ABSTRACT

My dissertation is a study of the politically-oriented intellectual products and reform programs of Muḥammad ᶜAbduh (1849-1905) and Ḥasan al-Bannā (1906-1949). It is an attempt to examine the foundations and nature of an inconsistency in ᶜAbduh's political and intellectual life and the divergence of ᶜAbduh's and al-Bannā's positions on socioeconomic and political matters in modern Egypt. In my analysis of these discrepencies, I considered the relationship between their thoughts on the one hand, and their social backgrounds and political commitments on the other. The fact that they lived in different periods necessitated a thorough examination of the possible role of the historical evolution of Egypt in bringing about the dissimilarity of their perspectives on the issue of reform. The necessity of this investigation of the subjective and objective conditions surrounding their intellectual and political activities stems from the idea that an intellectual does not function in a vacuum.

The study of these two Muslim reformers, as outlined, helps to comprehend the foundations and nature of what is known as the modern Islamic reform movement. In general, one would understand the nature of the relationship between Islam and the socioeconomic realities, and more particularly, the relationship between Islam and the politics of

the Middle East. The focus of this dissertation is on Islamic doctrine in Qur'ān and Sunna as interpreted by Muslim intellectuals to serve their political commitments and to support their politically-oriented reform programs.