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The New Orient Society of America

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CHICAGO
His Majesty, King Fuad I of Egypt

Frontispiece to The Open Court
THE FOUNDER OF MODERN EGYPT

BY HALFORD L. HOSKINS
Tufts College, Massachusetts

MODERN is often a deceptive term. When applied to human institutions, which tend to change slowly, it may be used descriptively to cover a long span of years or even of centuries; when applied to style of dress, it may scarcely embrace a decade. It is, at best, a relative measure. In modern Egypt a very large portion of the population live, labor, and die under circumstances little different from those which have obtained in the Valley of the Nile for many centuries. Yet Egypt may still be spoken of as "modern," though not necessarily in terms of railroads, improved irrigation methods, up-to-date cities, and contacts with the outer world, although these are important and indicative. Rather it is attitudes and points of view which are significantly modern and which deny the suggestion that modernity in Egypt is a superficial veneer which has naturally resulted from tutelage to a European Power. In the growth of national consciousness, the struggle for the expression of the vox populi, in the critical examination of social and religious customs and tenets hoary with age, in the mental stirring of the fellahen themselves, are the evidences of an Egypt which is fast breaking the fetters of an almost changeless past.

Many of the symptoms of Egypt's awakening scarcely antedate the World War. However, even a cursory review of the history of the country discloses the fact that everything which may be called modern in Egypt springs from a series of basic changes conceived and deliberately introduced by one remarkable man about one hundred years ago. His career, which was scarcely less noteworthy than that of his contemporary, Napoleon Bonaparte, likewise was made possible by political upheaval and foreign invasion, events which, because of their far-reaching consequences, may be spoken of briefly.

Down to the close of the eighteenth century Egypt was a country
practically unknown to western Europe. It had been Mohammedan in religion and culture since the Saracenic invasion of the seventh century, Turkish in allegiance since its conquest by the Sultan Selim in 1517. The government of Egypt for nearly three centuries after the latter event was a unique arrangement of checks and balances, in which authority was cleverly divided between a Turkish pasha on the one hand and twenty-four Egyptian Mameluke beys on the other. Such a régime was characterized by unexampled violence, rapine, and fraud, without hope of redress on the part of the victimized population as long as the Ottoman government was believed to possess the power of enforcing its decrees. However, in 1766 Ali Bey, one of the Mameluke chieftains, contrived, by coercing his colleagues and ousting the Turkish Pasha of Cairo, to make himself for the time being dictator of Egypt. For the next quarter of a century Egypt remained in successful rebellion, and gave every evidence of having escaped entirely from the suzerainty of the Ottoman Porte.

This situation in Egypt, coinciding with serious defeats of Turkey at the hands of Russia and Austria, presaged the opening of a new era. This did not ensue, however, except through a period of remarkable confusion and travail. The temporary severing of Egypt from the authority of the Sultan gave opportunity for the opening of European commercial contacts with that country and the reopening of an ancient route of trade and communication with the East. A growing appreciation of the strategic position and potential value of Egypt and of the ease with which an invader might establish his authority there inevitably attracted a covetous Europe. Given a favorable moment and a Napoleon Bonaparte, the French occupied Egypt in 1798 and, by bringing that country definitely within the sphere of European politics, laid some very important foundations for a new Egypt.

However, it was an obscure soldier of fortune who became the principal instrument of Destiny in shaping the future of the country of the Nile. Among the Albanian levies sent by the Sultan to Egypt in 1799 to assist in driving out the French was a young officer, erstwhile a tobacco merchant of Kavala, with the not uncommon name of Mohammed Ali. Nothing about him seemed unusual during the chaos of the next few years, in fact, except his skill, or perhaps his good fortune, in escaping death, which seemed invariably ready to wait upon those who rose to positions of power or authority
MOHAMMED ALI
The Founder of Modern Egypt
in Egypt Mohammed Ali was not idle during these years, for he was not without ambition. He rose steadily in rank and importance, not scrupling to employ any effective means, abruptly changing alliances, conspiring to set up one dictator after another, whom he as often helped to pull down. One of the few indications of the superior judgment which was in later years to place him among the great men of his time was to be found in his shrewd manipulation of forces which he could not control and in the calculating patience with which he approached his goal—the mastery of Egypt. Thus, by means of his Albanians, he played the Turks and Mamelukes against each other and the sheikhs and ulama against both; he conspired with the French against the English in 1805 and thereafter supplied great quantities of grain to assist the latter in their campaigns against the French. By treachery he slaughtered the principal Mamelukes; he employed his unruly Albanian and Turkish forces in campaigns against the Arabs, ostensibly to placate the Sultan; he found in the Arabs a means of becoming rid of his own former associates, the Albanians; and then devoted the remainder of a long life to not quite successful efforts to displace, or to secure independence from, the Sultan.

