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**The Social Life and Constructions in Cairo**  
**From 1879 To 1917**

A Thesis to obtain the Master Degree

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### List of Abbreviations

- 'Aḥmad 'oraby, 'oraby = moẓakerat 'oraby, alğoz'a al'awal, ɗar alhlal .
- 'Aḥmad 'oraby, kašf alstar = 'Aḥmad 'oraby, kašf alstar 'an al'asrar, alğoz'a al'awal, matb'et mšr.
- 'Abdelraḥman alrafe'y, 'aḥmad 'oraby = 'Abdelraḥman alrafe'y, alẓa'yem 'aḥmad 'oraby, ɗar alhlal, alqahra, 1952.
- 'Abdelraḥman alrafe'y, alṭawra al'orabyya = 'Abdelraḥman alrafe'y, alṭawra al'orabyya wa al'eḥtlal al'enğlyzy, ɗar alm'aref, 1983.
- 'Abdelraḥman alrafe'y, mošṭafa kamel = 'Abdelraḥman alrafe'y, mošṭafa kamel ba'eṭ alḥaraka alwṭnyya, maktabt alnahḍa almsryya, alqahra, 1950.
- 'Abdelraḥman ẓaky, alqahra = 'Abdelraḥman ẓaky, alqahra, ɗar almostqbal, 1943.
- 'Abdelraḥman ẓaky, mawso't alqahra = 'Abdelraḥman ẓaky, mawso't alqahra fy 'alf 'am, maktabt al'anğlo almsryya, 1969.
- 'Abbas alṭrabyly, 'aḥya' alqahra = 'Abbas alṭrabyly, 'aḥya' alqahra almḥrosa, alhay'a almasryya al'amma llktab, 2003.
- 'Abbas alṭrabyly, šware' = 'Abbas alṭrabyly, šware' lha taryḥ, alɗar almsryya allobnanyya, 1997.
- 'Arafa 'abdo 'aly, ẓman alqahra = 'Arafa 'abdo 'aly, rḥla fy ẓman alqahra, maktabt madboly.
- 'Arafa 'abdo 'aly, 'ašr 'esma'yel = 'Arafa 'abdo 'aly, alqahra fy 'ašr 'esma'yel, alɗar almsryya allobnanyya, 1998.
- Laṭyfa moḥamd salem, alqwa al'eğtma'yea = Laṭyfa moḥamd salem, alqwa al'eğtma'yea fy alṭwra al'orabyya, alhay'a almasryya al'amma llktab 1984.
- Laṭyfa moḥamd salem, alḥarb al'alamyya al'ola = Laṭyfa moḥamd salem, mšr fy alḥarb al'alamyya al'ola, alhay'a almasryya al'amma llktab, 1984.

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### **I- Introduction ∴**

This research deals with The Social Life and Constructions in Cairo from 1879 to 1917 which is a very important period in the modern history due to the existence of the British occupation in Egypt which forced its policy in economic , social and conestructive life . Britain occupied Egypt when there was no reliable authority. The Khedive was weak and the parliament was not there.

Britain claimed that it intervened to put an end to anarchy and claimed to reform and enhance conditions of peasants, introduce western civilization and modernize the country. But in fact, Britain came for its own political and military interests. Britain didn't think of annexing Egypt to Great Britain or to put Egypt under its protectorate , for fear of the local and international problems that might arise. However, it worked for becoming the sole power that had practical sovereignty over Egypt.

The British occupation had a direct impact on the economic situation of the country. England had a great interest to the agricultural and irrigation sector, and the interest in the irrigation facilities has increased particularly in this period. The occupation was first focusing on transforming Egypt to a big cotton farm . But not vice versa the industry had no concern of the occupation authorities but the Egyptian industry was facing a great competition of the foreign industries, which was also able to replace the national industries. The commercial activity had a remarkable progress in this period , this was as a result of the stability of security and the improvement and variety of transportation methods

The social life in Egypt was affected by the presence of the British occupation that led to the multinational foreigners spreading out, which also led to classifying the society into many classes. The class of large landowners emerged among these classes, so they were under the care spot of occupation authorities. Also they paid an attention to peasants, because of their desire to keep a kind of social balance among classes.

## ***Introduction & Methodology***

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And they faced the increased growth in the class of cultivators who had the modern concepts that grant the patriotism and the demand for the constitution of new dimensions.

