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**ISLAM AND MODERNISM  
IN EGYPT**

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AT CAIRO  
ORIENTAL STUDIES

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ISLAM AND MODERNISM  
IN EGYPT

A STUDY OF THE MODERN REFORM MOVEMENT  
INAUGURATED BY MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH

*By*

CHARLES C. ADAMS

B.A., PH.D., D.D.

*American Mission, Egypt*

*Member of Administrative Faculty*

*School of Oriental Studies*

*Cairo*

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## PREFACE

**T**HIS book is the first part of a dissertation which was submitted, in August 1928, to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Chicago (U.S.A.), Department of Old Testament, in candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Its publication has been made possible by the decision of the Faculty of the School of Oriental Studies of the American University, Cairo, Egypt, with which the author of this work has for some years been associated, to include the work as a monograph in its series of Oriental Studies.

The second part of the dissertation, which is not being published at the present time, for various reasons, consists of a translation into English of a work on the Islāmic Caliphate by 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq, one of the younger and more liberal school of Egyptian writers of to-day. This work, published in 1925 under the title *Al-Islām wa uṣūl al-hukm* ('Islām and the Fundamentals of Authority'; sub-title: *A Study of the Caliphate and Government in Islām*), aroused a furor of opposition in Egypt at the time of its publication by reason of its liberal views. What is the origin of these revolutionary views? In particular, do they bear any relation, as might naturally be conjectured, to the modern reform movement in Egypt, inaugurated by Muḥammad 'Abduh, the late Grand Muftī of Egypt, who died in 1905? Or do they connect, rather, with the works of European scholars? The consideration of these and similar questions which naturally arise in connexion with a work like that of 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq, led to the preparation of an introductory study to accompany the translation, in which an effort is made to set forth the origin and development of the modern reform movement, to estimate the extent of its influence, and to discover whether any relation exists between the ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh and those of the author whose work was translated and other writers who, like him, belong to the modern Egyptian School. The form and contents of the introductory study are sufficiently general, however, and of such general connexion with

the translation, that it can be published separately in the form in which it now appears.

This study is offered by the author to the public with much diffidence; in the hope that scholars familiar with the field covered may find something of value in it, even though such European scholars as Goldziher, Horten, Hartmann and others, and such Egyptian scholars as Professor Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq, in collaboration with M. Bernard Michel, have preceded with studies in European languages concerning the work of Muḥammad 'Abduh. It is not claimed for this work that it presents anything new, not heretofore discovered, with reference to the life and teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh; although it may be said, with some show of justice, that it sets these forth with greater fullness than has been done heretofore, and, in particular, that it gives some account of the later developments of the movement. In any case, there would seem to be room for a work in English on this subject. The author cherishes the hope, also, that a somewhat wider public of those who wish to follow the developments that are taking place in modern Islām and in the thought life of Islāmic countries may find the work not without interest.

The work is published practically as presented in dissertation form; such changes only have been made as were necessary to take account of publications relating to the subject that have appeared since the work was written. Particular mention should be made of the admirable series of *Studies in Contemporary Arabic Literature*, by Professor H. A. R. Gibb, reprinted from the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, London; and the valuable biographical sketches in *Leaders in Contemporary Arabic Literature*, by Tāhir Khemīri and Professor Dr. G. Kampffmeyer, reprinted 1930, from *Die Welt des Islams*. The present writer has been gratified to find his own views confirmed at a number of points by these studies, and, in other instances, has received help from them which he gladly acknowledges. The recent publication of greatest concern, however, to a work dealing with Muḥammad 'Abduh, is volume i of the *Tārīkh* or 'Biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh', by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, which appeared in the latter months of 1931. This long-