For fully fifteen years after his appointment as Pasha of Egypt in 1805, Mohammed Ali was compelled to use every possible resource to maintain a position which so many of his predecessors had found completely untenable. That he succeeded at all in a country so completely ruined by the depredations of its former rulers, by factional feud and by foreign invasion, is eloquent of the shrewdness of the new Viceroy, and his methods and motives must not be viewed with the jaundiced eye of a less violent age. "Nothing struck me so forcibly," said a European visitor to the Pasha, "as the egotism which seems to be the predominant feature of his character. He sees, feels, knows, dreams of nothing but self. The projects of this singular personage, however enlightened or disinterested in appearance, are all designed solely with a view to augment his own solitary state, or confirm him individually in power." But while it was undoubtedly true that self-interest was the lodestar of his early life and perhaps the later as well, it is equally true that no change of importance could have been made in the administration of Egypt in the early nineteenth century except on the basis of his complete control of every detail. Personal ambition and Egyptian progress in this instance walked hand in hand.
Reform of the administration of Egypt was at first not a matter of choice for Mohammed Ali—it was a prime necessity. Ransoms imposed on the more wealthy Mamelukes, confiscations of property on flimsy pretexts or none at all, forced loans from well-to-do Cairenes, and ruthless plunder of rich Copts supplied funds with which to pay temperamental Albanian mercenaries, to bribe agents of the Porte, and to begin the establishment of a viceroyal court. But Mohammed Ali well understood that the killing of geese is not predictive of golden eggs. Until some dependable source of revenue, other than extortions, arbitrary tax levies and impositions, could be found, the new régime could not be regarded as more stable than its predecessors. Necessity, to an ingenious man, is the mother of invention. Sources of income there were in Egypt if they could be controlled. Ergo, they must be reserved for the Pasha.

Thus originated the system of monopolies. Taxes which had been farmed under every earlier administration since the days of antiquity were quickly centralized. The traffic in and sale of tobacco, salt, and coffee was made a function of state, and their prices greatly increased. From time to time other articles passed under government control. During the Napoleonic Wars, for example, grain came under state control and proved to be for the time being the most lucrative monopoly of all. The British demand for this important commodity at one time reached the stage where even impure grain, steaming with fermentation, still commanded a high price. The next logical step was the extension of the principle of monopoly to the land itself. From the beginning of his dictatorship Mohammed Ali had seized such properties as he could lay hands upon. In 1810 he began the further confiscation of such of the better lands as were held on insecure titles. This practice was improved upon and extended in subsequent years until the greater portion of the cultivable land of Egypt became the personal estate of the Pasha on which the peasants labored under corvée and had practically the status of serfs.

The nationalizing of the soil of Egypt (for the state was, according both to Mohammedan law and to custom, identical with the ruling power) adversely affected only the interests of a relatively small class of proprietors. The condition of the fellah remained substantially as it had been before. Not so the land itself. The demands of state required that it yield more consistently and abundantly than before. For this a constant supply of water was necessary, and
MAP OF EGYPT
whenever the affairs of government permitted, the Pasha busied himself with measures for improving irrigation and for reclaiming waste lands. Old irrigation canals were reopened and new ones constructed. Many thousands of water-wheels were built and installed. These were not always efficacious during the season of low water, and in order still further to increase productivity, Mohammed Ali set his French engineers to work in 1835 on a great barrage, or weir, on the left or west branch of the Nile about sixteen miles from Cairo. Construction was pushed as rapidly as possible, too rapidly, as it proved, and some years later the greatest project of its kind in the world, built at enormous cost, was completed. For more than a score of years it gave service before the insecurity of its foundations made an extensive rebuilding necessary. Its partial failure was due to haste rather than to faulty plan.

All this was done, of course, with little thought of the betterment of the Egyptian people. Some of the changes, in fact, worked real hardship to a considerable portion of the population. However, they did contribute very largely to the augmentation of the Pasha's power, and indirectly made possible many innovations which eventually redounded to the advantage of all classes in Egypt. At the outset, the success of the Pasha meant thorough exploitation of the country and its population. It meant the exchange of a haphazard scheme of Turkish and Mameluke levies, in which the rich largely escaped burdens and the poor paid such varying amounts as they were supposed to possess, for a scientific arrangement in which one's property and income were known and under which all classes bore the burdens of state. It may have worked hardship on a greater portion of the population than any previous administration ever had, but at least it had the partially compensating advantages of security of life, if not always of property, and right of appeal to the Pasha himself.

