

Intra-Elite Conflict and the Demand for Power-Sharing: Evidence from Khedival Egypt

Allison Spencer Hartnett* Mohamed Saleh†

April 7, 2021

Abstract

We study how the rising economic power of a disenfranchised elite can increase its *de jure* political representation and its demand for *de facto* power-sharing. We draw on evidence from Khedival Egypt in the aftermath of the American Civil War cotton boom in 1861–1865 that increased the economic power of village headmen (the rural bourgeoisie) vis-à-vis the aristocracy. We employ a wide range of novel data sources on Members of Parliament (MPs) in 1824–1923, parliamentary minutes from 1866–1882, and the failed Urabi uprising in 1879–1882 that aimed at overthrowing the Khedive and was defeated by the British occupation in 1882. We first document that village headmen almost monopolized parliamentary seats in 1866–1882. The parliamentary representation of cotton areas first declined in 1866–1882 by policy design, before it partially rebounded after the 1882 occupation. The latter positive effect is driven by new entrants, and not persisting incumbents, thus suggesting a larger replacement process of the pre-1882 parliamentary class in cotton areas. Our preliminary findings from the parliamentary minutes in 1876–1882 and the Urabi uprising reveal that MPs from cotton areas gave more speeches, and that cotton areas witnessed more Urabi deaths and arrests, suggesting a stronger demand for power-sharing that was first penalized and then later co-opted by the British occupation. We also conduct a discourse analysis of the parliamentary minutes in 1866–1882.

*University of Southern California

†Toulouse School of Economics

1 Introduction

An influential thesis in social sciences argues that the probability of democratization can increase with inequality, as economically rising, yet politically marginalized, elites demand power-sharing arrangements with the incumbent elite (Moore 1966, Ansell and Samuels 2014). Evidence on this thesis has been limited in two ways, however. First, it has been mostly confined to industrializing autocracies in modern Europe, where a rising capitalist class (the urban bourgeoisie) challenged the incumbent elite (the landed aristocracy). This is less relevant to the historical experience of most developing countries, where the intra-elite conflict had been primarily agrarian due to the historical absence of an industrialist class. However, the absence of industrialization does not necessarily impede (attempts at) meaningful power-sharing in authoritarian regimes. Second, the evidence has been largely focused on *successful* democratic transitions. Yet, intra-elite power sharing in autocracies also merit study, because they shed light on the demand for democratization, even if such demands remain unsatisfied in equilibrium.

In this paper, we investigate the impact of the rising economic power of a disenfranchised elite on both its *de jure* political participation and its demand for *de facto* power-sharing with the incumbent elite. Our historical context is Egypt from 1824 to 1923. Throughout this century, Egypt was first an autonomous Ottoman province from 1824 to 1882 and then a *de facto* British colony from 1882 to 1923. Despite an early state industrialization attempt by the Ottoman viceroy Muhammad Ali (1805–1848) and his successors (1848–1879) that created the nucleus of an urban working class, the Egyptian economy and the social conflict remained primarily agrarian. Ruled by an Ottoman-Egyptian aristocracy, the second-class disenfranchised elite was the Egyptian rural bourgeoisie, the local village headmen, due to the absence of an independent (non-bureaucratic) industrialist class.

We exploit two major shocks that arguably altered the social conflict: the American Civil War cotton boom in 1861–1865 that led Egypt’s cotton exports to quadruple and shifted the economy to an export cotton-based economy. The cotton boom disproportionately increased the economic power of village headmen in higher cotton suitability

areas, who introduced agricultural slavery and became the largest slaveowners in the Egyptian countryside (Saleh 2021).¹ The second shock is the British invasion in 1882 that led to a change in the composition of the political elite.

We examine two sets of political outcomes among village headmen: political representation and demand for power-sharing. First, we measure political representation by parliamentary membership. Despite being an authoritarian regime throughout this century, Egypt had a long-standing parliament dating back to 1824. Furthermore, Members of Parliament (MPs) in rural provinces in 1824–1882 were almost entirely village headmen. Hence, parliamentary membership arguably captures the political representation of the Egyptian rural bourgeoisie. Second, we measure the demand for power-sharing among the agrarian bourgeoisie, both in formal institutions (parliament) and via informal means (participation in the 'Urabi revolt). In particular, we examine the activity of village headmen MPs as captured in their speeches in parliament. In this preliminary version of the paper, we focus on a single outcome: the number of times an MP speaks in parliament. We also examine the extent of participation in the failed Urabi revolt in 1879–1882 that aimed at overthrowing the Khedive. The participation in Urabi revolt is not specific to village headmen, though. It has a broader participation base spanning the peasantry, army and police officers, the religious elite, and the bureaucracy.

The analysis draws on novel data that we constructed from both primary (archival) and secondary historical sources in Arabic and English. We constructed a database at the MP, chamber, and parliamentary session level on Egyptian MPs spanning the period from 1824 to 2020. For the purpose of this paper, we restrict our analysis to the period from 1824 to 1923. This database includes a wide range of variables including full name, occupation, and electoral constituency. We also digitized the parliamentary minutes from 1866 to 1882, which enable us to examine the political attitudes of village headmen MPs.

We employ both quantitative and qualitative methods in the empirical analysis. In the first part of the analysis, we analyze the impact of the cotton boom and the 1882

¹Saleh (2021) shows that the cotton boom led to a rise in household slaveholdings in cotton suitable areas, where the demand for slaves came from village headmen and the wealthiest *fellahs*. The aristocracy did not respond to the boom by purchasing more slaves though. Instead, large estates resorted to coercing more *fellahs* using their state coercive power.

occupation on village headmen's membership in parliament, we employ a difference-in-difference strategy at the district level, and a cross-sectional strategy at the MP level. At the heart of both strategies is a comparison of villages with varying levels of cotton suitability, under the presumption that village headmen in higher cotton suitability villages benefited economically more from the cotton boom than lower cotton suitability villages. The rapid accumulation of cotton wealth in some villages rather than others would have strained established local hierarchies rooted in property and agricultural production (Saleh 2021). We find that the number of village headmen MPs in cotton suitable areas disproportionately dropped in the aftermath of the cotton boom in 1866–1882. This drop is actually due to the electoral design by Khedive Ismail of the parliament in 1866, that assigned a seat to each district. Because cotton areas had many more seats in the first (pre-boom) parliament in 1824–1837, the redesign of the second parliament in 1866–1869 led to a disproportionate drop of MPs in cotton areas. However, the number of MPs in cotton areas partially rebounded during the colonial period after the 1882 occupation. We argue that the latter effect is due to the British administration's policy of favoring cotton areas politically, yet replacing their parliamentary dynasties with new ones. Moving to the MP-level analysis, we document that MPs in cotton areas in the precolonial period were less likely to serve in parliament during the colonial era, which is consistent with the district-level findings.

Next, we examine the difference in the demand for power-sharing with the incumbent elite across higher and lower cotton suitability villages. We consider two preliminary outcomes: (1) a count of each time an MP spoke in parliament as captured in the session minutes of the parliament in 1876–1882, and (2) local participation in the Urabi revolt as measured by appearing on the 'Urabi arrests list from the British Occupation period.² Our preliminary findings suggest that village headmen MPs in cotton areas gave more speeches in parliament. Also, we find that cotton areas participated more actively in the Urabi revolt.

In the second part of the analysis, we conduct a discourse analysis of the parliamentary minutes in 1866–1882. We currently focus on the parliaments from 1876 to 1882.

²In future drafts, we will do a text analysis of the parliamentary minutes to capture more nuanced measures of opposition and support among village headmen.

