

Table Of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	I
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	II
A NOTE ON USE OF ARABIC SOURCES	III
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: "THE ENORMOUS PARADE"	1
CHAPTER 2: THE ARMY OF THE WAFD	17
<i>Educational Reform Under Lord Cromer</i>	19
<i>Creating a University</i>	25
<i>A Brief Political History of the Revolt</i>	30
<i>The Wafd and the Shabab</i>	33
PART TWO: SCOUTING IN EGYPT	36
CHAPTER 3: THE MALLEABLE MOVEMENT	36
<i>Scouting and the Empire</i>	37
<i>Constructing a Flexible Ideology</i>	40
<i>The Question of Militarism</i>	43
CHAPTER 4: "THE VERY THING FOR THEM"	46
<i>Scouting Arrives in Egypt</i>	47
<i>The Association of Egyptian Boy Scouts</i>	51
<i>Scouting for Boys: From English into Arabic</i>	53
CHAPTER 5: AL-'UMDA WA-AL-KASHSHAFI FI MU'ASKAR AL-AHRAM (THE VILLAGE CHIEF AND THE BOY SCOUTS AT THE PYRAMIDS ENCAMPMENT)	58
<i>Cast of Characters</i>	60
<i>Scouting and the Hierarchy of Nations</i>	64
<i>A Donation and a New Recruit</i>	65
PART THREE: FROM SCOUTS TO SHIRTS TO SOLDIERS	68
CHAPTER 6: THE CULT OF PHYSICAL SPORT	68
<i>Al-Riyada al-Badaniyya</i>	72
<i>A National Charter and a Young Chief Scout</i>	75
<i>Scouting Takes Hold: Expansion and Diversification</i>	77
CHAPTER 7: "WE WERE ON A SCOUTING TRIP IN UPPER EGYPT."	83
<i>The Young Egypt Society</i>	88
<i>Militarism in Context</i>	92
<i>The Riots of November 1935</i>	94
<i>Questioning the Influence of Fascism</i>	97
CONCLUSION	100
BIBLIOGRAPHY	104
UNPUBLISHED ARCHIVAL SOURCES	104
ARABIC LANGUAGE PERIODICALS	104
FRENCH LANGUAGE PERIODICALS	104
PUBLISHED SOURCES IN ARABIC	104
PUBLISHED SOURCES IN ENGLISH	105

Acknowledgments

More than anything, I owe the completion of this project to the contagious enthusiasm of an extraordinary teacher. From the moment I approached Walter Armbrust last spring with little more than an odd hunch about the neglected importance of boy scouts, his kindness and encouragement have been limitless. Over the course of two separate trips to Egypt, he has guided me through the complexities of Cairo's antique book and magazine market and helped me to locate the Arabic sources without which my research would not have been possible. On countless afternoons over the past twelve months, he has welcomed me into his office and smiled calmly as I grumbled and fretted over concerns that often had little to do with this thesis. He has responded swiftly to more emails asking more outlandish questions than I dare to count. And throughout it all, he has shared a knowledge of Egypt that is at once humbling and inspiring.

Though I would have been fortunate to work with just one such devoted teacher, I owe thanks to many more. It was in a tutorial with Eugene Rogan that the idea for this topic first occurred. He forced me to refine my earliest ideas and pointed me towards the sources that gave shape to this topic. Ronald Nettler has helped immeasurably with his careful readings of drafts and his sage advice about the wider context for my work. Najah Shamaa has shown exceptional patience as my Arabic teacher over the past two years. The translations that comprise the core of this research would not have been possible without her perseverance through hours of individual tutorials. Likewise, I would like to thank Rifat Amin for shepherding me through so much of the Egyptian Scouting literature I discovered during my research trips to Cairo.

For their friendship and good humor, I would like to thank Matthew Ellis and Patrick Wrigley. I owe much of my happiness and intellectual growth over the past two years to the hours we have spent chatting, exploring, drinking pomegranate juice, and cooking eggs. The adventures of my research in Cairo, London, and Oxford would not have been nearly so pleasant without their company.

For indulging my rapacious library borrowing habits, I would like to thank Mastan Ebtehaj. For making the Middle East Centre such a warm, lively, and welcoming place for all who enter, I am grateful to Collette Caffrey.

To thank my parents and my sister Susie for all that they have given me is basically impossible. At the moment, I will simply express my gratitude for their patience and encouragement and their regular reminders that a good night's sleep usually makes all the difference.

Finally, I would like to thank Paige Atkinson not merely for her elegant cover design but for her constant love and support over the past three years. She has taught me to notice more, and for that I will remain ever grateful.

A Note on Use of Arabic Sources

The central chapters of this work rely considerably on research in Arabic sources. For the benefit of the reader, I have translated all cited passages into English. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

Where transliterations were necessary for citations or to clarify the use of specific Arabic words, I have employed a simplified version of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* transliteration standard that uses no diacritics. Diphthongs are written “au” and “ei” where appropriate. I have retained the “l” of the definite article “al” in all cases. All vowels, long and short, are written with a single vowel, “a,” “u,” or “i.” Doubled consonants are written with a double letter (or pair of letters where necessary as in the use of “sh” for the Arabic letter “shin”).

Names regularly cited in English are written in accordance with common usage.

Introduction

Chapter 1: "The Enormous Parade"

The enormous parade began to move. Successive waves rolled forward, chanting patriotic slogans. Egypt appeared to be one great demonstration . . . united in one person and a single chant. The columns of the different groups stretched out for such a long distance that Fahmy imagined the vanguard would be approaching Abdin Palace before he and his group had budged from their position in front of the railroad station. It was the first demonstration that machine guns had not interrupted. No longer would bullets come from one side and stones from the other.

Fahmy smiled. He saw that the group in front of him was starting to move. He turned on his heels to direct his own personal demonstration. He raised his hands and the lines moved in anticipation and with enthusiasm. Walking backward, he chanted at the top of his lungs. He continued his twin tasks of directing and chanting until the beginning of Nubar Street. Then he turned the chanting over to one of the young men surrounding him, who had been waiting for their chance with anxious, excited voices, as though they had labor pains that would only be relieved by being allowed to lead the chants. He turned around once again to walk facing forward. He craned his neck to look at the procession. He could no longer see the front of it. He looked on either side to see how crowded the sidewalks, windows, balconies, and roofs were with all the spectators who had begun to repeat the chants. The sight of thousands of people concentrated together filled him with such limitless power and assurance it was like armor protecting him, clinging tightly to him so that bullets could not penetrate.¹

By the time Naguib Mahfouz set his pen to crafting the vivid finale to his epic *Palace Walk*, the events of this closing scene had long been etched into the national imagination of his native Egypt. Indeed, like so many battles for national independence, the Revolution of 1919 quickly became the centerpiece of a new, popular political mythology. Of course like all myths, the accounts of Egypt's first great *thawra* of the 20th Century had their titans, and Sa'ad Zaghlul Pasha ascended quickly into the role of a modern-day political deity. But more than any one individual, Egypt's heroes in the lore

¹ Naguib Mahfouz, *Palace Walk*. Translated by William Maynard Hutchings and Olive E. Kenny. (London: Doubleday, 1991), 490-1.

of its anti-imperialist struggle were the hordes of its own people who thronged to Cairo's great squares and avenues and marched together, chanting as one their outrage at foreign oppression. And at the forefront of these crowds whose image Mahfouz, like many others, would lovingly reproduce were the nation's young men, *al-shabab*, who led their countrymen "with anxious, excited voices, as though they had labor pains that would only be relieved by being allowed to lead the chants."

But if Egypt's rising generation was a cause for glorification in the pages of nationalist history, the same vigorous young men were the objects of acute ambivalence in the practical realms of national politics and popular culture. The basic facts of the popular resistance against Great Britain had proven that the growing ranks of Egypt's educated youth could serve as the shock troops of any future political movements. On the one hand, the *shabab* became the foremost symbol of strength in the newly-independent nation-state. On the other hand, their very power—and the hagiographic testaments to that power's import in the struggle for independence—underscored the liability of so potent a force. In short, any party that could rally the crowds of the young around its cause would be assured a mighty weapon in the national controversies of the future. And conversely, a failure to win over the youth could prove fatal in the contentious atmosphere of interwar politics.

With time, this tension would provide a framework for the lively youth culture that developed in the wake of Egyptian independence. In a context where national strength was increasingly conceived in the most literal terms possible, the *shabab* became the emblem of Egypt's highest aspirations. Despite the aura of controversy that was, by many accounts, the defining feature of the inter-war period, a kind of popular consensus took shape around the idea that cultivating the physical, intellectual, and moral faculties of the rising generation was a foremost national imperative. Yet the subtext to the deluge

of articles, essays, and exhortations for or about youth that appeared in that era's exploding mass media is a profound anxiety about loyalty. The paired conditions of modernity and independence had introduced a new degree of choice into the lives of individual Egyptians. And empowered with that choice, Egypt's youth could move their allegiances between the various contenders in the arena of national affairs. If a glorification of physical strength became the clearest manifestation of the hopes attached to the *shabab*, then a trope on the virtues of conformity and obedience belied the fears surrounding the volatility of the nation's young.

See <http://users.ox.ac.uk/%7Emetheses/JakesMasterECN.htm#Fig1>

Figure 1: King Faruq I, Chief Scout of Egypt

See <http://users.ox.ac.uk/%7Emetheses/JakesMasterECN.htm#Fig2>

Figure 2: Muhammad Naguib poses for *Al-Kashshafa*, January 1954

To introduce what I hold to be a critical and long-overlooked response to these interwoven emphases on strength and loyalty, I offer the pair of images displayed in the two figures above. The first is a photograph of Egypt's young King Faruq I, dressed proudly in the standard uniform of the Egyptian Boy Scouts or *al-Kashshafa al-Misriyya* as they were known in Arabic. The second is the cover of the January 1954 issue of *al-Kashshafa*, the official organ of the Association of Egyptian Boy Scouts. The caption reads, "General Muhammad Naguib performs the Scout salute."

In the preface to his masterful work, *Race, Resistance, and the Boy Scout Movement in British Colonial Africa* Timothy Parsons confesses, "There is . . . a broad perception that Scouting is a relatively inconsequential institution that is not worthy of serious academic investigation. Friends and acquaintances often responded with wry

chuckles or bemused looks when I explained that my next project was going to be a study of African Boy Scouts during the colonial era.”² Like Parsons, I too have brooked suspicions of academic obscurity or downright eccentricity for my fascination with Egyptian boys in uniform. Indeed the prevailing tendency both in Western academia and in Egypt itself to dismiss the Scouting movement as curious but inconsequential has only added to the challenge of this research. It is a sad fact for historians that people tend not to preserve records of things they find unimportant.

Nevertheless, the two images featured above speak volumes about the critical significance of this long-overlooked movement in Egypt’s rapidly-developing, inter-war youth culture. As a pair, they raise an array of questions that begin to suggest the import of what may at first seem an odd topic. To list just a few: Why would Faruq have chosen to pose as *al-kashshaf al-a’zm li-misr*, “The Chief Scout of Egypt”, and why in turn would his coterie of Palace advisers, from a point several years before his coronation, have chosen to cultivate an affiliation between the young king and the Scouting movement?³ What was the actual magnitude and significance of this movement of which Faruq chose to style himself as the leader? Why in turn would Muhammad Naguib and the leaders who subsequently arose from Egypt’s elite officer corps have chosen to affix their image to the very same movement? Was Naguib’s awkward salute merely an effort to efface all record of the recently-deposed king, or might it say something more about an affinity between the outlook of the Free Officers and the prevailing interpretation of Scouting in Egypt?

² Timothy H. Parsons, *Race, Resistance, and the Boy Scout Movement in British Colonial Africa*. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2004), xi.

³ The Arabic *a’zm* might translate better as “Supreme,” but British correspondence on Faruq’s Scouting activities regularly refers to him as the “Chief Scout.” For the sake of consistency with English sources cited in later chapters, I have chosen to use the English title throughout.

I shall argue that attention to the Boy Scout Movement is essential to any broader understanding of youth culture in Egypt's formative years between the two World Wars. By directing the focus of this admittedly preliminary study towards the history, evolution, and influence of Scouting, I hope to offer new insights on this period of Egyptian history in at least three respects. First and most specifically, I believe that despite its long exile to the realm of academic obscurity, the Scouting movement in Egypt was both more widespread and more influential than any study until now has suggested. Second, by using the Scouting movement as a kind of prism through which to regard the refractions of nationalist ideology, I intend to provide new depth and several important corrections to the study of Egyptian youth culture as it evolved between the Revolution of 1919 and the political upheavals of the late 1930s. Finally, and most generally, I shall suggest that attention to the concerns and activities of Egypt's rising generation may offer a striking counterpoint to the prevailing commentaries both about the nature of Egyptian politics and about the impact of British imperialism in the rocky years of Egypt's qualified independence.

Before Britain's unilateral declaration of qualified independence for Egypt in 1922, Scouting had already begun to assume its place at the center of the controversy over the political socialization of youth. Far more than an extracurricular society that offered training in tracking, knot-tying, and first aid and organized camping excursions in the open air, Scouting seemed to promise a comprehensive program for the modeling of the rising generation. In time all three major parties to what Gabriel Warburg has termed "the three-legged stool" of Egyptian inter-war politics would attempt to leave their imprint on Egypt's young, and for all three, namely the Palace, the Wafd, and Egypt's British "advisors," Scouting would at one time or another prove central to their efforts at

winning the loyalties of individual Egyptian youth.⁴ Later on, as the darker years of the 1930s witnessed a rising popular disillusionment with the failures of the post-war order and a consequent fracturing of Egypt's popular and political cultures, the new players in the public sphere would in turn endeavor to use Scouting as a mechanism for attracting their own loyal supporters. Though the rapid, global success of Robert Baden-Powell's Scouts depended in large part on the movement's promotion of certain broadly-defined and non-controversial values, the movement's ideals were neither arbitrary nor wholly consistent across all areas where Scouting was practiced. Rather, Scouting's rising popularity in Egypt and the specific interpretations of the movement's values in their Egyptian context together offer critical data about the new Egyptian nation in an era of seismic change.

Even beyond the contested boundaries of the official Scouting organization, Scouting in Egypt became emblematic of a network of ideas about youth, sport, and political organization that circulated widely throughout the popular culture of the inter-war years. These ideas relate specifically to the paired concerns mentioned earlier in regard to the popular mythology of the 1919 Revolution, namely the tangled tasks of strengthening Egypt's young for a glorious future and organizing them in an ordered system that would safeguard their enduring loyalty. As envisioned by Robert Baden-Powell in his *Scouting for Boys* (1908) and as practiced by an ever-multiplying number of eager boys throughout Britain, the United States, and Western Europe, Scouting arrived in Egypt as an appealing and ready-made solution to both of these problems at once. The movement's simultaneous emphases on physical sport and training on the one hand and military-like discipline and conformity on the other met a pressing need. Egypt's inter-

⁴ Gabriel Warburg, "The 'Three-Legged Stool': Lampson, Faruq, and Nahhas, 1936-1944" in *Egypt and the Sudan*. (London: Frank Cass, 1985).

war political elites appreciated the utility of such a program. The Scouting movement would become one specific manifestation of a mode of organization and political socialization that was far more widespread than the mere counted membership of the Egyptian Boy Scouts.

Ultimately, it is these larger concerns about how Egypt's burgeoning ranks of educated young came to understand their role in the modern nation-state that constitute the central focus of this work. The existing political, diplomatic, and intellectual histories of the interwar period in Egypt have tended to emphasize the fractiousness of the times. As the argument goes, the failures of the first decade after independence begot a generation of minds disillusioned with the unfulfilled promises of the past and eager to fashion alternative formulas for a glorious future. Among the most thoughtful of these works are the writings of Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski. Their research provides a valuable framework for understanding the tides of ideas that swept through Egypt in the three decades after Mahfouz's "enormous parade" overwhelmed Cairo's streets. In many ways it furnished the earliest inspiration for this very project. Yet the style of their two-volume classic on the evolution of Egyptian nationalism serves to show up several of the voids in the existing literature on interwar Egypt that a more specific attention to the development of youth culture may help to fill.

Gershoni's and Jankowski's analysis of nationalist ideologies focuses specifically on the imagined boundaries of the various communities to which Egyptians swore their loyalty in the interwar years, but it offers rather fewer insights about the specific qualities of that loyalty itself. Their overall thesis, as stated on the opening page of *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, is that "in place of the exclusivist territorial nationalism which had marked the 1920s, the period after 1930 witnessed the development of new supra-

Egyptian concepts of national identity.”⁵ But if, as they argue, an Egyptian was more likely to regard himself first and foremost as a child of the Nile Valley in 1925 and as a member of the Islamic *‘umma* or an heir to the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Arabic language in 1935, this shifting allegiance, even when presented with these scholars’ meticulous attention to gradations of ideology, says little about characteristics of either membership as a lived experience. The problem, put more bluntly, is that nationalism functions as a robust ideology only at the level of defining the national community. At the level of action, nationalism tends to be productive mostly in what Nadav Safran has termed its “negative aspect.” As Safran explains, “In its negative manifestation, nationalism is a movement of liberation in the sense of seeking to drive out the dominant foreign power. This feature is shared universally by the various countries as well as among most of the social classes within each country. In its positive aspect, nationalism involves specific concrete ideologies which, though they may have characteristics in common, tend to differ greatly from country to country, from one sector of the population to another.”⁶ In effect, this post-revolutionary or post-colonial fission speaks to the ideological emptiness of nationalism beyond the often-times powerful act of defining one form of membership against another.

In the broadest sense, then, the study of youth culture offers an opportunity to explore the qualitative aspects of membership in the various imagined communities of inter-war Egypt. And where Gershoni’s and Jankowski’s study leads them to highlight the various controversies that characterized one aspect of the intellectual and cultural output of this period, an alternative focus on the qualities of organization and

⁵ Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation, 1930-1945*. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1.

⁶ Nadav Safran, *Egypt in Search of Political Community*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 10.

indoctrination begins to suggest a level of uniformity that is not predicted by their selected framework. For Egypt's young men, the experience of membership in the various groups and societies that attached to the shifting ideological communities of the period retained certain crucial qualities of consistency.

Attention to such aspects of historical continuity in the organizational experiences of Egypt's youth furthermore throws into question the prevailing historical periodization of the interwar era, especially as it relates to the violent upheavals of the mid-1930s. Jankowski's published doctoral dissertation entitled *Egypt's Young Rebels* broke new ground with its analysis of the Young Egypt or *Misr al-Fatah* movement of the 1930s, and it earned him a place as a pioneer in the study of youth culture and politics in the interwar period. Yet his insistence on the originality of the movement, especially as relates to its organizational methods, causes him to define the rise of this uniformed, paramilitary youth group as a kind of sudden and radical discontinuity in the chronology of Egyptian history. These same claims, moreover, force him to rely on a common form of historical psychology to support his arguments: "Given the increasingly malfunctioning nature of the actual political process in Egypt in this period (Royal ousters of the majority party, rigged elections, etc.), it seems likely that educated younger Egyptians progressively experienced an intellectual dichotomy between what they were learning should occur and what they saw occurring in reality. While one result of the frustration resulting from this gap between the ideal and the real could have been the withdrawal of some youth from a political game in which practice was so divergent from theory, for other youth the result was undoubtedly a desire to correct these evils through their own involvement in politics."⁷

⁷ James Jankowski, *Egypt's Young Rebels: "Young Egypt": 1933-1952*. (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1975), 4.

The kind of disillusionment that Jankowski describes is undoubtedly important to any understanding of the turbulent upheavals that culminated in violent rioting in late 1935 and early 1936 between the Green Shirts of Young Egypt and the Blue Shirts of the dominant Wafd party. It moreover helps to explain the proliferation of organizations proposing alternative ideological models for Egypt's future, groups that included Young Egypt, the Society of Muslim Brothers, and the lesser-known Young Men's Muslim Association. Such recourse to psychological commentary on the political and economic frustrations of the 1930s, however, fails to explain why the leaders of Young Egypt selected the paramilitary model they ultimately used to mobilize their membership. In fact, Jankowski makes a critical factual error when he writes that, "it was the first paramilitary organization organized for younger Egyptians, with many of its symbols and techniques influencing later Egyptian paramilitary groups such as the 'Blue Shirts' of the Wafd or the 'Rovers' of the Muslim Brotherhood."⁸ The details of how all three of these movements evolved and influenced each other are admittedly complex. Yet in basic terms, the founders of the Young Egypt Society did not suddenly devise a spontaneous youth fad which others were quick to mimic when they put on uniforms and took to the streets. Nor were they simply looking to the rising fascist movements of Europe, though the impact of Europe's own new ideological currents also deserves consideration. Rather, the uniformed youth groups that appeared in the 1930s took their cues from a set of practices that were already well established by the time Young Egypt was founded in 1933. Indeed the very name "Rovers" or *jawwala* was not some random coinage but a calque on the name that Lord Baden-Powell had given to the phase of Scouting he designed for post-adolescent young men.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

Though they might seem esoteric, or even downright nitpicky, these related efforts to demonstrate the significance of Scouting in Egypt and to revise the institutional histories of the uniformed youth movements of the 1930s do not arise from some pedantic fixation with the arcane. Rather, heightened attention to these rather fine-grained concerns provides at least the beginnings of new insights on some of the broadest questions in Egyptian history. By way of concluding this brief overview of the project that follows and also providing some comments about method and structure, I shall now allude briefly to two of these grand themes.