Among the works born of the ambition of Mohammed Ali which were productive of important consequences to Egypt in future was the creation of what may be called a national army to support his designs on independence. In 1820, he commissioned a French officer, Colonel Sèves, better known as Suleiman Pasha, to lay the foundation for such an army. Since the necessary man-power for a large military establishment did not seem to exist in Egypt, Mohammed Ali turned his attention to the Sudan, a rich, populous region, which might well provide a recruiting ground. During the years 1821-1823
his Egyptian levies overran almost the whole of the Sudan and would have entered Abyssinia but for the warnings of Great Britain. His new territories did yield some economic fruits, but as a military recruiting ground the move was a dismal failure: the Sudanese died like flies under compulsory military training. The Pasha had, then, as a last resort, to draft the despised Egyptian fellah in large numbers—a vain expedient, he feared, for the Egyptian peasant had survived through the centuries more because of his unwarlike character than because of any sterner trait. The results of this move were astonishing. The fellah did, indeed, have a great dread of military service. He ran away or resorted to self-mutilation to escape the draft, and frequently deserted the ranks after training had begun. But the campaigns in the Morea in 1824-1827, and still more, the campaigns against the Turks in Syria during the next decade, demonstrated conclusively that, when properly equipped and efficiently commanded, the Egyptian fellah was the equal or the superior of the boasted professional Turkish soldier.

The effects of the Pasha’s military policy were profound. In the first place, the withdrawal of many thousands of able-bodied men from productive farming necessitated a more paternal attitude toward those who were left in order to safeguard the foundations of the state. Secondly, the effectiveness of his peasant army enlarged the Pasha’s schemes of conquest and indirectly but materially influenced his entire policy from about the opening of the Morean campaign. But most important of all, military service made a man and a citizen out of him who had never aspired to any position of trust, respect, or honor. The knowledge that he was capable of meeting and defeating in battle those of other races and of higher classes brought a dawning realization to the fellah that he was of some importance: the knowledge that he was fighting the battles of Egypt as against Greeks, Turks, or Arabs, that the Pasha relied on him and publicly celebrated his victories, seems to have given rise to an embryonic feeling of loyalty and patriotism. More than to any other single feature of his policy, the growth of national sentiment in modern Egypt can be traced to the nizam jedid—the new model army of Mohammed Ali.

The Pasha’s dreams of independence and of founding an Arab empire touched upon the interests not only of the Ottoman Porte but inevitably those of European Powers as well. For the success of his external policy, the Pasha was necessarily beholden to Great Britain
All that remains of Egypt's ancient university in the city of On or Heliopolis. Moses and Plato are said to have studied there.
and France in particular. To them he frequently appealed for guidance and their methods he strove to copy. It is probable that he never harbored any serious illusions about the possibility, or even the desirability, of completely Europeanizing his country. More than perhaps any other oriental of his day, the Pasha of Egypt realized the essential differences between the character, outlook, and institutions of Eastern and Western peoples. However, he was convinced, through observing the rapid growth of trade and the technical improvements due to the Industrial Revolution, that the study and adoption of western methods might not be inconsistent with much of the culture and many of the institutions of the East. Both for the sake of attracting favorable attention to his own modern outlook and progressive tendencies and for the purpose of introducing into his own country as many practical improvements as possible, Mohammed Ali therefore undertook a study of the life of western nations, and in order to lose no time, he took into his service such experts as could be obtained for moderately good stipends. His employment of Colonel Sèves has already been adverted to. Several other Frenchmen also, mostly young officers, were employed in various capacities at one time or another, some of them in his new model army. His marine, for which he developed so great an affection, was in large measure the work of the skilled and faithful Cérisy Bey, who was secured from the Government dockyard in Toulon. Others were employed as secretaries, medical officers, and occasionally administrative officers. Fewer Englishmen were employed, partly because of their government's proscription of the foreign service of British officers, and partly because of the greater unwillingness of Englishmen to take service in Egypt. For that matter, while Mohammed Ali ever maintained the highest regard for English ingenuity and ability, he found English servants less tractable than other Europeans. He frequently made use of British business and commercial houses established in Egypt as his agents, however. Messrs. Briggs and Company, for instance, carried out a great variety of commissions for him, and the firm of Alexander Galloway and Sons served him on a number of occasions. His regard for English character is well illustrated by his remark on the occasion of being shown the captain's cabin on a British ship of the line. "These English," he observed, "are a great people because they always have their shelves filled with books. Mine have only pipes."

