The Ottoman Response to the Egyptian Crisis of 1881–82

Selim Deringil

The 1881–82 movement in Egypt led by Ahmed Urabi has been studied extensively from the Arab–Egyptian and the British points of view. However, surprisingly little has been written on the subject of how the Ottoman State reacted to this crisis in a land which was still nominally under its suzerainty. This study focuses on the events from the Ottoman point of view. The Yıldız Palace Archives of Sultan Abdulhamid II contain a vast number of reports, draft telegrams and dispatches, minutes of the Ottoman Cabinet etc. relating to this subject. It has proved interesting to set these against British material found in the Public Record Office and in the British Library Department of Manuscripts. For the sake of analytical clarity Ottoman relations with the Urabists and the Khedive, and Ottoman relations with Britain will be taken as somewhat separate spheres of investigation. This does not, of course, imply that these are hard and fast categories, as the materials under review do overlap to a great extent.

The Egyptian crisis, roughly spanning the period September 1881 to September 1882, is interesting in several respects. First, it provides important insights into Abdulhamid II’s attitude towards Pan-Islamism and more particularly ‘Arabism’. Second, it serves to illustrate the increasing mutual distrust between the Sublime State and the Court of St. James. Third, it gives a clear indication that neither the British nor the Ottomans truly understood the social dynamic behind Urabi Paşa. It is also worthwhile to point out that the ‘Egyptian Question’ arose at a particularly bad time for the Ottomans. The Empire was still bogged down in the consequences of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, the Cyprus Convention and the Congress of Berlin. Much of Ottoman financial self-control had been relinquished to the Ottoman Debt Commission in 1881. The Empire was also being pressured by Russia to pay a very heavy war indemnity. As a final result of the Berlin Congress the Ottoman State was compelled to give up two-fifths of its entire territory and one-fifth of its population. Also in May 1881 Tunisia had fallen to the French. Against this background the last thing Abdulhamid II needed was a potentially explosive issue which could wreak havoc in the Islamic ‘core’ of his remaining domains.

OTTOMAN RELATIONS WITH THE URABISTS AND THE KHEDIVE

Abdulhamid II was to come under heavy pressure from both the British and the Egyptian Khedive Tevfik Pasa to send an Ottoman expeditionary force to Egypt. As sovereign ruler of Egypt and also the Caliph and ‘Emir-
el-Muminin’, the Sultan had to tread very carefully. As Ahmed Urabi gradually increased his power in Egypt during the autumn of 1881 and the winter of 1882 the situation became very delicate for Istanbul. Since 1878 Abdulhamid had made it a matter of policy to stress the Islamic element in Ottoman society as a new bid for unity against what he saw as an increasingly hostile Christian world.\textsuperscript{3} The Sultan had also promoted his Arab subjects to posts of unprecedented seniority: ‘Never … since the establishment of the Ottoman Sultanate, had an Arab whomever his ancestors were put his forehead where they had put their feet …’.\textsuperscript{4} The institution of the Caliphate received extreme emphasis during the reign of Abdulhamid: ‘None of the latterday Ottoman Sultans had emphasized this title more or made use of it better than did Sultan Abdulhamid II’.\textsuperscript{5} However, Abdulhamid was also wary of the cultural revival of Arabism proceeding in Syria, and the duty of ‘state ideologues’ such as Abulhuda seems to have been to counter the spread of Arabist sentiment by publishing a steady stream of literature underlining the legitimacy of the Caliph and the duty of obedience of all Muslims.

However, for Abdulhamid ‘Pan Islamism’ or ‘Islamism’ were largely a means to an end – the preservation of the Empire: ‘Abdulhamid was an Ottoman Sultan before he was the Great Muslim Caliph. “State” (devlet) was far more important to him than “religion” (din)’.\textsuperscript{6}

If the Urabists could feasibly be used to this end they were just tolerated, not more. As it soon became clear that they could not be directed at will, the Porte immediately wheeled in to support the Khedive, Tevfik Paşa. Abdulhamid is often said to have ‘played off Urabi against Tevfik’.\textsuperscript{7} This is not strictly accurate. The Sultan had no special love for Tevfik, or for any of the Mehmet-Ali family for that matter. But Urabi was potentially a much more serious threat, as a successful example of nationalism could spread to other parts of the Empire. Weak and imbecilic though he may have been, Tevfik was the legitimate ruler, and representative of the Sultan.

At first the Ottomans proceeded cautiously, indeed almost politely, with the newly appointed Mahmoud Sami government which took office on 4 February 1882. Even when the Egyptian Chamber of Delegates demanded the right to supervise the budget, and an intense debate ensued around the Organic Law which was to set the limits of Egyptian ‘constitutionalism’ the Porte’s reaction was measured.\textsuperscript{8} In response to the alarmist telegrams of the Khedive stating that the Chamber was insisting on the revision of international treaties and provoking foreign intervention, the Ottoman Cabinet advised the Sultan to order that he keep calm. The minutes of the Ottoman Cabinet dated 14 Rebiyulevel 1299/4 February 1882 advised that the Khedive should be ordered to provide additional information. But his demand for a new Ottoman inspection commission should be refused, as this would only provide fuel for British and French propaganda which was already clamouring that the Ottomans were interfering in Egypt’s internal affairs.\textsuperscript{9} On the same day the Sultan was advised as to the specific demands of the Egyptian Chamber.\textsuperscript{10} The matter was discussed again in the Cabinet of 16 Rebiyulevel 1299/6
February 1882. The Ministers pointed out that the Khedive himself had called the Chamber as a local provincial assembly (meclis-i vilayet) and if they discussed matters of a purely local nature this should not be discouraged. The Egyptian notables should be ordered to stay off the subject of the supervision of the budget and the appointment of officials as this could set an undesirable precedent for other Ottoman provinces. But the Egyptians should not be provoked into precipitate action. On the same day a telegram to the Khedive was approved by the Sultan stating that the ‘strenuous measures’ such as the sending of a military force suggested by the Khedive, ‘were not quite in keeping with the need for moderation and caution which is naturally desirable …’. It was, however, out of the question to discuss Egypt’s international commitments.

It is interesting to note that this sensitivity towards implications for the Ottoman Arab provinces of political developments in bordering areas was to become a continuing theme in Ottoman statecraft. During the Mahdist uprising in the Sudan the Porte sent strict instructions to its officials in the Hijaz and Yemen to prevent at all costs the spread of the idea of ‘Arab government’ (Hukumet-i Arabiyaye). Also when Malet, the British Consul-General in Egypt, was granted an interview with Abdulhamid the latter told him that it was out of the question to grant Egypt a Constitution: ‘It was not possible for him to allow a Constitution in one province of his dominions and to withhold it from others …’. Nor was the Khedive Tevfik Paşa alone in clamouring that foreign intervention was imminent as a result of provocation by the Urabists. Leading Urabists including Urabi himself had been in contact with Istanbul and made precisely the same accusations against Tevfik. Urabi’s letters to the Sultan expressing his devotion have been repeatedly referred to or published in the literature on the subject. One petition of particular interest however seems to have escaped attention. In his ariza dated 7 Muharrem 1299/30 November 1881 Urabi stated clearly that the Khedive was aiming to separate Egypt from the Ottoman State and make it dependent on Britain, ‘like India’, and to set himself up as its first governor. Tevfik’s First Minister Riaz Paşa, ‘has also been heard blasphemously claiming in public that “one day it is inevitable that our country will come under British protection” …’. In furtherance of this aim it was claimed they were attempting to dispose of the true patriots.