In the historical overview of education in Egypt that introduces his *Putting Islam to Work*, Gregory Starrett observes:

If schools, universities, the press, and the military barracks act as centers of revolt, it is because the spread of their unique disciplinary practices across the whole of society is accompanied by the spread of the distinctly new techniques and potentials for revolt associated with them. A new system of power uniformly diffused, serves, among other things, to surround dominant classes with new sources of anxiety and threat.⁹

Starrett's argument about the relationship between disciplinary practices and organized rebellion provides an apt caption to the pair of photographs presented at the beginning of this chapter. My intention in presenting King Faruq I and Muhammad Naguib together in the garments of Scouting is neither to suggest a historical teleology that posits the Free Officers Revolt as a simple inevitability, nor to make the even more outlandish claim that the Revolt was actually due to the rise of Scouting. But in the pages that follow, I will argue that Scouting, both as a collection of disciplinary practices and as a reflection of popular ideas about how Egypt's young should participate in the life of their nation, deserves a place of rank in Starrett's list along with "schools, universities, the press, and

⁹ Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 58.

the military barracks.” By tracing the evolution of Scouting from its origins through the tumult of the 1930s, I hope to offer a new vantage from which to regard the political socialization of the generation of *shabab* who ultimately enrolled in the military academy in 1938.

The central chapters of this work will endeavor to explore this network of ideas as they evolved between the Revolution of 1919 and the illegalization of the shirt movements (both Green and Blue) in the spring of 1938. Chapter Two of this introductory section will review the existing secondary literature on the related topics of education, interwar politics, and nationalist ideology to provide a framework for the subsequent analysis of Egyptian youth culture. Part Two will provide a history of Scouting in Egypt with particular attention to the indigenously-produced, popular literature on the movement that appeared throughout the period under consideration. Part Three will address the emergence of the militant youth organizations of the mid-1930s and explore their treatment of earlier ideas and practices in Egyptian youth culture. Finally, the concluding chapter will attempt briefly to relate the narrative of the preceding sections to the broader movements of Egyptian history towards its moment of Revolution in 1952.

In the final assessment, the story of the *shabab* in the years of Egypt’s parliamentary monarchy may, I hope, add nuance to one of the most hard-fought debates of Middle Eastern Studies as a field, namely the impact of Western imperialism on the shaping of the modern Middle East. For no country more than Egypt is Bernard Lewis’s claim that “in the Middle East, the impact of European imperialism was late, brief, and, for the most part, indirect” harder to support. It is perhaps no coincidence that the British occupation of Egypt receives scant reference in the countless pages he has recently

published on the modern Middle East.¹⁰ And yet the body of works, exemplified by Timothy Mitchell's *Colonizing Egypt*, that have emerged to provide a contrary account of how "the colonial process would try and re-order Egypt" confront an alternative set of objections to their claims about the effectiveness of Western disciplinary control.¹¹

The classic histories of interwar Egypt, in focusing on the political dynamics of the "three-legged stool," have tended, if understandably, to emphasize the enduring influence of Great Britain throughout the period.¹² To be sure, the argument that Britain's imperial interests continued to shape the course of Egyptian affairs is more than amply supported by the cycles of undisguised political interference that so tainted the project of interwar politics. Nevertheless, Gregory Starrett may be closer to the truth of the colonial experience when he argues:

The articulate ideologies of educational theorists and colonial administrators are among the elite's tools of self-construction, tools they use to create for themselves consistent experiences of inconsistent social processes. But the creation and application of a plan, the attempt to transform reality into the facsimile of a specific text, is a complex process whose results do not simultaneously or efficiently serve all the interests of the dominant groups or classes in society. It is always historically contingent, problematic, and uncertain.¹³

The insight of Starrett's analysis is perhaps more clearly introduced by the following passage taken from a report on the Egyptian Ministry of Education sent by the British High Commissioner, Lord Lloyd to the Foreign Office in April 1927:

¹⁰ Bernard Lewis, *The Shaping of the Modern Middle East*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 28.

¹¹ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 33.

¹² For detailed political accounts of this period, see: Marius Deeb, *Party Politics in Egypt: the Wafd and Its Rivals, 1919-1939*. (London: Ithaca Press, 1979), Janice Terry, *The Wafd, 1919-1952*. (London: Third World Centre, 1982), and Nadav Safran, *Egypt in Search of Political Community*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

¹³ Starrett, 60.

I came early to the conclusion that in this Ministry the Egyptian Government were entitled to liberty of action as regards their British staff. None of the four points reserved in His Majesty's Government's declaration of the 28th February, 1922, were directly affected, and even before 1922 a considerable measure of independence had here been conceded.

Though actual interference on my part could be justified, an attitude of complete detachment in a department where Egypt herself was showing an intention of retaining more than one hundred British officials would be impossible. Representations from the officials themselves would inevitably draw me into the question in one way or another.

Nor, I conceived, was it desirable that we should stand entirely apart. Our special ties with Egypt are likely to persist, whatever form they may take; and the training of her public men can never therefore be a matter of indifference to us. Secondly, there were clear tendencies to substitute foreign culture for British in certain sections, the motives being evidently mainly political. Thirdly, the possibility of certain extremist elements succeeding in infecting the schools with Bolshevik ideas could not be overlooked; nor could the extent to which students had been systematically used by the Wafd for political agitation and finally murder be forgotten.¹⁴

Several key themes in the dynamics of the imperial encounter emerge from Lord Lloyd's anxious commentary on the status of Egypt's schools. First and most basic is the fact of Britain's restricted powers after the unilateral declaration of Egyptian independence. Though the declaration's famous "four reserved points" left the British High Commission considerable authority to intervene in many areas of Egypt's domestic and foreign policy, that authority was no longer absolute. While such comments generally belie a latent frustration at the inconvenience of Egyptian independence, the files of Foreign Office correspondence on Egypt contain frequent allusions to the curtailment of British power after 1922. Though British officials in Egypt were unreserved in their decisions to wield their available authority, they showed a certain restraint about "stretching the Reserved Points beyond the limits even of their elasticity."¹⁵

¹⁴ Lord Lloyd (Cairo) to Austen Chamberlain (Cairo), 4 April 1927, FO 371/12369.

¹⁵ Foreign Office Minutes by J. M. Pink (London), 3 June 1936, FO 371/20109.

Beyond the cautious legalism with which British officials in Egypt manipulated their powers of influence, however, lurks a deeper concern about the venture of the Empire. Lord Lloyd's report articulates an awareness that though the British might have maintained the clout to prop and topple governments, they had failed to win the hearts and minds of the Egyptian people. Read against even the most nuanced political assessments of the interwar period, the records of Egypt's rapidly emerging popular culture provide a dramatically different and more dynamic account of the colonial experience. Lord Lloyd's description of Britain's predicament in the realm of ideas offers a succinct description of the cultural and ideological problems that plagued Egypt's political elites, especially after 1922. The full complexity of this dynamic will remain a central concern of the chapters that follow, but two general and related observations may help to establish a basis further discussion of these issues.

First, Lord Lloyd's remarks underscore the momentous implications of choice for the hegemony of British culture. Even before Britain chose to grant Egypt the nominal terms of independence, the individuals of Egyptian society could choose among a growing array of cultural productions of non-British provenance. Especially in an age of rising nationalist sentiments they were exercising these "clear tendencies to substitute foreign culture for British in certain sections." Second, such choice spurred all those parties with an interest in the evolution of Egyptian culture (and they were many) to augment their efforts at winning minds. Yet even where such projects of disciplinary control were allowed to proceed unimpeded, their agents could monitor only how practices and ideas were supplied. At the level of consumption and interpretation, they were powerless.

It is this treachery of consumption that quickly becomes a central theme in the story of Scouting in Egypt. Scouting provides an ideal case for exploring the dynamics of

cultural consumption precisely because the supply, in the form of Robert Baden-Powell's voluminous writings on the practice and ideology of Scouting and his centralized administration of the entire movement, was so carefully managed. Despite these thoroughgoing efforts at administrative control, the surviving record of the Egyptian Boy Scouts, as represented in the thriving, Arabic print culture of the interwar years, offers a diversity of perspectives that run against the orthodoxy of the British Scouting Association. And oftentimes, it was these very points of deviation that proved most critical to the significance of Scouting in its Egyptian context.

Chapter 2: The Army of the Wafd

This deliberate introduction of schoolboys into the political arena has had a disastrous effect on the discipline of the schools since the war. Masters are defied both in and out of class rooms, and if they give an order, in respect of strikes for example, they are as often as not forbidden by the Ministry to carry it out. Further, they are constantly forced to readmit students dismissed for misbehaviour, and instructed to pass others in examinations, for which they are evidently wholly unprepared. Masters in general are seldom supported by superior authority, and are at the mercy of student organizations. On occasion indeed the schoolboys have shown themselves more powerful than the Minister himself: and the Government's fear of them is reflected in the number of unnecessary posts which it creates for them in the lower grades of the various administrations, a policy which makes its professions of anxiety to economise in official salaries a pure farce.

To these considerations must be added lack of consistent policy and excessive centralisation in the Ministry itself, the opening of new schools without adequate staff, the constant dismissal and appointment of educational experts on political grounds and a falling off in the social and intellectual level of the foreign teachers recruited since the war.¹

In the closing remarks of his report on education from 1927, British High Commissioner Lord Lloyd turns his attention from the general concerns of cultural influence discussed in the previous chapter to the specific problem of student politics. With the disgust and frustration that would color so much of the High Commission's correspondence on its political *bête noire*, the Wafd, Lord Lloyd bemoans the party's apparent manipulation of the educational system for political ends. Though his disdain for the Wafd's motives likely caused the High Commissioner to overstate the situation, Lord Lloyd's commentary provides a useful introduction to the issue of extracurricularity in the political contests of interwar Egypt.

The target audience for the explosive proliferation of printed media and formal organizations addressing themselves to the concerns of Egyptian youth in the interwar period was not simply a subset of the total population that fell within certain roughly-defined age boundaries. Rather, the very nature of such cultural production presumed

¹ Lord Lloyd (Cairo) to Austen Chamberlain (Cairo), 4 April 1927, FO 371/12369.

consumers of a very particular type. The vast array of pamphlets, journals, and magazines speaking to the interests, hopes, and obligations of Egypt's rising generation presumed at the very least an audience with the literacy and education to read such materials and the financial means to purchase them. Likewise, the widening collection of clubs and societies that offered their activities and services to the young required a potential membership with leisure time to expend. In short, the likeliest consumers and participants were the students of Egypt's growing, secular state school system.

Since long before the *shabab* took to Cairo's streets as the vanguard of the 1919 Revolution, the debates that raged over education in Egypt had focused at least as much on the problem of how students would occupy their time away from their classes as they had on the issue of what they would learn in those classes themselves. In their respective studies of educational reform in the modern Middle East, Timothy Mitchell and Brinkley Messick both offer nuanced accounts of the process by which modern, Westernized educational techniques served to reorder and rationalize the process of learning. Both devote particular attention to the manner in which the Lancaster method and its derivatives imposed novel modes of organization and classification that changed the ways in which students progressed through time. Though both authors focus specifically on issues within the classroom—the division of learning into discrete subjects, the partitioning of school time into finite periods, and the arrangement of students into bounded age groups—Mitchell in particular notes that this process held broader implications for notions of childhood and youth as stages of life. “Learning,” Mitchell observes, “was now to be separated from the practices in which it was entwined, assigning it a distinct place, the school, and a distinct period of life, that of youth.”²

² Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*. 87. For a more thorough account of the changes brought about by the modern, Westernized school, see Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*. Chapter 3 and

Messick and Mitchell both explain in great detail that this novel periodization imposed novel forms of order and discipline on the lives of youth within the “distinct place” of learning. Neither author, however, makes much of what happened outside the newly-bounded space of the school. To take up Mitchell’s own language, time within the distinct place of learning was only a subset, albeit considerable, of the total distinct period of learning. By rationalizing the day into finite segments of instruction, the modern school system hardened the distinction between school time and *faragh* or leisure. And although modern methods of teaching may have elaborated techniques of discipline within the time and space of school itself, they simultaneously produced a void outside those boundaries. Moreover, by moving all students through a uniform schedule of learning within the school, such techniques also guaranteed that the periods of unstructured leisure for all students would coincide.

Educational Reform Under Lord Cromer

The problem of *faragh* has been an almost universal concern of educational reformers and political elites throughout the modern world. Groups of idle youth imbued with new ideas and a sense of group identity could, in the absence of structure, discipline, and supervision, threaten grave disruption to the maintenance of public order. In Egypt, as in other colonial contexts, the dangers of extracurricular liberty became a particular preoccupation of imperial administrators. Lord Cromer frets in his *Modern Egypt*:

It is on every ground of the highest importance that a sustained effort should be made to place elementary education in Egypt on a sound footing. The schoolmaster is abroad in the land. We may wish him well, but no one who is interested in the future of the country should blind himself to the fact that his successful advance carries with it certain unavoidable disadvantages. The

Brinkley Messick, *The Calligraphic State*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) Chapter 5.

process of manufacturing demagogues has, in fact, not only already begun, but may be said to be well advanced.³

Cromer's high-handed commentary on Egyptian education proves instructive here in two simple respects. First, it offers an apt illustration of British fears about the activities of modern-educated natives. At intervals throughout his sprawling depiction of Egypt under British control, Cromer launches into sympathetic digressions about the intellectual and religious estrangement of the modern-educated Egyptian who "cuts himself adrift from the sheet-anchor of his creed."⁴ The awareness of such dislocation in its Egyptian context governed two divergent policies towards youth and education. The first, most popular under Cromer, was simply to restrict the supply of modern-educated youth who might, in their free hours, engage in the "hare-brained and empirical projects [of] the political charlatan, himself but half-educated."⁵ The second, increasingly unavoidable once Egypt gained nominal independence, was to fill the idle hours of the student's day with activities and amusements that conformed to desired patterns of behavior. This latter practice, namely the creation of an appealing youth culture, will be the focus of Parts Two and Three. The remainder of this present chapter, however, will explore the process of transition from the first form of educational policy to the second.

If Cromer's remarks on the impact of modern education in Egypt serve to show that the activities of educated Egyptians were a notable cause for British concern, his comments also speak to the specific nature of that concern. Simply put, educational policy in Cromer's writings is first and foremost a sociopolitical matter. And in his assessments of the various educational projects underway in Egypt, he tends to evaluate each program according to its effectiveness in maintaining political stability.

³ Lord Cromer [Sir Evelyn Baring], *Modern Egypt*, vol. 2. (London: Macmillan, 1908), 534.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 230.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 534.

Ultimately, the adjustment of educational methods to the imperatives of politics was hardly unique to British practice in Egypt. Those who study education often take as axiomatic the notion that educational systems reflect the political regimes in which they are produced. In fact, as the primary mechanisms for producing the citizens of the modern state, systems of education (broadly construed here to comprise both the curricular and the extracurricular) may provide clearer data for the evaluation of a given political regime than the language with which that regime may choose to describe itself.

In many fields of study, this above observation is a point so well accepted as to need no repetition. Yet few works to date have attempted to read the record of educational change in modern Egypt against the narrative of the political transformations that took place in the aftermath of World War I. By attempting to do so here with the aid of what literature does currently exist, my intentions are twofold. First, the analysis of one important strand of youth culture that shall occupy the central chapters of this work requires a basic grounding in both the political and the educational circumstances out of which interwar youth culture developed. Second, this brief synthesis of two previously distinct but related bodies of work may furnish new insights about each.

Egypt's educational system at the beginning of the twentieth century was a complex affair, comprising two separate substructures. The older of these by far was the network of religious schools or *kuttabs*, which aimed to provide Egyptian boys with the basic training required for the memorization of the *Qur'an*. Those who showed particular promise in these schools might eventually advance towards the study of religious science and law at Cairo's great mosque-university, *al-Azhar*, but for the most part schooling in the *kuttab* was a local affair, long integrated into the broader routines of daily life. Alongside this traditional system, the khevide Muhammad 'Ali and his dynastic successors had, since the beginning of the 19th Century, undertaken the rapid creation of a

modern, state school system. The graduates of these new primary and secondary schools were to become not religious scholars or jurists but the technocrats and bureaucrats of a modern, civil service. To that end, the curricula of these schools eschewed the narrow religious focus of the *kuttab* in favor of a novel emphasis on foreign languages and modern science. In the five decades between the founding of the first such schools and the advent of Lord Cromer's British administration, this new system witnessed a process of gradual expansion throughout Egypt.

Cromer's overall objective, upon his arrival in Egypt in 1883, was to maintain political stability while retooling the country's economy for maximum yield on its staggering European debt.⁶ The primacy of this purpose, coupled with prevailing contemporary theories of education, provided the basis for Cromer's treatment of both the religious and secular state school systems. Under Cromer's leadership, the British sought to employ the existing divisions between the two systems to reinforce desired hierarchies of political and economic status. In practice, this policy translated into a process of modest reforms in the network of religious elementary schools and a simultaneous arrest of development in the newer state primary and secondary schools.

Though several existing studies of British educational policy under Cromer have focused simply on the fact that the counsel general "slashed educational expenses," the changes that took place after 1882 did not merely involve a uniform diminution of government funding.⁷ Rather, as Starrett shows in the early chapters of *Putting Islam to Work*, the British administration envisioned a process of cautious reform arising from the Empire's economic and political interests in Egypt. In their treatment of the village

⁶ For background on the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, see Juan R.I. Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁷ Judith Cochran, *Education in Egypt*. (London: Croon Helm, 1986), 10.

kuttabs, Starrett argues, British reformers were motivated by the belief that “prophylactic measures like popular schooling . . . would, in theory, produce disciplined, competent workers with little incentive to disturb the status quo.”⁸ Consequently, they chose to leave the system as a whole intact while urging certain adjustments in the methods of teaching within the individual schools themselves. These reforms tended to stress the importance of basic literacy and moral instruction over what British observers held to be backward practices of ritual and recitation. And as noted by Starrett, the purpose of these adjustments to the content and organization of the *kuttab* was not to provide students with an engine for individual advancement, but rather to imbue them with a stronger sense of their proper place in the hierarchies of Egyptian life. Furthermore, imperial economic policy throughout Cromer’s tenure held that the peripheral economy of Egypt should remain a producer of agricultural resources and a consumer of European industrial goods. By leaving the existing system of schooling largely intact, the British were able to minimize the impact of any reforms within the classroom on the broader patterns of agrarian life outside.⁹

If among the lower strata of Egyptian society, British policy held that a marginal advance in the level of education might provide a kind of buffer for the maintenance of order, among native elites, Cromer’s administration feared that an excess of modern, Western-style learning might bring quite the opposite effect. Consequently, the parallel system of state primary and secondary schools witnessed a reduction in government funding and a constriction of its student body under the reign of the British counsel general. In particular, Cromer judged that “the best test of whether the Egyptians really

⁸ Starrett, 26.

⁹ Starrett, 30.

desire to be educated is to ascertain whether they are prepared to pay for education.”¹⁰ He therefore reversed the long-standing practice of free tuition under the state school system. The real impact of this decision, hardly beyond Cromer’s immediate prediction, was to limit the student body of these schools to the members of Egypt’s most elite families. In his comparative study of *Education and Social Change in Egypt and Turkey*, Bill Williamson observes that “even as late as 1910 there were only just over 2000 pupils in government secondary schools” among a native population of nearly eleven million.¹¹ If Cromer feared that modern learning could lead to mischief and demagoguery, then his solution was to restrict its availability to all but the children of the higher classes. And even in this case, the objectives of the state school system were confined to preparing its graduates for bureaucratic work in the Egyptian civil service.

Among the striking features of this British policy as a whole was its comfortable ambivalence towards the purpose and social function of education. In their attitudes towards the schooling of the masses, British educational theorists both at home and abroad presumed that a certain degree of literacy and moral instruction would provide an effective means of social control. By learning to read and understand scripture, the argument went, a child of lower rank would come to accept his station in life without succumbing to vice and crime. In their fears about the dangers of higher forms of education, however, the same theorists expressed an awareness that cultivation of the mind beyond the most basic skills could lead to higher aspirations and desire for change. In the Egyptian context, this distinction was only reinforced by the bifurcation of the school system into separate realms that seemed to mirror these expectations. And yet the

¹⁰ Cromer, 530.

¹¹ Bill Williamson, *Education and Social Change in Egypt and Turkey*. (London: Macmillan, 1987), 80.

error of British judgment lay in the assumption that Egyptian students would consume and interpret the lessons of each respective field as the British had intended.

Creating a University

In the event, they did not. Throughout the four decades of British control, public pressure for access to the opportunities afforded by primary and secondary schooling only increased, as did the demand for extension of the state system to include a modern university. Indeed the issue of the university would become the most contentious issue in the field of education during the two decades preceding the unilateral declaration of Egypt's independence. With hindsight, Britain's treatment of the university issue seems a study in myopic miscalculation. At the time, however, colonial administrators throughout the Empire feared that the advance of higher education along the lines of the great British universities would serve to provide ideological fodder for popular, nationalist revolt. So, in keeping with the broader contours of their educational policy, Cromer and his successors shied away from acknowledging Egyptian aspirations for higher education. As Haggai Erlich laments in his *Students and University in 20th Century Egyptian Politics*, "Under Lord Cromer, the British failed to grasp the historic opportunity to join hands with the emerging liberal nationalist wing and to initiate cooperatively the shaping of a culturally British oriented university. Had the British responded properly to those 1905-7 efforts, the twentieth century history of higher education in Egypt, with all its far-reaching social, cultural and political implications, might have been different."¹²

Though Erlich's research focuses specifically on the politics of the institution that would become Cairo University, the insight of his commentary here applies to Britain's educational and cultural policies in general. In its attempts to stifle popular demand for

¹² Haggai Erlich, *Students and University in 20th Century Egyptian Politics*. (London: Frank Cass, 1989), 22.

modern, Western-style education, the British administration did not actually succeed in diffusing Egyptian aspirations as hoped. Rather, Britain's tight-fisted policies simply sent the proponents of educational reform to seek guidance and patronage from other quarters. The unexpected outcome of this misjudgment was that Britain unwittingly conceded the opportunity to shape the young students of modern Egypt in her own likeness. As indigenous actors gradually gained the will and authority to undertake projects under their own initiative, Britain only fell farther behind the curve of cultural influence.

