



# DURHAM MIDDLE EAST PAPERS

UNDER SURVEILLANCE:  
POLICE AND POLITICS IN THE ARCHIVE OF  
KHEDIVE ABBAS HILMI II

**Pascale Ghazaleh**

*The American University in Cairo  
Fellow, The Mohamed Ali Foundation*

**Durham Middle East Paper No. 104**

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INSTITUTE FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

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Mohamed Ali Foundation Paper No. 01

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## MOHAMED ALI FOUNDATION

In 2018 Durham University and the Mohamed Ali Foundation<sup>1</sup> launched a fellowship programme to encourage academic research in the archive of the last khedive of Egypt, Abbas Hilmi II (1874–1944), and to make the collection's strengths more widely known to international researchers.

The collection, which is deposited in Durham University Library's Archives and Special Collections, provides a rich resource of material on political, social, economic and cultural affairs in Egypt in the late 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. It is hoped that this endowment by the Mohamed Ali Foundation will foster deeper understanding of an important period of Egyptian history and of a transformative era in East-West relations.

## BIO

Dr Pascale Ghazaleh is Chair and Associate Professor of History at The American University in Cairo. Dr Ghazaleh has taught in AUC's History Department since 2005. She is an expert on Ottoman history and 19th century Egypt, on which she has published widely. She holds a PhD in History from Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, writing on "Généalogies patrimoniales. La constitution des fortunes urbaines: Le Caire, 1780-1830" ("Patrimonial Genealogies. The Constitution of Urban Wealth: Cairo, 1780-1830").

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## INTRODUCTION

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Among the most remarkable features of the Abbas Hilmi II Papers are the reports by informers and secret police agents, many of which may be found in the files of the Department of Interior (AHII 6). These documents speak of the state's increased ability to police and observe; more importantly, they tell us of surging political activity and the ruling class's perception of such activity as potentially useful, if it could be harnessed in the struggle for independence from British rule, and potentially threatening, if it turned against the class interests of landlords and urban elites. Intelligence reports thus reveal not only a broadening of the political base – the birth of mass politics and indeed a changing understanding of what politics entailed – but also a dawning awareness of the potential power that students' and workers' movements wielded. They also signal to new forms of solidarity based on class or national interests rather than professional affiliation or position vis-à-vis the state.

The development of institutions, technologies, and techniques of surveillance, and the spread of informers along with increased interest in different kinds of information, resulted principally from the expansion and growing complexity of the state apparatus (as expressed in the ability to produce population censuses, implement universal conscription, apply quarantine measures, and monitor potentially productive populations). Surveillance intensified and became increasingly institutionalized as mass politics gained momentum, becoming a force that could prove useful to the nationalist movement while also posing a threat to the colonial authorities and / or the indigenous ruling class at different points in time.

The development of the intelligence apparatus during this period has already been the topic of some research,<sup>2</sup> and this chapter will therefore present an overview of some of the Abbas Hilmi II Papers' contents, which shed light on the proliferation of political activity and the concomitant deployment of a network of informers, while showcasing the main findings of recent scholarship on the topic.

### 1. The Meaning of Politics

Until the nineteenth century, in Egypt as elsewhere in the Ottoman sultanate, the Ottoman ruling class was made up principally of military personnel and state administrators. Historians have outlined the main features of the relatively austere apparatus of government that characterized the earliest period of Ottoman rule: the state was concentrated around the sultan and his extended military-bureaucratic household; it was

concerned principally with defense, the administration of justice, and the construction and maintenance of public works. This system evolved, leading to the expansion of an increasingly complex and centralized bureaucracy; by the eighteenth century, centralization had given way to autonomous provincial centers of power.<sup>3</sup> Albert Hourani, in a seminal albeit now dated text,<sup>4</sup> defined what the members of this class engaged in as the "politics of notables," to indicate the empire-wide shift in the eighteenth century towards diffuse power, no longer concentrated principally in Istanbul but increasingly situated in the provinces. During this period, dynasties of military commanders and wealthy, powerful merchants exercised authority through their households and extended networks of associates and followers. Some of the most powerful of these local rulers were able to implement trade policies, strike coinage, have Friday sermons given in their name, and undertake military campaigns autonomously of Istanbul, even while the sultan remained their nominal suzerain.<sup>5</sup>

The *`askar* – those the Ottoman state identified as its 'servants'<sup>6</sup> – had clearly defined rights and duties. Affiliation with the state meant contributing to its defense in various capacities; thus, state officials, soldiers, and members of the religious and educational establishment were all considered *`askar*. By the seventeenth century, however, such affiliation had become a commodity, and soldiers, religious scholars, and other members of the state apparatus could sell their offices, and the revenues appertaining thereto, to members of the *ra`aya* (the 'flock' – designating the general population, producers and taxpayers, traditionally the inseparable counterpart of the *`askar*, echoing the dyad of *`amma* and *khassa*, or 'popular' and 'privy' – although the terms were not coterminous, and these translations would remain anachronistic arguably until the end of the nineteenth century).<sup>7</sup>

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I contend that it was in fact the transformation of state office into a commodity that could be traded (if not on the open market then within networks of buyers and sellers) that paved the way for the explosion of political activity that occurred after the mid-nineteenth century. Purchasing a position in the state apparatus entailed more than just the right to a salary: it made possible some degree of involvement in the domain of state administration and, as such, eventually led to commoners taking an active interest in spheres from which they had been excluded until then. This was not an inevitable consequence of commoditised state office, of course; rather, the subsequent upwelling of activism required three profound transformations:

1) the growing involvement of wider segments of the population in areas that had previously been considered the sole remit of the state, such as the right to monitor and dispose of resources, oversee the construction and use of infrastructure and public works, or even participate in decisions regarding to the defense of the empire's borders; 2) an articulation of politics itself that encompassed a broad understanding of government as a public good, beyond the narrow confines of state action; and 3) the state's deployment of new modes of population control, to count, conscript, tax, and monitor social groups whose labor power was understood as crucial to the state's survival.<sup>8</sup>

By the 1860s, evidence of intensified and diverse political activity is abundant. Juan Cole's masterful study of the decades that preceded the Urabi uprising traces the proliferation of workers' clubs, political gatherings, night schools, and other forms of association. Political activity, deliberately defined as such by the social actors who engaged in it, may also be detected in nationwide support for the Urabi revolt – support that, as Cole points out, was underpinned by developments in transport and communications technology: "The spread of the telegraph, railroad lines, and newspaper distribution in the 1860s and 1870s allowed villages far apart to keep abreast of key political intelligence."<sup>9</sup>

This political activity, I argue, resulted from two related developments: intensified government involvement with changes in the agrarian and urban economies, on one hand; and the translation of the types of authority that artisans and peasants had exercised into the more formal, broader-based politics of the late nineteenth century.

Intensified state involvement in the Egyptian economy may be traced back to the beginning of the nineteenth century at least. The state incorporated prerogatives related to economic activity (for example, Mohamed Ali's confiscation of tax farms and transfer of their management to state employees) and thereby created an association between the political sphere as

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the Ottoman ruling class had defined it, in narrow and relatively minimalist terms, and productive or distributive capacities, which had been under the jurisdiction of a variety of different actors, ranging from guilds to merchants. This association, while it did not entail a wholesale monopoly of the state over any activity (not even agriculture, where the state's intervention was limited, in the first half of the nineteenth century, to control over cash crop production and distribution), would prove difficult to separate.