We are working on including the minutes from the 1866-1876 and 1883-1923 periods. A close reading of the parliamentary minutes from the final years prior to the 1882 British occupation lends credence to our argument that village headmen MPs expressed political positions consistent with demands for greater power-sharing. Such moments include demands for information and oversight in the wake of the 1876 debt default, direct confrontations with members of the Council of Ministers about the parliamentary mandate and dissolution, as well as local concerns collected by commissions organized by village headmen MPs. Although historiographic accounts focus on how headmen used their position within parliament to lobby for changes to agricultural and tax policies that would benefit them (which is present in the discussion), we also see concrete objections to the executive's policies and proposals for administrative and policy reform that would serve to strengthen legislative constraints on the regime and increase the level of power-sharing enjoyed by MPs.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. We begin by surveying the literature on intra-elite conflicts and demands for power-sharing, focusing specifically on role of legislative representation in advancing the demands of rising elites. We then describe the historical development of agrarian class conflict in the case of Egypt. We then discuss the data sources and the empirical analysis. Finally, we present preliminary conclusions and outline next steps for future drafts.

2 Economic Change and Social Conflict

Economic development is the mainstay of models of social conflict and political order. Theories linking development and social conflict fall in one of two major camps. The first suggests a structural relationship between growth and pro-democratic change. Since [Lipset \(1959\)](#), social scientists have suggested several pathways through which an expanding economy might increase the likelihood of regime change, including increased schooling, urbanization, and the expansion of the middle class ([Barro 1996](#)). A second, related literature explains democratization as a function of development-induced social conflict. Inequality between social groups is the primary mechanism in these arguments, although evidence regarding the directionality of this effect is mixed.

[Boix \(2003\)](#) and [Acemoglu and Robinson \(2005\)](#) theorize that modernization reduces inequalities between elites and the masses. According to the median voter theorem ([Meltzer and Richard 1981](#)), lower levels of inequality mean that the median voter would be less likely to prefer extreme redistribution. According to Acemoglu and Robinson's argument, elites may be more willing to extend the franchise when the likelihood of progressive taxation is reduced.

Both strands in the literature focus on industrialization as the driver of growth and development. Absent industrialization and an urban middle class, existing theories suggest limited prospects for democratic transition. For [Boix \(2003\)](#) in particular, modernization changes elites' options with regard to protecting their wealth. As economies industrialize, Boix argues that capital mobility permits capital flight in the face of high taxation. When more equal societies democratize, governments would be incentivized to curb taxation to avoid the transfer of wealth across borders. This establishes the expectation that in economies with low capital mobility, such as agricultural economies, elites would be unwilling to concede to democratic demands. Recent work, however, has re-introduced Barrington Moore's (1966) observations about the competitive dynamic between agrarian elites and the urban middle class. [Ansell and Samuels \(2014\)](#) observe that the primary threat to elites' power is not the median voter, but rather rising classes with economic means like the urban bourgeoisie. Meaningful political contestation is more likely to happen between groups on the higher end of the wealth distribution, and as [Albertus and Menaldo \(2018\)](#), [Ziblatt \(2017\)](#) show in the context of modern Europe and Latin America, conservative elites would prefer to share power by adopting more democratic institutions than risk losing power altogether.

Industrialization is the theoretical engine powering this established literature, but these dynamics only apply to a limited set of countries, predominantly the United States and Western Europe. Even among studies that disaggregate between elite groups like ? focus on the urban middle class as the counterweight to large landowners' monopoly of power. Western European cases, however, are among the least generalizable for several reasons. First, the first waves of globalization, industrialization, and democratization the 19th century coincided with a shift in the global imperial order. European

colonial occupation began to lose its foothold in Latin America while expanding in Africa and Asia. Second, major players in the global economy, in Europe, the Americas, Asia, and Africa, were heavily reliant on a rapidly expanding import-export trade of agricultural goods, particularly cotton, wheat, and silk. Ultimately, agrarian - not industrial - modernization was the prime mover of economic growth for much of the 19th century. We therefore propose a reorientation toward rural social conflict to examine the prospects for democratization in agrarian societies.

We argue that conflict within rural elite strata can pave the way for greater power-sharing. Tensions can arise between large landowners and a rising agrarian bourgeoisie for a number of reasons, including competition over land and labor or divergent taxation preferences. The rural middle class, traditionally fulfilling a role as local political elites, may also have political reasons to represent the interests of the poor over the landed class.

We explore this argument in the case of Egypt, where a cotton boom during the American civil war enriched not only large landowners, but also led to the economic empowerment of the village headman who would become a new rural bourgeoisie. This shifting economic landscape led to greater political representation and eventually overt demands for powersharing that threatened the autocratic order presided over by the Khedives, descendants of Muhammad Ali Pasha, and supported by British and French interests. We focus on the level of political representation achieved in the Egyptian parliament during the 19th century. The rural middle class emerged as the dominant class represented in the Egyptian parliament, and their rising wealth and influence increased their demands for constitutional reform and meaningful legislative oversight. The agrarian bourgeoisie also played a central role in the 'Urabi revolt, a sustained opposition movement that lasted from 1879 until the British invasion of Egypt in 1882.

3 Political Representation and the Rural Economy in 19th Century Egypt

A number of elements of Egypt's 19th century historical context make this a suitable test case to explore the political effects of agrarian intra-elite conflict. First, after

Muhammad Ali Pasha's³ (1805–1848) early attempt at state industrialization failed to create an industrialist class, intra-elite conflicts remained agrarian. On the one hand, there were the Ottoman-Egyptian elite who consisted of the viceroy (later called the Khedive) and top state officials. These were typically owners of large estates that were created by state confiscation of peasants' land. On the other hand, there were the Egyptian village headmen: a rural middle stratum who acted as intermediaries between the viceroy and the peasants, yet lacked political power at the national level. These were typically medium landholders who increased their landholdings by confiscation of peasants' deserted land or payment of tax arrears. By the late 19th century, disparities in privileges and political influence contributed to the agrarian bourgeoisie's support of the Urabist nationalist movement from 1879-1882, the first credible domestic challenge against the Khedive's regime.

Second, despite being an authoritarian regime throughout the period, Egypt had a long parliamentary history, with sporadic assemblies dating back to 1824. Membership in the parliament was either by appointment by the Khedive or by in-direct election by local elites (electors) in the constituency. This established parliamentary history enables us to capture the political participation of the rising elites over time.

Third, Egypt witnessed an unprecedented political upheaval in the aftermath of the Egypt's default in 1876 that lasted until the British occupation in 1882. During this period, MPs demanded more political power of the legislative. Furthermore, a military officer called Ahmed Urabi, a son of a village headman, led a revolt against the Khedive. The revolt gained support from MPs and had a wide support base in rural Egypt, but was eventually defeated by the British occupation that intervened to protect the Khedive's power.

3.1 Cotton and Class Conflict in Egypt

Egypt became a major exporter of long-staple cotton in the 1820s. Egypt's leader, Muhammad Ali Pasha, prioritized the expansion of summer "cash" crops and personally monopolized the export all major cash crops (cotton, wheat, rice, and sugar cane) from 1808-1842 (Saleh 2021). The most lucrative crop was long-staple cotton, the cultivation

³Egypt's Ottoman autonomous viceroy

of which expanded rapidly due to infrastructural improvements in the Nile Delta that enabled perennial irrigation. After 1842, cultivators also benefited from cotton wealth as exporters were able to purchase directly from growers (Saleh 2021). Viceroy Sa'id's land law of 1858 reduced barriers to private property rights, affording greater opportunities for wealth accumulation among provincial notables (Schölch 1974). When American Civil War led to a cotton "famine" for Britain's textile mills, Egyptian exporters ramped up production and reaped the benefits of a cotton boom.

The highest stratum of the Egypt's political elite were Ottoman-Egyptian notables and Europeans in the immediate social orbit of the Viceroy. Muhammad Ali Pasha started to award land grants to favored courtiers in 1826, nearly twenty years prior to the dissolution of the monopoly system (Barakat 1977, Cole 1993, Cuno 1992). Ali's successors continued to award estates with low tax rates, creating a new landed nobility that was well-positioned to benefit from the cotton boom (Cole 1993, p. 56). As large landholdings grew, concurrent population growth meant that landlessness and agricultural wage labor also expanded among the rural poor (Chalcraft 2005, p. 305).