Erlich's history of the university draws a basic distinction between two contending models of higher education, each with its own proponents. In the years preceding the university's creation, this division mirrored the broader differences between the two dominant branches of nationalist thought. On one side of the issue, Mustafa Kamil's militant Watanist party perceived the institution as the ideal factory for a generation of loyal, politically-active nationalist youths. Railing against any form of cooperation with the British, Kamil called for the creation of a university modeled along French lines with emphasis on political studies and highly-centralized systems of administration and examination.¹³ On the other side, the members of the 'Umma Party, led by Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid, Qasim Amin, and Sa'ad Zaghlul "were more directly affected by British ideas of individual freedom, restraint and patience, utilitarianism and gradualism in reform. For the purpose of promoting this kind of liberal nationalism, they were ready to compromise about immediate and strictly political achievements. For this reason, they did not reject outright cooperation with the British occupiers, particularly in educational and cultural matters."¹⁴

¹³ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

The British failed to perceive the opportunity in such cooperation. Consequently, the Watanist model predominated even as the Watanists themselves were shunted to the margins of Egyptian politics. In the absence of British support, the self-appointed “university committee” under the leadership of Qasim Amin turned to Khedive ‘Abbas in 1906 for royal patronage. The Khedive in turn appointed his uncle, Amir Fu’ad (later Sultan and then King) to manage the project. A shrewd politician if nothing else, Fu’ad treated the university as one of many cultural projects to consolidate power and influence at the expense of his rivals. To that end, he swiftly outmaneuvered members of both nationalist parties for control of the administration and turned to France and Italy for academic and financial support where Britain offered none. The faculty of the Egyptian University in its earliest years thus delivered lectures in a variety of European languages that few Egyptian students could understand. Yet Donald Reid notes in his institutional history, “King Fu’ad and some European ambassadors saw ‘the battle of the languages’ in political terms and rarely stopped to ask what might be best for the students.”¹⁵

Although, as Reid quips, “until 1925 the ‘university’ in the title was more aspiration than reality,” the institution’s early years proved emblematic of broader patterns in the politics of education and youth culture.¹⁶ Most notably, broad principles and high ideals rapidly gave way to an unhesitating competition for influence and loyalty. In the contentious political climate that developed prior to World War I, Egyptian and foreign elites alike began to treat the various subdivisions of Egyptian education as fiefdoms over which they might vie for control. This manner of competition all but eliminated the potential for any sweeping reform of the state educational system as a whole. Instead, the discordant interests of France and Britain or of Fu’ad and the

¹⁵ Donald Malcolm Reid, *Cairo University and the Making of Modern Egypt*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 96.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

emerging nationalist movements served to focus debate on ever-finer details of curriculum and administration.

Given the daunting complexity of this situation, it is hardly surprising that the existing scholarship on the history of the University shows certain disagreements about the nature of the institution as it developed. Reid concentrates his study rather narrowly on the evolution of Cairo University itself with limited attention to the political currents gushing around its gates. He chooses to use the writings of the University's great luminaries to follow the trajectories of various intellectual trends. And his adept readings of Arabic sources help to demonstrate that despite its shortcomings, the University still managed to foster a vibrant intellectual community, even in its early years. Nevertheless, where Reid does comment on the political implications of various ideological trends, he is quick to note that even the most outspoken liberals among the Egyptian faculty remained rather elitist in their outlook: "Lutfi al-Sayyid and Muhammad Husayn Haykal reflect the conservative elitism of the upper-class associates of the university. True, the two were liberal in pushing Western-derived ideas on individual liberties, reason, and science. But theirs was the West of John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, and Gustave Le Bon, not that of Karl Marx or even Thomas Jefferson. In Egypt, too much education too fast could be dangerous."¹⁷

Erlich, whose research relies heavily on British archival sources, devotes his attention more eagerly to the political ramifications of educational developments. In the years leading up to the 1919, he finds a steady but gradual eclipse of liberal models in education and argues that the surviving proponents of such ideals, namely the Liberal-Constitutionalist intellectuals on whose writings Reid relies, belonged to an increasingly-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

marginalized elite clique. Of the University, he writes that “as if in line with a French model, [it] was non-utilitarian, non-individualistic, authoritarian.”¹⁸

Such qualities did not, however, preclude Egypt’s students from political activism. On this matter, Erlich offers two observations that will prove critical to the arguments of the chapters that follow. First, he comments that “the students were politically active first and foremost as a sector. Indeed, theirs was the most easily discernible sector in Egyptian society. Newly and somewhat artificially created, the very existence of their age-group constituted a revolutionary phenomenon in a society which had previously turned children into adults somewhere in their early teens.”¹⁹ And second, he notices that such activism related directly to the creation of *faragh*. Among the consequences of the University’s haphazard beginnings was a failure to provide for even the most basic student needs outside the classroom: “Students often lacked the new educational frameworks which could be used as a substitute for the old life left behind: no sport activities; no guided or encouraged socializing, entertainment and the like; no dormitories and other facilities. . . . The connection between such problems and the tendency to find a mental outlet in stormy politics seems obvious. In fact, Egyptian students found little else to do outside their classes.”²⁰ The latent potential of this student sector with a sense of its own identity and plenty of time to spare exploded in the demonstrations of 1919. Ironically, but not surprisingly, the students of Egypt’s secular state school system played precisely the role that Cromer had most feared.

¹⁸ Erlich, 34.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 51.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

A Brief Political History of the Revolt

It is at this critical moment of transition from British control to qualified independence that the record of Egyptian education runs at odds with certain aspects of the standard political histories on the period. To better explain the nature of these contradictions, we must now turn to a brief account of the events that led to Egypt's qualified independence and the construction of the post-war order.

In the immediate aftermath of World War I, Egypt's population rallied around the negative nationalist objective of ending the Protectorate and expelling the British from Egyptian soil. The causes for resentment were manifold at all levels of society. Among the upper classes, heavy-handed manipulation of the economy, overstaffing of the government bureaucracy with British employees, and the war-time requisitioning of buildings, crops, and livestock were just some of the major irritants. And among the lower classes, the burden of war weighed especially heavy as Britain levied huge numbers of *fellahin* to serve under the brutal conditions of the Labour Corps. Safran and others note that such material abuses combined with the established, religio-cultural abhorrence for the foreign occupation to yield the fervor of revolution: "The view of the world underlying the religious resentment, diverted and checked by Cromer's 'full belly' policy, was brought sharply into focus again by the economic hardships, and perhaps by Britain's war against the Ottoman sultan-caliph."²¹

The nationalist desires of the moment found a ready leader in Sa'ad Zaghlul, who began his political agitations for Egyptian independence by organizing the *wafd*, a self-appointed delegation demanding to speak for Egypt at the Paris Peace Conference. Zaghlul and his cohort recognized the full potential of popular discontent, and by acknowledging their support base across all levels of society, they were able to mobilize

²¹ Safran, 106.

public opinion throughout Egypt. When the British attempted to forestall the nationalist agitation by exiling Zaghlul and three other Wafd leaders, the full force of negative nationalism exploded into violent revolution.

What followed over the course of the next three years may best be described as a battle of wills. The Wafd, conscious of its power base in popular sentiment, maintained a stubborn insistence on complete independence: “The call for *Istiqlal tamm*, complete independence, had captured the public imagination to the extent that the Wafd had either to deliver complete independence or risk losing its popular support.”²² The authors of British policy in London, for their part, expressed their determination to proceed as they saw fit. Under Lord Curzon’s willful leadership of foreign policy, “the British were still trapped by the illusion that with military power and political acumen they could destroy the Wafd’s nationalist support.”²³ Between these two extremes were the reports and suggestions of Britain’s agents on the ground, most notably Allenby and Milner. Though neither man was inclined by nature to regard the nationalist agitation with sympathy, both were impressed by the extent and durability of the Wafd’s backing. Consequently, “Allenby proposed that Britain was strong enough to grant independence and still retain its vital interests, but that without a declaration of independence, any Egyptian dealing with the British would be regarded as a traitor.”²⁴

Ultimately, Britain followed Allenby’s advice and thereby established the political framework that would facilitate all the tumult and frustration of the years that followed. Jealous of their popularity and the polling numbers they could produce, Wafdist leaders under Zaghlul remained intransigent, refusing to accept Britain’s conditions for independence even though some among them, Zaghlul included, may have recognized the

²² Janice Terry, *The Wafd 1919-1952*. (London: Third World Centre, 1982), 131.

²³ *Ibid.*, 146.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 144.

wisdom of a more moderate approach. Consequently, Britain completely bypassed the Wafd in the course of negotiations and made two decisions that proved critical to the establishment of the problematic triangular relationship of power. First was the unilateral declaration of independence of 1922. The terms of independence reserved for Britain four critical points of responsibility: security of imperial communications, defense against incursions by other foreign powers, protection of foreign interests and foreign persons in Egypt, and determination of Sudan's future status. These famous "four points" made a mockery of Egypt's independence and guaranteed the unchecked right to intervene whenever Britain saw her interests under threat. The second critical British decision at this moment was the empowerment of King Fu'ad and his coterie of supporters as a check to the popular mandate of the Wafd. As Janice Terry explains, "The Wafd had been totally shut out of any direct involvement although the British had been forced to compromise because of the 1919 Revolution in which the Wafd had played a crucial role."²⁵

The general pattern of events that ensued from these circumstances has been well documented. Throughout the next three decades, the Wafd managed to win the overwhelming majority of the popular vote in every free national election. Yet invariably, after each election, the party's government would incur the rancor of the British or the King or both, and the Monarchy would exercise its constitutional rights to dissolve the government and replace it with one deemed more suitable. Popular resentment against such autocratic practices would accumulate until the minority government would fold. Again the Wafd would flex its muscle at the polls, and the process would commence anew.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 150.

The Wafd and the *Shabab*

While the basic facts of this unfortunate cycle are undeniable, the interpretation they often receive is more problematic. Most histories of the interwar period discover an overwhelming popular support for the ideals of liberal, democratic governance at the moment of independence. Safran, for example, tells that “the prestige of constitutional democratic government was so high that even leaders of religious opinion, conservative as well as traditionalist, were straining their minds to find in the Islamic heritage provisions and justifications for such a form of government.”²⁶ And in the standard categories by which the “three-legged stool” is described, the Wafd becomes the stand-in for such popular desires. The narrative of the subsequent thirty years then reveals the tragic tale of how such high ideals were dashed by the constant interference of an autocratic Monarchy and a rapacious Empire.

To be sure, the conditions of Egypt’s qualified independence created an atmosphere where any sincere idealist was likely to suffocate. And arguably, the Wafd favored the pragmatics of *realpolitik* as an unavoidable recourse. Whatever the justifications, closer examination of the party’s activities reveals a political machine that was hardly democratic. In few areas was the contradiction between a rhetorical espousal of liberal parliamentarianism and a practical resorting to rather illiberal organizational techniques more apparent than in the area of education. Indeed, the *shabab* who came of age in the mid-1930s may have shown little respect for the political liberalism of their parents precisely because few aspects of their overall educational experience had prepared them to do so.

So critical were Egypt’s students in igniting the 1919 Revolution that they quickly won the title, ‘the army of the Wafd.’ With the elimination of British impediments, the

²⁶ Safran, 187.

modern, state educational system was again allowed to expand and thrive. And in the atmosphere of nationalist euphoria that followed Egypt's qualified victory against imperialism, nearly all parties, whatever their other differences, rallied behind the notion that a modern, independent nation required a system of education equal to the country's highest aspirations. The Wafdist government that came to power following Egypt's first independent elections was happy to oblige such public opinion. Zaghlul's government put in motion the first in a series of post-war measures to expand the network of primary and secondary schools. Yet such expansion in the quantity of the student population did not translate into a more thoroughgoing remodeling of the educational system as a whole. Even on the crucial issue of university reform, the Wafd was slow to act. Erlich observes with a note of regret that "the Wafd, colliding with the British, would invest in organizing political students and virtually ignore—even when in power (1924)—the subject of the university. The British, for their part, facing the growing enmity of the students, were to return to the university policy of Cromer and Dunlop."²⁷

Erlich's analysis brings us back to the passage that opened this chapter and to Lord Lloyd's consternation at the state of the Egyptian school system. What he describes is an educational environment subjected quite dramatically to the imperatives of Egypt's turbulent political scene. Admittedly, the writings of British officials must be read with a note of caution, for especially when dealing with the Wafd, they tended to regard the situation in the most conspiratorial of terms. At the same time, their misjudgments are most likely to be a matter of degree in this case more than one of total misperception. In his study of student activism in twentieth-century Egypt, Ahmed Abdalla asserts that from 1919 onward, student organizations were central to the Wafd's methods of organizing and mobilizing public opinion. And through its student committees, the

²⁷ Erlich, 50.

party's leadership, including Zaghlul himself, endeavored to cultivate strong ties of loyalty which it frequently reinforced with patronage and favoritism of the kind Lord Lloyd so bewails in his report.²⁸

The point of such observations is not to deny that the Wafd was outspoken in its support for parliamentary government nor to contradict the abundant evidence that the party was instrumental in bringing students into the public sphere. But in consolidating its support base among the *shabab* the Wafd helped to define a model for the youth of interwar Egypt that was both far-reaching in its impact and ultimately illiberal in its conception. Recognizing the utility of the students as symbolic leaders of the modern nation, the Wafd was eager to promote the strength and numbers of that crucial sector. By all accounts, the expansion of the modern state school system in the first two decades of Egyptian independence was staggering.²⁹ At the same time, the metaphor of an army that so frequently attached to the Wafd's young supporters was hardly arbitrary. As the turbulence of national politics thundered towards the fury it would sustain for nearly three decades, the leaders of each faction quickly learned to prize the loyalty and obedience of their supporters. If the Revolution of 1919 had proven the student sector as a mighty political weapon, the political contests that followed had left the Wafdist leadership anxious to maintain the order of its army's ranks. In the youth culture that emerged from the tumult of such times, strength and loyalty became the twin virtues of the day.

²⁸ For a summary of the Wafd's early activities among students see Ahmed Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt: 1923-1973*. (London: Al-Saqi, 1985), 43.

²⁹ To cite just one set of statistics, Gershoni and Jankowski write that "Between 1925-6 and 1935-6, enrollment in state secondary schools nearly tripled and enrollment at the Egyptian University more than doubled; by 1945-6, there were more than four times the number of secondary and university students as there had been twenty years earlier." Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, 13.

Part Two: Scouting in Egypt

Chapter 3: The Malleable Movement

In the opening to his study of the Boy Scouts in Britain's African colonies, Timothy Parsons provides the following elegant analogy to explain the global success of the Scouting movement:

In one sense, Scouting can be compared to a secular religion with Baden-Powell as its prophetlike founder whose writings constituted the core of the Scout canon and whose personal example became the guide for model behavior. The territorial Scout associations around the world correspond to national churches with the authority to make alterations to the movement within the limits of Scouting orthodoxy. At the local level, troops are the congregations who put core Scout values into practice. Local applications of Scouting usually result from a syncretic blending of Scouting orthodoxy and community values. In some cases these adaptations have the full blessing of the Scout authorities. Scouting allows religious institutions to create 'closed' troops solely for the members of their congregations, and national Scout associations are free to choose their own emblems to symbolize patriotism and loyalty. Some local communities, however, also make alterations to the Scout canon that official Scouting considers unacceptably heretical.¹

As an introduction to the study of Scouting in Egypt, Parsons' comparison proves valuable in at least two respects. First, it offers a framework for understanding the ideological malleability that so augmented the movement's diverse appeal. And second, it provides an apt model for the layered process by which Scouting, as a body of ideas and organizational techniques, was consumed by its various practitioners. These related themes of ideological malleability and layered consumption were critical to the historical evolution of Scouting in Egypt, and they shall appear frequently in the pages that follow. But as Parsons' own analysis suggests, the study of "local congregations" in action best begins with some knowledge of the Scout canon from which all subsequent adaptations have arisen. Before pursuing the narrative thread of Scouting's rise to prominence in

¹ Parsons, 25.

Egypt, we therefore move briefly back in time to explore the movement's origins in Edwardian England.

Scouting in Britain was the creation of Gen. Sir Robert Baden-Powell, who rose to celebrity for his victorious leadership of British troops at the siege of Mafeking in the South African Anglo-Boer War. Upon his much-lauded return to Britain in 1903, Baden-Powell employed the social capital he had earned through his military exploits to launch a youth movement based on a collection of training techniques he had tested on his young subordinates in South Africa. Scouting was not the first character-building, youth movement of its kind and in its early years Baden-Powell actually collaborated with the already-established Boys Brigades that had gained some popularity in England around the end of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, Baden-Powell managed to utilize a combination of his celebrity status and his original training and organizational techniques to win unprecedented support for his own movement. In short time, Scouting would take Britain and the United States by storm and spread rapidly to the farthest reaches of the globe. By some accounts, Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys*, first published in serial form in 1908, "has probably sold more copies than any other title during the twentieth century with the exception of the Bible."²

Scouting and the Empire

At its moment of origin, the Scouting movement took shape from the imperatives of the Empire. In his study of Baden-Powell's "character factory," Michael Rosenthal argues that the Chief Scout's ideas gained rapid popularity as a readymade solution to the foremost worries of Britain's social and political elites. "The Scouts," he argues, "were born in the anxieties of an imperial power at the turn of the century beginning to feel

² Tim Jeal, *Baden Powell*. (New Haven: Yale Nota Bene, 2001), 396.

itself threatened both from without and from within—abroad, by the commercial competition offered by the expanding industrial capacity of the United States, Japan, and Germany, as well as the development of German military might; at home by the rumblings of the labor movement, union activity, and the specter they engendered of the working classes disturbing the serenity of a highly stratified society.”³ With his comprehensive program of physical training, woodcraft, moral indoctrination, and public service Baden-Powell promised to save the Empire from its impending decline and fall into decadence and decay.

Central both to the ideology of Scouting itself and to the societal fears that helped to make the movement so popular were the various strands of social Darwinist and eugenicist thought that had gained currency throughout Europe in the closing years of the nineteenth century. In his analysis of the eugenicist ideas that circulated throughout the popular press and the academy of Baden-Powell’s day, Rosenthal is careful to distinguish between two dominant theories in the science of racial improvement. Both camps saw human existence as a natural and ongoing struggle for dominance among the various races and nations of the earth. Disagreement arose, however, over the methods for winning and maintaining high rank in this global hierarchy. Those awed by the power of genetics and represented for Rosenthal by the biometrician and philosopher Karl Pearson saw the process of racial improvement as a matter of breeding alone. Those like the physician C.W. Saleeby who maintained faith in the transformative power of “nurture” looked to techniques of ongoing cultivation for the betterment of the Empire’s every citizen.⁴

³ Michael Rosenthal, *The Character Factory*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 151-9.

In articulating the ideology of Scouting, Baden-Powell displayed a cunning aptitude for blending seemingly discordant streams of thought and thereby winning support from the broadest possible audience. Thus, as Rosenthal notes, “Despite the sharp differences between them, it is interesting to see Pearson and Saleeby come together in their admiration for Baden-Powell. Pearson found in him a man who preached some primitive form of the scientific method; Saleeby saw him as an educator, indeed, ‘the greatest educator of our time.’”⁵ In his treatment of Britain’s social and imperial maladies and his proposals for their remedy, the Chief Scout managed to combine aspects of both the “nature” and “nurture” schools of eugenicist thought. The patriotic glorifications of Empire that pervade his writings rely heavily on a vision of the world wherein Britain’s preeminent status arises from the racial superiority of its citizens. Yet as David Macleod explains in his study of the American Scouting movement, Baden-Powell’s entire program of character building rested upon “a popular psychology which conceived the mind as being composed of several major faculties: intellect, emotion, will, and sometimes conscience. The faculties in turn comprised a host of separate powers; . . . Like educators, character builders believed such powers could be improved individually—as muscles are improved—through exercise.”⁶ This capacity for human improvement in turn implied that the hierarchy of nations might not be permanent. Only through physical, intellectual, and moral training and a state of constant vigilance could Britain defend her Empire against the host of contenders massing around the globe.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁶ David Macleod, *Building Character in the American Boy*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 30.

Constructing a Flexible Ideology

Such comfort with loose resolutions between the discordant ideologies of his day is a critical feature throughout Baden-Powell's foundational texts for the Scouting movement. When analyzed closely, his writings belie a network of apparent contradictions that could—and did under certain circumstances—prove problematic to the evolution of Scouting in practice. Yet the existing histories of the Boy Scouts seem to agree that Baden-Powell intended a certain flexibility of interpretation as a means to augment the movement's popularity. In Scouting's early years, such malleability indeed served to win the Chief Scout rapid and overwhelming support for his undertaking. And yet that very same diversity of appeal helped to undermine later efforts to enforce a kind of Scouting orthodoxy on the global community of practitioners. Such potential for divergent interpretations proved crucial to the evolution of the movement in its Egyptian context, and before turning to that story of *al-kashshafa*, we must glance briefly at several important aspects of ambiguity in the Scouting canon.

