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## Publication

### 'Fickle Fate Has Exhausted My Burning Heart': An Egyptian Engineer of the 19th Century Between Belief in Progress and Existential Anxiety

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Little is known about the worldview and self-image of low-ranking Egyptian civil servants and graduates of state schools of the mid-19th century. Based on an unusual self-referential text which the young irrigation engineer Muhammad Kani al-Baqli had printed in 1865, this article seeks to discover the social and cultural orientation of a simple efendi of the mid-19th century and how he interpreted his world. It will show how al-Baqli acted as an individual in a world defined by constraints and dependencies and how he tried to realise his ambitions for social recognition and advancement. Despite his subaltern position, al-Baqli participated in the dominant hegemonic discourse about reform, progress and civilisation, and he aimed to adapt it to his own ambitious purposes. He also attempted to define what ought to be provided for him as an individual and as a member of an emerging social group, the afandiyya, by a progressive and just government.

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