The changing rural economy and the expansion of the state from center to periphery was also accompanied by the creation of a new intermediary stratum in rural Egypt: the *'umda/umad* (village mayor) and *shaykh/shuyukh al-balad* (village headman). Chalcraft (2005) dates the emergence of the *'umda* to abolition of tax farming in 1814, at which time wealthier landholders were appointed to exercise coercive authority over a village or group of villages.⁴ The village headmen were more numerous than the *'umad*, were typically small landholders who at once represented the interests of the state and the villagers.⁵ The cotton boom served to increase the wealth and status of this class. By the 1860s, groups of *'umad* had achieved political influence through appointments to provincial bureaucracy as well as the Majlis al-'Ayan.

⁴The *'umda* was the highest ranking local official, although received no state salary. His responsibilities included taxation, conscription, corvee labor, and ensuring the fellahin cultivated (Chalcraft 2005).

⁵Like the *'umda*, a headman exercised coercive authority to tax, police, and conscript. They also mediated disputes and acted as a local intermediary while enjoying material benefits from their position like preferential access to irrigation or cheap labor.

3.2 'Umda, the Parliamentary System, and Demands for Power-Sharing

Institutionalized national-level representation in Egypt began under Muhammad Ali. The earliest body existed from 1824 to 1837 and fulfilled a primarily consultative role. Al-Sayyid Marsot (1984) argues that this body was created with the primary goal of supporting Muhammad Ali's rural reform programs. The viceroy's needed local buy-in to accomplish highly coercive reforms, including military and corvee conscription, export-oriented agriculture, and tax collection, sensibly believing that the support of local notables was key to their success. This first council included 99 village headmen (*shuyukh al-balad*) from across Egypt, 24 district governors, 4 ulama, and 33 appointees chosen by the viceroy (Weipert-Fenner 2020). The viceroy dissolved this body in 1837, and parliamentary life later resumed during the reign of Khedive Ismail in 1866.

Members of this new chamber, *Majlis shura al-nuwwab*, were by and large village headman, some of whom had become men of means during the cotton boom. Winning candidates - who were required to pay a 500 piastre land tax - were selected by electoral colleges (Ezzelarab 2009, Weipert-Fenner 2020). Weipert-Fenner (2020) argues that the Khedive had multiple incentives for allowing legislative constraints on his rule, not the least of which was Egypt's fiscal crisis - particularly the need to service the Khedive's foreign debt. Furthermore, the increasing economic power of village headman meant that the Khedive would be more dependent on their tax revenue, and might well see the merit of coopting them by creating more political opportunities through the parliament. By and large, the early years of renewed parliamentary life were characterized by cooperation between MPs and the Khedive. MPs were able to approve some domestic legislation that contributed to their personal wealth accumulation, including the distribution of state land, amending property inheritance laws, gaining more secure property rights, and introducing the *muqabala* law, which allowed landholders to pay a lump sum six year tax payment up front in return for full property rights and a fifty-percent reduction in property taxes.

With increased wealth and political opportunity, MPs began to make political demands aimed at increasing the oversight of the legislature and directly challenging the

power vested in ministers, who were primarily drawn from the landowning Turkish elite. By the late 1870s, parliamentarians began to demand the constitutionalisation of the body’s taxation and budgetary oversight (Weipert-Fenner 2020). British and French interference in Egyptian politics reached a fever pitch when they engineered the ascension of the Khedive Ismail’s son Tewfiq to the throne and the legislature dissolved in 1879. Pressure applied by the ’Urabi movement led to the re-opening of parliament in 1881, but parliamentarians were conscious of the real possibility of European direct rule and increasingly concentrated their attentions on pushing the nationalist reforms advocated for by Ahmad ’Urabi and his followers. Ultimately, this mass movement served as Britain’s justification for occupying Egypt in 1882.

4 Data

Our empirical analysis is based on merging data on the political representation of village headmen and their demand for power-sharing with geographic data on FAO-GAEZ crop suitability indices. We also exploit information on the household-level slaveholdings of village headmen and on the size and type of large estates that we extract from the 1848 and 1868 Egyptian individual-level population census samples (Saleh 2013). In this section, we describe our data on the political outcomes and the main regressors.

Political Representation We construct a dataset at the MP, chamber, and parliamentary session level, that spans the universe of members of the Egyptian parliament starting with the first parliament under Muhammad Ali in 1824–1837 until the 2015–2020 parliament. For the purpose of this article, we restrict the analysis temporally to the period from 1824 to 1923, and spatially to MPs who represent rural constituencies.⁶ This includes six parliamentary sessions during the unicameral periods in 1824–1882 and 1913–1923, and 10 parliamentary sessions during the bicameral period in 1882–1913.⁷

⁶We define a rural constituency to be a village, district, or a province in the Nile Delta and Valley according to the 1996 population census administrative division. We thus exclude MPs from urban constituencies (Cairo, Alexandria, Damietta), MPs with missing constituencies (e.g., elected or appointed at Egypt level), and MPs who represent a rural constituency that spans multiple provinces.

⁷The dates of the parliamentary sessions during the unicameral periods are: 1824–1837, 1866–1869, 1870–1873, 1876–1879, 1881–1882, 1913–1923. The dates of the sessions during the bicameral period

For the period of our study in 1824–1923, we employ a secondary (published) source in Arabic, *History of Parliamentary Life in Egypt since the Era of Muhammad Ali Pasha* compiled by Subhi (1947) from the primary lists of MPs at the Egyptian parliamentary archives.⁸

The data on MPs has a wide range of variables including dates of parliamentary cycle, official name of chamber, full name of MP, occupation (e.g., village headman), whether the MP is elected or appointed, place of permanent residence or electoral constituency at the province, district, or village level, the executive position that the MP held in parliament if any (e.g., president of parliament), whether the MP completed his mandate or not, and the reason for not completing the mandate (e.g., death, illness, resignation, promotion to governmental position, assassination, election results nullification).

While the Ottoman-Egyptian aristocracy that governed Egypt under Muhammad Ali's dynasty in 1805–1882 dominated the governmental positions, the parliamentary seats in rural provinces in 1824–1923 were almost entirely dominated by the Egyptian rural bourgeoisie. This is confirmed by Figure 1 that shows the occupational distribution of all MPs, both urban and rural, from 1824 to 1923. The figure reveals two things. First, the number of MPs fluctuated from one session to the next. It witnessed a large drop in 1866–1882 in comparison to 1824–1837. Adding up MPs in both houses in the post-1882 period suggests that the total number of MPs remained roughly equivalent to the pre-1882 period. Second, the vast majority of MPs in 1824–1882 are village headmen (*sheikh al-balad* or *'umda*), a well-known fact in Egyptian parliamentary history. Following the British occupation in 1882, the composition of MPs in the Lower House in 1885–1912 continued to be dominated by “rural notables” (*a'yan*) who are most probably village headmen.

Figure 2 shows the composition of MPs of rural constituencies by elected and appointed status. Rural MPs in the parliamentary cycles from 1866 to 1882 are all for the Upper House (*majlis shura al-qawanin*) are: 1883–1890, 1890–1895, 1896–1901, 1902–1907, 1908–1913 and for the Lower House (*al-jam'iyah al-'umumiya*) are: 1885–1889, 1891–1894, 1896–1899, 1902–1907, 1909–1912.

⁸Subhi was the director of the House of Representatives' administration in 1939–1947, and hence he had access to the primary lists of MPs. Volume 6, published in 1939, includes the list of MPs up to 1939. Subhi published an addendum in 1947 that includes the list of MPs from 1939 to 1947.