Though comments about the preservation of the Empire appear throughout the pages of *Scouting for Boys*, such global concerns were not the sole issue that Baden-Powell proposed to address with his novel movement. Simultaneous to the growing fear about threats from abroad was a more local concern, particularly acute among British elites, about the collapse of the social order at home. For reasons not terribly dissimilar to those in the Egyptian context, such anxieties focused particularly on the changing role of Britain's youth. In his *Youth, Empire, and Society*, John Springhall provides the following incisive synopsis:

What made the young particularly vulnerable to social conditioning around the turn of the century was their growing isolation and protection from adult status; a privilege once confined to the upper and middle classes but which was now beginning to filter down slowly to other levels of society. The 'invention' of adolescence as an age-defined social cohort further segregated the young, as well

as creating a 'social problem' whose solution invariably became the provision of adult-supervised leisure pursuits.⁷

Though both the local danger of an uncontrollable rising generation and the global menace of rising foreign powers were of greatest concern to the same group, namely Britain's ruling elite, the logical solutions to these twin problems were not exactly the identical. A stable social hierarchy prized qualities of deference, loyalty, and obedience, whereas a mighty empire required citizen soldiers trained to be strong, ambitious, and brave. In selecting models of good character for his Scouts, Baden-Powell managed to locate those figures in history and literature who seemed to embody both sets of virtues at once. Yet in many cases, the qualities of strength and loyalty more often functioned in a kind of binary tension. As David Macleod explains the motivations behind youth movements like the Scouts, "Counterbalancing worry that boys were out of hand was fear that middle-class boys were growing weak and effeminate. . . . Hence character builders wanted more than just control; they also wanted boys to develop strong powers and a firm will."⁸

In practice, the varied motivations and objectives of the movement helped to ensure that Scouting would appeal in different ways to different groups, and this diversity of potential interpretations is neatly reflected in the existing academic studies of the Boy Scouts. Rosenthal's critical analysis of Baden-Powell's writings leads him to conclude that the highest virtues promoted by the early Scouting movement were conformity and obedience. His extended metaphor of the "character factory" suggests that Scouting took shape from a powerful, upper-class impulse to exercise methods of disciplinary control over the totality of British society:

⁷ John Springhall, *Youth, Empire, and Society*. (London: Croom Helm, 1977), 16.

⁸ Macleod, 44.

While the Scout factory for the turning out of serviceable citizens could not vouch for the uniformity of its finished product, its aspirations for such uniformity were nonetheless real. Both specifications and uses, in this case, were supplied by a coherent ideology stressing unquestioning obedience to properly structured authority; happy acceptance of one's social and economic position in life; and an unwavering, uncritical patriotism, for which one would be willing, if necessary, to die.⁹

Within the confines of the individual Scout troop, Rosenthal argues, the Scout Law thus served as a "protracted call for obedience on a grand scale."¹⁰ And at a national level, the very same glorification of loyalty and patriotism helped to justify the movement's official disavowal of politics. Yet as Rosenthal suggests, such a large-scale effort to remove Britain's young from involvement in the contests of national politics could hardly qualify as apolitical. "It is enough for the moment," he notes ironically, "to point out that requiring loyalty to an employer during the period of a developing labor movement is by no means the simple moral act that Baden-Powell liked to pretend it was."¹¹

Although Rosenthal makes a strong case for understanding the Scouts as a deeply conservative program of social control, his rigid focus on issues of class hegemony fails to account adequately for the overwhelming popularity of the movement, particularly among the members of Britain's growing middle class. Though his work deals more specifically with the American adaptation of Baden-Powell's movement, David Macleod suggests that Scouting succeeded precisely where other modes of youth work had failed by "purporting to give boys' needs and impulses free play yet also promising order and discipline." In this respect, Scouting "struck some shrewd balances. The Scout oath embodied the new inspirational approach to moral education, while badges recognized the traditional claims of steady effort."¹² If a good Scout knew to obey orders from his

⁹ Rosenthal, 7.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹² Macleod, 18.

superiors with a whistle and a smile, he also learned that individual achievement could lead to individual advancement.¹³ In his critique of Rosenthal's earlier work, Baden-Powell's biographer Tim Jeal explains, "While the Boy Scouts undoubtedly appealed to Sir Edmond Elles as a semi-military 'Character Factory', the Movement simultaneously appealed to educationalists and to liberal philanthropists as a disinterested attempt to help boys of all classes widen their overall perspectives."¹⁴

In a more general but equally important sense, Baden-Powell managed to attract eager followers for his new movement because the activities he offered were fun. Where the Boys Brigades on which the Scouts were partially modeled had subjected young lads to a rather bleak combination of military drill and moralistic preaching, Baden-Powell devised a wide array of games and activities that catered more readily to the energies and interests of his young Scouts. Moreover, in the massive body of publications that proved so instrumental to the spread of his movement, Baden-Powell was careful to structure his writings with his actual reading audience in mind. In *Scouting for Boys*, he alternates his moral advice and practical instruction with tales of adventure and derring-do, selected for their illustration of Scouting virtues but recounted also for the amusement of the reader.

The Question of Militarism

If the varied methods and activities of the Boy Scouts reflected a general concession to changing theories of child-rearing and education, the specific differences between the Scouts and the earlier Boys Brigades also highlight Baden-Powell's careful treatment of a controversy that would prove especially crucial to the evolution of Scouting in Egypt. From Scouting's earliest years onward, the role of militarism in the

¹³ The Eighth Scout Law states: "A Scout smiles and whistles under all circumstances. When he gets an order he should obey it cheerily and readily, not in a slow, hang-dog sort of way."

¹⁴ Jeal, 414.

canon of Scouting ideals and the intended relationship between Scouting organizations and national militaries became regular points of contention in public discourse on the movement. On the one hand, the Boy Scouts, even down to the level of terminology, had clear origins in military practice. Moreover, Baden-Powell's vague exhortations about service to the Empire could easily be read as encouragement towards future enlistment. Yet in his efforts to make his movement as popular as possible, B.P. also catered to military critics in Britain's growing pacifist movements. *Scouting for Boys* is full of passages insisting that the Boy Scouts are "peace scouts" and that their foremost tasks include peaceful activities like community service, woodcraft, and first aid. Baden-Powell supported such claims particularly by pointing out that his organization had wholly abandoned the military drill so central to the work of the Boys Brigades.

In all likelihood, the ambiguity was intentional. Rosenthal makes an especially strong case that Baden-Powell suffused his writings with pacifist rhetoric in an effort to forestall pacifist criticism and maximize Scouting's appeal. He argues ironically that "the notion of the Scout as a serviceable citizen trained to follow orders in wartime is at the heart of Scouting. Whether this makes him a war Scout or a peace Scout . . . is beside the point; what matters is simply that Scouting holds out before us a model of human excellence in which absolute loyalty, an unbudgeable devotion to duty, and the readiness to fight, and if necessary to die for one's country, are the highest virtues."¹⁵

Debate over Baden-Powell's plan for the movement is likely to continue as long as scholars deem Scouting worthy of study, but whatever the original intent, all existing histories of Scouting agree that the movement's emphasis in Britain shifted dramatically as a consequence of war. Macleod laments, "It would take the carnage of World War I, which decimated Britain's Scoutmasters and former Boy Scouts, to make British

¹⁵ Rosenthal, 162.

Scouting unambiguously non-military.”¹⁶ In the aftermath of war, Baden-Powell and the other leaders of the British Scouting Association made a concerted effort to replace any vestiges of pre-war militarism with a new glorification of peace and international brotherhood.

This act of “subtle and effective re-orientation of Scouting which placed the emphasis firmly on class harmony, national unity and peaceful reconstruction” offers an important example of the movement’s ideological malleability.¹⁷ The same qualities of interpretive ambiguity that allowed Scouting to evolve so fluidly with changes of public opinion within Britain also allowed the movement to attract enthusiastic supporters beyond Britain’s borders. But if such organic adaptability was beneficial to Scouting as an international movement, the same quality became deeply frustrating to those who wished to use the movement as a mechanism for extending British influence around the globe. As tool of cultural imperialism, Scouting proved devastatingly unreliable. In case after case, British proponents of Scouting overseas delighted in the movement’s rapid spread among foreign populations and broadcast predictions of its civilizing effects only to recoil in horror when local interpretations differed from their own. Such is the story of Scouting in Egypt to which we now turn.

¹⁶ Macleod, 139.

¹⁷ Springhall, 63.

Chapter 4: “The Very Thing for Them”

In May 1916 Reverend A. H. Griffiths, a former British Scoutmaster working at the Y.M.C.A. in Cairo, sent the following optimistic inquiry to Scouting Headquarters in London:

Has the Chief Scout ever considered the possibility of native troops of scouts in Cairo and other large towns of Egypt? In several months out here I have had many opportunities of watching Egyptian boys and have talked with schoolmasters of government and missionary schools. The general verdict seems to be that the boys are the right stuff but the early training in deception and intrigue in the harim and the later associations of café haunting and bazaar frequenting, together with the treatment of women as inferior animals, all prove too much for the majority of boys, who are intellectually alert enough but lacking in moral stamina.

Scouting would be the very thing for them in hundreds of ways which I need not enumerate. What is wanted is a young Egyptian of character and standing to found and thoroughly train the first troop. Surely there are at one or two of the English Universities Egyptians who could be put in touch with English scouts. I saw a paragraph (translated) from one of the native daily papers suggesting that a troop of Egyptian Boy Scouts should be formed.

I thought it might be worth while my mentioning all this; a strong Scout movement would be the greatest boon to the manhood (and womanhood) of this wonderful country.¹

Written at a moment when British control of Egypt remained steady and firm, Griffiths’ letter radiates a zealous faith in the transformative power of Baden-Powell’s young movement. In the years after *Scouting for Boys* appeared on bookstalls around Britain, Scouting had spread throughout the English-speaking world at a staggering rate. So popular was the idea of the movement that the promoters and practitioners of Scouting alike began to consider novel applications beyond British soil. As Tim Parsons explains, Baden-Powell “quickly realized its value to the empire as the movement expanded overseas. . . . Believing in the humanitarian mission of British imperialism, he envisioned

¹ Rev. A.H. Griffiths to H. Geoffrey Elwes (Editor of the Boy Scouts’ *Headquarters’ Gazette*) 28 May 1916, British Scouting Association’s Archives (SAA).

Scouting as a tool of ‘civilization.’”² The missionary fervor with which proponents of Scouting advocated the global spread of the movement adds real weight to the religious analogy which opened the previous chapter. Especially in the first decade after *Scouting for Boys* was published, Baden-Powell’s supporters came to regard the Scouts as a mighty tool for reshaping the backward character of the native. Almost from the outset, however, hopes that Scouting would tighten the bonds of Empire ran against a host of difficulties and disappointments.

Had the introduction of Scouting in Egypt occurred according to Griffiths’ plan, the history of the movement there might have taken a rather different course. In the event, the early years of *al-kashshafa* were neither so well planned nor so carefully monitored as British observers would have liked. Narrating a precise, linear history of the movement’s emergence in fact proves rather difficult precisely because the earliest moments of Scouting in Egypt were so chaotic. Thanks to the murkiness of this early history, the details of the movement’s appearance generated understandable confusion even in contemporary accounts by British and Egyptian authors. The basic reason for this disagreement is that several distinct troops appeared in the major cities of Egypt at roughly the same time under the leadership of several different individuals, each with his own specific interpretation of Baden-Powell’s ideas.

Scouting Arrives in Egypt

Though Griffiths apparently failed to notice its existence, the first troop of Egyptian Scouts was founded by Prince ‘Umar Tusun in Alexandria in 1914.³ Tusun is one among a number of key figures in Egypt’s early national history who deserve greater attention in Western scholarship. For present purposes, several key biographical details

² Parsons, 61-2.

³ Jamal Khashba, *Harakat al-Kashshafa fi 78 ‘Am*. (Cairo: *al-Fajala*, 1992), 115.

will suffice for the following discussion of Scouting's early years in Egypt. Tusun was a member of the khedival dynasty who gained recognition throughout Egypt for his generous patronage of the arts and education in Alexandria. Himself an accomplished academic, Tusun published works on a variety of topics, including several volumes on the history of the Egyptian military under Khedive Muhammad 'Ali. In the years of revolutionary ferment, he earned a reputation as a staunch supporter of the nationalist cause, and a recent article in the French edition of *Al-Ahram Weekly* actually credits him with first proposing to Sa'ad Zaghlul the idea of a delegation to demand Egyptian independence from Britain at Versailles.⁴ Whatever the validity of this detail, Tusun's avid support for the nationalist resistance in general and for the Wafd in particular won him both the rancor of his cousin Fu'ad and the suspicion of British officials.

Tusun's early efforts to promote Scouting foundered temporarily in the face of wartime upheaval, but following the end of hostilities, the movement began to spread under the encouragement of several different organizations. In the peak years of the nationalist struggle, Tusun worked to revive and expand his Alexandrian Scouts, and according to at least one British observer, he quickly hit upon the utility of the movement as a tool for mobilizing the city's young against the British. A report on the "Egyptian Boy Scout Movement" submitted to the War Office in 1920 remarks with dismay, "There is little doubt that in this organization is one of the stimulants in awakening the native conscience in the Nationalist Cause, and the Commandant of the Alexandria Police draws attention to the frequent processions of Boy Scouts carrying the Egyptian Flag at their

⁴ Gisèle Boulad, "Le Bien-Amie d'Alexandrie," *Al-Ahram Hebdo*. Retrieved 18 April 2005 from <http://hebdo.ahram.org.eg/arab/ahram/2005/3/30/patri2.htm>.

head and that the atmosphere of politics is not only not eliminated but on the contrary, Nationalist ideas are instilled.”⁵

Despite its momentary import for nationalist demonstrations in Alexandria, Tusun’s Scouting organization failed to win the leading role in the movement’s expansion after WWI. Rather, that distinction fell to his rival and cousin Sultan Fu’ad, who in 1918 founded the first Egyptian troop in Cairo at *al-madrassa al-thanawiyya al-sultaniyya*, the elite secondary school funded through the Sultan’s royal endowment. Though his earliest motivation for promoting the movement remains unknown, Fu’ad’s attraction to Scouting accords with the general pattern of his patronage for institutions of modern European education and culture. Like his involvement in the University project, the Sultan’s interest in Scouting probably arose from his broader efforts to present himself as a champion of modernity at a moment when the role of his dynasty in the future of Egypt had come under question. But whatever its original reason, Fu’ad’s decision to form this first Scout troop in Cairo proved significant in at least two respects. First, the Sultan’s enthusiasm for Scouting helped to publicize the movement among Egyptians and thereby to accelerate its spread. And second, Fu’ad’s patronage served to establish a lasting connection between the Egyptian Boy Scouts and the Egyptian Palace.

Following on the creation of Cairo’s first troop, new Scout groups quickly appeared at other schools around the city and then elsewhere throughout the country. As the popularity of Scouting among Egyptians grew, so too did British concern for the manner in which Scouting was practiced. By 1920, a host of British observers had begun to send reports home both to the British Scouting Association and to the Foreign Office expressing an array of reservations about the development of Scouting in Egypt. To

⁵ G. W. Courtney to M.I.5 (War Office) 24 March 1920, “Egyptian Boy Scout Movement,” FO 371/5026.

varying degrees, all of these reports focused on two chief complaints, namely, the alarmingly militaristic character of many Egyptian troops and the apparent lack of uniformity and organization in the practice of the movement.

By 1920, the “subtle and effective re-orientation of Scouting” described in the previous chapter had already taken hold in Britain, as Baden-Powell and others recoiled from the horrors of war and attempted to replace any vestiges of pre-war militarism with a new commitment to international peace and brotherhood. It is perhaps for this reason that British observers were disturbed to find in Egypt an interpretation of Scouting that seemed to broadcast the very features they were then attempting to efface. In August of 1920, the Scoutmaster of a British troop in Alexandria reported on the local Egyptian Scouts, “I fear that they do not catch the ‘spirit of the movement,’ at least it will only be one here and there that does, and the rest are ‘just a little army’ as I heard one criticism here.”⁶ Such descriptions agree with the earlier characterization of Prince Tusun’s troops as a machine for nationalist indoctrination and organized protest, but concerns about the militaristic character of Scouting were not confined to Alexandria. By 1920 the Cairo troops attached to government schools were receiving supervision from the distinguished British educator and well-trained Scoutmaster Robert Allason Furness. Nevertheless, a report submitted to Scouting headquarters by Major F.S. Morgan, a visiting inspector, lamented of these troops too that “in method they are rather militarist being addicted to street parades, Sam Brown belts, and brass bands!”⁷ Such public displays by uniformed troops of Egyptian Scouts eventually attracted the attention of the British High Commission, which reacted with similar dismay. Though training in marksmanship had

⁶ Douglas Allen (Boy Scouts Local Association 1st Alexandria Troop) to Hubert Martin (The Commissioner for Overseas Dominions and Colonies) 20 August 1920, TC/Egypt, SAA.

⁷ Captain F. S. Morgan to Imperial Headquarters 1 March 1921, “Report of Scouting in Egypt,” SAA.

played an integral part in Baden-Powell's original program of activities for his Scouts, the High Commission informed Scouting Headquarters in 1921 that they "consider it very undesirable at the present juncture to furnish Boy Scouts in Egypt with rifles or to instruct them in their use."⁸

The real cause for British concern in 1920 was not merely the fact that Egyptian boys were dressing in uniforms and marching through the streets of Cairo and Alexandria, but that they were encouraged to do so for political purposes. One consequence of such practice was a proliferation of distinct Scouting organizations, divided from each other by the personal and ideological rivalries of their respective benefactors. In particular, British officials were alarmed to note that "the more extreme Nationalists . . . have realized that an organization such as this, presents exceptional opportunities for instilling the young idea with revolutionary tendencies, and there is no doubt that this is one of the principal *raison d'être* for organizing such a movement which outwardly appears highly commendable."⁹ Just four years earlier, Griffiths had announced that Scouting would be "the very thing for them in hundreds of ways," yet in the aftermath of the Revolt, British observers now reported of "the view held by many people . . . that the Scout movement in Egypt is anti-British!"¹⁰

The Association of Egyptian Boy Scouts

Fractured and politicized as the movement may have been in its early years, Scouting officials in Britain did not despair altogether over the future of *al-kashshafa*. Historically, the years after Baden-Powell first published his popular manual in Britain had been hardly less complex. In the absence of any formal organization to monitor the

⁸ D.G. Osborne (F.O.) to The Boy Scouts Association 7 February 1921, FO 371/6324.

⁹ G. W. Courtney to M.I.5 24 March 1920, FO 371/5026.

¹⁰ Morgan, "Report of Scouting in Egypt."

practice of Scouting and supervise the training of new Scoutmasters, independent troops had put Baden-Powell's ideas to work as they saw fit. A desire to impose order on the spread of Scouting, however, quickly moved the Chief Scout to establish an official supervisory committee which eventually became the British Boy Scout Association (BSA). During the movement's first decade, the BSA gradually developed an elaborate administrative structure for monitoring developments within Britain, and in 1919 the Scouts acquired an estate at Gilwell Park outside of London which they thereafter used as a centralized training facility. As Baden-Powell's ideas spread around the globe, the Chief Scout also established two distinct commissions to oversee Scouting in foreign lands. "Imperial Headquarters" would monitor the activities of Scouts throughout the various states and colonies of the British Empire, and the International Bureau would serve to register Scout groups of other nationalities.¹¹

In the eyes of British Scouting authorities, this two-part administrative structure seemed to provide an ideal mechanism for redirecting the progress of the Egyptian movement along desired lines. The report drafted by Major Morgan in 1921 offered the following recommendations:

It seems to be of the utmost importance that early recognition should be given to the properly constituted Associations, but unfortunately recognition and registration by Imperial Headquarters would have the effect of making the Scouts into a political and pro-British organisation in the eyes of the mass of Egyptians. . . . If it is possible for the International Commissioner to recognize the native and mixed Troops while the overseas Commissioner registers the purely British Troops, the unity of the Movement could be maintained without political friction.¹²

By granting formal recognition to a single Association of Egyptian Boy Scouts or *Jam'iya al-Kashshafa al-Misriyya* (JKM), Morgan proposed to centralize control of the

¹¹ Jeal, 491.

¹² *Ibid.*

movement. Registration under the national Association would confer an official legitimacy on individual troops that Morgan correctly surmised would attract them to join. From the British perspective, such administrative centralization would allow closer supervision of Egyptian Scouting practice. By recognizing the collection of troops that had grown out of Fu'ad's Cairo Scouts as the core of the new Association, the British could furthermore maneuver to eradicate Wafdist influence over the movement. On the whole, Morgan's plan succeeded, and the majority of troops around the country applied for membership. Although Tusun "declined to amalgamate" his Alexandrian troops with the national Association, even he agreed to cooperate with the national leadership and to support the official movement with donations from his own funds.¹³

Scouting for Boys: From English into Arabic

Along with efforts to centralize the administration of the Egyptian Boy Scouts came a simultaneous endeavor to ensure that Egyptian troops conformed to official standards of Scouting practice. To that end, the International Bureau invited several leading Egyptian Scoutmasters to attend training sessions at Gilwell Park.¹⁴ Moreover, in his capacity as the British liaison for the Egyptian Boy Scouts, Robert Allason Furness had requested permission to draft and publish an Arabic edition of *Scouting for Boys* in March 1920: "The issue of books, to ensure uniform principles and procedure, is the pressing need for us at present; and though a mere translation of *Scouting for Boys* would be in many ways unsuitable for Egypt, yet there is much of the necessary contents of the

¹³ "Report from Chief on his interview with Prince Ismail Daoud regarding Scouting in Egypt," 30 June 1922, SAA.

