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al-Muqtataf

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- 1207 RODRÍGUEZ FERNÁNDEZ, Antonia.  
Aproximación a los términos *taqaddum/ta'ajjur* en la prensa de la modernidad: la revista *al-Muqtataf* (1876-1952). *Miscelánea de Estudios Arabes y Hebraicos: Sección Arabe-Islam*, 50 (2001) pp.253-267

**al-Muqtataf**

Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddima* itself is tightly structured along quasi-logical lines, and its text flows as would a deductive process from the basic to the derivative. This is a multi-layered process of considerable complexity and rigour, deploying metaphysical categories, and the metaphysical restatement of certain legal categories, for the study of material derived from the historical experience of the Arabs, the Berbers and other peoples, as well as observations on Ibn Khaldūn's own time. The *Muqaddima* contains a virtual register of the knowledge available to Ibn Khaldūn from his personal political experience and the books he read on history, politics, *fiqh*, eschatology, philosophy and the natural sciences, and offers extraordinary direct glimpses of his time. The result is a very richly textured work which has been read in different senses by different people, most of whom have tended to ignore its primary feature – complexity – for the sake of rather simplistic univocal interpretations.

Further reading

- al-Tahānawī, *Kashshāf isṭilāḥāt al-funūn*, M. Wajih, A. Sprenger and W. Nassau Lees (eds), Calcutta (1854 ff; rpt Beirut, 1966, in 4 vols), AH 1215–18 (on the technical sense of the term).
- Quatremère, Etienne, *Les Prolégomènes d'Ebn Khaledoun*, Paris (1858–68) (edition of Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddima*) and the 1900 vocalized Beirut edition *Muqaddimat al-'allāma Ibn Khaldūn*, based on that of N. Hūrīnī (vol. 1 of *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, Būlāq, AH 1284), were consolidated together by A. Wāfī and published as *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn* (4 vols, Cairo, 1957 ff.) The best translation of the *Muqaddima* is still that of W. McGuckin de Slane, *Les Prolégomènes d'Ibn Khaldoun* (3 vols, Paris, 1863 ff.). The English translation of F. Rosenthal, *Ibn Khaldūn: The Muqaddimah. An Introduction to History* (3 vols, Princeton, 1958; rpt. 1967) is serviceable but often unreliable. On this was based the abridgement of N.J. Dawood, *Ibn Khaldūn: The Muqaddimah* (London, 1967, pbk 1978).
- (For the linguistic aspects of the term, the standard Arabic dictionaries may be consulted.)

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See also: historical literature

**muqatta'a see qit'a**

**muqtadab see prosody**

**al-Muqtataf (1876–1952)**

One of the most distinguished monthly reviews; founded in Beirut, it moved to Cairo in 1885. Its first editors were Ya'qūb Ṣarrūf and Fāris Nimr. *Al-Muqtataf* was an encyclopaedic popularizing magazine largely filled with information on Western civilization taken from foreign newspapers and magazines and covering, *inter alia*, history, commerce, art, archaeology, science and biography. It also published novels and short stories, initially mainly translations, including Disraeli's *Tancred*, Scott's *Ivanhoe* and Ṣarrūf's own first novel, *A Girl in Egypt*. Many leading Egyptian and other writers were among its contributors.

Further reading

- Farag, Nadia, 'The Lewis affair and the fortunes of *al-Muqtataf*', *MES* 8 (1972), 73–83.
- Fihris al-Muqtataf*, Beirut (1967).
- Kenny, L.M., 'East versus West in *al-Muqtataf*, 1875–1900', in Donald P. Little (ed.), *Essays on Islamic Civilization Presented to Niyazi Berkes*, Leiden (1976), 140–54.

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**al-Muraqqish al-Akbar (sixth century CE)**

Al-Muraqqish ('the embellisher') the Elder was the sobriquet of a poet from the Qays ibn Tha'laba clan (cf. **al-A'shā Maymūn**) who lived in the first half of the sixth century. His real name is not known for certain. He is more famous as hero of a love romance, according to which he died of unrequited love for his cousin Asmā', than for his poetry. However, since he is one of the oldest Arab poets known to us, his importance to literary history can hardly be overestimated. His poetry, which was collected by **al-Mufaddal al-Dabbī**, shows the rather advanced stage that Arabic poetry had already reached in the beginning of the sixth century, but still is not devoid of archaic traits (e.g. metrical irregularities). The tripartite form of the *qaṣīda* was not yet known at his time, but he often uses the form of a *qaṣīda* in two sections, namely a *nasīb* followed by a message, mostly *fakhr* (self-glorification).