In a similar tone Mahmud Sami Al-Barudi wrote the Sultan two petitions giving details of numerous plots allegedly hatched by the Khedive either to poison or otherwise dispose of the Urabists. In particularly flowery terms worthy of the poet that he was, Barudi went to some length to claim that, ‘lying is like second nature to him [Khedive]’, and that he had become, ‘as a toy for the foreigners and as a buffoon before his own people’ (melabe-i ecanib ve suhre-i akarib). But both Urabi’s and Barudi’s appeals to the Sultan proved counterproductive as they were taken as proof of insubordination.

Indeed it seems as though the Porte was already hardening its line towards the Urabists by mid-April 1882. In the Cabinet meeting of 23 Cemaziyelevelvel 1299/13 April 1882 the Ministers recommended that two
warships be sent ‘to restore order’. They also put forward that the Egyptian government had been acting in a manner, ‘contrary to their duty of obedience’. The Ministers also felt that the ‘Urabists were using disrespectful language towards the Khedive’. They concluded that it would be best to send an Ottoman official with the ships to find out the causes of the conflict and to advise the Egyptians to be obedient. ‘More forward measures’ were also to be considered. A month later on 24 Cemaziyelahir 1299/14 May 1882, acting on the Khedive’s suggestion, the Porte drafted a telegram to the Egyptian Council of Ministers stating unequivocally that they should obey their Khedive and if they had any legitimate grievances they should refer them to ‘the seat of the Caliphate’. Also it had been heard abroad that they dared to put about the story that they would oppose any Ottoman military expedition. The Egyptians were told to refrain from ‘wilful and obstinate acts’ (harekat-i hodserane).

OTTOMAN RELATIONS WITH BRITAIN DURING THE EGYPTIAN CRISIS

Ever since the Cyprus Convention of 1878 the close links between London and the Porte had gradually but definitely given way to mutual suspicion and distrust. Abdulhamid, although favourable to Britain in the early years of his reign, had come to consider Britain the bête noire of the Ottoman State and British intervention in the affairs of the Empire the primary threat to its survival. Thus all entanglements in which Britain was involved were to be avoided and this became a first priority: ‘... In the conditions that the Sublime State now finds itself it would be harmful to ally with England and to acquiesce in all its aims and desires ...’

Nor were the ‘British’ the monolithic body the name implies. The Liberal government of the time (1880–85) was an uneasy amalgam of Whigs and Radicals, with Gladstone and Granville involved in a delicate balancing act. The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary were not properly informed on matters relating to foreign policy. The fact that the Sultan centralized affairs of state on his own person and delegated very little real authority also meant that the old methods of manipulating the Porte through individual ministers could not be relied upon. As a result the British men on the spot, the ambassadors and dragomans, found themselves shadow-boxing with an elusive and increasingly suspicious Abdulhamid. On 9 July 1882 the British Ambassador at the Porte, the Earl of Dufferin, complained of ‘the extraordinary impediments which affect diplomatic negotiations at Constantinople’. The Ambassador claimed that Ministers themselves were unauthorized to negotiate and that they, ‘dared not tell the Sultan anything which might displease him’. The Sultan communicated not through regular channels but through ‘three or four irresponsible young men’ whom he disavowed when he found it convenient to do so:

... Even if an Ambassador endeavors to reach the Sultan by a written message through his own Dragoman, no one at the Palace will undertake to deliver it if it contains phrases of a strenuous character,
[if the Ambassador asks for an audience] ... the Sultan keeps him waiting with one excuse or another for weeks ....

The Ambassador had some interesting observations to impart regarding the person of Abdulhamid:

In considering any act or word which emanates from His Majesty we have to take into account the complicated and even contradictory elements of his character. As I have already more than once described to your Lordship Abdul-Hamid is a man of great intelligence, astuteness and finesse. If he had merely to deal with Orientals and with men and questions with which he was familiar and forces which he had an opportunity of measuring he would probably be regarded as a ruler of great force of character and ability. Unfortunately the defects of his early education, his ignorance of the world and of the machinery ... of modern European politics introduce into many of his combinations a certain strain of childishness and folly. The suspiciousness of his nature is almost maniacal, he has no respect for the truth and his duplicity is unbounded ....

Just before Dufferin left for Egypt as the British troubleshooter, Abdulhamid was to return the compliment by telegraphing his agent in Cairo, Kadri Efendi: ‘Malet is to be replaced by Dufferin. You know that this man is much more experienced in intrigue than Malet’. The Anglo-French note delivered in Egypt on 8 January 1882 promising support for the Khedive against the Urabists had been an important part of this inauspicious background of mutual distrust. The Porte saw this as an infringement of its sovereign rights in Egypt. The Ottoman Cabinet advised on 20 Safer 1299/12 January 1882 that Britain and France should be told ‘there was nothing in Egypt which could justify such a guarantee from outside parties’. London and Paris were to be told that any guarantee of support should come from the sovereign power. On 26 January Britain replied that the Joint Note was not an infraction of the Sultan’s sovereign authority and ‘All England wanted was the well being and prosperity of the country and the maintenance of administrative independence...’.

As it became known that an Anglo-French naval demonstration was being planned as a show of support for the Khedive against the Urabists, the Porte sent a circular telegram to its ambassadors. The Ottoman State, it was said, merely desired peace and the maintenance of the status quo in Egypt, and its policy there was very modest and cautious. The whole Egyptian business was merely a local affair involving a controversy over the dismissal of some officers. Any naval or military demonstration by a foreign power would be unacceptable. The Ottoman ministers also stated on 25 Cemaziyelahir 1229/15 May 1882, that the sending of British and French fleets was an ‘illegal act’, it was also unacceptable that the Powers should tell the Ottoman State to abstain from independent action. The situation was an act of aggression ‘reminiscent of the Austrian attitude towards Bosnia’ before its occupation of that province. This sense of historical precedent runs throughout the Ottoman documents. The
Cabinet, in another set of deliberations in which they advised against the sending of a naval force to Egypt, recalled the escape of Firari Ahmed Paşa and warned against the dangers of the recurrence of such an event: ‘If such a great force as the Imperial Navy were to fall into the hands of the Egyptians, it is clear that this would cause extreme danger and difficulty for the state’. Also the presence of such a force would only provoke the Europeans for as soon as the Ottomans assembled a few ships in a place like Crete the British and French could send a force two or three times its size. But the crisis in Egypt was escalating and this brought on the mission of Derviş Paşa.

THE DERVIŞ PAŞA MISSION: QUESTIONS OF MILITARY INTERVENTION AND CHANGE OF KHEDIVE

The Derviş Paşa Mission which arrived in Egypt on 7 June 1882 had three main duties assigned to it by Abdulhamid: 1, to prevent by any means the military entanglement of Ottoman forces in Egypt; 2, to remove Urabi from the scene by inviting him to Istanbul; 3, to give support to the Khedive Tevfik Paşa as the legitimate representative of the Sultan, and thus forestall any foreign intervention. Yet one quite often comes across statements in the literature on the subject such as those made by Vatikiotis on the purpose of the Derviş Paşa Mission: ‘According to Turkish sources ... the Sultan ... aimed at using Orabi to abolish the Khedivate and restore Ottoman control’. Those very ‘Turkish sources’ indicate the exact opposite. Tevfik was to be given all possible support. Vatikiotis also claims that the Urabists and notables ‘were further encouraged by the knowledge that the Sultan was anxious to undermine Khedivial authority in Egypt through the possible use of armed support of the military dissidents’. In his more recent and otherwise well-documented work Schölch also seems to have overlooked the issue of support for Tevfik: ‘He [the Sultan] was quite determined to depose Tevfik because of his ineptitude and appoint Halim as his successor’.