¹⁴ Khashba, 116.

book we ought to issue, which would only be worse said if we tried to say it otherwise than you have said it once and for all.”¹⁵

Whether impressed by Furness’s argument or simply flattered by his fawning praise, Baden-Powell consented to the project, and the Arabic edition appeared shortly thereafter under the title *Kitab al-Fityan al-Kashshafa*. As Furness’s letter suggests, however, the new book was not a verbatim translation of Baden-Powell’s earlier work, nor could it have been. The sections which provided basic instructions in skills like map-reading, tracking, camping, and knot-tying and those that described the various games Baden-Powell had devised for his Scouts could translate easily into an Arabic edition. Problems arose, however, in those portions of *Scouting for Boys* where Baden-Powell had used his narrative talents to elaborate on aspects of Scouting ideology.

Though a comprehensive comparison between the English and Arabic editions would be beyond the limited scope of this study, even a cursory glance at the opening pages of the two works suffices to illustrate the problem of a “suitable” translation. Quite simply, *Scouting for Boys* reads as an elaborate paean to centuries of British achievement and conquest. To illustrate the importance of each Scouting virtue and each concrete skill, Baden-Powell draws liberally from the pages of British history.¹⁶ In his description of “Chivalry,” for example, he offers the following:

In the old days the knights were the scouts of Britain, and their rules were very much the same as the scout law which we have now. And very much like what the Japs have, too. We are their descendants, and we ought to keep up their good name and follow in their steps.

¹⁵ Furness to Baden-Powell 3 March 1920, TC/Egypt, SAA.

¹⁶ So thorough is Baden-Powell’s integration of historical allusions within the canonical texts of his new movement that Eric Hobsbawm cites the Boy Scouts as the quintessential example for the process of institutional elaboration he labels with his coinage “the invention of tradition.” See Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger ed., *The Invention of Tradition*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 4.

They considered that their honour was the most sacred thing to uphold; they would not do a dishonourable thing, such as telling a lie or stealing: they would really rather die than do it. They were always ready to fight and to be killed in upholding their king, or their religion, or their honour. Thousands of them went out to Palestine (the Holy Land) to maintain the Christian religion against the Mahomedan Turks.¹⁷

The problematic “suitability” of such proud reference to the Crusades in a book for an Egyptian audience needs little elaboration, but the treatment of this passage in the Arabic epitomizes the problems of translating and transposing Baden-Powell’s ideas for Arab and predominantly Muslim readers:

In bygone days the knights were the scouts of their nations (*'umam*), and their order is the closest thing to our Scout order in this age. We are [their] successors, and we ought to preserve their longstanding glory and their good name and follow their footsteps and their norms (*atharahum wa-sunnatahum*).

Those knights considered the protection of their honor to be their most sacred duty, and they would never do a dishonorable thing such as lying or stealing, and they would rather die than commit a crime. They were always ready to plunge headlong into the flood of war and to sacrifice their lives in supporting their Sultan or their religion or their honor. How many thousands of them went to the sacrifice for their duty!¹⁸

The differences between the two versions are typical of the translation as a whole. The translators seem to attempt as close a rendering of Baden-Powell’s original language as possible. In cases where specific historical examples confront problems of unsuitability, the Arabic version either omits such references altogether or replaces them with vague generalities. Yet the criterion of unsuitability is restricted to incidences of direct contact between Britons and the Muslim world. Those events and personalities deemed more benign thus remain in the Arabic version in their complete and original forms. The end result is a document of a staggeringly schizophrenic nature. In the opening pages the reader learns that, “Surely every Egyptian wants to help his country by

¹⁷ Robert Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys (The Original 1908 Edition)*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 22.

¹⁸ *Jam 'iyat al-Kashshafa al-Misriyya, Kitab al-Fityan al-Kashshafa al-Misriyya*, 2nd Printing. (Cairo: *Dar al-Ma'arif*, 1925), 24.

following the course which will raise its might and its glory, and among the easiest ways in which he may render a true service to his fatherland is by becoming a Scout.”¹⁹ On the following page, however, the text explains that the finest examples of this pathway to the glory of Egypt are in fact the heroes and explorers who helped to extend the reach of the British Empire.

Such wild incongruities in the translation of Scouting’s core text speak to a larger problem of adaptation that confronted the movement in the years following its consolidation. British authorities within both the BSA and the Foreign Office had favored closer affiliation between the Egyptian Scouts and the International Bureau precisely to avert the use of Scouting as a mechanism for anti-British agitation. Yet as Morgan so clearly recognized, the maneuver ran the risk of discrediting the Scouts as “a political and pro-British organisation in the eyes of the mass of Egyptians.” At the same time, both the High Commission and the leadership of the JKM—which remained loyal to the Palace thanks to continued patronage from Fu’ad—saw a clear and mutual interest in promoting the spread of Scouting among Egypt’s youth. As the outlines of interwar politics grew clearer, royalists and British authorities alike became eager to break the Wafd’s potent monopoly on the loyalties of Egypt’s young. The complex politics of the Scouting movement in Egypt shall receive greater attention in subsequent chapters, but in the simplest terms, both interested parties hoped that Scouting might provide a viable alternative to the youth demonstrations of which the Wafd had grown so fond since 1919.

To compete successfully with alternative modes of leisure activity, Scouting had to appeal to the sensibilities of Egypt’s growing student corps. And in a political climate where the Wafd could expect near unanimous support at the polls by calling for *istiqlal tamm*, complete independence, a movement that taught its followers to emulate the

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

examples of great Britons like Walter Raleigh and Francis Drake was likely to attract more suspicion than support. In short, the promoters of Scouting would have to prove their sincerity as champions of the modern Egyptian nation, and to that end they would need to reinvent the tradition of Scouting in an Egyptian likeness.

Admittedly, that process of reinvention had begun with the translation of Baden-Powell's own work. In particular, the words noted in the Arabic version above carry a resonance that at least suggests reference to a historical past quite different than that described in the English original. The substitution of *'umam* for "Britain" and the addition of *wa-sunnatahum* ("and their norms") to the simpler English "follow in their steps" might imply a vague allusion to the great empires of Islam. But whatever the emotional power of such words, subtle semantic alterations could hardly counteract so many pages of praise for the British Empire. The Association of Egyptian Boy Scouts needed a literature of its very own.

Chapter 5: *al-'Umda wa-al-Kashshafa fi Mu'askar al-Ahram* (The Village Chief and the Boy Scouts at the Pyramids Encampment)

When I saw that the Scouting movement had been held back from the progress which the great men of the modern educational renaissance who brought the order of Scouting to Egypt hoping for some good from the dissemination of its teachings among the souls of the nation's young had anticipated. And when I learned from the numerous trials which I experienced during the five years of my research on this glorious and useful art, I found that the secret of its underdevelopment could be attributed to neglect for the spread of its principles by exciting and captivating means. All that the men of Scouting had undertaken was purely technical publications, from which no one other than the [existing] Scouts themselves would gain insight. When I saw the overwhelming need for a stage play with which the Scouts could enliven their evening gatherings and by which they could spread the call to these august principles, I offered up this play of mine to the noble Egyptian nation, and it is the first such theatrical story of its kind, and I saw to it that I should compose it in the tongue of the people so that its influence on the soul might be more profound and its truthfulness greater.¹

Hamza Kassab's preface to his 1924 play, *The Village Chief and the Boy Scouts* (*U&K*), offers a rare glimpse of the Egyptian Scouting movement in its fledgling state. As he explains his reasons for creating a stage play as a gift to the Scouts, Kassab speaks to the very concern discussed at the conclusion of the previous chapter. In Britain, Baden-Powell had managed to popularize his movement by creating a printed literature of Scouting that was at once instructive and entertaining. The earliest efforts of the JKM to reproduce these texts in an Arabic version had, for reasons of cultural and political dissonance, involved a process of amendment that ultimately upset this delicate balance. What remained were either "purely technical publications" or documents so irrelevant to an Egyptian audience that they had little chance of captivating their readers.

As Kassab's introduction suggests, and the actual play more clearly demonstrates, a certain kind of entertainment was crucial to the whole idea of Scouting. On the one hand, the use of "exciting and captivating means" (*al-turuq al-mushawwiqa al-*

¹ Hamza Kassab, *al-'Umda wa-al-Kashshafa fi Mu'askar al-Ahram*. (Cairo: Hussein Hasanein, 1924), 7.

jadhdhaba) would provide a viable attraction to new recruits in a cultural field where young people could select between a growing array of leisure activities. Yet the value of Scouting's various amusements extended well beyond their utility for recruitment purposes. At the heart of Scouting in both its British and its Egyptian manifestations was a rather novel attitude towards education that prized experiential learning over traditional classroom instruction. By drawing the young into activities that were at once informative and fun, Baden-Powell and his disciples believed they could influence the minds of their young charges far more deeply than any classroom teacher. The merit of such *tarbiyya 'amaliyya* or practical education represents the central concern of Kassab's drama. And as the play's storyline serves to demonstrate, the adjective *'amaliyya* possesses a double meaning. On the one hand, the skills of the well-trained Scout hold real-world applications in contrast to the bookish knowledge provided by schools. On the other, thanks to the clear utility of such skills and the pleasant methods by which they are conveyed, the Scouts gain mastery of Scouting's "glorious and useful art" and its "august principles" through practice and experience in the open air.

As its title implies, Kassab's work revolves around a studied juxtaposition of two character types—one traditional and one modern—that ultimately collide on the grounds of a Scouting encampment near the Pyramids. The play begins in the rural home of the *'umda*, a prosperous notable whose spoiled, lazy son (Farghal) refuses to go to school. After extended consultation with his friend the village sheikh (Abu Shahata) and his industrious servant ('Allam), the *'umda* decides to grant his son a holiday, and the four set out in their new automobile to visit the sights of downtown Cairo. Meanwhile, the Scouts awake at their camp, emerge from their tents, and assemble for roll call. Two Scouts, one of them new to the troop, are caught dawdling in their tents, and as punishment the Scoutmaster (*al-ra'is*) leaves them to guard the camp while the others

take a morning journey to climb the Pyramids. Throughout the play, the main action of the storyline alternates with dialogue between pairs of Scouts on guard duty; invariably, these moments of comparative solitude give rise to debates about the various merits of Scouting. Upon returning from their excursion, the troop divides into patrols which set about the work of the day. During this time, the guards on watch spot an automobile speeding towards a dangerous patch of road. Although they fail to avert an accident, they alert their fellow Scouts who then spring to action, rescuing those injured and extinguishing the flames that engulf the damaged car. Of course the passengers happen to be the *'umda* and his companions. Thanks to the troop's expertise in first aid, they recover quickly from their injuries and thereafter inquire about the nature of this heroic organization. Their ignorance and backward manners provide an interlude of comedy for both the Scouts on stage and the viewing audience, but gradually the *'umda* comes to understand the great importance of Scouting for the future of Egypt. Farghal eventually joins the troop, and the *'umda*, upon learning that the government declines to fund the Scouts, offers a sizable donation from his private funds.

Cast of Characters

Though Kassab's play is about as predictable as it is didactic, it provides a magnificent record of Scouting's reinvention in the first year of Egypt's qualified independence. While a comprehensive analysis of the entire play is unfortunately beyond the scope of this work, several key passages deal with themes that would retain critical importance to the subsequent development of Scouting in Egypt. Among the richest of those passages is the collection of character descriptions that opens the play. For present purposes, three personalities are especially useful:

The *'umda*, Abu Farghal: A prosperous man who did not marry until the third decade of his life, in a stage of transition from the old, barbaric ways of life

to the modern civilized world. He is still ignorant about the essence of progress, and yet the new spirit impels him powerfully to take up the causes of the *nahda*. So he adjusts and works towards them with fear and longing. . . . He lives—at the time of the events of this tale—in Munira with his son, a student in secondary school. He is a man of light spirit, pleasant in company and personable, who accomplished but a paltry share of his primary studies and is a candidate in the parliament.

...

The Scoutmaster of the troop: A student in the secondary school who excels in many talents among the least of which are his skill at administration and his ability to win over the obedience of his brothers and subordinates. He is also very good at speaking *fusha*.

...

The New Scout: A decadent, delicate, tender student. He has been inserted into the ranks of the Scouts like many of the “sons of the notables” in the notion that it is but a stage for play and amusement, and he is not able to see what is behind the mountains [i.e. he doesn’t yet get it].²

Kassab’s work instructs its audience through a long series of staged comparisons between aspects of Scouting and their opposites. Within the world of the play, the Scoutmaster and the *’umda* represent polar extremes. Between them, all remaining personalities are arrayed in a spectrum that undergoes a sort of Doppler shift towards the Scoutmaster’s example. Throughout the play, the extent to which each personality approaches the exemplary virtue of the *ra’is* is marked by a whole variety of features including age, manner of dress, and most notably language. The *’umda* and his constant companion the sheikh speak in a caricatured colloquial, and their efforts to employ elevated registers of Arabic invariably fail with comic effect. The *ra’is*, on the other hand, represents the pinnacle of eloquence and is “very good at speaking *fusha*.” And the Scouts under his charge converse in a range of mixed dialects that correspond to their respective ranks in the hierarchy of the troop.

Kassab’s careful manipulation of language here provides a useful introduction to the play’s general outlook on education. From the earliest years of the movement,

² *Ibid.*, 9-11.

Scouting literature in Egypt offered direct and steady criticism of the nation's existing school systems. Central to this impassioned critique was the idea not that classroom instruction was altogether wrong but that it was woefully incomplete. The *ra'is* stands out as the most accomplished school student in the play, and his literacy facilitates his "skill at administration" and his eloquent command of the troop. He later explains to the *'umda*, however, that "'we are a dictionary of deeds and a technical encyclopedia in all things.'"³ As the storyline serves to demonstrate, book learning constitutes only one component of this greater education. Scouting provides the means to make the total process of character formation complete.

In contrast to the *ra'is*, the New Scout embodies the limitations of school learning on its own. The adjectives used to describe him—decadent (*mutraf*), delicate (*mitrahhaf*), and tender (*raqiq*)—together imply two distinct but related areas of educational neglect that the *ra'is* endeavors to correct. When the New Scout appears on stage, stumbling out of his tent long after the roll call, he immediately displays a regrettable combination of physical and moral weakness. His learning process in the course of the play revolves around the gradual correction of these paired faults and in turn helps to dramatize the Egyptian adaptation of Baden-Powell's core teachings on strength and loyalty.

All three of the adjectives used to describe the New Scout imply a shameful lack of physical cultivation that contrasts sharply with the boundless energy of his peers in the troop. While he struggles to recover from the previous day's work and complains of the early role-call, his fellow Scouts rejoice in their rugged outdoor life. When the *ra'is* offers two other Scouts who have just completed the night watch an opportunity to rest, they decline the offer and reply instead, "'We would prefer to climb to the summit of the pyramids for in that act are two exercises in one: activity for the body and thought for the

³ *Ibid.*, 54.

mind.”⁴ Again and again throughout the play, the various spokesmen for Scouting’s core values return to a commentary on the interdependence of body and mind. According to this conception of human development, the New Scout’s decadence and delicacy arise from a general neglect for his body that has only been encouraged by his misguided parents. To combat this condition of weakness, the Scouts offer him a wealthy regime of physical activity.

As Kassab’s description suggests and the criticisms uttered by his peers confirm, however, the New Scout suffers punishment and derision not only because he is weak but also because he is willfully insubordinate and lazy. During his shift on guard duty, he gripes to his companion about the head of their patrol and about the need to stand at attention and salute this superior officer. His patient interlocutor replies,

“Do you see some shame in that? Was he not appointed chief of your patrol, and has he not experienced hardships like you? It is necessary, in order for you to respect yourself, that you should respect others, because another will respond in kind. Suppose tomorrow by chance you should be promoted and become the head of a patrol. They will salute you, and why? I will take you far and wide, and don’t you see that the head of your patrol salutes the head of your troop and the head of your troop salutes his teacher and he in turn his director, and like that people have their levels and stages.”⁵

In this utterance, the New Scout’s companion offers an elegant synopsis of the movement’s message about loyalty and obedience. He faults the New Scout for refusing to respect and obey his superiors, but he also offers encouragement, suggesting that the neophyte might one day expect the same from his subordinates. The world he describes is thus profoundly hierarchical and at the same time dynamic. Individual Scouts must obey orders without question, yet virtuous performance offers the promise of advancement.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

Scouting and the Hierarchy of Nations

Although the above dialogue deals with the local order of an individual Scout troop, later events and conversations reveal that such vision of a meritocratic hierarchy applies to Kassab's portrayal of the modern world as well. In Chapter 3, we saw that Baden-Powell's writings entail a compromise between the "nature" and "nurture" schools of eugenicist thought. To his British audience, the Chief Scout warns that Britain's preeminence is not fixed; only through the comprehensive preparation of Scouting can the younger generation hope to preserve the glory of the Empire. In the setting of Kassab's play—and the ideology of the Egyptian Scouting movement more generally—the same basic idea of an alterable global hierarchy works to very different effect. After centuries of defeat and humiliation at the hands of Europe, the Scouts announce their hope for a new day of Egyptian glory.

The idea that Egypt is a nation "in a stage of transition from the old, barbaric ways of life to the modern, civilized world" appears in the very first sentence describing the *'umda* and recurs at intervals throughout the play. Where *Scouting for Boys* insists that Britain's young must work to save their Empire from decline, Kassab's play urges its audience to strive for Egypt's renewal. When set against this vision of global change, the New Scout's weakness and laziness and the *'umda*'s backward manners take on new significance; far more than individual foibles, these characteristics become impediments to the success of the modern Egyptian nation. Kassab makes this argument perfectly explicit in yet another dialogue between guards of the camp. In the midst of an extended digression about the role of European industry in Egypt's economy, one of the Scouts exclaims:

"If we sit by and abide [the Europeans'] treating us like fools, we'll never be done with them. And it irks me, friend, when you speak of their [the Egyptians'] calamities and show good will towards them; in fact you are treacherous. They

always want one to say to them, ‘You are the finest people. This is Egypt, mother of the world. We are the origin of civilization.’ And so on in that tone. Oh brother, you all can go to hell. It was true that your forefathers were the origin of human prosperity and civilization, but they did not know how to preserve their greatness, and so it passed on to other nations.’⁶

By this line of argument, Kassab—and the Scouting movement for which he speaks—insists that Egypt’s modern condition is Egypt’s own responsibility. In their weakness and decadence, the New Scout and the *‘umda* both fall prey to the nostalgic complacency against which the above passage so rails. To adopt the ideals of Scouting, then, is to take action, to refuse ill treatment, and to regain the nation’s lost greatness.

A Donation and a New Recruit

The play’s conclusion ultimately relates this assertion of Scouting’s national import to the real circumstances of contemporary Egypt in two critical respects. By the final moments of the drama, the *‘umda* has completed his progression from a total ignorance of Scouting to an absolute faith in the movement’s value. Enthusiastic as he becomes, all the aging man can do to support the cause of Egypt’s renaissance is to offer his patronage for the under-funded movement. It is left to his son Farghal to benefit from Scouting’s actual teachings by joining the troop, a decision which the *ra’is* insists the boy must make himself. These paired actions serve to clarify the movement’s general outlook on youth, education, and the relationship between the generations. The entire plot of the play works to demonstrate that the Scouts are the truest agents of Egypt’s improvement. But membership in this elite corps belongs only to the young. Not only are the backward members of an older generation unable to benefit from new methods of education, but those same methods eventually demonstrate the inability of parents to educate their children as they should. The best such parents can do is to express their faith in the

⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

promise of youth and cede control of their children to those more skilled in modern education. Here, in the conclusion of Kassab's play, we find the basic outlines for the cult of youth that would gain such tremendous force throughout Egypt in the decades that followed.

If Kassab's conclusion helps to clarify his ideas about youth, it also contains a subtler, though equally potent, political message. As the Scouts wait for Farghal to don his new uniform, the *'umda* inquires after the troop's finances. The *ra'is* responds that they receive nothing from the government and instead pay for everything "from our own private funds. And some wealthy men realize the benefit of the Scouts, so they help us."⁷ In a movement that always claimed to rise above the divisiveness of politics, direct reference to the monumental controversies of the day would have been unthinkable. Yet by leaving his audience to ponder the fact that generous individuals must fund the Scouts because the government fails to do so, Kassab helps to reinforce a political outlook that he suggests at intervals throughout the entire play. At the moment of the work's publication in 1924, the Wafd held overwhelming control of Egypt's first, post-independence government. In other words, the government that saw no need to support the heroic Scouts was a Wafdist government. And chief among the "wealthy men" who "realize the benefit" of the movement was the noble King whose smiling face appears in a photograph on the opening page of the play's published edition.

See <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~%7Emetheses/JakesMasterECN.htm#Fig3>

Figure 3: Dedication page from *The 'Umda and the Boy Scouts*. The inscription reads, "To His Royal Highness, His Great Majesty the King of Egypt, Fu'ad I: High Chief of the Boy Scouts and the Founder of their Renaissance."

⁷ *Ibid.*, 74.

Kassab never makes his political views explicit, and admittedly, the play's conclusion could also read as a simple, fundraising gesture. Yet Kassab's suggested dig at the Wafdist government and his open praise for the King together correspond with the play's broader commentary about Egyptian society as it is and as it should be. It seems hardly a coincidence that the only character in the play connected with national politics is the *'umda*, "a candidate in the parliament." His occasional allusions to parliamentary affairs moreover revolve around petty intrigue and personal rivalry. By association with the *'umda*, parliamentary governance becomes an aspect of the backward, traditional existence that Egypt must struggle to overcome. Against this depiction of uneducated notables bickering over trifling concerns, Kassab offers the vision of an efficient society, ordered and ranked according to effort, achievement, and merit. And at the top of this just hierarchy sits the King himself, the champion of modern causes and the great *ra'is* of Egypt's young.