Text edition

- Lyll, C.J. (ed.), *The Mufaddaliyāt*, Oxford (1918–21), poems nos 45–54 and appendix.

and the attractions of modernity—created a problem in orientation for Egyptian intellectuals that would haunt them in various ways for many years. Debate over these questions rose to the top of the agenda for thinkers and writers, spurred by the liberalistic input of the Syrian Christian newcomers. The major medium for this debate was the press.

Lord Dufferin—the special British envoy sent to Egypt after the conquest to recommend policy and whose report provided the initial guidelines for the British administration there—pointedly emphasized that “a free press” would be “necessary to render vital and effective” the functioning of other institutions that he proposed.<sup>2</sup> Lord Cromer, the British official who was to implement this precept for most of the period (1883–1907), was a firm believer in the humanistic mission of British imperialism as well as an efficient administrator. He believed in freedom of expression both as a principle and as an instrumental safety valve for releasing pressures. He was prepared to leave the press alone, interfering only when its conduct was excessively aggressive. However, in the few instances when the Egyptian government at his instruction did react to press attacks with punishment, Cromer discovered that silencing the papers was a difficult and indeed impractical task, since other foreign powers offered many of them protection. Cromer therefore chose to let the Egyptian press develop unimpeded, and after 1894 he no longer invoked the rigid 1881 Press Law, officially still in force. He tended to overlook attacks by journals opposed to the occupation, convinced that such talk was inconsequential. This freedom was bound to be less than complete, given domestic and foreign sensitivities on the part of both the British and the khedive; yet, while warnings and suspensions remained realities,<sup>3</sup> on the whole it was a relatively happy period for the press, a “golden age” in the definition of one of its historians.<sup>4</sup>

Syrians, mostly Christian, who arrived in Egypt in a steady flow, bringing with them high literary standards and refined business skills, continued to lead the way in journalism, playing a parallel role among Arab employees of the civil service. For the Syrians, who along with the Armenians were “the intellectual cream of the Near East” in Cromer’s view,<sup>5</sup> journalism and publishing in general were natural and attractive vocations, second only to commerce. The Syrians were highly visible in the Egyptian press, where they were represented more heavily than in any other occupation. By one count, about 15 percent of all the papers established in Egypt between 1873 and 1907 were founded by Syrians, although they comprised less than a third of one percent of the population in 1907.<sup>6</sup> Their qualitative contribution was even more impressive: Syrians owned two of the five most influential daily newspapers of the period and had exclusive control over the most popular cultural periodicals. An Egyptian challenge to their dominance began to emerge toward the end of the century, but the Syrians continued to retain a prominent position in the field until after World War I.

Non-news periodicals, initially the undisputed domain of the Syrians, consumed much of their journalistic energy. Their literary and scientific journals, aimed at enlightenment, played an important role in fostering reading habits among the people and training them to assimilate modern knowledge of every kind. In Beirut of the 1870s, this genre had been saliently represented by *al-Jinan* and *al-Muqtataf*. The transfer of the latter journal to Cairo in the 1880s, and the appearance of another emigré publication, *al-Hilal* (“The Crescent”), in the following decade, marked a shift to Egypt in this branch of the press as well.

The monthly *al-Muqtataf* had been founded in Beirut in 1876 by two young instructors at the Syrian Protestant College, Ya‘qub Sarruf (1852–1927) and Faris Nimr (1857–1951), with Shahin Makaryus as a third partner. When intellectual and political horizons in Beirut became too narrow for them,<sup>7</sup> the three moved to Cairo in 1884 and restarted the journal. For several years, *al-Muqtataf*, “a magazine for science, craft, and agriculture,” was the only periodical of its kind. It popularized science, from anatomy to astronomy and from physics to veterinary medicine, discussed social and philosophic issues, and translated extensively from European literature, thus contributing immensely to the edification of its readers—that is, of the small but crucial nucleus of urban educated men who could read and benefit from such knowledge. Starting off with a readership of some 500 in Beirut, the journal was reported, eight years after it moved to Cairo, to have reached a circulation of about 3,000 throughout the region.<sup>8</sup> Sarruf and Nimr were the paper’s leading spirits, but many other intellectuals contributed as well, including Shibli Shumayyil, Iskandar Ma‘luf, Farah Antun, Jurji Zaydan, Muhammad Kurd ‘Ali, and later Salama Musa. *Al-Muqtataf* provided them with their earliest training in writing, after which they moved on to publish their own journals. Many readers whom *al-Muqtataf* exposed for the first time to the systematic presentation of modern, basically secular knowledge gratefully acknowledged the benefits they derived from it. “I felt as if I owned all the treasures of earth” when leafing through the pages of *al-Muqtataf*, recalled Jamil Sidqi al-Zahawi, the leading Iraqi poet of the late nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup> Salama Musa, another devoted reader of the journal around the turn of the century, later an eminent writer and journalist, noted: “I owe *al-Muqtataf* the scholarly drive that has engaged me all my life, just as I owe it the ‘telegraphic’ style in which I write.”<sup>10</sup>

