and administrative positions."²³⁷ If indeed, Hunter's assessment of the non-competitive character of the bureaucracy is accurate, it may very well be a reflection of the expanding bureaucracy in which new qualified officials were always needed and recruitment into the ranks of the bureaucracy opened doors to higher and higher levels of service. The economic bond the new elite shared was created by their ownership of landed estates. ---

Later under the British occupation, incorporation of native elements in all branches of government administration was considered a priority – Lord Dufferin, in fact, expressly instructed his successor, Cromer, to meet this goal.²³⁸ One of the chief aims of providing education under British rule was to supply civil servants. The British abolished free education and instituted a rigid system of examinations which had to be surmounted in order to attain government employ.²³⁹ One writer comments: "The British occupation of Egypt succeeded in introducing a new focus for education – government employment as the expected reward for the English-speaking elite. The guarantee of a position with the Civil Service after graduation from a government school became firmly implanted in the people's minds."²⁴⁰ While the necessity of a specific educational background in order to attain a government post was not new, the connection between the two was becoming more firmly entrenched.

Loss of Support for the Khedive

²³⁶Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 98.

²³⁷Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 99.

²³⁸William M. Welch, *No Country for a Gentleman*, (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1988), 98.

²³⁹Radwan, *Old and New Forces*, 94.

²⁴⁰Clayton Sedwick Cooper, *The Man of Egypt* (New York, Hodder & Stoughton: 1913), 19-20.

Even though Egyptian high officeholders owed their positions to the ruler, as time wore on, these men developed loyalties apart from those to the Khedive. Hunter attributes this development to, among other things, support from European sources, the increase in profitability of land ownership, and the expansion of bureaucracy. He identifies two groups representing interests separate from those of the Khedive. Members of the first group were officials who had a strong economic base in rural areas. The second group were tied to European states and advocated reforms which promoted western ideas. "These ties signified the presence within the administration of "intermediaries," high officials were both members of a ruling establishment and representatives of 'society.'"²⁴¹ These conflicting ties were an inevitable result of the introduction of Egyptian natives into the bureaucracy. The Ottoman Egyptian elite which Toledano speaks of was inherently foreign and intimately tied to the viceroy. With a rising class of native Egyptian bureaucrats, the ties were not so clear or strong. While there was a degree of personal loyalty combined with a sense that the ideological goals which they had been introduced to in Europe would only be carried out through the medium of the Khedival programs, a rising sense of loyalty to the *watan* or nationalism would soon complicate matters. The Egyptian natives represented a new body of "intermediaries" between the Khedival government and the Egyptian society that it governed.

Once Europeans began to reach higher governmental positions, other related complications began to arise. In addition to the ethnic tensions aggravated by the presence of Europeans, they introduced a new element to the bureaucracy— a new power to which one might apply. Once foreign consulates began to take an interest in local Egyptian officials, the possibility of patronage and protection was introduced. Foreign patronage was a source of stability for these officials. This protection from the whims and caprices of the khedive gave some of these officials the confidence necessary to separate the interests of the khedival government from the interests of the Egyptian state.

Concept of *al-watan*

Another development with long-term implications was that of a new concept of Egypt. According to Hunter, Egyptian technicians like 'Ali Mubarak and Rifa'a Tahtawi advanced a new view of Egypt. "Because of their exposure to European ideas, they began to explore their country's pharaonic origins and developed a notion of Egypt as a living reality with continuous links to its pre-Islamic past. In

²⁴¹Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 36.

their writings, they began referring to Egypt by the Arabic word *al-watan*, which had customarily meant "birthplace" in the sense not only of house or plot of ground but also of homeland. *Al-Watan* was used in this latter sense to convey a meaning of Egyptianness, the assertion of the indigenous element against outsiders....²⁴² Hunter notes that Mubarak viewed three items as priorities as far as improving the material condition of his *watan*: development of industry and trade; advancement of education which in turn would change the attitudes of Egyptians and instill in them the habit of self sufficiency; and modernization of agriculture and in tandem irrigation. In connection with his attempts to forward these goals, Mubarak wrote works on these subjects. One of his unpublished works entitled *al-Tarbiya wa ma yatarattab 'alayha min taqwim al-shu'ub* concentrates on education.²⁴³ He also composed a primer for use in the government schools. *Tariq al-hija'* introduced the Arabic letters and then provided passages for reading as well as a lengthy preface advising teachers on how to deal with their students. The work was most likely in use in the schools for many years.²⁴⁴ In the area of agriculture and irrigation, Mubarak composed *Nukhbat al-fikr* which comments on and criticizes agricultural policy as well as giving information on the Nile river.²⁴⁵ *Tanwir al-afham* deals with hydraulic engineering, an essential part of irrigation.²⁴⁶

Amongst 'Ali Mubarak's other works, Reimer notes that the very purpose and form of *al-Khitat* involved this sense of *watan*. Designed to locate Mubarak's Egypt in the context of the country's long history, the work was intended to instill a patriotic sense of pride in the homeland which is represented as "...a national community with a distinguished past, united in the periods of its greatest achievement under a single sovereignty."²⁴⁷ This message is interpreted as inherently conservative – a call to Egyptians to support their ruler in the same way Egyptians always had in the greatest periods of Egyptian history.

