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4-12-2024

The Downfall of the Khedivate of Egypt

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Repository citation: Desenberg, Jacob, "The Downfall of the Khedivate of Egypt" (2024). *23rd Annual A. Paul and Carol C. Schaap Celebration of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity (2024)*. Paper 23.

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Important Sources

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Key Points

- Muhammad Ali was sent to Egypt, along with other Albanian troops under the Ottoman Empire to counter the French invasion from Napoleon Bonaparte in 1801.
- The Ottoman-British forces defeated the French in Cairo, driving them out of Egypt on June 27th, 1801.
- By 1805 Muhammad Ali was acting as the unofficial Wali (governor) of Egypt despite the Ottomans still sending troops to remove him from power.
- A state monopoly oversaw the agricultural community under Muhammad Ali where the communities could only sell crops to the state.
- By nationalizing the land Muhammad Ali maximized Egyptian profits and increased population. As early as 1811 Egypt was able to profit in trade from crops and still have excess grain for peasants
- As quickly as 1823 the cotton industry was able to export cotton to European markets giving an edge over American cotton.
- Machines in these factories were reported to be faulty, and running at such high expectations that malfunctions happened often. Despite Egypt being at severe risk of famine in 1863 cotton production was up 50% from the previous year.
- Isma'il Pasha the grandson of Muhammad Ali Pasha enacted a wide variety of social reforms across Egypt. Isma'il, like his grandfather, wished to see a powerful Egypt and enrich the lives of the people living in Egypt.
- Opening of the Suez Canal was a monumental point of Isma'il's works.
- Al-Afghani asserts that Isma'il being a leader of Muslims should favor all Muslims over non-Muslims.
- The British parliament reached out to Isma'il in 1876 to purchase the Suez Canal shares from Isma'il.
- By 1837 al-Tahtawi led the School of Language which taught European languages to translate key texts into Arabic.
- In 1881 al-Marasfi published his book based on lectures that pulled from classical thinking of past Muslim Caliphates and modern education often seen in Europe.
- Rashid Rida was an outspoken advocate against liberal reforms in Egypt. That *litjihad* was not in the best interest of Muslims in Egypt.
- In 1876 Stephen Cave was sent by the British government to analyze the Egyptian financial crisis.
- The Debt Administration comprised officials from Britain, France, Austria, and Italy.
- In 1879 Nubar Pasha was appointed Prime Minister with the consent of Isma'il, the French, and the British.
- It was determined that under Nubar's government, Isma'il's property needed to be seized to help repay the debt. 435,000 acres of Isma'il's personal property was seized.
- Many of Isma'il's palaces were built in 1869 for the ceremonial opening of the Suez.
- Isma'il was formally deposed by the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II in 1879.
- Ahmed Urabi led a military revolt against Khedive Tewfik Pasha in 1881 to counter the influence of the British-backed government.
- Urabi revolt members pulled from the writing of Egyptian scholar Muhammad Abduh who was a follower of Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani.
- By July 1882 the British navy had begun a bombardment on the port of Alexandria.
- Dicey blames many of Abbas's anti-British sentiments on the fact that he was educated amongst Europeans who opposed the British.

Context

Egypt was an Ottoman Province led by Mamluks since the 1517 Ottoman-Mamluk war. Mamluk ran Egypt was a loosely ran state under the Ottoman control. In 1798 French General Napoleon lead a military campaign into Egypt. The invasion promoted the British to respond with their troops. Muhammad Ali Pasha was a leader from Ottoman controlled Albania and responded the call to defend.

Thesis

The Khedivate of Egypt faced many issues that led the British to assume control over the Egyptian government. Issues in Egypt include rapid industrialization, unequal social reforms, willingness to take on state debt, and failed nationalist aggressions to take control.

Conclusions:

Rapid industrialization taken from Muhammad Ali, Sa'id and Ismail Pasha all lead to a rapid industrialization of Egypt. By taking on these endeavors lead to often failed returns in profit. Later leaders like the infamous Ismail Pasha was willingly to acquire debt to feed into what his image of Egypt should like look. While also financing industrial projects that failed to return profits. These reforms affected most of the elite living in the country upsetting many of the working class. Nationalist aggressions aimed at removing many Europeans that had defacto control of the country only made things worse. In 1881 there was a revolution which saw the further control of the British in Egypt.