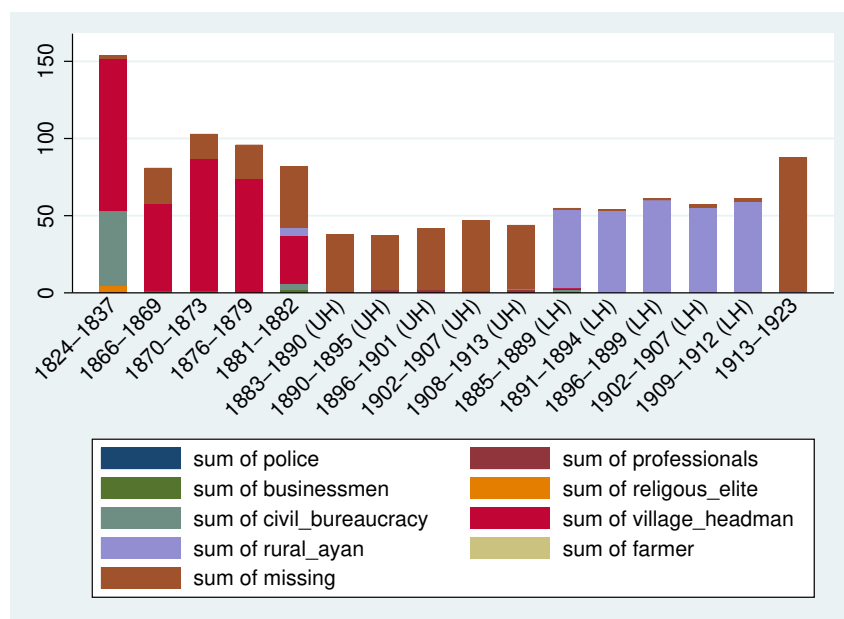


Figure 1: The Occupational Composition of Members of Parliament, 1824-1923

Notes: UH indicates the Upper House, LH the Lower House. The figure includes all MPs, whether representing urban or rural constituencies.

“elected” by the local elites in their constituencies. This is in fact dictated by the parliamentary law issued by Khedive Ismail in 1866 (Subhi 1947). The appointment of a number of rural MPs is observed in the 1824–1837 parliament, the Upper House in 1883–1913, and the single house in 1913–1923.

The original dataset is at the level of MP, chamber, and parliamentary session. We exploit this dataset in two ways. First, we aggregate the information on MPs to the district level, which we then merge with the FAO-GAEZ crop suitability indices. We choose the district level, because the more fine-grained village level is often missing, especially after 1882. Second, we use the original dataset in order to examine the persistence of MPs and their dynasties over time. To this end, we construct a unique identifier for each MP by matching MPs’ names both across chambers and parliamentary sessions.⁹ To do so, we first removed titles from MPs’ names (e.g., Sheikh, Pasha, Bey). We then followed certain rules in creating the MP’s unique identifier in order to mitigate false matches. First, an MP cannot be matched to two sessions that are more than 20 years apart. Second, an MP cannot be matched to another MP with an identi-

⁹It was possible for an MP to be a member of both chambers.

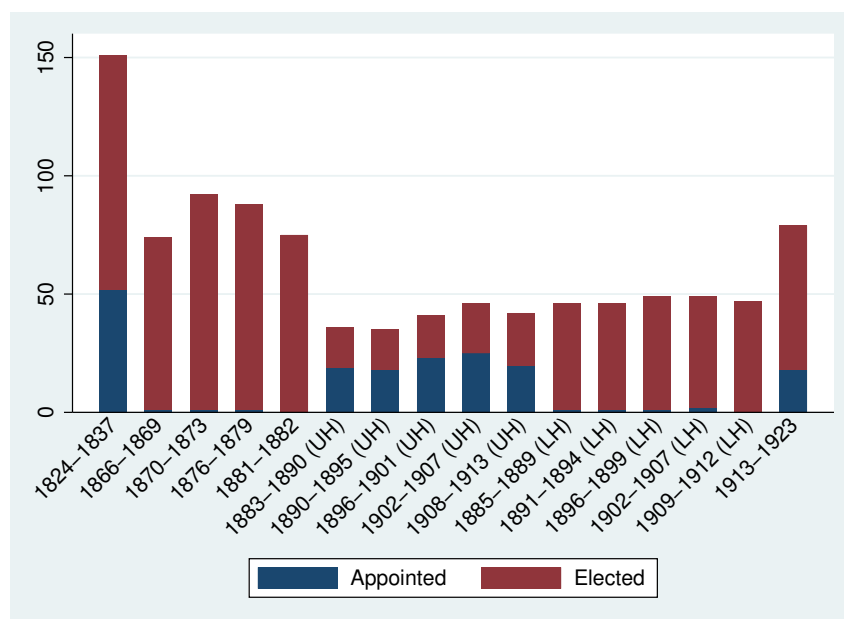


Figure 2: Members of Parliament by Election/Appointment Status, 1824-1923

Notes: UH indicates the Upper House, LH the Lower House. The figure is restricted to MPs representing rural constituencies.

cal name in the same chamber and session. Third, an MP with a missing family name (i.e. having only one name)¹⁰ cannot be matched to any other MP. Similarly, we then created a unique dynasty identifier that traces the family name of each MP across MPs, chambers, and sessions, for those MPs who have at least two names. We then merge the dataset with the FAO-GAEZ crop suitability measures at the village, district, and province levels, depending on the level of geography that is available for each MP.¹¹

Figure 3 shows the proportion of new entrant MPs and dynasties in 1824–1923. The first observation is that MP and dynastic persistence is strong, and even increased throughout the period, confirming a long-known fact in Egyptian parliamentary history. The proportion of new entrants declined in 1866–1882, increased slightly after 1882 in both houses, before it declined to around 40% of MPs and 20% of dynasties.

¹⁰Egyptian names are series of first names along the paternal line: X son of Y son of Z son of L. Family name is the last name of an MP's full name excluding title(s), conditional on having at least two names.

¹¹We also improve on the localization of MPs who serve more than once in the parliament by using the MP unique identifier. We assign the most detailed localization that is available for the MP in a given parliamentary session to all the other sessions of that MP. We implement a similar imputation to improve localization of MPs who belong to dynasties that serve more than once.

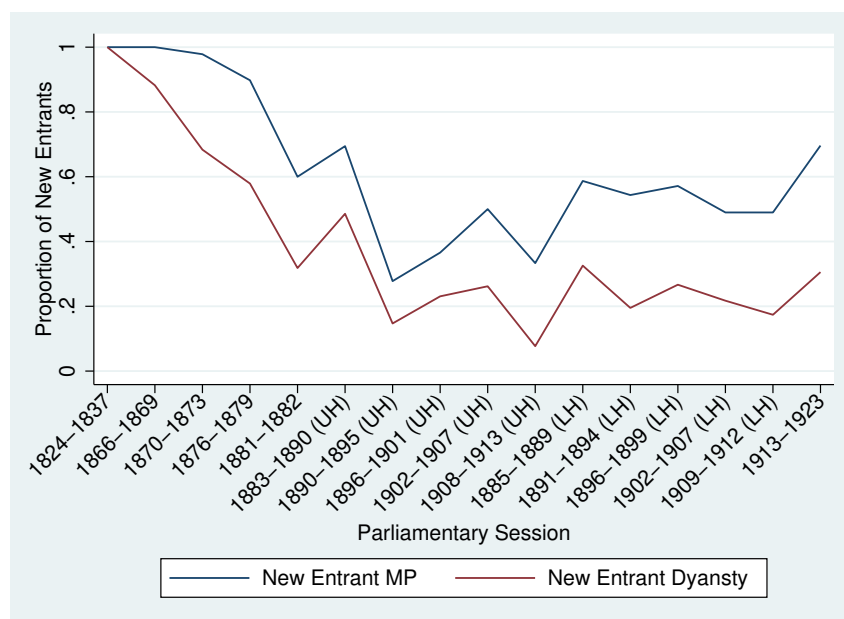


Figure 3: The Proportion of New Entrant Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Dynasties, 1824-1923

Notes: UH indicates the Upper House, LH the Lower House. The figure is restricted to MPs representing rural constituencies.

Urabi Arrests by the British Occupation in 1882 We compile from the British Archives (FO 141/161) the list of arrests in the aftermath of the British occupation of political activists who participated in the Urabi rebellion. Data on arrests include information on name, locality, and occupation. We merge this dataset with both the MPs data (using name) and with the crop suitability indices (using locality).