Alan Mikhail, in *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt*,<sup>10</sup> ties new understandings of the Ottoman state, Egyptian society, and the relation between the two to the expansion of irrigation works starting early in the nineteenth century. As the state expanded its control over production and distribution networks, it created an inextricable association between the mechanisms of government and those of the economy. It is hardly surprising, then, that overt popular demands for involvement in decision-making at the state level quite explicitly associated economics and politics. These, however, were spheres that the British vigilantly endeavored to separate in theory, principally in an effort to prevent the nationalist movement, and especially the mass of the population, from claiming any right to involvement in government.

In *Egypt's Occupation. Colonial Economism and the Crises of Capitalism*,<sup>11</sup> Aaron Jakes points out that the British colonial rulers saw their Egyptian subjects, particularly among the working classes, as incapable of pure political engagement; Gorst and others systematically ascribed popular unrest to economic interests (an elitist argument that may be frequently heard in Egypt even today). Indeed, it appears that one of the main conflicts in this period was precisely over what constituted politics, who was entitled to participate in that sphere, how to define the public good and in which circumstances it could open up to previously excluded parties.<sup>12</sup>

While Jakes has analyzed the sophisticated political analyses that nationalist figures developed after 1907, my interest here is the genealogy of working-class understandings of what politics meant, and what the population at large could contribute to it. The Abbas Hilmi archive provides astonishing insight into this particular question at a crucial point in Egypt's history; in the stories the spies narrated, I discern echoes of the language ascribed to guild masters in eighteenth-century court documents, and of the grievances presented by striking workers in late nineteenth-century petitions to the government.

Within certain groups, political activity in the sense of involvement with state matters and opposition to colonialism constituted a deliberate change of policy. The documents in the Abbas Hilmi II Papers, particularly the informers' reports prepared for the Ministry of Interior, provide examples of this shift. According to an informer attending a meeting of *al-Ruqiyy al-Islami* (Islamic Improvement) association,<sup>13</sup> in 1909, the association's head told members that *al-Ruqiyy* had considered prohibiting speeches mentioning politics, but that now speakers were free to speak of whatever their conscience dictated. This decision had been made, he said, "because it has become obvious that we are dead;" a particular cause of despair was the imprisonment of "Shaykh Abd al-`Aziz [Jawish]," editor of *al-Liwa'* and the founder of the 'People's Night Schools,' which targeted the urban poor.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the emergence of a figure like Jawish, an activist who criticized the British occupation vehemently and was a hero among the urban working class, could crystallize a groundswell of popular engagement and move it towards deliberate political opposition to colonial policies.<sup>15</sup>

The effects of British occupation, especially on the political effervescence noted by Cole, were inescapable, whether in the cities or in the rural areas. But the Ottoman rulers' own political affiliations mitigated these effects to some degree: Abbas Hilmi II, for example, became a well-known supporter of nationalist activism. The ruling class could dismiss the masses as motivated by crass material interest; at the same time, regardless of its agenda, it had

to contend with pressure from below and recognize that this pressure could be useful to various parties in the struggle being waged around the question of political independence and (less overtly) economic sovereignty. The question, for the leaders of the independence movement, was then how to harness this energy and co-opt elements of the popular opposition – often while suppressing the working class's world view and political agenda in favor of a more liberal understanding of power and relations of production.<sup>16</sup>

The workers' and students' associations were heir to a long tradition of urban opposition; contestation in the rural areas also drew on traditions of solidarity and collective action, for example, in managing resources like agricultural land and irrigation water. I would argue that workers' activism did not distinguish between politics and economics, while increasingly formal politics sought to treat these as two separate realms (each the realm of its own experts), and to exclude the workers from the political sphere. It would be no exaggeration, indeed, to say that this was one of the most important struggles of this period. Thus, it seems that this period witnessed a wide-ranging – not always conscious or explicitly formulated – class struggle over the traditional understanding of the public good, and how it might be incorporated into the anti-colonial movement. Its outcome was to divide

that understanding into specialized spheres and exclude rural and urban workers from the new politics, now strictly defined as matters of government. What remained were resources, their definition, extraction, and management. These too would later be subsumed into the sphere of state prerogative.<sup>17</sup>

If political activity and awareness were most intense and visible in the capital, even in areas more remote from the center of power, the population articulated its grievances in ways that show a clear understanding, and a specific interpretation, of the ruling class's rhetoric. One striking document recounts how the respected leader of one of the tribes in Sudan had presented a complaint to Hunter Pasha,<sup>18</sup> phrasing it in the following terms:<sup>19</sup>

The time of the dervishes [the Mahdi's rule] was better for us than this time, and we have not seen the meaning of the freedom you claim to have bestowed upon us, because our supervisor [the mudir or administrative head] takes camels from us by force under the pretext that they are needed for public works, so he takes them and loads them beyond what they can bear, and marches them beyond their strength; and when one of them tires, they shoot it with a bullet. As for those that are strong enough, they return them only when they are worn out and weak, and do not pay us for them. Thus has our condition worsened, so where is justice and where is the freedom that you wish for us?

Hunter Pasha informed this petitioner that the leader of Egypt was Lord Cromer and that he would convey the tribe's complaints. This remains consistent with the long

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Ottoman tradition of petitions presented to rulers; what is perhaps remarkable is the tribal leader's clear understanding of the incongruity between the rhetoric of freedom and justice, on one hand, and not only the violation of the tribe's economic rights, but also the *mudir*'s abuse of the animals he had requisitioned, on the other.

In the various ways that had been available to working class people in Ottoman lands until the nineteenth century – and that historians know about through the study of petitions and court documents in which artisans or agricultural laborers articulated their grievances or demanded the redress of certain situations – ideas like equity and solidarity appear prominently.<sup>20</sup> The reports in the Abbas Hilmi archive indicate that these concepts remained important well into the late nineteenth century. At a meeting of the Workers' Association, held in a school that belonged to the National Party in Bulaq, and bringing together about sixty workers and students, according to the informer's report, a railroad worker named Muhammad Badr took the floor to recount a story intended to illustrate the benefits of solidarity (*ittihad*). The story concerned a “Muslim individual,” a comrade of Badr's, who had been responsible for the carriage in which “the British engineer” (*al-bashmuhandis al-inglizi*) rode. This

worker died destitute, and his colleagues approached the British engineer to ask him for eighty piastres, owed to the worker in arrears on his salary; they planned to use this money to pay for the burial, which the widow and orphans could not afford to do. The engineer shooed them away (“*Mafish! Ruh barra!*”); the workers, for whom it was payday, then took up a collection that yielded the considerable sum of fifteen pounds. Badr was given the money and the engineer spotted him standing near the cashier's office holding it. He questioned Badr about it and, upon learning what the workers had done, reportedly exclaimed: “I didn't know that you Muslims were so united.” So impressed was he, Badr continued, that he pulled three pounds out of his pocket and contributed them to the burial fund. “See, brothers,” Badr concluded, “what unity is and how the British admire our unity (*ittihadana*).”<sup>21</sup>

This story – narrated almost as a morality tale – can be read as the realization that traditions of artisan solidarity were effective as leverage whether the rulers happened to be Ottoman or British. Until the eighteenth century, court documents drawn up by guild members refer to collective funds used to pay pensions to colleagues who had fallen ill and were unable to work, or burial expenses for members who had died.<sup>22</sup> The underlying understanding of solidarity was contrasted, here, with the “British engineer” and his peremptory dismissal of the request for the deceased worker's due; and, in the story at least, the workers' decision to rely upon their collective generosity, despite their relative need, was sufficient to prompt the engineer's admiration and unexpectedly lavish gift.