Although its message was universal, *al-Muqtataf* was a Syrian Christian product par excellence. Most of its writers were Syrian (including some who resided outside Egypt), as were, in all probability, most of its readers. A broader audience was sought by *al-Hilal*, the monthly founded by Jurji Zaydan (1861–1914) in 1892.<sup>11</sup> A Beirut like Sarruf and Nimr, Zaydan likewise moved to Egypt, in 1886. Several years earlier, he had submitted his first article to *al-Muqtataf* for publication. It was rejected, and the author was advised to learn more before

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يعقوب صروف ومجله المتكطف

این جنبش علمی و ادبی که اکنون در کشورهای عربی دیده میشود در اصل مدیون چند تن از دانشمندان پرکار و چند مدرسه و مؤسسه است که در حدود نیمه های قرن گذشته هستی یافتند یا کمی پس از آن بوجود آمدند . در نیمه قرن گذشته و دو سال پیش از آنکه یعقوب صروف چشم بجهان بگشاید مصر و لبنان در این راه افتاده بودند که بوسیله مدرسه و روزنامه و چاپخانه و با نقل و ترجمه علوم رشته گسسته ای را که میبایستی دوران طلائی گذشته را به عصر علمی تازه به پیوند محکم و استوار سازند ، و با ساده کردن و پیراستن زبان عربی از نو نیروی دیرین این زبان را که در قرن سوم هجری برای تعبیر حقائق علوم و فلسفه و زندگی داشته دوباره بآن برگردانند .

پیش از آن تاریخ قرنها بود که دانش را در خاور رونقی نمانده بود ، و مخصوصاً از قرن شانزدهم مسیحی که حکومت استبدادی عثمانی بر سینه اعراب سنگینی میکرد زندگی عقلی آنان نیز را کد مانده بود ، و از چند مدرسه دینی در تونس و مصر و جنوب عراق و لبنان و چند چاپخانه فرسوده و عده معدودی کتاب که بگذریم دیگر اثری از علم و دانش یافت نمیشد . روزنامه و مجله اصلاً وجود نداشت . دره بیسوادی همه گیر و زبان هم زار و ناتوان شده بود .

مترکمی است که با زبان و تاریخ معاصر عربی سروکار داشته باشد و نام مجله ( المتكطف ) را شنیده باشد ؛ زیرا مجله المتكطف قدیمترین و بادوامترین مجله علمی عربی و از لحاظ اثری که در باز کردن افکار مردم شرق داشته سودمندترین مجله ای بوده است که تاکنون در این منطقه بوجود آمده .

این مجله درست هشتاد و چهار سال پیش شروع با انتشار نمود و مدت پنجاه و دو سال پیوسته در بیروت و قاهره زیر نظر مؤسس آن دکتر یعقوب صروف در هفتاد جلد و در حدود شصت هزار صفحه منتشر گردید .

کسانی که با تاریخ کشورهای عربی از اواسط قرن نوزدهم بپدید آشنائی دارند میدانند که ( المتكطف ) و مؤسس آن چه تأثیر عظیمی در تحول فکری مردم این منطقه که اساس تحولات اجتماعی و سیاسی آنها بوده است داشته .

یعقوب صروف از نخستین دانشجویان و نخستین فارغ التحصیلان دانشگاه امریکائی بیروت ، و از دسته اول معلمان لبنانی این دانشگاه بوده و مجله المتكطف را در همین دانشگاه و با راهنمایی و کمک استادان آن منتشر نموده است . ازینرو میتوان این مجله را نیز یکی از فرزندان روحانی این دانشگاه بشمار آورد ، چون مشعلی را که بیش از نیم قرن در دست داشت از این کانون برافروخته بود .

ما خوشوقتیم که در این شماره معرفی این مجله و مؤسس آنرا همکار گرانمایه ما آقای دکتر فؤاد صروف برادر زاده شادروان دکتر یعقوب صروف که مدتها در قاهره در اداره امور آن مجله و نوشتن مباحث و مقالات آن با هم فاضل خود همکاری نزدیک داشته و اکنون نایب رئیس دانشگاه امریکائی بیروت و یکی از دانشمندان و استادان بنام جهان عرب است بعهده گرفته اند . معرفی چنان عالی ارجند را چنین استادی دانشمند باید .

الدراسات الادبية

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