The truth was that both a military landing and a change of Khedive were considered extremely undesirable last-resort measures, particularly as they would be undertaken at the behest of foreign powers, which would be damaging to Ottoman prestige. As the ministers stated:

If in the case of extreme necessity it became inevitable to change the Khedive, because this would be done as a result of the strength and influence of the foreigners, this would result, God Forbid, in a diminution of the influence of the Sublime State …

Also the Ottomans fully expected to be opposed militarily by the Egyptians and as a result knew that any expedition would be a full-scale military operation and not a ‘demonstration’: ‘The sending of soldiers to Egypt can only be done with the intention of beating down Egypt. The sending of a force only for a demonstration would be both pointless and dangerous’. The sensitivity to historical precedent is also observable in the issue of
the change of Khedive. The Sultan, emphasizing his unwillingness to undertake such action under Western pressure, was to write in a personal memorandum that in the event of the deposition of Ismail Paşa in 1879 this was done under extreme Anglo-French pressure and against his will: ‘The French convinced the English to support them ... There were close ties and friendship between the French Prime Minister Gambetta and Halim Paşa ...’. Nor does this mean that Abdulhamid had any particular affection for any of the Mehmet Ali family. Here again history was called as a witness when he stated in a memorandum dated 5 Cemaziye lahir 1305/19 February 1888 that they were all suspect. During the 1877–78 Russo-Ottoman war Ismail had in fact proposed that he send Egyptian troops to garrison Istanbul so Turkish forces would be free to go to the front. Abdulhamid said that this was a ‘fiendish Egyptian plot’ and that the evil intentions of the Mehmet Ali family ‘dated back to the Navarin affair’. The memorandum continued:

The Mehmet Ali Paşa family have always been the enemies of the House of Osman and have always tried to conquer their position and have spent millions of akçe towards this end ... A draft in Abdulhamid’s own hand noted that Tevfik’s Paşa’s telegrams contradicted one another. He seemed to be against the Urabists, yet he still did all they asked. The Sultan stated that in his view:

... Tevfik and Halim are the same, whichever one proves his true loyalty to the Sublime State, and does not encourage these contemptible men (bu makule adamlar) and does not incline towards England or France, it is he who will be preferred ...

The Sultan then referred to the Urabists as ‘vermin’ (haşerat) and asked the Ministers to waste no time in finding a solution to the problem. Indeed on the eve of the dispatch of the Derviş Paşa Mission intense discussion seems to have taken place in the Ottoman Cabinet. In the minutes dated 14 Receb 1299/2 June 1882 the ministers stated that they had reviewed all the letters and telegrams received from the Khedive, Ahmed Urabi and Mahmud Sami Al-Barudi. The Ministers were of the view that the Urabists were ‘acting out of a feeling of national defence’ (muha faza-i kavmiyyet maneviyatiyla), and as a result the Khedive had been forced to seek the support of the foreigner. They advised against the replacement of Tevfik by Halim as Urabi wanted, because then the Khedivate would be in Urabi’s gift, and there was no guarantee that if one day Halim fell out with him he too would not be deposed. The ‘accusations’ of Mahmud Sami and Urabi were not to be believed for they were untrustworthy. All things considered, it was recommended that the Porte back up Tevfik, of whose behaviour they had experience, rather than Halim who was an unknown factor, ‘because in a matter of such importance it is not advisable to replace the tried by the untried ...’ (gair-i mucerrebin mucerrebe tercumesi tarafına gidilmesiyecegine ...). The ministers felt that as a result of the Sultan’s support for Tevfik Paşa the Egyptian notables had already started abandoning Urabi, and that this
should be encouraged by an official declaration from the Sultan to be published in Egypt by Derviş Paşa, ‘whose primary duty should be the support of Tevфик Paşa’. Accordingly Urabi was sent a telegram in Arabic on the next day emphasizing that close ties were required between Istanbul and Egypt and that if they became distanced the enemy would come between them. He was advised to obey the special commissioner who was being sent ‘to assure your sincere and total devotion’. The mission was also to include Sheikh Ahmed Esad, a close confidant of the Sultan and one of his ‘official Arabs’. This was not Esad’s first trip to Egypt. He had spent time there during the critical months of spring 1882 when the fleets arrived in Alexandria harbour. It is interesting that Schölch assesses him as ‘the Sultan’s special ambassador to Urabi’ who ‘was staying in Cairo and giving moral support to Mahmud Sami and Urabi against Tevfik and the Powers’. The Dervis Paşa Mission is usually said to have included two contradictory elements: the high-handed centralist Derviş Paşa and the ‘Pan-Islamist’, Esad, who was instructed to support Urabi. The Ottoman documents indicate that such a clear-cut view is inaccurate. Ahmed Esad was to act in a very strange manner for one favourable to Urabi’s cause and Derviş was in fact much more subtle and certainly had no instructions ‘to shoot [Urabi] if necessary with his own hand’. Nor was he to ‘prepare a Turkish intervention’. His instructions were exactly the opposite.

In Esad’s secret report to Istanbul it was stated that he had told Urabi personally:

None of your views are acceptable to the Sultan. Give up these ideas and forsake this arrogance for you are not up to dealing with the Sublime State... If his Imperial Majesty sees that you insist in your views he will send many soldiers led by able commanders. It is even probable that he will honour Egypt in person to put a stop to this disorderly and unseemly state of affairs.

The report also includes an interesting interchange between Ubeyd Bey, a leading Urabist and Esad. Esad was approached confidentially by Ubeyd when he left the room to perform his ablutions. Ubeyd said that Urabi was personally determined to resist any Ottoman force and added, ‘but we won’t obey him as he has some aims for which it is not yet time’.

On the other hand the early proceedings of Derviş Paşa were remarkably moderate for an ‘old soldier of the old energetic unscrupulous type’. Derviş first tried to bring about a reconciliation between the Urabists and the Khedive. The Porte’s answer to this suggestion, however, was categorically negative, and he was reminded of the written views of Mahmud Sami and Urabi in which they had spared no insult in referring to their superior the Khedive. When the so-called ‘Alexandria massacres’ occurred on 11 June the event was taken in Istanbul as the ‘fruition of the aims and desires of Urabi Paşa’. In the subsequent days, however, Derviş assured Istanbul that the regular army had done its duty in re-establishing and maintaining order in Alexandria. Urabi and his followers, he said, were the only force capable of maintaining order and
resisting the Europeans, and as such they should not be alienated or pressed into desperate action. Rather Derviş counselled reconciliation, a general pardon by the Khedive, and the use of Urabi to maintain general order while his support was slowly melted away from under him, ‘then all measures against him will be possible’. These were Ottoman tactics at their best.

The situation was indeed delicate. The popularity of Urabi was at its height, not only in Egypt but in Istanbul also. Dufferin was to report on 23 June that ‘The Sultan’s position in the presence of the growing sympathy for Arabi Paşa evinced by the Mahometan public opinion and the danger of general Arab revolt, is undoubtedly difficult …’. Of course, whether there was in fact such a danger or Abdulhamid was deliberately exaggerating to avoid sending troops is a moot point.