These examples illustrate the ways in which working-class people understood political engagement, as a form of activism or a mode of being that was familiar to them, rather than actions dictated to them by the nationalist leaders or the press. Their engagement was not exclusively about political independence but rather entailed a particular understanding of social justice and fairness; whether framed in terms of religion (“Muslim unity”), class interest, or native vs foreign identity, it was still rooted in concrete considerations, and indeed could not be abstracted from them. The protests of students at al-Azhar University thus combined criticism of political figures with demands for the payment of delayed stipends: at one gathering of 250 students, mainly but not exclusively from the *riwaq* of the Upper Egyptians, speakers condemned the political parties, and in particular the Umma Party and its leader, Mahmud Pasha Suliman. They pointed out that, if “those who wish to have their chests decorated with medals” were able to obtain what they sought from the government, they would then disown the students' cause and look upon their legitimate demands with disgust.<sup>23</sup> This wariness of support from opportunistic politicians is summed up pithily in the comment of one



individual who remarked contemptuously to his companions: “Ignore them, fellows, government talk is shit” (*sibukum minhum ya wilad bala kalam hukuma bala khara*).<sup>24</sup>

Not all reports, of course, explicitly articulated connections between concrete material grievances and political demands. At a meeting of Jam`iyyat al-Hayat (the Life Association) held in March 1909, members repeated the widespread condemnation of those who sought state honor and exhorted each other to contribute to the development of the nation (*umma*), no matter what sacrifice this required in terms of life, wealth, and involvement in politics (*wuluḥ abwab al-siyasa*). The association’s treasurer spoke up to say that the situation would not improve until power was wrested from the government’s hands – by force if necessary. He concluded by observing: “The Egyptian nation is no less than the French during their revolution.” Two members of the audience contributed to the discussion by holding the British colonial authorities responsible for the collapse of security and suggested that, by refusing to pay taxes, the population could force them to restore order.<sup>25</sup>

Along similar lines, a report concerning the Egyptian Youth Association (Jam`iyyat al-Shabiba al-Misriyya) recounts that, at a meeting held in the Preparatory School of Sayyida Zaynab, and chaired by the school’s principal, members enunciated, among other things, their support for consultative government (*al-hukuma al-shuriyya*) and their rejection of despotic one-person rule (*hukumat al-fard al-istibdadiyya*). To illustrate the evils of the latter type of government, one of the members spoke out in condemnation of the shah of Persia, who had bombarded the Parliament and attacked the Great Mosque in Tabriz.<sup>26</sup> This ability to engage with the discourse of the political parties was combined here with awareness of revolution and repression elsewhere. The international dimension of anti-colonial action reappears at several points throughout the archive; another report refers to an Indian member of Jam`iyyat al-Hayat calling on the members to support the Indians and their uprisings.<sup>27</sup>

At the same time, new or refurbished forms of engagement caught the interest of the ruling class, who saw in them an opportunity for patronage that could bring political benefits. Thus, a memorandum on the creation of a Workers’ Party (undated but likely written in 1909)<sup>28</sup> notes that the founders’ meeting was held in “an elegant neighborhood” of Cairo (*hayy raqi*) and lists among the reasons for establishing such a party the fact that in Europe, the “Western notables” saw such parties as beneficial and vied to obtain votes so that they could represent them. The Workers’ Party, according to this document, was to unite all groups and unions and classes of workers, to make them as “one

hand and one heart” in the service of the common interest; financial life, the report continued, is in the hands of workers and benefit could only be achieved with their consent.

While it is unclear from this document whether one or perhaps several notables sponsored this iteration of the Workers’ Party, the report cites “social scientists” (*‘ulama al-ijtima’*) and European example to justify its establishment, and acknowledges approvingly that workers control strategic areas of production and transport. Gradually, as groups previously marginalized from formal politics began to engage in political activity that threatened the legitimacy and worldview of the ruling class, nationalist notables sought to encourage these groups to create parties and unions that could be incorporated into traditional types of patronage networks. In turn, the workers could draw upon their own practices of collective bargaining, the guilds’ use of precedent as leverage in negotiations with various parties in the governing structure, and the customs of solidarity that persisted until late in the nineteenth century.

Thus, the expansion of the state apparatus, and the creation of political parties by nationalists who intended to rule alongside or instead of the British, also fostered the increasing entry into politics by groups who had their own understanding of class and national interest. In turn, this expansive practice of citizenship

exerted pressure on the notables, who sought to counter it in a variety of ways, ranging from outright opposition to patronage to tactics of surveillance and control.

## 2. A History of Spying

If political activity was linked to the expansion of the state apparatus, then, it continued, for the working class, to draw upon long-standing concepts of economic justice and was particularly focused on the authorities’ imposition of increasing and inequitable control over production and distribution. In turn, this activity provided an impetus for the government’s desire to monitor the population and, when necessary, to suppress it, but also to regulate it as a potential labor force and a competitor in the struggle for resources. Surveillance was an important weapon in an arsenal of measures designed to render the working population legible to the state and its administrators. Cole discusses at length the development of state control over the urban population during the two or three decades preceding the Urabi uprising:

State regulation had an impact on a wide variety of labor issues. Even in the 1850s, not times of significant expansion in the bureaucracy, the state began attempting to bring within its purview areas of life previously not very constrained. The bureaucracy grew under Isma`il [r. 1863-79] and he increased the powers given to officials, including, for instance, building and health inspectors. Modern medicine provided officials with an unwonted tool whereby to exercise control over guild leadership. The state also began depriving guildmasters of certain prerogatives, taking these functions

over itself. The imagery of the panopticon probably overestimates the resources of an Old Regime state of the viceregal sort, but the state's 'eyes,' as contemporaries called them, certainly multiplied greatly under Isma'il.<sup>29</sup>

Well before Abbas Hilmi II's time, then, the grid of state surveillance and control had expanded and grown more sophisticated than in previous times. Of course, spies were not new instruments of government; as early as the Umayyad period, and certainly before, rulers maintained networks of agents who relayed news about rebellions, as well as the general condition of the subject population, to the centers of government. The position of secret agent was associated with the postal service; one study suggests that the caliphs' reliance on it in peacetime shaped the state's military, civic, and administrative functions.<sup>30</sup> The Abbasid rulers developed these networks, granting them official status and relying on them heavily. Hitti notes:

The postmaster-general had another important function besides looking after the imperial mail and supervising the various postal establishments; he was the chief of an espionage system to which the whole postal service was subordinated. As such his full title was *sahib al-barid w-al-akhbar*, controller of the post and intelligence service. In this capacity he acted as an inspector-general and direct confidential agent of the central government. The provincial postmaster reported to him or to the caliph directly on the conduct and activities of the government officials in his province, not excluding the governor himself.<sup>31</sup>

Thus spies were hardly unknown to the history of the region; rulers used them to a lesser or greater extent, relying on different types

of agents and seeking various types of information. What was perhaps different about the deployment of spies in the nineteenth century, and particularly from the 1860s onward, in Ottoman lands, was the complexity of the bureaucracy and the "staggering intensification of domestic surveillance." After the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, the struggle for power between the colonial authorities and the Ottoman-Egyptian ruling class, as well as the explosion of political activity among the population at large, provided the parameters for this intensified scrutiny. Informers could report that popular sentiment distinguished clearly between the British and the khedive's government, and reserved its opposition for the former. Thus, "[t]hree of the Khedive's secret agents who toured the city's quarters and nightclubs reported that 'the nationals and foreigners are totally united' and that 'all nationals and foreigners are filled in their heart with the love of Your Highness and are not desirous of the occupation authorities.'"<sup>32</sup>