The authorities of the British occupation played a key role in developing , as well as modernizing , to serve their interests and consequently they planned the city and provided it with facilities and services.

During the period of the British occupation, all aspects of thought power and western life completed in all fields of life and that matter, in turn, was reflected on the construction as the western culture was imposed upon the Egyptian society due to the disappearance of the local culture.

Construction extension in Cairo was remarked in that time by its speed and extension into various directions surpassing the previous ones. New residential clusters were formed and provided with houses , social and entertainment services in a way that could create new non-central area to alleviate pressure on the centre of Cairo. Heliopolis and Ma'ady were both built outside the reconstruction block of the Capital , in addition to the neo-built areas during that time such as Zamalek and Garden City.

Egypt opened its wide doors for the European engineers, an affair that continued till the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Those who were exercising control over the markets - whether they were represented as individuals, real estate companies, authorities or agencies - were foreigners. Construction in Cairo expressed all the trends as it included the various styles that were common in Europe, even that building materials were being imported from external countries. Also, the real estate capital was foreign and at the same time the construction companies were foreign ones.



## ***Introduction & Methodology***

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It can be assumed that the period of the British occupation beginning with the ending of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was considered as the continuance of the renaissance of building mobility in Cairo. The effect of importing from the west remained apparent in the process of building, the use of building materials, methods of construction and even the developed ways of implementation.

I depended in making this research on various sources including Documents, Periodicals , Scientific researches , Arabic and Foreign references .

The Documents of the Cabinet such as Nizart Al-Ashghal ,Al-Magalis El-Niabiia and Al-Gama'ia Al-O'momiia as for Periodicals such as AL-Qahera,Al-Barid,Al-Ekhlās and Al-E'mara.

The Arabic references such as the writings of professors Abdel-Rahman Al-Rafe'e, Yonan Labib Rizq, Rao'f Abbas, Ahmed Ahmed El-Hetta, Mohamed Fahmy Lehita, Abdel-Azim Ramadan, Latifa Mohamed Salem, Fathi Mohamed Miselhy, Gamal Hemdan and others, in addition to some foreign references studying the period in hand like the writings of Cromer, John Marlow, Holt, Robert Tignor and others.

### **II-Methodology :**

This research deals with "The Social Life and Constructions in Cairo from 1879 to 1917". I selected that topic definitely because it is engaged in the period of the British occupation and also because Cairo at that time was distinguished by political, economic , social and even constructive characteristics arising from the emerging political events that Cairo witnessed in the period in question.

I adopted in this research *The Descriptive - Analysis* method as I analysed the Political , economic and social life then I described the constructions during this period .

This research is divided into three chapters beginning with an introduction and ending with a conclusion.

**Chapter One** entitled " The Political Development ". I discuss the accession of Khedive Tawfik to the rule of Egypt in 1879, the developments of the Patriotic Movement that led to the Urabi-led revolt and I view the tokens, motives and events of such a revolt and even the factors of its failure. Then I move to the British occupation and its policy, which began in 1882. The British during the reign of Khedive Tawfik and then that of his son, Khedive Abbas Helmy II, worked hard to get established in Egypt so they dominated all the affairs of Egypt and also imposed their policies upon it in all fields. After that, I analyze the most important political parties and their directions, the breakout of the First World War in 1914, the appointment of Prince Hussein Kamel as the Sultan of Egypt and finally the political status of Egypt during the period of the British protectionism.

**Chapter Two** entitled " The Economic and Social Life " is made up of two parts, the first one of which deals with the economic life . In this part, I discuss about the concern about both irrigation and agriculture and the increase in the production of cotton crops by setting up the public projects supporting the sector of agriculture. Then I move to deterioration of industry into full neglect by the British government . consequently , the policy of the occupation decided that Egypt must be an agricultural soil only , and become an exhibit for the British products , that have been given the chance by the simple custom taxes imposed upon them , to sweep the Egyptian markets and flourish through them. After that, I touch on trade that received a good deal of concern adequate to facilitate exporting the raw materials and importing the manufactured goods. Finally, I consider the Egyptian monetary order and also the radical changes in the financial relations between Egypt and Britain.

As for the second part of this chapter, it studies the social life and deals with the changes in the Egyptian population during the period under consideration. Then I talk about the social classes. The Egyptian society, at that time, consisted of several classes including the following:-

- 1- The Senior landlords.
- 2- The Peasants.
- 3- The Cultured.
- 4- The Craftsmen.

