

Articles In English

Contents

* Language, Literature and Society in 17th and 18th Century Cairo 5

By . Nelly Hanna

* The Sirdar Murder Trial 27

Prof. Dr. Abdel-Wahab Bakr

**Language, Literature and Society in 17th and 18th
Century Cairo**

By

Nelly Hanna

**Department of Arab and Islamic Civilizations
American University in Cairo**

The cultural history of the 17th and 18th century in Cairo has not been well studied. The full extent of the written production of the time is not well known. Many manuscripts in the collections of Arabic manuscripts all over the world, including those in Dar al-Kutub, either composed or copied during these centuries, still require to be explored. Moreover, many 18th century literary texts are still unpublished. Some works, like the poetry of Hasan al-Badri al-Hijazi (d. 1718), are only known from the chronicle of the historian al-Jabarti, who often quoted his verse. Little has been written about him since the article of James Heyworth Dunne, published in 1938;¹ and writers who at that time were very prominent, like `Abdalla al-Idkawi or Abdalla al-Shabrawi, are hardly remembered today. In fact, it is likely that by and large, the extent of works written in the 18th century is not fully known, since much of it remains in manuscript form and is dispersed in libraries all over the world. The basic work of finding literary texts has consequently still has some way to go. And as long as these literary texts remained uncovered and unknown, we cannot aim at a better understanding of general trends in the field. Studies of literary texts will remain partial until we have a better knowledge of existing literary texts, their number, their content and their style.

James Heyworth-Dunne's general overview of the 18th century literature produced in Cairo points to some of its general features. He noted the literary production developed under the patronage of some of the Mamluk emirs, the most prominent of who was Emir Radwan Katkhuda al-Jalfi. Some of the literary production that was produced in his circle followed the classical style of writing; Ismail al-Zahuri (d. 1796), for instance, copied the Abbasid school of poetry; Shaykh Muhammad al-Suyuti (d. 1766) wrote wine songs in imitation of Abu

Nawas; and Abdalla al-Idkawi (d. 1770) wrote maqamat. One can also see a panegyric style, a kind of court literature that we can link to the rise of strong Mamluk households during that period; some followed the classical style and others still focused on linguistic jugglery.²

Scholarly studies that deal with 18th century literature repeatedly refer to this linguistic jugglery which was empty of significance and point out the emphasis that writers put on form rather than on content. These views, which may have discouraged further scholarly research of this production, are based on one aspect of the writings of the period rather than on the whole. Be that as it may, this trend should not allow us to neglect other trends that were also significant. In other words, to characterize the literary production as being uniform or as homogeneous hides the fact that there were multiple trends and that the global picture was more complex than suggested. In a general way, the literary production of the period has been viewed in a negative light. The lack of imagination; the jugglery with language rather than with content; the bad quality of the language are cited to describe this production. In short, many of these views are based on generalities rather than on close analysis of the literature in question and on the writing of traveler accounts rather than of the literary production itself.³

Studies of the history of Arabic literature refer to this period, which roughly covered the Mamluk and Ottoman states, as the "post-classical." The term refers to a few centuries between the 'classical period' as its focal point but that does not indicate much about the later period, roughly 1300 to 1800, in spite of its length. It was followed by the "renaissance" or nahda starting in the 19th century. The term nahda implied looking back to the classical period but neglected the cen-

turies preceding 1800. This term "post classical" has recently been seriously challenged because it does not take into consideration the dynamic nature of the literature over a period of several centuries and it disregards its manifold developments.⁴ The periodization "post-classical" and "renaissance" also implies a break between the two periods which is open to question.

If we turn from literature to history, we find that for a long time, historians of Ottoman Egypt studied the period of 1517 to 1800 as a three-century long period of decline, a decline that touched the economy, society as well as culture, with little or no differentiation between one century and another. More recently, historical studies of this period have taken an entirely different turn, exploring numerous facets of life. The 'decline' approach to the period has been superseded by other ways of understanding society and the economy. But while historians of Ottoman Egypt have moved away from this approach, the general trend among literary historians has not. The literary production of the period before the 19th century continues to be considered as one of decline. One of the consequences of the general trend to view 17th and 18th century culture in a negative light has been that the link between this period and the later period have not been considered; and the possibility that trends of the 17th or 18th century might be at the source of later developments has not been explored.