awaited volume by the chief disciple of 'Abduh, who has carried on his tradition, must remain the principal source of information regarding the life and work of the great Egyptian reformer. The second volume, containing 'Abduh's principal contributed articles and briefer works, and the third, containing biographical and eulogistic accounts which appeared at the time of his death, were already available. But, until the appearance of the recent volume, the only biography of considerable length concerning him was that from the pen of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā which was printed in vol. viii (1905) of *Al-Manār*, the monthly journal of the 'Abduh party. The volume which has just now appeared contains a wealth of incident and detail concerning events and persons; throws most interesting and valuable sidelights on modern Egyptian history; reveals inner details of the various intrigues, political or otherwise, in which 'Abduh was involved, sometimes as author but more frequently as victim—which is the principal reason why publication of the biography in its present form has been possible only in recent years; and, in short, would be considered, with its more than one thousand pages, as the last and fullest source-book for a biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh, were not the publication of a supplementary volume promised, containing additional documentary material. But a comparison of the recent volume with the earlier and briefer biography reveals that the main outlines of the 'Life', even down to the more important details, remain the same; so that little rewriting of the present study has been necessitated by the appearance of the larger biography. Page references to the new volume have been added in the footnotes for the most important facts and statements; but in many instances references to the earlier biography have been considered sufficient.

The footnotes, citing supporting authorities or making explanatory comments, have been retained for the sake of those who may wish to verify statements or views expressed. The general reader who is not concerned about authorities and to whom a system of footnotes is distracting, will find that these footnotes can, for the most part, be safely disregarded.

With reference to the ever-troublesome question of the transliteration of Arabic words, it has seemed best to make use of all the diacritical marks necessary to indicate the Arabic characters, and the length-marks above words to indicate the long vowels, even in words such as Muḥammad, Islām, Ḳur'ān, &c., that may be regarded as having attained a common, anglicized form; omitting, however, any mark to indicate that the two English letters kh, gh, &c., in such words as khalifah, al-Ghazzālī, &c., represent one Arabic letter, in order to avoid multiplying signs where the value of the letters will be sufficiently evident to those who are familiar with Arabic. In fact, all the diacritical marks will have meaning only for those who know the Arabic characters; and to them the system of transliteration used will be apparent without further explanation. For those who do not know the Arabic characters, the diacritical marks will add nothing; and it is hoped, on the other hand, that they will not unduly inconvenience the reader.

The author makes respectful and grateful acknowledgment of the debt which he owes to his honoured teacher, Martin Sprengling, Ph.D., Professor of Semitic Languages and Literatures at the University of Chicago, under whose tuition and direction this work was prepared. His wide acquaintance with the field of Arabic and Islāmics, his understanding of the critical questions which arise in connexion with such a study, his sympathetic guidance and painstaking assistance over a long period of study, made him an admirable counsellor and gave weight to his suggestions and advice. The writer therefore gladly acknowledges his great indebtedness to him, at the same time insisting that any defects which, it is feared, will be only too evident in this work, will be due only to the student and not to the teacher. To his colleagues in the School of Oriental Studies, the Rev. E. E. Elder, Ph.D., D.D., and the Rev. A. Jeffery, M.A., Ph.D., the author also expresses his hearty thanks for timely assistance in numerous ways during the preparation of this work and for encouragement and advice in connexion with its publication.

CAIRO,  
*April, 1932.*

C. C. ADAMS.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE following works, in addition to those referred to in the foot-  
notes, have been consulted. Abbreviations are noted for those  
works that are most frequently referred to in the text.

A. WORKS ABOUT JAMĀL AL-DĪN AL-AFGHĀNĪ

- Pers. Rev. The Persian Revolution*, E. G. Browne, 1909, biography  
in Chapter I.
- Enc. Islām. Encyclopedia of Islām*, article 'Djamāl al-Dīn al-  
Afgānī' by Goldziher—with bibliography.
- History of Arabic Journalism* ('Tārīkh al-ṣahāfah al-'arabiyyah'),  
by Vicomte Filib dī Tarāzī, Bairūt, Al-Adabiyyah Press, 1913,  
pp. 293-9.
- Mashāhīr. Eastern Celebrities* ('Mashāhīr al-sharq'), by Jirjī  
Zaidān, vol. ii, pp. 52-61. This account is reproduced from the  
Arabic periodical *Al-Hilāl*, April 1, 1897. The same account  
appears also as the introduction to the Arabic translation of  
Jamāl's work, *Refutation of the Materialists* ('Al-radd 'alā al-  
dahriyyīn'), 1925 edition, Cairo. Other editions contain dif-  
ferent biographies.
- Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, latest edition, Cairo, 1346/1928, biography  
of Jamāl by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāzīk, pp. 1-14.
- Predestination* ('Al-kaḍā wa al-kadar'), by Jamāl, brief biography  
in introduction. Cairo, no date.
- Al-Manār*, vols. i-xxviii, frequent references. Articles by Jamāl.  
*Biographies* of Muḥammad 'Abduh all give some account of Jamāl.  
See below.