Similarly, the introduction of *'Alam al-Din* is dedicated to expressing the debt each citizen owed to the land in which he lived and how by spreading knowledge and educating its youth, one could

²⁴²Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 114.

²⁴³Dykstra, "A Biographical Study," 372-3.

²⁴⁴Dykstra, "A Biographical Study," 389.

²⁴⁵Dykstra, "A Biographical Study," 398-400.

²⁴⁶Dykstra, "A Biographical Study," 387-8.

²⁴⁷Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness," 62.

repay the debt one owed to his *watan*. He saw his own contribution to his *watan* as lying in his efforts to establish new schools and author valuable books which would pass on his knowledge to his fellow countrymen.²⁴⁸ Dykstra notes that "...Mubarak's insistence that anyone who, by means of both his appetite for knowledge and his own distinctive talents, acquires special and useful knowledge in one field or another, is obliged to communicate that knowledge in order to benefit his country (*watan*) and mankind (*jins*)."²⁴⁹ This sense of the responsibility that accompanied knowledge has been discussed previously in the thesis in relationship to the technocratic mentality that members of the missions abroad exhibited. The union of knowledge and its dissemination with the concept of *al-watan* is ironic in that the goals of this pedagogical system in the mind of its founder, Muhammad 'Ali, had originally been to obtain more efficient control over the state and then to utilize the state as a tool to conquer other lands.

In fact, although Muhammad 'Ali had not aimed to create a nation-state with a sense of independent pride, many of his reforms eventually contributed to the rise of this sense of *al-watan*. Translations of European works into the Arabic language through the Bureau of Translation made a modern education available to native Egyptians independent of the question of knowledge of foreign languages and opportunities to travel abroad. Heading the Bureau of Translation was al-Tahtawi who was one of the chief propagators of the idea of *al-watan*. In his work as a translator of French works, al-Tahtawi was instrumental in bringing French Enlightenment ideas to Egypt and translating them into Arabic. Among the works he chose to translate was Montesquieu's *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur decadence* which helped introduce the concept of the nation to Egyptian intellectuals.²⁵⁰ The printing press at Bulaq printed classical Arabic works, but most of its publications were technical in nature and utilitarian in style.²⁵¹

Steppat claims that the concept of *watan* was originally greeted with approval by the khedives because the idea stressed the independent character of Egypt as removed from the Ottoman Empire. "But acceptance of the new concepts which had been imported from the West implied transformation

²⁴⁸Dykstra, "A Biographical Study," 416.

²⁴⁹Dykstra, "A Biographical Study," 378.

²⁵⁰Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, 70.

²⁵¹Dykstra, "A Biographical Study," 379.

of the "subject" into the 'citizen.'"²⁵² The very learning of the ideas which Muhammad 'Ali did so much to facilitate may have been the root of the cause of the eventual defection of those native Egyptian technicians. In 1874 'Ali Mubarak criticized Muhammad 'Ali's successors and the execution of the reform program in a written work on the Nile and was consequently removed from office.²⁵³ When Nubar Pasha returned from Paris in 1878 to advise Isma'il, he suggested a course of action that was almost identical to the demands of the Commission of Inquiry which had been formed to investigate Egypt's financial difficulties. Isma'il found he had no choice but to accept the plan and a Council of Ministers was established under Nubar's leadership. Isma'il was prevented from attending meetings. 'Ali Mubarak was appointed head of the Department of Education in Nubar's ministry. His participation in the ministry marks his complete defection from the Khedives.²⁵⁴ The modern westernized ideas of 'Ali Mubarak and other officials like him had made khedival absolutism hard to accept in the end.

²⁵² Steppat, "National Education," 284-5.

²⁵³ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 194.

²⁵⁴ Hunter, *Under the Khedives*, 202-203.