However, the employment of Europeans not naturalized in
Egypt was intended from the first to be temporary and provisional, pending the training of his own subjects for such duties. In order the more rapidly to build up a body of highly trained Egyptians, the Pasha about 1824 began the practice of selecting from the sons of distinguished Egyptian families small groups to be educated abroad. These were looked upon as wards of the state and were naturally to enter the Pasha’s service upon their return. Quite arbitrarily they were assigned to various branches of learning: some to medicine, some to trade and industry, some to engineering, others to more academic studies. On the whole, the Pasha’s expectations along this line were not realized, chiefly because of the unworthy character of many of the youths sent to Europe, who had been chosen without any reference to their individual fitness. But some, such as Hekekyan bey, later rose to positions of trust and distinction. The fact that the majority of these students were sent to France will help to explain, together with the effects of the French conquest, the prevalence of French cultural influence in Egypt to the present day.
Mohammed Ali founded a medical school of his own, under the celebrated French surgeon, Dr. Clot (Bey), hoping thus to lay the foundation of medical knowledge in Egypt. But probably the most significant indication of his interest in the welfare of Egypt which is not traceable directly to personal ambition is to be found in the growth of a system of secular schools. The ancient al-Azhar mosque and university summed up education in Egypt at the outset of the Pasha's régime. Its nature and purpose were wholly ecclesiastical, its outlook fundamentalist and medieval. It held aloof from the secular world of affairs. It was wedded to the *status quo* of dogma and superstition, yet it was revered by devout Mohammedans everywhere. Without attempting to interfere in any way with this established institution, Mohammed Ali, once he had Egypt definitely in hand, set up series of new schools for other and more practical purposes. Not fully appreciating the necessity of elementary foundations, his first establishments were colleges and training schools, such as the famous Polytechnic School created in
1833, designed to prepare young men for the higher offices in the army, navy, and state services. As the need became more evident, preparatory and elementary schools were founded, not as public schools in the more recent sense, but solely for the purpose of feeding the higher institutions and preparing for some branch of government service. Eventually there were several primary schools in each mudirlik, all organized on a somewhat modified European basis and under the direction of European instructors. The admission of youths to these schools was therefore, to all intents and purposes, admission into government service, since all expense of instruction, even to food, clothes, and lodging, was borne by the state. Schools have since been founded in Egypt, of course, for much more general purposes, but it may be noted that even today the idea persists that a degree from a state institution entitles its holder to a government position.

Mohammed Ali's attempt artificially to bring about an industrial revolution in Egypt fared little better than his efforts to create an educated class within the space of a handful of years. At enormous cost, he had brought into Egypt the latest machinery for the manufacture of cotton, silk, and linen cloth. Simultaneously, as monopolist of Egypt, he issued instructions for the planting of great numbers of mulberry trees, and annually prescribed the acreage to be planted in cotton, flax, and indigo. The raw materials for a cloth industry were forthcoming in due time, and the experience gained in the production of raw fabrics has been advantageous to a more normal and natural growth of these materials in recent years. A century ago, however, Egyptian technique was not equal to the task of operating delicate and complex machinery, nor could repairs be made except after long delay and at great cost. Similar results followed the Pasha's introduction of machinery for the manufacture of rum, sugar, and even firearms. But although enormous sums of money were sunk in these enterprises to little immediate avail, they were not destitute of beneficial results. These experiments, being generally regarded in Europe as successful, brought Egypt into favorable notice, while the introduction of new plants and processes into Egypt was productive in times to come of numerous advantages. Moreover, these experiments were not without their moral and cultural effect on the Egyptian people.

Far more important economically than the Pasha's mistaken attempts to mechanize his country was his generous attitude toward
the Greeks. From the time of his accession to the Egyptian pasha-lik, Greek refugees from Turkish misrule sought asylum in Egypt and were not denied. After the beginning of the Greek revolt in 1821, and particularly after the time when the Pasha's own forces were cooperating with those of the Sultan in suppressing the Greek revolutionaries, considerable numbers of Greek families found their way to Alexandria, where they were welcomed without regard to the Sultan's orders for their destruction. Egypt to them was the land of opportunity. Becoming protégés of the Pasha, and exempt from many of the burdens imposed on the Mohammedan population, they grew and prospered, founding and developing new industries and forging ahead in nearly every branch of activity. Their aptitude for manufacturing and commerce is manifest in the names of Egyptian firms today. But not alone in economic respects did their establishment in Egypt justify the judgment of Mohammed Ali. They also functioned in many ways as cultural agents. Their communal schools, hospitals and philanthropic institutions inevitably have exerted a deep influence on the non-Christian elements of the population, while their contributions in the realm of science, art, and literature have not been meager. They have been a powerful leavening influence.