This situation was not to be taken for granted, however. Jakes remarks:

[The] spread of political surveillance ensued from the "policy of conciliation" in two respects at once. First, in cultivating 'Abbas Hilmi II as an ally, Gorst was willing to grant him a freedom of action that Cromer had long withheld. The daily memoranda the Khedive was receiving from the Interior by 1909 suggest that he had availed himself of this new latitude to monitor any and all organizations that might now challenge his authority. Second, a growing public awareness about the Khedive's rapprochement with the

British exposed him to new levels of popular disapproval. The Interior's growing web of informants indexed this heightened polarization of political energies, as new parties, societies, unions, and student associations seemed to multiply day by day."<sup>33</sup>

The intelligence reports contained in the Abbas Hilmi II papers thus show an intense concern not only with monitoring political activity in general, which seems to have meant efforts to rally large numbers around issues that the government sought to monopolize; but also with identifying the perpetrators of such activity, especially when these activists belonged to what the informers called the "lower class" (*al-tabaqa al-watiya*).<sup>34</sup> A degree of anxiety was attached to the expression "public opinion" (*al-ra'y al-'aam*), which is mentioned in some of the informers' reports: one, dated 30 August 1909,<sup>35</sup> refers to the government's decision to use force against those who "departed from the sphere of legality" and observes that this decision had affected demonstrators seeking to sway public opinion against the government, particularly in the matter of Shaykh Jawish's sentencing to jail. The same document mentions that Shimi Bey<sup>36</sup> had met with a group of students at the National Party club and condemned one student's attempt to commit suicide in his acute distress at Shaykh Jawish's imprisonment. Significantly, Shimi Bey did not condemn the suicide attempt in religious or moral terms, but because it was "of no use to the country;" far better, in his opinion, to attack someone "known to cause great harm to the country," and thus sacrifice one's life by receiving a death sentence. The document does not say whether this attempt at channeling the demonstrators' despair toward assassination met with any success.

The proliferation of new media, as documented by Ziad Fahmy,<sup>37</sup> required a broader network of surveillance, as well as the ability to monitor different venues and modes of public expression. One report thus recounts in considerable detail a play performed at a school in Sayyida Zaynab in April 1909.<sup>38</sup> The informer narrated all the acts as well as some of the lyrics to the songs featured in the show; they are worth summarizing here. The first act concerned an Egyptian civil servant whose nephew was dismissed from his job in the Diwan and replaced by a foreigner who received a higher salary, although the nephew's children were going hungry. In the second, an actor dressed as a peasant sang Upper Egyptian songs. The lyrics described the Agricultural Bank taking the clothes off Egyptians' backs; while the peasants work the water wheel and mend their hoes, "Mister *Kharuf* [Sheep]" eats their lentils. Finally, the song compares the British unfavorably to the Ottomans: "The Albanians (*Aranita*) were merciful, while Mister James is riding us." The characters in the third act address Egypt, asking what ails its children, when foreigners hold the list [i.e. of debts or taxes] in their hands and "the Pasha and the Bey are collecting the money ... The fat has come to you in a barrel and the butter has gone to Somalia; they've ground sesame paste with dust and they

are eating macaroni and taro.” The fourth act featured an inebriated Egyptian who is robbed and beaten by a policeman; the fifth, a corrupt and ignorant mayor in an Upper Egyptian town, who takes the peasants’ land and receives honors (*rutbat bey wa kiswat tashrif*) from the government.

While it may seem surprising that an informer should painstakingly summarize a theater performance and jot down detailed lyrics to the songs performed, the play touches on all the tropes of a strong and often explicit opposition to the British occupation, and the local notables allied with it: the greedy and exploitative occupiers, the unjust impoverishment of the peasantry, the corruption and stupidity of the native ruling class. The intelligence gathering activities of the informers thus had to be calibrated to the political effervescence that was becoming ubiquitous.

The Ministry of Interior files also reveal a variety of technologies of surveillance: the agents monitoring large gatherings in Azbakiya Gardens estimated numbers of attendees by questioning the ticket sellers about how many visitors had been admitted to the gardens. On 29 August 1909, for example, 2700 people were admitted, among which an estimated 2200 were demonstrators and spectators, “of the middle rank;” according to the informer’s report, very few if any were Azhar students and “turban wearers.” When the

demonstrators had gathered, one Ali Fahmi, reportedly an employee of the Irrigation Department, ascended the music kiosk and delivered a speech in stentorian tones, paying tribute to those Egyptians who were now ready to serve jail sentences, or even offer the ultimate sacrifice, in order to reveal the evils of the occupation. He was referring to Shaykh `Abd al-`Aziz Jawish; the gathering in Azbakiya was a fund-raiser to organize a celebration marking the shaykh’s imminent release from jail.<sup>39</sup>

The concern for scrutinizing and censoring political activity was evident in Egypt as it was in Istanbul, where Abdul Hamid II’s paranoia was well known: ironically, the Abbas Hilmi archive includes spies’ reports on gatherings where attendees denounced the presence of spies in their midst,<sup>40</sup> as well as reports on secret societies, night schools, and demonstrations organized by Azhar students. The reports filed by Shimi Bey and his “collaborators” (AHII 15 and 16) offer insight into the use of informers to monitor not only the “dangerous classes” but also those members of the ruling class whose behavior might draw opprobrium upon the ruling family. Some of these reports mention high-ranking individuals whose disorderly conduct had to be controlled, or accounts of the comings and goings of individuals who had been targeted for observation. One informer does not mince his words when describing Ali Pasha Thabit, the governor of

## “THE OTHER TWO DOSSIERS CONCERNING SHIMI BEY AND HIS COLLABORATORS ALSO CONTAIN NOW CHILLINGLY FAMILIAR REMINDERS...”

Sharqiya, who was reportedly “a renowned homosexual and a drunkard who cares only for enjoyment,” as well as an expert gambler (*sifatuh luti muhimm wa sukari wa shayif mazajuh ... wa ustadh fi lu`b al qumar*); as for the deputy governor, he was “ignorant in administrative matters” and appeared kind, “meaning that he does neither harm nor good.” The same report noted that hashish consumption and prostitution were widespread in Daqahliya.<sup>41</sup> The two dossiers concerning Shimi Bey and his collaborators also contain now chillingly familiar reminders of the other reasons for which surveillance was deployed: one document refers to rewards given to people who inform on those who are ill (presumably to prevent contagion from spreading); subsequent pages in this report recount incursions into homes by public health officials accompanied by soldiers and neighborhood headmen to take the sick away to the hospital (*asbitalia*).<sup>42</sup>

### Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to highlight some of the diverse and often astonishing material contained in the Abbas Hilmi II Papers with regard to political activity and surveillance. Neither the activity nor its monitoring were entirely new, of course; but these documents illustrate the new modes and articulations of political engagement as well



the increasingly fastidious scrutiny to which they were subjected. I cannot do justice to the range of material in the archive, or to the transformations that took place in the complex relation between the Palace, the British, and the nationalist movement (which itself was a multifarious and changing thing). In this regard, Dinshway seems to have been a fulcrum; the terrible sentences handed down to the peasants accused of having killed a British officer operated in some ways as the Dreyfus trial did in France, galvanizing public opinion and focusing grievances. So much of the popular politics of this period must still be brought to light and understood, not as the reflection of the intelligentsia's ideologies or the translation of European ideas but as the adaptation of deep-rooted understandings of equity and representation to new circumstances – the spread of capitalism and an increasingly intrusive state apparatus foremost among them.