5- The Workers.

6- The Foreigners.

After all that, I show the cultural and intellectual life including the education, the woman and even the press.

**Chapter Three** entitled " The Construction ", I mention several points that are :- The importance of Cairo location, the expansion of the old districts divided into several axes which were the east north axis, the west north axis, the western axis and even the southern one. Then, I talk about the construction of new districts such as Heliopolis, Ma'adi and Hada'ek Al-Qubba. After that, I discuss the modernization of the buildings after I pass through the prosperity of construction sector and also the constructive styles that varied during that era; the Classic style, the Gothic style, Renaissance Age style, Baroque style, Rococo style and others. Finally, I go to survey the aspects of construction of Cairo whether buildings, palaces or hotels and even the industrial, military, educational and religious installations and I also mention how the streets were modernized by planning and paving them, building the squares and setting up bridges. Moreover , I tackled the development of transportation means such as railways, tramways, the river transportation, as well as public and private means of transportation.

At the end of this research, there is a conclusion in which I summarize the most important results of such a research.

**General overview of Egypt status in the beginning of Tawfik reign**

Mohamed Tawfik pasha became Khedive on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1879. At that time, Egypt was passing through one of the most critical periods in its national history; people were suffering from injustice and the exorbitant taxes imposed on them during the reign of Ismail. They were also acerbated about the foreign intervention in the Egyptian affairs which appeared in the foundation of the Debt Fund and the Anglo-French Dual Control on the Egyptian funds, in addition to the foreign general penetration in the country. Hence, the Egyptians were looking forward to a new rule that would put an end to injustice and the foreign intervention .

The revolution of thoughts and the longing for freedom and constitutional regimes had already started at the end of Ismail reign and they became immanent in the minds of the cultured in the beginning of Tawfik reign.

At that time, the nation longed for a new regime that would put an end to extravagance and foreign influence. They needed a regime that would consolidate justice and guarantee freedom and respect the constitution.

People hoped that the new Khedive would find a remedy for the financial irregularities resulting from the loans borrowed by Ismail. They also hoped that he would guarantee the constitutional forms that secure freedom. Such expectations were based on the good characteristics of Tawfik which they knew well. He was known as a straight man who had never been an extravagant a tyrant. For such reasons, people of all classes were contented with the new khedive, Tawfik<sup>(1)</sup>.

**European covetousness:**

1. England: The European covetousness especially that of the British, was observing the incidents development so as to satisfy their imperialistic covetous desires in Egypt. Such covetousness was stirred in 1875 when Britain bought the Egyptian shares in the Suez Canal. Such a tragedy was an introduction to the British intervention in Egypt and consequently occupying it.
2. France: France had the same covetousness as that of England and it hoped to have the same influence the British had, if not more.

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<sup>(1)</sup>Abdelrahman alrafe'y, alṭawra al'orabyya wa al'eḥtlal al'englyzy, ḍar alm'aref, 1983.p 31.

3. Turkey: Turkey thought of taking the opportunity to gain the rights and privileges given to Egypt. In addition, most foreign countries and communities, in general, longed for having economical and financial influence in Egypt. <sup>(1)</sup>

**Khedive Tawfik background:**

He is Mohamed Tawfik, the son of Ismail Ibn Ibrahim Ibn Mohamed Ali. He was born on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1852. When he grew up, his father sent him to Al-Manial school where he received his basic education.

Then he was sent to the preparatory school where he learnt science, Arabic, French and English in addition to the Turkish and Persian languages.

In 1893 he married princess "Amina Elhamy"; the daughter of Prince Ibrahim Elhamy who was the son of Prince Abbas HelmyI . He did not like his father, who married several times so he never married again.

In 1874 he had his first child; Prince Abbas Helmy, and in 1876 he had his second son; Prince Mohamed Ali. Then he had his two daughters; Princess Khadiga and Princess Neamat. <sup>(2)</sup>

When he was 19, his father appointed him head of the cabinet council. Then he took over the ministries of the interior and national services. He received some training on the systems of directorates and departments. Then he was appointed prime minister on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1879 after the fall of Nubar pasha government when conflict between Ismail and European countries was excessive.