The issue of the projected Ottoman expeditionary force is a critical one as it serves to focus much of the Egyptian controversy. Abdulhamid knew that the Ottoman State’s military resources were extremely limited. The use of these already limited means in a conflict from which he had precious little to gain and very much to lose was the last thing he desired. The prospect of the ‘Caliph’s army’ involved in hostilities against a ‘champion of Islam’ such as Urabi would seriously damage Ottoman credibility in the Arab provinces. The British were alive to these implications:

On the one hand his prestige and popularity as the Head and Champion of Islam might be damaged both in Arabia and Africa, and on the other Arabi Bey … might be tempted to revive the tradition of the Arab Caliphate.54

On 15 June Derviş was told in very strong language that it was out of the question to send Ottoman forces: ‘the fact that it is desired by those ill-wishers against the State is proof enough of its dangerous and harmful nature’. The Ottoman Commissioner was warned not to act against instructions by demanding troops: ‘Do you not see the gravity and danger of the situation which would be created if [Ottoman] soldiers were to fight the Arabs?’55 Derviş, however, kept up his appeals. On 16 June he stated that although Urabi was successful in maintaining order it was not good for the Khedive’s or the Porte’s prestige ‘to have to present a smiling face’ to Urabi and his followers. To put an end to this situation ‘twenty or thirty battalions’ of soldiers would be needed.56 The British, who were closely monitoring the situation, soon heard that Derviş was bragging ‘that two army corps are ready to be dispatched at once to Egypt should he give the signal for their departure’. Dufferin apparently referred the matter to his local military expert, a Major Swain. The Major said in a report dated 12 June that he was ‘at a loss to know where these two army corps are’ and went on to assess the possibility of mobilizing such a force:

A Turkish army corps on a war footing represents 34,000 infantry, 45,000 cavalry and 96 guns. If this number is doubled it gives 79,000 men and 192 guns, or in other words it would comprise about two thirds of the present strength of the Imperial Army.
The Major then gave a detailed breakdown of Ottoman troop strengths in the various provinces underlining the fact that a general discharge of troops was proceeding. Derviş’s claim, he stated, would be impossible to fulfil in the present state of affairs, ‘without unnecessarily denuding the parts [of the Empire they would be drawn from] of troops’. The report concluded that ‘there is no expeditionary force ready and massed for service in Egypt’. Yet the Sultan constantly attempted to keep the British off balance by implying that there was such a force. On 16 June, just four days after Major Swain’s dispatch, the Sultan requested the British government to supply him with troop transport ships. Dufferin said, ‘It was difficult to imagine the Sultan’s motive’.

The Sultan’s motive was definitely not the military solution. On 19 June Derviş was instructed to ask Urabi to resign in order not to force the Porte to send soldiers and ‘to prevent divisions among Muslims’. He was to be told that the Sultan was not in any way angry with him and invited him to Istanbul where ‘he would be much in favour’. Urabi was to be reminded of ‘the very great harm to result from such a course of action as the sending of Ottoman troops to Egypt by the intervention of European Powers’. The Palace also told Derviş that it was very much against the convening of an international conference in Istanbul to deal with the Egyptian crisis. Derviş was to pacify the country, and anybody who would undertake such action as to provoke intervention ‘was a sinner against Allah’.

It is interesting to note that Derviş also reported on attempts by European Consuls to heighten tension in Egypt by distributing handbills among the Christian population encouraging them to flee Egypt. This in turn, was reacting on the Muslim population who feared that once the Christians had left the fleets would bombard Alexandria. This fear then completed the vicious circle by increasing inter-communal tensions. This evidence helps to confirm Galbraith and Marsot’s contention that ‘the disorders of 1882 were incited by the actions of the Europeans, not by Urabi’.

Even in the last days of June, however, Istanbul was still working on the ‘soft option’ towards Urabi. On 24 June Derviş was told that Urabi was to be given the Mecidiye First Class and made a Paşa. On the next day Derviş wrote that although Urabi was for the time being the only force capable of maintaining order, time must be gained and reforms instigated which would make it impossible for ‘a man like Urabi who does not know good from evil’ to concentrate power in his hands. This was nothing more than the time-honoured Ottoman device of ‘... Loading with honours and official duties men it [Istanbul] could not capture or discipline ...’.

By the beginning of July, however, the Porte seemed to be in despair. Derviş was told on 1 July that the moderate policy followed so far had been unproductive: Urabi had not come to Istanbul. Upon Derviş’s insistence Urabi had been decorated and a policy of reconciliation followed but this had not yielded results. Derviş was asked what the attitude of the local population would be to an Ottoman landing. In a letter to Derviş dated 3 July the same tone of desperation was discernible. He was to summon Urabi and ‘behind closed doors’ tell him that the English and French had
designs ‘to cause the killing of Muslim by Muslim’ in Egypt. Did he want ‘Muslim blood to flow like the waves of the holy Nile?’ (Islam kaninin emvac-i Nil-i mubarek gibi akmasini …) Did he want to turn Egypt into another Tunisia or India? He wanted Halim to be Khedive, but did he not see that Halim was the puppet of the French?65 On the same day Derviş sent an important cable. The Khedive and his followers were insisting on the need for an Ottoman force. Urabi and his followers were spreading the rumour that the Ottomans would destroy Egypt and make it easier for the foreigners to invade. Derviş suggested that the Porte should spread the rumour that it would land a force in Port Said, ‘to protect the Canal against the British’. At the same time a local assembly of notables and ulema would be called and the necessity for the landing explained to them. This would mean that public opinion would turn against Urabi and he would not be able to offer armed resistance.66 Urabi, according to Derviş, was implying that the Porte should leave him to his own devices to defend Egypt.67

The Porte now directed Derviş to publish the declaration that the Sultan had given him. The text of the declaration was an appeal to the population of Egypt on behalf of the Sultan:

O people of Egypt … Let it be known that your Master the Caliph of all Muslims only wants the prosperity and happiness of his people. Perform your duty of obedience to the Sultan by obeying the Khedive … There is no tribalism (kavmiyyet) or nationalism (cinsiyyet) in Islam. Religion and nationality are as one. Recent acts against His Highness the Khedive are not acceptable to the Sultan … Let there be no talk of tribalism and nationalism … Beware on all occasions of any illegal activity or inhuman behaviour towards anyone, native or foreign …68

The convening of the conference in Istanbul, and the rumours that it had been decided there to send Ottoman soldiers to Egypt brought tension to a peak. On 3 July Derviş reported that the newspaper El-Taif, ‘which is particularly the mouthpiece of Urabi’ had published an article on 14 Şaban 1299/2 July 1882 stating that an Ottoman force would ‘meet with even stronger resistance than an English or French force’. The Commissioner further reported that the defences at Abukir were being reinforced against such an eventuality.69 Reacting in horror to this news, Istanbul immediately demanded an official denial of the El-Taif article.70 Derviş replied that Urabi had been obedient until news had leaked out of the conference that Ottoman troops were about to arrive, and that this had changed everything. It was no longer possible to influence Urabi ‘through flattery’. He was now demanding that Derviş Paşa should leave Egypt.71 Istanbul was particularly alive to the implications of the El-Taif article for Islamic lands:

It is a great corruption [that such things should be written], as the Padişah is the Caliph and Emir of Muslims everywhere. To see such words used against the Imam of all Muslims will no doubt sadden the hearts of many believers …72
It is interesting that the British were also inclined to touch a raw nerve in Abdulhamid’s Islamic sensibilities. During these very days the Dragoman of the Istanbul Embassy, Sandison, had an interview with the Sultan in which he attempted to scare him with talk in ‘some of the most influential English newspapers’, to the effect that his inactivity in Egypt was causing the press to push the Government to recognize ‘an independent Arab Government in Cairo’. Sandison rubbed salt into the wound by hinting ‘that a rival Caliph in Egypt would not suit His Majesty’.73