B. WORKS ABOUT MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH

- Koranauslegung. Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung*  
Goldziher, pp. 320-70. Deals with 'Abduh's interpretation of  
the Qur'an but contains also a valuable summary of his ideas.
- Beiträge. Muhammad Abduh: sein Leben und seine theologisch-  
philosophische Gedankenwelt*, Horten, in *Beiträge zur Kenntniss  
des Orients*, vol. xiii, 1915, pp. 85-114, on biography; vol. xiv,  
1916, pp. 74-128, on doctrine.
- Michel, *Risālah. Cheikh Mohammed Abdou: Rissalat al Tawhīd*,  
B. Michel et le Cheikh Moustapha Abdel Razik, Paris, 1925.

- Translation into French of 'Abduh's work on theology. The Introduction, pp. ix-lxxxv, contains a valuable account of his life and doctrines.
- Al-Manār*, vol. viii, 1905, by index, biography by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā. All the volumes contain articles by Muḥammad 'Abduh, references to his life, doctrines, &c.
- Tārīkh. Tārīkh al-ustādh al-imām al-shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh*, biography by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, in three volumes. Vol. ii, containing his principal articles and briefer works, collected from various sources, was published 1908. Vol. iii, containing biographical and eulogistic accounts which appeared at the time of his death, letters and telegrams of condolence, &c., published on the fifth anniversary of his death, 1910. Later editions. Vol. i, pp. 1134, containing full biography, published latter part of 1931. Al-Manār Press, Cairo.
- Mashāhīr*, vol. i, pp. 281 sqq. The same account appears in *History of Arabic Journalism*, pp. 287-93.
- Printed Report. Al-ihtifāl bi ihyā dhikrā al-ustādh al-imām al-shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh*, printed report of addresses on occasion of seventeenth anniversary of 'Abduh's death, July 11, 1922. On biography of 'Abduh, pp. 10-28, by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāzīk. Same in *Al-Manār*, xxiii. 520-30.
- Weekly Siyāsah*, June 4, 1927, article by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāzīk.
- Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, Cairo, 1346/1928, pp. 15-22, biography of 'Abduh, by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāzīk.
- L'Islām: Croyances et Institutions*, H. Lammens, Bairūt, 1926, pp. 223 sqq. and 229-34, brief discussion of Modernism in Egypt and the work of Muḥammad 'Abduh and *Al-Manār*.
- Secret History of Egypt*, W. S. Blunt, London, 1907, New York, 1922, for 'Abduh's relation to the 'Arābī Rebellion.
- Modern Egypt*, Cromer, vol. ii, pp. 179-81, for Cromer's estimate of 'Abduh.
- Les Penseurs de l'Islām*, Baron Carra de Vaux, Paris, 1926, vol. v, 'Les sectes—Le Libéralisme Moderne', pp. 254-67, brief biography of 'Abduh, his reforms in the Azhar, and his controversy with M. Hanotaux. In the same volume: on Shaikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, pp. 275-84; on Muṣṭafā Kāmil Pasha and Egyptian Nationalism, pp. 285-96; on Sa'ad Pasha Zaghlūl and recent political developments in which he was concerned, pp. 296-306.
- Gibb, *Studies in Contemporary Arabic Literature*. Three studies by H. A. R. Gibb, reprinted from the Bulletin of the School of

Oriental Studies, London Institution, 1928-30. I. The Nineteenth Century. II. Manfalūṭī and the 'New Style'. III. Egyptian Modernists. Valuable account of the development of modern Arabic literature and characterizations of some of the leading writers. Discussion of Muḥammad 'Abduh and his influence.

Khemīrī, *Leaders in Contemporary Arabic Literature*, Tāhir Khemīrī and Professor Dr. G. Kampffmeyer, 1930, biographical sketches of some of the leading writers, their works and their views. Very useful.