Having become a convert to the efficacy of European science, Mohammed Ali undertook whole-heartedly to introduce its benefits, as far as he comprehended them, into Egypt. Accordingly, he established hospitals of a type previously unknown in Egypt and developed a keen interest in the promotion of medical knowledge among his subjects. At his instance, the medical school at Aluszabel, already referred to, was founded. Most of the instructors of the school were French doctors who had no knowledge of the language of their students, while the latter were equally ignorant of the speech of their masters. The net result of this experiment was deeply disappointing, but it did not militate against the adoption of other, and perhaps more effectual methods for the checking and controlling of the epidemics, especially of cholera and the plague, which visited the land of the Nile at not infrequent intervals. A virulent epidemic of cholera which ravaged the country in 1831, carrying off an appreciable portion of the population, led the Pasha to appeal for advice to the consuls of European states. At their suggestion, rigid quarantine regulations were adopted. These failed to stay the disease, but the Pasha, instead of adopting
the characteristic Moslem attitude of ascribing it all to the will of Allah, merely planned to establish a more efficient quarantine on other occasions.

An occasion for a more thorough testing of European methods of prevention was furnished by a visitation of the bubonic plague in 1835, which brought all normal activities to a complete standstill. Again the assistance of the European consuls was solicited, and under the presidency of the British Consul-General a Board of Sanitation was established. This had absolute authority for several years over matters of public health, and in one form or another continued until near the end of the reign. Political considerations as well as problems of health and sanitation may have prompted the formation of the board, for at that time Mohammed Ali was anxious to curry favor with European governments by any means. Some of the work of the organization, however, was permanent. A modern lazaretto was founded at Alexandria to stop the importation of infectious diseases, the destruction of some of the filthier sections of the city of Alexandria was accomplished, and numerous breeding places of diseases were wiped out—measures unpopular enough at that time with a considerable portion of the population. A good many years were to elapse before the continuation of this good work was incorporated into a consistent government program, but the beginnings of the present extensive efforts to eradicate disease from a country which was once as disease-ridden as any on earth must be ascribed to the founder of the present Egyptian dynasty.

It is difficult to determine to what extent, aside from the practical necessities of government, Mohammed Ali was concerned with the ideal of justice. There was nothing in his background, his environment, or his early training remotely suggestive of justice for all. Turkish government took no cognizance of human rights. Yet from the early days of his power, the Pasha concerned himself with equalizing burdens, suppressing dishonesty and corruption, and substituting something equivalent to law for unmitigated violence. It may be that the material advantages of this type of government impressed him with the basic principles of justice, or it may be that his regard for European institutions or his desire to appear modern and progressive in European eyes introduced a benevolence into his despotism. At all events, he did much to regularize the administration and to temper the wind to the shorn lamb.
There were serious obstacles in the way of judicial improvement. Formal justice among Mohammedans had always been intimately associated with the exercise of religious prerogatives. As in Europe for a long period of time, legal affairs concerning marriage, divorce, contracts, wills, and inheritance pertained to the supreme religious authority, and in Egypt were administered by the mufti as representative of the Sultan. The establishment of a system of secular courts for civil procedures, therefore, would be attended with a certain risk, for even Mohammed Ali realized the danger of tampering with matters of faith. Justice in criminal matters, however, remained in the hands of the executive authorities. But for a people brutalized by centuries of pitiless exploitation no elaborate system of justice would serve. It was more needful that the lines of proper conduct be clearly understood and that punishment be prompt and effective than that there should be any quibbling over legal technicalities or rights of individual liberty.