Meanwhile all attempts to procure an official denial of the El-Taif article failed. Derviş Paşa was told that the offending passage had been a quote from a British paper and it was suggested that the Porte should demand an official denial from that source.74

In these days of Admiral Seymour’s ultimatum and the events leading up to the bombardment of Alexandria, Derviş seems to have made a last desperate attempt to bring Urabi to Istanbul. Acting on instructions to ‘beseech him [Urabi] in the name of humanity and Islam’ to go to Istanbul, Derviş approached Urabi one last time on 8 July. However, the latter told him it was out of the question that he go anywhere because he would be cut off from Egypt ‘by an army of 200,000’, the local population would be greatly excited and this would lead to grave disturbances.75

To ‘beseech in the name of Islam’ seems to be all that the Porte could envisage at this juncture. Military intervention was out, and the Sultan did not waver on this point. Derviş was told on 7 July that ‘even if the Porte were to send 100,000 soldiers to Egypt’, England and France would do all in their power to make sure they failed.76 Nor was Abdulhamid mistaken. Dufferin told his minister on the very same day that he was determined that a Turkish expedition should not re-assert Turkish power in Egypt. Also he was ‘aware of the great aversion of the Sultan to the step we are anxious he should take’.77

In these hectic last hours before the British ships opened fire Abdulhamid made desperate and hopeless attempts to prevent the inevitable. On 10 July Derviş was told to ‘order’ Urabi to refrain from provoking Seymour.78 On the same day the Sultan told Dufferin by way of the American minister that he would have a concrete proposal by ‘5 o’clock tomorrow’ and asked for a postponement of the bombardment by 48 hours. Dufferin replied he could only grant this if the proposal justified the ‘additional risk which would be entailed’ to the British ships from the Egyptian forts:

The threatened bombardment is an act of self-defence which the military authorities in command … can readily prevent. [The projected bombardment] … is a local question of police which is not likely to affect the character of our friendly relations with the Porte.79

To the Sultan, however, this ‘local question of police’ was an infringement of his sovereign rights in Egypt. The Porte’s Ambassador to London, Musurus Paşa asked on 10 July that the ultimatum be lifted. He too was given the ‘self-defence’ line and was told all this was being done ‘in the
well-understood interest of the Sultan ... whose orders had been disobeyed'.

The day before he embarked to leave Egypt, Derviş placed the blame for the burning of Alexandria jointly on Urabi and Seymour. Urabi had provoked it by his 'obstinacy and stupidity' but Seymour had made irresponsible use of violence. Also the behaviour of the British was inhuman: they had fired upon teams sent out to extinguish fires and bury the dead. As British Marines were landed and a fully-fledged military confrontation developed in Egypt, Istanbul remained a forlorn onlooker. Schölch mentions that at the end of July Urabi received a telegram from the Foreign Minister Said Paşa placing the entire blame for the Egyptian crisis on his shoulders. There is an undated draft in the Yıldız documents which could be the Turkish copy of this telegram. In the name of the Sultan, Urabi was told that he had misled the Muslims of Egypt with his 'lies about protecting the peace of Muslims'. But his rebellion was motivated only by his personal ambition 'which is to become Khedive of Egypt'. The text is written in a very high-handed tone:

You should know that you are a common man [ahad-i nasdan bir adam olub] and have no superiority or nobility and have no authority to rebel in the name of the Prophet or the Emir el Muminin ... Schölch maintains that although some in Urabi's entourage such as Nedim were in favour of publicizing this breach with Istanbul, Urabi wanted it kept secret. Schölch also states that until the moment when Urabi was openly ostracized by the Sultan 'the ties with the Porte were never questioned'. There is, however, some evidence in Wilfred Blunt's correspondance with Gladstone which contradicts this position. Blunt wrote to Gladstone on 16 February 1882 giving his assessment of the Urabists' links with the Sultan:

... I have no reason to believe that any real conversion has taken place among them to the Sultan's Imperial ideas. I know them to be firm in their intention to submit to no interference from him in the affairs of Egypt. I believe they would resist him heartily in arms were he to attempt sending troops to support his authority here. Indeed Araby had told me as much, though usually very cautious in his language about the Porte ... the loyalty displayed to Abd-ul-Hamid is lip service only ...

THE ISTANBUL CONFERENCE

The Istanbul Conference on Egypt bringing together the Ambassadors of the Powers convened on 3 June 1882. It was to become a sorry charade in which the British pressed Abdulhamid to send troops and he retaliated with stalling tactics until the last-minute declaration of Urabi as a rebel. The first thing that must be understood about this conference was that it was extremely undesirable to Abdulhamid. Although the proceedings began on 3 June an Ottoman delegation did not join the sittings until 26
July. The Derviş Paşa mission was largely a preemptive measure to avoid entanglement in this conference and the Commissioner was told as much before he left Istanbul. The Porte's Ambassador to London, Musurus Paşa, also made this clear when he told Granville on 20 June that the Sultan would never agree to a conference, 'as conferences had always ended unfavourably to Turkey'. Musurus also said that regarding the sending of troops the Porte did not want to appear 'as the mandatory of Europe'. Here once again the Sultan's sensitivity to historical precedent played a decisive role in policy. Abdülhamid clearly recollected the manner in which the Ottoman delegation had been slighted in the Berlin Conference. Dufferin also came up against the same theme in an interview with the Foreign Minister Said Paşa on 26 June. He told the minister he knew that Turkish Commissioners at conferences before did not have good memories but this was different: 'All our interests are jeopardized'. Dufferin could not resist adding: 'Les absents ont toujours tort'.

On 19 July 1882 the British gave the Porte what amounted to an ultimatum regarding the sending of troops to Egypt. But they placed little faith in the Sultan. Dufferin said it was 'out of the question to place any reliance upon his stability of purpose or upon his good faith ...'. The Ambassador seemed actually surprised that the Sultan would employ armed forces 'only so far as these may be compatible with the Sultan's own aims, wishes, desires and dreams ...'. One is tempted to ask: for whose 'aims, wishes and desires' was he supposed to act?

From the very first day that they joined the conference the Ottoman delegation noticed that the British were the main exponents of sending an Ottoman force to Egypt, and that the French were lukewarm about the idea. Said Paşa was to remark that the 'general demeanour' of the French Ambassador did not match the ardour of his British colleague. It is interesting that this information finds its shadow in British sources. Even before the Ottomans joined the conference Dufferin had reported on 26 June that the French Ambassador was very much against 'even the suggestion' of Ottoman troops: '... he appeared to prefer any amount of delay or any solution rather than that ...'. A few days later he was to report that the conference was getting nowhere and that the Ambassadors of the Powers were only procrastinating. The Ottoman delegation, of course, did not fail to make use of this. In the second sitting the Ottoman delegation tried to preempt the British by proposing that as soon as an Ottoman force arrived in Egypt the British should withdraw. This proposal took the British and French Ambassadors by surprise and caused the German, Austrian and Russian delegates to intercede with the Ottomans to withdraw their proposal since the British would never accept such a condition. But time was gained. It is also worth noting that all the Ambassadors soothed Ottoman worries by assuring them that the new situation in Egypt did not mean, 'independent laws' would be made, 'nor would a constitution be permitted'.