#### C. THE LITERARY WORKS OF MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH

The principal works of Muḥammad 'Abduh have been mentioned in the preceding pages but for the sake of convenience are recapitulated here. A list of his writings in approximate chronological order is given in *Al-Manār*, vol. viii, p. 492. Lists are found also in the Introduction to the French translation of *Risālat al-tawḥīd* by M. Michel and Shaikh Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāzīk, pp. lxxxvii, lxxxviii, and in Professor M. Horten's account of the life and teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh in *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Orients*, vol. xiv, pp. 83-5. The latter list is not complete as it mentions only the works which were utilized by the writer in compiling his review of the ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh. The list of M. Michel is mainly followed in the list given here as it is practically complete, with the exception of one or two items included below.

1. *Risālat al-wāridāt*, 'Treatise consisting of Mystic Inspirations'. Cairo, 1290/1874, reprinted in *Tārīkh al-Uṣṭādh al-Imām*, vol. ii, pp. 1-25. Cf. above, pp. 40-41.
2. *Ḥāshiyah 'alā Sharḥ al-Dawānī li al-'aḳā'id al-'Aḳudīyyah*, 'Collection of glosses on "The Commentary of Al-Dawānī on Al-'Aḳud's work on The Articles of Belief"'. Cairo, 1292/1876, reprinted Cairo, 1322/1904. Cf. above, p. 41.
3. *Al-radd 'alā al-dahriyyīn*, 'Reply to the Materialists', translation from the Persian into Arabic of the work of Al-Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī. 1st edition, Bairūt, 1303/1886, 2nd edition, Cairo, 1312/1895, reprinted several times, the most recent 1344/1925. It contains a brief biography of Jamāl al-Dīn, reprinted from the magazine *Al-Hilāl*, which is the same as that which appears in *Mashāhīr al-Sharḥ*, vol. ii, pp. 52-61. Cf. above, p. 15, n. 1.
4. *Sharḥ nahj al-balāghah*, 'Commentary on "The Highway of

- Eloquence"', a work on rhetoric. Cf. above, p. 65, n. 2. 1st edition, Bairūt, 1302/1885, reprinted several times at Cairo.
5. *Sharḥ maḳāmāt Badī' al-zamān al-Hamadhānī*, 'Commentary on "The Assemblies" of Badī' al-zamān al-Hamadhānī'. Cf. above, p. 65, n. 3. Bairūt, 1306/1889.
  6. *Risālat al-tawḥīd*, 'Treatise on the Unity of God', a work on theology. 1st edition, Cairo, 1315/1897, 2nd edition, with notes by Muḥammad Rashīd Ridā, 1326/1908. Further notes were added in later editions. The 5th edition, Cairo, 1346/1926-7, was carefully revised and further notes added. Cf. above, p. 76, n. 3.
  7. *Sharḥ Kitāb al-baṣā'ir al-Nusairiyyah fī 'ilm al-manṭiq taṣnīf al-ḳādī al-Zāhid Zain al-Dīn 'Umar ibn Sahlān al-Sawī*, 'Commentary on "Results of Reflective Insight in the Science of Logic attributed to Nuṣair" by Al-ḳādī Zain al-dīn'. Edited for the first time and commented on by Muḥammad 'Abduh. Cairo, 1316/1898.
  8. *Taḳrīr fī islāḥ al-maḥākim al-shar'iyyah*, 'Report on Reform of the Shari'ah Courts'. Cairo, 1318/1900. It appears also in *Al-Manār*, vol. ii. Cf. above, p. 81, n. 6.
  9. *Al-Islām wa al-radd 'alā muntakidih*, 'Islām and the Reply to its Critics'. A series of articles which appeared in 1900 in the newspaper *Al-Mu'ayyad* in reply to articles by M. Hanotaux which appeared in *Le Journal de Paris*. Cf. above, pp. 86 sqq. Translated into French by M. Tala'at Bey Ḥarb and published under the title, *L'Europe et l'Islām*, Cairo, 1905. Collected and published in Arabic under the above title, together with a number of other articles by Muḥammad 'Abduh and others, 1327/1909. Cf. above, p. 89, n. 1. Reprinted since, most recently 1343/1924, 1925.
  10. *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah ma' al-'Ilm wa al-Madaniyyah*, 'Islām and Christianity and their Respective Attitudes towards Learning and Civilization'. A series of articles which appeared first in *Al-Manār*, 1901, in reply to articles in the magazine *Al-Jāmi'ah*, by Faraḥ Anṭūn. Printed separately, Cairo, 1320/1902. Reprinted since, 3rd edition, 1341/1922, 1923. Cf. above, p. 90, n. 1.
  11. *Al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ*, a work on Arabic philology, by Ibn Sīdah, in 17 volumes. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abduh, with the help of Shaikh Muḥammad al-Shanḳīṭī and others, Cairo, 1316/1896 onwards. Muḥammad 'Abduh also edited *Asrār al-balāghah*