The present paper makes use of literary texts of the 17th and 18th century for various purposes. One of them is to show that such texts can be used as a source for the history of this period, and that it can be useful to examine them within the context of the time in a meaningful

way. It also suggests that these written texts were a consequence of a number of factors that emerged during that period, in other words that the written production was related to the social conditions of the time; and finally, it also explores some features of this period that look forward to the 19th century. In other words, some developments of the 19th century can be seen as having their source in the previous period. Therefore without directly entering the debate of the decline in 18th century literature, it nevertheless proposes another alternative way of considering this production.

There is one particular linguistic trend that is of special interest in the writings of the 17th and 18th centuries, namely, the use of colloquial (*‘amiyya*) as a means of written expression, or what is commonly known among linguists as Middle Arabic and occasionally referred to as hybrid Arabic. This is a language register which makes use of classical Arabic and combines it with idioms, vocabulary or grammatical structure of the spoken language. Numerous scholars have examined the linguistic aspects of this language register, with regard to its technical features. What the present paper does is to consider its use in this period from a historical point of view, with the aim of tying the trend to its period and identifying the ways in which the use of written colloquial was part of a specific context. In fact, written colloquial was given a wider space in the writings of the 17th and even more so of the 18th century than it had in the preceding century or two. Various social, economic, and cultural factors may have had an impact on the spread of colloquial and these should be identified and discussed. Hence even though this level of language was known and used in earlier writings, the reasons for this may have been different.

The use of written colloquial or of sub-standard Arabic is by no means a feature that was limited to the 17th and 18th century, since texts written much earlier were using colloquial or semi-colloquial. In the 18th century as in any other earlier period, "Middle Arabic" was but one of several registers of the Arabic language in use, literary Arabic, the legal Arabic. Colloquial (middle Arabic) was used in the 15th century, for instance, by Ibn Iyas in his chronicle of Egypt; and in Ibn Sudun's poetry.⁵ Still earlier, the papyrus texts of the 8th and the 9th century, deeds and documents made use of this colloquial language. The reasons for its use were quite varied. For some, it was the only medium of communication the writers were familiar with, either because they were not fully literate, or because Arabic was not their first language. For instance the writings of the 9th and 10th centuries may have used substandard language at a time when Arabic was not fully spread possibly by persons who did not have a full command of the language. The papyri of the 8th and 9th centuries for instance that used colloquial or "Middle Arabic" may have been the result of a process of Arabization that was under way and that those using it were had a limited knowledge of the language. Possibly too, the level of literacy was such as to explain the linguistic or grammatical mistakes. Possibly too the use of colloquial could be a reflection of the level of education of the writer. The 14th century author of *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, al-Yusufi (d. 759/1357), a middle ranking Mamluk officer, who made ample use of colloquial in his work, admitted that his knowledge of Arabic grammar was limited and that he was afraid to make mistakes.⁶

There were other reasons to use this language register. Among people whom we know to have been well-educated and who had a good

command of Arabic, sometimes it was the nature of the subject matter that dictated the language register that they chose, as we can see in the light humorous literature of writings like the poetry of Ibn Sudun (d. 1464) in the 15th century, it was easy for colloquial terms and phrases to crop into a written text whereas it would not appear in any texts of religious sciences. Even so, its use in literary texts remained limited.

Given this historical background, the question is to try to identify some of its features in the 18th century and understand why they emerged at that time. One of these features is that it appears that there was an increase in the use of colloquial in written texts. This increase is evident in the number and in the size of such works. In terms of size, the late 17th century text, Yusuf al-Shirbini's *Hazz al-Quhuf* is one of the largest works that makes use of colloquial, since it is a book size text and is almost entirely in Middle Arabic, that is it combines the spoken and the classical registers. In that, it is a unique work for the period.⁷