The major issue during the negotiations for an Anglo-Ottoman military convention seems to have been the official declaration by the Sultan denouncing Urabi as 'a rebel and outlaw'. The British were to apply
extreme pressure for this declaration to be issued before any Ottoman landing. This suggests that even at this late date they were worried about the possibility that Ottoman troops would make common cause with the Urabists. Dufferin actually told Said Paşa on 7 August that if Ottoman soldiers arrived before Urabi’s denunciation was made public, Admiral Seymour had orders to prevent their landing.\textsuperscript{94} The British Ambassador proved particularly unyielding on this point. The Ottomans suggested that troops should first be landed and Urabi asked to surrender, if he persisted then the declaration would be issued. Dufferin categorically refused and threatened to walk out of the negotiations.\textsuperscript{95} Abdulhamid, on the other hand, seemed particularly reluctant to take this step. Telling Urabi privately what he thought of him was one thing, but publicly and openly to declare him a rebel was quite another, especially as this would be done with the prodding of a Christian power. Accordingly the Sultan sent word to the Conference on 27 August that the announcement of Urabi to be a rebel and outlaw before the arrival of Ottoman troops would serve only to intensify the resistance of the Urabists. They would ‘precipitate themselves’ (\textit{muhaceme ederek}) on to the Ottoman troops who would be much fewer in number. However, the Sultan was, as in the case of the bombardment of Alexandria, attempting to prevent the inevitable and he could only stall for so long. By 6 September it was made clear by the British that this declaration was a \textit{sine qua non} for any military convention. On this day the Ottoman Cabinet was to advise that

Since he has disobeyed the orders of the Sublime State ... and attempted to further his personal interest ... thus provoking foreign military intervention he has brought down upon himself his declaration as a rebel and outlaw.\textsuperscript{96}

An \textit{irade} was accordingly issued on the next day. It specified that the denunciatory declaration would be formulated in Turkish, and not in Arabic as the British wanted, ‘because the official language of the State is Turkish’. If the British insisted, then an Arabic translation would be made and this given to the Embassy for proclamation in Egypt. The \textit{irade} specified:

... To ensure that there to be no mistake in the translation into Arabic of the original Turkish version Abulhuda and Seyid Esad Efendi should approve it and seal it with their seals ...\textsuperscript{97}

It is particularly noteworthy that the two leading ‘Pan-Islamists’ in Abdulhamid’s entourage were asked officially to endorse the document. Again, the Sultan was acutely aware of the implications of his actions for the Arab world as Urabi had become something of a legend.

CONCEPTIONS OF URABI

Although Abdulhamid feared ‘Hukumet-i Arabiyye’ above all else and once even told the British Ambassador, ‘any Arab government would be as fatal to the interests of England as those of Turkey’, he did not truly
understand the dynamic motivating Urabi. The Ottomans, the British, the French, in short all the outside parties involved in the conflict did not see that Urabi was a local force, drawing his strength from the fact that he had become a pater patriae: ‘There can be no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the population had given Urabi moral support, had rallied in spirit under his banner’. Instead everyone looked for an éminence grise behind Urabi who was pulling his strings. Malet once reported that in a conversation with Abdulhamid

His Majesty seemed to think that it was impossible that the Egyptian officers should have acted as they had unless they had been urged on by intrigue and he suspected the ex-Khedive and Prince Halim.

Indeed, we come across the theme of ‘intrigue’ or ‘conspiracy’ throughout the Ottoman documents dealing with Urabi. On 10 June Derviş received a telegram telling him that ‘it is thought that Urabi Paşa is working in concord with the British Consul’. Five days later Derviş was asked: ‘Is the Khedive appearing to be (zahiren) at odds with Urabi Paşa while secretly (batinen) acting in league and in agreement with him in this intrigue?’ The matter came up again on 1 July when Derviş was told: ‘The Khedive seems to be secretly allied with Urabi Paşa’. This evidence combined with the fact that it was hoped to put an end to the troubles in Egypt by enticing Urabi to Istanbul with simple promises of royal favour indicates that the Sultan was at a loss as to what to do. Before, either local risings were crushed militarily (which was out of the question in this case) or their leaders were ‘bought’. Neither method seemed to be applicable. The fact that as late as 10 July 1882, the day before the bombardment of Alexandria, Abdulhamid could feel that he could order Urabi to refrain from provoking Seymour is another indication of how far he was out of his depth. How did he hope to order the only viable popular leader in the country to refrain from defending himself?

The British fared no better as far as understanding Urabi was concerned. Although at first both Malet and the British representative on the Dual Control, Auckland Colvin, felt that ‘[Urabi’s] movement though in its origin anti-Turk is in itself an Egyptian national movement …’, they both were soon to change their tune completely and speak of ‘military dictatorship’ and ‘despotism’. Robinson and Gallager have also pointed out that the British

… did not understand the nature of the Egyptian revolution; nor was this altogether surprising since Arabi’s movement was one of the first Oriental liberal–national revolutions against European control.

Galbraith and Marsot also indicate that the ‘men on the spot’, Malet and Colvin, supplied ‘misleading, inaccurate, or false information’ which ‘deluded their superiors’. These authors also point to Malet and Colvin’s, ‘complete lack of understanding of currents agitating Egyptian society’. Nor did these superiors need much deluding. On 7 February 1882 the Ottoman Ambassador in London, Musurus Paşa, reported that Granville
had asked him point-blank whether Urabi was working for the ex-
Khedive Ismail Paşa.\textsuperscript{108} It is interesting that this suspicion was also
declared by Granville to Blunt who was to impress upon Gladstone the
incredibility of the proposal:

I cannot easily forget that the highest authority in the Foreign
Office expressed to me ... in March his absolute knowledge of
Arabi’s corrupt complicity with Ismail in a design for that Prince’s
restoration ...\textsuperscript{109}

In effect it seems all outside parties thought at one time or another that
Urabi must be someone’s puppet. The Sultan himself wavered between
putting him down as an agent of the British or Prince Halim. In a personal
memorandum he stated:

... Urabi’s correspondence with Halim Paşa shows that he is acting
with his encouragement. The desire of the British was in any case to
start up something like this to enable them to go into Egypt. To
prevent this the necessary precautions were taken and Derviš Paşa
and Seyyid Esad Efendi were sent to Egypt. Their counsels had no
effect. At that time the British fleet came to Egypt. Later the English
asked the Sublime State to send no more than four thousand soldiers
to Abukir, the place where Napoleon disembarked and where in the
least stormy weather it is impossible to dock ... If the State had sent
soldiers to Egypt, we had good information that Urabi’s henchmen
would brandish the Holy Book and would thus make it impossible
for the Imperial Soldiery to fire upon them ... This too was with the
encouragement of the British ...\textsuperscript{110}

Of course such ‘encouragement’ existed only in the Sultan’s head, but he
was quite correct in his assessment of the Egyptians’ will to resist. On the
other hand the French feared that ‘Arabi’s rising was part of a general pan-
Islamic movement directed by the Sultan’ against French positions in
North Africa, and because of this were against any idea of Ottoman troops
being sent to Egypt at all.\textsuperscript{111}

CONCLUSION

Seen from Istanbul, what was important was not so much whether Urabi
was a rebel or a patriot, but that he was seen as a rebel. Although no doubt
some of the Ulema and Viziers felt sympathetic to Urabi, the Sultan had
no such soft spot. The man had publicly insulted and opposed the legally
constituted authority, his representative, the Khedive.

