



Lives at Risk: Public Health in Nineteenth-Century Egypt (Comparative Studies of Health Systems and Medical Care) (No. 24)

LaVerne Kuhnke

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Lives at Risk describes the introduction of Western medicine into Egypt. The two major innovations undertaken by Muhammad Ali in the mid-nineteenth century were a Western-style school of medicine and an international Quarantine Board. The ways in which these institutions succeeded and failed will greatly interest historians of medicine and of modern Egypt. And because the author relates her narrative to twentieth-century health issues in developing countries, *Lives at Risk* will also interest medical and social anthropologists.

The presence of the quarantine establishment and the medical school in Egypt resulted in a rudimentary public health service. Paramedical personnel were trained to provide primary health care for the peasant population. A vaccination program effectively freed the nation from smallpox. But the disease-oriented, individual-care practice of medicine derived from the urban hospital model of industrializing Europe was totally incompatible with the health care requirements of a largely rural, agrarian population.

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