Other than its unusual size, al-Shirbini appears to be part of a trend that was apparent in other texts. Many other literary works were written using this language. Had it not been the policy of modern editors to correct the language of the works they published to bring them to the level of standard Arabic, the texts using colloquial would have been much more numerous. To cite a few examples of other texts of the 17th and 18th centuries written in colloquial or semi colloquial, one could point to Muhammad al-Sanhuri's verse, *Mudhik Dhawi al-Dhawq wal-Nizam fil Hall Shadhara min Kalam Ahl al-Rif wal-'Awamm* and Muhammad Hasan Abu Dhakir's text, both in manuscript form; in addition there were the numerous texts of popular lit-

erature, the siras, the texts of shadow plays, khiyal al-dhill, which were put down in writing. Many of these, including Shirbini's text, were humorous works intended for entertainment. These and many more were written in this language register called Middle Arabic. Doris Behrens Abuseif recently pointed out another text, possibly a barber or seller of medical herbs, who wrote a book on artisans and guilds in the vernacular language.⁸ And one is of course also reminded of the barber in 18th century Damascus, al-Budayri al-Hallaq, who wrote a chronicle using a conversational style, whose source of information on the important events taking place in the city, as he himself says, was the conversations that he had with the clients, including Shaykh Abdul-Ghani al-Nabulsi, with whom he conversed as he shaved them.⁹

Another reason why we find an expanded use of colloquial in the literature of the period is that colloquial had in fact expanded in many other types of writing. It was used not only in literary texts, such as the humorous literature like Hazz al-Quhuf, popular literature of the sira, the zajal or the mawwal; nor was it limited to texts that were addressed to the `amma. In other words, one cannot associate the use of colloquial with 'popular culture.' There was, in fact, a significant expansion in its use in other kinds of writing. We find it in texts that have an academic dimension as well as texts of an administrative nature, that are usually associated with the use of fusha. One notable example is its appearance in a number of chronicles which made extensive use of colloquial, in their sentence structure and in their vocabulary. These chronicles have been termed "military chronicles" but there is in fact no clear indication that the authors were in fact military.¹⁰ One study of these chronicles that was undertaken by a linguist, Madiha Doss, identified features in the text that were relating to

story-telling and were hence clearly taken from the oral tradition.¹¹

Even more telling is its use in administrative circles, as demonstrated in a study by Abdul-Sami`i Salim al-Harawi. In a book written in 1963 and which has not received the attention it deserves, he rightly argued that this colloquial language had penetrated into the administration. Although it does not make reference to specific documents, it argues that there were some administrative texts which aimed at clarity rather than correctness and that the language used was aimed to be understood rather than to follow grammatical rules.¹² When several decades later, the orders of Muhammad Ali Pasha (1805-1848) were published, Harawi's views were confirmed. In fact, the numerous orders issued by this ruler used a language which moved between the administrative, the classical and the colloquial.¹³ If colloquial was used in the administration in the early 19th century, we can be sure that it was also in use in the 18th century.

There is, moreover, another domain, as yet unexplored in which the language register is worthy of being studied, namely in the court records, that means the sijills where the cases appearing on a daily basis in front of the qadi were recorded. These records have been used in a very extensive way by historians, to undertake social, economic, legal or urban studies. The judiciary system was a religious institution, and as in academic institutions and in institutions of learning, one would expect that the language used would follow the correct norms of classical Arabic. Many a time have their readers remarked that their language did not fully conform to the rules of proper writing. In fact the cases in these court registers combining legal formulas with occasional ungrammatical ones, but only a few scholars have started to be

interested in the study of the linguistic aspects of these records.¹⁴ The interest of these court records would be in the combination of language registers that were used. Basically the language of court records was the legal administrative language that followed the requirements of a legal document. Occasionally a court case might include direct speech, and at times a sentence structure close to that of the spoken word. In other words, there is an alternative combination of language registers that could be worthy of further consideration.

This expansion in the use of written colloquial can be perceived in various ways. It could be considered as an enrichment of the language in which there were more language registers or levels that could be used, and in different combinations. Thus this could give a writer more space allowing him to move from one register to the other within a single text. However, that is not the direction in which the dominant trend in literary and linguistic studies, for the most part, has developed. On the contrary, the development described in the previous pages has often than not been seen by many scholars, in negative terms. The reasons forwarded for such this opinion vary. For some, it was viewed as a decline of the classical language corresponding to the general decline of culture that is associated with the "post-classical" period of Arabic literature. One scholar, Salwa Milad, has attributed this 'weakness' of the language in the Ottoman period (1517-1800) to the interpenetration of Arabic and Turkish, pointing out the numerous Turkish words that the records make use of.¹⁵ Others have forwarded explanations for this trend as being the result of neglect for culture and learning on the part of the state. It has also been explained in a linguistic framework as a stage in the development of language. Linguists have sometimes argued that the history of the Arabic language

underwent certain stages of development, notably from classical Arabic at first, then to Middle Arabic and finally, in the modern period, to standard modern Arabic.