- and *Dalā'il al-i'jāz*, by 'Abd al-Kāhir al-Jurjānī. Cf. above, p. 85, nn. 6 and 8.
12. *Tafsīr sūrat al-fātiḥah*, 'Commentary on the first chapter of the Qur'ān', entitled *Al-fātiḥah*. Cairo, 1323/1905, 2nd edition, 1330/1911.
  13. *Tafsīr sūrat al-'aṣr*, 'Commentary on Chapter 103 of the Qur'ān', entitled *Al-'aṣr* ('The Afternoon'). Printed first in *Al-Manār*. Printed separately, Cairo, 1321/1903, reprinted since.
  14. *Tafsīr juz' 'amma*, Commentary on the last thirty-seven chapters of the Qur'ān, 78 to 114 inclusive. Printed first in *Al-Manār*. Printed separately, Cairo, 1322/1904.
  15. *Tafsīr al-Kur'ān al-ḥakīm*, 'Commentary on the Qur'ān', otherwise known as *Tafsīr al-Manār* ('The Manār Commentary'). Cf. above, p. 76, n. 3. This Commentary was to have embraced the whole Qur'ān but was carried during Muḥammad 'Abduh's lifetime only as far as Chapter 4, verse 125 (*Sūrat al-nisā*). It has since been carried by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā as far as *Sūrat al-tawbah*, Chapter 9, verse 93. Ten volumes have thus far appeared, the last printed 1350/1931. Vol. 1, which as first printed was not uniform in style with later volumes, has been finally revised and enlarged to agree with them and has appeared November, 1927.

In addition to the above works which were published, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā mentions in his list a number of works written by Muḥammad 'Abduh but never published. They are as follows:

16. *Risālah fī waḥdat al-wujūd*, 'Treatise on the Unity of Existence'. Cf. above, p. 41, n. 1.
17. *Tārīkh Ismā'il Bāshā*, 'History of (the Khedive) Ismā'il Pasha'. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā says that he had been told that Muḥammad 'Abduh had written such a history but the work was unknown to him. *Al-Manār*, viii. 492.
18. *Falsafat al-ijtimā' wa al-tārīkh*, 'Philosophy of Society and History'. This work embodied his lectures on the 'Prolegomena' of Ibn Khaldūn which were delivered in the Dār al-'Ulūm, 1878-9. The manuscript was lost when he was removed from the school and compelled by the Khedive to retire to his village. Cf. above, p. 46.
19. *Nizām al-tarbiyah al-Miṣriyyah*, 'The System of Education in Egypt'.
20. *Tārīkh asbāb al-thawrah al-'Arābiyyah*, 'History of the Causes



of the 'Arābī Rebellion'. This was not completed. Part of it is given in *Tārīkh*, i. 159 sqq.

Account has been given in chapters II-IV of the numerous articles contributed by Muḥammad 'Abduh to *Al-Ahrām* and *Al-Wakā'i' al-Miṣriyyah* ('Journal Officiel'), cf. pp. 37 sqq., and 49 sqq.; to *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, cf. pp. 58 sqq.; to *Thamarāt al-funūn* of Bairūt, cf. p. 65, n. 4; to *Al-Mu'ayyad* and *Al-Manār*, cf. pp. 87 sqq., and 89 sqq. The most important of these articles have been collected and published by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā in vol. ii of his biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh, *Tārīkh al-Ustādh al-Imām*.

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