The movement had overtones of parliamentarianism as well, and
as such could constitute a dangerous example for the Ottoman Arab
provinces which Abdulhamid saw as the heartland of the Empire together
with Anatolia. Indeed parliamentarianism was a sore point in Istanbul
proper. Even if, as Schölich indicates, Urabi frequently protested his
loyalty to the Emir-el-Muminin and stressed that Egypt was part of the
Ottoman Empire, what was critical from Istanbul’s viewpoint was that
he was not trusted. Also there are indications that, although Urabi declared his loyalty officially, he was determined to resist Ottoman troops. ‘Arabism’ or ‘Pan-Islamism’ were political tools for Abdulhamid and were fine as long as he held the reins. ‘Official Arabs’ such as Abuhluda and Seyyid Es’ad were useful as state ideologues but no independent ‘Arabism’ could be tolerated. It was highly significant that these two ‘Official Arabs’ affixed their seals to the declaration denouncing Urabi as a rebel. Later in a personal memorandum Abdulhamid would draw a comparison between the Sudanese Mahdi and Urabi referring to the Mahdi as ‘a brigand worthy of the title – a second Urabi (Urabi-i Sani)’.

Urabi became in the Sultan’s mind, something of an epithet for rebellion. In 1887 he was to draw yet another comparison this time between Urabi and Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, where the latter was said to be pretending loyalty to Istanbul while preparing to provoke Russian intervention:

... Just like Urabi who at the beginning of his uprising declared his obedience and loyalty to the Sublime State and his enmity to the English, later causing England to go into Egypt and is now living in peace and comfort on a British pension ...

This increasing distrust of all things British would lead the Sultan into his policy of neutrality, the main aim of which was the distancing of the Empire from Britain. The Egyptian chapter in Ottoman history had come to an end. Although Britain formally recognized Ottoman suzerainty in Egypt until the Great War, British imperialism of a new subtle blend gradually established itself. The Ottoman Commissioner to Egypt, Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa who was ostensibly there to negotiate British evacuation, nicely summed up the situation:

Even if the British were to end their military occupation today, their moral occupation (ișgal-i manevi) of all this country’s institutions is so thorough that it will prove more effective than military occupation.

This was indeed a good assessment of that peculiarly Victorian form of colonial government, the ‘Veiled Protectorate’.

NOTES
OTTOMAN RESPONSE TO THE EGYPTIAN CRISIS

Studies, Vol. 9 (1978), pp. 519–37. The indemnity was to increase Ottoman indebtedness by one-sixth.


5. Ibid., p. 143.


7. Schölch, op. cit., p. 244.

8. For an excellent account of these critical days see Schölch, op. cit., pp. 194–215.

9. Basbakanlik Arsivi, Yildiz Esas Evraki (hereafter referred to as Y.E.E.) Kisim: 39/Evrak: 84-1/Zarf: 84/Karton: 124/Enclosure: I–17. Meclis-i Vukela Mazbatasi. The Ottomans had already sent an inspection commission to Egypt in October 1881, headed by Ali Nizami Pasa. See below n. 26. Although Abdulhamid jealously guarded any decision making and centred the business of state around himself, he did order the Cabinet to discuss and to advise. The subsequent decisions he made were influenced by this advice. The image of the ‘despot’ and ‘paranoic’ who did not listen to anyone is incorrect.

10. Ibid., enclosure I–15.

11. Ibid., enclosure I–3. The Ministers did however make distinctions between Egypt which was an ‘autonomous province’ (Eyalet-i muttaze) and others.

12. Ibid., enclosure I–5. ‘Arzu olumnası tabii olan levazim-i itidal ve ihtiyata pek de muvafaq gelemiyecegi …


14. FO. 78/3324, Pol. No. 246, Malet to Granville, 21 September 1881.


17. Ibid., encl. A–1 and A–2: 5 and 7 Muharrem 1299./28 and 30 November 1881.


23. FO. 78/3387. Draft no. 566 A. Dufferin to Granville, 9 July 1882. See also Feroze Yasamee, ‘The Ottoman Empire and the European Great Powers: 1884–1887’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies 1984), p. 62: ‘Despite the apparent malleability of the Sultan’s personal psychology, the corruptibility of many of his servants, and the weakness and disorganization of his administrative apparatus, the Ottoman Empire was not an Egypt or a Bokhara: its governing institutions could not be decisively penetrated and its ruler could not be bought out’.


26. Y.E.E. 39/84/1/84/124. FO. 78/2277. Draft no. 42. Granville to Dufferin. 26 January 1882: The key words here were ‘securing administrative independence’. During the visit of the Ali Nizami Pasa and Ali Fuad Bey Mission to Egypt in October 1881, the then Prime Minister of Egypt Serif Pasa, and the Khedive himself had asked the British to intercede with the Porte and bring about the recall of the Mission. Granville fully supported this idea and said: ‘The Government of England would run counter to the most cherished traditions of national history were it to diminish that liberty (of relative autonomy)’. See: FO. 78/3320. Draft no. 214. Granville to Male. 4 November 1881.
29. Y.E.E. 39/2012/131/116. Firari (Runaway) Ahmed Pasa was the Ottoman Admiral who defected to Egypt with the whole Ottoman fleet at the end of the Second Egyptian–Ottoman war (1839). The above mabata is undated but is likely to have been written in May 1882. Note that only shortly before the Ministers had advocated a naval 'demonstration' (see above. n. 181; Y.E.E. 39/1745/131/116); it seems that the Sultan intervened at this point.
30. Ibid.
31. Y.E.E. 39/2465/121/122: This is a collection of documents compiled in a 270 page defter comprising most of the telegraphic and postal correspondence between Derviş Paşa and Istanbul. The instructions sent to Derviş Paşa emanate in most cases directly from the Sultan. Derviş Ibrahim Paşa (1812–96) was a well-known Ottoman trouble-shooter (in many cases literally) who had distinguished himself in the Balkans during the turbulent 1870s; on him see Islam Ansiklopedisi (Ist. 1945) Vol. 3. p.552, and Meydan Larousse (Ist. 1970), Vol. 3. p.587.
32. Vatikiotis, op. cit. p.466, n. 23 By 'Turkish sources' here Vatikiotis does not indicate anything beyond the Memoirs of Kamil Paşa.
33. Ibid., p.146.
34. Schölch, op. cit.: p.245, also p.246: 'It was now known positively that the Sultan was only waiting for an opportunity to depose Tevfik'. Halim Paşa as direct descendant of Mehmet Ali would have been eligible. He had been resident in Istanbul since his exile from Egypt and was very active in promoting his cause.
35. Y.E.E., 39/2012/131/116. Encl. A.40. Undated Cabinet minutes. Halim was known to be close to the French.
36. Ibid. The term used here is: 'Misir'î dogmek niyetiyle'.
37. Y.E.E. 8/1063/77/3. (undated): Schölch is also mistaken in stating: 'Even at that time he had wanted to appoint Halim as Ismail's successor' (Schölch, op. cit. p.247). Khedive Ismail had been deposed in June 1879 when his financial policies fell foul of Anglo-French interests.
40. Y.E.E. 39/1208/131/116. Encl. A–9 (see also Said Paşa's Memoirs, p.73, where he too indicates that the Sultan did not favour a change of Khedive).
41. Ibid., encl. A–14.
42. Abu-Manneh, op. cit. p.151, n. 75.
43. Schölch, op. cit., pp.245, 246.
44. Vatikiotis, op. cit., p.156; Mansfield, op. cit. p.38; Cromer, op. cit., p.222.
46. Schölch, op. cit., p.249.
47. Y.E.E. 39/1208/131/116. Encl. A–4: Of course all such reports must be approached with caution for it is impossible to discern to what extent the reporter might be telling the Sultan what he would like to hear.
50. Ibid., p.9. Palace to Derviş, 12 June 1882, tel. no. 5.
51. Ibid., p.10. Palace to Derviş, 13 June 1882, tel. no. 6: The British, on the other hand, accused the Ottomans. Granville told the Ottoman Ambassador Musurus Paşa that 'the Porte] was responsible in the ultimate resort for the serious outrage in Alexandria' – see: FO. 78/3378. Draft no. 322. Granville to Dufferin, 17 June 1882.
52. Ibid., pp.17–21. Derviş to Palace, 13 June 1882, tels. 11, 13, 15.
53. FO. 78/3386. Draft no. 487, Dufferin to Granville, 23 June 1882; in another draft Dufferin said the Sultan first 'stood to win on Derviş Paşa', who failed and so he inclined to Urabi as a result of his appearing to be 'champion of the rights of Islam'. See FO. 78/3386. Draft no. 473; Dufferin to Granville, 19 June 1882. The assessment is of course incorrect.
54. FO. 78/3385. Draft no. 444, A, Dufferin to Granville, 14 June 1882.
OTTOMAN RESPONSE TO THE EGYPTIAN CRISIS