These are broad explanations which may have their usefulness. Nevertheless, there are other ways to understand the conditions described here in historical terms that bring into the picture a social dimension, in other words, the users of the language and that have some relevance to the literary production of the period as well. Often perceived as a decline of language, parallel to the perceived decline of 18th century economy and culture, it has, as a result, been considered as not worthy of serious study and has consequently not received the attention that it deserves.

The aim of the present study is to reconsider these writings in written colloquial from a different angle, namely by placing them in the context of social economic and political developments of the period and to try to understand them as a product of these various forces. What I am suggesting here is to consider this development in the language not only in relation to linguistic criteria, or in relation to their linguistic developments, but in relation to a broader historical context; they are linked to the general climate which produced them. Thus, by considering those literary texts in relation to the context of their time, to the social conditions that produced texts of a particular kind, one can make links between the authors and the texts that they wrote to the society and economy conditions of their lifetimes.

For such a significant change to take place there must have been numerous factors behind it, both local and regional. On the broader level, the development of local languages was not limited to Egypt. In

other words, this expanded use of `amiyya can be considered, at one level, as a greater emphasis on the local dialect of Cairo or of Egypt, rather than on the universal language that any educated Arabic speaking person would understand regardless of where that person was. Yet, at another level, it was not a local phenomena: there are examples in Bilad al-Sham, such as the work of al-Budayri al-Hallaq. Studies have also indicated a similar trend in the development of local dialects and local languages in faraway regions, in south-east Asia. Sheldon Pollock, for instance, has studied the vernacularization of languages in India, as spoken languages found their way into the written word.¹⁶ This trend could be partly explained by the intensification of world trade as of the 16th century and the commercialization that came with it in the following centuries as new trade routes were created across the Atlantic and these were linked to the Mediterranean and to the Indian Ocean. As a result, areas vastly distant from each other became linked by regular maritime traffic.

The development of colloquial, or of a written local dialect, can also be linked to a greater literacy, not necessarily the literacy of those who would carry on their education to become ulama, but a literacy that was linked to the market place.¹⁷ It is probably not accidental that we have more texts written in the 17th and 18th centuries by people outside the establishment and did not belong to the academic circles, sometimes by ordinary tradesmen and artisans. Several examples of artisan authors could be identified, and these often wrote in colloquial. Yusuf al-Maghribi, the author of the dictionary in colloquial, was a person of artisan origin. He tells us that his family made sheaths for swords, and he himself was trained in this craft; he knew the artisans in the market, he was familiar with their vocabulary and

he recorded it in his dictionary. As for Yusuf al-Shirbini, some autobiographical information emerges here and there in his book, from which one can gather that at one time he was a weaver, and at another time he was a book seller. He moved between different crafts, but was essentially an artisan or tradesman.

In fact, many of the names mentioned here, Yusuf al-Shirbini, Muhammad Hasan Abu Dhakir, as well as the numerous anonymous authors, are not mentioned in the biographies of the time, namely al-Muhibbi's *Khulasat al Athar fi A`yan al-Qarn al Hadi `Ashar*, al-Muradi's *Silk al-Durar fi A`yan al-Qarn al-Thani `Ashar*, nor by al-Jabarti, presumably because they were either outside the establishment or on its fringes, rather than court artists. All we know about them is what they themselves tell us in their writings. The same could be said of the anonymous author of the so-called *Gotha* manuscript, which from internal evidence appears to have been written by an artisan. Hence, there seems to have been a wider space for these ordinary tradesmen and artisans who were not part of the scholarly establishment to express themselves in the written word. In other words, the expansion of colloquial could be a reflection of this social trend.