اجتمع في جامع السلطان الاشرف بعد صلاة عصر يوم الخميس ٤ الجاري اغلب الطلبة الموجودين في رواق الصاعدة بالجامع الازهر والتف حولهم آخرين من طلبة باقى الازهر وعدد هم نحو المائتين وخمسين شخصاً تقريباً وقفاؤنا في امر حرمانهم من الاستحقاقات الموقوفة عليهم وتنشروا من تصرف مشيخة الجامع الازهر وعدم مراعاتها قاعدة مخصوصه في توزيع تلك الاستحقاقات حاله كون الواقفين لم يميزوا احد دون الاخر ثم قالوا ان ظروف الاحوال لاتسمح لهم بالمطالبه بهذه الحقوق لانهم في احتياج لرضاء الأمير حتى لا يكون في نفسه شيء من المطالبه ثم تهبوا من الاحزاب خصوصاً من حزب الأئمة ورئيسه محمود باشا سليمان وقالوا فليست الله ولا يجعل عدم تشريف الأمير لسلطانه في الصعيد سبباً من الاسباب التي يبيع بها المواطن على الأمير الى ان قالوا لو كانت المعية انما لمحمود باشا مايتناهى وانما لايتناهى الذين يريدون ان تتحلّى صدورهم بالنياشين لقاموا في الحال يقبحون عمل الطلبة وينشرون اسمائهم من طلبات الأزهرين وانصرفوا في الساعة ٤ و ٣٠ افرنكى مساءً وفي الساعة ٨ افرنكى مساءً اجتمعت جمعية الطياف بمدرسة حسن المسرات بالداوييه تحت رئاسة خليل مذكور احد تلامذة المدرسة التوفيقية وكانوا الحاضرين ثلثمائة شخص تقريباً وبعد اقتراح الحفلة قال الرئيس من الواجب على أعضاء الجمعية ان يسعوا وراء ترقية الأئمة مهما كلفهم ذلك من تنحية النفس والنفس وولوج ابواب السياسة وانتقد طريقة الانعام بالرتب والنياشين وقال انها طريقة غير قانونية ثم تكلم بعده التلميذ احمد شكري أمين صندوق الجمعية عن اختلال الأمن العام في بلاد القطر حتى في العاصم وعن جور الحكام المستبدين الى ان قال لا تقوم للأئمة قايمة الا اذا انتزعت السلطة من يد هذه الحكومة ولوغسباً وليست الأئمة المصرية باقل من الفرنسيين ايمان ثورتهم ويده وقف الشيخ ابو الفتح وخطب في الحاضرين وقال ان الاحتلال مسئول عن الأمن العام ثم احمد عليه احد مرفوق المدارس الثانوية والتي قصيده قال في مطالعها وختمها

سبحانك سبحانك فيها الى بلدانكم شدوا الرحال  
وانح ان بعد الاحتلال سقوط انجلترا سيكون حالاً

واوعد الحاضرين الذين طلبوا منه القصيده يانه سيطيعها لتوزيعها على الاهالى ليعرفون منها معنى الحرية والاستقلال ويعدو تكلموا آخرين على التربية وانحطاطها بين الأئمة ثم وقف كل من على مصطفى احمد وعلى على برهام من الاهالى وتكلموا عن الأمن العام في القطر وعما يجب عمله لالزام الحكومة بحفظ الأمن وروا ان خير واسطه للوصول الى ذلك هو امتناع الأئمة عن دفع الضرائب للحكومة حتى تحفظ الأمن

وبعد ما اتى محمد افندى لمى المهندس كلمات قليلة عن مزايى الاتحاد الى قال ٥ وبه تنول الأئمة حقوقها ٦ ثم وقف الشيخ مسعود من طلبة الازهر وسمى ازالة ماعلق في الأزهران بين الطلبة والتلامذة وطلب اتحادهم وقال ان ولاة الأمور اخذوا يفكرون في رد مطالب الأزهرين بدون اصلاح فدعوا جميعاً الى الله ان يصلح الاحوال وانفسر الاجتماع حيث كانت الساعة ١٠ و ٣٠ افرنكى مساءً

Right: Reports on meetings of Azhar students; accusations leveled against "corrupt" ulama; meeting of students from the different colleges to protest the suspension of their stipends (HIL/6/39).

مذكورة

- ليلة الجمعة ١٠ برقي المصطفى اجتماع في المدرسة التحضير في السيد زينب وجرى تمثيل رواية عنوا في عميرة لبيته مغلقة بمعرفة حسنة كمال الرسم بحوسه المدرسه
- الفصل الاول من ميسر موقف مصري في الحفلة اجري رفته ابيه ثقيفه من الديوان بنوع الوف وعينه خلد في شوقه اوراق
- بما هي اكثر من ماله المرفوت ولم يراع حاله اولاده وهم يتفقون ورجوعا
- الفصل الثاني يمثل شخص فلاح يفتي اوراق صعيدية عن الوطن اقطف من بصره الكلمات الديه
- يا ايه مصر عارجوم (قوم) البنات الزراعي جزي على الازم البنوك سوس حذت اموالنا والازم احنا نشفق في الشدوف ونضلع جروف والشدوف اكل العرس منا مال الدنيا جاحظ لهوا احنا في ماله ولبا بالازم
- كافوا بيرحمونا والمترجس على رالي علينا
- الفصل الثالث يمثل شخص اديب يفتي على طبع جدي يقولوا يا مصر مال اولادك نايم يا مصر مال اولادك صايم
- والديني في ايد القايم والباشا والبيس لو المال يا مصر انك عيا والديني يجمع في المال والعطفيه انهم تايه
- يا مصر فتحي مالك الاجانب واحنيه مالك والشمخ البس جالك والزبد راحت على الصوال طمخا الطمخه
- ياناس كلوا مكرون وقطس غشوك يا ايه بعد بقولكم على المال والدم سلاوة وادي ابن القطر ضيت فيه الحسة
- والباشا والبيس كالتال الديني ايه في الجيب وابيه البدش باف الاول يا اهل الوطن يا اهل لغبر شروع نصيه نصير
- جوزو اما المعوي حاصم لوزم والجرحل ميت باله ورنزم والعق ما يجيش نقال الجامعة تطيب اعانه يقول البسي
- البي ارفو في البرع اسكره
- الفصل الرابع يمثل شخص مصري كراي وباشا وديني مصري يلعب ما في حيوي وبعداهه يضره بوسله لقسيم
- الفصل الخامس يمثل عمه صعيدية الغم عليه برتبه بيه وكسوة تشريفه مع انه جاهل ولم يحسن النظم وياخذ
- الطيه الفاضليه الفقرا بالوقصا
- الفصل السادس يمثل محكمة الجنائت نظره قضية اعلام شخص فلاح يفتي صلاه بقصته تدعى دولة وبعد
- المرافعة بيت اء القاضى له العمد وانهم حله الضم بقتل ليعتص من قيراطيه من الارصه فحلت المحاكمه
- ببرازة الضم والقض على العمد وحسبه
- وقد انتهى التمثيل حيث كانت الياغة بعد نصفه اليك اول ماين ١٩٠٩