Parliamentary Minutes in 1866–1882 We rely on the Egyptian parliamentary minutes that span the period from 1866 to 1882. We employ the minutes published by the National Archives of Egypt, [Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya \(2001\)](#), in four volumes.¹² In this preliminary analysis, we construct data on the number of times an MP speaks. We merge this dataset with MPs dataset using names of MPs and with the crop suitability indices (using locality).

Crop Suitability Indices We employ the FAO-GAEZ crop suitability indices for cotton, wheat, barley, beans, and maize. Because Egyptian agriculture is irrigation-fed, We use the crop suitability indices under irrigation and intermediate input level for the

¹²In the future version of the paper, we will add the parliamentary minutes in 1883–1923.

baseline period (1961–1990). The crop suitability indices under irrigation are not available at the low input level, presumably because the irrigation infrastructure requires a sufficiently high level of input.¹³ The crop suitability indices are continuous. We transformed each crop measure into an index varying between 0 and 1, with 1 being the highest value in the sample, and 0 the lowest. We created a cereals suitability index that is equal to the maximum of the suitability indices of wheat, barley, beans, and maize.¹⁴ Figure 4 maps the cotton and cereals suitability indices, after transforming them into binary variables, for villages in the 1882 census. Although the two (continuous) indices are highly correlated ($\rho = 0.89$), they exhibit spatial variation.

5 Empirical Analysis

We employ both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the effect of the rising economic power of the Egyptian rural bourgeoisie during the nineteenth century on their parliamentary representation and on their demand for power-sharing. First, we study econometrically the effect of the American Civil War cotton boom in 1861–1865, and of the subsequent British invasion in 1882, on the political representation of village headmen, measured by their parliamentary seats. Second, we document (quantitatively) the difference across high and low cotton suitability areas in the demand for power-sharing among village headmen, measured by the Urabi arrests and the number of times an MP speaks in parliament in 1876–1882. Third, we employ a discourse analysis of the parliamentary minutes in 1866–1882 in order to understand the demand for power-sharing among village headmen, and the nature of the social conflict between the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy in more depth.

¹³We use FAO-GAEZ Data Portal Version 3.0.1. The crop suitability indices under irrigation assume that water resources are available and that the irrigation infrastructure is in place. They take into account the type of soil and the terrain slope. The crop suitability indices under rain-fed agriculture show no variation within Egypt, which receives too little rainfall.

¹⁴We match the grid-cell-level crop suitability indices with Egyptian villages according to the 2006 population census administrative boundaries. We then matched the villages in the 2006 census with the villages in the 1882 census by village name, which seldom changes over time.

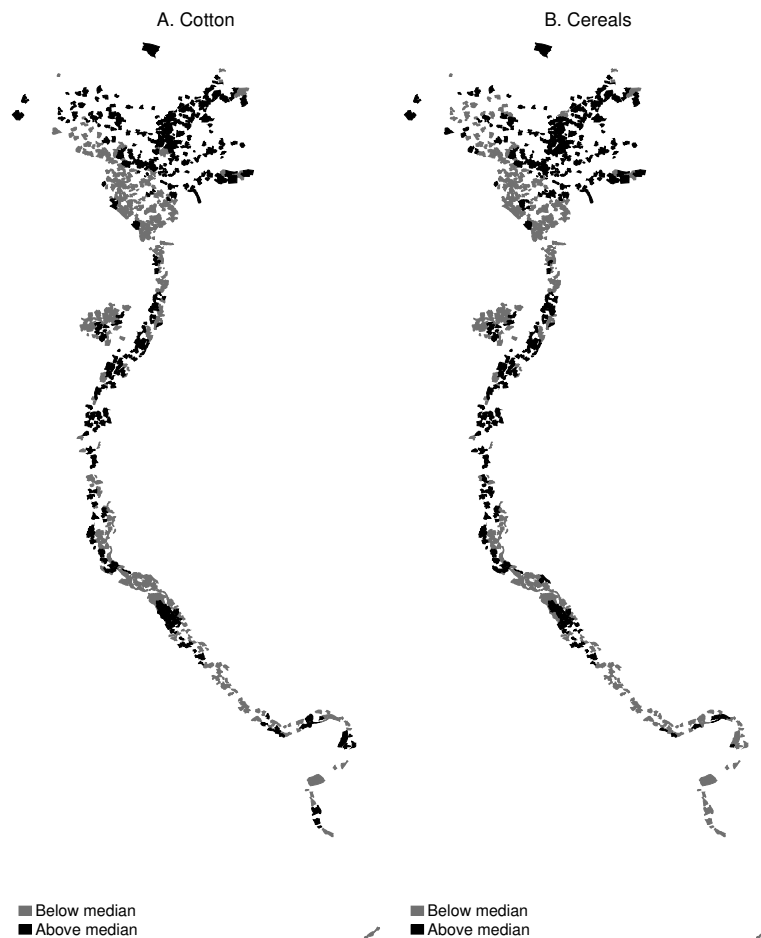


Figure 4: The Spatial Distribution of the Cotton and Cereals Suitability Indices

Notes: Crop suitability indices range from 0 (lowest value in the sample) to 1 (highest value). Cereals suitability index is the maximum of the suitability indices of wheat, barley, beans, and maize. The maps show the spatial distribution of the crop suitability indices, after transforming them into binary measures for visualization, at the village level in the 1882 population census. The village-level correlation coefficient between the continuous cotton and cereals indices is 0.89.

Source: FAO-GAEZ crop suitability indices under irrigation and intermediate input level in 1961–1990.

5.1 Political Representation

We investigate the effect of the cotton boom and the British invasion on membership in the Egyptian parliament by exploiting the spatial variation in cotton suitability, and the time variation generated by the two shocks. We conduct the analysis at both the district and MP levels.

District-Level Analysis We first employ a difference-in-differences strategy at the district and parliamentary cycle level that compares the evolution of the number of elected

MPs before and after the cotton boom, and before and after the 1882 occupation, across districts with varying levels of cotton suitability. For the cotton boom effect, we restrict the analysis to rural districts in the first five parliamentary sessions in 1824–1837, 1866–1869, 1870–1873, 1876–1879, 1881–1882, where we estimate the following regression:

$$nMP_{dc} = \gamma_1 cotton_d \times postboom_c + \delta cereals_{cd} + \alpha_d + \beta_c + \epsilon_{dc}$$

where nMP_{dc} is the total number of elected MPs (in both houses) in district d in parliamentary cycle c .¹⁵ Alternatively, we examine as dependent variable the number of village headmen MPs in the district. The variable, $cotton_d$ is the FAO-GAEZ cotton suitability index averaged across villages in district d , $postboom_t$ is a dummy variable =1 if the parliamentary cycle is after the cotton boom in 1861–1865, $cereals_{cd}$ is the interaction of the FAO-GAEZ cereals suitability index (includes wheat, barley, corn, and beans) with the post-boom dummy variable, α_v is a full set of district fixed effects, β_c is a full set of parliamentary cycle fixed effects, ϵ_{cd} is an error term.

Next, to examine the effect of the 1882 occupation, we employ all parliamentary cycles from 1824 to 1923, where we estimate the following regression:

$$nMP_{dc} = \gamma_1 cotton_d \times post1882_c + \delta_1 cereals1882_{cd} + \delta_2 nMP0_{dc} + \alpha_d + \beta_c + \epsilon_{dc}$$

where $post1882_c$ is a dummy variable =1 if the parliamentary cycle lies after the 1882 invasion, $cereals_{dc}$ is the interaction of the cereals suitability index with the post-1882 dummy variable, $nMP0_{dc}$ is the interaction of the number of MPs in the first parliament in 1824–1837 with the post-1882 dummy variable. In both regressions, standard errors are clustered at the district level.

The preliminary findings are shown in Table 1. Columns (1)–(2) show that the cotton boom is negatively associated with the number of MPs: Districts with higher cotton suitability witnessed a stronger decline in the number of MPs in the 1866–1882 in comparison to the first pre-boom parliament in 1824–1837. The results in columns

¹⁵The cycle variable is equal to the parliamentary session in unicameral periods (1824–1882, 1913–1923). In the bicameral period (1883–1912) it is constructed following the dates of the more detailed parliamentary session, mostly that of the Lower House.

