

# **Al-jabarti's History of Egypt**

Adb Al-rahman Jabarti

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The multi-volume chronicle of the Cairo scholar Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti (1754-1825), known in Arabic as cAja-'ib al-atha-r fi- al-tara-jim wa-al-akhba-r, which translates roughly as The Most Wondrous Achievements: Biographies and Reports of Events, is the single most important primary source for the history of Egypt over nearly four centuries of Ottoman rule (1517-1882). This text, compiled by editor Jane Hathaway to appeal to the general reader as well as scholars of Egypt and the Ottoman Empire, is a collection of excerpts from al-Jabarti's history, providing a multifaceted overview of Egyptian society during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The selections cover key political developments, including various power struggles and the French occupation, and offer telling glimpses of Egyptian society at large: the role of the Muslim scholar-officials and their interaction with the political authorities; the activities of merchants, shopkeepers, peasants, and tribespeople; the status of women and non-Muslims; and popular reaction to warfare, plagues, natural disasters, food shortages, and price increases. A general introduction and a brief introductory passage to each major excerpt help to place this indispensable primary source in its proper historical and social context.



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