There were other local factors which could have helped colloquial to expand during this period. One of them is the weakness of certain models of high culture and at the same time a development of lower levels of culture. For centuries, the Mamluk chancery, *Diwan al-Insha*, which was described in detail by al-Qalqashandi, had set norms and formed a model for this high culture. Its highly skilled personnel was trained in the arts of writing. When, after 1517, this *Diwan* disappeared from the Egyptian scene, it was not replaced either by a high

culture emanating from the Ottoman pasha; neither did the mamluk households which emerged towards the end of the 17th century come to present a model of high culture. At the same time, Cairo and most other cities of the Ottoman empire, was experiencing the development of another level of culture, the culture of the coffee house. As more and more coffee houses appeared in the city with the introduction of coffee consumption in mid-16th century, these places became linked to certain types of entertainment. Partly this entertainment consisted of popular forms of entertainment, such as those done by monkey owners or acrobats; but part of the entertainment also consisted of story tellers, hakawatiya, narrators of siras, poets shu`ara, and the such. There were numerous people who frequented the coffee-houses of the city were thus exposed to these diverse forms of oral literary culture. Thus, there were changes at the top and there were changes at the bottom, and both were in some way or other manifestations of subtle transformations that were taking place in society.

These social and economic factors therefore could, in a direct or indirect way, have an impact on the kind of language used in written communication. Who the people using the written word were, and to whom they may have addressed their writings, these are factors that could affect the content as well as the language of the written word. Moreover, it is quite possible that people who were outside of the establishment were not bound to the rules of writing as were those who functioned from within. They might be more innovative with respect to established tradition. If these conditions had an impact on the spread of colloquial, then, even if at a certain level, colloquial was considered as a declined form of classical, at another level, it was a reflection of a broader population making use, in some way or other, as

reader or as writer, of written texts. Seen from this perspective, the developments of the 17th and 18th centuries look forward to the later period, in the 19th century, when school education became more widespread and when the printed word could reach much large numbers of people.

There were other consequences that resulted from the situation. Not only was there an expanding in the use of written colloquial but there were some writers who offered an explicit justification for its use. They formulated arguments to support the use of a register of language that did not follow the strict grammatical rules of the classical language. This justification, which can be identified from the early 17th century, was expressed in different forms. Two texts can be cited in this regard and both were written by men who had had a madrasa education, namely in the Azhar. In other words, both were perfectly familiar with the fusha language and made ample use of it, yet both chose to argue for the use of written colloquial.

One of these is Yusuf al-Maghribi who wrote in the dictionary entitled *Daf' al-Isar fi Kalam Ahl Misr* in the early 17th century. Yusuf al-Maghribi's dictionary of the spoken word was not the first dictionary of its kind. Earlier on, dictionaries of the colloquial language had been written with a view of identifying those words which were not Arabic words but which had entered the language as Arabization and Islamization spread into new territories and as persons whose first language was not Arabic brought with them the vocabulary of their original languages. The purpose of these earlier dictionaries was to purify the language from these foreign words. In short, the use of these colloquial terms was deemed to be negative and the objective of

the dictionaries in identifying them was to point out to the words that were to be avoided.

Unlike earlier works, al-Maghribi on the contrary, tries to show that the spoken language is correct and he provides justification for its use. Al-Maghribi, wrote his dictionary of colloquial words for exactly the opposite reason, namely to show that these colloquial words had a reliable source and that they were acceptable.¹⁸ Thus, not only was his dictionary a way of elevating this register of language to the level of an academic study, to be taken as seriously as other dictionaries, but he was also providing a justification for the colloquial language. In his introductory words, al-Maghribi expresses his attitude towards this language, and it is here that the statements are significant. Although he had left his craft and entered the Azhar to receive a religious education where we know that language studies were very important, al-Maghribi defended the use of colloquial.

About a century later, a second writer, an unknown literary figure, Muhammad Hasan Abu Dhakir, who also made use of the written colloquial in his writings, provided further justification for using this language. This time, he did not try to argue that it was just as correct as fusha; instead he argued that even if it were incorrect at the linguistic level, its use was justified on the basis that it expressed in a better way what the writer felt or wanted to express. Abu Dhakir was very articulate about his dissociation from the scholastic tradition practiced by those he called, with some sarcasm, *ashab al-ta'alif wal tasanif*, the writers of books and tracts, with some implications of pomposity and from the rhetorical literature that many writers of his generation resorted to. He said that he was incapable of writing like them in ac-

ademic language. In terms of form and expression, he advised his readers to follow him insofar as he used language in a way that expressed him, even if it meant that the language was weak (*rakik*). He used colloquial as an expression of difference, not only in language but also in attitude. Abu Dhakir's words indicate a support, a justification for flexible expression that was independent of the more scholarly and the literary use of language.¹⁹ Hasan Abu Dhakir made an appeal for the use of a free language that could express one's thoughts and feelings without concern for correctness and for grammatical rules. In an important but unpublished manuscript he consciously advocated the use of freer expression and of language neither tied to rigid rules of correctness associated with scholarly learning nor filled with the ornaments and embellishments of high literary canons.