(5)–(6) reveal that this effect is due to the number of village headmen who constituted almost all rural MPs. Examining this effect in depth, we attribute this effect to the design of the parliament by Khedive Ismail in 1866. Whereas cotton areas had many more seats in Ali’s first parliament, Ismail’s electoral decree assigned (roughly) one seat to each rural district. Hence, this resulted in a disproportionate decline of the number of MPs in cotton districts.

The effect of the 1882 occupation is shown in columns (3)–(4). The findings suggest that higher cotton suitability districts witnessed a partial rebound in their parliamentary representation in the aftermath of the 1882 occupation. Columns (7)–(8) show that the effect is attributable to village headmen MPs. These findings suggest that the rising rural bourgeoisie in higher cotton suitability districts first lost their parliamentary advantage over low cotton suitability districts in the aftermath of the cotton boom before it partially regained it during the colonial period.

Table 1: The Cotton Boom, British Occupation, and the Political Representation of Village Headmen: District-Level Analysis

	No. MPs in District				No. Village Headmen MPs in District			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-boom × Cotton	-2.24** (1.07)	-4.19 (3.40)			-2.13** (1.04)	-3.65 (3.38)		
Post-1882 × Cotton			0.02 (0.29)	1.74** (0.67)			0.12 (0.24)	1.63** (0.64)
Parliamentary Cycle FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cereals	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
MPs in 1824–1837	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Clusters (Districts)	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
Obs (District-Parliamentary Cycle)	875	875	1925	1925	875	875	1925	1925
R^2	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.31
Av. dep. var.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17

Notes: The dependent variable is the number of elected MPs in columns (1)–(4) and the number of elected village headmen MPs in columns (5)–(8). Standard errors, clustered at the district level, are in parentheses. The regressions are at the district and parliamentary cycle level from 1824 to 1923. There are 11 parliamentary cycles: 1824–1837, 1866–1869, 1870–1873, 1876–1879, 1881–1882, 1883–1889, 1889–1895, 1895–1901, 1901–1907, 1907–1913, 1913–1923. The sample is restricted to rural districts in the Nile Delta and Valley following the 1996 census administrative division. Columns (1), (2), (5), (6) are restricted to the parliamentary cycles from 1824 to 1882. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The findings in [Saleh \(2021\)](#) reveal that the cotton boom caused the emergence of

(imported) agricultural slavery in higher cotton suitability areas that witnessed a greater growth in household slaveholdings. Importantly, the largest slaveowners in these areas were village headmen, not the aristocracy. Large estates reacted to the cotton boom by coercing more local *fellahs* because they had the state coercive capacity to do so. They did so via expanding on *jifliks*, a specific type of large estates that were formed on confiscated tax-paying *fellahs*' land and by recruiting more army and police soldiers on large estates presumably to subdue *fellahs*. Consistent with these findings, our preliminary findings (not shown) suggest that higher slavery districts, where the rural bourgeoisie grew in economic power during the cotton boom, witnessed a disproportionate drop in the number of MPs in 1866–1882, followed by a partial rebound in the post-1882 period.

Next, we decompose MPs in each district and parliamentary cycle into new entrant MPs, those who served in the parliament for the first time and incumbent MPs, those who had served in any parliamentary cycle before. Alternatively, we define the incumbency status based on the dynasty variable. First-timer dynastic MPs are those who belong to dynasties that serve in the parliament for the first time, whereas the incumbent dynastic MPs are those who belong to dynasties that had served in parliament before.

We are not able to examine the effect of the cotton boom on the number of MPs by incumbency status. Because of the 30-year lag between the first (pre-boom) and the second (post-boom) parliaments, all MPs in the 1866–1869 parliaments are new entrants.¹⁶ Hence, Table 2 shows the effect of the 1882 occupation on the number of MPs by incumbency status. The findings reveal that the positive effect of the occupation on the number of MPs in higher cotton suitability districts is actually due to a positive effect on the number of new entrant MPs and dynasties rather than on the number of MPs and dynasties who had served before. This suggests that while village headmen in cotton districts witnessed a partial rebound in their parliamentary representation in the post-1882 period, this advantage was mainly achieved via the (partial) replacement of MPs and parliamentary dynasties rather than the mere re-appointment of the pre-1882 MPs and parliamentary dynasties.

¹⁶Also, almost all dynasties in 1866–1869 are new entrants too, except the Abaza family that served in both parliaments.

Table 2: The British Occupation and the Number of MPs by Incumbency Status:
District-Level Analysis

	No. First-Timer MPs		No. Incumbent MPs	
	(1) MP	(2) Dynasty	(3) MP	(4) Dynasty
Post-1882 × Cotton	1.38** (0.59)	1.16** (0.47)	0.23 (0.38)	0.44 (0.52)
Parliamentary Cycle FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cereals	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MPs in 1824–1837	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clusters (Districts)	175	175	175	175
Obs (District-Parliamentary Cycle)	1925	1925	1925	1925
R^2	0.33	0.31	0.29	0.40
Av. dep. var.	0.25	0.14	0.08	0.19

Notes: Standard errors, clustered at the district level, are in parentheses. The regressions are at the district and parliamentary cycle level from 1824 to 1923. There are 11 parliamentary cycles: 1824–1837, 1866–1869, 1870–1873, 1876–1879, 1881–1882, 1883–1889, 1889–1895, 1895–1901, 1901–1907, 1907–1913, 1913–1923. The sample is restricted to rural districts in the Nile Delta and Valley following the 1996 census administrative division. $*p < 0.10$, $**p < 0.05$, $***p < 0.01$

MP-Level Analysis To further investigate the persistence and replacement of MPs in the aftermath of the British occupation, we exploit the fine-grained MP-level data. We restrict the analysis to the pre-1882 parliamentary cycles where we estimate the following regression at the MP and parliamentary cycle level:

$$MPPost1882_{mvc} = \gamma_1 cotton_v + \delta_1 cereals_v + \beta_c + \epsilon_{mvc}$$

where $MPPost1882_{mc}$ is a dummy variable that equals 1 if MP m in village v in pre-1882 parliamentary cycle c serves (or belongs to a dynasty that serves) in parliament in the post-1882 era. The crop suitability indices $cotton_v$ and $cereals_v$ are both measured at the village level. We use a categorical cotton suitability measure that divides villages into high, medium, and low cotton suitability levels. This regression thus captures the difference in parliamentary persistence in the colonial period across high, medium, and low cotton suitability villages. Standard errors are clustered at the village level.

The results are shown in Table 3. We find that MPs in high cotton suitability villages are systematically less likely to serve in the post-1882 parliaments, in comparison to MPs in low cotton suitability villages. The results on parliamentary dynasties are

qualitatively similar, although not statistically significant. This result is consistent with the district-level analysis. Both results suggest that although the colonial administration favored the cotton districts, they tended to replace MPs and parliamentary dynasties in these districts by new entrants.

Table 3: The British Occupation and the Persistence of MPs: MP-Level Analysis

Dependent Variable: =1 if MP or Dynasty Serves in Parliament after 1882

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	MP	MP	Dynasty	Dynasty
=1 if Cotton Medium	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.06 (0.05)	-0.06 (0.06)	-0.03 (0.07)
=1 if Cotton High	-0.09* (0.05)	-0.10* (0.06)	-0.11 (0.08)	-0.07 (0.10)
Parliamentary Cycle FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cereals	No	Yes	No	Yes
Clusters (Villages)	242	242	242	242
Obs (MP-Parliamentary Cycle)	464	464	464	464
R^2	0.11	0.11	0.03	0.04
Av. dep. var.	0.57	0.57	0.81	0.81

Notes: Standard errors, clustered at the village level, are in parentheses. The regressions are at the MP and parliamentary cycle level from 1824 to 1882. There are 5 parliamentary cycles: 1824–1837, 1866–1869, 1870–1873, 1876–1879, 1881–1882. The sample is restricted to MPs in rural provinces in the Nile Delta and Valley following the 1996 census administrative division. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

5.2 Demand for Power-Sharing

We study village headmen’s demand for power-sharing using the activity of village headmen MPs during the parliamentary sessions from 1866 to 1882 and the political participation in the Urabi revolt in 1879–1881. We currently consider two preliminary outcomes. First, we measure political participation with a count of the number of times an MP speaks during a session. Using the minutes from the fourth (1876–1879) and fifth (1881–1882) parliaments, we capture the degree to which each MP participated actively in open debates.¹⁷ Second, we compiled data from the British Archives on the names, occupations, and home districts of those arrested due to participation in the Urabi Revolt in the aftermath of the British occupation.