٦/٥٥

قسم الضبط

قلم التحريرات

مذكوره

في ليلة اول الساعه ٨ افركي مسأ توجه الشيخ عبد العزيز جويش رئيس تحرير جريدة اللؤلؤ لمدرسة الصناع اليليه الكائنه بدرسه الاجتهاد الوطني ببولاق والقي خطبه على ما تقي شخص تقريبا ندد فيها على عدم اتفاق واتحاد المصريين حتى تفرقت كلمتهم واعاب في ذلك فريق الأغنياء من الأمه حتى قال انهم اتموزج للطبقه الوسطى والفقراء ولكن مع الأسف توأهم تاركين كل شئ نافع ويقلدون الأجانب في الشئ الضار وليس يهتم من تعتمد عليه الأمه بل ان اعانهم كلها كاعمال الطبقة السفلى وقد قال الله تعالى

يا اذا اردنا ان نهلك قرية امرنا مترفيا ففسقوا فيها فحق عليها القول فدمرناها تدميرا

فيلزم ان تجتمع كلمة الطبقة الوسطى من الأمه لتقوم المعوج ومحاربة الظلم والاضطهاد

الحاصل من رجال الحكومه ورجال الاحتلال الى ان قال يلزم عمل جمعية كبرى تضم بين

اعضاؤها الطبقة الوسطى من الأمه للقيام بهذا الغرض وقد اوعد بفتح الجمعية في الشهر المقبل وانفن الاجتماع في الساعه ٩ و ١٠ افركي مسأ

تحريرها في ١٤ مارس سنة ١٩٠٩



Above: Shaykh Abd al-Aziz Jawish gives a speech at the Workers' Night School (HIL/6/50)

Right: Account of a play performed at the Sayyida Zaynab Preparatory School on 20 April 1909 (HIL/6/83)



مذكره

تبلغ ان ما ذكرته الجرائد عن مظاهرات يوم الجمعة ٢٩ فطن الجارى عنه تفتت الحزب وتحويله على استعمال  
 القدر نفسه بجمع عند الدائرة القانونية اشراف نفوس المظاهره التي كان عليه ان يقولوا ما كان  
 الرأى العام ضد الحزب بسبب العلم على الشيخ جادوى وانذار جريدة النور وان ذلك كفر شيا لونه  
 الا انه فيما اذا كان محسبهم القسام بالظاهره . ويقال انه الحزب الوطنى ليعلى ان تظهر شانه هذه المظاهرات  
 وتبذل ان يسمي بكنهه في نادى الحزب الوطنى من جماعة من المدونة يوم الجمعة التكاليف الزخايب  
 حبس الشيخ جادوى بقوله انه هذا العمل غير معقول حيث لوقاثة من يلهو على الوطنى من غير رضى نفسه  
 في سبيل حربه بلده انه يفتك به يفتك انه مستبى الصاب لبلده فيقتله بنفسه حتى حكم عليه  
 بالعدم ..... (ولكنه العبارة من غير ان يفتك به بل يفتك به بلده قالوا عنه سبهم الى سبى بكنهه  
 حيث كانا هناك)

وتبلغ ان من الدوله استكونه جميع الخبى الى سبى قاصره على ابناء الوطنى لوجود الشيخ جادوى محسباً في غير  
 بعضهم انه يفتك بالبلد ليشاء مضمون يرمى اليه عند خروج من لجمه

ويقال انه استدعى المظاهره حاشه محمد زك الشهور بالزور دائما واحدى من محبة الرقى ليعلى ان لم  
 يرضه بل من لجمه فطبا وشركه فطر الشيخ محمد بولس القاضى ايضا والشيخ محمد زك بالزور وعبد الحميد  
 كراء القال بان مدونة بولس وصلى ومحمد بالجماعة بمصر

ويقال انه اذاعة الحزب الوطنى استتفوا المراسلة مجلس ليعلى ان عقب صدور الحكم على الشيخ جادوى  
 تبلغ مدونة الحكم وقال احد زوى المدونة بالحزب - الفقيه والحكمه من هذا المتفرق الى وجود مدونات  
 وقد تم شديده بين رضا بكنهه مجلس المبعوثان وفريد بكنهه الحزب الوطنى زادوا لبلده ووثقا ناره  
 فريد بكنهه مرتبه للاستانة هذه السنة وقدم شاكها على فلاح فريد بكنهه ما شاع عنه المظالم بكنهه بكنهه  
 مصر شيخ الاسلام . وكثيره من المشيميه فريد ليعقوده انه اول المدونة الرسته بظهوره الى الهذيان  
 واعماله نظر الوعنايه

ويقولونه عن سفر فريد بكنهه الى لستانه انه لم ير مدونه على الف الجنيه لظهور مؤتمرا الشيعه  
 وكذا اوصى زملاؤه بان يكونوا على حذر من الوقوع في مشاكل مع الحزب

وتبلغ ان من لجمه حضره بالمدرسه الامداد لم ير بكنهه سوى التفتت في الحكم والوزراء ويقولونه انه  
 هذا الحكم كان مقرا من قبل حيث لم يجز القاضى بطقه بكونه جوى بل كاد ليعلى ان يكون ذلك لما حوسب  
 القاضى عربيه سالما ونسبونه الى بعضه الشيا من موكلا الشيا عدم رضا بكنهه الحزب

وتبلغ ان الشيخ عبد الرزاق المهدى العالم من الدبر الثاني بالزور خا رايه نائب مجلس الشورى  
 عن على السفر لبلده خوفا من لوره سمحت في الجامع وقيل سافر الى بلده وان بعضه المقتول الذي ليعلى  
 بكنهه خوفا من لوره موقعا على الحزب الذي كان تقدم بالزور من لوره حتى ان كانت تفتت  
 لجمه . ويستند حصوله من ذلك . انما الدبره استا شيا . من غير ان يفتك به بل يفتك به بلده  
 وكما فقيرت خطه اعتدال الشيخ محمد بولس القاضى كذا كان السيد الفقيه محمد فداوا لجمه مدونة لجمه  
 من الحزب المبرج كما قوضت في خندق هذه المذكره كذا . في غرضه

Left: Reported fears of spies attending nationalist meetings; rumours of a demonstration organized by Azhar students (HIL/6/181)

مذكره

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ويقولونه عن سفر فريد بكنهه الى لستانه انه لم ير مدونه على الف الجنيه لظهور مؤتمرا الشيعه  
 وكذا اوصى زملاؤه بان يكونوا على حذر من الوقوع في مشاكل مع الحزب

وتبلغ ان من لجمه حضره بالمدرسه الامداد لم ير بكنهه سوى التفتت في الحكم والوزراء ويقولونه انه  
 هذا الحكم كان مقرا من قبل حيث لم يجز القاضى بطقه بكونه جوى بل كاد ليعلى ان يكون ذلك لما حوسب  
 القاضى عربيه سالما ونسبونه الى بعضه الشيا من موكلا الشيا عدم رضا بكنهه الحزب

وتبلغ ان الشيخ عبد الرزاق المهدى العالم من الدبر الثاني بالزور خا رايه نائب مجلس الشورى  
 عن على السفر لبلده خوفا من لوره سمحت في الجامع وقيل سافر الى بلده وان بعضه المقتول الذي ليعلى  
 بكنهه خوفا من لوره موقعا على الحزب الذي كان تقدم بالزور من لوره حتى ان كانت تفتت  
 لجمه . ويستند حصوله من ذلك . انما الدبره استا شيا . من غير ان يفتك به بل يفتك به بلده  
 وكما فقيرت خطه اعتدال الشيخ محمد بولس القاضى كذا كان السيد الفقيه محمد فداوا لجمه مدونة لجمه  
 من الحزب المبرج كما قوضت في خندق هذه المذكره كذا . في غرضه