57. FO. 78/3385. Draft no. 5, Major Swain to Dufferin, 12 June 1882. This extremely detailed and lengthy report is also interesting as it shows the extent to which British intelligence had up-to-the-minute information on the state of the Ottoman Army.
58. FO. 78/3386. Draft no. 454, Dufferin to Granville, 16 June 1882.
60. Ibid., pp.53–4. Palace to Derviş, 21 June 1882.
Draft no. 498, Dufferin to Granville, 26 June 1882.
64. Y.E.E. 39/2465/121/122. pp.95–7. Palace to Derviş, 1 July 1882, tel. no. 34.
67. Ibid., pp.121, 122, 123. Derviş to Palace, 3 July 1882, tel. no. 64.
68. Ibid., pp.62–4. Palace to Derviş, 22 June 1882, tel. no. 22.
70. Ibid., pp.128–29. Palace to Derviş, 4 July 1882, tel. no. 39, 40.
71. Ibid., pp.130, 131. Derviş to Palace, 4 July 1882, tel. no. 67.
72. Ibid., pp.132, 133, 134. Palace to Derviş, 5 July 1882, tel. no. 68. Copy of telegram to Khedive. The telegram also noted that the article was the work of Abdallah-Al-Nedim who was reknowned for his close ties with Urabi.
73. FO. 78/3387. Draft no. 547, Dufferin to Granville, 3 July 1882.
75. Ibid., pp.145. Derviş to Palace, 8 July 1882, tel. no. 76.
76. Ibid., pp.137. Palace to Derviş, 7 July 1882, tel. no. 42.
77. FO. 78/3387. Draft no. 561, Dufferin to Granville, 7 July 1882.
78. Y.E.E. 39/1465/121/122. pp.146, 147. Palace to Derviş, 10 July 1882, tel. no. 45.
79. FO. 78/3387. Draft no. 566. B. Dufferin to Granville, 10 July 1882. For an excellent assessment of these critical few days see: Galbraith and Marsot, op. cit. pp.484–7 and Schölich, op. cit., pp.258–92. The issues leading up to the bombardment are dealt with here only in so far as they have a bearing on the policy of the Porte. However, the general gist of the Ottoman evidence tends to support the claim of Galbraith and Marsot as well as that of Schölich that the British intervention was not justified by local events and the Arabists were capable of maintaining order.
80. FO. 78/3378. Draft no. 390, Granville to Dufferin, 10 July 1882.
82. Schölich, op. cit., p.286.
83. Y.E.E. 39/360/131/116. However, it must be noted that the document above is an extremely rough draft and there is no indication that it was actually sent.
84. Schölich, op. cit., p.313.
85. British Library, Additional Manuscripts. 4110. Gladstone Papers Vol. XXV. Correspondence with Mr Blunt: One must however allow for the somewhat romantic character of Mr. Blunt’s information, although seen in conjunction with the matter of the El-Taif article this letter at least deserves to be taken seriously.
88. FO. 78/3386. Draft no. 498, Dufferin to Granville, 26 June 1882.
89. FO. 78/3388. Draft no. 628, do., 21 July 1882.
90. Y.E.E. 39/2469/121/122. p.1. This is a 60-page defter containing the negotiations in formal sittings and private meetings.
91. FO. 78/3386. Draft no. 495, Dufferin to Granville, 26 June 1882.
92. Ibid., Draft no. 524, same to same, 30 June 1882.

This content downloaded from 62.122.78.49 on Fri, 20 Jun 2014 15:05:31 PM
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions
95. Ibid., pp.41–42. Private negotiations with British Ambassador, 9 Şevval 1299/25 August 1882.
96. Y.E.E. 36/2475/150/XVI. p.37. Defter entitled ‘Egyptian Affairs’ (Misir Isleri). 21 Şevval 1299/6 September 1882. It is also interesting that the commander of the Ottoman force which was supposedly to be sent was to be none other than Derviş Paşa (see. Ibid., pp.41–42).
97. Ibid., Irade dated 22 Şevval 1299/7 September 1882. It is noteworthy that it was the ‘official Arabs’ not the Şeyhülislam who was employed in this context. This might be due to the de-emphasizing of that office by Abdulhamid.
98. FO. 78/3388. Draft no. 606, Dufferin to Granville, 16 July 1882.
99. In his carefully researched study, Schölch does however point out that conscription and mobilization was not entirely voluntary and ‘did not begin from the bottom up’, see: Schölch, op. cit. pp.287, 288, 289.
100. FO. 78/3324. Pol. No. 246, Malet to Granville, 21 September 1881.
102. Ibid., p.26. Palace to Derviş, 15 June 1882, tel. no. 10. However in all fairness to the Ottomans it must be admitted that they were generous with their suspicions. They also suspected the Khedive Tevfik Paşa of combinations with the British. (see. Ibid., pp.34–6).
103. Ibid., same to same, pp.95, 96, 97, 1 July 1882, tel. no. 34.
104. See above, n. 78.
106. Robinson and Gallagher, op. cit., p.104; Schölch, however, has pointed out that the terms ‘liberal’ ‘national’ or ‘revolution’ do not exactly fit the Uradım movement: see Schölch, op. cit., pp.306–15.
108. Y.E.E. 39/84–1/84/124, enclosure 1, 6.
110. Y.E.E. 8/1063/77/3. The Sultan added that the Ottoman troops would be outnumbered and slaughtered.
114. Başbakanlık Arşivi. Misir Irade, no. 745: 14 Zilhicce 1304 (2 September 1887). I am grateful to Dr Feroze Yasamee for this reference. It is worth mentioning that the Uradım episode was also to be used as an example of Arab nationalism by the Young Turks. Ziya Gokalp referred to Abdallah Nedim as ‘one of Arabi’s followers’ who espoused the slogan ‘abandon the Turk’. See: Ziya Gokalp, Türkleşmek, İslamişmak, Muasirlaşmak (Ankara: Serdengecti Nesriyati, 1963), p.26.
115. Y.E.E. 39/2168/129/120. 21 Cemaziyeahir 1307 (15 February 1890).
116. Mansfield, op. cit., p.93: This policy was the brainchild of Sir Evelyn Baring (later Earl of Cromer) who outlined his attitude in an article entitled, ‘The Government of Subject Races’. Baring, although nominally the British Consul General in Egypt, was the power in the land from 11 September 1883 to 6 May 1907.