¹⁷In future drafts, we will use text analysis to measure MPs’ political positions and degree to which issues related to power-sharing were expressed by MPs from the agrarian bourgeoisie from the full corpus of parliamentary minutes from 1866 to 1890.

We compare both outcomes across high and low cotton suitability areas. Table 4 shows the differences at both the village and district levels. We document that village headmen MPs in higher cotton suitability areas give more speeches in the 1876–1879 and 1881–1882 parliaments. These areas also have higher participation in the Urabi revolt, measured by the number of deaths and arrests. Participation in the Urabi revolt is a wider social mobilization phenomenon though that included various factions such as army members, police officers, and governmental members.

Table 4: MP Speaking Counts and Urabi Protest Arrests by Cotton Suitability

(a) District-Level Analysis							
	Low cotton			High cotton			Diff
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	
Speaking counts	86	0.99	2.50	59	3.12	15.44	1.767
- Killed during arrests	41	0.02	0.16	49	0.67	3.85	0.607
Number of arrests	41	0.95	2.79	49	12.10	52.40	10.281
- Village headmen	41	0.05	0.22	49	0.04	0.20	0.001
- Army members	41	0.00	0.00	49	1.08	7.28	1.004
- Police officers	41	0.00	0.00	49	0.14	0.87	0.133
- Govt. members	41	0.00	0.00	49	0.22	1.43	0.208

(b) Village-Level Analysis							
	Low cotton			High cotton			Diff
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	
Speaking counts	1627	0.06	0.63	1593	0.11	1.76	0.053
- Killed during arrests	1017	0.00	0.04	1262	0.01	0.08	0.004
Number of arrests	1017	0.08	1.02	1262	0.18	3.73	0.102
- Village headmen	1017	0.00	0.03	1262	0.00	0.06	0.002
- Army members	1017	0.00	0.00	1262	0.00	0.04	0.002
- Police officers	1017	0.00	0.00	1262	0.00	0.03	0.001
- Govt. members	1017	0.00	0.00	1262	0.00	0.03	0.001

5.3 Parliamentary Minutes Discourse Analysis

Based on the foregoing quantitative analysis, we suggest that a class conflict emerged between the rising agrarian bourgeoisie - village headmen - and the incumbent ruling elite.

1876-1879 Parliament Egypt’s fourth parliament convened in the wake of a major fiscal crisis. After some 15 years of accumulated long and short term loans from

British and French banks, the Egyptian government stopped servicing their debt; European lenders and their respective governments imposed a Public Debt Fund (Caisse de la Dette Publique) which dictated Egyptian state revenues directly. Such blatant infringement on Egypt's fiscal sovereignty was a major point of contention for MPs. Through MP responses to the attendant crises precipitated by the default, we see clear indications of MPs pushing for more oversight and power-sharing with the Council of Ministers, themselves members of the large landowning class.

Upon convening in 1876, the house collectively demanded details regarding the 1876 default and the terms regarding the debt settlement. These requests included a demand that a commission look into the plan to repay the debt and take into consideration the several parliamentary proposals to amend the plan. In particular, in a general statement on 1 January 1877, the president of the Majlis details the status of outstanding debts. In the same meeting, the council expresses an opinion on the matter that government workers, clergymen, and military personnel must receive their salaries prior to the start of debt collection. Mohammed Effendi Radhi argued that although the 1876 debt should be repayed in full, "we have to make sure that all government officials, clergy, and soldiers are paid their salaries first and foremost before any settlement takes place. This is the fair and just solution. Even if these individuals have a source of income, they must be compensated for their government services through the ensured salary."

The majority of debt was to be recouped through taxes on agricultural production and land sales. Throughout this parliamentary term, discussions around the regulations governing land sales, landowners' defaulted payments, and the allocation of taxes were a major theme. MPs split into opposing views on the question of what to do with those landowners unable to afford land payments. Some felt clemency should be exercised, particularly for the poor, military, or government officials, while others viewed expropriation and re-allocation of their land to more productive farmers as a more effective strategy to support the economy. (It is more than likely that being landowners themselves, some MPs viewed this crisis as an economic opportunity). Sheikh Ibrahim al-Jabbaar hints at potential opportunity for other rural families, likely headmen and peasant alike, to benefit from the possibility harvesting crops larger estates ('ezba) and

splitting the profit with the landowner.

Taxation in service of the debt default was controversial for other reasons, particularly acute Nile floods that destroyed agricultural land in 1877-78, particularly in the south. For that reason, MPs argued it would be unreasonable to tax flood-affected areas. MPs lobbied collectively for adjusted collection timetables that took into account such regional specificities. Hassan Rassem Basha made his position on the government's intent to tax clear: "This decree makes it apparent that the administration primarily cares about tax collection," while Sheikh Ibrahim al-Jabbaar implicates any harm that comes to the farmer as "due to the government, because there is nothing to collect." In a direct appeal for more powersharing between the parliament and the council of ministers, Mahmoud Bey al-'Attaar appealed to a sense of shared national interest, saying: "These talks [between ministers and MPs] are conducted for the benefit of the Kingdom and the state of Egypt and its people. We appeal for the increased use and exchange of dialogue and debate regarding this matter amongst ministers present." He continued by invoking the interests of peasants: "The parliament needs to consider the needs of the peasants, even those who are unable to fully pay what is due of them. That is the fair and just mission of the council."

MPs also spearheaded local fact-finding missions and reconstruction initiatives in the wake of the flooding. They discussed the fact that the old ways the Nile was managed were not sustainable and therefore new management measures and irrigation plans were needed to properly utilize the Nile and ensure crop sustainability. The parliament announced the collection of reports from village headmen to address irrigation construction needs after the flooding. Bakhoum Effendi reported on villagers' concerns and complaints regarding irrigation, digging, and water purification and promised that local representatives would report their complaints directly to parliament.

Despite these drives for autonomy, open clashes between the ministerial cabinet and MPs became more evident as the parliamentary session came to a close in 1879. The Speaker of the parliament gave a general statement attesting to insufficient documentation being provided by the Ministries of Finance and Interior. He then made a direct call for more MP collaboration (and room for dissent) in interactions with the Council of

Ministers: “There needs to be a discussion between the Councils on matters concerning finance, a greater exchange of information, and more debates with the elected members. This should occur as soon as possible.” In some cases, such as in a bill related to charitable property, the Ministry of Waqf explicitly incorporated input from MP debates into the final version of the law.

By March 1879, the parliament issued a statement that the body would audit all finances collected and spent on land and agricultural maintenance. During the same session, the Minister of Interior declares that the parliamentary session is dissolved. This declaration sparks an impassioned debate about procedure and parliamentary mandates. Mohammed Effendi Radhi objects to the Minister of Interior, saying “Your thanks [for our service] are acceptable, but the council can only be dismissed if it considers the issues on which it has written and in the budget.” Another village headmen who is not an MP from the mudariyya of al-Minya and Bani Mazar also dissents, stating that such an order, “requires that the council be notified, the purpose is to prove the Shura Council, and no procedures or laws are approved from the House of Lords without the aid of or in conjunction with the House of Representatives.” The Minister of Interior argues that all the issues on the table are long-term issues, and that the term of the council is concluded. The chamber notes that foreign journalists accompanied the Minister, which several MPs label as censorship and an opportunity to portray the Egyptian people as vulgar. “We will not leave until the council gives the members what they asked for. We are waiting for the reply.”