Notwithstanding many difficulties, real improvement was made. Two new non-sectarian courts were established at Alexandria and Cairo to deal with disputes of a commercial nature, especially those arising between Moslems and Christians. In other civil matters, a degree of justice was obtained through the despatch of strict mandates and circular letters to the responsible officers of administration throughout the country and by sparing no pains to see that these were obeyed. The Pasha himself went about the country on tours of minute inspection at irregular but frequent intervals, and he and his secretaries were unwearying in their perusal of the reports demanded of all his officials. He deprecated the bodily punishment of delinquents and offenders except for crimes of a serious nature. He preferred to govern by precept and example rather than by the bastinado and the sword. "All about me," he said toward the close of his career, "well know that I love not to harm any man. For forty years I have held my hand from sharp punishment: but if I am compelled to do otherwise, the fault will not lie at my door." A few public torturings and protracted executions toward the close of his reign were rather to serve as warnings to other evil-doers, who might be inclined to take advantage of a tolerant prince, than to indicate the vindictiveness or the choice of the Viceroy. Certainly his reputation for fairness in later years is one of the significant features of his reign.

As long as the resources of Egypt were being fostered primarily
for the purpose of enabling the Pasha to defeat the Sultan, the net benefits of the Pasha’s reform program were problematical, as European Turcophiles never tired of pointing out. Throughout the eighteen thirties, a time of great material advance in Egypt, every man, every beast, every piastre was weighed and measured according to one scale—that of military value. Perhaps it was not, in the long run, a disadvantage to Egypt that, through British intervention, the Pasha’s hopes were brought to irremediable ruin in 1840 after his crushing of Turkish forces in Asia Minor and at a time when the way to Constantinople lay open. Mohammed Ali never recovered from the failure of the great aim of his life—that of establishing an independent empire. However, being left Egypt in hereditary tenure, he was able to console himself that at any rate he was the founder of a dynasty which might carry on the constructive work which he had begun. There still remained to him nearly a decade of peaceful life, which he devoted more wholeheartedly than ever before to the material and cultural development of his country, with a motive no more reprehensible than that of securing the favorable verdict of history.

The Egypt he left at his death in 1849 was in all respects a very different country from that to which he came with a force of Albanian irregulars a half century before. He had failed, it is true,
to eradicate a variety of abuses. Both slavery and the slave trade still existed, although in late years the traffic in human beings was considerably lessened. Poverty was still wide-spread, yet a large improvement in conditions of living is indicated by an increase in the population from about 2,460,000 in 1800 to 4,476,440 in 1848. Ignorance, superstition, and disease still held a large part of the population in thrall, yet real headway had been made against all of these relics of the past. The roster of accomplishments far exceeds that of failure; a few of the more fundamental and enduring must serve to illustrate the rest.

Mohammed Ali himself liked to think that he had succeeded to some degree in founding a nation, based on popular loyalty to the prince. The evidences he found always disappointing, and he was prone to complain of the lack of appreciation of his work. However, he was not a patient man, and he never realized that what he tried to do by arbitrary methods within the space of a generation could only be brought about after a considerable lapse of time. Much of what he did was probably misunderstood by his subjects, but means did not exist for the expression of popular sentiment, in any event. That the Pasha did not fail in causing a vague stirring of national sentiment is witnessed by the report of the British Con-
sul-General, Charles Murray, to Lord Palmerston, in commenting on the death of the great Viceroy. "The attachment and veneration of all classes in Egypt for the name of Mahomet Ali," he wrote, "are prouder obsequies than any which it was in the power of his successor to confer. The old inhabitants remember and talk of the chaos and anarchy from which he rescued this country, the younger compare his energetic rule with the capricious, vacillating government of his successor, and all classes, whether Turks or Arabs, not only feel, but hesitate not to say openly that the prosperity of Egypt has died with Mahomet Ali or (in their oriental phraseology) the breath of Egypt has left its body.... Very rarely would it be that Your Lordship would hear in any province of the Turkish Empire such a phrase as the following: 'If Allah would permit me, gladly would I give ten years of my life to add them to that of our old Pasha.' Yet this I have known to fall from the lips of more than one during the last illness of Mahomet Ali."

More instrumental in laying the foundations of a modern Egypt even than personal loyalty to the sovereign was the ending of the isolation of Egypt. Few Europeans had visited Egypt prior to 1800, and they generally found it essential to disguise themselves in native costume to avoid the insults and injuries customarily showered on all infidels. From the beginning of his reign, Mohammed Ali made safety and security of foreigners a cardinal point of policy. Afterward, by promoting European contacts, by the adoption of European methods, and particularly by the founding of schools through which foreign ideas were disseminated, he laid the basis in knowledge for a tolerance and sympathy which must ever precede any real cultural advancement. Mohammed Ali's work progressed but slowly after his death, but from it may be traced most of the lines of development of Egypt of the present day.