Throughout the wild turmoil of the interwar years, the Egyptian Scouting movement consistently maintained a position of official disengagement from political affairs. In his writings on British Scouting, Rosenthal quips that "requiring loyalty to an employer during the period of a developing labor movement is by no means the simple moral act that Baden-Powell liked to pretend it was."⁸ And in interwar Egypt, requiring loyalty to the King during the conflicts of a developing parliamentary monarchy was no less political. From the moment of its official registration onward, the JKM remained an invaluable weapon in the Monarchy's effort to break the Wafdist monopoly on Egypt's young. The battle for the loyalties of the *shabab* had begun.

⁸ Rosenthal, 115.

Part Three: From Scouts to Shirts to Soldiers

Chapter 6: The Cult of Physical Sport

The publics receiving ideas reconstruct meanings in terms that suit their norms and values and that complement their modes of feeling and expression. Such reconstruction can also reverberate back on the producers of texts. The manner in which ideas are received and reconstructed by audiences can in time create a feedback loop in which authors adapt their production to meet the demands of their consumers. . . . To a considerable degree the new supra-Egyptian nationalism of the era was sculpted from below, as both intellectual and political elites adapted themselves to the values and desires of a new Egyptian public emerging over the interwar period.¹

In the preface to the second volume of their two-part study on Egyptian nationalism, Gershoni and Jankowski use the model of a feedback loop to explain the process by which ideas in interwar Egypt were produced and consumed. With this framework as their starting point, the authors argue that by the early 1930s, middle-class consumers of literate popular culture were more numerous, more vocal, and more powerful than they had been a decade earlier. They explain that this “new Egyptian public,” drawn into the public sphere by the rapid, post-war expansion of the education system, was “more traditional in outlook than the smaller, more Westernized educated upper and middle class of the previous generation.”² This traditionalism, they argue, exerted a critical pressure on the creation of nationalist ideology, which in turn catalyzed a dramatic and observable shift: Nationalist writings before the 1930s had expressed an effusive admiration for the West and an exclusivist definition of the Egyptian community rooted in attention to Pharoanic history. In response to the new *effendiyya*, such ideas gave way to a more Easternist orientation, a qualified rejection of Western values, and a re-appropriation of Egypt’s Arab and Islamic heritage.

¹ Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*. xii-iii.

² *Ibid.*, 11.

Though Gershoni's and Jankowski's work offers a wealth of insights, I shall use this chapter to reconsider the implications of the "feedback loop" and to challenge aspects of their basic thesis. Gershoni and Jankowski employ this model to mark a historical discontinuity, a rejection of old ideas in favor of new ones. Although admittedly more focused and limited in scope, my own attention to the evolution of youth culture suggests that the likely impact of consumer feedback was less a process of selectivity than one of incorporation. In a context where the loyalties of youth had become vital to political success, rival groups tended to angle for young supporters not by hardening the qualitative distinctions between themselves and their competitors, but by laying claim to whatever ideas seemed to curry favor with the *shabab*. The outcome was a peculiar brand of inclusive cultural brinksmanship. Each interested party attempted to outdo the others by claiming to be at once more devoted to the cause of youth, more steadfast in its nationalist zeal, more committed to the improvements of modernity, and more defensive of Egypt's Arab and Islamic heritage.

Before embarking on our exploration of this process at work, we must pause to consider the intended audience for Egypt's burgeoning youth culture. Three general observations about the "*shabab*" as a subset of the Egyptian public will prove especially relevant to the analysis that follows. First, and perhaps most important, the population of literate young men educated in Egypt's modern state school system grew ever larger throughout the interwar years. As Gershoni and Jankowski observe, "If secondary school and university students increasingly played a larger role in the public life of their country, one basic reason is that there were more of them to do so."³ Second, although the distinction conferred by modern schooling increasingly marked the *shabab* as a discrete sector, the age boundaries defining both the outer limits and the developmental stages of

³ *Ibid.*, 13.

“youth” remained rather vague and fluid. A British observer in 1920 quipped of the Boy Scouts, “A noticeable feature is the disregard which the organizers appear to have for any age limit. Many ‘boy Scouts’ seen on their weekly route marches have the appearance of well developed young men of eighteen.”⁴ Finally, whatever the murkiness of its outlines, the membership of this generational category was always aging and therefore changing. With a few exceptions, the young men who took to the streets in 1936 were not the same individuals who had done so 17 years earlier.

The implications of this gradual but constant turnover did not escape Egypt’s political elites but rather helped to ensure a steady escalation of their efforts in the realm of youth culture. The events of 1919 had won the Wafd an overwhelming command of the student sector. So complete was the party’s popularity that in 1924, according to Erlich’s figures, “only some 500 of all students supported rival parties such as the *Watani* or the Liberal Constitutionalists.”⁵ Nevertheless, the shifting demographics of the *shabab* guaranteed both that Wafdist leaders would remain jealous of their prestige and that “rival parties” would redouble their efforts to dismantle the “army of the Wafd.” In the first decade after 1919, the most ambitious projects to create viable alternatives to Wafdist activities were sponsored, unsurprisingly, by the Wafd’s most ardent antagonist.

King Fu’ad’s early efforts to employ the Scouting movement as an effective counterweight to Wafdist youth organizations offer perhaps the clearest and most historically significant example of cultural brinksmanship at work. As late as 1929, British Scouting officials lamented the slow spread of the movement among Egyptians and reported that “the Nationalists still object that Scouting is an English measure.”⁶ If Scouting was to succeed, it would have to lose the taint of its affiliation with Great

⁴ G. W. Courtney to M.I.5 24 March 1920, FO 371/5026.

⁵ Erlich, 58.

⁶ Baden-Powell to Hubert Martin 24 August 1929, SAA.

Britain. At the same time, Fu'ad was struggling to establish an effective power base among a population somewhat inclined to regard his dynasty as an emblem of outmoded tradition. If the King was to wield his constitutional authority against the Wafd without constant threat of popular resistance, he would have to prove himself as a sincere champion of the modern Egyptian nation. The solution to these paired problems rested in a simultaneous effort to recast a variety of leisure pursuits in a nationalist mold and to establish the King as the most eager patron for these newly-patriotic activities. In the most general of terms, this process relied on an ever-tightening equation between the physical strength of the individual and the global strength of the Egyptian nation.

In Chapter 3, we saw that Baden-Powell embedded in his movement a delicate balance between local deference and global ambition. Within England, the physical activity of Scouting would provide a safe outlet for the otherwise volatile energies of youth, but on a global stage, the very same training would strengthen and embolden a generation of mighty young men ready to defend the glory of the Empire. In Egypt, this same dualistic understanding of physical activity generally and of Scouting more specifically rested at the heart of royal projects in the realm of youth culture. From a political perspective, Fu'ad's interest in the *shabab* revolved primarily around a need to lure students away from Wafdist action in the streets, but to present alternative pastimes as mere distraction from the contests of national politics would hardly win them eager support. On the other hand, by promoting sports and physical education not merely as a matter of entertainment or personal health but as a means towards national advancement and a source of national pride, the King could help to portray such activities as a mode of patriotic duty. To that end, the Palace helped to organize an ever-expanding schedule of sporting meets and competitions at which the nation's young could demonstrate their prowess before the eyes of their adoring king.

See <http://users.ox.ac.uk/%7Emetheses/JakesMasterECN.htm#Fig4>

Figure 4: King Fu'ad (on the balcony) surveys the annual sports meet for students (1928).⁷

Of course, the Palace was not solely responsible for the cult of sport and physical training that pervaded Egyptian popular culture in the interwar years. The passages of Kassab's play dealing with the hierarchy of nations and the need for Egypt to regain its national vitality are in fact representative of broader currents of thought then circulating throughout the country. As Jankowski correctly observes in his study of Young Egypt, "The nineteenth-century concepts of survival of the fittest and life-as-struggle had been absorbed into Arabic thought by the previous generation of Arab intellectuals."⁸ In his efforts to foster sporting culture among the *shabab*, the King was not therefore imposing a novel, elite ideology on an unthinking public but rather manipulating an existing body of popular ideas to strategic effect. By employing the general arguments of eugenicist thought, the Palace was able to contend that weightlifting and Scouting were every bit as important to Egypt's future as street demonstrations for *istiqlal tamm*.

Al-Riyada al-Badaniyya

By the early 1930s, Egypt's exploding popular media had seized upon the topic of *al-riyada al-badaniyya*, physical exercise, as a foremost issue of the day. Journals and magazines of all stripes ran regular columns on questions of health, sport, and physical training, and several publishers began to produce journals solely devoted to such matter. An article published in *Sahifat Madrasat Damanhur al-Thanawiyya* (The Journal of the Damanhur Secondary School) in its inaugural issue from 1930 provides a particularly rich

⁷ *School Life in Egypt* (Photo Album). (Cairo: 1928), 68.

⁸ Jankowski, *Rebels*, 56.

example of this genre. The article, entitled simply “*al-Riyada al-Badaniyya*,” serves as a useful artifact of popular ideas about physical training precisely for its lack of originality. As the work of a student testing his pen at journalistic style, the piece here provides a glimpse of the feedback loop in action. The author’s goal seems less a new contribution to thought about physical exercise than a comprehensive presentation of current and accepted views on the subject. His penchant for long chains of hyperbolic metaphors betrays an apparent intention to prove himself not by the creativity of his thought but by the eloquence of his style and the fervor of his patriotism.

The article begins by admonishing Egyptians for neglecting their health and proposing that physical exercise will provide the engine for national improvement:

It is incumbent upon us for the sake of humanity and the coming generations that we devote attention to [physical exercise] along with our intellectual and moral education, for it is a fundamental element in the education of communities and a foundation for all intellectual and ethical advancement, and a model for good health and the lantern by which it is illumined so that mankind may ascend a rung on the ladder of civilization and graze in the affluence of prosperity.⁹

This opening paragraph encompasses the article’s two basic arguments. First, true education requires equal cultivation of intellectual, moral, and physical qualities, but in Egypt the physical aspect receives insufficient time and commitment. And second, proper attention to health and strength will bring glory back to Egypt. Though the young author complains that his countrymen lack an appropriate concern for their bodies, he does find some cause for optimism: “You would see the star of proof shining brightly if you were to see one of the great sporting meets since in it both courage and bravery are

⁹ Muhammad Zaki Na‘im al-Rumi, “*al-Riyada al-Badaniyya*,” *Sahifat Madrasat Damanhur al-Thanawiyya* 1, no. 1 (1930), 92.

manifest, and you may see bravery and chivalry, and competing in it are those of good health and firm resolve.”¹⁰

Despite its belabored redundancy and its overwrought prose, this aspiring journalist’s commentary helps to illustrate the circulation of ideas about the extracurricular lives of Egypt’s young. And if the article’s language is most explicit in its praise for physical exercise in the general case, several details within the text suggest a preference for one mode of physical education above all others. Although the author never mentions the movement specifically, several passages seem to replicate aspects of the Scouting canon almost to the word. Most notable is the following passage about the moral virtue of the good sportsman:

You see all of them bowing to a single word, and what is that word and where is its source? It is the word of their superior, that word filled with wisdom and guidance, and they comply with blind obedience like the soldier in the field of battle, surrendering to his leader and carrying out the orders of his chief. So they surrender to his orders and respect his rights and in that way it becomes easy for them to live a good life. And so every one respects his superior and treats his inferior with sympathy.¹¹

The passage bears a striking resemblance to New Scout’s lesson about the virtue of obedience discussed in the previous chapter. Whatever the author’s actual affiliation with the movement, his language helps to underscore the unique appeal of Scouting among Fu’ad and his palace advisors. While sporting culture in general may have helped to draw students away from Wafdist organizations in their free hours, swimming, running, and soccer hardly offered consistent programs of character formation. Scouting, on the other hand, combined a healthy regimen of physical activity with clear and specific training in deference and loyalty.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

A National Charter and a Young Chief Scout

Though Fu'ad's private patronage for Scouting had been steady since his founding of the first Cairo troop, his public efforts to legitimize and spread the movement reached a climax in April of 1933. In a speech he delivered the following year, Hassanein Bey, the Vice President of the JKM, recounted the momentous events of 1933 as follows:

It is during the year 1933 that the Scout movement has been awarded its most brilliant recompenses for it has been granted National Charters, and it has been graced by His Majesty with the most conspicuous and valuable token of his fatherly interest. His Majesty's Solicitude towards the organisation and his principle that a King must always give the good example to his people prompted him to give the Association the most precious gift that a loving father can give; His Royal Highness Prince of Said, Crown Prince of Egypt . . . was authorized by His Majesty the king to accept to be 'Chief Scout of Egypt.'¹²

Although it is unlikely that Fu'ad had read *The 'Umda and the Boy Scouts*, the similarities between the play's conclusion and the King's actions in 1933 were neither insignificant nor ultimately coincidental. Regardless of any speculations about life's imitation of art, both men's actions arose from the same set of real-world circumstances. Moreover, the practical and symbolic implications of their respective decisions were nearly identical. Like the *'umda*, Fu'ad acknowledged that the JKM had suffered suspicion and slow growth without formal government support. But whereas the Cabinet and Parliament in 1924 had rested firmly in the hands of the Wafd, Egypt's government in 1933 was controlled by the King's own men and led by the royalist prime minister Isma'il Sidqi Pasha.¹³ In the absence of Wafdist ministers who might question his motives, Fu'ad could finally grant the JKM the formal recognition that proponents of Scouting had so long desired.

¹² Hassanein Bey, Speech delivered at a Scout rally at Port Said, 7 November 1934, SAA

¹³ Fu'ad had exercised his constitutional right to dissolve the Cabinet in 1930, replacing the Wafdist premier with his own man Sidqi. Upon his appointment, Sidqi swiftly moved to abrogate the 1923 Constitution and thereby established an effective Palace dictatorship which lasted until 1935.

If this gesture on its own might have reeked of political motives, Faruq's simultaneous appointment as the "Chief Scout" of Egypt added significant credibility to the entire maneuver. Again the analogy to Kassab's concluding scene proves instructive. Though the *'umda* displays his absolute faith in the movement through the generosity of his donation, it is only his son Farghal who may become a Scout and carry forward the promise of the rising nation. Likewise, though Fu'ad performed the greatest service within his powers by granting the National Charter, it was the young Crown Prince Faruq who assumed the honor of leading the movement. Through these two gestures, the Palace broadcast a renewed faith in the import of the *shabab*. Formal governmental recognition conferred unprecedented legitimacy upon Scouting as a means to make Egypt great. And Faruq's assumption of his new title confirmed the Palace's conviction that such greatness would come from the energies of the rising generation.

The political motives underlying royal relations with the JKM did not escape the notice of Egypt's British advisors. The High Commission's report on the Scouting movement from 8 May 1933 states bluntly, "It seems . . . to be a natural and proper thing for His Majesty to take the lead of the movement. H.M. is keen on education and 'le sport' and outdoor activities. No doubt there enters into his thoughts the idea that the more the young Egyptian occupies his mind with physical training and outdoor pursuits, the less prone he will be to fill his otherwise idle moments with the disturbing amusements of rather hare-brained politics."¹⁴ Whatever the transparency of Fu'ad's actions in the eyes of foreign observers, however, the events of 1933 helped to accelerate two related trends within the broader development of Egyptian youth culture. The first was a widening public embrace of Scouting as an ideal mechanism for Egypt's

¹⁴ Ronald Campbell (The Residency, Cairo), "Minute Sheet" 8 May 1933, FO 141/705/13.

improvement. The remainder of the current chapter will consider this expansion of the movement and diversification of its uses. The second notable trend was a dramatic escalation of the praise and promises offered by rival elite factions in their courtship of the *shabab*. The consequences of this latter process will provide the focus for the next and final chapter.

Scouting Takes Hold: Expansion and Diversification

Just as the Palace had hoped, the events of 1933 provided a tremendous boost to the public image of Scouting. Enrollment in troops around the country continued to grow, and a brief study of the movement conducted later that year by the British High Commission estimated Egyptian membership at 4,500.¹⁵ Within a total population of roughly 15 million Egyptians, such numbers might seem negligible. But when we compare the movement's numbers to the total enrollment in the secular state school system (roughly 750,000 students) and the much smaller population of secondary school students (approximately 45,000) from which the overwhelming majority of Scouts were drawn, the growing influence of Scouting becomes apparent.¹⁶ Membership figures moreover account for only one aspect of Scouting's rising cultural importance. A vast collection of articles, weekly columns, and photo spreads in the printed media of the 1930s testifies to a genuine Egyptian fascination with *al-kashshafa*.

See <http://users.ox.ac.uk/%7Emetheses/JakesMasterECN.htm#Fig5>

Figure 5: An advertisement for *Sheikh Sharib Tea*. The caption reads, "After the toil of work, the Scout sits in waiting. . . . What helps him to renew his vitality? A rewarding cup of good tea."¹⁷

¹⁵ Campbell to the Foreign Office 26 May 1933, FO 141/705/13.

¹⁶ Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*. 12.

¹⁷ *Al-Ithnein* 183 (29 November 1937), 33.

Although the Palace clearly saw the advancement of Scouting as a boon to its own political agenda, it would be wrong to understand the movement's popularity merely as a kind of public manipulation by royalist elites. Literate Egyptians of all ages found a number of perfectly logical and pragmatic reasons to support the movement. As in many other countries where Scouting was practiced, the primary appeal for many parents and children alike may have involved little concern for the movement's moralistic agenda. An article published in *Sahifat al-Jami'a al-Misriyya* (*The Journal of the Egyptian University*) in 1938 explains quite simply, "You see the Boy Scouts hurrying in their free time to the open country where there is sun and fresh air and leaving behind the din (*dauda*) of the city and the dullness of their homes in favor of tranquility and the beauty of nature and sunlight."¹⁸ In an era when Egypt's population was not only rising but flocking to the country's few major cities, Scouting's appeal for many may have been as simple as the opportunity to escape Cairo's deafening *dauda*.

In more ideological terms, the Scouts also came to represent genuine hopes about Egypt's future. At a national level, the movement's teachings on the merits of physical training, diligent work, and public service corresponded to a widespread desire for Egypt's self-improvement. And on a global scale, the attendance of Egyptian delegates at the International Bureau's annual "Jamborees" became a source of pride and an indication that Egypt had joined the community of modern nations. Periodicals as prestigious as *al-Hilal* carried photo features to celebrate Egypt's participation in these international Scouting summits, while other journals targeting younger readers ran detailed coverage of these events. Articles in the children's magazine *Samir al-Tilmidh*, for example, tended

¹⁸ "Haula al-Kashf," *Sahifat al-Jami'a al-Misriyya* 1 (1938), 142.

to emphasize even the minutest of Egyptian achievements on this international stage:

“Our troop was the very first to arrive in Sweden, making an example of its country.”¹⁹

See <http://users.ox.ac.uk/%7Emetheses/JakesMasterECN.htm#Fig6>

Figure 6: A photo spread from *al-Hilal*: "The Scouts at the Budapest Convention."²⁰

Finally, beyond its entertainment value or its confirmation of patriotic aspirations, the Scouting movement appealed to many Egyptians as a pragmatic solution to a pressing concern of the day. Alongside public optimism about the promise of modernity was a rising anxiety about Egypt's detachment from its indigenous heritage. More specifically, a collection of new societies and organizations had begun to argue that in their efforts to absorb Western ideas and emulate Western culture, Egyptian Muslims had strayed from the straight path of their faith. Throughout the 1930s, the most prominent and successful of these new groups was *Jam'iyat al-Shubban al-Muslimin*, the Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA). From the earliest years of the YMMA's existence, Scouting played a central role in the Association's program of new Islamic activism.

Thanks largely to the more violent and dramatic actions taken in later decades by other organizations like Hassan al-Banna's Muslim Brotherhood, the YMMA has received rather little attention in Western scholarship about modern Islamic movements. Nevertheless, when he prepared his submission in 1932 for Hamilton Gibb's edited volume *Whither Islam?: A Survey of Modern Movements in the Moslem World*, Professor G. Kampffmeyer was sufficiently convinced of the Association's importance to call it “a better illustration than anything else of the present state of mind not only in Egypt but in a

¹⁹ “*Mu'askar al-Jawala al-Duwali al-Thamin*,” *Samir al-Tilmidh* 3, no. 1 (1935), 13.

²⁰ *Al-Hilal* 41, no. 10 (1 April 1933), 1301.

large part of the Arabic-speaking world as well.”²¹ The distinction Kampffmeyer confers on the movement furthermore agrees with the observations of British officials during the same period. In fact, the YMMA was the only Islamic organization to receive regular attention from the High Commission in the turbulent years of the 1930s.

