contrast to their medical activity, however, most barber-surgeons seem to have shrunk from major (and dangerous) surgical operations. Their lists of clients and patients reveal that they were consulted by the middle and upper classes of society, to which they themselves belonged according to stock books of their property. About one-third of the barber-surgeons held official posts, up to that of village mayor. Finally, Sander shows that their corporation was well-organized, although burdened with inner conflicts that arose from its members' financial interests and striving for prestige. This preoccupation with internal affairs made it easy for the *Collegia medica* (consisting of physicians-in-ordinary or medical professors) to carry through ordinances enhancing the academic physicians' control of the "craftsmen-surgeons". Sander interprets this as the beginning of the end of the barber-surgeons' trade. Totally abolished in the nineteenth century, it was one victim of the so-called professionalization of physicians.

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LAVERNE KUHNKE, *Lives at risk: public health in nineteenth-century Egypt*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990, 8vo, pp. x, 233, $40.00.

This book, one of a series of comparative studies of health systems and medical care, examines the establishments relating to health and medical education that were set up by Mohammad Ali (*c.* 1769–1849), the Albanian officer who became Viceroy of Egypt in 1805. Whether his efforts were for the benefit of the Egyptians or simply in his own interest is left for us to answer.

The book is divided into nine short chapters with two appendices, and end-notes from a rich variety of sources, which includes official Egyptian newspapers, official reports, the accounts and memoirs of resident or travelling European medics and non-medics in Egypt, and the descriptions of nineteenth-century Egyptian historians.

The book describes the efforts of the French doctor Clot Bey in the establishment of the medical school and the midwifery school, which were unprecedented in Egypt. In the nineteenth century, the country endured a long series of cholera and plague epidemics. One of Mohammad Ali's greatest achievements to counteract them was the establishment of an international quarantine board with members from a variety of countries. The first of its type in the world, it is discussed in relation to Western European pro- and anti-contagion debates. The author argues that it was doomed to fail because of the different interests of its members.

Cholera and plague were not the only threats; smallpox was also endemic. The success in training barber-surgeons and midwives to vaccinate the people shows how different Egypt was from Western Europe in the numbers and types of medical personnel available. However, a longer and more comprehensive comparison between the generally fatalist attitude of the Muslim population to the idea of vaccination and the theoretical debates in the West at that time would have been very useful. Nonetheless the book is valuable for anyone interested in the history of public health, Egypt, and the Middle East.

A map of Egypt showing the cities mentioned, as well as a chronicle of Mohammad Ali's successors, to whom less attention is paid in the book, would have been very helpful.

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CHARLES BAZERMAN, *Shaping written knowledge: the genre and activity of the experimental article in science*, Madison and London, University of Wisconsin Press, 8vo, pp. xi, 356, £15.75, (paperback).

From one point of view, the history of science is the history of attempts to find languages in which to speak more correctly and say more about various aspects of nature, and have them established by displacing pre-existing ones. Because this point of view is still underexplored by historians, when adopted to the exclusion of others it leads quickly and unnecessarily to erroneous assumptions. One is that languages of science have been used essentially to *refer to*