Right: Shimi Bey said to have advised a student who intended to commit suicide in protest against the imprisonment of Shaykh Jawish that it would better serve the country to carry out an attack on an enemy of the nationalists and receive a death sentence, thereby sacrificing himself for a worthy cause (HIL/6/189)



مذكوره

التي تمنونه بزر علينا ونفخه نريد منكم رئيسا  
في مصر لتقدم اليكم شكواكم فأنظره هنتر بات  
بأن الرئيس في مصر وكبيرها هو اللورد كرومر فقدموا  
له شكوى وهو يصفكم في هذا الظلم  
ثم أخرج أيضا أنه جازع حضور كثير من الأشخاص  
الوطنية في مصر بطريق ومصر جوابات خصوصية للبريطانيا  
نتيجة انظر لظننا مساعدة هؤلاء الناس فيما يطلبونه  
منهم فطالنا الأمور بجميع الرأى في حجرة ويقطعون  
عبرهم ويقضونهم على سبب من حضر فيهم ذلك  
عن يد يد ونارة من جوابات غير رسمية للقمندان  
فخرج أنه يساعد على هذا الجواب بقدر ما يمكنه فيألم  
عما يريد ويعطيه شخصه على سبب من ويرى أنه  
يجبه مما يجبه ذلك الخواص فيجيبون في الزوار  
ويجيبون القمندان بما حصل وأما في التجارة من التي  
أخذها ذلك الزوار هو هذا قليل من كثير مما حصل

في عصر أمس تقابلت مع رضوانه أفندي سالم قومندان  
نقطة مرس مطروح فأخبرني أنه حضره ما مورية هو دانه  
سواء ليست به الجارية وأنهم استحوذوا ٧٧ هجيرة بتمه  
شماخانة جنبه مرسه عشرة من مرس برسم اليونانيين  
والجارية برسم فخرها من ثم أخبرني أيضا أنه كان مرس  
في الواجور شخص اسمه الخواجه كحول يقال أنه وكيل اللورد  
كرومر ولم يعلم سببه وجوده مرسه وجه وجوده  
بالسودانية جاء شخص إلى هنتر بات وهو شيخ قبيلة سميت  
هناك وقد تم شكره الما بالث قائلوا له مدة الدواوين  
كانت لنا جسد من هذه المدة ولم نر من الخديرة التي  
تدعوهم اليكم منتمونا إليها ذلك لأنه مديرنا يأخذ  
منا جملنا بالفتوة بدوى إلا بد زمة لا شأن وصاحبه  
فأخذها منا ويحذرنا ما لا تطيعه ويسيرها فوق جبهدها  
والذي يقبض من يملكونه بالارصاص وما يقوى من  
يد رونه الا هذا لا يصح ولا يدعونه لنا أبدا وهكذا  
من كل ما يسئ حالتنا فأمره العدل وإياه امره

Above: Report of a complaint from the leader of a tribe to Hunter Pasha regarding the British claim of having given democracy to Egypt and Sudan (HIL/34/40)

اجتمعت جمعية الصناع بمدينة الجيزة والاتحاد التابع للحزب الوطني ببولاق في الساعة الخامسة مساء يوم  
الجمعة ١٧ يونيو الحاضر وافتتح المجلس توفيقه افندي الركني الحامي وكلف بعضه الحاضرين بالخطابة وكما يتبع  
عدد لهم نحو الستة شخص من الصناع والتجار  
فقام محمد بدر من الصناع ومنه مستخدم المسك الحديد الديرية وقال انه كان موجودا بالصناعة شخص مسلم  
وظيفة عربجي العربي الكسح التي يركبها الياسمين في الجيزة وكان في كل يوم الياسمين يركب العربي  
كويري امبارة لغاية محو المواصلات خلف القلم ثلاث مرات او اربع وكان هذا المسلم هو الذي يزعم العربي  
فتسبب منه ذلك حصول مرضه للمسلم توفي باسبابه وكان فقيرا جدا وصاحب اولاد ليس في طاعتهم دفنه  
فوجدوا الياسمين في الجيزة وطلبوا منه مبلغ ثمانية قروش صنع كانت باقية للموت في مالهية لم دفنه  
فقال ما فيش روح برة ومنه حصة من الموت انه كان هذا اليوم اول الشهر وعمل للصناعة جارية صرفت راتبها  
فوجدوا الاولاد لبرهم واخذوا منهم فطال كل من يقصده مالهية يطعن لهم شيء على قصده لوعانه فلم يصبه شيء  
حتى جهر من العمال ختمه عشر جنيه وفي الشراء حضر الياسمين فوجد في واقفا بجوار الصراف ومن هذا المبلغ  
الطعام ولما سألني عن عرفة فاخذته الدفعة وقال ما كنت اظنه انكم باسمية تتخذه لبره لدرج ومنه امبارة  
باتحادنا اخرج من جيبه ثلاثة جنيهات واعطاهم في فانظروا يا اخواني كيف يكون الاتحاد وكيف يكون  
الانجليزى مبيحا باتحادنا

فقام بعده محمود صالح من الصناع بمدينة الخليفة وكلفهم عن نقابة الصناع وفوائدها ووصى بالانتماء  
في عضويتها وانتمى على عربكي لطفى مؤسس

ثم قام محمد ابراهيم من الصناع وقال انه بولاقا لكتبة محمد بالانجليز فقط والحقيقة انه محمد بالانجليزى  
والفرنساوى والتمليان والرومى وما سبب ذلك؟ اسبابه انه الصناع والعمال الوطنيه غير  
متضامنه فلما اتحدوا وقضوا منوا لتقدمت الصناع ومنى تقدمت لرحل عنا عموم الوجبات حيث  
لا يجبروا لرم مرتزقا ولذلك فاذا همت جميع سيمتلك تقاضى العمال ولم يصبه زمة على ما سبب  
حتى يشترك فيل في نحو استمارة من العمال وكل مشترك يدفع في الشهر غرضه صنع واحد ومركز الجمعية  
بالجيز ببولاق فاعلمكم الي الصناع والعمال الاتحاد بل

ثم قام محمود سليمان الطالب بالمدارس ومنه على سيرة البطالوريا وقال أعزقكم ما هو الدار الوطنى  
المنتشر في الدار المصرية الذي انصفه واقهرها هذا الدار وهو تقليدنا الدار باوبوه في عزاءهم القبيح

Left: Report on  
a gathering of  
the Workers'  
Association at a  
school affiliated  
with the  
National Party  
(HIL/6/453)