1881-1882 Parliament The fifth parliament is called into session in the midst of the 'Urabi revolt. Many of the debates in this abbreviated session tap into the unfolding sense of economic crisis, both in urban and rural Egypt. One debate concerns a potential ban on the exportation of wheat; rising wheat prices negatively impacted small merchants and the poor and some felt that a ban on exports would address deepening poverty. Opponents took the side of producers, whom exports favored. Abdel Majid al-Bitaash's stance reflects the widening Gulf between popular interests and producers: “Costal residents are facing difficult conditions due to the rise in grain prices, and the poor are many and the rich are few, so we should help the many in a way that doesn't

harm farmers.”

Al-Bitaash also pushed for the institutionalization of parliamentary oversight and agenda setting. He gave a speech that encouraged his fellow MPs to join him in expediting the passage of local laws through parliament (which at that time had no independent legislative powers) “to ward off injustice against the people” to present them directly to the Khedive prior to the end of the term. A general administrative law and an administrative law for village headmen was necessary, he argued, to ensure that “every one is bound by its requirements, and grievances are not mismanaged.” al-Bitaash also asserts that any sale of Egyptian government property must be approved by parliament, a practice that was frequently sidestepped by other government officials. Ahmed Ali Mahmoud dissented, taking a conservative stance that Article 39 of the Basic Law manages how to resolve petitions according to specialized bureaucratic agencies, and therefore it is not “good for the parliament to interrupt it with an order, rather it is parliament’s duty to transfer it to one of the ministers.”

On the question of agricultural taxation, debates from the previous parliament about fair taxation amounts and schedules continued. Ibrahim Sa’id called for an overhaul of the taxation system to be “more fair and commensurate with the situation of the country [...] so that farmers feel safe and pay land installments to the government at a fair price.” Sa’id proposed that if the body approves, a committee would be established to explore the matter further. The motion received universal agreement.

The analysis of the 1881-1882 parliamentary minutes is on-going, but taken together the last six years of parliamentary life before colonialism show that MPs clashed with ministers, both on matters of administration and procedure as well as financial and economic governance. As we refine and extend our analysis, we hope to explore how changes in the structure of parliament altered the nature of opposition and participation among village headmen MPs.

6 Preliminary Conclusions

In this paper, we hope to build on the literature connecting social conflict and power-sharing by rooting our study of intra-elite conflict in the agrarian question. For many

non-European states, cleavages between the rural aristocracy and rural bourgeoisie were more salient than a rural-urban divide. Using multiple data sources, we show that despite the attempts of the Khedival regime to constrain and malapportion political power away from cotton producing areas, the rising agrarian bourgeoisie in cotton producing areas was able to make credible demands for increased political power in multiple ways. First, village headmen MPs begin to demand more oversight of ministerial activities through the formal structure of the legislature. Although MPs constitute the majority of MPs, those from cotton areas are found to speak more frequently in parliamentary sessions than those from non-cotton producing regions. We interpret this to mean that cotton wealth translated into political power not only for the upper echelons of the landowning class, but also for small and middle-sized owners from these regions. As the occupation took hold and ultimately repressed the 'Urabi revolt in 1882, we find that cotton rich areas were subjected to more arrests and collateral damage than regions with lower cotton production. Transversing the critical juncture of the British occupation in 1882, we also find evidence that MPs from high cotton districts were less likely to be reappointed; instead, new MPs and dynasties emerged in these districts under the occupation. Taken together, our evidence suggests a strong demand for power-sharing from the agrarian bourgeoisie that was first penalized and then later co-opted by the British occupation.

This paper also contributes rare empirical evidence about political behavior prior to and in the years immediately following colonial rule. While a large literature has emerged concerned with understanding the long-term effects of colonial policies on decolonizing states, we know less about how pre-colonial dynamics affected the development of inequalities under foreign occupation. Evidence from Egypt's pre-colonial parliamentary experience and fine-grained data on rising elites like the 'umda can serve to clarify the local conditions that gave rise to worsening rural inequality in the 20th century.

In our next iteration of the paper, we will extend our coverage of the parliamentary minutes analysis to include the complete series from 1866 through the post-occupation period. We then intend to use text analysis methods like topic modeling to parse indi-

vidual level political positions of MPs over time to track attitudes over time that will give more fine-grained insight into demands for power-sharing within the legislature. To capture the social conflict in more depth, we will also analyze the direct connection between the growth in village headmen's slaveholdings, that was induced by the cotton boom, and their parliamentary representation. Here, we will draw on the 1848 and 1868 individual-level population census samples that were digitized by [Saleh \(2013\)](#).

We also plan to contextualize the Egyptian case with an explicit comparison to agrarian social conflicts and parliamentary representation globally in the 19th century. The commodity booms driven by the expansion of European and American industrial expansion also resulted in the emergence of an agrarian bourgeoisie in several predominantly agricultural economies in Latin America, notably Brazil ([de Souza Martins 2003](#)). By linking the development of power-sharing not only in industrializing European countries, but also with other export-oriented agricultural economies with high degrees of foreign interference, we will be able to expand on the potential generalizability of our findings in the Egyptian case.

References

- Acemoglu, D. and Robinson, J. A. (2005). *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Albertus, M. and Menaldo, V. (2018). *Authoritarianism and the Elite Origins of Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Ansell, B. and Samuels, D. (2014). *Inequality and Democratization: An Elite-Competition Approach*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Barakat, A. (1977). *Tatawwur al-Malkiyya al-Zira'iyya fii Misr wa Athuruha 'ala al-Harika al-Siyasiyya (1813-1914)*. Dar al-Thaqafa al-Jadida, Cairo.
- Barro, R. J. (1996). Democracy and Growth. *Journal of Economic Growth*, 1(1):1–27.
- Boix, C. (2003). *Democracy and Redistribution*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chalcraft, J. (2005). Engaging the state: Peasants and petitions in Egypt on the eve of colonial rule. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 37(3):303–325.

- Cole, J. R. (1993). *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Cuno, K. M. (1992). *The Pasha's Peasants*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya (2001). *The Minutes of Majlis Shura al-Nuwwab*. Cairo: Dar al-Watha'iq al'Qawmiya. 4 volumes.
- de Souza Martins, J. (2003). Representing the Peasantry? Struggles for/about Land in Brazil. In Brass, T., editor, *Latin American Peasants*, number 9. Frank Cass Co. Ltd., London.
- Ezzelarab, A. (2009). The fiscal and constitutional program of Egypt's traditional elites in 1879: A documentary and contextual analysis of "al-Lā'iha al-Wataniyya" ("The national program"). *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 52(2):301–324.
- Lipset, S. M. (1959). Some Social Requisites of Democracy : Economic Development and Political Legitimacy. *American Political Science Review*, 53(1):69–105.
- Meltzer, A. H. and Richard, S. F. (1981). A Rational Theory of the Size of Government A Rational Theory of the Size of Government. *The Journal of Political Economy*, 89(5):914–927.
- Moore, B. (1966). *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Beacon Press.
- Saleh, M. (2013). A Pre-Colonial Population Brought to Light: Digitization of the Nineteenth-Century Egyptian Censuses. *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History*, 46(1):5–18.
- Saleh, M. (2021). Globalization and Labor Coercion: Evidence from Egypt during the First Globalization Era.
- Schölch, A. (1974). Constitutional development in nineteenth century egypt - a reconsideration. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 10(1):3–14.
- Subhi, M. K. (1947). *History of Parliamentary Life in Egypt since the Era of Muhammad Ali Pasha, Vol. 6 and Addendum*. Cairo: Dar al-Kutub.
- Weipert-Fenner, I. (2020). *Title:The Autocratic Parliament: Power and Legitimacy in Egypt, 1866-2011*. Syracuse University Press, Syracuse.

Ziblatt, D. (2017). *Conservative Political Parties and the Birth of Modern Democracy in Europe*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.