However, his ministry did not remain in power for long. It was followed by the first cabinet of "Mohamed Sherif pasha" in 1879. This government remained in power until Ismail was deposed.

**The reign of Khedive Tawfik:**

The news spread that Ismail was deposed on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1879 and Tawfik knew he was chosen Khedive on the same day. At that time, Tawfik was 28 years of age according to the Hijra calendar. The crowning ceremony was held at the citadel on that day. It was a special day, indeed.

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<sup>(1)</sup>*Ibid* , p. 31, 32

<sup>(2)</sup>Mohamḍ 'abdefattah 'abo alfaḍl, t'ammolat fy ṭawrat mṣr "alṭawrat al'orabyya", alḡoḏ' alḡams, alhay'a almasryya al'amma llktab, 1999, p 61, 62

Mohamed Tawfik pasha became Khedive in the midst of tough conditions resulting from the mistakes of the previous administration and the problems Egypt faced before he succeeded to the throne.<sup>(1)</sup>

There was nothing special about the past of Tawfik that might have given glimpses about his political orientations. However, people hoped his reign would be better than that of his father. This hope was based on the fact that he witnessed the problems the country suffered from as a result of the extravagance of his father and his indulging in debts. He also witnessed the obligations imposed by Britain and France on his father. Besides, Tawfik was a straight economical person and that made him avoid the mistakes made by his father.

However, it was sorrowful that he had a weak character that lacked courage. This made him fear the European influence. In addition, he believed in autocracy, and as a result, his reign was characterized by problems .

### **Sherif pasha government:**

Mohamed Sherif pasha was the prime minister when Tawfik pasha succeeded to the throne. It was customary that the government resigns when a new ruler succeeded to the throne, and that's what Sherif pasha did.

However, Khedive Tawfik wanted Sherif pasha to remain prime minister and to form a new cabinet. Sherif pasha agreed and formed the cabinet on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1879.

Having Sherif pasha as prime minister was most welcome by the nation as people hoped he could realize what people aspired for. That hope had its reason, as Sherif pasha, during the reign of Ismail, drafted a new constitution and submitted it to the parliament, but the political crisis which ended in deposing Ismail prevented the Khedivial decree from being issued. Yet, there was some sort of disagreement between Tawfik and Sherif concerning constitution. This was because Tawfik didn't tend to the idea of the constitution and preferred autocracy while Sherif was one of the fanatical supporters of constitutional regimes. He is considered the founder of this ruling system in Egypt. Because of this, there was some sort of disagreement between the two men.

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<sup>(1)</sup>Aḥmad 'oraby, mozakerat 'oraby, alḡoz'a al'awal, ḡar alhlal.p, 48 .

Tawfik kept ruling according to the autocracy system for two years, but he was compelled to renounce his ultimate power under the pressure of the army revolution in 1881. For this reason, the khedive didn't tend to keep Sherif pasha as prime minister for long.<sup>(1)</sup>

### **The decree of Aug. 7<sup>th</sup>, 1879 and its restrictions:**

Khedive Tawfik was worried about the delay of the decree of the sultan to recognize him as a khedive. Britain and France had asked for viewing the decree text before it was issued as they wanted to shrink the privileges mentioned in the previous decrees. Of course, they weren't after the interests of Egypt. What they were really after was limiting the influence of Turkey that might contradict with their interests.

Turkey agreed to let the two ambassadors of Britain and France view the decree before it was issued. And after negotiations, the decree was issued on Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>, 1879. The decree was amended so as to shrink the privileges given to Ismail. Such amendments are:<sup>(2)</sup>

1. Concerning the right of Egypt to sign treaties and agreements with foreign countries, the Khedive was obliged to report the texts to the Sublime Porte before issuing them.
2. The number of the army men should not exceed 18000 in the time of peace.
3. The Khedive's right to get loans was limited to the purposes of settling the current financial status under the consent of the creditors.

Both Britain and France accepted such limitations as they didn't contradict with their interests.

### **Sherif cabinet resignation:**

Once Khedive Tawfik felt his position was secure, especially after the Ottoman decree which consolidated his position as khedive on Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>, 1872, he began to break all his promises which had given some hope to the nation. Instead, he was yielded to the demands of European representatives and consuls, especially

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<sup>(1)</sup> 'Abdelrahman alrafe'y, alṭawra al'orabyya , p 37, 38

<sup>(2)</sup> Ibid , p. 38 , 39