## END NOTES

- 1 I would like to extend my thanks to the Mohamed Ali Foundation for offering me the opportunity to work on these documents; the wonderful archivists at Palace Green Library, Durham University, and especially Francis Gotto, for welcoming me and facilitating the research process; the librarians at the American University in Cairo's Rare Books and Special Collections Library, and especially Walaa Temraz, for helping me access the digital copy of the collection; and Aaron Jakes, who brought his deep knowledge and generous advice to bear on a draft of this chapter while his book, which touches upon this topic extensively, was still under press.
- 2 See most importantly Jakes, Aaron. *Egypt's Occupation. Colonial Economism and the Crises of Capitalism*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press (2020); Ellis, Matthew. *Desert Borderland: The Making of Modern Egypt and Libya*. Stanford: Stanford University Press (2018), chapter 3; and narrower studies, such as Badrawi, Malak. *Political Violence in Egypt 1910-1924. Secret Societies, Plots and Assassinations*. Richmond: Curzon Press (2000); Tauber, Eliezer. "Egyptian Secret Societies, 1911." *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 4 (2006): 603-23. [www.jstor.org/stable/4284478](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4284478); Landau, Jacob M. "Prolegomena to a study of secret societies in modern Egypt," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1:2 (1965): 135-186. DOI: 10.1080/00263206508700010; Tam, Alon, "Cairo's Coffeehouses in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries: An Urban and Socio-Political History" (2018). *ProQuest*. AAI10793595. <https://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI10793595>;
- 3 Carter V. Findley traces the growth of the "scribal service" even during periods of Ottoman imperial contraction until the end of the eighteenth century: see Findley. *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922*. Princeton University Press (1980).
- 4 Hourani, Albert. "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in *The Modern Middle East*. Hourani, Albert, Khoury, Philip S., and Wilson, Mary C., eds. Berkeley: University of California Press (1993): 83-109 (originally published 1968).
- 5 On the military households of Ottoman Egypt see in particular Hathaway, Jane. *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdaglis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1996). doi:10.1017/CBO9780511470738
- 6 See Hanna, Nelly. *The State and Its Servants: Administration in Egypt from Ottoman Times to the Present*. New York: Columbia University Press (1996).
- 7 Cuno, Kenneth. "Ideology and Juridical Discourse in Ottoman Egypt: the Uses of the Concept of *Irşad*." *Islamic Law and Society*, 6, 2 (May, 1999), 136-163; Ghazaleh, Pascale. *Fortunes urbaines et stratégies sociales. Généalogies patrimoniales au Caire 1780-1830*. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale (2009). 2 vols.
- 8 See Fahmy, Khaled. "The Anatomy of Justice: Forensic Medicine and Criminal Law In Nineteenth-century Egypt." *Islamic Law and Society*. 6 (1999): 224-271.

- 10.1163/1568519991208682; and Ghazaleh, *Fortunes urbaines*, ch. 1.
- 9 Cole, Juan. *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East: Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt's 'Urabi Movement*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press (1993): 267.
- 10 Mikhail, Alan. *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt: An Environmental History* (Studies in Environment and History). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2011). doi:10.1017/CBO9780511977220
- 11 Stanford: Stanford University Press (2020).
- 12 See also Omar, Hussein. "The Rule of Strangers: Empire, Islam and the Invention of 'Politics,' 1867- 1914." University of Oxford, 2016.
- 13 Reports on al-Ruqiy al-Islami association and its meetings may be found in HIL 6/56, 64-6, 79, 104, 144, 149, 152-3, 157-9, 177, 188, 213, 226, 264-5, 279, 291, 303, 315, 430, 457, 468.
- 14 Jakes, *Egypt's Occupation*, ch.6. For a basic biography of Jawish, see Goldschmidt, Arthur. *A Biographical Dictionary of Modern Egypt*. Boulder / London: Lynne Rienner Publishers (2000): 96. The shaykh is mentioned repeatedly throughout the Abbas Hilmi II collection; the catalogue cites, for example: general reports on Shaikh `Abd al-`Aziz Jawish (HIL 6/106, 156, 186, 281, 292), on his criticisms of the upper classes, the government and the British (HIL 6/50), his visits to various schools (HIL 6/84, 106, 156, 307) and meetings with al-Azhar students (HIL 6/313-314), a party in his honour (HIL 6/282-283, 293-5, 300, 308) and demonstrations in support of Shaykh `Abd al-`Aziz (HIL 6/301-2, 306).
- 15 For a nuanced overview of Jawish's trajectory, see Lockman, Zachary. "Exploring the Field: Lost Voices and Emerging Practices in Egypt, 1882-1914." In Gershoni, Israel et al., eds. *Histories of the Modern Middle East: New Directions*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner (2002): 137-54.
- 16 Lockman offers a more nuanced view of the relation between elite and workers' theory and practice of nationalism: "segments of the urban working population developed links with the nationalist movement early on, found in their own concrete experience reasons to feel themselves a part of that movement, and came to interpret and conceptualize their own concerns in nationalist terms." See Lockman, Zachary. "The Social Roots of Nationalism: Workers and the National Movement in Egypt, 1908-19." *Middle Eastern Studies*. 24. 4 (1988): 445-59.
- 17 Timothy Mitchell. "Fixing the Economy." *Cultural Studies*. 12. 1 (1998): 82-101. DOI: 10.1080/095023898335627
- 18 Presumably Sir Archibald Hunter (1856-1936). See Hill, Richard. *A Biographical Dictionary of the Sudan*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. (1951; 1967): 168.
- 19 AHII 34/40.
- 20 See Chalcraft, John. *The Striking Cabbies of Cairo and Other Stories: Crafts and Guilds in Egypt, 1863-1914* (SUNY Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East). Albany: State University of New York Press (2004); and Ghazaleh, Pascale. *Masters of the Trade: Crafts and Craftspeople in Cairo, 1750-1850*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press (2000).
- 21 AHII 6/453, 18 June 1910.
- 22 Cole refers to the practice of rukiya, which "distributed income among guild members with little regard for who worked hardest, ensuring all members of a comparable rank a similar level of income" (*Colonialism*: 71).
- 23 AHII 6/39, March 1909.
- 24 AHII 6/4.
- 25 AHII 6/39, March 1909.
- 26 AHII 6/35, 8 March 1909.
- 27 AHII 6/198.

- 28 Report on the establishment of the Hizb al-`Ummal (Workers' Party) (AHII 6/89); another report discusses whether it can be classed as an association (AHII6/90).
- 29 Cole, *Colonialism*: 98.
- 30 Al-Naboodah H. "'a'ib al-Khabar: Secret Agents and Spies During the First Century of Islam." *Journal of Asian History*. 39/2 (2005): 158–176. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/41933414](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41933414).
- 31 Hitti, P.K. *History of the Arabs From the Earliest Times to the Present*. Macmillan International Higher Education (2002): 325. He continues: "Al-Mansur employed in his espionage system merchants, pedlars and travellers who acted as detectives; al-Rashid and other caliphs did the same. Al-Ma'mun is said to have had in his intelligence service in Baghdad some 1700 aged women. Especially was 'the land of the Romans' covered with `Abbasid spies of both sexes disguised as traders, travellers and physicians."
- 32 Kazamias, Alexander. "Cromer's Assault on 'Internationalism': British Colonialism and the Greeks of Egypt, 1882-1907." Gorman, A. and M. Booth, eds. *The Long 1890s in Egypt: Colonial Quiescence, Subterranean Resistance*. Edinburgh University Press (2014): 253-286, 272.
- 33 Jakes, *Egypt's Occupation*, Chapter 6.
- 34 AHII 6/54, 1909.
- 35 AHII 6/189, 1909.
- 36 Along with Muhammad Rushdi, one of the Khedive's top spies. Jakes, *Egypt's Occupation*, Chapter 2.
- 37 *Ordinary Egyptians: Creating the Modern Nation Through Popular Culture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press (2011).
- 38 AHII 6/83.
- 39 HIL 6/191.
- 40 HIL 6/181, August 19, 1909.
- 41 AHII 16/47.
- 42 AHII 16/169.

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