These views on the use of the spoken word in written communication stand out in relation to earlier periods. They are explicit and they are articulate. Thus at one level, the period in question witnessed an expansion in the use of written colloquial, while at another level, some writers were actually pushing for its use. In short they may well signify a change of attitude towards the use of this level of language, a change that, in itself may have been a further incentive to its use. This justification of the vernacular, this defense of the colloquial as opposed to the *fusha*, the conscious preference of colloquial over the *fusha* as a medium of written communication, can be linked to the factors that were mentioned earlier, the absence of the model that the chanceries had provided on the one hand and the process of commercialization on the other hand. Both factors had a broad significance for the society of the time and their impact went beyond language, since it touched many aspects of life. What was happening in

important the power structure and in the economy had repercussions of various sorts on other dimensions of life and culture was one of them. In other words, one can place the expansion of written colloquial in the context of these broader changes of which it constituted one aspect.

These are some possible explanations for the expansion in the use of written colloquial. There may be others. The trend is not a simple one and was probably the result of multiple factors. Be that as it may, until the end of the 19th century, colloquial continued to develop as a medium of written communication, fuelled by the spread of commercial presses, the development of the newspaper and the expansion of the school system, which meant that there was a much larger reading public that potential writers wanted to reach. These were more reasons to use of a level of language that many people could understand.

At the end of the century, the question of the classical versus the colloquial and of the validity of the one against that of the other was again an issue of heated debate. It engaged some of the major figures of the time, like Rifa`a al-Tahtawi.²⁰ Various political dimensions became part of the picture, such as nationalism and colonialist policy. Language use was associated with the political tensions of the time, those between the English occupiers and the nationalists, between those who stood for a spread of the written word and those who were more purist. On the one hand, the expansion of printed books and newspapers required the use of an easier medium more accessible to larger numbers. Moreover, there was an expansion in the cultural production created outside of the religious establishment and by others than the ulama of the Azhar; and expanded middle classes, had created

new conditions. These conditions had created a fertile ground for the further development of colloquial as a written media of expression. On the other hand, was the association of classical Arabic with the calls for nationalism, for protection against foreign penetration. In other words, the debate about which language register was the right one which had started at a much earlier date became, at the end of the 19th century, associated with the large debates that touched politics, society and culture of the time. Ultimately, it was at this time that those who called for the use of classical Arabic gained the upper hand. The development that colloquial had had from the previous century or two was now taking another turn. While it maintained its popularity with some literary writings, such as the works of Abdalla Nadim or Bayram al-Tunisi, it lost some of legitimacy as a medium of communication.

By placing the debate in its historical context, we can better understand both the 18th and the 19th centuries, and to see how they were linked to each other, developments in the 18th century in many ways leading to those occurring later on. We can ask if the *nahda* had any sources in the earlier century. Moreover, this approach means that we can place language as one of the important manifestations of the changes that were taking place, one that was closely tied to these broader social changes.