The reasons for the YMMA’s high profile in the records of British correspondence relate directly to the topic of the next chapter. Before moving on, however, I would like to touch briefly on the basic ideology of the movement and the nature of its interest in Scouting. As stated in its founding regulations, drafted in November, 1927, the aims of the YMMA were “(1) to spread Islamic humanization and morals, (2) to endeavour to enlighten the minds by knowledge in a way that is adapted to modern times, (3) to work against dissension and abuses amongst the Islamic parties and groups, (4) to take from the cultures of the East and the West all that is good, and to reject all that is bad in them.”²² The breadth and generality of these objectives accurately reflect the dynamic nature of the movement in its early years. On the one hand, the YMMA was both active and vocal in its efforts to revive Islam in all areas of Egyptian life. On the other, the movement’s members engaged in an ongoing and lively debate about the actual details of that revival. Kampffmeyer’s account of his time at the Association’s clubhouse in downtown Cairo describes it as a hub of intellectual activity: “There are young men and men of mature age, professors of al-Azhar University as well as of the Egyptian University, men of letters, teachers, officials, merchants, young men of every class of society.”²³ The Association’s official organ, *Majallat al-Shubban al-Muslimin*, moreover

²¹ Professor Dr. G. Kampffmeyer, “Egypt and Western Asia” in H.A.R. Gibb, *Whither Islam?* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1932), 103. For more information on the history of the YMMA, see James Heyworth Dunne, *Religious and Political Trends in Modern Egypt*. Washington, 1950.

²² *Ibid.*, 103.

²³ *Ibid.*, 113.

reflects this lively exchange of ideas. Articles in the magazine cover topics ranging from Qur'anic exegesis to the treatment of diabetes.

Despite its considerable intellectual vibrancy and flexibility, the YMMA's writings and activities did cohere around a set of recurring concerns. As the organization's name suggests, the rearing of Egypt's youth was chief among these. The YMMA's frequent writings on education and the duties of the *shabab* constitute part of a much greater public critique of Egypt's secular state school system throughout the interwar years. Much of this criticism arose from the notion that the education provided by the existing system was woefully incomplete. The highly standardized curriculum, bound by the restrictions of centralized examinations, seemed to offer Egypt's young little preparation for life beyond the classroom. In a political climate where all efforts at sweeping reform had run aground, the Egyptian public increasingly turned to other quarters to supplement the education of its young.

In an article on the merits of Scouting, published in July 1933, the YMMA describes its troops as the panacea to Egypt's educational woes. The author begins with a bleak assessment of the school system: "They take to stuffing the brains of the children with what is harmful, . . . and they oppress them with homework. So the child emerges from this stage . . . and he doesn't understand what surrounds him except two or three routes which convey him to his home, and he does not know by heart any of the matters of the world and society except what he finds in his paltry books."²⁴ In contrast to this detrimental process, Scouting offers the young man "what will form him in the development of his moral, physical, and intellectual powers. . . . Scouting sets right the self and teaches the young man to rely on himself, to deal with rough conditions in his

²⁴ "Hadith al-Kashshafa," *Majallat al-Shubban al-Muslimin* 4, no. 10 (July, 1933), 638.

life, all of which has an influence on his future life and . . . accustoms him to respect others and to help people under all circumstances.”²⁵

The language of the article faithfully replicates some of the most basic ideas that Baden-Powell had first used to publicize his British Boy Scouts. At the same time, the promotion of those same ideas by a movement calling for an Islamic revival points to the growing distance between the Chief Scout’s original intention and the practice of Scouting in its increasingly popular Egyptian form. The more groups like the YMMA rushed to use Scouting as a solution to Egypt’s own problems, the more their interpretations of the movement varied from the orthodoxy of the BSA. True, they continued to praise the movement as a means towards the holistic education of youth. They announced that Scouting would instill moral virtues and strengthen young bodies. But the moral virtues that the YMMA was teaching were not the same as those the Reverend A. H. Griffiths had hoped to instill in the Egyptian public in 1916. Nor, for that matter, were the objectives of rigorous physical training. The exact nature of those differences would soon expose the fragility of British influence in Egypt and help to fuel the political explosions that brought that influence nearer to its end.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

Chapter 7: “We were on a Scouting trip in Upper Egypt.”

At the beginning of Chapter 3, I proposed that the paired qualities of ideological malleability and layered consumption were critical to the evolution of Scouting in Egypt. In Chapters 4 and 5, I endeavored to show how British and Egyptian proponents of the movement first adapted Baden-Powell’s ideas to suit new cultural circumstances. Chapter 6 then explored the process by which both elite and popular actors came to embrace Scouting as an appealing means of molding a new generation of Egyptian citizens. Through all of these chapters, however, I confess that I have offered little commentary about the ideas and experiences of the intended audience for so much ideology.

In the introduction to his sensitive and compelling work *On My Honor: Boy Scouts and the Making of American Youth*, Jay Mechling warns that the tendency to study youth culture through the writings and ideas of adults has helped to reinforce a variety of misconceptions about the lives of young people. He argues that the correction to these “skewed views of the nature of boys and the nature of the Boy Scout experience lies in the study of boys’ lives in what social scientists call ‘natural settings,’ those places and occasions in the everyday lives of boys where we get some glimpse of who they are and how they fashion their lives.”¹ For Mechling, himself an anthropologist, this solution dictates the nature of his study. Years of participant observation with a single troop allow for detailed analysis of Scouting as a lived experience.

Mechling makes a strong case for directing the study of youth culture towards greater consideration of youth themselves. Unfortunately, his methods present rather

¹ Jay Mechling, *On My Honor*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), xviii.

fewer problems for his own research on Scouting in the present-day United States than they do for the study of Egyptian Scouting seven decades ago. Unearthing the record of this long-neglected movement at the level of official, adult-constructed ideology has entailed no small effort on its own. But locating actual accounts and recollections of Egyptian Scouting from the perspective of its young practitioners constitutes another challenge altogether. I admit my own regret at failing to discover more such sources, and I hope that this unfortunate limitation in my present work will provide an impetus for later research. Nevertheless, I will attempt in this last chapter to reconstruct some of the thoughts and experiences of the *shabab* themselves from what records do exist. And to begin, I would like to offer one of the few published accounts of Egyptian Scouting written from the memories of an actual participant.

Ahmad Hussein first published his polemical autobiography *Imani (My Faith)* in 1936 as a form of propaganda for his new movement, *Misr al-Fatah* (Young Egypt). Hussein opens his first chapter as follows: “We were on a Scouting trip (*rihla kashfiyya*) in Upper Egypt, and leading us was Hamid Effendi, the renowned teacher at the Khedival Secondary School. Accompanying us was the great master of Scouting, ‘Abdallah Salama Effendi.”² In the pages that follow, Hussein describes the events of this journey in 1928 with great detail. What emerges is the story of his nationalist epiphany, the moment of conversion to the cause of Egypt’s greatness which would later drive him to found his very own uniformed youth movement.

Many aspects of Hussein’s account resonate with common themes in the official Scouting literature. As he describes himself prior to his great awakening, the young Hussein appears lazy and decadent, not unlike the petulant New Scout in Kassab’s play: “I started to feel in the depths of my soul that my hopes had been dashed, for I had

² Ahmad Hussein, *Imani*. (Cairo: *Dar al-Shuruq*, 1981), 15.

believed that I was going on a happy, pleasant journey, and here we were starting out in the middle of the noonday heat and exhausted. . . . Look at us, strewn about inside the tent, out of breath and vexed, and in a condition near to passing out.”³ The itinerary of his journey, however, provides opportunities for a series of dramatic revelations. First among these is the simple act of raising the Egyptian flag in the center of the troop’s remote campground: “And when the flag arrived at its resting place, and the scoutmaster took hold of it and called out to us, ‘Company, attention!’ I felt that something new had been born and sprung up in my spirit and ideas, and it wasn’t entirely clear in such a way that I might know what it was and what its limits might be, yet it was powerful inasmuch as I felt it in my soul.”⁴

In the days that follow, Hussein travels with his troop to all the great sites of Upper Egypt. At each new monument, he finds himself dazzled by the ingenuity of the ancients and awed by the traces of pharaonic power. Gradually, his amazement gives way to contemplation and finally to outrage. His revelation hinges on a sudden awareness of the contrast between Egypt’s former greatness and its current degradation. Shaken by his sudden discovery, Hussein turns to consider the causes of this degradation and determines “that the Egyptians had severed all the ties that were binding them to those ancestors, and instead they took to speaking about them and looking at their works in exactly the same way as the foreign tourists do . . . or even, I ask God’s forgiveness, with less reverence and respect than tourists do.”⁵

Though shaken by this vision of Egypt’s ignorance—“ignorance of our country, ignorance of our history, ignorance of ourselves, ignorance of our ability”—Hussein does not despair altogether. Rather he finds hope for his country in the martial spirit of his

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

Scout troop. Having completed a tour of the sites around Aswan, he and his companions organize themselves in lines and march through the gates of the city:

According to this magnificent image we entered Aswan seven years ago, and we cut across its main street, and the people stood on the sides of the street and applauded. . . . We imagined that we were returning from war as victorious conquerors. Oh for my memory. Oh for its majesty. What is more wonderful and greater in its influence on my soul! For these were the feelings from which I founded Misr al-Fatah in what followed.⁶

Clearly, Hussein's is not a typical memoir. His recollections conform to the greater design of an effort to popularize his new movement. Despite its stylized composition and its propagandistic tone, however, this opening chapter proves remarkable both as an artifact of Scouting experience and as a key to understanding the development of Hussein's own youth organization. To begin, Hussein did not belong to just any Scout troop. In 1928, the Khedival Secondary School could boast the second-oldest Scouting program in Cairo, and 'Abdallah Salama Effendi was widely considered the best-trained Scoutmaster in Egypt. He had traveled with the first delegation of Egyptian Scoutmasters to Gilwell Park in 1920, and from that time onward, he became the most trusted Egyptian in the eyes of the British Scouting Association.⁷

Given the pedigree of both the troop and its leader, several aspects of Hussein's account might seem surprising. When British Scouting officials had decided to redirect the Egyptian movement "along proper lines" in 1920, the eradication of rampant militarism had ranked at the top of their agenda. Nevertheless, Hussein's description of his model troop's activities suggests that little had changed in the intervening years. Even beyond the military discipline with which the troop assembles at attention and the

⁶ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁷ For precise details on the histories of individual Scout troops in Cairo, see Khashba, pp. 115-7. The Scouting Association's Archives include minutes of several meetings between 'Abdallah Salama and Baden-Powell himself.

occasion of their victorious parade through the streets of Aswan, Hussein includes the lyrics of several songs the troop would sing as they marched. These words hardly speak for the pacifist internationalism that the BSA was attempting to promote:

Masters in all ages, oh Egypt, oh what a wonderful fatherland.

Trample the enemy on the day of battle. Obey the call. Make the sacrifice.⁸

Taken on its own, the militarist hue of Hussein's recollections might seem more a reflection of his own later tendencies than an accurate representation of official Scouting practice. Such attraction to the militaristic components of the Scouting cannon, however, appears as a common theme in writings both by and about the Egyptian Scouts throughout the decades after 1920. Admittedly, the official literature of the JKM remains consistent in its disavowal of any connection between Scouting and military practice. In Kassab's play, only the bumbling sheikh is foolish enough to ask, "So these Scouts troop by troop and battalion by battalion are like an army?"⁹ Likewise, in one of a series of articles written on behalf of the JKM for the magazine *al-Fajr* in 1934, Hasan Muhammad Jawhir describes the error of those who "are under the delusion that [the Scouts] are a little army. They appoint themselves its officers, and they force those young lads who fall into their talons to carry wooden rifles, and they march with them through the streets beating drums and blowing bugles."¹⁰

The very need to draw an explicit distinction year after year between Scouting and such illicit militaristic behavior suggests that in the eyes of the Egyptian public, such differences were rather difficult to perceive. Moreover, the tendency of even officially-sanctioned troops to blur the lines between Scouting and early military training seems to

⁸ Hussein, *Imani*, 25.

⁹ Kassab, 55.

¹⁰ Hasan Muhammad Jawhir, "Harakat al-Kashshafa fi Misr," *al-Fajr* no. 5 (1 October 1934), 70.

have extended well beyond Hussein's personal experience. In August 1933, the British Foreign Office received an alarming report regarding a tour to Palestine, organized by the YMMA for a delegation of Scouts from its own troops. The YMMA's Scouts were at that time recognized as full members of the JKM, and before departing on their journey, they had filed all the appropriate forms to represent the Egyptian Boy Scouts abroad. Despite this official sanction, the YMMA group nevertheless attended a series of lectures at which both Egyptian and Palestinian speakers "welcomed the boy scouts and wished them to become a strong military organization—not boys like those of Baden-Powell, but young men who would save the country and enjoy the confidence of the people. They were under the rule of tyrants and every day witnessed a new form of persecution. If they united and became powerful they could oppose their oppressors."¹¹

The Young Egypt Society

In fact, by the autumn of 1933, the development of at least one such "military organization" was well under way. According to James Jankowski's study *Egypt's Young Rebels*, Ahmad Hussein called the first meeting of *jam'iyat misr al-fatah* (the Young Egypt Society) on October 12, 1933.¹² The founding members there defined a set of broad objectives for the reform of Egyptian politics and society, and they also established an organizational structure in keeping with "'the martial spirit' which [the society's] program had emphasized as necessary for Egyptian youth." The Society would comprise two types of participants: regular, dues-paying members and more activist "fighters" (*mujahidun*). The latter "was to be an 'active participant' in the paramilitary formations

¹¹ R. M. Graves (Egyptian Ministry of the Interior, European Department) to W. A. Smart 15 September 1933, FO 141/705/13.

¹² Jankowski, *Rebels*, 12.

of the society, was to give ‘complete obedience to the leaders’ of his formation, and was to carry out whatever orders were given to him ‘without debate or delay.’”¹³

Jankowski’s approach to Young Egypt emphasizes aspects of novelty and discontinuity. His early descriptions of the movement explain that it was the first youth organization “actually headed by young men,” the “first paramilitary organization organized for younger Egyptians,” and the first of the newer youth groups that devoted “relatively greater attention to politics.”¹⁴ He goes on to assert that the basic impulse behind this radical new movement arose from “disillusionment among educated Egyptian youth not only with the government but also with the established political parties which were failing either to create effective representative institutions or to terminate the continuing British presence in Egypt.”¹⁵ Such frustrations were only augmented by the exigencies of a global economic depression that had left many Egyptian students with dismal prospects for employment upon their graduation.

Jankowski is not wrong when he writes that Young Egypt was young, militaristic, and political. Nor is he incorrect in his assessment of the critical attitudes that the *shabab* of the 1930s took towards the condition of their country. He simply falls short of explaining why a growing number of Egyptian youth in the 1930s chose to express their various frustrations specifically through membership in uniformed, paramilitary organizations. His work furthermore overlooks the profound influence that the Scouting movement, as an emblem of broader trends in interwar youth culture, exerted both upon Ahmad Hussein’s founding vision for Young Egypt and upon the decisions of other Egyptians to join his movement. Though Jankowski does mention the opening chapter of *Imani* at several points, he describes Hussein’s revelatory journey simply as a

¹³ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

“secondary-school trip” and makes no reference to the author’s hyperbolic glorification of Scouting.¹⁶

In fact, Hussein’s treatment of Scouting in *Imani* is crucial to any nuanced understanding of Young Egypt in its broader context. The opening chapter becomes particularly noteworthy when we recall that the book was written both as a political autobiography and as a recruitment tract for Young Egypt in its year of greatest activity. In any form, Hussein’s account of his Scouting past would be significant, because it establishes in the founder’s own words that “Misr al-Fatah in its totality is indebted to this trip which I took in the year 1928.”¹⁷ At the same time, Hussein’s authorial decision to begin a propagandistic text for Young Egypt by discussing the merits of Scouting is equally notable. In his own language, Hussein presents his movement not as a radical innovation but as a subtle and natural adaptation of existing practices. He observes that Scouting “taught me the influence of anthems and life in the troop and order on the souls of the youth. And that is altogether the weapon that I used in what followed in order to undertake this work the realization of which I took upon myself.”¹⁸ At once, Hussein claims a degree of originality and acknowledges a substantial debt to the formative experiences of his youth. In so doing, he allows his readers to understand Young Egypt as a logical advancement of widely accepted ideas about the role of the *shabab*.

As it turns out, the connection between Young Egypt and other earlier youth organizations was not merely conceptual. In one of the earliest British reports on the activities of movement, the new High Commissioner Miles Lampson writes of Young Egypt:

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁷ Hussein, *Imani*, 29.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

It attempts to awaken in its members admiration of the military spirit and of physical fitness, and in Cairo it sometimes affects a Green Shirt. On one recent occasion a party of young men from the society arranged to spend a night in the desert under the direction of a boy scout leader of the Young Men's Moslem Association 'in order to accustom themselves to hardship so as to be fit in time of war.' . . .

It is not inconceivable that the ardent young patriot might find the ill-led Wafd no longer as emotionally satisfying as in Zaghlul's days. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that, unless something more satisfactory can be provided than the present political provender supplied them by the Wafdist, Liberal and Palace parties, young Egyptians, who have not themselves experienced the patriotic exaltation of 1919, nor been attached thereby to the leaders of that movement, may turn to new ideas, or new forms of old ideas. They may conceivably find in the Young Egypt Society political self-expression more satisfying to the realist, semi-Fascist mentality of the type of younger Nationalist devotee.¹⁹

In a few short paragraphs, Lampson provides an incisive and remarkably prescient analysis of Egypt's evolving youth movements. Taken together, the two excerpts quoted above establish an invaluable framework for understanding the explosive developments of the mid-1930s. The first passage suggests at least two substantive revisions to Jankowski's work on Young Egypt. First, Lampson's report confirms that the paramilitary practices of Young Egypt took shape as an organic outgrowth of Scouting and that the Society's uniformed *mujahidun* gladly acknowledged their debt to *al-kashshafa*. Second, the fact of such open cooperation between Misr al-Fatah and the YMMA implies that despite its youthful leadership, Young Egypt was neither as innovative nor as autonomous as Jankowski's analysis would propose. Rather, Lampson's account begins to describe a kind of institutional fluidity whereby a growing number of Egypt's youth-oriented organizations assembled into loose networks of mutual-support for the achievement of certain common goals.

In the latter segment of his report, the High Commissioner reinforces his characterization of Young Egypt by relating the movement to larger trends in the

¹⁹ Miles Lampson to John Simon 7 May 1934, FO 371/17977.

evolution of Egyptian youth culture. Arguably, Lampson's decision to lump together the "political provender supplied them by the Wafdist, Liberal, and Palace parties" might smack of British condescension and an inclination to elide the ideological and political differences between Egypt's competing parties. Whatever its tone, however, his assessment proves keenly perceptive and offers a concise recapitulation of the process I have termed "inclusive cultural brinksmanship." The "patriotic exaltation of 1919" defined a model of youthful activism so powerful that it determined certain common constraints on interactions between the *shabab* and political elites of all parties. For the Wafd, the memory of 1919 furnished political capital of considerable but nonetheless limited duration. To retain the loyalties of an ever-changing cohort of *shabab*, the party was forced to continue and augment its demands for *istiqlal tamm*. And for other parties, any efforts to attract vital young supporters depended on their success in channeling the same "patriotic exaltation." Over time, as Lampson correctly observes, this process of competition over "the younger Nationalist devotee" lent an increasingly radical and militaristic quality to the youth activities of all rival contenders.

Militarism in Context

By noting a rising militarism across the spectrum of Egyptian youth culture, I do not wish to imply that this quality was equally common to all groups or wholly appealing to all Egyptians. In the previous chapter, I attempted to demonstrate that Egyptians of different stripes found a wide range of attractions in Scouting that had little or nothing to do with a desire to see the *shabab* marching in uniforms. At the same time, the methods and rhetoric used to popularize activities like Scouting, when coupled with the specific circumstances of the early 1930s, helped to unleash a latent potential for such extreme interpretations.

Among the factors that contributed to the evolution of paramilitary movements like Young Egypt's Green Shirts was the condition of Egypt's official national military. Stated simply, it barely existed. In the eyes of British officials, the 'Urabi revolt had augured the political liability of a strong Egyptian army. When Britain moved to quash the uprising and assumed control of Egypt in 1882, Cromer therefore took steps to diminish the size and capabilities of the country's own forces and thereafter relied on British troops for Egypt's strategic defense.²⁰ After forty years of enforced military weakness, many Egyptians hoped that the nation's qualified independence would entail a process of gradual rearmament and military modernization. Such hopes were dashed in 1927, however, when the High Commission decisively exercised its powers under the reserved points to veto a parliamentary motion for military expansion. British authorities remained frank in their determination "in short to keep it powerless unless and until we can insure that it can be depended on in an emergency to fight with us, and not against us."²¹

Whatever its justifications, this uncompromising position on the military won the issue a place of rank among Egypt's lasting grievances against the British. The absence of a real military also helped to ensure that popular desires for an emblem of national strength would find a surrogate in the *shabab*. Again, this tendency to see the nation's young as a kind of substitute for a real army was far from universal. Yet, it helps to explain the persistent appearance of military language and military analogies in writings

²⁰ For more details on Egypt's military development under British control, see Laily Morsy, "The Military Clauses of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, 1936," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Mar., 1984), 67-97 and Raymond Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution under Nasser and Sadat*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), 19.

²¹ Frank Patrick, "Minutes on the Army Crisis" 18 June 1927, FO 371/12357.

for or about youth from the early 1920s onward. It moreover renders the particular appeal of Scouting that much less surprising.

Throughout the preceding chapters, I have argued that the interactions of Egypt's political elites with the nation's young entailed a dynamic tension between a glorification of strength and a simultaneous bid for loyalty. Miles Lampson's report from the spring of 1934 describes the moment when the older generation began to lose control of that critical balance. For over a decade, the Wafd and its rivals had flattered the *shabab* with adulation for their energy, their ingenuity, and their devotion to Egypt's future. They had moreover laid claim to the obedience of this generation they so praised by promising leadership and commitment to Egypt's advancement in the hierarchy of nations. By the early 1930s, those promises had begun to ring hollow. Fully convinced of their own strength, the *shabab* became less confident in the traditional objects of their loyalty. Some decided to attempt for themselves what the older generation had failed to accomplish.