Conclusion

Muhammad 'Ali's modernization project affected most areas of public life in pursuit of his primary goal: the creation of a strong military. A modern education system based on western-influenced curriculum and new models of discipline was integral to the realization of this goal. The new pedagogical methods introduced were designed to produce men ready to run the new bureaucracy as well as officer the military.

The middle 19th-century in Egypt was characterized by a fundamental shift in governmental tradition. The modern bureaucracy which developed relied upon a new set of officials who shared much in common: a technical, western-influenced education, Egyptian nationality and the Arabic mother tongue. This new kind of official arose from a viceregal desire to create an indigenous base of expertise. The foundation for the creation of this new type of official lay in the conception and implementation of a system of education designed to bring the fundamentals of modern western education to Egypt.

Once native Egyptians began to receive a modern education, they began to participate in their own governmental affairs once again. The emphasis upon education also helped lead the way to the beginnings of a meritocracy where promotion was based upon skill and achievement, although the system remained subject to arbitrary interference by the Khedives. A strict meritocracy was not to come into being due to the dependence upon *intisab* combined with the tendency of rulers to act upon whims especially concerning appointments of their predecessors.

For an examination of education and its role in material and professional success within the changing bureaucracy, the most important figure is 'Ali Mubarak. His autobiography illustrates many

of the ideas put forth by historians like Hunter and Toledano who have studied the Egyptian bureaucracy extensively. His role in the department of education ties him inextricably to the very system that contributed significantly to his ability to reach the posts that he held.

For Mubarak, education is the basis of success and the duty of all educated people is to impart their knowledge to their fellow countrymen. In this passage from *'Alam al-Din*, his attitude on the nature of education as a foundation for the human character is clear:

A wise, aware man would order his young child to do something greatly useful to him in his childhood to prepare for his future and gain an education. The child's soul may hate this thing and his behavior may resist it. But he doesn't recognize the reason for it because of the deficiency of his intellect in comparison to his father's mind.²⁵⁵

Whether or not the pupil understands the necessity of education, parents bear the burden of the education of their children and, in corollary, those who have received a modern education shoulder the responsibility of conveying to their fellow countrymen the knowledge from which they have profited. This sense of duty to pass on the information that he has come into contact with combined with his wide range of experience makes Mubarak's works interesting for their descriptive and encompassing character.

The new education entailed an emphasis upon observation in keeping with the new pedagogical methods imported from Europe. The model schools instituted a systemic method of maintaining discipline and conferring degrees in which most of the power rested firmly in the institution governing the school system and little lay in the hands of the individual teachers. In the new schools, inspection played a vital role not only in homogenizing curriculum, but in maintaining standards of hygiene, physical order and sanitation within the individual schools. Possessors of a modern education aimed at holding a position within the administrative structure.

In contrast, traditional education in Egypt was textually-based in which the curriculum revolved around study of the Qur'an and related religious works and involved a great deal of memorization. The traditional schools gave more personal power to the individual shaykh or *faqih* in terms of teaching style, disciplinary methods and finally, determination of academic success. Lacking in any sort of inspection process, the physical circumstances of the *kuttab* were left to the discretion of

²⁵⁵ *'Alam al-Din*, 29.

the individual teacher and were often correspondingly dismal. Those who attained a traditional education were likely to hold positions related to the law.

In spite of the differences in pedagogical method, curriculum and disciplinary strategies, there was an inevitable continuity that resulted from the dependence of the new schools on the old schools for students. The new schools relied upon the old schools for students and these students brought with them their habits and basic approach to learning. The dependence upon memorization which had been so prominent in the old system, remained to some degree a facet of the new system. The basic goal of education, which was moral socialization of youth, remained a factor in the new system.

The continuity between the old system and the new system is expressed in the person and career of 'Ali Mubarak who began his educational career within the traditional *kuttab* and under the tutelage of *mu'addibs* and worked his way to the model schools of Muhammad 'Ali and then to the student mission to Paris. The career of Mubarak was remarkable in many ways and as such is a fitting subject for study from a variety of angles. His voluminous works provide much in the way of information upon the time period during which he lived and worked serving the Egyptian government. The wealth of information offers the potential of much in the way of further study. In addition to the works considered in this thesis, *al-Khitat* and *'Alam al-Din*, Mubarak penned geometry and reading textbooks; a description of the sea; a text on nutrition; engineering works; a work on irrigation; a history of the Arabs; a treatise on competition; an explanation of *hadiths*; a treatise on justice; among other works. Taking into consideration Mubarak's talent for observation and for recording his impressions and expressing his opinions, surely these other works would contain ample material for further study of the ways in which older patterns of thought and practice were integrated into the new structures of government and society in 19th-century Egypt.

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