Index

- 1 James Heyworth-Dunne, "Arabic Literature in Egypt in the Eighteenth Century with some Reference to the Poetry and Poets," BSOAS, 9,3 (1938): 680-681.
- 2 Heyworth-Dunne, 682-9.
- 3 Gamal El-Din El-Shayyal, "Some Aspects of Intellectual and Social Life in Eighteenth Century Egypt," in Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt, edited by Peter M. Holt, Oxford University Press, London, 1968, p.117-134 esp. p. 117-120.
- 4 Thomas Bauer, "In search of "post classical" literature: A Review Article," Mamluk Studies Review 11,2 (2007): 137-141.
- 5 The work of Ibn Sudun was studied and published by Arnoud Vrolijk in Bringing A Laugh to a Scowling Face, A Study and Critical Edition of Nuzhat al-Nufus wa Mudhik al-'abus by Ali Ibn Sudun al-Basbugawi (Cairo 810/1407- Damascus 868/1464, School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies, Leiden, The Netherlands, 1998.
- 6 Donald Little, "The Recovery of a Lost Source for Bahri Mamluk History: Al-Yusufi's Nuzhat al-Nazir fi Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir," Journal of the American Oriental Society 94,1 (Jan-March 1974): 48.
- 7 Yusuf al-Shirbini, Hazz al-Quhuf fi Qasida Abu Shaduf, Bulaq, 1857. This book was recently translated into English, see. Brains Confounded by the Ode of Abu Shaduf Expounded (Kitab Hazz al-Quhuf bi Sharh Qasid Abi Shaduf). Vol. 2. Translated and with an introduction and notes by Humphrey Davies. Paris: Peeters, 2007.
- 8 Doris Behrens-Abuseif, "Une polemique anti-ottomane par un artisan au Caire du XVIIe siecle," in Etude sur les Villes du Proche-Orient XVIe - XIXe siecle, Hommage a Andre Raymond, (Damascus, Institut francais d'etudes arabes de Damas, 2001), 56.
- 9 Al-Budayri al-Hallaq, Ahmad. Hawadith Dimishq al-Yawmiyya, 1154-1175 (1741-1762, edited by Ahmad `Izzat `Abdul-Karim. (Cairo: Egyptian Society for

- Historical Studies, 1959); Dana Sajdi, "A Room of his Own: The "History" of the Barber of Damascus (fl. 1762)."
- 10 Ahmad Katkhuda Al-Damurdashi, *Al-Damurdashi's Chronicle of Egypt, 1688-1737* : Al-Durra al-musana fi akhbar al-kinana ed. and transl. by Abd al-Wahab Bakr and Daniel Crecelius, Leiden, 1991.
- 11 For an analysis of this trend, see Nelly Hanna, *In Praise of Books, A Cultural History of Cairo's Middle Class*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, 2003.
- 12 Abdul-Sami` Salim al-Harawi, *Lugha al-Idara al-`Amma fi Misr fil Qarn al-Tasi Ashar*, al-Majlis al-A`la li Ri`aya al-Funun wal Adab wal Ulum al-Ijtima`iya, Cairo: 1963, p. 45, 71-72.
- 13 Nasir Abdalla `Uthman, *Al-Sulta wa `Ardhalat al-Mazlumin min `Asr Muhammad Ali, 1820-1823*, Dar al-Kutub wal-Wathaiq, Cairo: 2009.
- 14 Salwa Ali Milad, *Al-Watha'iq al-Uthmaniya, Dirasa Arshifiya Watha'iqiya li-Sijillat Mahmakat al-Bab al-Ali*, Dar al-Thaqafa al-Ilmiyya, Cairo, 2001p. 415-417; Nicolas Michel, "Langues et ecritures des papiers publics dans l'Egypte otoman," *L'Egypte/le monde arabe*, vol. 27-28 (1996): 157-184.
- 15 Salwa Ali Milad, p. 415-417.
- 16 Sheldon Pollock, "India in the Vernacular Millenium: Literary Culture and Polity, 1000-1500," *Daedalus* 127, 3 (Summer 1998) 41-74.
- 17 Nelly Hanna, "Literacy and the 'Great Divide' in the Islamic World, 1300-1800," *Journal of Global Studies*, 2 (2007): 175-194.
- 18 Liesbeth Zack, *Egyptian Arabic in the Seventeenth Century: A Study and Edition of Yusuf al-Magribi's "Daf al-Isr an Kalam ahl Misr."* Utrecht: Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication, 2009, p. 1-2.
- 19 Muhammad Hasan Abu Dhakir, untitled manuscript, fonds arabe no. 4643, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, folio158a-160b.
- 20 Gilbert Delanoue, "Deux pages de Rifa`a al-Tahtawi sur la langue arabe (1868)," in *La France et l'Egypte a l'epoque des Vice-Rois, 1805-1882* edited by Daniel Panzac and Andre Raymond, IFAO: Cairo, 2002: 71-90, see esp p. 83-84.