The Riots of November 1935

The rancor of these new youth organizations, exemplified by Young Egypt, focused on the persistence of British influence in all its many forms. A typical article from Ahmad Hussein's journal *al-Sarkha* rails that the British "have delayed the solution of the Egyptian question, . . . but the new generation understood all this. They knew the secret with which the English play with Egypt. The young generation were now uniting and gathering ranks to demolish this secret. This division in the ranks of Egyptians would soon disappear. Egyptians would unite as they did in 1919."²² The full force of

²² British translation of "Greeting to Miles Lampson" from *al-Sarkha* 19 January 1934, FO 141/498/6.

this youthful frustration exploded onto the streets of Cairo in November 1935. Haggai Erlich describes these student demonstrations of the mid-decade as follows:

What started the morning after the Wafd Day were the most violent riots in the inter-war history of Egyptian nationalist struggle. It was an exclusively student movement whose energy, erupting suddenly, turned immediately and temporarily into a most effective political factor. Its ensuing short history was divided into two stages. The first stage, which lasted to early January 1936, was characterized by spontaneous student action which took the shape of a nationalist storm of protest, encouraged yet uncontrolled by the established politicians. The second stage was initially marked by the political parties striving to control and exploit that energy by dressing the students in different uniforms.²³

In his account of the riots, Erlich offers a number of critical insights. First, he insists that the demonstrations began at the impetus of the *shabab* themselves and thus constituted a momentary climax in the disillusionment against which Lampson had warned almost two years earlier. Second, he argues that in their spontaneity and their sheer magnitude, the November riots could not be attributed to the organizing efforts of any one group. Indeed, Jankowski admits that “Young Egypt appears to have been only marginally involved in the demonstrations of late 1935 – early 1936.”²⁴ Individual members of the Society definitely took part in the protests, and Nur al-Din Tarraf, one of the leading members of Young Egypt, also sat on the “Executive Committee of Students” which played a role in organizing the demonstrations. For a brief moment, though, this explosion of youthful outrage against the manifold irritations of British interference transcended allegiances to any one group.

If Young Egypt could not claim responsibility for the events of that tumultuous winter, however, the militant Society nevertheless reaped benefits in the form of new support and legitimacy. The protest of 1936 added tremendous force to Egypt’s interwar cult of youth. By all accounts, the student demonstrations, among other factors, helped to

²³ Erlich, 115.

²⁴ Jankowski, *Rebels*, 22.

pressure Great Britain into negotiations for a new “Treaty of Friendship and Alliance” with Egypt. Moreover, the death of King Fu’ad and the accession to the throne of the young King Faruq served to convince the Egyptian public that 1936 was *sannat al-shabab*, “the year of the youth.” Such dramatic confirmations of the rising generation’s power, however, did not induce a calculated shift in the efforts of rival political elites to court the *shabab*. Rather, the old guard responded to evidence of their waning control by resorting to old methods with renewed vigor. One consequence of this increasingly desperate gambit to regain the loyalties of the young was the creation of several new uniformed paramilitary organizations that took the Green Shirts of Young Egypt as their model.

The rapid emergence of these “shirts” in the first half of 1936 conformed to long-standing patterns. In the face of rising anxieties about the intransigence of the *shabab*, Egypt’s political elites endeavored to secure loyal supporters by once again attempting to outdo each other in their claims to patriotic enthusiasm and their patronage of youth organizations. Jankowski explains that the royalist prime minister ‘Ali Mahir “realized the political potential to be had from building a pro-Palace alliance based on the non-Wafdist and primarily youth-oriented associations which had emerged in Egypt in the late 1920s and early 1930s.”²⁵ Foreign Office records confirm that Mahir met regularly with Ahmad Hussein in the early months of 1936 to express his support for Young Egypt, and though he could never produce conclusive evidence, Lampson’s communications with London express a strong suspicion that “Ahmed Hussein is being subsidized either by the Palace or the Prime Minister or perhaps both.”²⁶ Whatever the case, Mahir’s effort to

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Lampson to FO 2 March 1936, FO 371/20099.

control organizations like Young Egypt by encouraging them added considerable prestige to Hussein's radical brand of nationalist politics.

The Wafd quickly followed suit. By late January of 1936 the party had organized its own paramilitary corps, the Blue Shirts, as a political counterweight to Young Egypt's uniformed young men. Though ostensibly a maneuver to enforce order among its younger supporters, the British High Commissioner may have been closer to the truth when he wrote that "although the Wafd claim to represent the mass of the people they are in reality afraid and constantly make concessions to turbulent minorities such as the students."²⁷ After seventeen years without *istiqlal tamm*, Wafdist leaders could no longer rely on the memories of 1919 to rouse the enthusiasm of the young. To regain its cachet as the vanguard of the nation, the Wafd chose to imitate the methods of Young Egypt and assumed a more militarist tone.

See <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~Emetheses/JakesMasterECN.htm#Fig7>

Figure 7: Photo spread of "Youth Movements in Egypt and Abroad" from a special "Youth Issue" of *al-Hilal* (April 1936). From bottom left: Fascist Youth in France, Palestinian Rovers, and Wafdist Blue Shirts.²⁸

Questioning the Influence of Fascism

In his own assessment of the shirt movements, Haggai Erlich suggests that "the existence of these fascist-modeled organizations did not signify the regime's control of the educated youth. On the contrary, the new phenomenon was rather reflective of the growing challenge of violence."²⁹ Erlich's study provides a concise account of the frenzied escalation that led rival parties to gravitate towards the same "new phenomenon." The language he uses to describe these "fascist-modeled organizations,"

²⁷ D. V. Kelly (Acting High Commissioner) to FO 16 September, 1936, FO 371/20119.

²⁸ *Al-Hilal* 44, no. 6 (1 April 1936), 208.

²⁹ Erlich, 123-4.

however, represents a common scholarly mischaracterization that I would like to address before bringing this chapter to a close.

At intervals throughout his discussion, Erlich suggests that Young Egypt's Green Shirts and the Wafdist Blue Shirts both took their cues from the fascist youth groups that had appeared across Europe in the same period.³⁰ He furthermore asserts that "Young Egypt . . . started as a student movement and later acquired the organized Shirts dimension due to their 1935-6 riots." Closer attention to the early history of Young Egypt, however, suggests a slight but important revision of Erlich's account. Foreign Office records and Ahmed Hussein's own writings confirm that the uniformed paramilitary wing of Young Egypt existed from the movement's earliest moments and drew its primary influences from existing organizations within Egypt. Moreover, though he wrote his own work without the benefit of British sources, Jankowski correctly observes that in 1934, Young Egypt waged a vigorous "anti-Italian campaign."³¹ In fact, throughout 1935, Hussein campaigned vigorously for Egyptians to "take up arms and fight with the Abyssinian Army against the Italians."³² In these formative years of the movement, the leaders of Young Egypt characterized Italian fascism as a newer manifestation of the very European imperialism they had vowed to combat.

Over time, this critical stance gave way to a cautious affinity. By 1936, growing numbers of Egyptians had begun to respect the rising fascist powers of Europe for their viable challenge to British hegemony. And in the wake of the student riots, public admiration for the achievements of the *shabab* found echoes in the youth organizations then appearing throughout Europe. Erlich is therefore correct when he discovers an

³⁰ For a perspective on Italian youth movements, see Tracy Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight: Political Socialization of Youth in Fascist Italy, 1922-1943*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

³¹ Jankowski, *Rebels*, 20.

³² "Report on Young Egypt" 23 July 1935, FO 141/618/6.

Egyptian tendency to compare the various shirt organizations to fascist youth groups in Italy, France, and Germany. Nevertheless, the record of Young Egypt's evolution suggests that the existence of such similarities did not constitute a simple act of imitation. Rather the rise of fascism helped to reinforce existing trends that had their own origins within Egypt.

If Erlich thus misjudges the primary inspiration behind the shirt movements, he offers more useful insight on their greater import. Most critically, he notes that the anxious competition over Egypt's youth ultimately led the country's rival parties to adopt nearly identical modes of rhetoric and methods of organization. As the supporters of the Wafd and the Palace-aligned Young Egypt Society came to look more and more alike, Egyptian politics devolved into an accelerating cycle of rallies and demonstrations. In July 1936, Lampson informed London with horror "that both the Green Shirts and the Blue Shirts have lately been parading themselves freely in public, carrying truncheons and, in some case, knives and daggers."³³ For the better part of the next two years, uniformed brigades of young men regularly clashed in the streets of Egypt's major cities.

Ultimately, such frenzied manifestations of political muscle proved untenable. In March of 1938, the young King Faruq issued a royal decree outlawing all paramilitary organizations.³⁴ Though the decree originated as an attempt to forestall Wafdist reprisals for the dissolution of yet another Wafdist Parliament, all parties had come to recognize that the youthful shirts had outlived their utility. From that point onward, Egypt's young would have to seek new outlets for their ideas and their energies.

³³ Lampson to FO 20 July 1936, FO 371/20114.

³⁴ Jankowski, *Rebels*, 26.

Conclusion

Just a month after he issued his royal decree banning the shirt organizations, the young King Faruq I delivered a “Speech from the Throne” in which he expressed his hopes and aspirations for his beloved Egypt. “The first of those aims,” he explained to his subjects, “is a large and well equipped army which, far from being a matter of window-dressing, is an inevitable and imperative necessity. For wherever we may look we see continuous and progressive rearmament of land, sea, and air forces. The necessity of a strong army is all the greater when we consider the atmosphere of uncertainty which weighs upon a world so full of surprises.”¹

Though the 1936 “Treaty of Friendship and Alliance” failed to bring about the total independence for which Egypt’s students had demonstrated in November of 1935, the new agreement had included several critical readjustments to the Anglo-Egyptian relationship. Foremost among these was a grudging British assent to allow for the gradual expansion and rearmament of Egypt’s military. As part of that process, Egypt was permitted to open a new military academy to train the officers of a new modern army. And to attract its first classes of recruits, the new institution relied on familiar methods. A statement offered by the inspector general of the Egyptian Army in the *Journal of the Egyptian University* explains to the student body:

The educated Egyptian youth, and especially the university students for the most part, have offered a sacrifice for the benefit of the nation in recent years, since the period of the national renaissance until today, which no other stratum has provided, and why is that except because of their latent power which no others have . . . for they bring together a blazing youth and a bursting culture. And were that power guided with direction that might help to fan and cultivate its blaze, then it might bring about the greatest result. And the military is the way that will lead the youth to the perfection of their powers and prepare them in a

¹ King Faruq I, “Speech from the Throne” 12 April 1938, FO 371/21946.

manner that will arm them to be a suit of armor protecting Egypt in a time of adversity.²

The royal decree in 1938 may have brought the period of colorful demonstrations to a close, but the young wearers of those blue and green shirts remained. In 1933, when Ahmad Hussein had called on his followers to don their uniforms, many had hastened to do so as an expression of outrage at Egypt's enforced military weakness. With the signing of the Treaty and the subsequent abolition of the shirts, a new opportunity to advance the cause of Egypt's strength had arrived. And so those very same young men now flocked to enroll in the new academy.

These first classes of young recruits were, in the truest sense, the children of the 1919 Revolution. Born at the moment when the *shabab* first exploded into the nation's consciousness, they became the target audience for the ideas and practices that evolved out of Mahfouz's "enormous parade." To use Miles Lampson's language, these were the "young Egyptians who have not themselves experienced the patriotic exaltation of 1919, nor been attached thereby to the leaders of that movement."³ Rather, the "new ideas or new forms of old ideas" to which these cadets adhered took shape entirely within the context of the interwar experience. In this respect, their lives may provide the purest representation of Egypt's evolving youth culture as it was actually consumed. P. J. Vatikiotis observes,

These officers constituted an 'historical generation.' Although they did not subscribe to a common ideology, the affinity between them derived from a uniform educational preparation, as well as social and economic background—the lower urban and rural classes. They also harboured similar aspirations, suffered common frustrations, and shared vague plans for the overthrow of the existing order. They were anxious for a break, a radical departure from the *status quo*, which was dominated by the generation of political leaders who had

² Ahmad Abu Zir, "*al-Shabab wa-al-Jundiyya*," *Sahifat al-Jami'a al-Misriyya* 1 (1938), 17.

³ See Chapter 7, Note 19.

emerged under the protection of Britain in the years from 1907 to 1919 to become the rulers of Egypt in 1923.⁴

In his descriptions of Nasser and his cohort, Vatikiotis returns again and again to the idea that “the Free Officers, especially Nasser himself, had no common ideology (‘philosophy’), or political belief (‘aqida). Rather their political ideas were blurred by religious faith and the consumed admixture of Islamic-Fascist notions of the pamphlets of the 1930s.”⁵ To suggest that the cadets of the late-1930s lacked a uniform ideology either individually or as a group is not to claim that they were in any way dispassionate or apolitical. Instead, the value of Vatikiotis’s analysis rests in his assertion that for this particular “historical generation” the specific details of Egypt’s competing interwar ideologies may have become secondary to the manner in which they were expressed.

In the famous speeches of his later political career, Gamal ‘Abd al-Nasser would often point with pride to the scar where a bullet had grazed his forehead during the riots of November 1935. All existing biographies acknowledge that the young Nasser came of age as a political actor in the demonstrations of the mid-1930s. Few agree, however, about which of Egypt’s rival parties won his allegiance. Joachim Joesten suggests that “Nasser and his friends seem to have been organized by the Wafd.”⁶ Yet Vatikiotis writes with equal confidence that the young revolutionary was a member of “the radical Young Egypt Society, which also expanded his national consciousness as an Egyptian.”⁷ In all likelihood, both scholars may be correct. Nasser may well have marched at different times both with the Wafd and with Young Egypt. And certainly, his classmates at the academy included young men who had worn shirts of different colors in the demonstrations of 1936.

⁴ P. J. Vatikiotis, *Nasser and His Generation*. (London: Croon Helm, 1978), 49-50.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁶ Joachim Joesten, *Nasser: The Rise to Power*. (London: Odhams Press, 1960), 62.

⁷ Vatikiotis, *Nasser*, 58.

In the preceding chapters, I have attempted to chart a process of evolution whereby different groups espousing different ideologies adopted increasingly similar methods for attracting and mobilizing the young men of Nasser's generation. My goal in exploring this practical homogenization that culminated in the appearance of the "shirts" is not to dismiss the intellectual diversity of the interwar years as unimportant. Rather, I suggest simply that the ideas most influential for many young men of Nasser's generation were those shared by all the various groups competing for their loyalty. And what emerged from the "consumed admixture" of discordant ideologies was a common denominator of notions about the capabilities and responsibilities of the *shabab*.

By relating the lives of the young Free Officers to the broader trends I have described, I do not wish to imply that all young Egyptians experienced their youth in the same way. Plenty of students refrained from involvement in all of the activities I have explored; plenty who enjoyed their time as athletes and Scouts found little appeal in the demonstrations of the mid-1930s; and plenty who marched in uniforms of green and blue set their shirts aside for other pursuits after 1938. Yet the very ability to make those choices implied a profound change in the contours of Egyptian society. If nothing else, the efforts of so many groups to influence the hearts and minds of young Egyptians reinforced a distinctly modern boundary between youth and adulthood. Embedded in that newly-defined category of youth was the equally novel and controversial suggestion that positive change would come from the labors of the *shabab*. And among those young Egyptians who realized its most radical implications, this new idea of youth would help to provide the critical spark for the explosion of revolution.

Bibliography

Unpublished Archival Sources

Great Britain, British Scout Association Archives, Gilwell Park, Chingford.

Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Kew, London, Series

FO 141—Embassy and Consular Archives, Egypt, Correspondence

FO 371—General Correspondence, Political

FO 395—General Correspondence, News

FO 407—Confidential Print, Egypt and the Sudan

WO 32—War Office: Registered Files (General Series).

Arabic Language Periodicals

Al-Hilal

Al-Ithnein

Majallat al-Fajr

Majallat al-Kashshafa

Majallat al-Shubban al-Muslimin

Sahifat al-Jami'a al-Misriyya

Sahifat Madrasat Damanhur al-Thanawiyya

Samir al-Tilmidh

French Language Periodicals

Al-Ahram Hebdo

Published Sources in Arabic

Hussein, Ahmad. *Imani*. Cairo: *Dar al-Shuruq*, 1981.

Jam'iyat al-Kashshafa al-Misriyya. *Kitab al-Fityan al-Kashshafa al-Misriyya*, 2nd Printing. Cairo: *Dar al-Ma'arif*, 1925.

Kassab, Hamza. *Al-'Umda wa-al-Kashshafa fi Mu'askar al-Ahram*. Cairo: *Hussein Hasanein*, 1924

Khashba, Jamal. *Harakat al-Kashshafa fi 78 'Am*. Cairo: *al-Fajala*, 1992.

Published Sources in English

- Abdalla, Ahmed. *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt : 1923- 1973*. London: Al Saqi, 1985.
- Abdel-Malek, Anouar. *Egypt: Military Society; the Army Regime, the Left, and Social Change under Nasser*. [1st American ed.] New York: Random House, 1968.
- Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. [Rev. and extended ed.] London; New York: Verso, 1991.
- Baden-Powell of Gilwell, Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell. *Scouting for Boys : A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Baker, Raymond William. *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution under Nasser and Sadat*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1978.
- Berque, Jacques. *Egypt: Imperialism & Revolution*. New York,: Praeger, 1972.
- Cleveland, William L. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1994.
- Cochran, Judith. *Education in Egypt*. London ; Dover, N.H: Croom Helm, 1986.
- Cole, Juan Ricardo. *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East : Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt's °Urabi Movement*. Princeton Studies on the near East. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Cromer, Evelyn Baring. *Modern Egypt*. 2 vols. London: Macmillan, 1908.
- Deeb, Marius. *Party Politics in Egypt : The Wafd & Its Rivals, 1919-1939*. London: Ithaca Press for the Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford, 1979.
- Erlich, Hagai. *Students and University in 20th Century Egyptian Politics*. London: Cass, 1989.
- Gaddis, John Lewis. *The Landscape of History : How Historians Map the Past*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Gershoni, I., and James P. Jankowski. *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs : The Search for Egyptian Nationhood, 1900-1930*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- . *Redefining the Egyptian Nation, 1930-1945*. Cambridge Middle East Studies ; 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Gibb, H. A. R. *Whither Islam? : A Survey of Modern Movements in the Moslem World*. London: V. Gollancz, 1932.
- Heyworth-Dunne, J. *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*. London: Luzac and Co., 1939.

- . *Religious and Political Trends in Modern Egypt*. Washington, 1950.
- Hobsbawm, E. J., and T. O. Ranger. *The Invention of Tradition, Past and Present Publications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Hourani, Albert Habib. *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Jankowski, James P. *Egypt's Young Rebels : "Young Egypt," 1933-1952*. Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1975.
- Jeal, Tim. *Baden-Powell*. London: Pimlico, 1991.
- Khoury, Philip S. *Syria and the French Mandate : The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920-1945*. Princeton Studies on the near East. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Koon, Tracy H. *Believe, Obey, Fight : Political Socialization of Youth in Fascist Italy, 1922-1943*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.
- Lewis, Bernard. *The Shaping of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Macleod, David I. *Building Character in the American Boy : The Boy Scouts, Ymca, and Their Forerunners, 1870-1920*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983.
- Mahfouz, Naguib. *Palace Walk*. 1st Anchor bks. ed. New York: Anchor Books/Doubleday, 1991.
- Mechling, Jay. *On My Honor : Boy Scouts and the Making of American Youth*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Messick, Brinkley Morris. *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society*. Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies, 16. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Mitchell, Richard P. *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*. Middle Eastern Monographs, 9. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Mitchell, Timothy. *Colonising Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Morsy, Laily. "The Military Clauses of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, 1936," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Vol. 16, No. 1 (Mar., 1984), 67-97.
- Parsons, Timothy. *Race, Resistance, and the Boy Scout Movement in British Colonial Africa*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2004.
- Radwan, Abu al-Futouh Ahmad. *Old and New Forces in Egyptian Education; Proposals for the Reconstruction of the Program of Egyptian Education in the Light of Recent Cultural Trends*. New York,: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951.

- Reid, Donald M. *Cairo University and the Making of Modern Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Riess, Steven A. *City Games : The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports, Sport and Society*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.
- Rosenthal, Michael. *The Character Factory : Baden-Powell and the Origins of the Boy Scout Movement*. London: Collins, 1986.
- Safran, Nadav. *Egypt in Search of Political Community : An Analysis of the Intellectual and Political Evolution of Egypt, 1804-1952*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961.
- School Life in Egypt* (Photo Album). Cairo: 1928.
- Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *Islam in Modern History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- Springhall, John. *Youth, Empire, and Society : British Youth Movements, 1883-1940*. London: Croom Helm, 1977.
- Starrett, Gregory. *Putting Islam to Work : Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Terry, Janice J. *The Wafd, 1919-1952 : Cornerstone of Egyptian Political Power*. 1st ed. London: Third World Centre for Research and Pub., 1982.
- Vatikiotis, P. J. *The Egyptian Army in Politics; Pattern for New Nations?* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961.
- . *Nasser and His Generation*. London: C. Helm, 1978.
- . *The History of Modern Egypt : From Muhammad Ali to Mubarak*. 4th ed. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991.
- Warburg, Gabriel. *Egypt and the Sudan : Studies in History and Politics*. London: Frank Cass, 1985.
- Williamson, Bill. *Education and Social Change in Egypt and Turkey : A Study in Historical Sociology*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987.